

Cross-institutional collaborations for health equity research at a CTSA

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Introduction

The Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) is a statewide research partnership among Indiana University, Purdue University and the University of Notre Dame, along with a number of life sciences organizations, governmental entities and community groups.

Objective

We were interested in health equity research for each CTSA-affiliated institution, specifically focusing on cross department and cross-campus co-authorship. We conducted a bibliometric analysis of our CTSA-funded papers relating to diversity and inclusion to identify cross department and cross-campus collaborations.

Methodology

We worked with the Indiana CTSI's Racial Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force to conduct an environmental scan of diversity and inclusion research across our CTSA partner institutions. Using the Scopus database, searches were constructed to identify and retrieve the variety of affiliations for each of the CTSA authors, a health equity/health disparities search hedge, and Indiana CTSI grant numbers; dates covered the beginning of our CTSA in 2008-December 2021. PubMed was used to retrieve MeSH terms. We used Excel to analyze and clean the data, Python (Pandas and Plotly libraries) to analyze MeSH terms, and VOSviewer to produce the visualizations. VOSviewer required the development of a thesaurus file for standardization of entries for institutions and departments, and additional data cleaning and processing.

Acknowledgements

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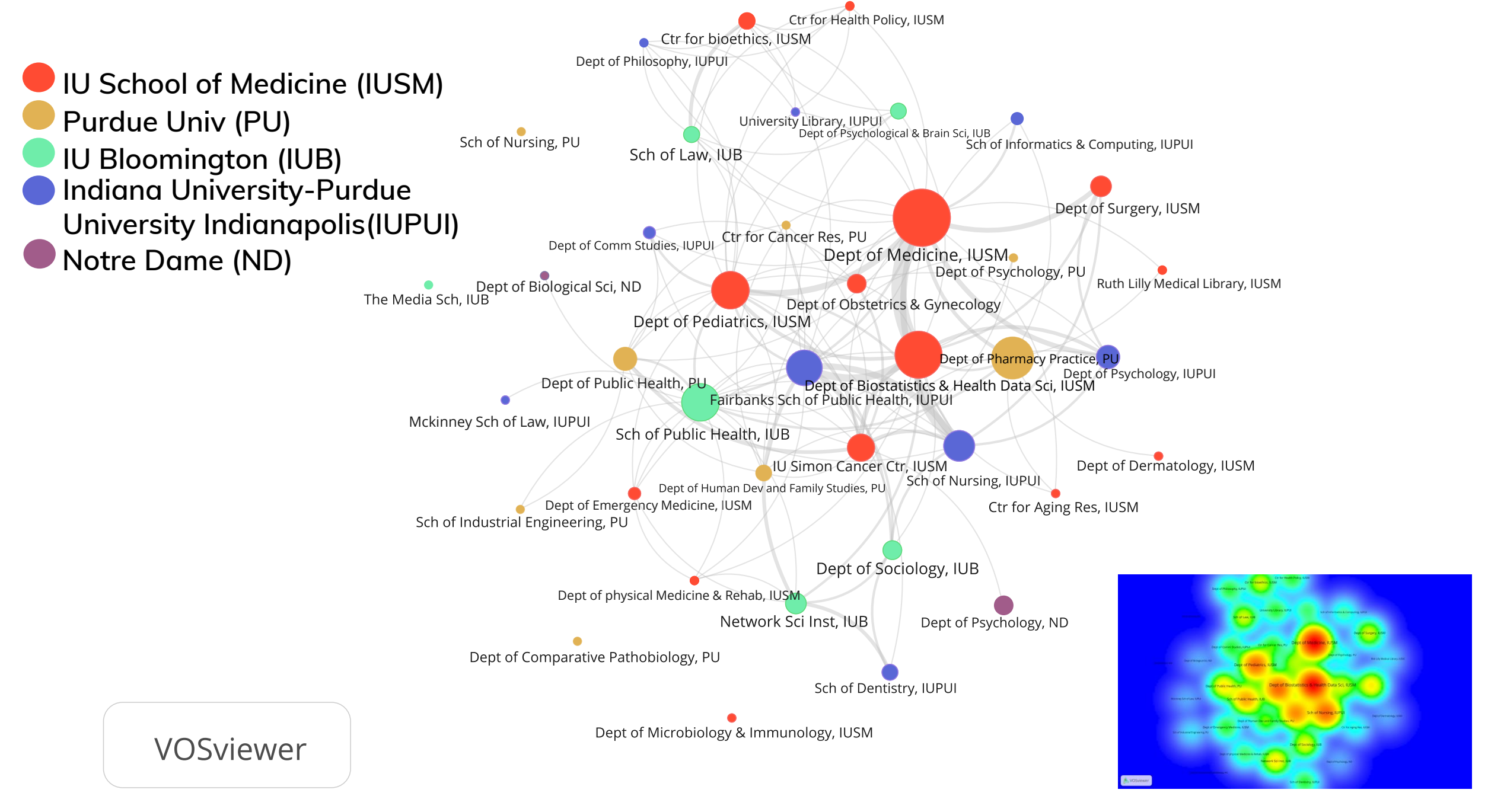
Limitations and Conclusion

Several limitations may be helpful to mention for other CTSA's looking at conducting similar studies. The complexity of our CTSA member institutions and inconsistent listing of affiliations meant the creation of an extensive search hedge; similarly, the concept of "health disparities" required thinking creatively in designing its search hedge. Since we started our process in Scopus, not all retrieved papers are in PubMed and therefore might not have MeSH terms assigned. Authors sometimes list multiple institutions, multiple departments, have incomplete name information in their publications, etc. and this requires additional data cleaning and confirming correct information. Some of these processes can be automated (e.g., Excel formulas, Python scripts) but other processes require manual time and effort.

