

Bibliometric Review of Employee Engagement and Employee Retention: Trends, Influential Factors and Future Research Paths

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement and employee retention in the current corporate world seems to be a very important point of discussion for all the stakeholders. As the working conditions and other scenarios are changing by each passing day, these two concepts have caught the attention of scholars and business leaders. The increase in research work related to employee engagement and employee retention has tendered the requirement for a comprehensive study in this subject. To take care of this issue, few scholars have conducted research in this field from various viewpoints. However, a good number of research work has not been conducted related to the concepts of employee engagement and employee retention with the help of bibliometric analysis. In this research work, an endeavor was made to analyze publications related to employee engagement and employee retention with the help of bibliometric analysis and for this the Scopus database was used. Various research works in the form of papers, articles, conferences papers, book, book papers among others were taken from Scopus database from 2006 to August 2024. Six research questions were formulated and the data was then analyzed against it. The results disclosed about the main information about data, annual scientific production, most relevant sources, most relevant authors, most relevant affiliations and corresponding authors countries. All these aspects have discussed in detail in the relevant sections of the research questions. These findings will prove to be source of valuable literature for future research scholars in the times to come in relation to employee engagement and employee retention.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Employee Retention, Bibliometric Analysis, Scopus Database.

INTRODUCTION:

Employee retention and employee engagement have developed as pivotal apparatuses of company prosperity in a progressively aggressive international market (Balakrishnan et al., 2013). The capability of a company to preserve talented employees and foment engagement among them is imperative for sustaining efficiency, decreasing employee turnover, and developing market leadership (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). In the last few years, these subjects have given utter-most importance in both scholastic research and company proceedings, mainly due to the increasing awareness that employee-associated aspects are essential in attaining competitive advantage in the times to come (Albrecht et al., 2015).

Employee retention means the company's capability to retain its skilled personnels over a long period of time, decreasing their turnover rate and its connected costs. Excess employee turnover means more monetary expenses in terms of selection process, training & development costs and decreased efficiency (Aman-Ullah et al., 2020). Going beyond the monetary expenses, high turnover rates can disturb the company's working environment and destructively effect employee efficiency, which leads to a deterioration in its productivity (Samuel & Chipunza 2009).

Employee engagement, alternatively means the degree to which employees are emotionally involved in their day to day working and how much they are devoted to their working environment (Gupta, 2015). There are high chances of probability that committed employees are more likely to display extra sense of belongingness in relation to their job, and at the end of the day contribute more in making the workplace environment more positive (Bakker et al., 2012). The notion of employee engagement goes much beyond the definition of 'job satisfaction' as it also incorporates the emotional and intellectual features of an employee's connection with their job (Vorina, 2017).

The association between these two concepts is inherently connected, because the engaged employees tend to stay with the company for longer periods of time. Various researches have proved that engagement acts as a forecaster for the parameter of turnover intention (Edwards-Dandridge et al., 2020). Rich et al., (2010) have confirmed that engaged employees have a higher level of commitment and generally does not seek any other employment opportunities. This means that bettering engagement has proved to be a zealous tactic in taking care of the retention aspect.

Companies that take care of employee engagement have had less employee turnover ratio, because this aspect cultivates a feeling of belongingness and commitment among the people (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Moreover, engaged employees have a tendency to evolve convalescent bonds with their co-workers and are more committed to achieve the company's objectives, further decreasing the chances of their leaving the job (Zhao et al., 2012). Hence, knowing the relationship between these two aspects is vital for constructing efficient H.R. policies that take out of the company's well-being, monetary growth among others.

The studies related to both these concepts have evolved significantly in the last few years, showing the increasing significance of these two areas in the corporate world. Initial research was mainly interested in finding out the parameters which contributed to employee turnover ratio (Khulbe et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the studies in the present times focus on finding the mental and sentimental facets that effect these two concepts (Alias et al., 2014).

Bibliometric research on these two topics have found out that numerous key tendencies and evolving topics in the present times. For instance, there has been an evident rise in studies related to understanding the role of leadership in promoting employee retention and engagement (Chandani et al., 2016). Research have also analysed the effect of work-life balance, organizational culture and employee well-being on these two concepts (Houssein et al., 2020). However, the increase in work-from-home and flexible working techniques have increased new threats and possibilities for companies to retain and engage their employees (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020).

