


## TRENDS AND INSIGHTS INTO EMPLOYABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A BIBLIOMETRIC PERSPECTIVE

**\*Rahul P R, \*\*Dr. Chithra P**

### Abstract

Bibliometric analysis is to uncover emerging trends in article and journal performance, collaboration patterns, and research constituents, and explore the intellectual structure of a specific domain in the extant literature. We used BiblioShiny through R Studio on 7913 documents to fetch databases from 2015 to 2025. This study identified relevant authors, highly cited publications, prominent themes and keywords, and co-citation networks. This article will help explore more into the areas of employability and higher education, which can guide policymakers and institutions in designing policies. The findings indicate that academic interest in employability in higher education is increasing, with a notable rise in publications since 2020 and a steady expansion in scholarly output. On the other hand, a downward trend in the average number of citations per article indicates both a decrease in the impact per article and an increase in publication volume. Key contributors, powerful nations like the UK and Australia, and important journals influencing the conversation are identified in the study. Key research issues, such as student employability, labour market alignment, curriculum design, and skill development, are focused on keyword and theme analyses.

**Keywords:-** Employability, Graduate Employability, Higher Education, Bibliometric Analysis and Research Trends.

mployability is the term used to describe a collection of accomplishments - skills, knowledge, and personal qualities - that improve graduates' chances of getting a job in their sector of choice. There has been a strong movement in higher

education toward the more active embedding of employability in curricula to meet increased employers' demands from graduates about the provision of both academic knowledge and skills directly applicable to the labour market.

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In the current scenario, the system of education does not focus properly on skills that can help in improving employability, and a large section of labour possesses outdated skills. India is the only country in the world that will see an absolute increase in its youth population by 2025. The Council of the Prime Minister for Skill Development has focused on setting the manpower target to achieve 500 million skilled workers by 2022. The target has been segmented into 20-odd ministries/departments, such as NSDC (Sanghi, 2012).

The purpose of this study is to present a bibliometric outlook on research trends in this discipline, illuminating the field's intellectual framework and highlighting the latest themes. Bibliometric analysis examines the social and structural relationships among various research components to provide a summary of a field's bibliometric and intellectual structure. It acts as a road map in research and helps understand the existing body of knowledge. The study showed the road map and pathways to scientifically understanding current and future research trends.

### Literature Review

(MARINA' et al., 2022) This aims to outline the research interest in analysing students' skills as a factor in increasing students' employability when pursuing internships in this study. In this regard, the author's goal is to analyze, using bibliometric methods, the features of the studies that are at the intersection of the three essential underlying economic concepts - internships, competencies/ skills/ abilities, and employability - published in the last 10 years.

(Dongna& Bin Amiruddin, 2024) Analyze the recent trends in the research area; identify major fields of scientific research activity; define stages of the profession's development, as well as crucial dynamics at the current stage; and further, prepare for the development of corresponding strategies for the future.

(Goia et al., 2022) This paper has attempted a bibliometric analysis of the available literature that analyzed the interaction of the three most key ideas, that is, internships, the skills of the students, and employability to better understand why there was such great interest in, and relevance for, this relationship.

(Dinh et al., 2023) Intention to document and analyze trends in research on employability over the past 38 years using a bibliometrics method, thus providing a better and more profound understanding of employability in the period from 1972 to 2019.

(Zakaria et al., 2024) It is anticipated that this study will shed light on the trends in publications and future developments on the connection between internships and employability. This information could be beneficial to companies for future hiring plans as well as to university administration for curriculum-related reasons.

(Masduki et al., 2022) It has used a typical bibliometric technique to analyse patterns in graduate employability research from 1986 to 2020. The study discovered a notable rise in the body of research on graduate employability as well as a sizable number of citations.

(Wahab et al., 2024) Investigated possibilities, trends, and directions in

graduate employability research in the current study. The results of the bibliometric analysis revealed that the most influential term is “intellectual network” among journal articles based on their publications and citations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the increasing number of research outputs, research on employability in higher education remains scattered, distributed across areas, and characterised by conceptual diversity. Researchers and practitioners still lack a clear, comprehensive picture of the development of studies on employability, including which issues have become notable, who the key researchers are, and which regions and institutions are at the forefront. Without this, identifying trends, co-operation, theoretical foundations, and gaps that drive progress is a challenge.

