

A Bibliometric Analysis of Talent Acquisition in Human Resource Management

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ABSTRACT

Talent acquisition has become a strategic pillar of human resource management (HRM) as organizations compete for scarce skills in an increasingly digitalized labor market. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis to investigate the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, influential publications, and collaboration patterns of talent acquisition research within the human resource management literature. The data were collected from the Scopus database using the keywords "talent acquisition" and "human resource management" and analyzed using VOSviewer to conduct keyword co-occurrence analysis, overlay and density visualization, citation analysis, co-authorship analysis, institutional collaboration mapping, and country collaboration analysis. The results show that human resource management, talent management, talent acquisition, and recruitment constitute core themes linked with organizational decision-making, HR analytics, predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. Based on citation analysis, key contributions such as artificial-intelligence adoption for talent acquisition, crisis-responsive HRM strategy, and HRM-driven knowledge management capacity significantly influence the field. The collaboration analysis demonstrates that India serves as the dominant contributor and central hub of an international research network extending to the United Kingdom, the United States, China, and several European and Asian countries, while co-authorship and institutional mapping reveal small, loosely connected research communities bridged by a limited number of prolific scholars and universities. Furthermore, thematic evolution indicates a transition from traditional recruitment and workforce-planning perspectives toward artificial-intelligence-enabled, data-driven, and predictive talent-acquisition practices. This study contributes by providing a comprehensive mapping of talent acquisition research development and identifying critical research gaps for future scholarship, particularly regarding cross-institutional collaboration and the integration of emerging technologies with human-centered talent strategy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In an era of intensifying global competition for skilled labor, talent acquisition has evolved from a routine administrative activity into a strategic capability that shapes organizational competitiveness. Organizations across industries increasingly recognize that identifying, attracting, and securing qualified human capital constitutes a critical antecedent of sustainable performance, particularly as digital transformation continually redefines the skills, roles, and recruitment channels that organizations must master.

Talent acquisition has become an important research area within human resource management, particularly regarding how organizations identify, screen, and select candidates through technology-enabled processes [1]. Historically, recruitment and selection functioned largely as manual, judgment-based activities; however, digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped talent-acquisition architecture through automation [2], predictive algorithms, and artificial intelligence [3]. Contemporary talent-acquisition systems increasingly integrate data analytics, natural-language processing, and machine learning to create comprehensive ecosystems that enable candidate screening at scale, evidence-based decision-making, and enhanced organizational responsiveness to labor-market volatility.

Bibliometric studies have increasingly become a useful approach to knowledge discovery in management and organizational research [4]. They provide a systematic methodology for examining publication patterns, citation networks, and collaboration structures to understand how knowledge develops within a research domain. Talent management scholarship more broadly has expanded rapidly in recent years [5], yet despite the strategic importance of talent acquisition and the substantial volume of academic research addressing it, no comprehensive bibliometric analysis dedicated specifically to talent acquisition

within human resource management currently exists.

Although many studies have investigated particular aspects of talent acquisition, including machine-learning-based recruitment processes [3], network-based hiring practices among entrepreneurial firms [6], and the relationship between HRM practices and organizational knowledge management capacity [7], there is still no systematic bibliometric mapping of the complete research landscape. This fragmentation creates significant knowledge gaps regarding the intellectual structure of talent-acquisition research, the interconnections between research themes, and scholarly attention patterns across different technological and organizational dimensions.

The multidisciplinary nature of talent-acquisition research adds further complexity. Contributors span human resource management, information systems, hospitality and service management, and computer science departments, publishing across diverse academic venues. The pace of technological change has accelerated the evolution of research agendas, as conversational agents and chatbots enter the recruitment process [8] and persistent labor-shortage pressures [9] compel organizations and scholars alike to reconsider recruitment strategy, talent identification [10], and adoption models for AI-enabled recruitment systems [11].

To address these research gaps, this study conducts a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of talent-acquisition literature within human resource management through systematic examination of peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus. Advanced visualization techniques reveal intellectual structures, identify influential publications and authors, visualize collaboration patterns, demonstrate geographic research distribution, and illustrate the temporal evolution of research themes. These findings provide a structured mapping of the research landscape that enables future researchers to understand the field's development and

identify promising avenues for scholarly contribution.

