

The Impact of Finnish Government policy change on international students' mental health.

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Abstract

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Abstract		
<p>The increased enrolment rates of international students in Finland over the past decade underscore the growing importance of addressing the well-being of this population (Mathies, & Karhunen, 2021). The internationalization of Finnish higher education encompasses policy formulation and implementation. With the introduction of policies such as fee paying for non-EU/EEA students, there is a need to understand how these changes may exacerbate existing challenges faced by international students, including those related to mental health (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016). As Finland experiences a surge in international student enrolment, examining the specific mental health implications of these policy changes within the Finnish context becomes imperative. This paper aims to use a systematic review approach to existing literature to investigate the impact of policy changes implemented by the Finnish government on international students' mental health.</p> <p>The study found that Finnish government policy changes, particularly the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students and stricter immigration and residency requirements, have harmed the mental health of international students. These changes led to increased financial stress, anxiety, and uncertainty about job prospects and residency, which contributed to worsening mental health. Additionally, academic pressures and social isolation due to cultural and language barriers further exacerbated these mental health challenges. The study also highlighted limited access to mental health services due to language barriers and cultural stigma. While some students used adaptive coping strategies like seeking social support, others employed maladaptive strategies, such as withdrawal, which worsened their mental health. The study recommends improved mental health services and better integration programs for international students in Finland.</p>		
Keywords		
international students; mental health; internationalization; Finnish government.		

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1 Introduction

The global movement of students across international borders has become a defining feature of higher education in the 21st century. As countries and universities seek to attract talents and diversify their academic enrolment, the number of international students has steadily increased. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the number of international students worldwide has more than doubled over the past two decades, reaching over 5.6 million by 2021 (UNESCO 2021). This trend reflects a broader globalization of education, driven by factors such as the pursuit of academic excellence, exposure to different cultures, accessibility and affordability of education (e.g. scholarship availability), and access to opportunities that may not be available in students' home countries. The benefits are often mutual such that, international students also contribute to cultural enrichment, diversity, national development, economic prosperity, and human capital (Lu & Härkälä 2024).

However, despite the many benefits of studying abroad, international students often face unique challenges that can impact their mental health and well-being. The transition to a new academic system, adaptation to different cultural norms, and potential language barriers can lead to stress, anxiety, and a sense of isolation (Wu et al. 2021). Financial pressures, particularly for students from low- and middle-income countries, can further exacerbate these issues, as many students must balance the costs of living and studying in a foreign country with limited financial support (Forbes-Mewett 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified these challenges, with many international students experiencing disruptions to their studies, financial instability, and limited access to social and mental health services.

The mental health challenges faced by international students are a growing concern globally, as research shows that these students are more likely to experience higher levels of psychological distress compared to their domestic peers (Brown & Brown 2013). As Universities and Governments continue to develop policies to attract international students, there is an increasing need to address the mental health and well-being of this population through tailored support services and interventions. Conversely, some of the Governments' policies could as well be contributing to the mental health challenges (Wang & Kaushal 2019).

2 International Students

International students are individuals who move to a foreign country mainly for educational ambition, registering into diverse programs such as higher education, language studies, or vocational training. Specific student visas are issued to these students to allow them to study in agreement with the host country's immigration regulations (OECD 2021). International students enhance campus life through involvement in a variety of educational settings with their exceptional cultural perspectives and experiences, thus enriching the whole learning environment and fostering cross-cultural conferences (Bodycott 2009).

The impacts of international students on its host countries span across many areas of social, economic, and cultural enrichment of the country (Lu & Härkälä 2024). Tuition fees paid by international students generate huge revenue that boosts a country's economy. For instance, the U.S. benefited from around \$41 billion to its economy during 2019-2020 from international students (Institute of International Education 2021). Socially, international students promote cultural diversity and universal awareness among local students, accelerating international relationships and nurturing diverse networks (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002). Moreover, quite a few international students prefer to remain in their host countries after graduation, thereby contributing to the labour market, paying taxes, and helping to curb skill shortages in several industries (Bhandari & Blumenthal 2018).

2.1 The Rising Trend of International Student Enrolment in Finland

The global surge in international student enrolment has led to a growing interest in understanding the distinct challenges and experiences faced by students abroad (Wu et al. 2021). Finland, with its renowned education system, has seen significant growth in international student numbers over the last decade (Mathies & Karhunen 2021). Data from the Finnish National Agency for Education (2017) shows that the international student population more than doubled, from 10,066 in 2006 to 21,061 in 2016 (Mathies & Karhunen 2021). Several factors contribute to Finland's appeal, including a peaceful environment conducive to living, studying, and working (Thao 2022). Finland's reputation for providing high-quality education further enhances its desirability among international students, particularly as it ranks highly among OECD countries for educational standards (Geddie 2015). However, alongside the growing international student population, certain challenges have emerged, especially concerning recent policy changes that may impact their experiences and mental well-being.

3 Immigration Policies

The main fundamental goal of every country is to ensure national security, economic progress, and humanitarian protection which is why almost every nation has its immigration policies. Immigration policies are the laws and regulations that govern how a foreigner may enter, inhabit, and depart a country. Classification of visas, which expedites various routes for studies, work, family unification, and asylum-seeking processes is the crucial aspect of these immigration policies, whereby everyone is controlled by precise qualification standards (Heinikoski 2020). Furthermore, operative border supervision is imperative for avoiding unlawful entrance and ensuring the effective and smooth processing of legitimate immigration and safety (Kagan 2020). The enactment and implementation of integration programs for immigration by numerous countries aid immigrants in adjusting to their environment, promoting and enriching language skills as well as opportunities to get occupation (Gonzales 2018).

Comparing immigration policies universally, there exist substantial disparities, demonstrating the distinctiveness of each country. The United States for example, mostly operates on a family-based and employment-based immigration structure compared to several European countries which concentrate on humanitarian protection resulting from regional crises (OECD 2020). A point-based system for skilled migration is being utilized by a country like Australia and Canada to entice talented migrants into the country (Department of Home Affairs 2021). Nevertheless, immigration policy may be controversial because of deliberations over economic repercussions, security concerns for its citizens, and variable public opinion, especially in times of economic crisis that may aggravate anti-immigrant emotions” (Borjas 2017; Pew Research Center 2020). As such, enacting immigration policies requires a careful approach to establishing equilibrium among conflicting concerns and ethics within any immigration policymaking body.

3.1 Finnish Government Policy Changes and Impact on International Students

A pivotal change occurred in Finland’s higher education system when the government introduced tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students, effective from 2017, which applies to students enrolled in University of Applied Sciences and Bachelor's programs (Elken et al. 2023). Previously, Finland had offered free education to all international students, which attracted many students from various parts of the world, particularly those from less affluent backgrounds. The shift to fee-paying education represents a significant financial burden for these students, potentially restricting access to higher education (Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). Beyond financial challenges, the introduction of tuition fees also has far-reaching

consequences for students' mental health. Increased financial pressures can trigger higher levels of stress, anxiety, and overall mental distress among international students (ForbesMewett 2019). Studies have shown that the financial burden resulting from the introduction of fees leads to heightened stress, anxiety, and a sense of insecurity for non-EU/EEA students (Aaltio et al. 2019; Tienari et al. 2020). Furthermore, a recent policy change by Petri Ojo's government compounds the situation for international students. The policy emphasizes on tightening immigration and enforcing deportations if foreigners become unemployed for three consecutive months (Koikkalainen et. 2023). These stressors not only affect international students' daily lives but also contribute to overall dissatisfaction and potential mental health issues, creating barriers to their academic success and social integration.

3.2 Mental Health Among International Students

Over the past years, the state of mental health and students' well-being has become a priority for universities (Cage et al. 2020; Sheldon et al. 2021). This is especially true for LUT and LAB University. Mental health issues are not just a matter of concern to academia but also a growing concern to public health. For instance, there was a recent public concern when the Helsinki Times on 4th May 2023 published news about a 26-year-old international nursing student at Laurea University of Applied Sciences who committed suicide due to frustration, depression, and other mental health-related factors. However, mental health issues among students are not unique to Finland not only international students but a global problem (Macaskill 2013). Nonetheless, international students have compounding risk factors compared to local students (Mori 2000). The World Health Organization (WHO) refers to mental health as "a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively, and can make a contribution to his or her community" (WHO 2022).

For most people, the University is supposed to be a community where they can thrive and build their future. However, research has shown that mental health issues have significantly increased among university studies in recent years (Storrie et al. 2010). The problem is experienced more frequently among undergraduate students (Sheldon et al. 2021). This is partly so because, for most students at this level, it is the first time leaving their parents' home to stay alone and in the case of international students, the first time leaving their country and being separated from their loved ones (Pedrelli et al. 2015). Studies on the mental health of international students can therefore provide insights into the challenges these groups of people face during their years of studies, and their transitions in work life as professionals into their perspective fields of practice. It can help LUT and LAB university

to put measures in providing mental health services to students as well as take actions to mitigate the factors causing the problem.

Previous literature focused on the risk factors of mental health issues (Sheldon et al. 2021). The authors identified and categorized these risk factors into seven themes: physiological and health, psychological, predictors of response to trauma, sociodemographic, university-specific related factors, relational factors as well as lifestyle factors. Similarly, the WHO report discussed that, when people are exposed to certain unfavorable economic, geopolitical, social, or environmental factors such as deprivation and inequality of access to for example jobs, violence, discrimination, and poverty, it heightens their risk of exposure to mental health issues (WHO, 2022).