Moreover, the absence of a bibliometric overview makes it difficult for researchers to find key research that has a strong impact, key journals, and aspects that have received less attention, which has led to repeated efforts and untapped potential for both theoretical and empirical advancement.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study offers a thorough bibliometric summary of employability studies in higher education, which is valuable in both academic and practical areas. First, by methodically mapping the intellectual framework, major issues, and developing research trends in the context of employability - which is still a quickly expanding but dispersed field - it adds to the body of previous studies.

Second, the analysis provides a clear picture of the key contributors and knowledge centres by identifying relevant writers, journals, countries, and collaborative networks. This aids academics in identifying possible fields for co-operation and more study, particularly in understudied areas like developing countries.

### **Scope of the Study**

The current study emphasises on a bibliometric analysis of employability - related studies conducted in higher education between 2015 and 2025. Its foundation is secondary data that was gathered solely from the Scopus database, guaranteeing a thorough and trustworthy coverage of academic articles in the title. After applying inclusion criteria such as subject field, document type, language, and duplication removal, the analysis is restricted to 979 enhanced documents.

Examining publication trends, citation patterns, notable authors, prestigious journals, top nations, and cooperative networks are all included in the study's scope. In order to comprehend the field's intellectual evolution, it also addresses themes and conceptual structures through keyword analysis, co-occurrence networks, and thematic mapping.

### **Objectives**

- To analyze the bibliometric information of the fields of Employability and Higher Education.
- To identify the most cited sources, journals, authors, countries, references, and trend topics in the

field of Employability and Higher Education.

### Methodology

Bibliometric information on the field of Employability and higher education is analysed using Biblioshiny in R Studio. Secondary data are taken separately from Scopus in a suitable format for the period from 2015 to 2025 and then merged into a single .bib file using RStudio, which is ideal for analysis in Biblioshiny.

### *Search Procedure and Filters Applied*

- Search Procedures and Keywords: Data extracted from Scopus databases. Our research keywords include - “Employability and Higher Education.
- Data Filtering: Data were extracted from Scopus, which contained 7913 documents. Documents were refined based on the refining strategy, subject area, Document type, language, and open access.

After fine-tuning the data, documents were merged into a single .bib file; 1235 duplicate documents were removed and 979 documents were finally extracted. Figure 1 indicates the PRISMA strategy adopted in inclusion and extraction.

### Analysis and Results

The BiblioShiny package provides an interactive and user-friendly graphical interface for bibliometric analysis, even for those with little or no programming experience. Researchers and practitioners use it to explore trends in academic publishing, determine influential works and authors, and map an area’s intellectual structure.

### \*Annual Scientific Production

Table 1 presents the annual scientific production. The number of publications was 27 in 2015, which increased in 2020, and reached a maximum in 2024 (172).

The dataset represents a healthy increasing trend of publication activity over the past decade. It signals that the research environment is not only healthy but also extending.

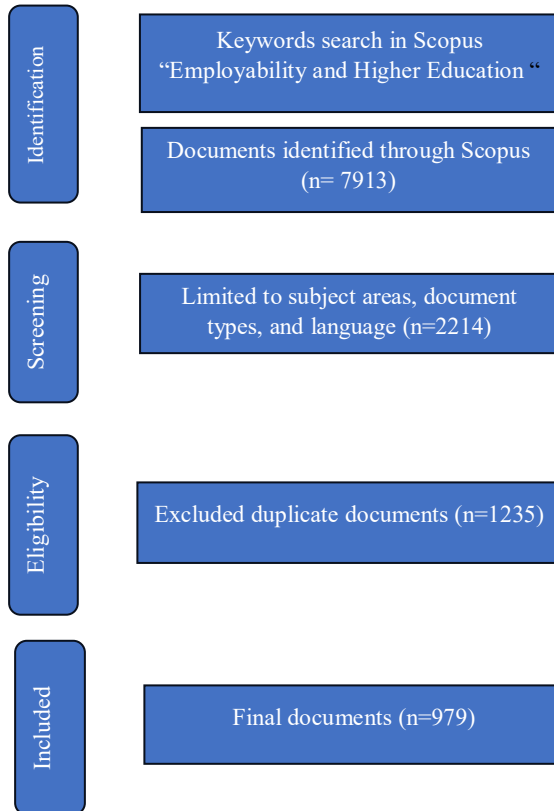
### \* Average Article Citations per Year

Table 2 shows the average citations per article and average article citations per year for the articles. MeanTCperArt (Mean Total Citations per Article) value has steadily declined from 18.04 in 2015 to 0.33 in 2025. The number of articles published annually increased notably, peaking at 172 in 2024. However, in 2025, it drops sharply to 3, likely indicating incomplete data for the year. The MeanTCperYear (Mean Total Citations per Year) value fluctuates but generally trends downward after peaking in 2017 (3.70). The number of citable years decreases steadily from 11 in 2015 to 1 in 2025.