2. METHODS

In this research, the design of bibliometric study is used to analyze the scientific literature on talent acquisition in human resource management. Bibliometric methodology provides a systematic, quantitative approach for examining knowledge structure and research evolution through analysis of publication patterns, citation networks, and collaboration structures within a specific research domain [4]. Bibliometric analysis enables researchers to quantify research productivity, track intellectual evolution, identify emerging research frontiers, and map knowledge structures without relying on subjective interpretation of individual studies.

The bibliometric approach was selected for this study because it offers several distinct advantages over traditional literature-review methods. First, bibliometric analysis is objective and quantifiable, providing numerical evidence of research trends and patterns. Second, it enables large-scale analysis of hundreds of publications simultaneously, providing a comprehensive landscape overview that is impossible through manual review. Third, network visualization through bibliometric tools reveals intellectual connections and knowledge structures that are not apparent through conventional methods. Finally, bibliometric findings complement traditional literature-review approaches and provide a systematic foundation for identifying research gaps and future directions.

The main source of data for this research is the Scopus database, selected for its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and book chapters across management, information technology, and related disciplines. The search strategy utilized keyword combinations including "talent acquisition", "human resource management", "recruitment", "talent management", and "HR technology" applied to titles, abstracts, and

keywords. Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to refine the search and ensure relevant document retrieval. Publications from 2000-2026 were included to capture the research development trajectory and contemporary scholarship reflecting both foundational and emerging perspectives in the field.

Document selection followed specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure research quality and relevance. Inclusion criteria encompassed: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters, (2) publications explicitly addressing talent acquisition or recruitment within human resource management, (3) publications in the English language, and (4) publications addressing talent-acquisition design, implementation, effectiveness, or technological application. Exclusion criteria eliminated: (1) non-peer-reviewed sources, (2) publications addressing human resource topics without explicit talent-acquisition relevance, (3) publications in non-English languages, and (4) editorials, commentaries, or opinion pieces without empirical or theoretical content.

Data analysis and visualization were performed using VOSviewer software, which is specifically designed for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks [4]. VOSviewer is widely recognized as a leading tool for creating publication-based and citation-based bibliometric networks and is extensively utilized in bibliometric research across multiple disciplines. The software enables network visualization in which nodes represent research elements (keywords, authors, institutions, countries) and connecting lines represent relationships (co-occurrence, co-authorship, citation) among elements.

This study employed five complementary bibliometric analyses, each providing unique insight into the research landscape. Keyword co-occurrence analysis identified major research themes and conceptual relationships by measuring how frequently different keywords appear together in titles and abstracts. Citation analysis identified the most influential

publications by counting citation frequencies and tracing the intellectual influences shaping the field. Co-authorship analysis visualized researcher collaboration patterns through networks showing which scholars collaborate frequently and which research communities exist within the broader field. Institutional affiliation mapping showed connections

among research organizations and identified leading contributing universities. Geographic analysis examined country-level contributions and international collaboration patterns, revealing which nations contribute substantially to research development and how international collaboration has evolved.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Keyword Co-Occurrence Network

