

*Bibliometric Analysis*

**New Media and Cross-cultural Adaptation: A Bibliometric Analysis Using VOSviewer**

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**Abstract:** A growing scholarly interest focused on new media and cross-cultural adaptation research, but a bibliometric analysis with VOSviewer software still needs to be improved. The paper aims to review the literature on new media and cross-cultural adaptation during the past two decades, analyse the current research on new media and cross-cultural adaptation, get an overview of current research, identify the heated topics, and propose future directions. This paper examined 1,1518 English-language articles published in the Web of Science database from 2003 to 2023 using bibliometric techniques and the VOSviewer software. The methodology analysed the variables such as development time, Top 10 countries, organisations, authors, articles, journals, and co-occurrence keywords in the bibliometric analysis. A review of the past 20 years shows a significant increase in excellent research publications on new media and cross-cultural adaptation. Regarding the region of publications, the number of publications in the United States is the absolute leader, followed by China, the United Kingdom, Australia, Spain, and Germany. However, the highest average number of citations is for Germany. As seen from the five categorised clusters, cross-cultural studies on social media use, Internet addiction, psychological health issues, and international students have become a growing concern in recent years. Future research on new media and cross-cultural adaptation may move toward exploring international students' social media usage and psychological adaptations.

**Keywords:** Social media; cross-cultural adaptation; intercultural communication; bibliometrics analysis; VOSviewer

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## Introduction

As a result of the growing process of globalisation in recent years, there have been countless immigrants, refugees, and sojourners, including international students, businesspeople, transnational workers, and others. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs stated that there were around 281 million international migrants in the world in 2020. When they move away from their familiar country to resettle in a new cultural environment for a long or short period, they must develop a relationship with their new environment that is relatively stable and harmonious and maintain it (Kim, 2001). The new media plays an essential role in social communication during the cross-cultural adaptation of strangers (Ahmad et al., 2014; Hsu & Chen, 2021). Consequently, studying new media and cross-cultural adaptation is of great importance.

Initial scholarly efforts, as highlighted by Tsai in 2006, focused on understanding the role of new media as a source of information in cross-cultural environments. Mokhtar and colleagues (2018) found that social media was vital for international students to gather information about their host culture. Subsequently, Rui and Wang (2015) explored an additional aspect of new media, highlighting its role in enhancing

interpersonal communication. In their 2017 study, Hendrickson and Rosen emphasised how new media impacts the communication between sojourner students and host nationals within a cross-cultural context. In addition, Zou (2014) suggested improving international students' new media literacy by focusing on cross-cultural education. In summary, scientific research on new media use and intercultural adaptation remains relatively fragmented (Pang & Wang, 2020).

A limited number of review studies, such as those by Alamri (2018), Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus (2016), and Pang & Wang (2020), have focused on the role of social media and sociocultural factors in cross-cultural adaptation. Additionally, research by Wilczewski & Alon (2023) delves into the impact of language and communication on the adaptation of international students. Most literature review articles use qualitative analysis to conduct a systematic literature review. Moreover, the sample included is more inclined to analyse international students. Few literature review articles analysed new media and cross-cultural adaptation, including immigrants, refugees and sojourners. There is a need for review articles on new media and cross-cultural adaptation through a bibliometric analysis with Vosviewer software. Therefore, this paper applies bibliometric methodology and VOSviewer software to visualise and analyse the research papers on new media and cross-cultural adaptation during the past two decades. Not only do we understand the overview of the current research and identify the heated topics, but we also need to anticipate and capture future study tendencies by synthesising emerging research topics to help inform future research on new media and cross-cultural adaptation.