Moreso, studies have also discussed symptoms of mental health issues (Pedrelli et al. 2015). According to the authors, examples of symptoms of mental health issues may range from common emotional issues such as stress and depression, and eating disorders like bulimia and anorexia, to a more severe psychological and mental problem like anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The authors listed social phobia, panic disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder as examples of anxiety disorders.

Other studies have also investigated the factors that hinder students from accessing support for mental health problems during their studies at the university (Cage et al. 2020). Although some Universities might have adequate support systems, the study revealed that not many students seek help when experiencing mental health issues. Findings from the study indicated that self-stigmatization, fear of stigma from friends, not wanting to disclose the problem, fear of the problem having an impact on education, the severity of the issue, and self-coping mechanisms are some of the factors why mental health issues among university students go unreported.

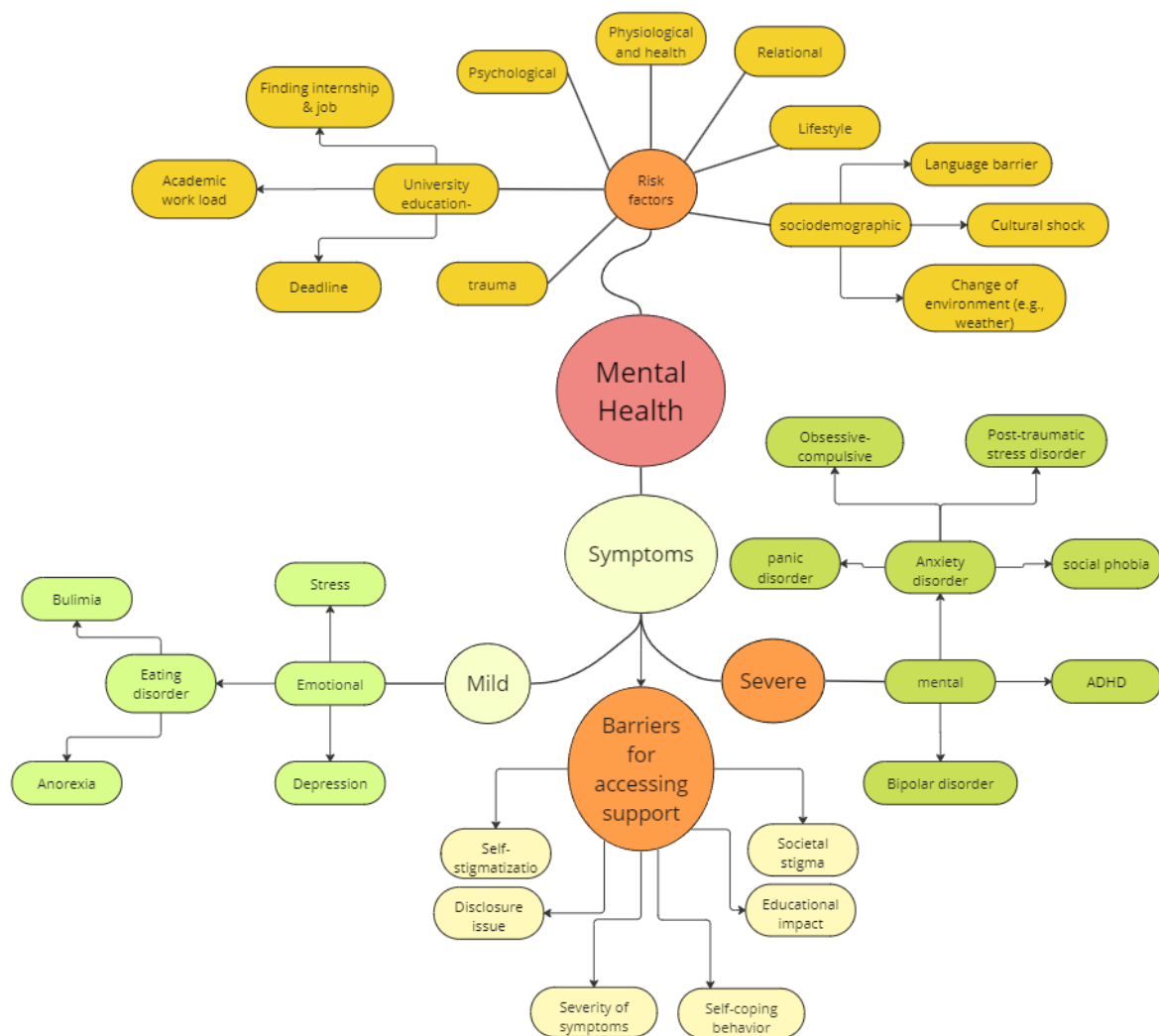


Figure 1. Concept map of mental health

From the above concept map, one can see the relationships between the concepts. The map shows how diverse researchers have attempted to tackle mental health issues. This also supports the importance and timeliness of the topic. Results from the various studies indicate that several factors could cause mental issues and virtually all of us encounter the symptoms at some point in our daily lives. However, the symptoms could be mild and temporal while others may experience severe and acute symptoms. Despite the symptoms, existing research also suggests that there exist barriers that prevent students from seeking help and medical attention. There exists a correlation between the mental health of international nursing students and their livelihood during education and after graduation because the topic chosen will not only promote and support the nursing profession in many ways but also fill the gap of the nurse shortages across the country.

3.2.1 Mental Health Challenges and the Need for Further Research

International students in Finland encounter a range of psychological challenges, often tied to their adjustment to a new environment, financial pressures, and the sense of isolation that can accompany living in a foreign country (Brown & Brown 2013; Brandolin et al. 2023). Feelings of homesickness, loneliness, and disconnection from their support networks back home often exacerbate these difficulties. Psychological strain among international students in Finland can manifest in various forms, including stress, anxiety, and depression, which may lead to poor academic outcomes such as delays in their studies, poor performance, or withdrawal (Hauschildt et al. 2015). While much of the existing research on international students has focused on English-speaking countries due to their larger populations of international students, the challenges faced by international students in non-English-speaking countries like Finland remain underexplored (Alharbi & Smith 2018). Given the recent policy changes in Finland and their potential to exacerbate mental health concerns, there is an urgent need for more focused research to evaluate these effects. This study aims to fill the gap by reviewing the literature on the impact of policy changes on international students' mental health in Finland, providing a basis for future interventions and support services tailored to their needs.

4 Aims, Purpose, and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of recent policy changes introduced by the Finnish government (Koikkalainen et al. 2023) on the mental health and well-being of international students.

The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth understanding of how immigration policy changes, particularly the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students and the recent policy on residence permits and deportation of unemployed foreigners, affect the mental health of international students in Finland. By analyzing the effects of these policies, the study aims to inform universities and policymakers on how best to support international students, ensuring that their mental health needs are adequately addressed. Additionally, the study seeks to shed light on the coping strategies employed by international students as they face new challenges in a foreign academic and social environment.

The research questions of this thesis are the following:

1. What specific policy changes have the Finnish government implemented concerning international students?
2. How have the Finnish government policy changes shaped the mental health outcomes of international students?
3. How do international students cope with mental health challenges following the implementation of policy changes by the Finnish government?

5 Implementation and Methodology

There were not many published scholarly materials researched on the topic “The Impact of Finnish Government policy change on the mental health of international students”, the authors had to divide the search process into various objectives to retrieve relevant articles. It was ensured that the appropriate keywords were selected based on an objective desire for each search process. Two main searching techniques were used in this study, namely advanced searching and manual searching on other databases such as Google Scholar, Science Direct, and Sage engine search. The authors made use of the phrases searching function and the Boolean operator AND, NOT, or/and OR to put together keywords in their advanced searching process. For this study, three main techniques for manual searching were utilized such as skimming and scanning, cross-referencing made use of footnotes and endnotes, bibliographies as well as backward tracking and forward tracking.

In the initial stage of the keyword search, 102 potential articles were collected. Then, it was determined by the authors the inclusion criteria concentrated more on the following: the content of the selected article, timeline publication, language, and context. Even though publications before 2010, the authors Linares-Espinos et al. (2018) emphasized the relevance of selecting publications in languages that make meaning and comprehension to their readers. As such, only articles published in the English language were reviewed by authors to manage time, avoid further confusion, and bypass the cost of the reviews of articles in foreign languages.

Most of the articles obtained did not focus on the context of international students in Finland but on other Western countries. However, much focus was given to related articles to ensure guidance on developing this Literature Review. As part of the exclusion criteria, all Systematic Literature Review articles were excluded from the selected articles.

Relevant articles were taken through screening independently by the two researchers and later discussed together for reconciliation. This process was to ensure that the predefined criteria used in the selection process were fulfilled, rigorous and avoid researcher bias. The titles and abstracts were critically examined as well as the context and methodology sections to assess their relevance to the research topic to pass judgment on the quality and appropriateness of each retrieved study.

To ensure adherence to a standardized literature review, only selected articles that were mutually agreed by the two authors were constituted in the final selection. In addition to that only quality articles were reviewed, the selected articles were subjected to use of the JBI appraisal tool was recommended by the thesis supervisor. Employing this collaborative

approach helped ensure that the chosen articles were not only relevant but also of high quality.