While collaborations do exist across our CTSA departments and institutions, the corpus of literature on health disparities is fairly small (>100 articles over 12 years). Talking with current collaboration groups may inform successful expansion of current collaborations as well as identify new areas of research to explore and fund. This work may further inform the Health Care Accessibility indicator of the Translational Science Benefit Model (TSBM).

Analysis

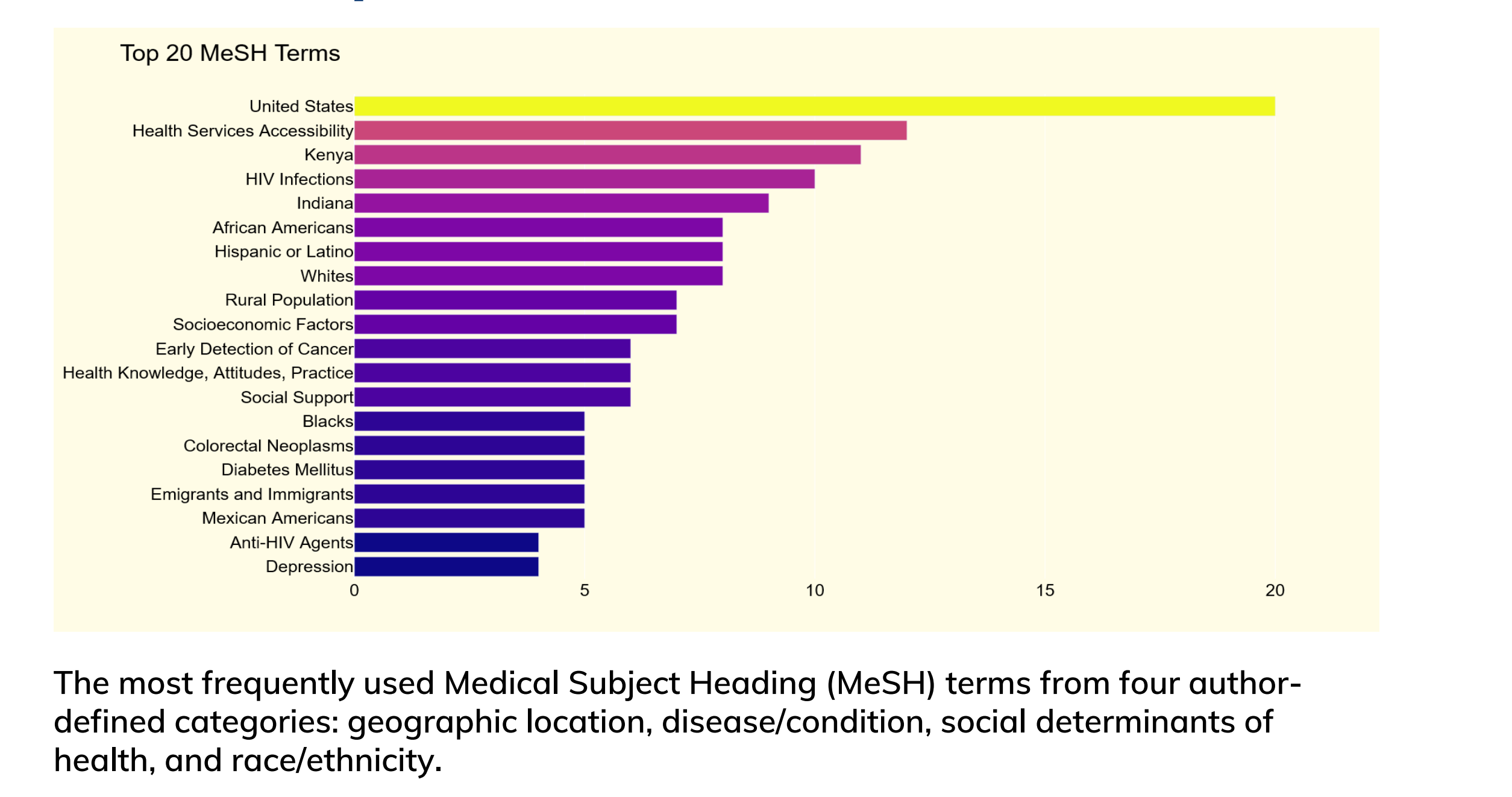
Cross-departmental collaborations for health equity research across CTSA-affiliated institutions (2008-2021)



Summary of indicators



Main concepts



Results/ Findings

There were 92 papers that matched our inclusion criteria. Identified articles were affiliated with a total of 122 institutions. There are concentrated areas of collaboration for IUSM and Purdue with the AMPATH program in Kenya; IUPUI has strong collaborations with several institutions in China. Cross-departmental collaboration were distributed across all Indiana CTSI institutions. For indicators, IUSM has the greatest number of documents with Notre Dame (ND) having the least; however, ND documents have the highest average (and average adjusted) citation counts and average number of authors per document. Main concepts falls into four categories, with recognition that no singular MeSH term exists to capture the social determinants of health concept.

Cross-institutional international collaborations for health equity research with CTSA-affiliated institutions (2008-2021)

