

A Bibliometric Analysis On The Role Of Psychological Contract In Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

The research delivered a wide-ranging bibliometric study about the influence of psychological contract on enhancing organizational commitment. It employ Biblioshiny to scrutinize 253 publications between 1991 and 2025 retrieved from Scopus and Web of Science. It also examines Publications trends, leading sources, renowned authors, keyword co-occurrence and collaboration networks. The most common topics include job satisfaction, emotional commitment, and psychological contract breach and research interests have been gradually growing, the data show. Work on thematic mapping and coupling of authors also shed light not only existing areas such as those of normative and continuance commitment, transactional and relational contract but also emerging ones like the linkage between these very types of contracts. Most studies take place in the West, suggesting the requirement for more longitudinal and cross-cultural work. In defining the intellectual and co-creative basis of the field, this paper offers significant input for scholarly reflection on future research agendas and real-world applications. The paper points out the importance of the psychological contract as a key construct that explains employees' behavior and their loyalty to the organization.

Keywords: - Psychological Contract, Organizational Commitment, Bibliometric Analysis, Affective Commitment, Job Satisfaction

1. Introduction

In today's business world, achieving one's long-term goals demands single-minded commitment to the cause. Management of human resources contributes directly to the construction of health-promoting work environments, including employee well-being and job satisfaction which are two factors underlying commitment (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Tiwari & Singh, 2014). According to Rousseau (1995) and Buchann (1974), "an individual's belief in mutual commitments in the employment relationship" (the "psychological contract") governs the dynamic between the firm and the employee, which is the basis of this commitment. When workers believe their employer keeps its word, they are more invested emotionally, which is known as affective commitment. Job performance improves, absenteeism and turnover decrease, and Rousseau and Parks (1993), among others (Betazones & Paz, 2007; guest, 1998; Zaragoza & Solanes Puchol, 2013). A psychological contract breached as a result of unmet expectations can have a negative impact on the quality of the working relationship, trust and ideas of Justice (Robinson, 1996; Cantisano et al., 2008).

Depending on whether they are characterized by a long-term emotional investment or a more transactional focus, psychological contracts can be either relational or transactional (MacNeil,

1985; Rousseau, 1995). The three elements of organizational commitment that Meyer and Allen (1991) identify-affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment-are impacted by the various types of contracts. Some researchers contend that normative commitment is more commonly associated with relational contracts- which cultivate a feeling of moral commitment and shared intent- than with psychological contracts-which are typically of moral commitment and shared intent-than with psychological contracts-which are typically associated with affective commitment (Bunderon, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Contributions motivated by necessity rather than commitment are common in transactional contracts. Organizational commitment and the psychological contract are intricate dynamics that influence the strength and quality of this commitment. Understanding employee behaviour and the organization's overall effectiveness requires an understanding of these factors, which are influenced by demographic and situational factors like age and job (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019).

Although there is a solid conceptual foundation in the available literature, there has been a lack of a thorough, data driven analysis of the literature regarding the function of the psychological contract in organizational commitment. Prior bibliometric research, such as the one that examined data from 1994 to 2018 using exclusively Web of Science database records, provided the initial mapping. However, this study had a limited reach. To make up for this shortcoming and give a more comprehensive and strong picture, the current study, "A Bibliometric Analysis on the Role of Psychological Contract in Organizational commitment," greatly increases the data corpus. By combining papers from Scopus with the Web of Science, it provides a more comprehensive and representative sample of intellectual production. The Biblioshiny tool is utilized in this research to do a thorough examination of multiple important bibliometric variables. Here we can see the most cited countries to get a feel for how the field is growing, the most cited sources and authors to identify influential thinkers, the publishing trend to track how the field is evolving, and the keyword co-occurrence to get a feel the main ideas and how they relate to one another. In addition, the research uses a thematic map to identify themes related to development, basic concepts, and specialization, and it makes use of advanced network analysis like author cluster mapping and collaboration networks to show how the research community is socially structured. Using more complete data using improved analytical methods the intent of this research is to develop a scientific map, including its intellectual and collaborative trajectory over time.