Occasionally, where there were different opinions regarding the inclusion of certain articles, these matters were addressed through constructive discussions between the two authors. The cooperative dialogue allowed for a consensus to be reached, ensuring that all selected articles met the necessary criteria and pushed forward meaningfully to the overall review. Through this meticulous process, the review aimed to provide a comprehensive and reliable synthesis of the existing literature on the topic.

5.1 Research Design

For this research, the authors decided to use a descriptive literature review methodology to completely investigate the impact of Finnish government policy changes on international students' mental health. Descriptive literature reviews are widely recognized for their rigorous and structured approach to providing a comprehensive summary and synthesis of existing research findings on a particular topic, providing an overview of the current state of knowledge. Authors utilized emphasis laid on the crucial role of literature reviews in health and social care, as they provide a comprehensive understanding of existing research. Aveyard, H. (2014) highlights their necessity in synthesizing findings, identifying literature gaps, assessing research quality, and supporting evidence-based practices. Reviews enable practitioners, policymakers, and academics to recognize trends and areas needing further investigation, enhancing transparency and reproducibility in research. In a field where decisions significantly impact patient care and community health, the insights from systematic literature reviews are invaluable, guiding clinical practices and shaping health policy. Thus, Aveyard's work and related literature underscore the importance of systematic reviews in advancing knowledge and improving practices in health and social care.

5.2 Search Strategy

The commencement of search and extraction for articles and materials began in Spring 2024, that is from the week of February. With the help of the university's library, more electronic database searches were accessed and selected for a wider range of articles ensuring they are relevant, suitable, and timely. There were two guidance meetings with authors and thesis supervisors to ensure that the most relevant parts of the selected articles were captured and recorded in the Excel sheet. Much focus was given to more data extraction and data analysis during the summer period.

The study involved a systematic search and subsequent analysis of relevant academic articles, reports, and studies. This literature review was primarily based on an extensive search of academic databases, including PubMed, SAGE, Cochrane Library, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. Keywords used for the search include "international students," "mental health," "Finnish government policy," "mental health of immigrants in Finland", Finnish Immigration laws on non-EU citizens, AND "mental health" "impact of host nation policy on international students" and related terms. The search was limited to publications from the years 2011 to 2024, to ensure the inclusion of recent literature. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were considered, including empirical research, systematic reviews, and theoretical frameworks.

Database	Search Strings	Delimiting factors	Result	Number of Articles
PubMed	International students AND mental health	English full text 2013- 2024	47	2
PubMed	Finnish government policies	Free full text 2013- 2024	121	4
Sage	Immigration policy AND international stu- dents	English free text 2009-2024	21	3
Cochrane	Impact of immigration policy on Mental Health	English free text 2012	7	1
Science Direct	Impact of host nation policy	English free text	16	2

	OR international student	2010-2024		
Science Direct	Finnish immigration laws AND their impact on Non-Eu	Free text 2004-2024	2004-27	4
Science Direct	Mental health among International students	English, open access International students	2013-2024	76
Google Scholar	Finnish Immigration laws on non-EU citizens AND "mental health"	Sort by relevance, Reviewed Articles 2013-2024	97	4
Total				22

Table 1 Database extractions

5.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria ensure to include studies that specifically examine the impact of government policy changes on the mental health outcomes of international students. The studies selected were published in English and peer-reviewed. Studies must have been published within the last 12 years (2011 -2024). The exclusion criteria on the other hand include non-English publications even though Finnish publications were considered at the earliest part of the data extraction process, studies not focusing on government policies on international students, articles addressing immigrant refugees were excluded, and those not addressing mental health outcomes among international students were also excluded.

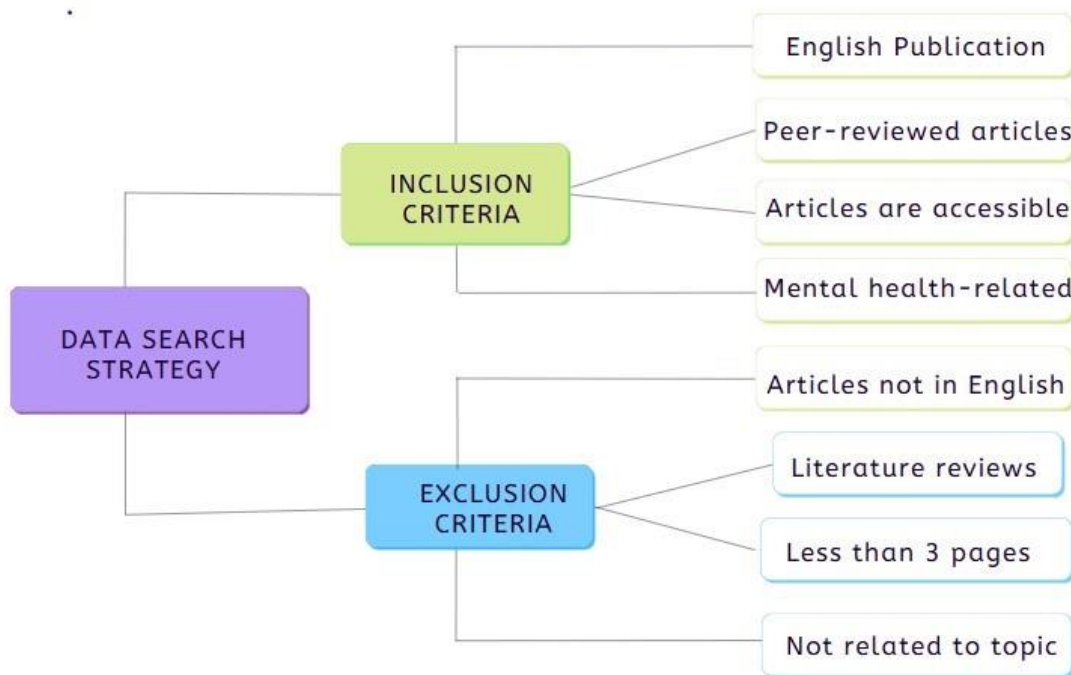


Figure 2. Data search strategy

5.4 Screening and Selection

Retrieved previous research work underwent stages of the screening process. Initially, titles and abstracts were read thoroughly to be carefully chosen to decide on their connections to the research question and inclusion principles. Subsequently, articles were categorized based on language. Although emphasis was laid on publications in the English language, at some point few Finnish language articles were selected. Articles that were accessible to full-text as potentially applicable studies were read thoroughly to be assessed for suitability established on predefined inclusion and exclusion procedures.

5.5 Data Extraction

Compilations conforming to selected investigations were thoroughly retrieved utilizing a harmonized data extrication form. Selected publications included study subcomponents (e.g., authors, publication year, study design), participant determinants (e.g., sample size, demographics), key findings related to government policy changes, and their influences on the mental health of international students.

The authors conducted data extraction in a precise and systematic way while ensuring a standardized data extraction approach to guarantee both accuracy and consistency

throughout the process. This analytical approach will suggest the careful selection of relevant studies, monopolizing on those that equip significant insights into the relationship between Finnish government policies and the mental health of international students.

The data extracted included crucial components such as the authors' names, publication year, publication channel, country, context, findings, mental health keywords, and the study design (e.g., randomized controlled trials, and observational studies). These details are essential for reviewing the findings and ensuring the relevance of the studies to our research question.

The imperative aspect will be the key findings concerning changes in Finnish government policies, categorically focusing on their impacts on international students' mental health. Research has shown that policy changes can significantly affect students' well-being, as demonstrated in studies that link enhanced support services and mental health resources to improved outcomes for this demographic (Pérez et al. 2020; Li et al. 2021).

By precisely capturing, synthesizing and analysing this data, the authors aim to provide valuable insights into how specific policy shifts influence mental health outcomes among international students. Evidence from research has shown that targeted interventions, such as improved resources in dealing with mental health and policies aiming at student well-being, can lead to remarkable positive concomitants. For instance, studies have postulated that embellished accessibility to mental health services correlates with better psychological well-being and reduced stress among international students (Eisenberg et al. 2016; Ssemugabo et al. 2020).

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on immigration policy and mental health and suggests future recommendations and interventions designed to support the mental health of international students in Finland. Existing research suggests that effective policy frameworks can mitigate the negative effects of cultural adjustment and academic pressures, ultimately leading to improved mental health outcomes (Klein et al. 2019; Zhao et al. 2021).

By thoroughly exploring the impacts of immigration policies on the mental health of international students, informed conclusions could be drawn to guide policymakers and educational institutions in nurturing a more supportive environment for this vulnerable but important stakeholder in every society. By aligning policy initiatives with the mental health needs of international students, a more inclusive and supportive educational landscape could be constructed to promote overall well-being and academic success among international students.

5.6 Data Synthesis and Analysis

The synthesized data were analyzed thematically, a technique comprising organizing and comprehending qualitative information to determine key themes, patterns, and correlations across the studies included in the research work. This thematic analysis steered to make out the core theory that emanated from the data, paving the way for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. In this instance, the main emphasis was on the “Impact of Finnish government policy changes on international students' mental health.

To accomplish this section, the analysis commenced by diving deeper into the data, and identifying relevant and meaningful portions of the information from each study. From this exercise, themes and concepts were derived such as the specific policy variations passed by the Finnish government and their discerning effects on the well-being of non-European students studying in Finland. Individual themes were then clustered and categorized to derive insights from the findings.

