

Health literacy in Latin-America and the Caribbean: A bibliometric review of current trends & applications (2005-2022)

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Background:

- Debates on the field of health literacy (HL) have increased significantly.
- HL themes have achieved substantial development in the US, & Europe.
- Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), seem to be few and scattered.
- This paper reviews/ discusses developments of HL concepts, themes, models, and interventions in LAC over the last two decades

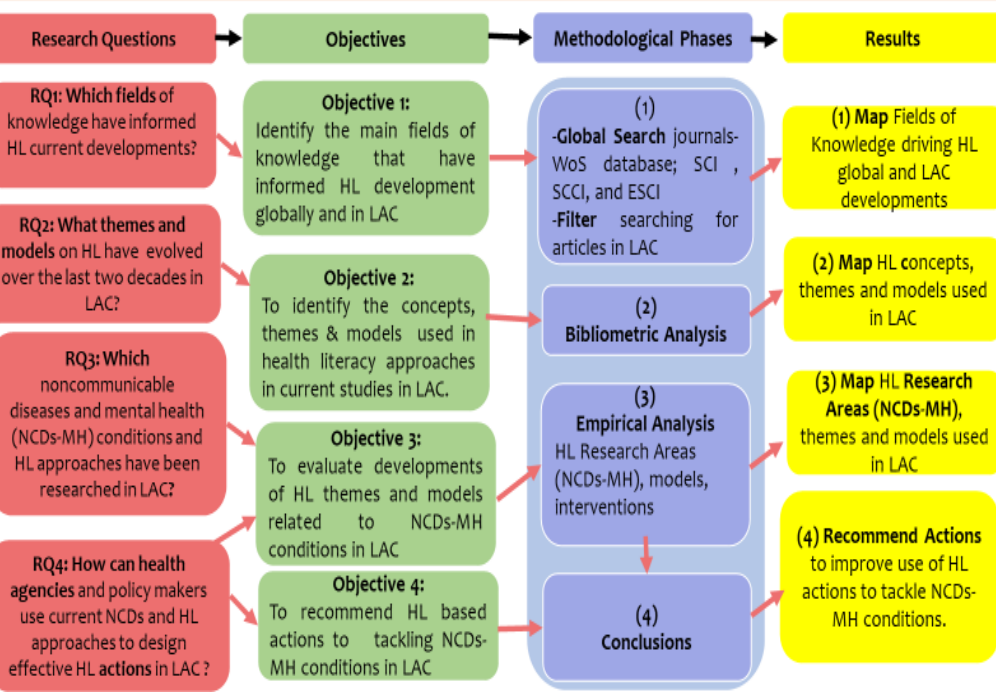
Purpose

- To identify the most prevalent health literacy concepts, themes and models deployed in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in HL.
- To investigate the extent in which HL has been used to understand the prevention of non-communicable diseases and mental health (NCDs-MH) conditions.

Methods

Bibliometric analysis to gain a better understanding of the HL themes and strands currently being researched in the LAC region.

Aim: identify most prevalent Health Literacy concepts, themes and models deployed in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)



Results

1. HL Over the last two decades

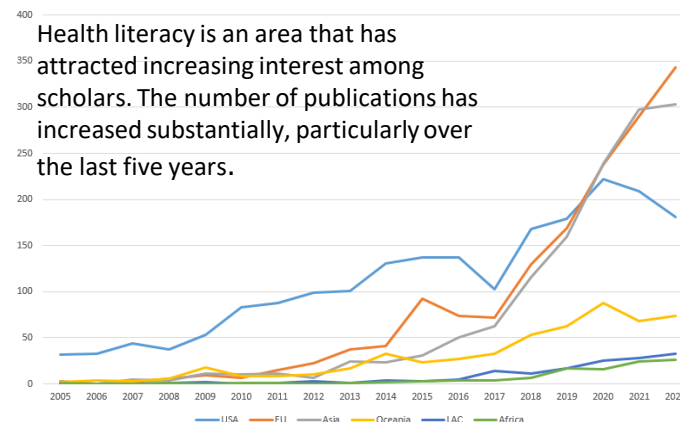


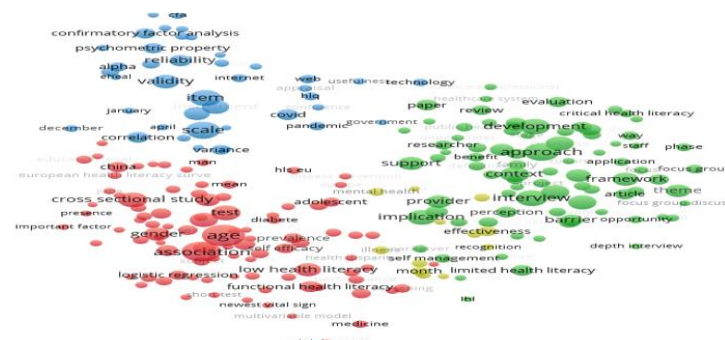
Figure 1: HL Articles published between 2005 and 2022 per region

2. Five WoS categories have informed HL global studies

(1) public environmental occupational health; (2) environmental sciences; (3) health policy services; (4) health care science services; and (5) communication. In terms of themes, HL publications can be organized into four thematic clusters: *analytical*; *psychometrical*; *pragmatical*; and *well-being*.

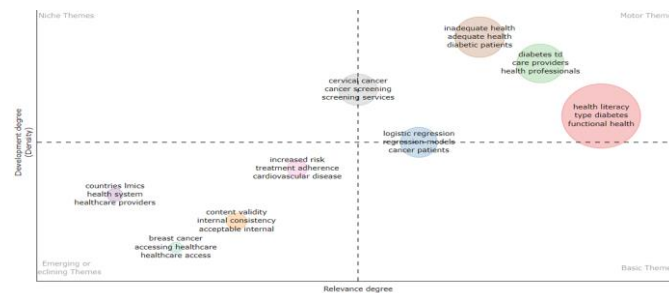
3. Thematic Clusters of HL publications

(analytical; psychometrical; pragmatical; well-being)



4. Research hotspots: In terms of the development of the themes and models related to NCD-MH conditions in LAC

- core zone of fundamental HL studies: three diabetes-related thematic clusters: health literacy-functional; care providers-health professionals; and (in)adequate health.
- peripheral area of HL studies: four thematic clusters: health system - health care providers, cardiovascular disease - increased risk, breast cancer - health care access, and content validity - internal consistency



Conclusions

- The number of HL publications has increased particularly over the last five years. Dominated by the global north. LAC and Africa still lay behind.
- There is no journal dedicated exclusively to HL indexed in WoS. HL topics are published in journals (environmental research, public health, health communication, and health education).
- HL as the driver to prevent NCD-MH, from health behaviour, health literacy levels, and the Covid pandemic to adult literacy, functional/low health literacy, and its effects.

Limitations/Future Research

- Only source: WoS (bias towards English Publications)
- Gap Global South increased. Scopus and Open Access should be included in future research.
- In-depth analysis of HL exemplar seminal articles/authors.