2. Bibliometric Research Method

2.1 Data source and search strategy

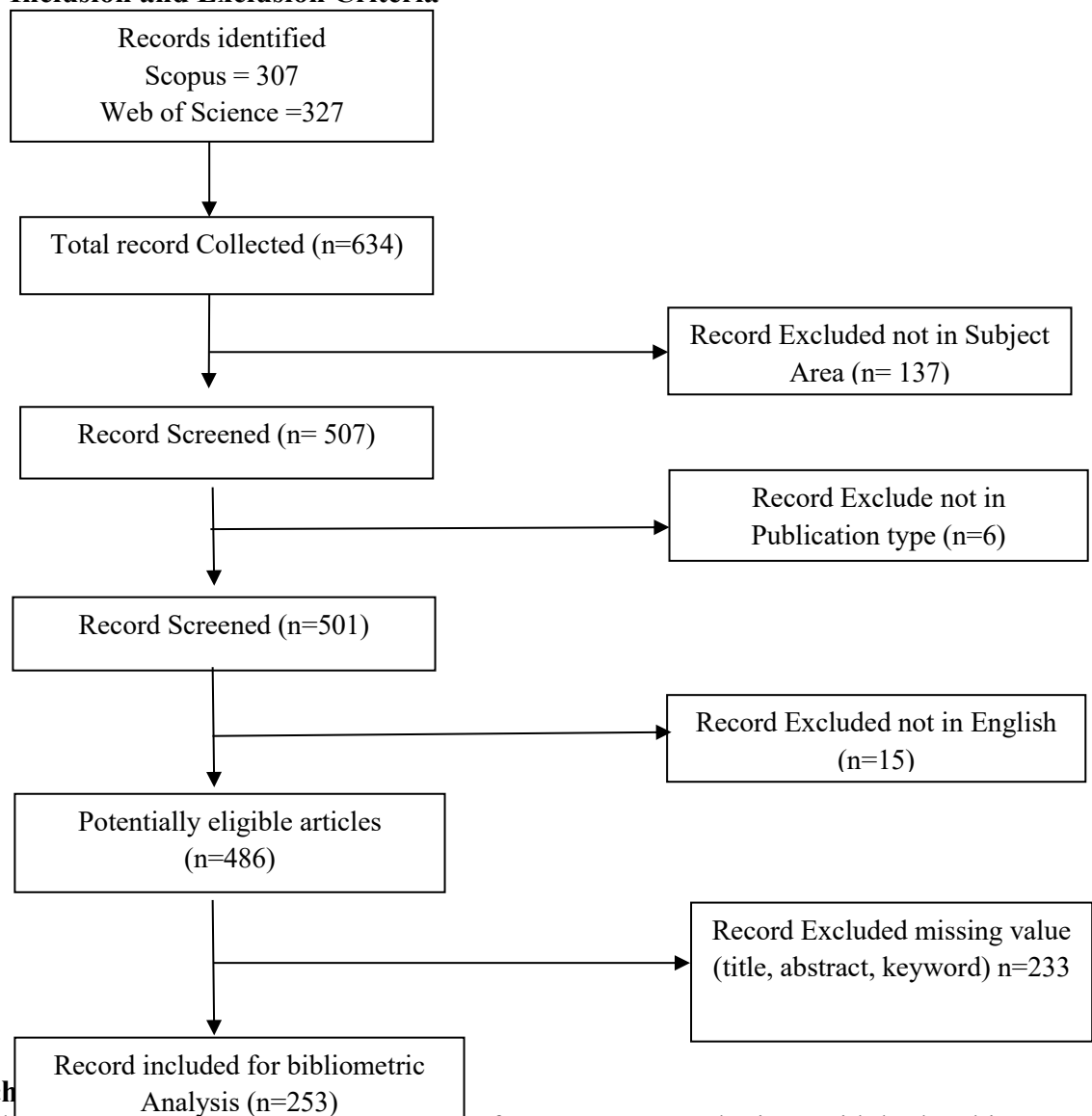
This bibliometric study followed a planned and methodical procedure; including searching the SCOPUS and Web of Science databases and selecting appropriate material. In the title, abstract, and keywords fields on September 24, 2025, the combined search phrases "Psychological Contract" OR "Unwritten Expectation" OR "Mutual Obligations" OR "Employee-Employer Relationship" and "Organizational Commitment" OR "Employment Commitment" OR "Job Commitment" were presented. The search query was narrowed down to the Years 1991-2025 in the Scopus database and 1993-2025 in the Web of Science database in order to capture a contemporary panorama of research. Figure 1 shows that initial search yielded 307 Scopus articles and 327 Web of Science Publications.