It is worth mentioning that, during the data synthesis and analysis of the findings, the authors employed the use of OpenAI ChatGPT4 to improve the quality of the existing text, to change the sentence structure to enhance clarity and elaborate on the authors' original thought or to simply check the grammar and spelling. The tools were utilized to improve mainly Chapter 6, thus in the results and discussions and in Chapter 7 in Conclusion. The reason for the implementation of the AI editing tool in Chapter 6 of Results and Discussion was to compare the interpretation of the extracted data and themes with the author's conclusions and try to draw inferences. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the publication.

5.7 Quality of Research Evaluation

The main delimitation of the thesis topic "The impact of the Finnish government policy change on the mental health of international students" is that it focuses specifically on the mental health outcomes of international students in Finland following a government policy change. This delimitation means that other factors impacting mental health, such as personal experiences, individual characteristics, and social support systems, may not have been extensively explored or considered in this study.

Authors took advantage of the Lab Thesis Guidebook and presented integral guidance and sequences for students embarking on their projects. It states essential details such as re-

search design, data collection methods, method of analysis, and ethical considerations confirming students hold fast to academic standards. Moreover, the guidebook focuses attention on the noteworthiness of transparency in writing and a conventional composition throughout the thesis project. The LAB Thesis Template contributes to a methodical framework for students to systematize their work to produce a desired outcome. It includes pre-established sections for the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, conclusion, and discussion, paving the way for a persistent depiction of research findings. Both above-mentioned resources are oriented toward facilitating the thriving accomplishment of the Lab University of Applied Sciences theses by clearly identifying the direction and guaranteeing academic precision.

The authors followed the ethical standards and guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) to ensure the reliability of findings and reporting. It was ensured that the data accurately reported findings and avoided misrepresentation or exaggeration of the results to ensure the ethical integrity of the study (APA 2010).

5.8 Findings from the literature review

The authors reviewed research articles which were categorized following their country of publication. Among these, Finland appeared as an appreciable contributor with respective studies addressing the impact of policies on the mental health of international students. Despite the fact of the relevance of these studies, they were eliminated due to several limitations they manifested. Authors discovered language barriers as a main hindrance to many of the Finnish publications, which may affect the accessibility and dissemination of their research findings. Language barriers might also restrict the scope of Finnish research and impede its research to a broader audience.

There is no doubt that descriptive reviews are of great value for harmonizing existing research, they may stipulate the theoretical proof needed for the purpose of satisfying specific policy impacts holistically. Methodological constraints had a major influence on the Finnish publications although there were substantial amounts of studies that utilized systematic descriptive reviews as their primary methodological approach.

A large proportion of the Finnish articles were at the bachelor's and master's thesis level, which were although worthy, may not all the time experience the strict peer-review process connected with higher-level academic publications, possibly influencing their intensity and authenticity.

By contrast, an enormous number of publications from the US imply a strong body of research in this area, impressively evaluating expanded resources, mastery or tackle on the research topic within American institutions. This direction is observably displayed in the bar graph above displaying a magnificent immersion of research output from the US.

In total, Finnish research presents a constructive understanding of the mental health implications of international students, the restrictions and stress, and the proposed requirements for further high-quality, peer-reviewed research. Nevertheless, the significant number of US publications suggest an extensive interaction with the topic which could offer more diverse viewpoints and approaches.

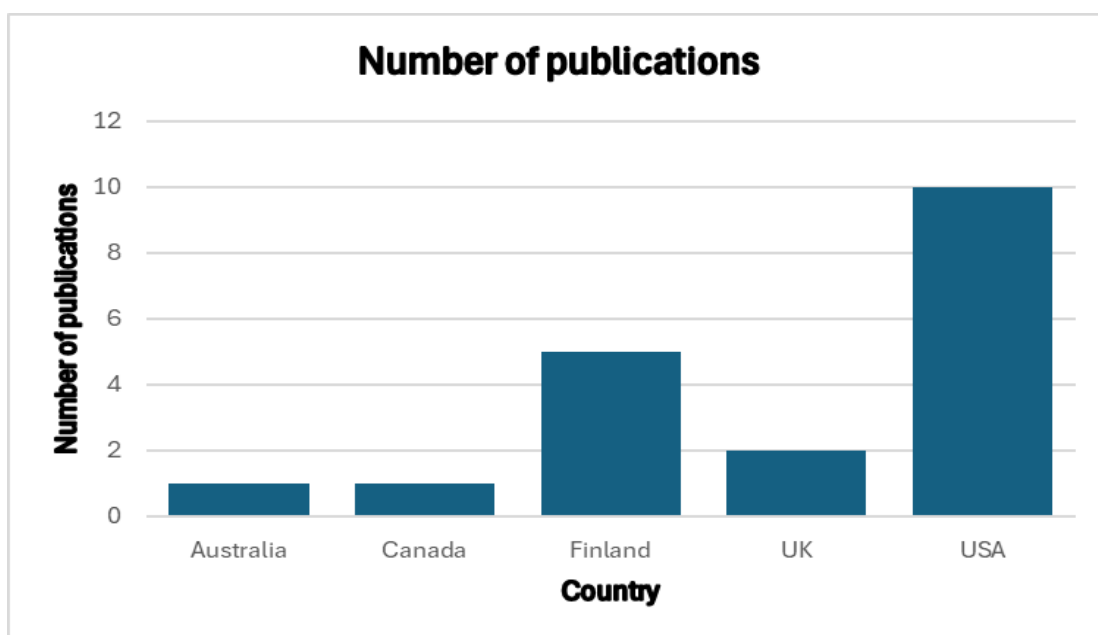


Table 2: Number of Publications by Country

5.9 Research methods used for the data analysis

Authors grouped articles based on research methods during the data analysis phase to facilitate comparative analysis so that the literature is well-designed in a manner that concedes a well-supervised as well as a relative evaluation of unrelated research perspectives and their discoveries. By adopting this strategy, straightforwardness and a deeper view of a literature review or meta-analysis by conscientiously assessing how dissimilar methodologies facilitate the whole meaning of a research topic.

Research methods used for the data analysis

Research Methods	Number
Quantitative method	2
Mixed method	1
Experiment	1
Cross-sectional study	1
Qualitative Study	10
Sampling	1
Interviews	1
Sampling	1
Literature Review	1

Table 3: Research Methods Used

Publication outlets and years of publication

Publication outlet	Number	Year
Social Science and Medicine	3	2011, 2012,2017
Cambridge	1	2018
Department of economics, Connecticut college	1	2023
The Lancet	1	2021
Department of health and human services.	1	2017
Research in Comparative & International Education	4	2016, 2016, 2018
International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)	1	2019

Research Gate	1	2013
Open Education Studies	1	2020
Learning and Individual Difference	1	2023
Current Opinion in Psychology	3	2022,2023, 2023
Education Research International	1	2015

Table 4: Publication outlets used

6 Results and Discussion

The analysis examined the effects of changes in Finnish government policy on international students' mental health. The findings are presented in this section. The three research questions of the study form the framework of this section and they are: RQ1: What adjustments to policy has the Finnish government made concerning foreign students? RQ2: What effects have changes in Finnish government policy had on international students' mental health? RQ3: How do international students cope with mental health issues? The section also compares these findings with existing research, identifying important themes and patterns, and discusses what the results mean for international students and Finnish university institutions are also explored.

6.1 RQ1: Policy Changes Affecting International Students

Like many other nations, Finland has made considerable changes to its higher education policies, especially concerning international students. These changes align with global trends toward the commercialization of education, evolving immigration rules, and incorporating international talent into the workforce (Elken et al. 2023; Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). While these reforms are designed to boost Finland's global competitiveness, they have also posed significant challenges for international students (Weimer 2013). This section reviews the main policy changes that have been introduced by the Finnish government.

6.1.1 Tuition Fees and Marketization of Education

Since August 1, 2017, the Finnish Government's policy on tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students came into force (Elken et al. 2023). The Policy shift was to bring Finland into line with other European nations that impose tuition fees on foreign students (Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). The fees were part of a larger plan to increase money through internationalizing higher education and boost the standing of Finnish universities abroad (Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). The implementation of tuition fees in Finland reflects, therefore, the global trend of commercialization of education. More and more, universities are not only viewed as a place for learning but also as a supplier of marketable services (Weimer 2013; Elken 2020).

While this policy was supposed to make Finland more competitive globally, it has placed non-EU/EEA students in an increasingly precarious financial situation. Thereafter, many international students, particularly those from developing countries, could not afford to pay the tuition fees, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of insecurity (Cai & Kivistö 2013). Studies show that, an increasing higher education costs is reshaping the Finnish

higher education landscape as well as changing student enrolments and the student's well-being (Jokila & Filippou 2023; Rogler 2019). As a result of the changes in tuition policy, international students need to juggle their financial burden with their academic responsibilities. Most of the international students studying in Finland have no choice but compelled to take low-salary jobs to afford their tuition fees and living expenses (Maury 2020), which might affect not only their studies but also their general well-being.

The situation is somewhat comparable to what has already been happening in countries like the UK and Australia, where financial pressure for international students occurs at a serious level (Wilson et al. 2023; Scott 2021). On the other hand, countries like Germany do not charge tuition fees to international students to create equal opportunities for all and attract a wide range of students across the globe without adding financial burden (Jayadeva et al. 2021). The difference in approach thus shows how different countries prioritize internationalization and education policy. Finland's move toward a more market-driven system may have some advantages, but it also creates clear challenges for the well-being of international students.