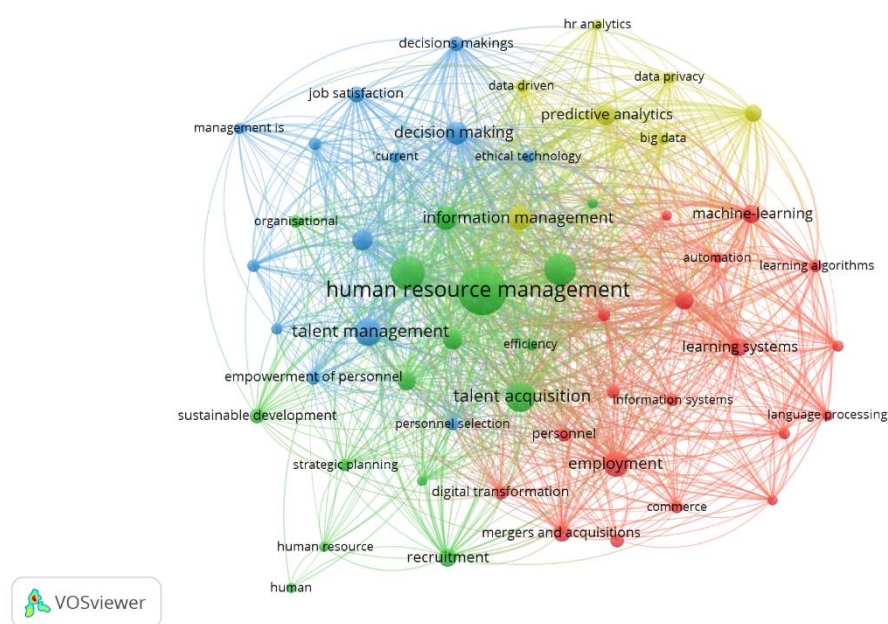


Figure 1. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

The keyword co-occurrence network of talent-acquisition research in human resource management is presented in Figure 1. In VOSviewer network visualization, the size of each node reflects the frequency of keyword occurrence in the literature, with larger nodes indicating keywords appearing in more publications, while the thickness of connecting lines represents the strength of co-occurrence relationships between concepts.

Analysis of the network reveals four distinct thematic clusters that represent different research perspectives on talent acquisition. The first cluster (colored green) forms the intellectual core of the field, centered on human resource management, talent management, talent acquisition, and

recruitment, and extends to related concepts such as human resource, personnel selection, empowerment of personnel, strategic planning, digital transformation, sustainable development, and mergers and acquisitions. The second cluster (colored blue) addresses organizational decision-making and employee experience, encompassing decision making, decisions makings, job satisfaction, organisational behavior, and information management. The third cluster (colored yellow) concentrates on HR analytics and data governance, including hr analytics, predictive analytics, data driven decision-making, data privacy, big data, and ethical technology. The fourth cluster (colored red) represents the artificial-intelligence and automation frontier

of the field, comprising machine-learning, automation, learning algorithms, learning systems, information systems, language processing, and employment-related applications.

This clustering pattern indicates that talent-acquisition research has become increasingly multidisciplinary and technologically oriented. Rather than representing fragmentation, the four clusters reflect the genuine complexity of contemporary talent-acquisition challenges, which require integration of core recruitment practice, organizational and behavioral considerations, analytics-driven decision support, and emerging AI capability. The dense interconnections converging on "human resource management" and "talent acquisition" as the largest nodes demonstrate that these two concepts function as the structural backbone linking the more specialized analytics and technology clusters.

Recent additions to the indexed literature substantiate the specific content of these four thematic clusters. Within the AI and automation cluster, machine-learning models are increasingly benchmarked for their capacity to enhance talent recruitment within business-intelligence systems [12], while adoption of AI-enabled recruitment continues to be explained through structured technology-acceptance frameworks [11]. Parallel developments bridging the core talent-acquisition cluster and the analytics cluster appear in studies combining people analytics with semantic-web résumé data to support sustainable talent acquisition [13], and in research linking innovative talent-management practices with employer-branding strategy to attract younger workforce segments [14]. These recent contributions confirm that the four clusters identified through co-occurrence analysis represent active, expanding research fronts rather than static categories.