To ensure the dataset remains valuable and accurate, it was put through a series of screening procedures. Initially, 92 papers were removed from the Web of Science database and 35 articles were removed from Scopus because they did not comply with the relevant subject

areas, which encompassed the social sciences, accounting, business, management, and psychology. After sorting 6 documents by publication type in Scopus, only articles, conference papers, book chapters, and reviews remained. Following this, 6 articles from Web of Science and 9 from Scopus were removed due to language filtering issues. This process resulted in the retention of 229 Web of Science articles and 257 Scopus articles for the purpose of quality control.

Duplicate entry screening, author information accuracy confirmation, and content relevance assessment were the three stages of a quality review. Due to concerns about duplicate or inaccurate author information, no record was rejected. In the content screening step, 108 publications from Scopus and 125 from Web of Science were removed from consideration due to their lack of relation to the study's aims in the titles, abstracts, and keywords. Figure 1 shows that 253 articles were finally included in the final corpus; 149 of these articles were found in Scopus and 104 in web of Science.

Figure 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria



2.2 Search

The search was conducted by expert consultations with both subject-matters and methodological experts. The SCOPUS query was used: (TITLE-ABS-

KEY("psychological contract" OR "unwritten expectations" OR "mutual obligations" OR "employee-employer relationship") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY("organizational commitment" OR "employee commitment" OR "job commitment")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"re") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"ch") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"cp")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE,"English"))

The Web of Science query was used: "psychological contract" OR "unwritten expectations" OR "mutual obligation" OR "employee-employer relationship" (All Fields) AND "organizational commitment" OR "employee commitment" OR "job commitment" (All Fields) and Management or Psychology Applied or Business or Social Sciences Interdisciplinary (Web of Science Categories) and Article or Review Article or Early Access or Proceeding Paper (Document Types) and English (Languages)

3. Findings

3.1. Performance Analysis

With respect to the effect of the psychological contract on organizational commitment, Figure 2 shows the yearly contributions to the field from 1991 through 2025. A rising tide of academic interest has been reflected in the steadily increasing number of publications on this subject since the turn of the millennium. Variations in research production have been rather noticeable; after reaching a peak in 2016, there was a brief dip, and then there has been a recent upturn. The rising trend, a dip, and subsequent rise again in the last several years. The growing trend shows that the psychological contract, particularly organizational commitment, has been more studied in the last 30 years, which is a good thing because it means that people are starting to realize how important it is to understand the dynamics between employers and employees and organizational efficacy.