According to the general trend, the average impact per article is decreasing even as more articles are being published. This can indicate a decline in the research’s perceived novelty or significance or a rise in competition for citations. The steep decrease in 2025 points to either insufficient data or an abrupt shift in publishing activity. Additional field context, citation guidelines, and publication regulations are needed to completely comprehend these developments.

**Figure 1**  
**PRISMA Model**

*Diagram showing the process of dataset extraction from Scopus*



**Table 1**  
**Annual Scientific Production**

Year	Articles
2015	27
2016	35
2017	47
2018	65
2019	96
2020	112
2021	121
2022	133
2023	168
2024	172
2025	3

*Source: Biblioshiny*

**Table 2**  
Average article citations

Year	MeanTCperArt	N	MeanTCperYear	Citable Years
2015	18.04	27.00	1.64	11
2016	21.43	35.00	2.14	10
2017	33.28	47.00	3.70	9
2018	24.42	65.00	3.05	8
2019	22.82	96.00	3.26	7
2020	15.87	112.00	2.64	6
2021	11.41	121.00	2.28	5
2022	9.06	133.00	2.27	4
2023	4.6	168.00	1.53	3
2024	1.53	172.00	0.76	2
2025	0.33	3.00	0.33	1

Source: Biblioshiny

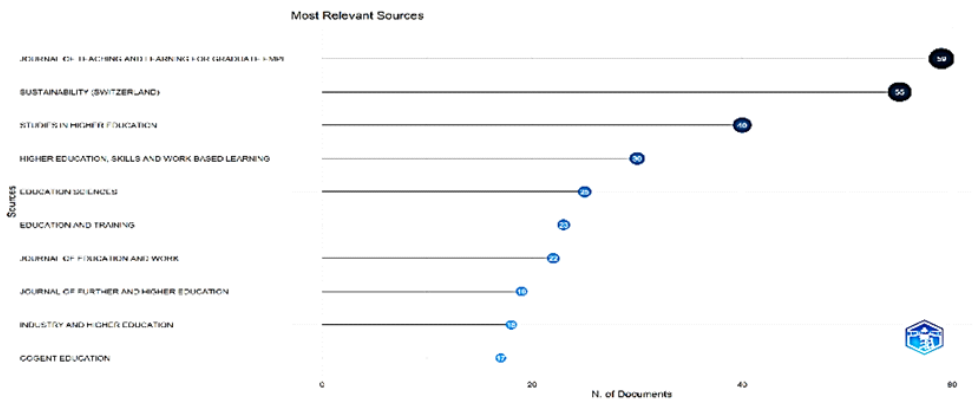
**\*Most Relevant Sources**

Figure 2 visualises the number of documents from various journals or sources. The horizontal axis (sources) represents the number of documents contributed by each source. Vertical Axis (Sources) listed the journal names or sources ranked by relevance.

The Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employment is the most important source, contributing the most

documents (59). Sustainability (Switzerland) is the second most significant source, contributing 55 documents. Journals like Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning (30 documents), Education Sciences (25), and Education and Training (23) contribute substantially. Fewer documents come from journals like Cogent Education (17) and Industry and Higher Education (18).

**Figure 2**  
Most relevant sources



Source: Biblioshiny

**\*Most Relevant Authors**

Figure 3 shows the significant authors. It is based on the number of documents they have authored.

The x-axis signifies the count of documents authored by each individual. The y-axis indicates the most significant authors contributing to the analyzed field. Bennett D stands out as the top contributor, with 20 documents authored. Jackson D (8 documents), Monteiro S (7), and Pham T (7) show significant moderate contributors to this topic. Lower Contributors, such as Beausaert S, Knight E, Bridgstock R, and Isopahkala-Bouret U each have 5 documents. Bennett D was the most voluminous author of work and his number of documents is almost twice that of the second most popular author. The distribution shows a sharp decline in the contribution of top-rank authors compared to lower-rankers.

**\*Most Cited Countries**

Here the table 3 shows a breakdown of total citations (TC) and average article citations across different countries.

