



IX ISCAR INTERNATIONAL SUMMER UNIVERSITY

“Practices Based on Cultural-Historical Psychology and Activity Theory”

CULTURAL-HISTORICAL PSYCHOLOGY IN BRICS+ COUNTRIES: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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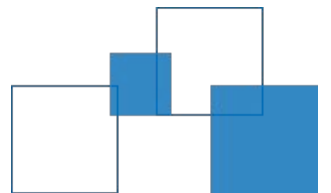
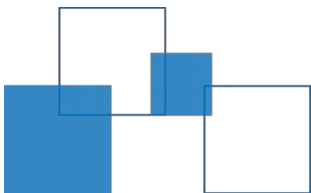
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Moscow, Russia

Study Goals and Context

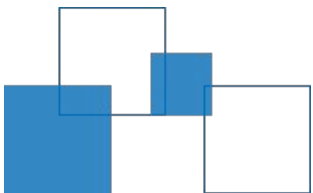
The present study aims to provide a comprehensive bibliometric account of the contribution of BRICS+ countries to the research landscape of cultural-historical psychology between 2005 and 2024. It addresses the dynamics and geographical distribution of publication activity, the structure of international scientific collaboration, key thematic clusters and institutional centres within the BRICS+ region, and the role of the journal *Cultural-Historical Psychology* in promoting and internationalising scholarly communication.

To this end, bibliometric methods are employed to examine publication productivity, citation patterns, network interactions, temporal trends, and thematic structures, using data from both open-access and commercial scientometric databases.



Key questions

1. How has cultural-historical psychology (CHP) evolved across BRICS+ countries over the past two decades?
2. Where is cultural-historical psychology being developed today — in which countries, by which leading institutions, and through what patterns of international collaboration?
3. What themes define contemporary research in cultural-historical psychology — and how have these thematic priorities changed over time?



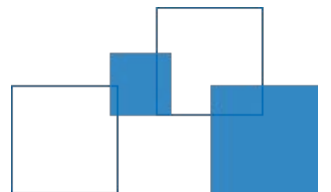
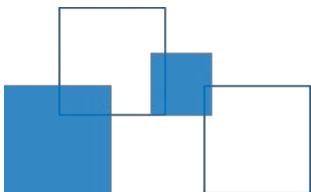
Research Questions

Within the framework of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What are the key trends in the dynamics and geographical distribution of publication activity in the field of cultural-historical psychology from 2005 to 2024, including specific patterns of growth in BRICS+ countries?

RQ2: What is the structure of international scientific collaboration in cultural-historical psychology, which stable transnational partnerships have emerged over the past two decades, and how is scientific influence distributed based on citation indicators?

RQ3: What substantive directions, theoretical concepts, and research foci shape the thematic structure of the publication landscape in cultural-historical psychology, and how has their representation evolved over the past twenty years?



Methodology Overview and Tools

1 **PRISMA-based search and filtering**

2 **Keyword-based inclusion, validated by experts**

3 **Enrichment with citation, open access, affiliation, and subject data**

4 **Analysis and visualisation tools: R/bibliometrix, Python, VOSviewer**

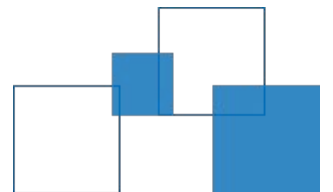
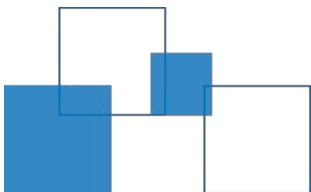
PRISMA: for documenting the inclusion/exclusion process of publications;

R (version 4.4.2) with the packages bibliometrix (version 4.2) (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) and tidyverse (version 2.00) (Wickham et al., 2019): for initial data processing, descriptive statistics, and data visualisation;

IBM SPSS Statistics (version 23): for inferential statistical analysis;

VOSviewer (version 1.6.20): for visualising co-authorship and keyword networks;

Python (version 3.13.2) with the packages BeautifulSoup (version 4.13.3), fastText (version 0.9.3), pandas (version 2.2.3), PyAlex (version 0.15.1), pybliometrics (version 4.1), pycountry (version 24.6.1), and a custom script (available upon request): for data collection, enrichment, and preprocessing.



Search Strategy and Sampling

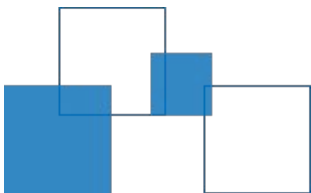
The bibliometric analysis was based on data retrieved from the following citation databases: OpenAlex, Scopus Preview, the Scopus API for non-commercial use, the Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI), and the PsyJournals.ru portal.

These sources provided a representative coverage of publications in the field of cultural-historical psychology for the period from 2005 to 2024. The integration of data from multiple sources enhanced the completeness and reliability of the analysis.