Along with all these tendencies, the scholars have gradually given importance to the role of technology in determining these two concepts. The arrival of digital technology and platforms have completely shaped the manner in which the companies communicate their employees, take care of their performance and give guidance (Kaur, 2017). Studies have also depicted that digital tools can improve employee engagement by enabling teamwork, giving synchronous assessment, and providing customized growth (Eickemeyer et al., 2021). However, this aspect also has its own set of problems, for instance the disorientation of fringes between personal and professional life, which can sceptically effect employee retention if not take care in the right manner (Khan, 2020).

Therefore, this research makes an endeavour to explore various research studies published on employee engagement and employee retention with the help of bibliometric analysis. This research with the help of Scopus database summarizes the research papers published on employee engagement and employee retention. This paper has been classified in the following manner. Section 1 is about the introduction on employee retention and employee engagement. Section 2 defines the methods employed in this research. Section 3 depicts the results of the bibliometric analysis. Section 4 discuss the results as per the requirement. Section 5 provides the conclusion of the research and directions for future studies.

METHODS:

This segment contains the research objectives and data set extraction.

Research Questions: The primary objective of this research is to examine the concept of employee engagement and employee retention with the help of bibliometric analysis of those papers that are indexed in Scopus database. To achieve this goal, some research questions have been formulated and these questions along with their importance are depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1 - RESEARCH QUESTIONS WITH THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

Sl. No.	Research Question	Significance
1	What is the Main Information about Data	This will help to know about the sources of data along with key-words, time-span, citation metrics and publication trends.
2	What is Annual Scientific Production	This will help us to know the total articles published, mirroring research output and trends in a specified time period.
3	What are the Most Relevant Sources	This helps to know about the top journals, data-bases or published papers that have immensely contributed to our research topic.
4	What are the Most Relevant Authors	This will assist in knowing about those authors who have published largely and articles cite them, as they can influence the output to a great extent.
5	What are the Most Relevant Affiliations	This will help to know about the author's affiliations and how their output can influence concepts related to this subject
6	What are the Corresponding Author's Countries	This helps to know the geographical pattern of the research which then highlights the area's specific output.

Source: Authors Calculation

Data Extraction:

For extracting the data, it is very imperative to select the suitable search engine and therefore, Scopus was chosen. Scopus was selected for the following reasons: **a)** Scopus quality and citation are recognized world-wide. **b)** Its research work is of very high quality. **c)** Its measures quality in different parameters. This search was done till August, 2024.

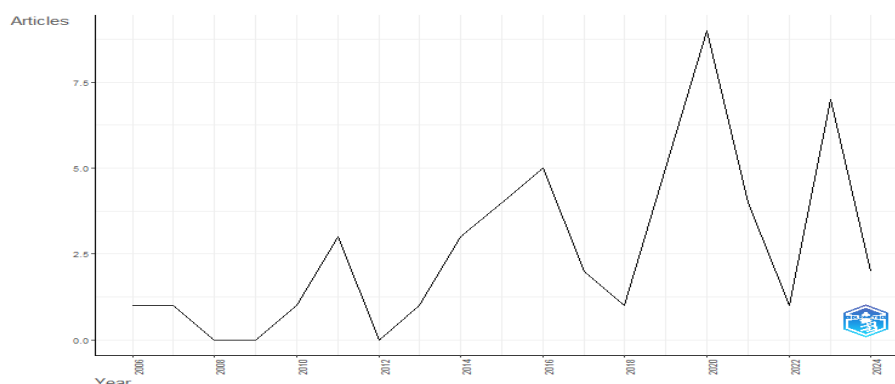
RESULTS:

In this segment, analysis of bibliometric data-base is depicted. This work was done conducted in such a manner that all the such questions would be answered.

Main Information about Data: The timespan for conducting this research work was between 2006 to August 2024. The sources include 39 journals and 50 documents. The annual growth rate was 3.93% and document average age was 6.14. The average citations per document was 42.54 and number of references were 3283. The document contents include keywords plus (ID) which were 190 and author's keywords (DE) were 143. The total number of articles were 159 and authors of single-authored documents were 3. The authors collaboration details are single-documents were 3, co-authors per documents were 3.22 and the percent of international co-authorship was 26%. The details of document types include 47 articles, 1 article (early access) and 2 reviews.