The findings from the above studies, therefore, reveal that, while Finland's move toward marketization has helped to internationalize its higher education system and boost university revenues, it has also created significant challenges for international students, particularly in terms of financial constrain.

6.1.2 Residency Permit Policy Changes

The expansion of residence permits for those seeking employment after graduation was another notable policy change noted in the literature (Koikkalainen et al. 2023). After graduating, foreign students were for the first time allowed to stay in Finland for nine months to find employment. This was first extended to 12 months and then to 24 months due to Finland's aging population and shrinking workforce to attract and retain international talent. One of the serious issues that came out from the data is the strict financial requirements that international students must attain to maintain their residency permits (Mathies & Karhunen 2021). Students requesting post-graduation work permits in Finland are required to provide proof that they have enough money to sustain themselves during the job-seeking time. Many students find this financial requirement to be quite difficult, especially those who don't have a job right away (Mathies & Karhunen 2021). Stress and instability can arise from employment uncertainty and the effort to meet one's necessities financially.

In Finland, extending residency permits is closely linked to the strategic aim of keeping skilled workers. This policy's strategy is similar to others around the world, as seen by nations like Canada and Australia that employ post-study work visas as a means of encouraging more international students to remain and support their home economies (Tran et al. 2020). However, as Mathies and Karhunen (2021) point out, even though these regulations might appear beneficial at first, they may unintentionally put a lot of strain on students. What makes Finland's most recent immigration policy stricter is the fact that international students and all other foreigners will be deported from the country after staying three months consecutively unemployed (Koiskalainen 2023). The difficulties are sometimes caused by onerous financial responsibilities and convoluted bureaucratic procedures. Even before this new policy, many international students believe that it takes more than six months to get a job. The whole global immigration policy is faced with this dilemma very often while trying to attract talent amidst the practical challenges that students face to get both visas and permanent residence (Mahler 2020). To be more precise, high financial stability requirements have pointed out a far larger obstacle faced by foreign students while studying in Finland (Barrionuevo-Bonini et al. 2021). For many students, it is challenging to focus entirely on their education and create career plans under these circumstances. When there is continuous stress to find work and save enough money to secure a residence, it might be disastrous for mental health, culminating in hopelessness, anxiety, and eventually fear of deportation. International students report fewer mental health issues concerning post-graduation residency in countries like the Netherlands, with less rigid financial restrictions (Barrionuevo-Bonini et al. 2021).

6.1.3 Immigration and Customs Reforms

Although Finland tries to streamline the processes and requirements concerning immigration, many foreign students still get entangled in the dilemma of bureaucracy anyway. The main difficulties include residence status and the renewal of visas. Stricter Finnish immigration laws over time have put greater pressure on these students, as they are consistent with the broader trend in the world. In addition to the stress of adjusting to living in a new country, managing the immigration system adds to it (Hacker et al. 2011; Barrionuevo-Bonini et al., 2021). Many people experience anxiety due to challenges with renewing their permits or delays in receiving visa applications. There is fear among international students such as fear of losing their legal standing in the country, or worse, the possibility of deportation once they complete their studies. This uncertainty can weigh heavily on them, affecting not only their academic focus but also their mental health (Barrionuevo-Bonini et al. 2021).

Global immigration laws are growing more restrictive, especially in North America and Europe, where stricter immigration laws are justified as a way to safeguard employment markets and national security (Hacker et al. 2011). These more stringent immigration laws in Finland may ensure that foreign students achieve some requirements, but they also complicate and burden their lives with additional requirements. In this regard, Wang and Kaushal (2019) conducted a study in the United States that brought to light how local immigration enforcement policies affect Latino immigrants in terms of bad health and low mental outcomes. Changes in government policies, such as the institution of Task Force Enforcement and Jail Enforcement under Section 287(g) of the IIRIRA, had serious negative consequences on mental health. While the research focused on Latino immigrants, results can be generalized to include other immigrant groups as well since they, too, will most likely find the enforcement of immigration and its implications for mental health similar.

Another issue brought up by Renfors (2019) as specific to Finland is linguistic and cultural limitations that make international students employable. In a country where their native language is not normally spoken, the need for Finnish language proficiency sets an employment obstacle quite often. The subsequent combination of language and financial difficulty creates an environment in which overseas students feel vulnerable and insecure because of the high levels of pressure they are under to succeed (Renfors 2019).

International students face several bureaucratic hurdles that further deteriorate conditions such as anxiety and depression as studies in the US and the UK have pointed out (Barrionuevo-Bonini et al. 2021). Despite efforts to ease the immigration procedure, Finnish law still lags far behind more student-friendly immigration programs, such as those in Sweden or New Zealand, where the requirements for a residency permit are lower (Barrionuevo-Bonini, 2021). Indeed, they show better mental health outcomes in these countries, partially because they face fewer challenges in renewing their visa and looking for accommodation upon graduation.

Policy Change	Description	Reference
Tuition Fees for Non-EU/EEA Students	Introduction of tuition fees for nonEU/EEA students in 2016, increasing financial burden.	Kauko & Medvedeva (2016)

Residency Permit Extensions	Extension of job-seeking residence permits post-graduation from 9 months to 24 months but with strict financial requirements.	Mathies & Karhunen (2021); Barrionuevo Bonini (2021)
Immigration and Customs Reforms	Stricter immigration rules cause bureaucratic challenges for students renewing visas and residency permits	Hacker et al. (2011); Barrionuevo Bonini (2021) Wang & Kaushal (2019)

Table 4.1: Summary of Findings for Research Question 1

6.2 RQ2: Impact of Policy Changes on the Mental Health

The policy changes introduced by the Finnish government have had profound effects on the mental health of international students, who are now faced with a variety of stressors. These stressors primarily arise from financial burdens, residency permit requirements, and difficulties in integrating into Finnish society. Each of these factors contributes to heightened anxiety, depression, and overall mental distress among students. The literature review revealed the following findings.

6.2.1 Anxiety from Financial Burden

In addition, for many international students, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, the tuition fee pressure, added to living expenses, became a major financial burden. This has therefore caused increased anxiety levels, financial stress, and even depression. The students who benefited from free education in Finland found themselves unprepared to pay tuition fees and hence experienced increased financial insecurity. Another study posit that, financial problems can be a strong predictor of mental health issues among international students (Saravanan & Subhashini 2021; Barrionuevo Bonini 2021). In their studies, a large number of international students who are trying to juggle their financial burdens with academic obligations reported that they feel forsaken and lonely.

According to Calikoglu (2018), financial stress is associated with worse mental health outcomes, and students from lower-income families are especially susceptible to anxiety and depression. Similarly, Brand-in et al. (2023), assert that international students in Finland now need to work part-time jobs while studying which further exacerbates these challenges, leaving students with little time to focus on their studies or engage in social activities, contributing to feelings of burnout and isolation.

The financial burden on foreign students in Finland may be representative of a greater worldwide trend whereby commercialization in education creates a severe financial burden. Anxiety and stress from earning money are common issues faced by international students (Forbes Mewett 2019; Patel et al. 2023). Finland's situation is quite like other countries, such as Australia and the UK, where tuition fees hit international students especially hard (Wilson et al. 2023; Scott 2021). However, Finland's high cost of living, combined with limited financial aid, may worsen these mental health struggles. While other countries might offer more generous financial support or flexible job opportunities for students, Finland's system leaves many students feeling the strain.

6.2.2 Stress from Residency Permit and Immigration Policies

The burden of complying with stringent residency permits and immigration policy criteria is one of the main sources of stress for foreign students studying in Finland. While increasing post-graduation job-seeking permits from 9 to 24 months was intended to help graduates find employment in Finland for longer, renewing these permits is a stressful process due to administrative and financial obstacles. Students who don't have a reliable source of income or employment prospects may find it difficult to demonstrate that they have the cash to maintain themselves. For many international students, this uncertainty over their residency status is a major source of concern (Lu & Everson, 2024).

Immigration policies could have mental strain on students, particularly those struggling to meet the financial and academic criteria for permit renewals (Hacker et al. 2011; Barrionuevo Bonini 2021). For many, the fear of losing their legal status in Finland creates ongoing insecurity and stress, making it difficult to concentrate on their studies and worsening their mental health. A recent study found that several significant job-related problems such as the inability to find sufficient information about job openings, ignorance of the recruiting process, a lack of industry networking, inadequate communication from hiring companies, and difficulties speaking the local language were raised by international students (Lu & Everson 2024). The study offered recommendations for organizations and recruiters on how to promote diversity in hiring processes and suggested ways universities can better support international students' transition into the local workforce.

Significant findings have emerged in several countries. Studies in the US, UK, and Australia show that international students face similar challenges when dealing with immigration systems (Barrionuevo Bonini 2021). These are, however, strict in Finland in terms of the financial requirements for permit renewal; hence, it adds to the stress and uncertainty of the students. While residence extension is supposed to facilitate job searches on behalf of international students, many such students feel overwhelmed with the financial burdens and complicated procedures required to maintain their legal status (Barrionuevo Bonini 2021).

Nevertheless, Finnish residence permit laws sound somehow very strict compared with other nations. More accommodating residency laws have been established in nations such as Canada and Germany that make it easier for overseas students to stay in the nation following graduation. International students in Finland report higher levels of stress related to residency permits compared to students studying in more flexible immigration contexts (Barrionuevo Bonini 2021). This difference in policy approach may account for this.