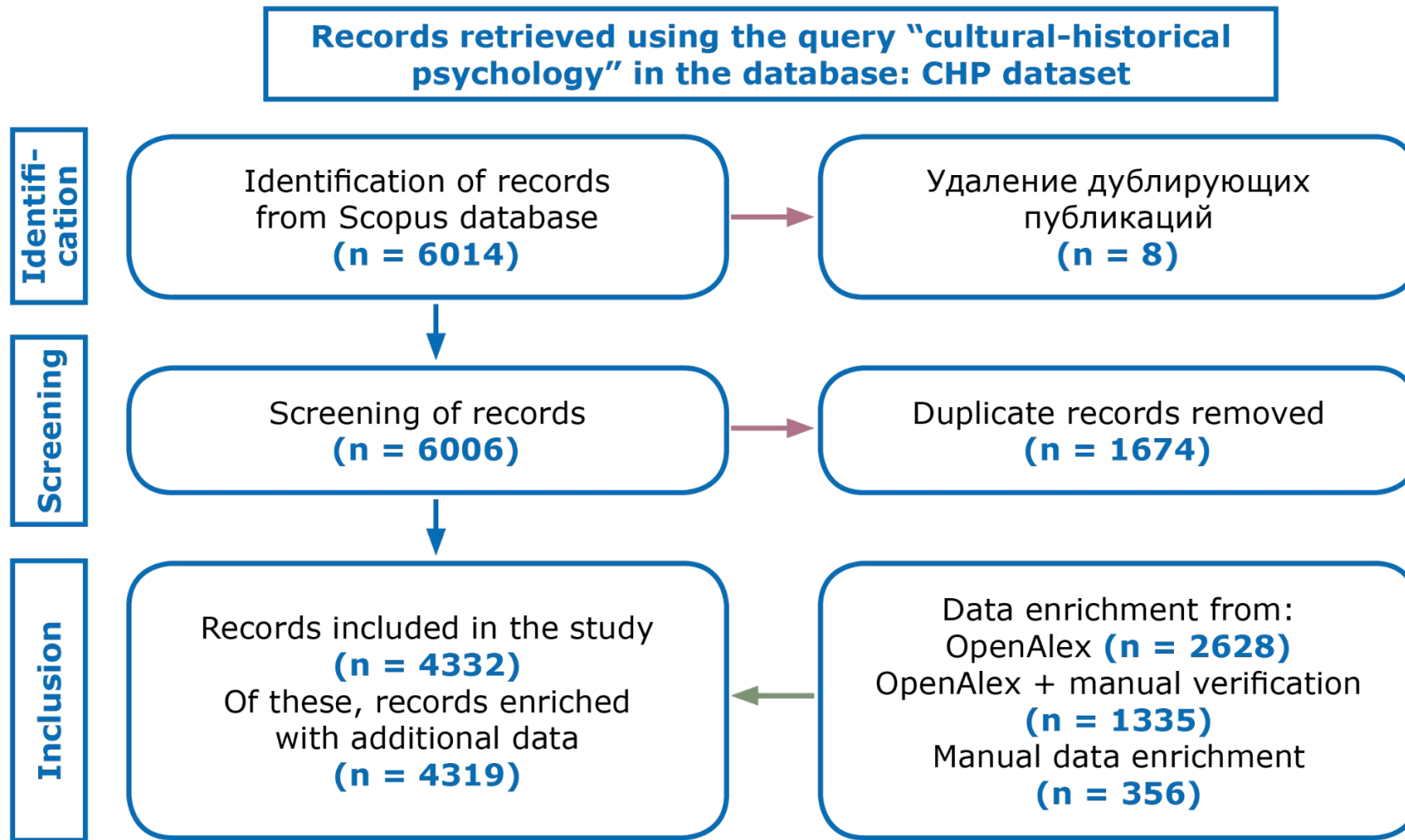
CHP – 4,378 publications (main dataset)

J-CHP – 947 articles from Cultural-Historical Psychology

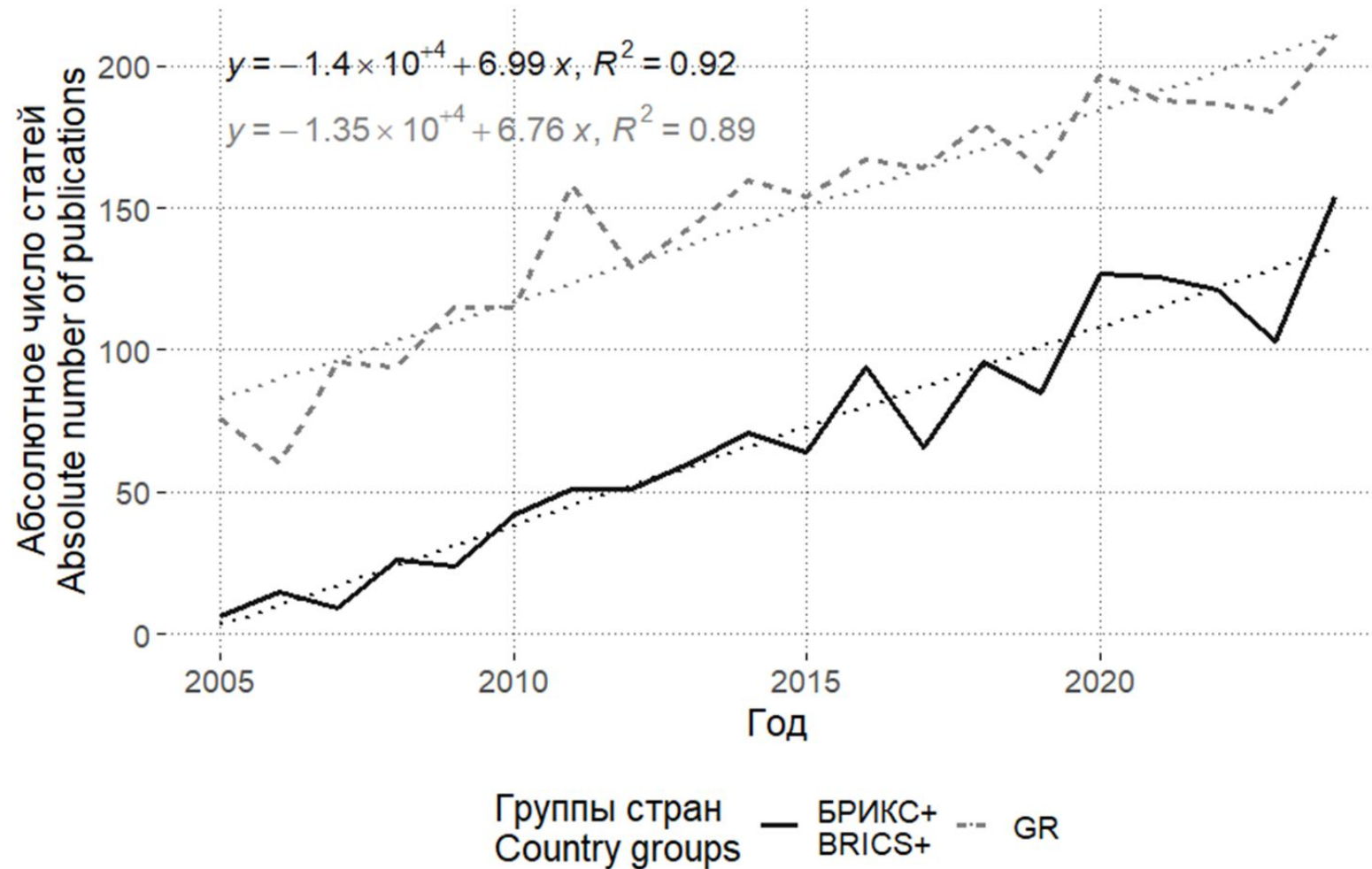
CJ-CHP – 949 publications citing Cultural-Historical Psychology



PRISMA flow diagram: CHP Dataset



Global Dynamics of CHP Publication Activity (2005–2024)



Publication activity in cultural-historical psychology has increased steadily since 2005.