Annual Scientific Production: Figure 1 shows the annual scientific production in which it is visible that 1 article each was published in 2006 and 2007. No articles were published in 2008 and 2009. In 2010 and 2011, 1 and 3 articles were published respectively. No article in 2012 and 1 article in 2013. In 2014, 3 articles were published and 4 articles were published in 2015. In 2016, 5 articles were published and 2 articles in 2017. In 2018, 1 article and 5 articles published in 2019. 9 articles in 2020 and 4 were published in 2021. 1 article in 2022, 7 articles in 2023 and 2 articles in 2024.

FIGURE 1 - ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION



Source: Authors Calculation

Most Relevant Sources: Figure 2 depicts the most relevant sources (journals) for employee engagement and employee retention. The most relevant source was Sustainability with 8 articles. Frontiers in Psychology, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Journal of Psychology in Africa and Personal Review with 2 articles each. All the other journals had just 1 article published and some of the details are visible in Figure 2.

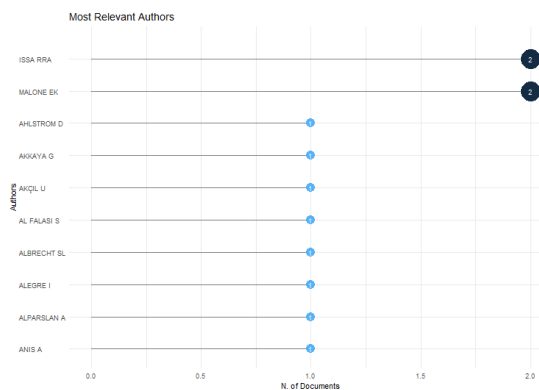
FIGURE 2 – MOST RELEVANT SOURCES



Source: Authors Calculation

Most Relevant Authors: Figure 3 shows those authors who have published the most in this subject. The authors with the highest number of publications in this field are Rra Issa and EK Malone with 2 articles each and the rate of article fractionalized was 1. Beside the above 2 authors there were 157 more who have published at least 1 article in this subject. Some of them are depicted in Figure 3.

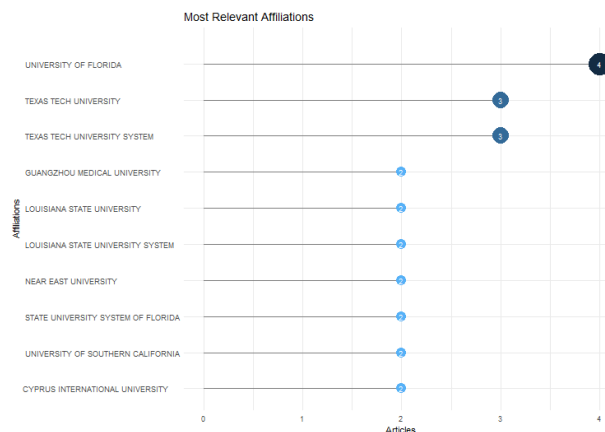
FIGURE 3 – MOST RELEVANT AUTHORS



Source: Authors Calculation

Most Relevant Affiliations: Figure 4 shows the authors affiliations and the maximum number of authors i.e. 4 were affiliated to University of Florida. 3 authors were affiliated to Texas Tech University and Texas Tech University System. 2 authors were affiliated to Guangzhou Medical University, Louisiana State University, Louisiana State University System, Near East University, State University of Florida, University of Southern California, Cyprus International University and Near East University. Beside these 103 authors were affiliated to different universities and intuitions across the globe.