6.2.3 Academic Stress

With the increased commercialization of higher education, students feel the increasing pressure to do well academically and to handle most of the financial responsibilities that come with tuition fees. This can be a very competitive environment in which to study, and for some students-especially international students, who also have to adjust to a new culture and overcome language difficulties can be very stressful and add to feelings of inadequacy.

Scholars argue that international students suffer more academic difficulties and a lack of tools to support their mental health as education becomes more commercialized (Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). Because of the focus on revenue development and global competitiveness, students are now forced to tackle their problems on their own due to a lack of access to mental health services and other support networks. A vicious cycle of stress and worry is intensified when students feel overburdened by the responsibilities placed on them, both financially and intellectually, and when they receive no assistance. For instance, studies suggest that the commercialization of higher education in Australia has increased student rivalry and pressure, leading to higher stress levels and mental health issues (Forbes-Mewett 2019). Similarly, studies reveal that the UK's shift toward marketization has created an environment where international students experience feelings of isolation and lack of support (Patel et al. 2023). Moreover, circumstances exist in Finland, where international students report high levels of stress caused by competing demands for academic success, financial stability, and limited access to mental health care.

6.2.4 Cultural and Social Isolation

International students frequently struggle to adjust to a new cultural setting, and Finland has some particular challenges in this regard. Many students experience feelings of social isolation and loneliness as a result of their struggles navigating the unique customs, language limitations, and reserved nature of Finnish society. According to a recent study, cultural differences may make it more difficult for students to properly integrate into their new communities and build meaningful relationships with locals (Forbes-Mewett 2019). Finland's social conventions, which cannot always make social connections simple, can exacerbate this sensation of isolation and make international students feel even more alone. As a result, these obstacles may negatively impact students' mental health while they already adjusting to a new academic and personal environment overseas.

The incapacity of students to fit into any community which is vital in regard to general health and mental stability is made worse by the absence of any firm support from families. Studies reveal that financial burdens can similarly create hurdles in bonding with classmates due to the inadequateness of time to interact socially while doing part-time work (Clough et al. 2019). Moreover, international students are often isolated socially and hardly open up about the financial constraints they face and this adds to the mental health problems they already have (de Moissan et al. 2020). This is so because, for example, although the Finnish government has made attempts to foster deeper integration of international students by introducing policies such as language training and cultural orientation programs in practice these policies often do not make such progress. Furthermore, programs usually fall flat in aiding students' transgressions on the social integration scene as they are not culturally focused (Kauko & Medvedeva 2016). This limits the number of interactions between students resulting in worse cases of social isolation among students.

Social isolation of international students affects their psyche in a very worrying way. Several researchers have noted that the lack of social engagement and relationships makes students prone to certain disorders including anxiety and depression (Forbes-Mewett 2019; Wu 2021). The students have fewer means to deal with the stress and the strain that the academia and their finances put on them. In the case of Finland, some students might feel an increased sense of alienation in case they are not able to socialize, which in turn may hamper their studies and their state of health. As stated, many international students do recognize mental health problems but do not seek help because they do feel a sense of cultural asylum (Forbes-Mewett 2019). This challenges the problem of related stigmas en-

dorsed towards mental health plus the absence of authoritative culturally appropriate treatments. This is especially worrisome in Finland where non-native speakers may find it hard to access mental health services because of language problems.

ontrast, some countries have introduced more robust social integration policies aimed at easing the transition for international students. For instance, countries like Canada and New Zealand have created structured programs that foster better social inclusion and cultural adaptation, which in turn, improves mental health outcomes for international students (Patel et al. 2023). Finland could benefit from adopting similar practices by enhancing its cultural integration programs and fostering more inclusive university environments.

Research question analysis

Impact	Description	References
Financial stress and anxiety	Tuition fees and associated financial pressures increase anxiety, depression, and financial insecurity	Barrionuevo Bonini 2021; Calikoglu 2018)
Stress from Residency Permit Uncertainty	Strict permit renewal requirements create uncertainty and stress, especially around financial stability.	(Hacker et al. 2011; Barrionuevo Bonini et al. 2021) Lu & Everson 2024
Academic Stress	Increased competition in academia, coupled with financial stress, contributes to poor mental health outcomes.	(Kauko & Medvedeva 2016; Calikoglu 2018)
Cultural and Social Isolation	Limited social integration due to cultural differences leads to feelings of isolation and poor mental health.	Forbes-Mewett (2019)

Table 4.2: Summary of Findings for Research Question 2

6.3 RQ3: Coping Mechanisms for Mental Health Challenges

The review of the literature identified certain coping mechanisms international students adopted to cope with their mental health challenges. The following section describes and discusses the different coping mechanisms international students use to cope with mental health challenges.

6.3.1 Adaptive Coping Strategies

More international students use adaptive coping strategies, which are proactive behaviours aimed at managing their stress to improve their well-being. Wu (2021) reported adaptive mechanisms of coping as 72.13% of the strategies reported by international students in a study. Among these, the strategy of building social networks features high in the list of commonly used strategies. Many students make friends with other peers, international and local, in establishing support networks that will help these students feel connected and less isolated. According to research in (Forbes-Mewett 2019; Wu 2021), social support is so significant in enabling students to cope with several adversities facing financial stress, academic pressure, and cultural adjustment.

Social support from friends and peers gives both emotional comfort and more practical help, such as sharing advice on Finnish bureaucracy or part-time work. As social networks are developed, the feelings of loneliness decrease, whereas the ability to cope with the stress of studying and living in a foreign country increase. In addition, participation in a student organization or a cultural group allows a venue for international students to feel a sense of belonging, which furthers stress alleviation (Forbes-Mewett 2019). Utilizing a social support network as a coping mechanism is not unique to Finland. Internationally, students around the world depend quite a bit on their social circles to manage stress and keep themselves mentally sound. The same findings have been reported in Australia, the UK, and the US, where students confirm that social networks offer emotional, academic, and financial support (Patel et al. 2023). The same trend can be seen in the United States immigrant youth use school-based networks and peer support in trying to cope with their mental health problems (Patel et al. 2023). Importantly, these networks encourage a sense of community and feelings of belonging that add to countering feelings of loneliness and isolation among international students. In addition, schools provide the common ground for post-migration adaptation in facilitating medical, behavioral health, and social services in developing resilience among immigrant youth who have been exposed to migration-related stress and trauma (Patel et al. 2023).

The other adaptation strategy that should be made available to students to ease their settling into Finnish society is language acquisition. Students will also engage in numerous activities within their communities, interact with native individuals with more ease, and might even apply for jobs much more easily (Wu 2021). Multilingual skills would enable them to manage everyday pressures, be it the police or mental health services. Indeed, individuals who strove to master the language of a host country suffered much less from stress and anxiety (Wu 2021).

6.3.2 Maladaptive Coping Strategies

Even though many international students occupy themselves with positive coping mechanisms, some employ maladaptive behaviours as a means to tackle and overcome their feelings. Disengagement from social interactions, self-restraint from stressful situations, or loafing may disintegrate the mental health problems that students are already going through, not to mention but few are some forms of maladaptive coping techniques (Wu 2021).

International students who find it difficult to become accustomed to their new environment mostly encounter isolation and withdrawal. Students who undergo profound cultural shock or communication challenges are capable of drawing back from social activities or avoiding connecting with their peers (Wu 2021). Although the reason for putting up with this behavior is to prevent them from being stressed, they end up becoming isolated which leads to loneliness and a deteriorated manifestation of depression and anxiety. These students are not able to keep pace in their academic studies or fail to benefit from support resulting from avoidance behaviors such as postponing academic work, not interacting with university staff in times of need, and also having the tendency to intensify stress over time. On a global scale, there is a documented evidence incident in connection with international students.

Scholars emphasized how language barriers, academic stress, and cultural differences can expand their perspectives leading to isolation especially when they are unable to fit in with native inhabitants (Forbes-Mewett 2019). This readiness to draw back can establish a chain where the absence of social involvement escalates mental health problems, bringing about unaccommodating students to seek assistance or get in touch with others.

Similarly, research on immigrant youth, discovered that avoidance behaviour such as negligence to academic obligations or staying away from social gatherings was rampant among students who encountered difficulties with mental health (Patel et al. 2023). The absence of self-assurance in their competence to achieve academic excellence or socialization forms a correlation to these behaviors. Some students may resort to excessive reliance on technology, such as uncontrollable use of social media, and long hours of online passing time

for the intention of eluding from their problems. Even though this may serve as a provisional relief from their stress, it oftentimes generates a distant detachment from actual world social engagements, intensifying feelings of loneliness and isolation.

6.3.3 Mental Health Services as a Coping Strategy

For a few international students in Finland, trying to obtain support from mental health professionals, is an indispensable adaptive mechanism for handling the stress and demands caused by academic requirements, financial pressures, and social seclusion. In spite of that, even with the ease of access to mental health services at several Finnish universities, there are notable impediments that block access to this assistance for international students. Students' inability to take advantage of universities' professionalized counseling services in the course of their adaptive strategies results from language barriers, being victims of mental health stigma amidst different ethnic backgrounds, and a lack of understanding of multiculturalism.