Normalised growth:

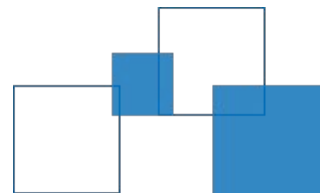
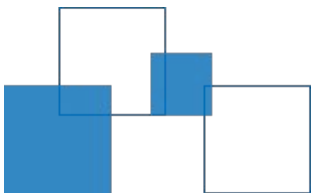
an average increase of 6,99 publications per year in the BRICS+ group and 6,76 publications per year in the GR group.

CHP Publication Activity in the BRICS+ group

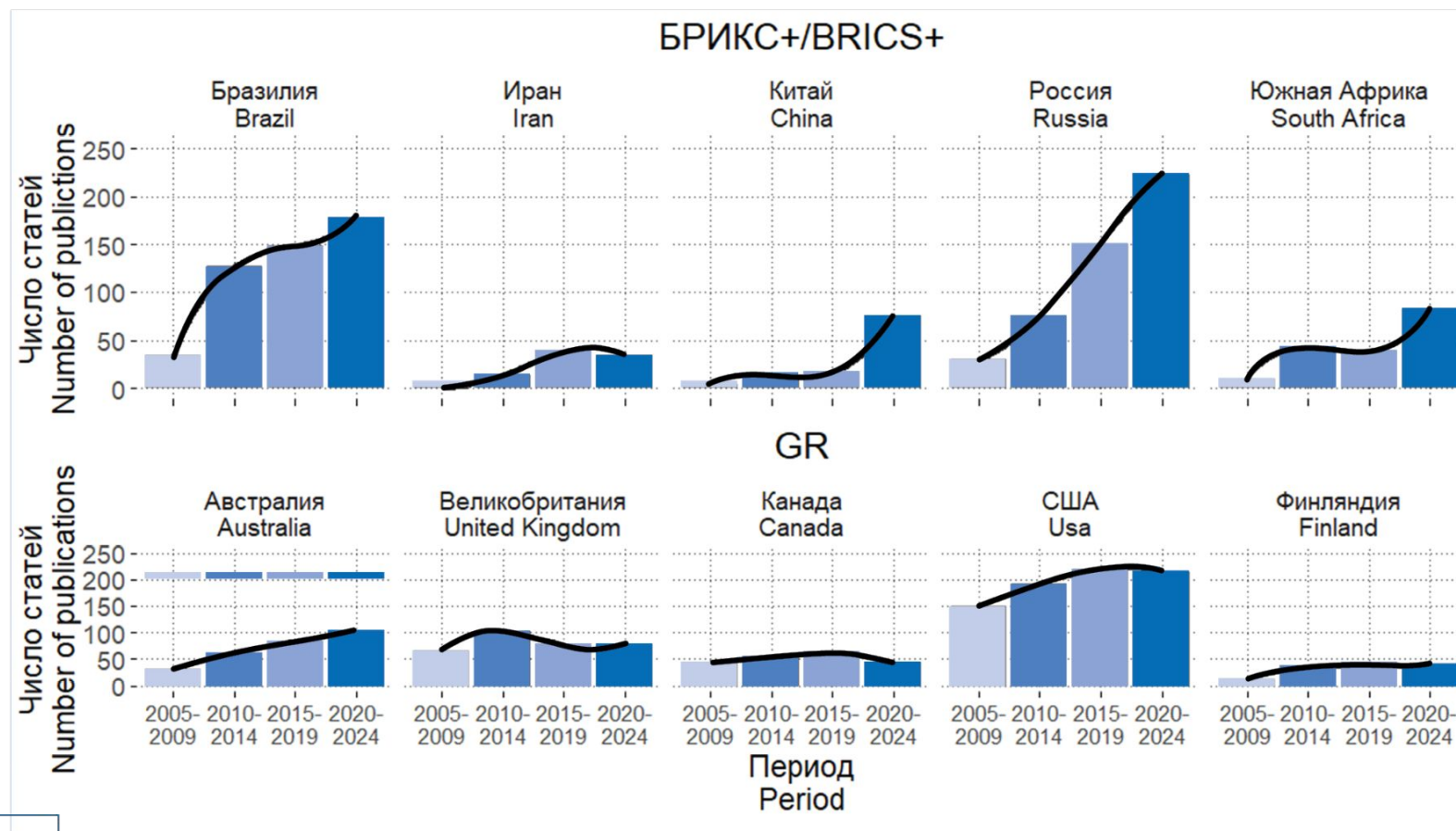
Despite the persistent gap in the absolute number of publications, the growth rate in BRICS+ countries is comparable to—and, in certain time intervals, even exceeds—that of other countries. This becomes particularly evident when comparing publication activity normalised by the number of countries in each group: the average annual increase per country is higher in the BRICS+ group (0,699 publications per year per country) than in the GR group (0,338 publications per year per country).

The temporal analysis reveals a transition from isolated publications in the early period (2005—2009) to sustained and intensive annual publication activity over the past ten years. The most pronounced positive trends were observed in **Brazil, Russia, and China**.

In Brazil, the number of publications increased from 34 in 2005—2009 to 178 in 2020—2024, representing more than a fivefold growth compared to the initial period. In Russia, the increase was even more steady and consistent: the number of publications rose from 30 in 2005—2009 to 223 in 2020—2024, indicating more than a sevenfold growth over the study period. In China, a particularly sharp rise was observed in the most recent five-year interval, with the number of publications growing from 16 in 2015—2019 to 76 in 2020—2024—an almost fivefold increase.