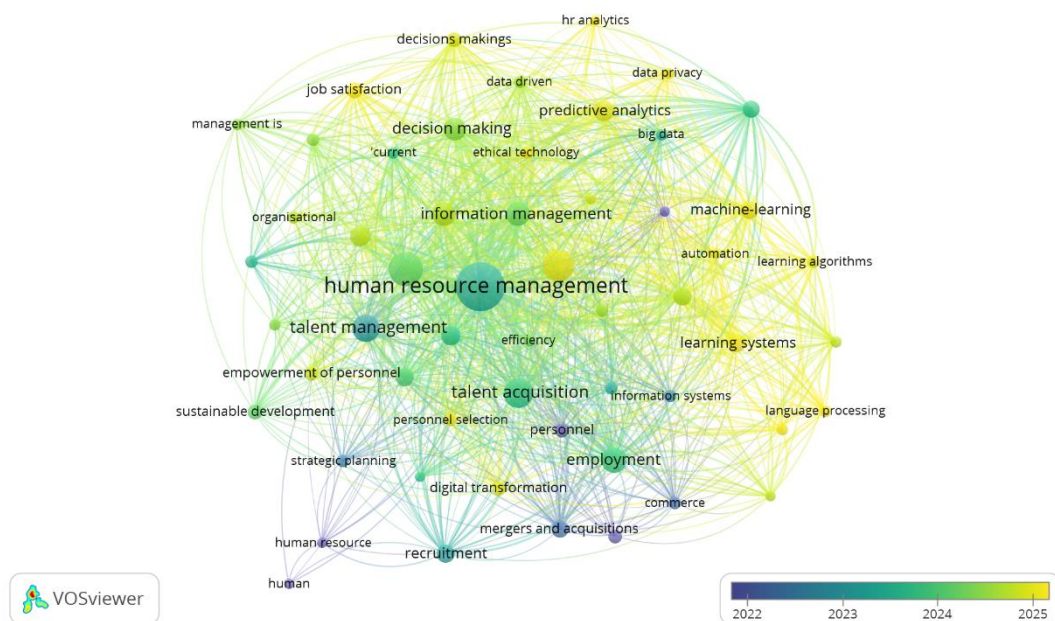


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

Figure 2 depicts the temporal evolution of keywords in talent-acquisition research through the overlay-visualization approach in VOSviewer, in which node color

indicates the average publication year of each keyword, ranging from purple and blue (earlier themes, around 2022) through green

(intermediate themes, around 2023) to yellow (the most recent themes, 2024-2025).

The earliest themes, depicted in purple and blue, consist of foundational concepts including human resource, recruitment, mergers and acquisitions, personnel, and strategic planning. These established themes have received consistent scholarly attention and demonstrate the enduring importance of core recruitment and workforce-planning practice to the field. The intermediate themes, shown in green and centered on human resource management, talent management, talent acquisition, digital transformation, and information systems, indicate that these concepts function as a transitional bridge connecting foundational practice with more technologically oriented scholarship.

The most recent themes, shown in yellow, include machine-learning, automation, learning algorithms, learning systems, language processing, hr analytics, predictive analytics, data driven approaches, data privacy, decision making, job satisfaction, and ethical technology. This temporal pattern demonstrates that talent-acquisition research has progressively evolved from traditional recruitment and workforce-planning perspectives toward technological and analytical innovation. The recent prominence of AI-and-big-data-driven recruitment approaches [15] and AI-transformed HR-analytics capability [16] reflects how quickly research agendas respond to emerging technologies as they mature from experimental application toward mainstream organizational adoption.