## Literature Review

### 1. Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Kim (2001) defines cross-cultural adaptation as a dynamic process where individuals adjust to a new or altered sociocultural environment. This involves forming and sustaining a stable, mutual, and functional relationship with the new setting. Within such contexts, individuals engage in communicative interactions, enriching their personal and social experiences, and fostering their adaptive changes over time. Kim (2001) proposes a dialectical, cyclical, and spiral adaptation model involving stress, adaptation, and growth rather than a smoothly, steadily moving linear progression. The focus of cross-cultural adaptation has evolved from early examinations of cultural groups to contemporary research that predominantly centres on individuals. This shift emphasises empirical investigations into individual cross-cultural adaptation, encompassing studies of immigrants, refugees, sojourners, and other social and occupational groups. Scholars such as Liu (2017) and Chen & Zhu (2020) examined the cross-cultural adaptation experience from different perspectives. From an identity perspective, Liu (2017) explored the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of immigrants and sojourners and discussed different identity negotiation strategies. Chen & Zhu (2020) explored international scholars' cross-cultural adaptation from an organisational culture perspective, including asking them about the difficulties they encountered in cross-cultural adaptation and their coping strategies.

Earlier research has indicated that various cross-cultural factors influence adaptation experiences. These include accommodation and length of residence (Schartner, 2016), as well as a social-cultural, social network, and new media factors (Ahmad et al., 2014; Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus, 2016; Zheng & Ishii, 2023). A recent study found that international students adapt differently in different countries (Akhtar & Kröner-Herwig, 2015). Martirosyan et al. (2015) noted that international students who are native English speakers typically find it easier to adapt to an English learning environment compared to their non-English speaking counterparts. Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus examined the sociocultural elements that precede and influence the cross-cultural adaptation process for various groups, including expatriates and their spouses, international students, and first-generation immigrants. International students who maintain frequent contact with their family networks experience more significant acculturation stress and are less emotionally resilient, while international students who socialise with locals are more psychologically resilient in the host country (Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Zheng & Ishii, 2023). In their 2023 study, Zheng & Ishii investigated how seeking support from distant versus proximate sources differently affects the psychological adaptation of sojourners within their host communities. Ahmad et al. (2014) proposed that the new media technologies have assisted

international students in adapting to the new culture. However, the challenges it poses are unprecedented. For example, overusing the Internet may cause avoidance and depression issues (McNicol & Thorsteinsson, 2017).

## 2. New Media and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

As defined by Lister et al. (2008), new media encompasses contemporary modes of communication and social practices emerging from digital multimedia and networked computing. This technology has revolutionised both mass communication and personal media interactions. For instance, it facilitates interpersonal communication through instant messaging, while also serving as a platform for mass communication, including the dissemination of cultural events, local news, and promotional content. In recent years, the intricate link between the use of new media by newcomers and their cross-cultural adaptation has been a focal point of extensive research. Some studies indicated that new media helps newcomers acquire new career opportunities, information resources, and sociocultural skills, improving their overall satisfaction while living in a new culture (Sandel, 2014; Tsai, 2006; Yang, 2018). Furthermore, new media interactions with host nationals can help sojourners gain access to the host's communication competence (Hendrickson & Rosen, 2017). Hendrickson & Rosen's (2017) study suggested that social media, especially SNSs and video chatting, facilitated the establishment of new relationships in unfamiliar societies and reduced acculturation stress among international sojourners. However, other findings indicated that Internet use, especially ethical social media, has been shown to increase social adjustment difficulties (Park et al., 2014) and prevent the ability to interact socially with host country nationals (Croucher & Rahmani, 2015).

Social media is crucial for establishing and maintaining relationships between newcomers and host nationals or their families or friends when resetting in a new environment. The empirical results support the fact that immediacy and interactivity, as essential features of social media, offer excellent advantages for cross-cultural transitions, such as rich sharing of information and a plethora of opportunities to establish and maintain social connections with the new environment (Alamri, 2018; Sleeman et al., 2016). The communication conducted through social media has been integrated into the daily lives of sojourners and has become an indispensable part of their cross-cultural adaptation practices (Park et al., 2014). Recent scholarly research in social media and cross-cultural adaptation concentrates on critical areas such as the motivation for using social media, the intensity and choice of platforms during the adaptation process, and the relationship between social media usage and the development of social networks.