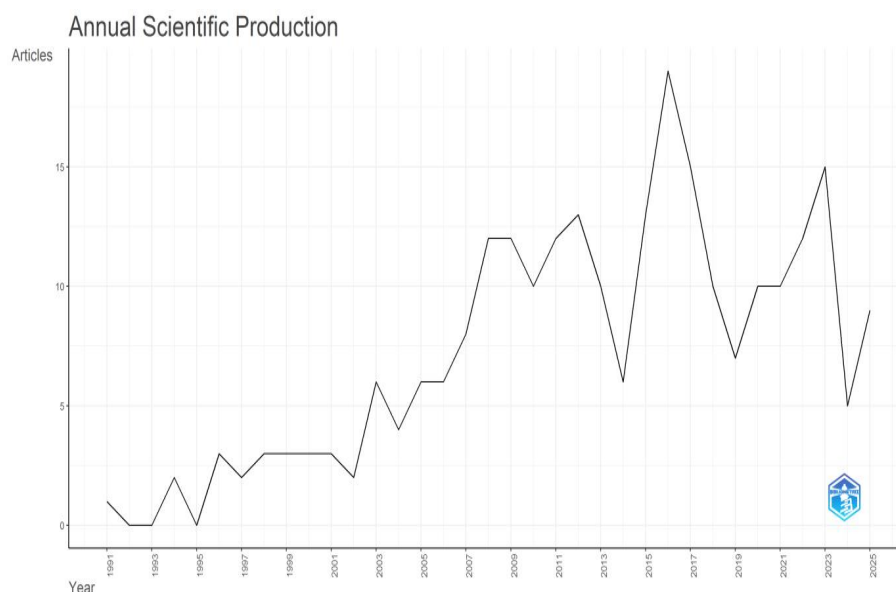


Figure 2: Annual Scientific Production

3.2. Most relevant sources

Figure 3 delineates the principal sources disseminating research on psychological contracts and organizational commitment. The *International Journal of Human Resource management*

leads with 17 articles, followed by the *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* with 9 articles, and both *Employee relations* and the *Journal of Managerial psychology* with 8 articles each. *Career Developments International* and the *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* each comprise 6 publications, supplemented by contributions from journals including *Frontiers in Psychology* and *Personnel Review*. This trend indicates that research on psychological contracts and organizational commitment encompasses various disciplines, including management, psychology and organizational studies.