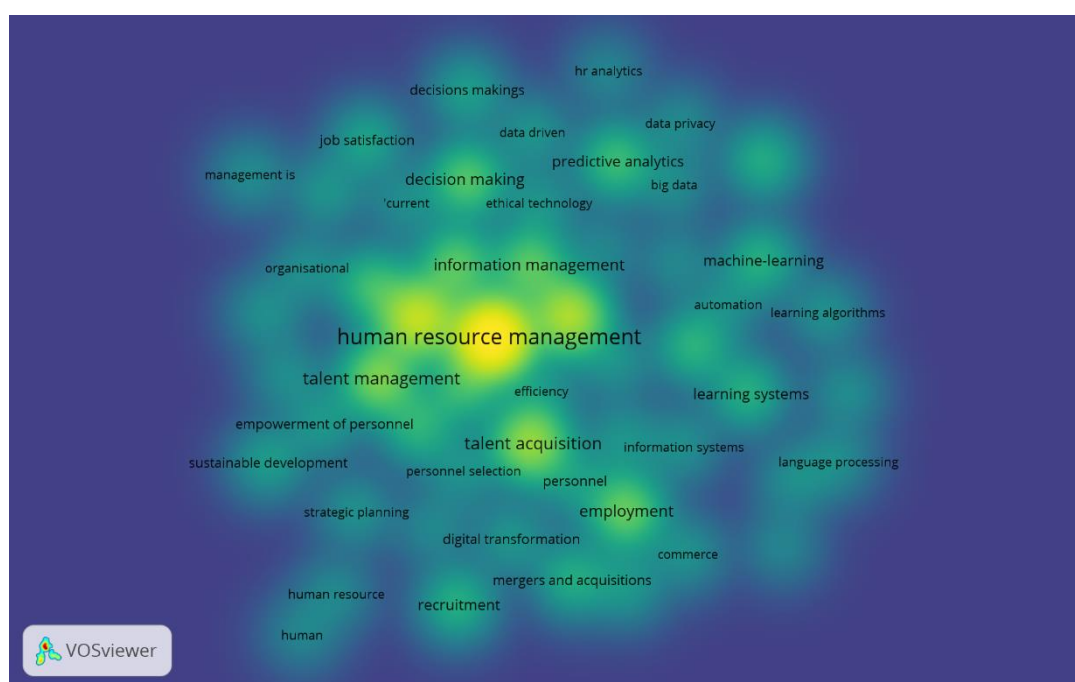


Figure 3. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

Figure 3 presents the density visualization, which highlights the concentration and intensity of research themes in talent-acquisition scholarship. The VOSviewer density map displays research concentration using a color gradient, in which brighter yellow regions indicate high research

density and cooler green and blue-purple regions indicate lower research density.

The brightest region of the map is centered on "human resource management", confirming its status as the single most extensively researched and structurally central concept in the field. A secondary, moderately bright area surrounds "talent

acquisition" together with the neighboring "information management" and "machine-learning" nodes, indicating that these themes have also accumulated substantial, though comparatively less concentrated, scholarly attention. Intermediate-density regions surround "talent management", "employment", and "learning systems", representing important but secondary research focuses that connect the core to the more specialized clusters.

Lower-density regions, depicted in blue and dark green at the periphery of the

map, correspond to keywords such as "human", "human resource", "commerce", "language processing", and "sustainable development". This density pattern identifies meaningful research opportunities in emerging or comparatively understudied areas, particularly regarding the intersection of talent acquisition with sustainability considerations [17] and with natural-language-processing applications for candidate screening, where substantial scholarly attention has not yet accumulated relative to the field's technological potential.