Country-Level Comparison: Total CHP publications



Total publications, 2005–2024:

- Brazil – 488
- Russia – 479
- South Africa – 112
- China – 104

Growth trajectories vary:

Russia and China show sharp recent expansion; Brazil peaked earlier; South Africa maintains consistent productivity and high citation rates.

Country-Level Trends – Growth Patterns

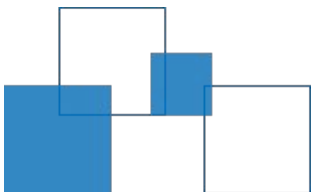
The analysis of publication trends reveals that, despite an overall increase in publication activity across both country groups, the nature of this growth differs significantly. In BRICS+ countries, growth is predominantly progressive and, in some cases, rapid; however, the rate of increase varies between countries.

Brazil experienced the sharpest early surge, with the number of publications rising from 34 in 2005—2009 to 127 in 2010—2014—an increase of more than three and a half times. In subsequent periods, the growth rate slowed: 149 publications were recorded in 2015—2019 and 178 in 2020—2024. In both cases, the increase compared to the previous period was relatively moderate (less than 20%). Thus, Brazil's trajectory may be described as following a saturation model, characterised by rapid initial growth followed by stabilisation at an attained level.

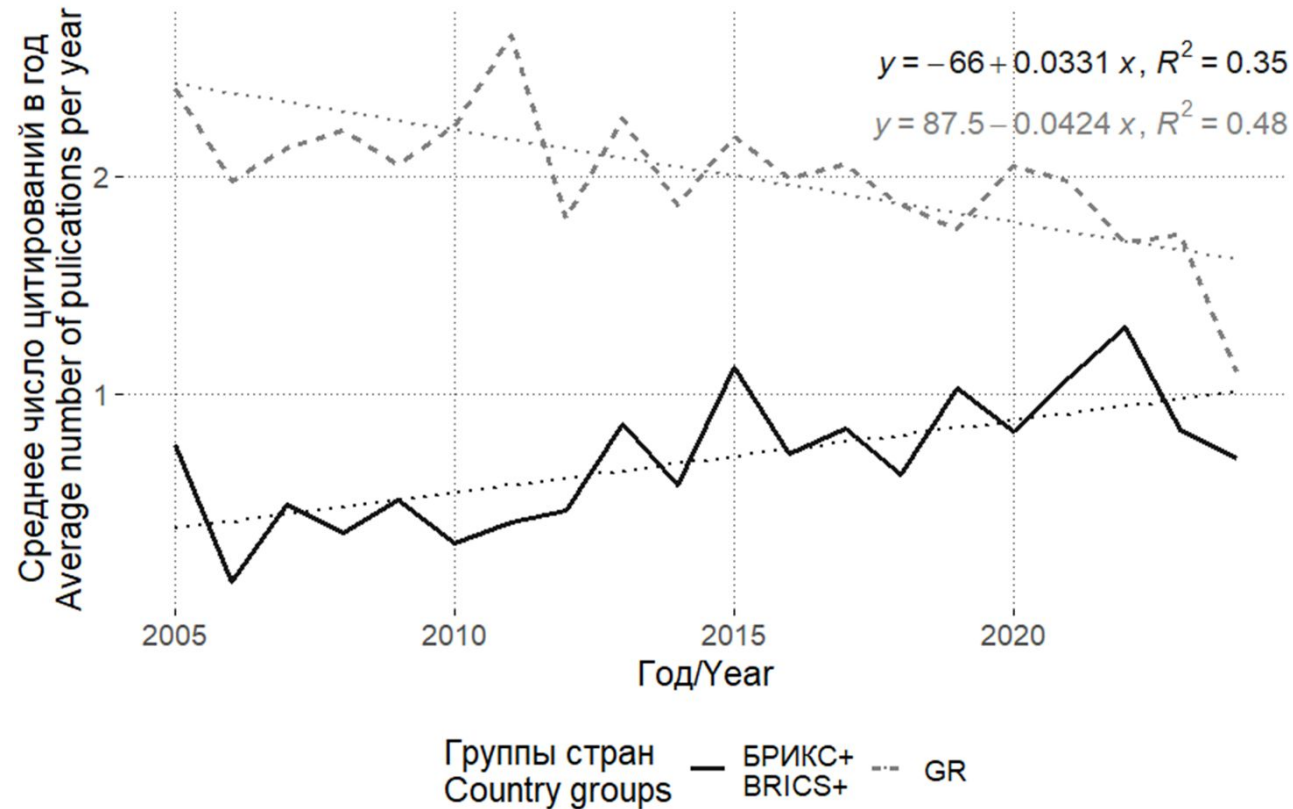
In **Russia**, the growth in publication activity was more consistent and steady. The number of publications increased from 30 in 2005—2009 to 75 in 2010—2014 (a 2,5-fold increase), then rose to 151 in 2015—2019 (a further twofold increase), and reached 223 in 2020—2024 (a 1,5-fold increase).

This pattern reflects a stable and incremental expansion of research activity, with no indication of saturation. **China** presents a particularly noteworthy case, as publication activity remained low during the first two periods. Only 16 publications were recorded in 2015—2019, followed by a sharp increase to 76 publications in 2020—2024.

This trend indicates a rapid surge of interest among Chinese researchers in the field of cultural-historical psychology in recent years.

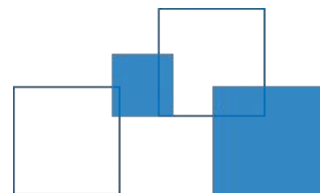
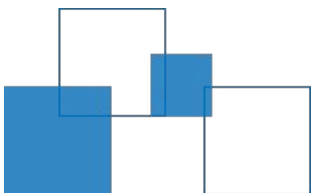


Citation Dynamics (BRICS+ and Global Rest)



To assess the scholarly impact of publications by authors from BRICS+ and GR country groups, an analysis was conducted of citation dynamics normalised by the number of years since publication, separately for each group.