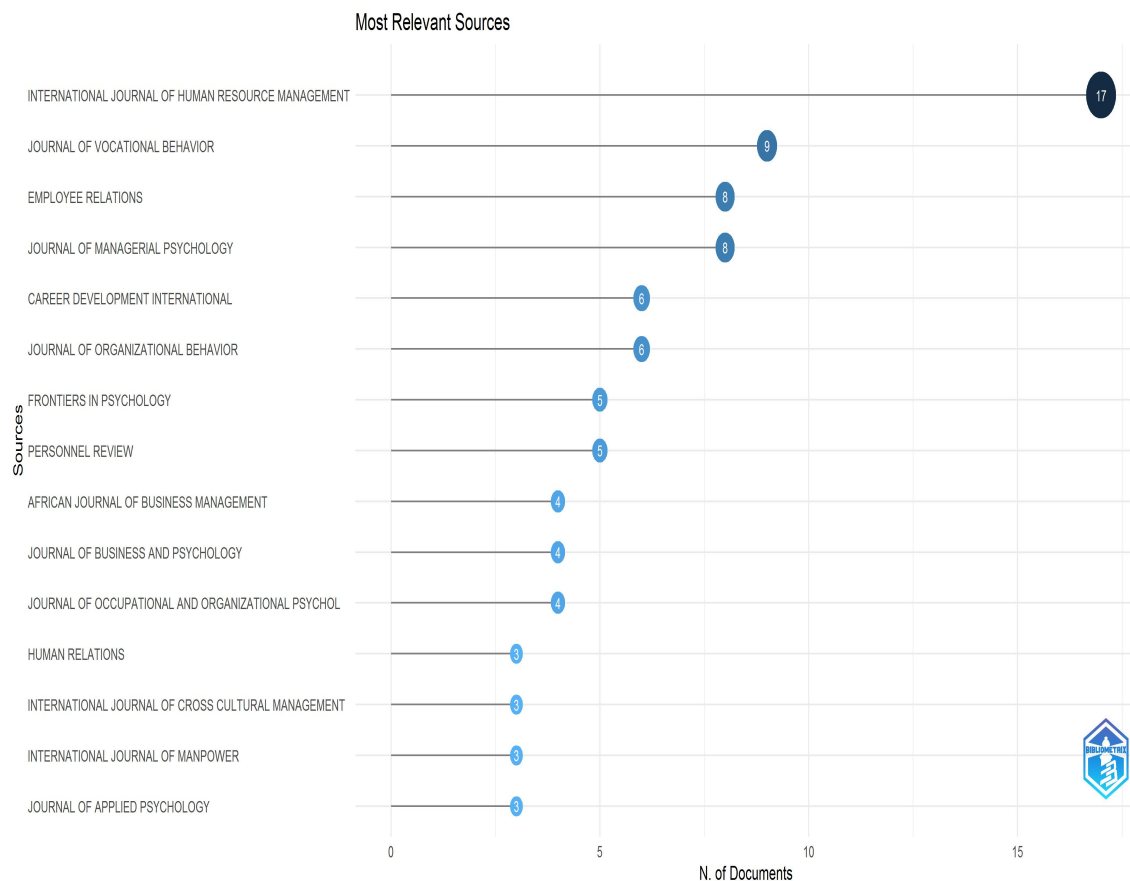


Figure 3: Most relevant source

3.3. Most Cited Countries

Figure 4 shows the country that research on psychological contracts and organizational commitment most frequently cites. With 1552 citations, the United Kingdom is in first place, followed by the United States with 1124 and Israel with 942. Canada, Belgium, and Australia are other significant providers, with 583, 382 and 297 citations, respectively. With citation counts ranging from 36 to 170, countries such as Ireland, Slovenia, China, India, France, and Uganda are also represented, but to a lesser extent. While contributions from other areas show a rising interest in the subject globally, this pattern suggests that study in this discipline is mainly focused in Western nations.



According to bibliometric study of recent research, the psychological contract is a key idea in studying organizational commitment. Key terminology frequently associated with this connection, such as *human resource management*, *psychological contract breach*, and *job satisfaction*, demonstrate its intricate and comprehensive nature. The fact that terms such as "employee attitudes," "employment" and "personal loyalty" appear so frequently here suggests that psychological contracts have a significant impact on how employees perceive and relate to the work organization. Figure 5 also depicts that psychological contracts fit into a broader organizational context (of *leadership*, *workplace*, and *organization* culture among others). To help create a more amiable work environment, as well as enhance levels of commitment, results emphasize the role of regulating psychological expectations.



3.5. Coupling Map

The author coupling based cluster map demonstrates that how the related subject area researchers cooperate and there is a comprehensive and panoramic view of the subjects' difference in the literature. In terms of psychological contracts and organizational commitment, which in the base map appears as a complex network of nodes representing different academic tracks. *Work performance, psychological contract, and organisational commitment* form one such significant group which is both influential and moderately central indicating it is an established collection of knowledge. The other cluster is affective commitment that entails *job satisfaction and psychological contracts*. While this need not carry the same weight, it is still a significant factor in scholarship, where millions of fringes but worthwhile contributions gain focus. The third large category concentrates on the individual, the psychological contentment and questions regarding people at work. Although there is little empirical research on these topics, they are so pertinent and so influential that they can be seen constantly debated. In contrast, *relational psychological contract, transactional psychological contact and psychological contract violation* are placed between the lower influential less central quadrant. This may indicate that these fields are either still in their infancy or less mature. Together these groups suggest the rich diversity and scope of psychological contract research and to its relevance as a touchstone for both scholars and practitioners in terms of understanding how organizations function and employees are motivated.