3.2 Co-Authorship Analysis

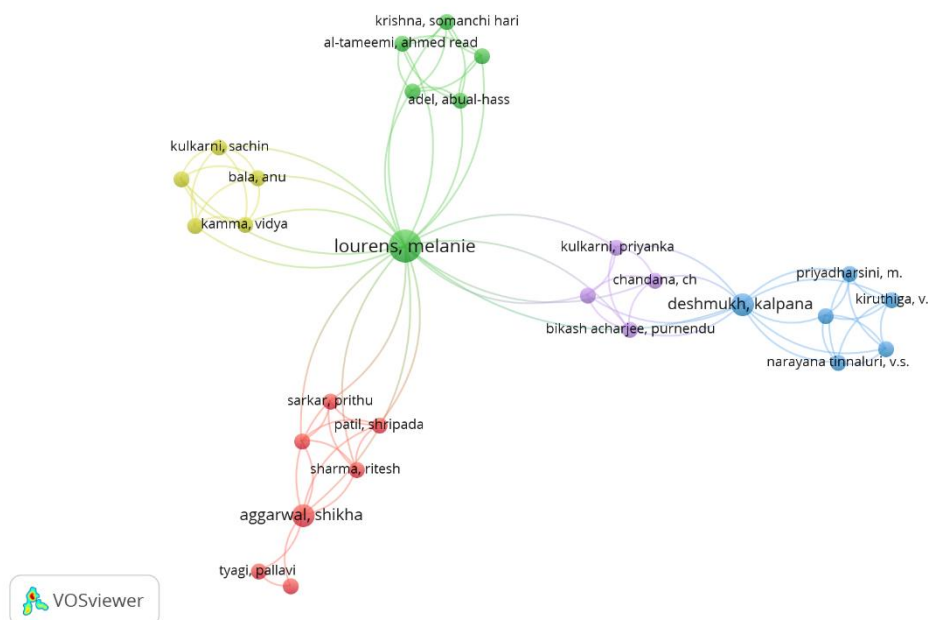


Figure 4. Author Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

Figure 4 illustrates the co-authorship network among researchers contributing to talent-acquisition scholarship. Node size represents publication volume, with larger nodes indicating more prolific authors, while connecting lines and their thickness represent co-authorship relationships and collaboration frequency.

The network shows that author collaboration in this field remains organized into several small, largely self-contained research teams rather than a single densely interconnected community. Lourens, M. emerges as the most prolific and structurally

central author, functioning as a bridging figure who connects four otherwise disconnected clusters: a yellow cluster comprising Kulkarni, S., Bala, A., and Kamma, V.; a green cluster comprising Krishna, S.H., Al-Tameemi, A.R., and Adel, A., associated with research on brain-computer-interface applications in HRM [18]; a purple cluster comprising Kulkarni, P., Chandana, C., and Bikash Acharjee, P., associated with machine-learning-based employee-management research [19]; and a red cluster comprising Sarkar, P., Patil, S., Sharma, R., Aggarwal, S., and Tyagi, P.,

associated with foundational work on AI transforming HR business practice [20].

The purple cluster additionally bridges toward a separate blue cluster comprising Deshmukh, K., Priyadharsini, M., Kiruthiga, V., and Narayana Tinnaluri, V.S., whose collaborative work addresses intelligent résumé screening and job matching [21], and whose affiliated author, Kamma, V., also links to cognitive-computing applications in HR decision-making [22]. This structure indicates that talent-acquisition scholarship at the intersection of AI and HRM has reached a

stage of coordinated, though still limited, collaborative maturity, in which a small number of highly active researchers connect otherwise isolated project teams. Such bridging authorship facilitates knowledge transfer across specialized sub-communities, yet the overall sparsity of the network, together with the presence of several fully disconnected small teams elsewhere in the wider dataset, indicates that large-scale, sustained co-authorship networks have not yet fully developed in this research domain.



Figure 5. Institution Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

Figure 5 illustrates the institutional collaboration network among universities and research organizations contributing to talent-acquisition scholarship. Node size reflects institutional publication volume, and connecting lines represent collaborative relationships evident through co-authored publications involving researchers from different institutions.

The institutional network reveals a fragmented pattern consisting of small, disconnected collaboration groups rather than a single integrated academic network. Lovely Professional University, India, occupies a bridging position, connecting on

one side to a closely knit cluster of Indian institutions including the GL Bajaj Institute of Technology and a college of medical technology, and on the other side to a separate cluster centered on the Institute of Aeronautical Engineering [22]. Beyond this bridging pair, most contributing institutions publish independently or in small, closed collaboration groups without connections to the wider network. This pattern suggests that institutional collaboration in AI-enabled talent-acquisition research remains concentrated within Indian technical and management institutions, with cross-institutional and cross-national partnerships

still comparatively limited relative to more established management-research subfields [7].