## Research Methods

Cavalcante et al. (2021) emphasise the importance of the bibliometric review methodology, noting its essential role in categorising published articles in various fields of study using objective criteria. VOSviewer was used to display the bibliometric maps of clusters, their citation relations, and heated topics (Hou & Yu, 2023). The data collection occurred on August 24, 2023, from the Web of Science database. A Boolean search was conducted in digital databases, and previous studies were screened according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. We searched for the following word combinations using keywords that best covered the topic under study. They were "new media" OR "social media" OR "online communication" OR "media technology" OR "social network sites" OR "Internet" AND "cross-cultural adapt\*" OR "cross-cultural adjust\*" OR "intercultural adapt\*" OR "intercultural adjust\*" OR "acculturat\*" OR "cross-cultural" OR "intercultural". After removing duplicates and irrelevant and non-English articles, 1,518 results published from 2003 to 2023 were obtained for this study. Subsequently, the 1,518 "full record and cited references" were exported for analysis through VOSviewer software.

## Results

This section showcases results encompassing descriptive statistics, research developments, contributions from different countries and organisations, notable authors, articles, journals, and co-occurrence keywords in the bibliometric analysis. In addition, this section also identified the five heated topics and predicted the trends of future research.

### 1. Descriptive Statistics

The sample in this study consisted of 1,518 publications from 4,414 authors in 98 countries and 2,017 organisations, which were published in 870 sources of journals, citing 67,683 references from 26,797 sources of journals in the cited literature (see Table 1).

Table 1. The descriptive information of the database

Criteria	Quantity
Publications	1,518
Authors	4,414
Countries	98
Organisations	2,017
Journals	870
Cited reference	67,683
Sources of journals in the cited literature	26,797

### 2. Research Developments

Figure 1 depicts the development of new media and cross-cultural adaptation research from 2003 to 2023. Figure 1 indicates a rising trend in publishing articles in this field. Three phases can characterise this trend of growth. The first phase was from 2003 to 2010 when fewer than 50 papers were published yearly. The second phase was from 2011 to 2016, when the number of papers was 50-100 per year. In the last phase, from 2017 to 2023, the number of published papers significantly increased, with more than 100 papers per year and peaking at 172 papers in 2021. It shows that this field has received more and more attention from scholars in recent years and has become a new focus of the field.

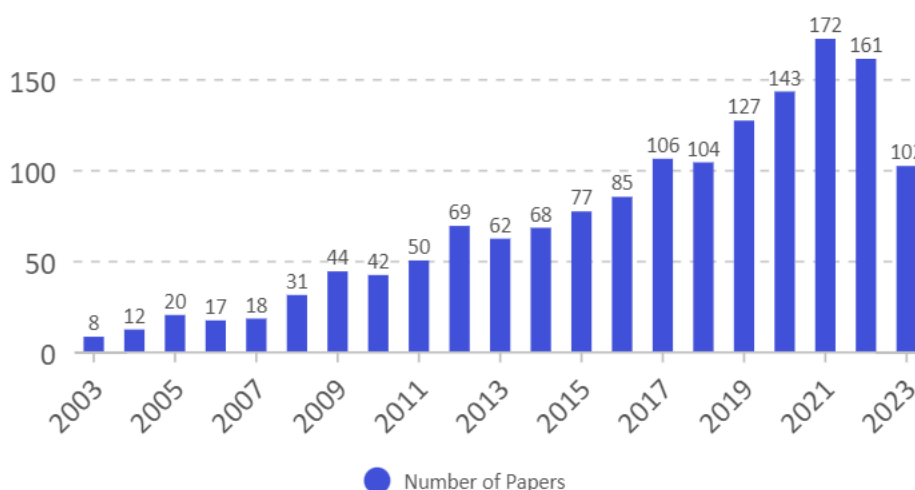


Figure 1. Levels of research development

### 3. Top 10 Countries

To understand which countries are prominent in the new media and cross-cultural adaptation research field, we also analysed countries. Table 2 lists the top 10 countries in this area. Table 2 shows that the most prominent country in this research area is the United States, which has published 568 papers with 14,800 citations. China and the United Kingdom ranked second and third, with 264 and 188 publications, respectively, and combined citations of 5,478 and 4,968, respectively. Australia and Spain are in fourth and fifth positions, with 124 and 100 published papers and 2,811 and 3,172 citations, respectively. There were only 87 publications from Germany, with a combined citation of 3,644. The following countries are Canada, Japan, South Korea, and France, with published papers of less than 80 and combined citations of approximately 1,400 each. In terms of publication geography, while the United States leads in both the total number of publications and citations, Germany boasts the highest average citation count.