Many international students, those from non-English speaking countries, precisely encounter problems benefiting from mental health services that are offered only in Finnish and English. The possible advantage of professional counseling services may diminish as students are not able to fully express their worries and communicate effectively about their mental health due to the language barrier.

Even though Finnish universities provide mental health services, the absence of multilingual counseling alternatives impedes the diversification of these services, neglecting many students excluded from the service's beneficiaries. Thus, language barrier becomes a crucial hurdle that precludes international students from looking for approved assistance, especially those individuals from countries where mental health conversations are less popular or condemned (Forbes-Mewett 2019). As such, communication challenges can hamper students' what it takes to reveal their distress, greatly devaluing the efficiency of the counselling (Brisset et al. 2014).

Students with mental health refrain from needing assistance resulting from key roles brought forth by cultural stigma. Among many cultures, mental health issues are not publicly revealed. It is a sign of incapacity or embarrassment for people who ask for assistance from professionals. This cultural stigma develops into tough situations for students to concede their mental health battles and contact university counsellors for support. Lack of enthusiasm to ask for help as a result of cultural standpoint with regards to mental health underlines another reason why students refrain from accessing mental health owing to cultural barriers (Forbes-Mewett 2019).

Studies performed on Chinese international students gave an account of how a greater number of the students surviving psychological distress do not benefit from mental health services, signifying cultural stigma and prioritizing self-trust (Lu et al. 2014). Similarly, another study posits the prominence of culturally suitable and structured care services to satisfy the wider diversified demands of international students (Smith et al. 2013). The deficiency in such services may complicate feelings of solitariness and hold back students from calling for help. This is mimicked by scholars in (Brandolin et al. 2023), who postulated that Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) interferences that comprise mindfulness and culturally applicable methods meaningfully mitigated mental health symptoms among international students.

Coping Mechanism	Description	Reference
Adaptive Coping	Seeking social support, learning Finnish, and participating in cultural activities to ease integration stress.	Forbes-Mewett (2019); Wu (2021)
Maladaptive Coping	Avoidance and withdrawal from social situations, lead to exacerbated mental health issues.	Wu (2021)
Mental Health Services	Barriers like language and cultural stigma prevent students from accessing mental health support.	Forbes-Mewett (2019); Patel et al. (2023)
Cultural and Social Isolation	Limited social integration due to cultural differences leads to feelings of isolation and poor mental health.	Forbes-Mewett (2019)

Table 4.3: Coping Strategies Used to Manage Mental Health Challenges

7 Conclusion

This research work probed how Finnish government policies have influenced international students in Finland. The main spotlights included an introduction to tuition fees, residence permits, support groups, and how these influence the mental health of international students and coping approaches.

To begin with, it was found from the research that the implementation of tuition fees for non-European Union students had resulted in a financial burden. The majority of students, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds, encounter difficulties in making up for livelihood and tuition. This financial hardship had brought about intensified stress and anxiety, directly pertinent to their mental health. Although the main of these fees were making Finnish education more appealing and standing shoulder to shoulder with other universities, they had unintentionally affected the well-being of international students.

Additionally, there has been a manifestation of increased stress levels among international students due to the residency permit policies. International students are faced with the challenges of procuring a long-term residency, and rigid financial and academic demands despite Finland's prolonged post-graduation work permits to draw in more diverse professionals to the country. This unpredictability concerning their future in Finland brings about emotions associated with low self-esteem, anxiety, and hard in enduring the tension to excel academically and attain financial stability.

In conclusion, students resort to adaptive and maladaptive coping tactics alongside mental health services to curb these challenges. Many depend on social networks, engaging in Finnish language courses, and participating in cultural events as a beneficial approach to coping with stress. On the other hand, others retreat or evade challenging circumstances, which deteriorates their sense of alienation. Restricted access to culturally befitting mental health services advances increased complexity and their capability to deal with mental health issues competently.

7.1 Implications of Findings

The result of this research exposed a substantial impact on policymakers and institutions of higher education in Finland. Tuition fee initiation has brought about heightened financial frustration, which has detrimentally affected students' mental health. This evidence shows that the ongoing tuition fee policies require re-examination, compassionately with scholarship opportunities and fee waivers to lessen the heavy loads on students. The stringent

residency permit demand, while intending to sustain international talents, builds up tremendous pressure, underlining the necessity for more non-rigid residency policies that do a service for interested students' financial and academic situation.

Moreover, the coping technique utilized by many students is an indication that there is a requirement for improved social and mental health support. Universities must be equipped with more culturally suitable mental health services and establish persistent support-approved channels to assist international students in acclimatizing themselves to the Finnish system shape-up and be successful. These alterations will give Finland not only a facelift in the eyes of the world, as a desirable and corroborative stopping place for international students, conforming with the objective of competitiveness at the global level but also restoring students' well-being.

8 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, quite several essential recommendations are put forward to improve general efficiency and manage the problems highlighted:

8.1 Recommendations for Policy amendment

First and foremost, discounting or modification of the tuition fee policy by the Finnish government while reconsidering introducing scholarship programs or tuition fee waivers for students from outside the European Union in contrast with the present high tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students particularly for students coming from under-developed countries. This would control the issue of financial hectic which most international students have to deal with alongside studying and managing the accompanying mental health tensions they live through.

Secondly, policies that are related to acquiring residency permits need to be manageable, specifically concerning the prerequisite for financial income for permit renewals. Proposing a substitute approach to fulfil the residency standards such as a part-time job or prolonged internship programs could combat the feeling of anxiousness among students and relieve students while making them stable in Finland during and after graduation.

Furthermore, there should be upgraded mental health support services by universities and policymakers, culturally befitting, and convenient in multiple languages to guarantee an accessible mental health service for all students. Professionals working within the mental health unit require additional training in cross-cultural mental health care to persuade more international students to ask for assistance, thus optimizing their general well-being.

In conclusion, a well-revised social and cultural integration program should be established by the university and the government to give a boost to the acquaintance of Finnish culture to new students upon arrival. This may perhaps compromise language courses, multiculturalism and coaching programs that provide guidance to students, make them develop a sense of belonging and mitigate feelings of seclusion that advance to poor mental health.

8.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Whereas this study placed reliance on secondary data sources, more research should survey without an intermediary the mental health problem encountered as a consequence of policy changes, either qualitatively or quantitatively. Establishing involvement with members firsthand through interviews, surveys or groups of interest will make provision for substantial proof of the precise impact of these policies on the students' welfare.

Taking into account the increase in online mental health platforms, future research should appraise the efficiency of digital mental health services for international students. This could assist in determining the degree of effectiveness of technology-based services for international students. Feasible approaches to eliminate impediments to gain access to in-person mental health care.

It would be useful to make a comparison between the mental health outcomes of international students in Finland with other nations with almost identical immigration and education policies. That kind of research could give prominence to proven methodology from other contexts and notify more compelling policy evolution.

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Appendix I: Studies Included in Literature Review

Author, Publication, Year	Purpose of study	Context	Study Design	Main results	Mental health keywords
Bailey et al. The nexus between immigration status, policy, and proceedings, and mental health 2022	The article aims to find the chain immigration policy, status, actions, and mental health	Non-citizen migrants in USA	Sampling	This article surveys how mental health may be affected by factors such as fear of deportation and uncertainty regarding the future	mental health, fear, uncertainty
Cai et al.	The article aimed to discover how far	International students	Literature review	The study reveals that Finland may be at	Stress, Well-being

<p>Tuition fees for international students in Finland: where to go from here?</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>the tuition fee policy importance in Finland will impact higher education</p>			<p>risk of admitting more international students from rich families instead of talented ones as a result of the tuition fee law.</p>	
<p>Helen Forbes-Mewett</p> <p>Mental Health and International Students: Issues, challenges, & effective practice</p> <p>2019</p>	<p>The study aimed to converge a great amount of research that pointed to international student mental health over the past 20 years</p>	<p>International students</p>	<p>Interview & Literature Review</p>	<p>The study unfolds a need for institutions to care for international students' well-being and include them in the universities' affairs.</p>	<p>mental health issues, confusion, depression, homesickness, insomnia, stress, negative feeling, cultural shock, low psychological distress, scared, frightened, unsure, nervous, anxious, negative feelings</p>
<p>Gilbert et al.</p> <p>On the nature, predictors, and outcomes of undergraduate</p>	<p>The study desired to probe the nature of psychological distress profiles among a sample of</p>	<p>Undergraduate students</p>	<p>Sampling</p>	<p>The research exposed five profiles of students marked by designs of universal and individualized</p>	<p>anxiety, depression, distress, risk behavior, suicidal ideation, emotional exhaustion</p>

students' psychological distress profiles 2023	1053 undergraduate students (78.2 % female; Mage = 22.60, SDage = 4.72)			levels of psychological distress	
Hatzenbuehler et al. Immigration policies and mental health morbidity among Latinos: A state-level analysis. 2018	The article aimed to inquire into the alliance connecting state-level policy climate about immigration and mental health outcomes among Latinos	Immigrant Latinos	Qualitative & Survey	The study reports that immigration policies had higher rates of poor mental health among Latino immigrants policy negatively affects compared to Latino immigrants excluded.	Increased anxiety, depression, stress, isolation, reduced self-esteem, mental health issues, worry trauma, fear,
Vargas et al. Fear by Association: Perceptions of Anti-Immigrant Policy and Health Outcomes. 2017	The study aimed to use the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2015 Latino National Health and Immigration Survey (n = 1,493) to reveal the link	Immigrant Latinos	Survey	It was revealed from the study that mental health of immigrant Latinos because of unfriendly policies needs to be addressed.	fearful, concern, health, mental health, fear, anxiety, mentally ill, depression, hopelessness, guilt, despair

	between immigration and immigrant policy and Latino health and well-being.				
Viruell-Fuentes E, et al. More than culture: structural racism, intersectionality theory, and immigrant health. 2012	The study was conducted to find out social determinants of health that have long stressed racism's central role in the production of health inequalities.	Health of immigrants	Qualitative	The article discovered that a richer understanding of immigrant health patterns needs a shift in focus from individual-level cultural details to research that gives a broader, deeper analysis of racism as a factor such as gender and class, to impact immigrant health outcomes.	well-being, health, mental health, threat, fear, stress, self-rated health, self-reported health, poor mental health
Hacker K, et al. The Impact of Immigration and Customs Enforcement on	The article aims to study the gap between existing research and using community-	Documented and undocumented immigrants	Community-Based Participatory Research	Immigrants are in fear of deportation. There is fear of alliance between local	well-being, fear, stress, emotional well-being, emotional distress, stigmatization,