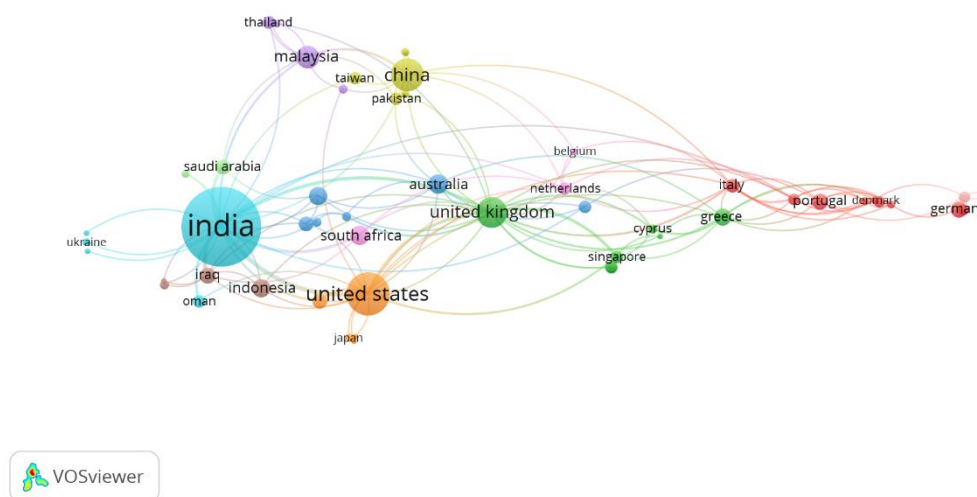


Figure 6. Country Visualization

Source: Data Analysis Result, 2026

Figure 6 presents the country collaboration network, mapping the global distribution and cooperation patterns in talent-acquisition research. Node size represents research contribution volume from each country, and connecting lines represent international collaboration evident through co-authored publications.

The geographic analysis reveals pronounced research concentration in India, which represents by far the largest and most centrally connected node in the network, reflecting the country's substantial digital-services industry, extensive information-technology workforce, and strong management-research tradition [1]. India maintains direct collaboration ties with a wide range of countries, including Malaysia, China [12], Thailand [11], Pakistan [17], Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and South Africa [19], indicating that Indian scholarship functions as a genuine connective hub for talent-

acquisition research across the Asia-Pacific, Middle Eastern, and African regions.

The United Kingdom and the United States constitute the next-largest nodes, each maintaining substantial independent research output and extensive international ties [23], [24]. A further cluster of European countries, including Italy, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Denmark, and Germany, forms a moderately interconnected sub-network that links back to the wider graph primarily through the United Kingdom, while Singapore, Australia, and the Netherlands provide additional linkages between the Asian and Western European research communities [10]. Notably underrepresented Latin American and most African countries, beyond South Africa, represent significant geographic gaps in current scholarship, potentially indicating missed opportunities for understanding talent-acquisition practice in high-growth emerging labor markets.

3.3 Citation Analysis

Table 1. Top Cited Research

Citations	Authors and year	Title
367	[1]	Adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) for talent acquisition in IT/ITeS organizations
285	[25]	Innovative human resource management strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic narrative review approach
168	[4]	Artificial intelligence and HRM: identifying future research Agenda using systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis
139	[6]	The use of networks in human resource acquisition for entrepreneurial firms: Multiple fit considerations
137	[7]	The effect of HRM practices on knowledge management capacity: a comparative study in Indian IT industry
105	[9]	Labor shortage: a critical reflection and a call for industry-academia collaboration
102	[24]	Knowledge, communication, and organizational capabilities
98	[23]	The effect of leadership style on talent retention during Merger and Acquisition integration: evidence from China
89	[10]	Artificial intelligence applied to potential assessment and talent identification in an organisational context
86	[11]	A UTAUT-Based Framework for Analyzing Users' Intention to Adopt Artificial Intelligence in Human Resource Recruitment: A Case Study of Thailand

Source: Scopus, 2026

Table 1 presents the most-cited publications in talent-acquisition research within human resource management, identifying works that have proven most influential in shaping the intellectual development of the field. The prominence of artificial-intelligence adoption research among the top citations demonstrates how significantly this technology has captured scholarly and practitioner attention [1].

The highest-cited work addresses the adoption of artificial intelligence for talent acquisition in IT/ITeS organizations, having received 367 citations. This exceptional citation count reflects widespread scholarly recognition that AI-enabled recruitment represents a transformative capability for organizational hiring practice. The second-highest cited work [25] examines innovative human resource management strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting that crisis-responsive HRM strategy, including remote and digitally mediated talent acquisition, has become a significant point of scholarly reference.

The presence of a dedicated bibliometric review of AI and HRM among the top citations [4] reflects growing scholarly recognition that systematic, quantitative mapping of this research domain is itself a valued scholarly contribution, reinforcing the rationale for the present study. Strong citation counts for foundational network-based hiring research [6] and for research linking HRM practice with organizational knowledge-management capacity [7] indicate that classical organizational-behavior and knowledge-based-view perspectives continue to anchor contemporary talent-acquisition scholarship even as the field embraces new technologies.