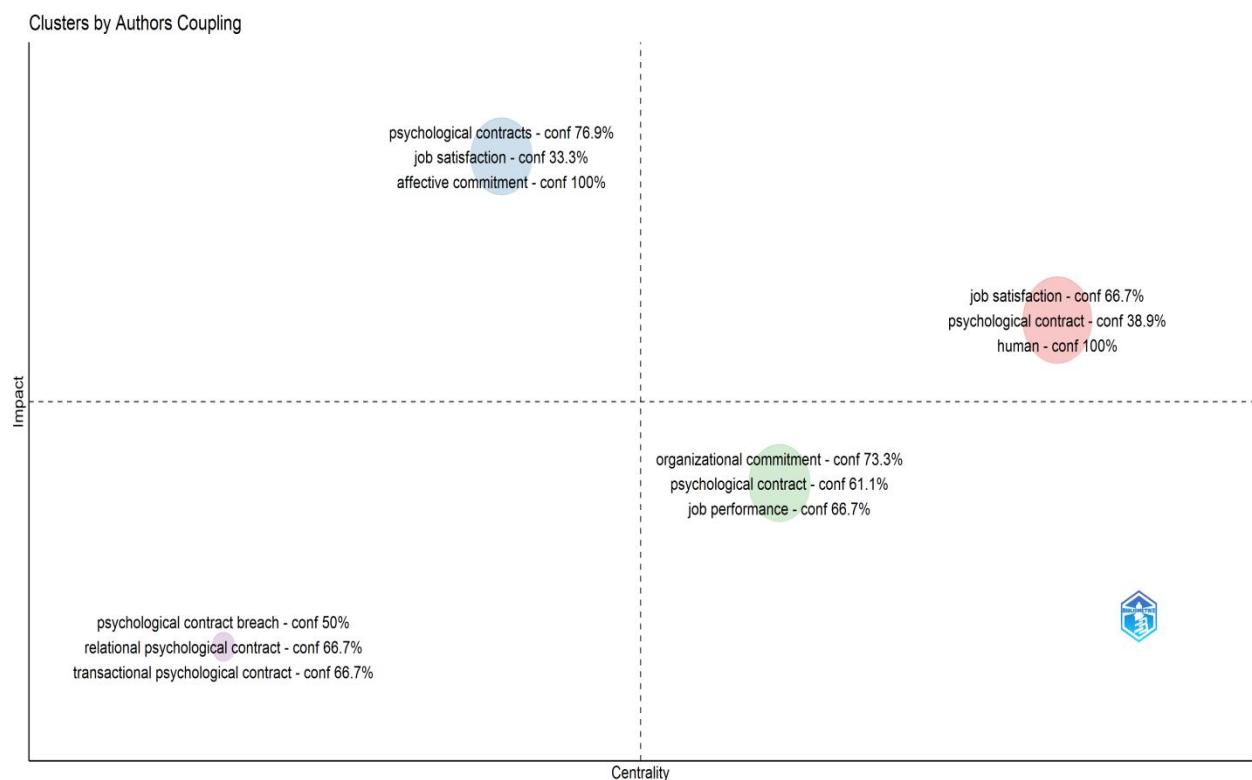


Figure 6: Clusters by Authors Coupling

3.6. Thematic map

A thematic map (see Figure 7) clarifies the field's conceptual structure whilst focusing on the relevance of psychological contract as it relates to organizational commitment. The terms "psychological contract," "organizational commitment," and "psychological contracts" are slightly dense and highly central in the **Basic Themes quadrant**. This demonstrates that

these are important, live and complex issues, where we have work to do. The high centrality and density of terms such as “humans”, “job satisfaction” and “humans” are in the **Motor Themes quadrant**, which suggest that these words have wielded influence over research in this field for many years. In contrast, relationship and transactional psychological contracts are located in the upper left of **Niche Themes** indicating they are niche topics with low connectivity. Employment contracts, India, and scale validation are all terms that fall into the Emerging or Declining topics category, which is located in the lower left quadrant. It also indicates areas where interest may be **increasing or diminishing**. By this categorization of related ideas, we illuminate the psychological contract as a significant factor for OCD examination and present new opportunities in this branch.