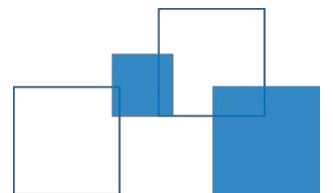
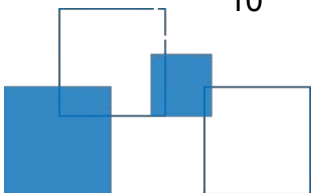
In BRICS+ countries, the number of citations shows a steady upward trajectory, with an average annual increase of 0,033 citations according to linear regression analysis. In contrast, GR countries exhibit a downward trend, with the average number of citations per year declining by 0,042.



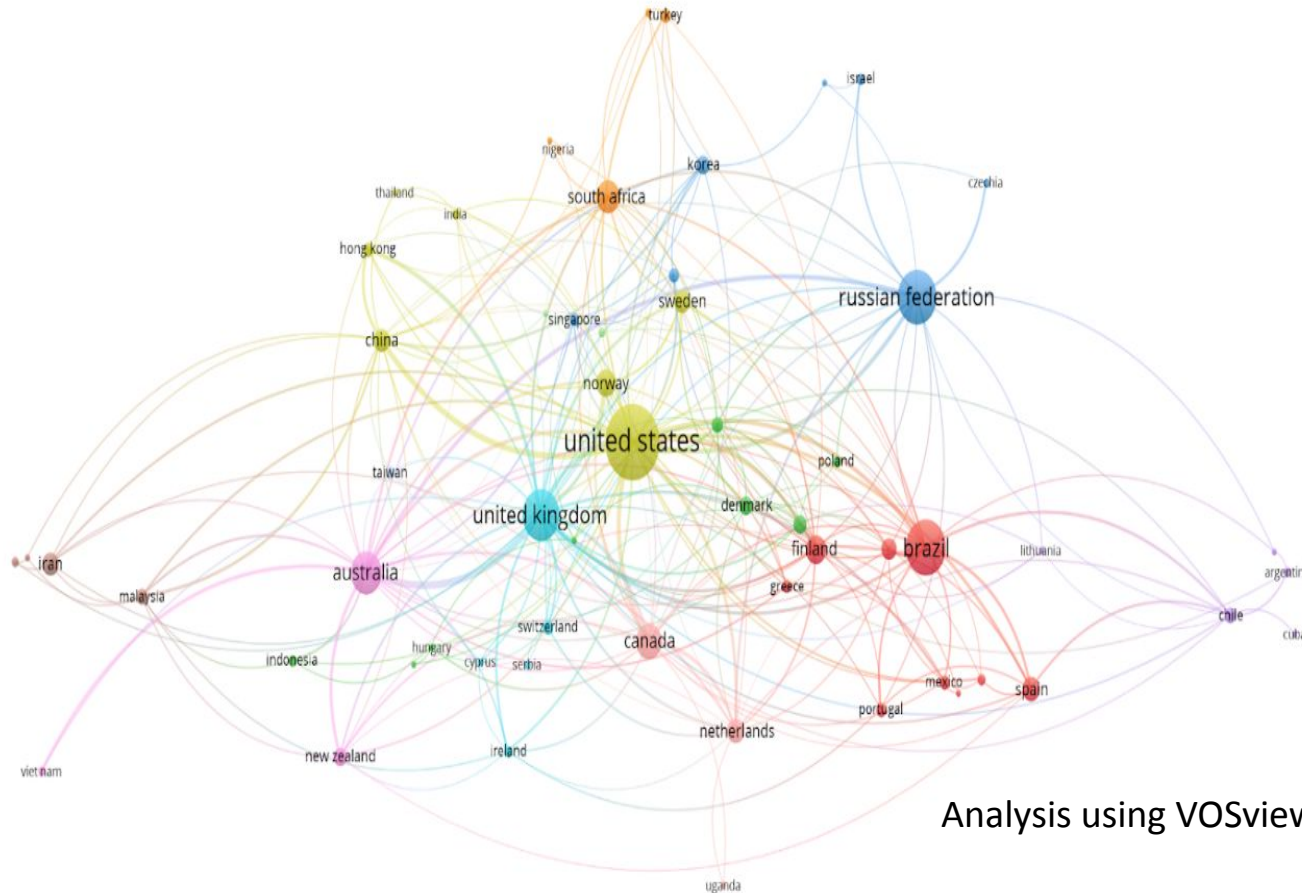
Ranking of the TOP-10 Organisations (BRICS+, 2005–2024)

Position	Organisation	Number of publications	Number of authors	Total number of citations	Average number of citations per publication
1	Lomonosov MSU	115	78	587	5,1
2	Moscow State Psychological and Pedagogical University	94	60	304	3,2
3	The University of São Paulo (USP)	52	69	170	3,3
4	National Research University Higher School of Economics	48	29	119	2,5
5	University of Brasília	43	46	214	5,0
6	São Paulo State University	39	48	227	5,8
7	State University of Campinas	27	24	87	3,2
8	University of The Witwatersrand	26	31	204	7,8
9	Federal University of Santa Catarina	25	34	73	2,9
10	Psychological Institute of RAE	23	27	50	2,2

Ranking of the TOP-10 organisations in terms of the productivity of publications on the topic of the cultural-historical psychology of the BRICS+ country group over the period 2005—2024 (n= 492)

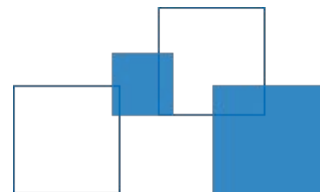
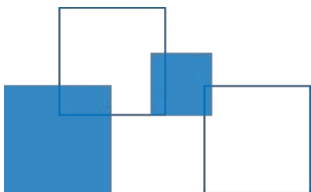


International Co-authorship Network by Country 1/2



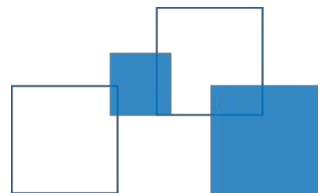
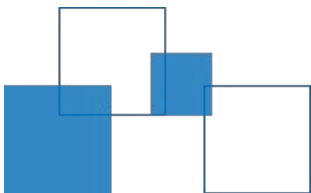
Analysis using VOSviewer

International co-authorship network by country in the field of cultural-historical psychology: the size of nodes corresponds to the number of publications; the thickness of edges corresponds to the intensity of co-authorship (number of joint publications); the colour of nodes reflects membership in the intra-group interaction cluster.