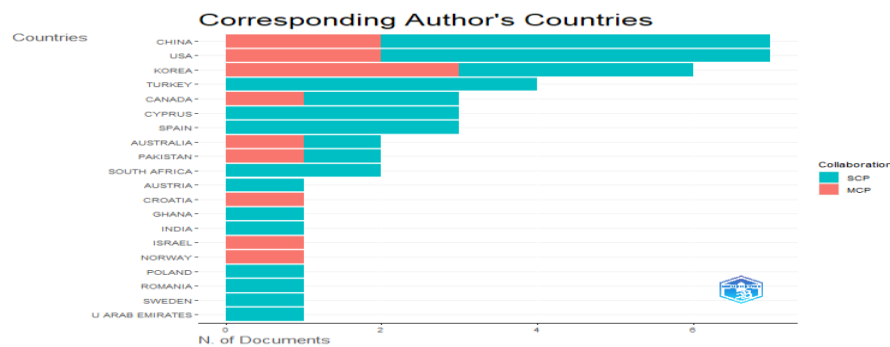
FIGURE 4 – MOST RELEVANT AFFILIATIONS



Source: Authors Calculation

Corresponding Author's Countries: Figure 5 demonstrates the nationality of the corresponding authors. The largest number of corresponding authors were 7 and their nationality was Chinese and Americans. The Korean authors occupied the second spot with 6 articles. The Turkish authors were next in the list with 4 articles. The Canadian along with Cypriot and Spanish had 3 articles each. The Australian, Pakistanis and South Africans authors had 2 research articles each. The authors from Austria, Croatia, Ghana, India, Israel, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden, UAE and UK had 1 article each.

FIGURE 5 – CORRESPONDING AUTHOR'S COUNTRIES



Source: Authors Calculation

DISCUSSIONS:

In this part, the responses to research questions articulated in the methodology segment are deliberated as per the requirement of the study:

RQ1: What is the main information about data?

Discussion: The time-span taken for this research work was between 2006 to August, 2024. In this duration, 39 journals and 50 document were published along with an annual growth rate of 3.93%. The average citations per document was 42.54, number of references were 3283 and it included 190 keywords plus (ID). Single-authored documents were 3, co-authors per documents were 3.22 and the percent of international co-authorship was 26%.

RQ2: What is Annual Scientific Production?

Discussion: No articles were published in 2008, 2009 and 2012. 1 article each was published in 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2018 and 2022. 2 articles were published in 2017 and 2024. 3 articles were published in 2011 and 2014. 4 articles were articulated in 2015 and 2021. 5 articles in 2016 and 2019. 7 articles were published in 2023 and 9 in 2020.

RQ3: What are the Most Relevant Sources?

Discussion: The most relevant sources mainly research journals and edited books are spread out across all the subject specific journals. The most relevant source (journal) was Sustainability with 8 articles. Frontiers in Psychology, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Journal of Psychology in Africa and Personal Review with 2 articles each. All the other journals had just 1 article published related to our topic.

RQ4: What are the Most Relevant Authors?

Discussion: This section discusses all those authors who have mainly worked in this area and it can be seen that Rra Issa and EK Malone top the list with 2 articles and beside them 157 more authors have published articles related to this area.

RQ5: What are the Most Relevant Affiliations?

Discussion: This section discusses about the affiliations of the authors who have published their research work in this field. In this it can be seen that University of Florida (4), Texas Tech University (3), Texas Tech University System (3), Guangzhou Medical University (2), Louisiana State University (2), Louisiana State University System (2), Near East University (2), State University of Florida (2), University of Southern California (2), Cyprus International University (2), Near East University (2) and other than these 103 were affiliated to different universities.

RQ6: What are the Corresponding Author's Countries?

Discussion: This section discusses about the nationalities of the authors who have published their research work in this field. In this it can be seen that from China (7), USA (7), Korea (6), Turkey (4), Canada (3), Spain (3), Cyprus (3), Australia (2), Pakistan (2), South Africa (2), Austria (2), Croatia (2), Ghana (2), India (2), Israel (2), Norway (2), Poland (2), Romania (2), Sweden (2), UAE (2) and UK (2).

Theoretical Implications: This research work has made efforts to add the following to the existing field of knowledge, **a)** This work makes a sincere attempt to study the concepts related to employee engagement and employee retention. **b)** The output derived with the help of bibliometric analysis will present a few vital insinuations for future works by providing them a novel route for investigations in this field.

Limitations of the Study: This work reconnoitres numerous and linked probable future research in employee engagement and employee retention which may contain published work on high citation research including technical characteristics by employing various kinds of database like Web of Sciences and others available in the internet databases to cross-check the resemblance of this work.

CONCLUSION:

In this work, a bibliometric analysis related to the concept of employee engagement and employee retention was conducted. The papers were taken from a time period of 2006 to August, 2024 covering all the research papers and documents published, which were related to this concept. It is concluded from the work that these two concepts had a slow start in terms of research publications but gradually the trend caught up and peaked in the year 2020. After this year there was an increase in the year 2023 but overall, the trend seems to decrease. The most relevant journal related to this concept was Sustainability and others had a small but significant contribution. Rra Issa and EK Malone are the two authors who seems to contribute the most to this field. Most of the authors were affiliated to the University of Florida and the maximum number of authors belonged to USA and China.

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