The inclusion of practice-oriented works among the top-cited publications, including research on labor shortage and industry-academia collaboration [9] and on the organizational-capability implications of knowledge and communication [24], indicates that scholars increasingly recognize the importance of examining talent acquisition as an organizational system embedded in broader labor-market and knowledge-

management dynamics rather than as an isolated recruitment activity. Similarly, sustained citation to research on leadership style and talent retention during merger and acquisition integration [23] demonstrates that talent-acquisition scholarship remains closely connected to the strategic human-capital dimensions of corporate restructuring.

Beyond the top-cited works summarized in Table 1, the broader corpus suggests that citation momentum is building around a second wave of publications addressing AI-enabled and analytics-driven dimensions of talent acquisition. Comparative evaluations of machine-learning models for recruitment within business-intelligence systems [12] and structured technology-acceptance analyses of AI adoption in recruitment [11] extend the AI-and-automation theme identified in Figure 1 toward practical implementation and adoption-behavior questions. Simultaneously, studies applying people analytics to résumé data for sustainable talent acquisition [13] and research connecting innovative talent-management practice with employer branding [14] indicate that the field is progressively integrating data-driven methods with human-centered talent strategy, situating recent AI-focused contributions [20]-[22] within a continuous trajectory of practitioner-oriented HRM technology scholarship.

4. CONCLUSION

The present bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive mapping of talent-acquisition research within human resource management, revealing an intellectually diverse field integrating core recruitment practice, organizational decision-making, HR analytics, and artificial-intelligence application. The identification of four distinct thematic clusters demonstrates that talent-acquisition scholarship functions as a genuinely multidisciplinary enterprise incorporating perspectives from management, information systems, and data science. Rather than representing fragmentation, this multidisciplinary

reflects the genuine complexity of talent-acquisition challenges, which increasingly require integration of human judgment, organizational strategy, and technological capability.

The temporal evolution from traditional recruitment and workforce-planning perspectives toward HR-analytics, predictive-analytics, and artificial-intelligence-based approaches indicates that research agendas respond relatively quickly to emerging technological possibilities. This progression reflects growing scholarly recognition that digital and AI-enabled channels provide capabilities unavailable in traditional recruitment contexts, including large-scale candidate screening, evidence-based selection, and predictive workforce planning. However, research has not yet fully addressed critical questions regarding algorithmic bias, data privacy, and the ethical governance of AI-enabled candidate assessment.

Co-authorship and institutional collaboration analysis reveal that talent-acquisition scholarship, particularly at the intersection of AI and HRM, remains organized into small, loosely connected research communities bridged by a limited number of highly active scholars and institutions, most notably in India. While this bridging structure facilitates some cross-team knowledge transfer, the overall sparsity of large-scale, sustained collaboration networks suggests that the field has not yet reached the level of organizational maturity observed in more established management-research domains.

Geographic research distribution reveals both strengths and limitations in current scholarship. India's position as the dominant and most centrally connected contributor reflects the country's substantial digital-services and information-technology sectors, while collaboration with the United Kingdom, the United States, China, and a cluster of European countries indicates an increasingly international research community. Nevertheless, the limited representation of Latin American and most African countries represents a significant

geographic gap, potentially constraining the generalizability of current findings to diverse labor-market and cultural contexts.

This bibliometric analysis contributes a systematic understanding of the talent-acquisition research landscape through comprehensive mapping of research themes, collaboration patterns, and intellectual evolution, and identifies critical research gaps and future research directions. Future scholarship should integrate mature understanding of organizational recruitment

practice with sophisticated application of AI-enabled screening and analytics technologies, while addressing critical questions about responsible deployment, algorithmic fairness, and equitable candidate treatment. Research examining cross-cultural talent-acquisition practice, multi-technology integration strategies, and long-term organizational outcomes of technology-mediated recruitment represents a significant opportunity for meaningful advancement of the field.

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