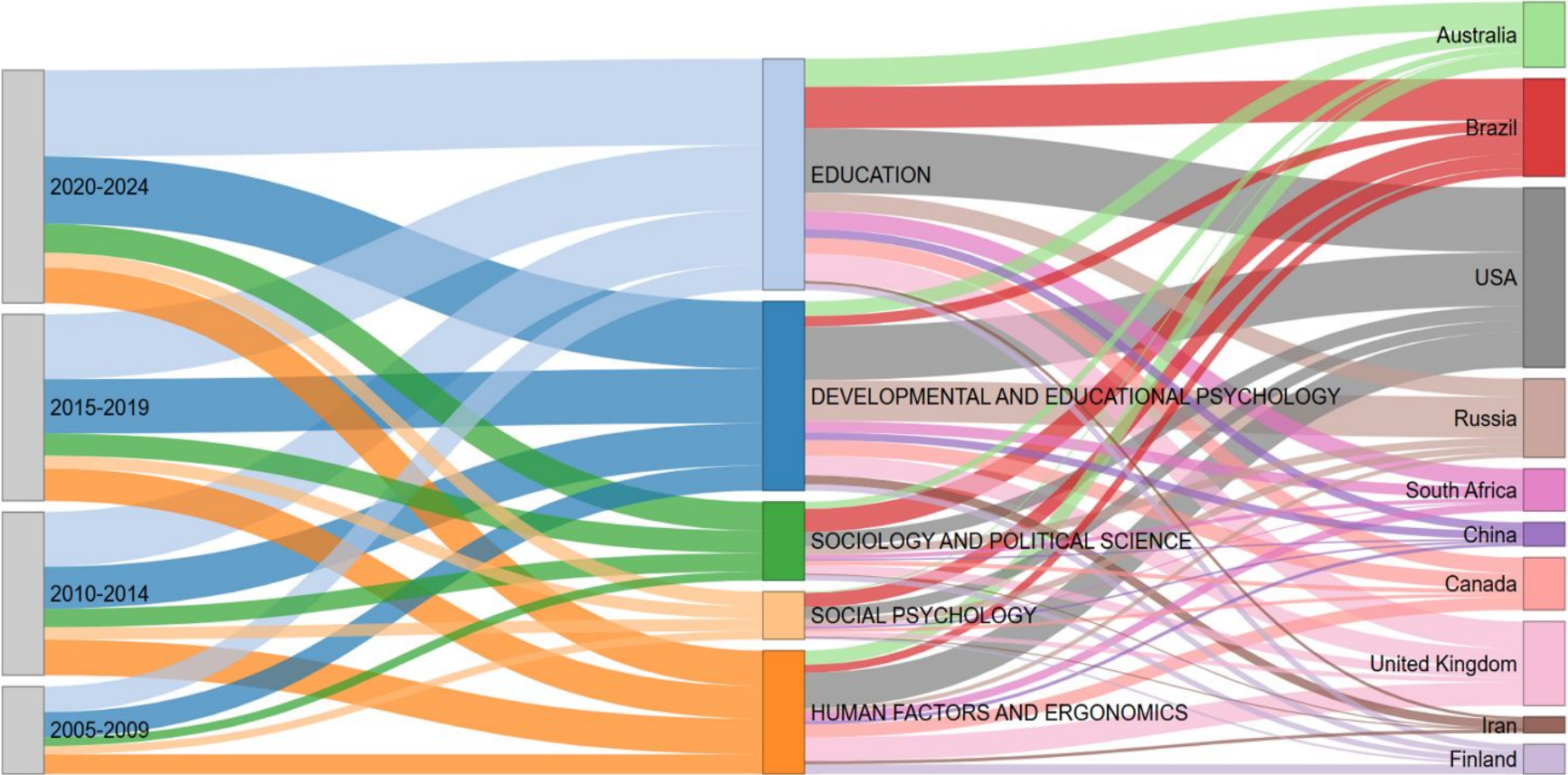


International Co-authorship Network by Country 2/2

- Cluster 1 (red — 9 countries): Brazil, together with Finland, Spain, France, Mexico, Portugal, Greece, Colombia, and Croatia (a cluster of Latin American and Southern European cooperation);
- Cluster 3 (blue — 7 countries): Russia, in collaboration with South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Israel, the Czech Republic, and Puerto Rico (a cluster of East Asian-Russian cooperation involving active participation from Asia-Pacific countries);
- Cluster 4 (yellow-green — 7 countries): China and India, together with the United States, Norway, Sweden, Hong Kong, and Thailand (a transregional collaboration cluster linking Asian and European countries);
- Cluster 7 (orange — 5 countries): South Africa and the United Arab Emirates, in cooperation with Turkey, Nigeria, and Ghana (a cluster representing expanding collaboration across Africa, the Middle East, and Turkey, indicative of Global South engagement);
- Cluster 8 (brown — 4 countries): Iran and Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with Malaysia and Bangladesh (a cluster of Middle Eastern and Asian cooperation).



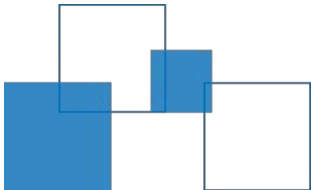
Subject Area Distribution in CHP 1/2



Sankey Diagram:
The top five subject categories
(OpenAlex; Scopus)



Sankey diagram
is available
online



Subject Area Distribution in CHP 2/2

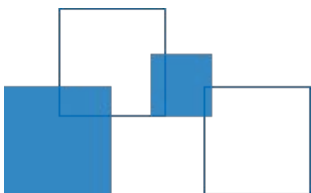
The contribution of the *Education* category—comprising a total of 1416 publications—has remained consistent throughout the study period, fluctuating between 25,9% and 29,2%.