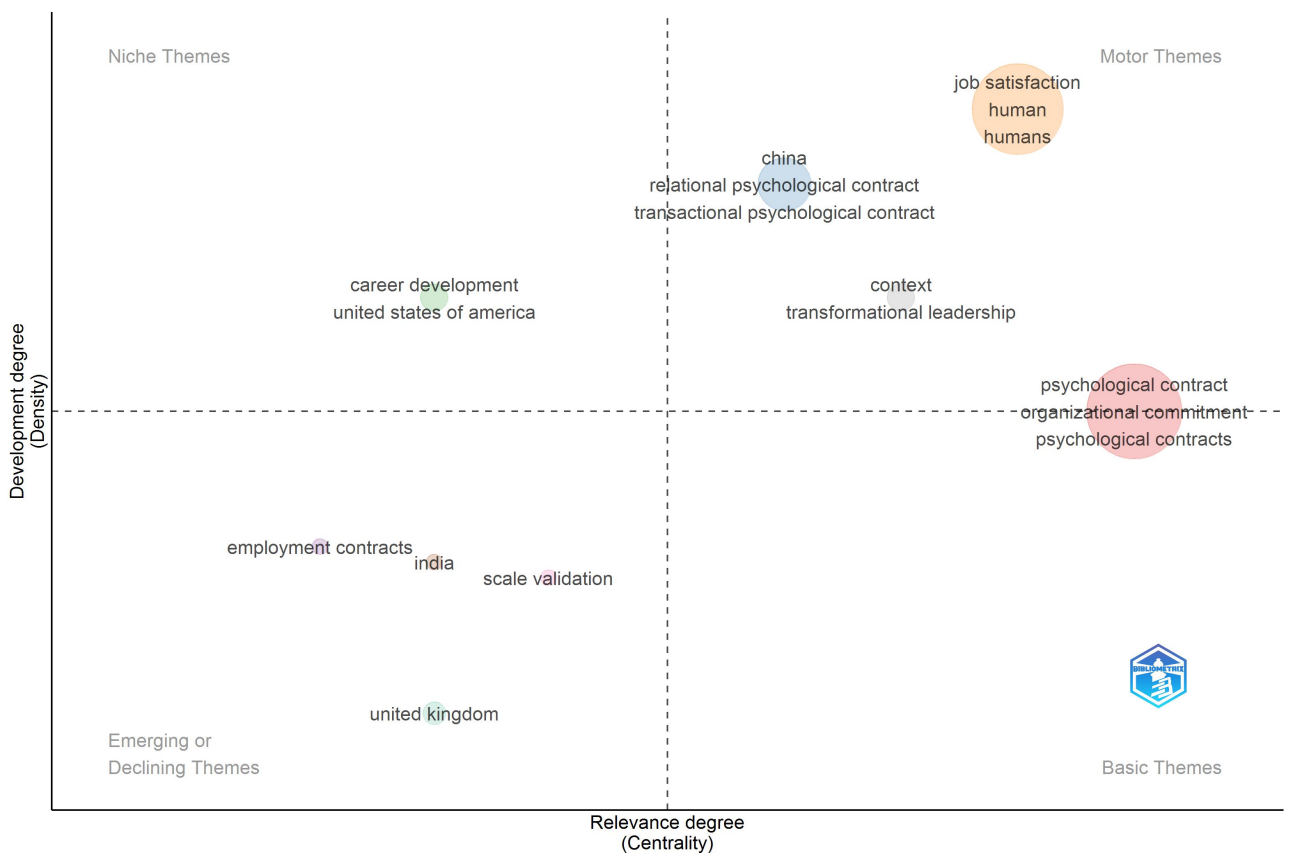


Figure 7: Thematic Map

3.7. Collaboration Network

To develop our bibliographical study on the impact of psychological contracts on organisational commitment, such a network of collaboration was determinant. The network renders a graphical representation of the connections between ababneh, bastos, guzzo, noonam and other prominent researchers within this research area as the co-authors of their publications. This research leans on the organization and density of links displayed in this map, which permits us to find groups of researchers that stand out, relevant areas for collaboration and how information is spread among different academic bodies. Through analysing the three networks' structure and connections, it can seek out some important research circles and academic exchange channels. So, the figure paints a picture of the academic landscape, with some well-coordinated efforts that have been essential for studying the relationship between unspoken expectations and employee commitment.

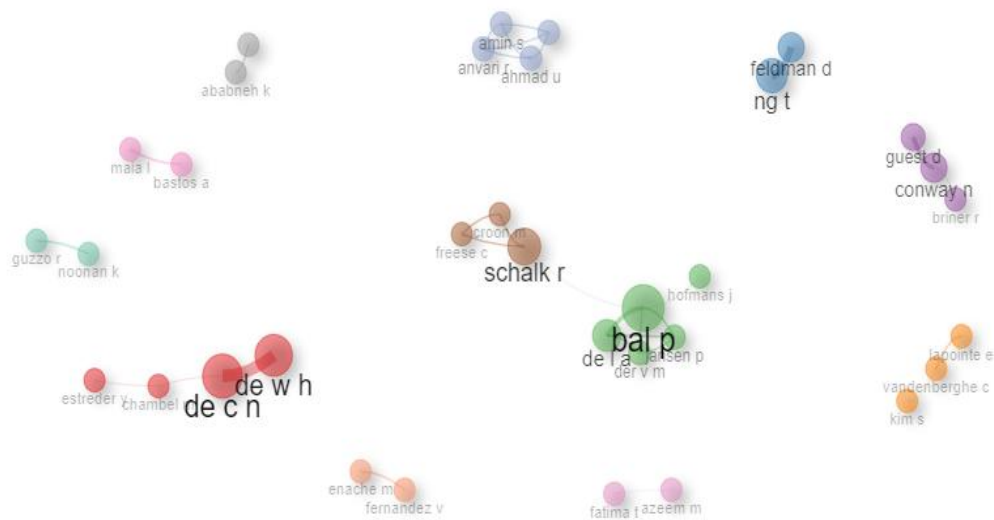


Figure 8: Authors collaboration network

4. Future Research Directions

This analysis in bibliometrics leads to a basic understanding for the future research of how does psychological contract effect into organization commitment? It has been observed that though much focus has been placed on established constructs like affective commitment, psychological contract and job satisfaction there are still new terrains to be charted.

Normative and continuance commitment, as well as transactional and relational psychological contracts, deserve further exploration because of the complex network of relations they create. Because the majority of these studies are based in the West and none includes non-Western countries, it would be advisable that upcoming studies start coming to terms with cultural and demographic moderators. Despite the strong evidence suggesting that organizational cultures are likely to have an impact on psychological contract fulfilment, we actually know very little about how organizations in different cultures ‘consume’ their psychological contracts.

Similarly, new forms of psychological contracts might develop due to shifts in the organization context such as remote work, the gig economy or adoption of AI. Future research should take into account the role of digitalization and hybrid ways of working in commitment levels and mutual expectations.

Longitudinal studies should enhance the investigation of how psychological contracts and OC evolve over time, particularly during organizational changes or crises. Finally, mixed-method studies that include bibliometric and qualitative elements might be of value in gaining insights into perceived experiences with regard to fulfilment or violation of the psychological contract. The network analysis of collaboration emphasizes the importance of more extensive cooperation both at international and interdisciplinary levels. Equivalent aspect combining psychology, management practices and technology would provide a better understanding about process of development and continuity of psychological contracts in dynamic organizations.

5. Conclusion

To fill in the gaps, the present study employs Scopus and Web of Science database to undertake a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of research pertaining to organizational commitment and psychological contracts. Biblioshiny and other high-degree mapping systems were used for publication trends, co-cited references, authors' social networks, research foci and growing avant-garde.

The psychological contracts were found to have contributed significantly to company commitment through its impact on the employees' attitudes, performance, and retention. Based on thematic mapping and keyword co-occurrence, environmental variables and psychological contract violation are emerging to the fore, while emotional commitment and job commitment are still leading. Intellectual activities are reflected in the subject and author pairs, indicated by association and collaboration maps. Towards such directions, these maps reveal knowledge structures and research opportunities. The poll has its blind spots though, in measures like methodological diversity, evolving workplace dynamics and worldwide representation you have some ample room for improvement.

This bibliometric study not only fills the gap found in recent literature but also provides an avenue for future research that can be of interest to researchers, practitioners and organizations looking to gain insight into psychological contracts and how they can enhance organisational commitment.

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