<p>Immigrant Health: Perceptions of Immigrants in Everett, Massachusetts, US</p> <p>2011</p>	<p>based participatory research to investigate the impact of enhanced immigration enforcement on immigrant health in Everett, Massachusetts, USA, a city with a large and diverse immigrant population</p>			<p>law execution and ICE a perception of volatility on the part of the former and worry about not being able to furnish documentation required to apply for insurance and for health care.</p>	<p>isolation, threat, chronic fear, afraid, threat of discovery</p>
<p>Julia Shu-Huah Wang, Neeraj Kaushal</p> <p>Health and Mental Health Effects of Local Immigration Enforcement</p> <p>2018</p>	<p>To research why local enforcement policies had negative health and mental health effects on Latino immigrants.</p>	<p>The mental health of immigrants (undocumented immigrants, legal immigrants, and U.S. citizens)</p>	<p>A difference-in-difference research design (DD)</p>	<p>The study revealed the negative health and mental health effects may affect the economic productivity of Latino families and their integration with U.S. society due to ignorance by policymakers</p>	<p>fears, stress, physical and mental health, anxiety, negative psychosocial impact, uncertainty, mental health distress</p>

<p>Laxman Timilsina</p> <p>Immigration policy shocks and infant health</p> <p>2023</p>	<p>The article aims to compare immigration policies — impact on infant health, specifically, mean birth weight and incidence of low birth weight (LBW)</p>	<p>Immigrants' children's mental health</p>	<p>Triple difference approach DD and DDD method</p>	<p>Positive immigration policies that stand up for immigrants have had a positive impact on infant health outcomes and the negative one puts immigrants in jeopardy.</p>	<p>early childhood shock, fear</p>
<p>Patel et al</p> <p>Mental health and adaptation among newcomer immigrant youth in United States educational settings</p> <p>2023</p>	<p>The purpose is to find out the mental health issues faced by youth immigrants in adjusting to educational environments.</p>	<p>Newcomer immigrant youth in USA</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>The article has outlined numerous risk factors that endanger behavioural health and academic issues, including pre-migration, route, and post-migration stressors and trauma</p>	<p>trauma, stress, behavioral health</p>
<p>Lu & Everson Härkälä</p> <p>International student experience of employment integration in Finland</p>	<p>The article addresses integration acquaintances of international students in nonnative English-speaking</p>	<p>International Students pursuing a 2-year Master's degree</p>	<p>Qualitative Study</p>	<p>The study identified several challenges related to employment integration for international students in Finland, including</p>	<p>Well-being, Stress levels</p>

2024	contexts, such as Finland			a lack of information about the labor market, unfamiliarity with recruitment practices, limited professional networks, and language barriers	
Kauko & Medvedeva Internationalisation as marketisation? Tuition fees for international students in Finland. 2016	The article aims to find out if the tuition fee policy will attract international students to Finland.	International students	Qualitative	There were discrepancies in the introduction of tuition fees as part of the internationalization.	Depression, stress, globalization shock
Pappa et al International master's degree Students' Well-being at a Finnish University During COVID-19 2020	To study the well-being of international students during the Covid 19.	International Master's Degree Students	Qualitative	IMDSs' need support as they struggle with stress, anxiety, and other negative emotions. affecting their well-being.	stress, anxiety, Mental Health, Psychological well-being, depression, negative emotional state, substance abuse, frustration, panic, increased worry

<p>Calikoglu</p> <p>International student experiences in non-native-English-speaking countries: Postgraduate motivations and realities from Finland.</p> <p>2018</p>	<p>The article aimed to explore international student encounters in non-native-English-speaking countries specifically Finland.</p>	<p>Postgraduate international students</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>	<p>International Students in Finland encounter academic, social., financial, and psychological challenges. Whereas some international students have continued to grow, a drop may be expected over the upcoming years</p>	<p>Anxiety disorder, psychological challenges, Loneliness, Depression</p>
<p>Wu et al.</p> <p>International Student's Challenge and Adjustment to College</p> <p>2015</p>	<p>The article conducted a study to reveal the obstacles international students face in US universities.</p>	<p>International students</p>	<p>Qualitative study</p>	<p>The study suggests the need for University readiness to help international students navigate their new home.</p>	<p>isolation, feelings of inferiority, stress, feelings of uneasiness, insecurity, depression, anxiety, and loss.</p>

Appendix 2 JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Systematic Reviews and Research Syntheses

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS AND RESEARCH SYNTHESSES

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Is the review question clearly and explicitly stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Were the inclusion criteria appropriate for the review question?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Was the search strategy appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Were the sources and resources used to search for studies adequate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Were the criteria for appraising studies appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Was critical appraisal conducted by two or more reviewers independently?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Were there methods to minimize errors in data extraction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Were the methods used to combine studies appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Was the likelihood of publication bias assessed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Were recommendations for policy and/or practice supported by the reported data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Were the specific directives for new research appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (including reason for exclusion)

Appendix 3. JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Text and Opinion Paper

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR TEXT AND OPINION PAPERS

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Is the source of the opinion clearly identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the source of opinion have standing in the field of expertise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are the interests of the relevant population the central focus of the opinion?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the stated position the result of an analytical process, and is there logic in the opinion expressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is there reference to the extant literature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is any incongruence with the literature/sources logically defended?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (including reason for exclusion)

Appendix 4. JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Is there congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is there a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is the influence of the researcher on the research, and vice-versa, addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are participants, and their voices, adequately represented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is the research ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, and is there evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do the conclusions drawn in the research report flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (Including reason for exclusion)

Appendix 5. JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR ANALYTICAL CROSS SECTIONAL STUDIES

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Were the criteria for inclusion in the sample clearly defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Were the study subjects and the setting described in detail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Was the exposure measured in a valid and reliable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Were objective, standard criteria used for measurement of the condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Were confounding factors identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Were strategies to deal with confounding factors stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Were the outcomes measured in a valid and reliable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (Including reason for exclusion)

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Is it clear in the study what is the cause and what is the 'effect' (i.e. there is no confusion about which variable comes first)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Were the participants included in any comparisons similar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Were the participants included in any comparisons receiving similar treatment/care, other than the exposure or intervention of interest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Was there a control group?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Were there multiple measurements of the outcome both pre and post the intervention/exposure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Was follow-up complete and if not, were differences between groups in terms of their follow-up adequately described and analysed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Were the outcomes of participants included in any comparisons measured in the same way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (including reason for exclusion)

Appendix 7. JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies

JBI CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR ANALYTICAL CROSS SECTIONAL STUDIES

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Author _____ Year _____ Record Number _____

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1. Were the criteria for inclusion in the sample clearly defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Were the study subjects and the setting described in detail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Was the exposure measured in a valid and reliable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Were objective, standard criteria used for measurement of the condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Were confounding factors identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Were strategies to deal with confounding factors stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Were the outcomes measured in a valid and reliable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info

Comments (including reason for exclusion)

Appendix 8. Evaluation of the Study Quality

Studies	Symbol	JBI Questions											Sum
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	
Hacker K, et al.	⚡	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		9/10
Viruell-Fuentes E, et al.	∞	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	10/11
Julia Shu-Huah Wang, Neeraj Kausha	@	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y		8/10
Laxman Timilsina	@	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y		8/10
Woolhandler et al,	B	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						6/6
Hatzenbuehler ML, et al.	↔	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y				7/8
Vargas ED, Sanchez GR, Juárez M	⚡	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			8/9
Jaakko Kauko, Anna Medvedeva	∞	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	10/11
Helen Forbes-Mewett	B	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?						5/6
Gilbert et al.	⚡	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	Y			8/9
Bailey et al.	∞	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	10/11
Patel et al.	B	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N						4/6
Calikoglu	@	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y		8/10
Pappa et al.	@	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	?	Y	Y	Y		8/10
Wu et al.	@	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	?	Y	Y	Y		8/10
Cai et al.	∞	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	10/11
Kauko et al.	↔	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				8/8
Lu et al	∞	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	11/11

Q = Question

Y= Yes

N= No

? = Unclear



= JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Systematic Reviews and Research Syntheses



= JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Text and Opinion Paper



= JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research



= JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Quasi-Experimental Studies



= JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies