

## Trends in Research Regarding International Student Connectedness, A Systematic Review

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**Abstract :** Humans are highly social creatures, and our social surroundings create a large part of our daily experiences. Feeling connected and belonging at school have been studied a lot, especially in the period up to college. The need to feel connected becomes even more vital when people choose to study abroad. The number of published research in the field has increased recently, creating sufficient studies for a systematic literature review. The current study was conducted to find out existing trends and central themes in the field regarding international student connectedness. Using PRISMA 2020 and Shariff et al.'s work as the guidelines, I conducted a systematic literature review of studies regarding international student connectedness in higher education. Three steps of inclusion/exclusion criteria were used to determine the final studies to be included. The results show an increasing trend in the field as the number of related studies drastically rose after 2017. The results showed that there are three phases in the research regarding the connectedness of international students: a rejection period, a sudden increase of interest in the topic, and merging as an essential part of the mental well-being of international students. There is also a change in the themes regarding the topic, as there is a rise in the number of research published regarding international students' mental health in recent years, connectedness being a sub-topic.

**Keywords :** international students, connectedness, mental well-being of international students, trends, higher education

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