Table 2. Top ten countries within the field

Country	Publications	Citation	Average citation
USA	568	14,800	26.06
China	264	5,478	20.75
UK	188	4,968	25.45
Australia	124	2,811	22.67
Spain	100	3,172	31.72
Germany	87	3,644	41.89
Canada	76	1,412	18.58
Japan	61	1,077	17.66
South Korea	57	1,524	26.74
France	53	1,451	27.38

Figure 2 displays a map illustrating co-authorship among countries based on an analysis of 1,518 articles. Applying a minimum number of documents of a country threshold of 10, only 44 out of 98 countries satisfied this standard. Notably, the cluster comprising the United States, China, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Spain stands out prominently, representing 78.8% of the total publications. The map features lines linking various points, symbolising the collaborative ties between countries. The top 5 most influential countries in the field of new media and cross-cultural adaptation are the United States (42 links, 404 link strength), the United Kingdom (42 links, 323 link strength), China (39 links, 253 link strength), Australia (39 links, 178 link strength), and Germany (33 links, 178 link strength). The proximity of these clusters on the map reflects the intensity of their collaborative efforts, highlighting the extent of their joint publications.

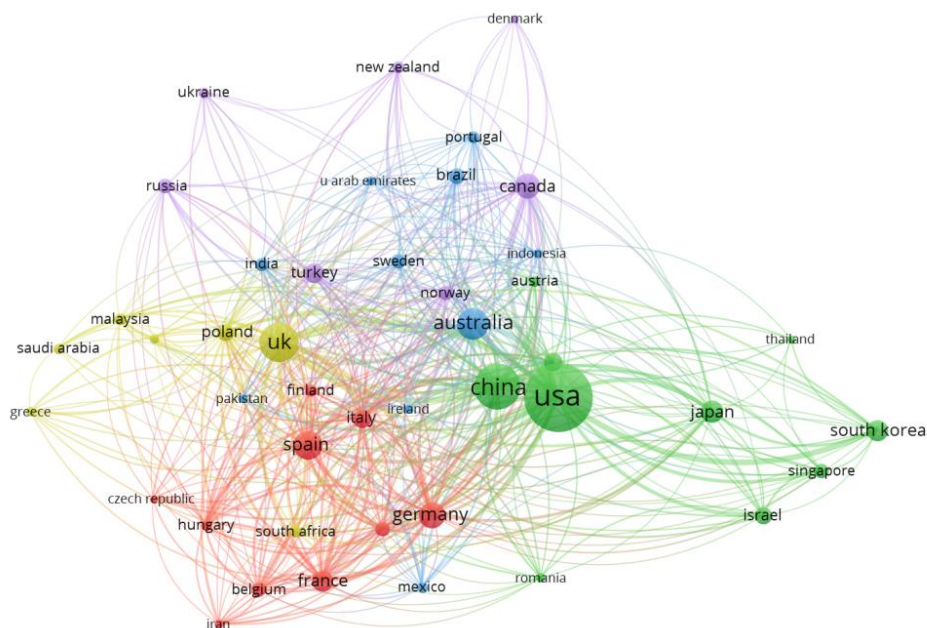


Figure 2. Co-authorship by country

#### 4. Top 10 Organisations

As we can see from Table 3, among the top 10 organisations, three are from the United States, three are from the United Kingdom, and two are each from China and Spain. Among them, Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom ranked first with 18 publications and 573 citations on the new media and cross-cultural adaptation research. Following closely, the University of Hong Kong (China) and the University of Texas at Austin (United States) have contributed significantly with 16 and 15 publications, and 363 and 831 citations, respectively. The University of Texas at Austin had the highest average number of citations, with 55.4. It reflects that North American and European organisations are leading in this field.

Table 3. Top ten organisations within the field

Organisations	Publications	Citation	Average citation
Nottingham Trent University	18	573	31.83
The University of Hong Kong	16	363	22.69
The University of Texas at Austin	15	831	55.40
University of Granada	14	241	17.21
University of Oxford	13	363	27.92
Cardiff University	13	666	51.23
Chinese University of Hong Kong	12	255	21.25
University of Valencia	12	322	26.83
Columbia University	12	257	21.42
Michigan State University	12	306	25.50

### 5. Top 10 Authors

Table 4 enumerates the leading scholars in this field. Mark D. Griffiths was the most highly accomplished author, with 15 published articles cited 359 times during the search period. He mainly contributed to Internet use in cross-cultural studies, especially on Internet addiction and social media addiction in cross-cultural studies. Halley M. Pontes published eight articles with 286 citations and became the second most productive scholar. He centred on using the Internet Disorder Scale-Short Form to estimate underlying Internet addiction in cross-cultural studies. The third-ranked scholar was Christian Montag, who discussed distinguishing between universal and specific Internet addiction in cross-cultural research. EO Im focused on the relationship between immigrant transition and health among women, with the lowest combined citations of 37. Six other authors have published six articles each. Among them, Zsolt Demetrovics had the highest impact, with 297 citations. He mainly focused on assessing problematic Internet use in different European countries from a cross-cultural perspective. Dwivedi and Yogesh Kumar then concentrated their research on exploring the influence of social media in the process of consumer acculturation.

Table 4. Top ten authors within the field

Authors	Publications	Citation	Average citation
Griffiths, MD	15	359	23.93
Pontes, H. M.	8	286	35.75
Montag, C	7	462	66
Im, E. O	7	37	5.29
Demetrovics, Z.	6	297	49.5
Dwivedi, Y. K.	6	181	30.17
Chun, L	6	172	28.67
Kizgin, H	6	163	27.17
Jamal, A	6	161	26.83
Hu, S	6	138	23

### 6. Top 10 Articles

The top 10 cited articles in Web of Science are shown in Table 5. The top-cited article has received 533 citations. The article used a new DSM-5 approach to understanding and assessing online gaming disorders through cross-cultural collaboration. The second and third most cited articles account for 433 and 312 citations, respectively. Both articles focused on the cross-cultural differences in Internet use. The second-highest cited article delves into the cross-cultural variances in obtaining, assessing, and utilising online health information. Meanwhile, the third most-cited study unveils notable gender and cultural disparities in Internet experience, attitudes, usage, and self-confidence among Chinese and British students. The fourth cited article tested the effects of gender and age on self-esteem in cross-cultural studies.

Table 5. Top ten most cited articles

Title	Journal	Year	Citation
An international consensus for assessing Internet gaming disorder using the new DSM-5 approach	Addiction	2014	533

How Internet users find, evaluate, and use online health information: A cross-cultural review	Cyberpsychology & Behavior	2004	433
Gender and cultural differences in Internet use: A study of China and the UK	Computers & Education	2007	312
Age and gender differences in self-esteem—A cross-cultural window	Journal of Personality and Social Psychology	2016	303
The effect of perceived service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in e-commerce settings: A cross-cultural analysis	Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	2010	289
Cross-cultural differences in infant and toddler sleep	Sleep Medicine	2010	276
A cross-cultural comparison of Internet buying behavior: Effects of Internet usage, perceived risks, and innovativeness	International Marketing Review	2003	218
Personality maturation around the world: A cross-cultural examination of social-investment theory	Psychological Science	2013	206
Self-disclosure and privacy calculus on social networking sites: The role of culture: Intercultural dynamics of privacy calculus	Business & Information Systems Engineering	2012	199
Ambient co-presence: Transnational family practices in poly media environments	Global Networks	2013	199

### 7. Top 10 Journals

Table 6 presents an analysis of the top 10 journals in the field of new media and cross-cultural adaptation, ranked based on their number of publications. These journals published 179 articles together with combined citations of 5,030. The increased interest of these journals in research on new media and cross-cultural adaptation was reflected in the table. The journal 'Computers in Human Behavior' leads with 35 publications and a total of 1,326 citations, accounting for 19.55% of the total sample, as shown in the analysis. The "Frontiers in Psychology" and "International Journal of Intercultural Relations" followed by 21 and 20 publications, respectively, and 367 and 412 citations. The other seven journals all had less than 20 publications. The "Computers & Education" journal only published 13 articles with 1104 citations. That means the "Computers & Education" journal achieved more attention in this research field.

Table 6. Top ten journals within this research field

Authors	Publications	Citation	Average citation
Computers in Human Behavior	35	1,326	37.89
Frontiers in Psychology	21	367	17.48
International Journal of Intercultural Relations	20	412	20.60
Journal of Business Research	18	547	30.39
New Media & Society	16	387	24.19
International Journal of Communication	15	134	8.93



International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	15	112	7.47
Technological Forecasting and Social Change	13	407	31.31
Information Technology & People	13	234	18.00
Computers & Education	13	1104	84.92

### 8. Co-occurrence Analysis of Keywords in the Research Field

Using VOSviewer, we performed a keyword co-occurrence analysis to identify current hot topics and potential future trends, as illustrated in Figure 3. With a minimum co-occurrence criterion of 10, out of 6236 keywords, 193 met this benchmark. Figure 3 categorises these 193 keywords into five distinct clusters. Cluster 1, with 52 terms, includes 'social media' (285 occurrences, 1,266 total link strength) and 'communication' (127 occurrences, 652 link strength). Cluster 2, with 46 keywords, features terms like 'Internet' (309 occurrences, 1,415 link strength) and 'cross-cultural study' (180 occurrences, 786 link strength). Cluster 3, comprising 44 items, includes 'adolescent' (97 occurrences, 537 link strength) and 'depression' (70 occurrences, 419 link strength). Cluster 4 has 27 items, such as 'culture' (127 occurrences, 668 link strength) and 'cultural difference' (49 occurrences, 224 link strength). Finally, Cluster 5, with 22 keywords, highlights terms like 'acculturation' (196 occurrences, 1,041 link strength) and 'attitude' (78 occurrences, 423 link strength)."

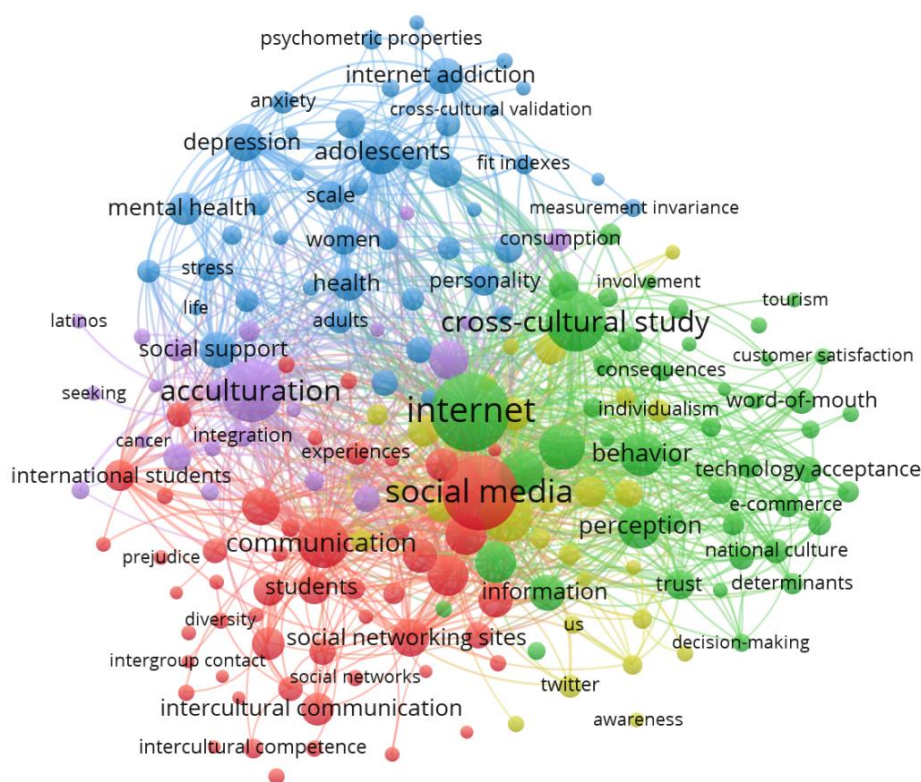


Figure 3. The network of keywords co-occurrence

Through a keyword co-occurrence analysis, five hot topics were identified. They were social media in intercultural communication, Internet behaviour and impact in cross-cultural study, adolescent physical and mental health in cross-cultural contexts, cultural variations in cross-cultural communication, and the acculturation process among immigrants. The five most frequently used keywords from each cluster,

indicative of their popularity in the domain of new media and cross-cultural adaptation research, are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7. Top five keywords ranked in each cluster.

Cluster No.	Cluster colour	Top 5 Keywords
1	Red	Social media, communication, social networking sites, Facebook, intercultural communication
2	Green	Internet, cross-cultural study, model, behaviour, impact
3	Blue	Adolescents, depression, Internet addiction, social support, health
4	Yellow	Culture, cultural difference, self, gender, value
5	Purple	Acculturation, attitude, immigrants, immigration, knowledge

The overlay visualisation of keyword co-occurrences in new media and cross-cultural adaptation (refer to Figure 4) reveals the specific periods when key terms, like Internet, intercultural communication, and cultural differences, predominantly surfaced, particularly around 2016. This information is instrumental in anticipating the future research trajectory in these areas. Over the next two years, keywords such as cross-cultural studies, acculturation, adolescents, depression, and social networking sites emerged. Since 2019, these keywords have been appearing more and more frequently, For example, social media, Facebook, international students, Internet addiction, and mental health. It shows that cross-cultural studies on social media use, Internet addiction, psychological health issues, and international students have become a growing concern in recent years.

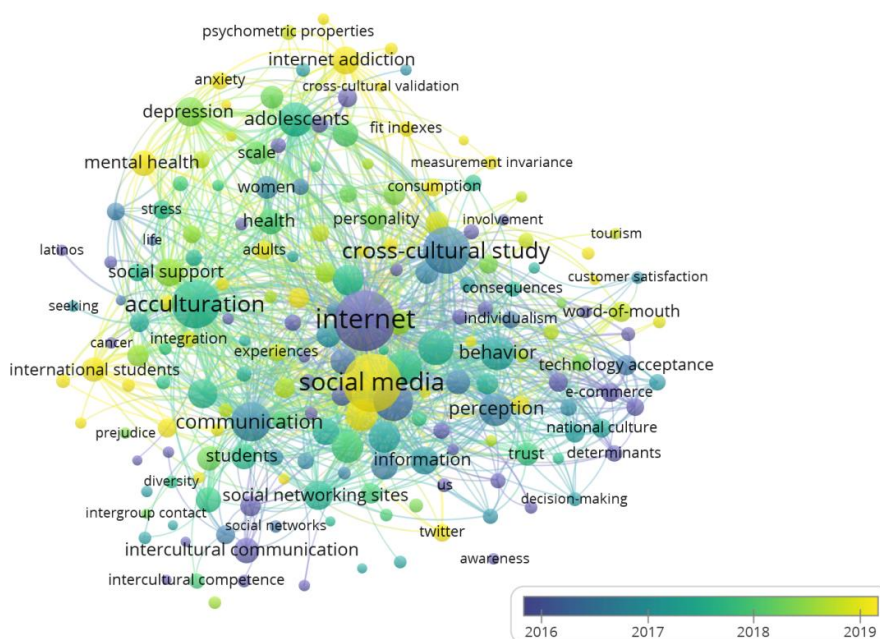


Figure 4. The overlay visualisation of keywords co-occurrence

## Conclusion

This study provides an extensive summary of the latest developments, key topics, and primary research directions in the fields of new media and cross-cultural adaptation. It combines VOSviewer to conduct a bibliometric analysis on new media and cross-cultural adaptation research from 2003 to 2023. Based on 1,518 articles obtained from WOS, we identified research dynamics, Top 10 countries, organisations, authors, articles, and journals. We analysed the network of keywords co-occurrence on new media and cross-cultural adaptation. Potential future trends and hot topics were also predicted in this study. This research offers scholars insight into the current state of the field and assists in identifying existing research gaps. In addition, this research may provide ideas for future studies. However, a limitation must be recognised in this study. The sample employed in the current research is contained in only one database. Although the Web of Science covers many journals, it cannot cover the total relative topics.

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**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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