The share of publications classified under *Developmental and Educational Psychology* (1159 publications) has gradually increased, rising from 29,3% in 2005—2009 to 34,8% in 2020—2024.

A modest increase is also observed in the category *Sociology and Political Sciences* (480 publications), whose share grew from 10% in 2005—2009 to 12,4% in 2020—2024.

At the same time, a decline was observed in several thematic areas. The proportion of publications classified under *Social Psychology* (292 publications) decreased from 9,3% in 2005—2009 to 6,3% in 2020—2024.

A similar downward trend was recorded in the category *Human Factors and Ergonomics* (755 publications), whose share fell from 22,4% in 2005—2009 to 15,3% in 2020—2024.



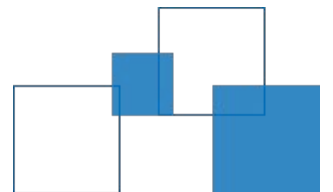
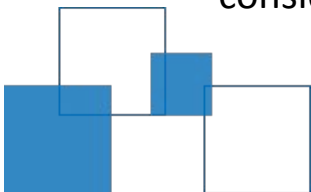
Subject Area Distribution in CHP by Country

The distribution of subject categories by country shows that the highest proportion of publications classified under *Education* was recorded in Australia (171 out of 400 publications, 42,8%; here and below, percentages refer to the total number of publications from each country), Brazil (255 publications, 42,6%), and South Africa (110 out of 259 publications, 42,5%). Substantial figures were also observed in the United States (395 publications, 35,9%), China (54 out of 145 publications, 37,2%), and the United Kingdom (167 out of 515 publications, 32%).

The category *Developmental and Educational Psychology* is most prominently represented in Iran (56 out of 98 publications, 57,1%), Russia (250 out of 482 publications, 51,2%), and China (48 out of 145 publications, 33,1%). In most other countries, the proportion of publications in this category ranges between 20% and 30%.

The category *Sociology and Political Sciences* is most prominently represented in Brazil (142 out of 598 publications, 23,7%) and Finland (35 out of 182 publications, 19,2%). In other countries, the share of publications in this category ranges from 8% to 11%.

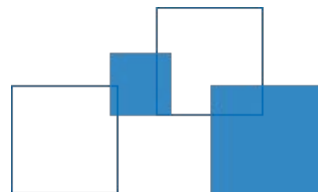
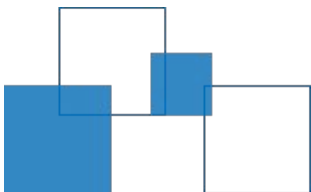
The category *Social Psychology* accounts for the highest proportion in Brazil (88 out of 598 publications, 14,7%). The category *Human Factors and Ergonomics* is most prominently represented in Finland (59 out of 182 publications, 32,4%), the United Kingdom (143 out of 515 publications, 27,8%), Canada (81 out of 322 publications, 25,2%), and Australia (87 out of 400 publications, 21,8%). In other countries, the share of publications in this category is considerably lower.



Cloud of Subject Areas in CHP (2005–2024)



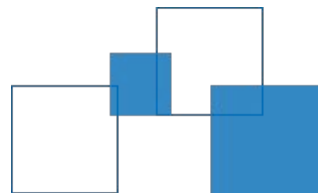
Cloud of subject areas for publications on the topic of cultural-historical psychology in 2005–2024: absolute frequency of area occurrence (out of 4,332 articles) is given in parentheses



Disciplinary Landscape of CHP Publications

To compare the representation of different subject areas between the two country groups, the proportion of publications associated with each area was calculated separately for BRICS+ and GR countries (top 10 of areas are presented)

Position	Subject area	Publications of BRICS+ (n = 1391)	Publications of GR (n = 2941)	All publications (n = 4332)
1	Social sciences	36,1	42	72,6
2	Psychology	33	28,2	53,7
3	Arts and humanities	10,4	11,3	19,9
4	Computer science	9,7	4,3	10,8
5	Health professions	2,9	3,8	6,3
6	Medicine	1,7	2	3,5
7	Neuroscience	1,2	2	3,1
8	Decision sciences	1	1,2	2,1
9	Environmental science	1	0,4	1
10	Business, management and accounting	0,7	1,8	2,6



Analysis using VOSviewer

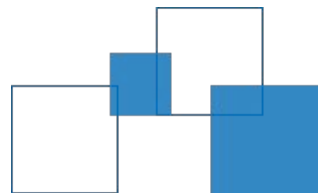
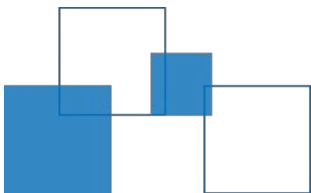
Semantic Network: BRICS+ Countries 2/2

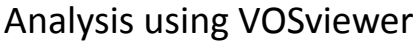
As a result of the analysis of the keyword co-occurrence network based on the CHP publication sample affiliated with BRICS+ countries (2005—2024), three substantive clusters were identified.

Cluster A1 (red, 124 terms) comprises terms related to the theoretical and methodological foundations of cultural-historical psychology.

Cluster A2 (green, 73 terms) includes concepts pertaining to the domain of learning and education.

Cluster A3 (blue, 42 terms) reflects research focused on communication and interaction.





Temporal Structure of the Keyword Network – BRICS+ Countries 2/2

The priority thematic emphases by year in publications from BRICS+ countries are distributed as follows:

In 2015, the most frequently occurring keywords were: *Bakhtin* — 51 mentions, *constitution* — 41, *Soviet psychology* — 25.

In 2016, predominant terms included: *psychology* — 344, *history* — 94, *conception* — 74, *Vygotski* — 68, *Luria* — 44.

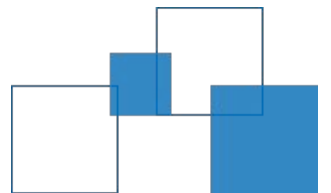
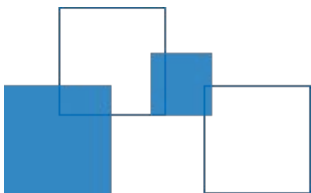
In 2017, keywords shifted towards theoretical concepts: *L.S. Vygotsky* — 165, *mediation* — 155, *zone of proximal development* — 116.