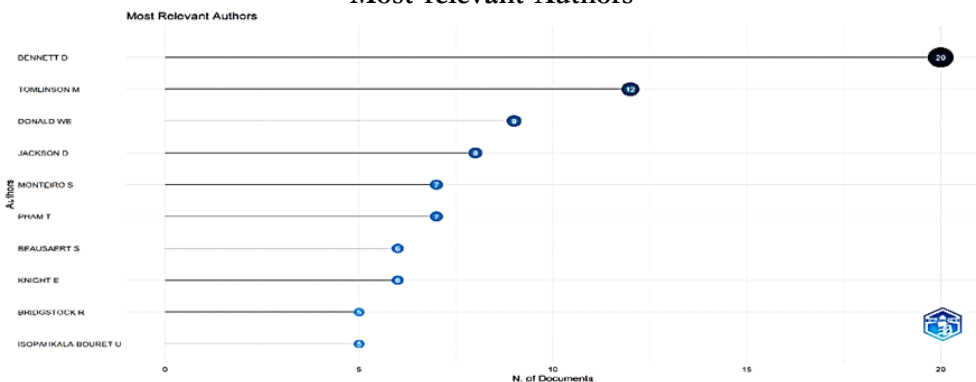
The UK boasts 4749 total citations, indicating a clear, dominant position in highly cited work creation. Chile has the biggest average number of article citations of 120.00, showing that its work is very impactful despite less frequent output. Spain (15.70) and Sweden (14.20) demonstrate consistent impacts per article and suitably contribute to their higher total citations. Malaysia and Finland have low average citations per article at 6.90 and 8.80, respectively, implying that their publications reach a smaller audience or have less influence.

**\*Trend Topics-Keywords**

The terms in the table 4 are included together with how frequently they occur, which probably indicates how important or common they are in a dataset, such as research articles or a conversation subject.

The frequent references to students, employment, and the labour market are a clear manifestation of interest in comprehension of the transition from education to employment and the difficulties students face in the process. In

**Figure 3**  
**Most relevant Authors**



Source: Biblioshiny

**Table 3**  
**Most cited countries**

Country	TC	Average Article Citations
UNITED KINGDOM	4749	17.70
AUSTRALIA	1415	11.10
SPAIN	1052	15.70
PORTUGAL	578	20.60
NETHERLANDS	414	20.70
CHILE	360	120.00
MALAYSIA	228	6.90
TURKEY	190	63.30
SWEDEN	170	14.20
FINLAND	105	8.80

*Source: Biblioshiny*

**Table 4**  
**Trend topics based on keywords**

Item	F
England	5
United Kingdom	6
Employability	21
Engineering	5
Higher education	82
Student	40
Students	34
Employment	43
University sector	29
Labour market	25

*Source: Biblioshiny*

addition, this focus on employability and the university sector throws into relief institutional responsibility in preparing students for professional life. This dataset probably connects to research or discussions on higher education, especially in the UK, about how institutions contribute to employability and prepare students for the labour market. The presence of “engineering” may show a case study or specialised interest within this broader field.

**Findings and Suggestions**

According to the study, the number of publications on employability in higher education increased steadily between 2015 and 2024, exhibiting an increase in scholarly interest in the area. Research influence is focused among a small number of relevant individuals, as evidenced by the substantial contributions made by a small number of writers and publications to the subject. The previous studies’ main topics include curriculum

design, student skills and competences, labour market alignment, and employability and higher education. Research primarily emphasises the graduate transition from education to job, as seen by the prevalence of keywords like students, employment, and labour market.

Innovative and important research should take precedence over merely increasing the number of publications. In addition to theoretical knowledge, universities should place a strong emphasis on employability skills, soft skills, and practical skills. The results of the study should be used by policymakers to create employment and education programs that work. To increase graduate employability, universities should fortify their connections with businesses through training, internships, and co-operative initiatives.

### Limitations of the Study

Although bibliometric analysis is a valuable tool, it has its limitations. These include possible biases in database coverage, an inability to evaluate the qualitative aspects of research, and the

omission of publications not included in indexing systems. Overcoming these issues, calls for a holistic approach that integrates bibliometric techniques with qualitative assessments.

### Conclusion

This bibliometric analysis found relevant trends in employability research within higher education. As institutions continue to adapt their curricula to meet workforce demands, current research will be required to identify effective practices and foster collaboration among key stakeholders. Future studies should focus on longitudinal analyses to assess the long-term impact of educational interventions on graduate employability.

The findings show that while there is a robust body of literature addressing employability in higher education, gaps remain in aligning educational outcomes with labour market requirements. The transfer of responsibility for graduate employability from government entities to HEIs necessitates a re-evaluation of institutional strategies to make sure that graduates are well-prepared for employment challenges.

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Published in 2007

Pages 114

Priced Rs. 80

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