In 2018, the focus shifted substantially towards educational themes: *student* — 323, *teacher* — 304, *learning* — 275, *interaction* — 205, *teaching* — 185, *cultural historical psychology* — 170.

In 2019, the educational orientation continued to strengthen: *learner* — 154, *challenge* — 115, *cultural historical activity theory* — 112, *impact* — 97, *skill* — 97, *classroom* — 86.

In 2020, terms more unique to the sample emerged: *face* — 27, *perezhivanie* — 25, *Vygotsky's sociocultural theory* — 23.

In 2021—2022, topics related to the pandemic and methodology came to the fore: *pandemic* — 30, *covid* — 28, *qualitative study* — 28.



Top Publication Sources in Cultural-Historical Psychology 1/2

Position	Sources (Journals)	Number of publications	Total citations	Average number of citations per publication
1	Cultural-Historical Psychology	134 (3,1%)	491	3,7
2	Mind, Culture, And Activity	102 (2,4%)	2379	23,3
3	Voprosy Psikhologii	97 (2,2%)	145	1,5
4	Learning, Culture and Social Interaction	61 (1,4%)	706	11,6
5	Psicologia Em Estudo	52 (1,2%)	133	2,6
6	Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science	51 (1,2%)	655	12,8
7	Psychology In Russia: State Of The Art	49 (1,1%)	187	3,8
8	Psychological Science And Education	44 (1%)	99	2,3
9	Cultural Studies of Science Education	41 (0,9%)	443	10,8
10	Culture And Psychology	40 (0,9%)	815	20,4
11	Psicologia Escolar E Educacional	34 (0,8%)	54	1,6
12	European Early Childhood Education Research Journal	31 (0,7%)	764	24,6
13	Language and Sociocultural Theory	31 (0,7%)	265	8,5
14	Teaching and Teacher Education	30 (0,7%)	678	22,6
15	Cadernos Cedes	30 (0,7%)	33	1,1
16	Frontiers in Psychology	30 (0,7%)	271	9,0
17	Psicologia E Sociedade	29 (0,7%)	165	5,7
18	Educational Studies in Mathematics	27 (0,6%)	707	26,2
19	Voprosy Filosofii	24 (0,6%)	15	0,6
20	Theory & Psychology	23 (0,5%)	891	38,7

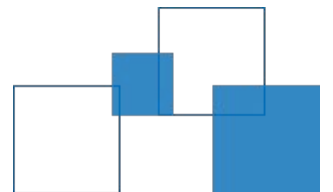
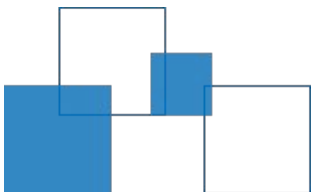
Top Publication Sources in Cultural-Historical Psychology 2/2

Research in the field of cultural-historical psychology (CHP dataset) has been published across 1409 different sources (journals). Considering the total number of articles ($n = 4332$), the average number of articles per journal is 3,1 (median = 1).

To analyse the sources most actively publishing work on cultural-historical psychology, the total productivity of each journal was calculated, and the twenty journals with the highest publication counts were identified. For these journals, the total and average (per published article) citation counts were also computed. These twenty journals account for 492 publications, representing 11% of the entire dataset.

It is noteworthy that two of the three most productive journals are published in Russia — *Cultural-Historical Psychology* and *Voprosy Psikhologii*. Additionally, two other Russian journals are included in the top 20: *Psychology in Russia* (7th place) and *Voprosy Filosofii* (19th place). These data underscore a strong national core of publication activity in Russia and highlight the leading role of Russian journals in shaping and sustaining the scholarly field of cultural-historical psychology.

Publications in international journals receive significantly greater scholarly impact in terms of citations. The highest average citation rates were recorded in the journals *Theory & Psychology* (38,7), *Educational Studies in Mathematics* (26,2), *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* (24,6), *Mind, Culture, and Activity* (23,3), *Teaching and Teacher Education* (22,6), and *Culture and Psychology* (20,4). Russian journals exhibit lower average citation rates — generally below 2 citations per publication — with the exceptions of *Cultural-Historical Psychology* (3,7) and *Psychology in Russia: State of the Art* (3,8).



Key Takeaways

Sustained Growth — BRICS+ countries show higher normalised growth rates per country than the Global Rest, with Russia, Brazil, and China leading the increase.

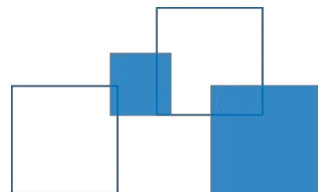
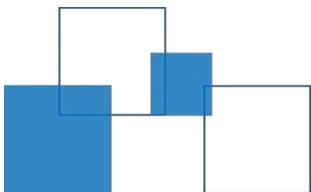
Fragmented Collaboration — BRICS+ remain dispersed across different collaboration clusters, with limited intra-bloc co-authorship and predominantly transregional partnerships.

Distinct Thematic Profile — BRICS+ publications prioritise theoretical–methodological concepts, while the Global Rest focuses more on applied educational topics.

Recent Research Surge — The more recent average publication year in BRICS+ reflects a marked expansion of activity after 2015.

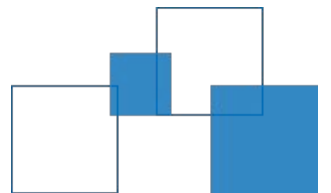
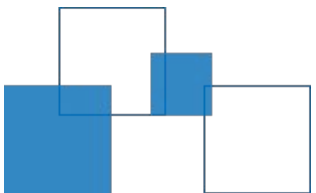
Strategic Needs — Findings point to the need for greater visibility, openness, and collaboration to strengthen the global position of cultural-historical psychology.

The results presented today are based on the first dataset of our project — the CHP corpus. Next we will turn to the second and third datasets, focusing specifically on the journal Cultural-Historical Psychology and its international citation network.



*To learn more about the trends in Global Rest countries examined in our study,
as well as other findings, please refer to the article:*

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