

# Pedagogies in Practice: Mapping the Intellectual Landscape of Experiential Learning in Higher Education

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents a bibliometric review of experiential learning in higher education, which is a teaching method that focuses on active, reflective, and applied learning to improve the engagement of the students and their competence in the real world. Based on the information that has been retrieved in the Scopus database, the analysis is conducted on 1,737 documents published in the period between 1976 and 2025. Biblioshiny and VOSviewer were also used to discuss the trends, intellectual structure, and the development of the themes in the field. The production of scientific content on an annual basis shows a gradual and exponential increase in the number of publications especially since 2010, a sign of increased academic attention. The major sources such as Salinas-Navarro and powerful periodicals such as the Journal of Experiential Education are the major contributors. The United States, United Kingdom and Australia were the best publishing countries and the international collaboration networks were highly visualized with the co-authorship mapping. Thematic maps and evolution analysis identified such core themes as pedagogy, sustainability, and student engagement and some new ones like gamification, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. The co-citation and keyword co-occurrence networks promote theoretical backgrounds as well as interdisciplinary intersection points that define the discourse. Literature gaps were observed in poorly explored topics and areas with a high priority on the wider inclusivity and theoretical advancements. Practical implications imply the increased use of technology and global cooperation and skills-based learning as a possible step to the further evolution of experiential learning in higher education.

**Keywords:** *Experiential Learning, Higher Education, Bibliometric Analysis, Biblioshiny, VOSviewer.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Experiential learning has emerged as a transformative pedagogical approach in higher education, shifting the focus from passive absorption of information to active engagement and reflection (Ernst, 2013; Kayes & Kayes, 2021). Rooted in the works of educational theorists such as John Dewey, David Kolb, and Jean Piaget, experiential learning emphasizes learning through direct experience, critical reflection, and active experimentation (Cox, 2010). In this approach, learners are not mere recipients of knowledge but co-constructors of meaning through contextual, practical, and often collaborative activities (Chawla & Cherrington, 2020). Such methods include internships, service-learning, fieldwork, simulations, study abroad programs, problem-based learning (PBL), and case studies, among others (Kayes & Kayes, 2021). These immersive experiences help bridge the gap between theory and practice, fostering deeper understanding and skill development (Rahmi, 2024).

In the landscape of higher education, experiential learning is increasingly recognized for its ability to cultivate critical

21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, adaptability, problem-solving, and leadership (Neamtu & Hossu, 2024). Universities and colleges worldwide are incorporating experiential elements into their curricula to enhance employability, global competence, and civic responsibility (Zahir, 2021). The learner-centered orientation of experiential pedagogy aligns well with the constructivist paradigm and supports inclusive, personalized, and transformative learning experiences (Chan, 2022). Furthermore, experiential learning supports interdisciplinary engagement, community integration, and socially responsible innovation, positioning students as active contributors to knowledge and social change (Mawas & Muntean, 2018).

Over the past two decades, experiential learning of the higher education literature grew considerably, a reflection of the subject area's theoretical development alongside diverse implementation models of diverse disciplines (Aithal & Mishra, 2024). Experiential learning research has explored learning effectiveness of experiential methods, the reflection aspect, students', teachers', and

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stakeholders' perspectives, integration with the curriculum, and challenges inherent in assessments (Chan, 2022). Business, healthcare, education, and engineering are some of the areas that have immensely utilized experiential methods for more effective perceptual development of students with real-world competencies (Chong et al., 2022). As the area matures, more demand is laid for mapping the intellectual structure, thematic features, influential authors, and new promising areas of study (Sung et al., 2024).

With the multiplicity of practices and conceptual designs of experiential learning, the extant research literature displays a multiplicity of terminologies, settings, and forms of evaluating work (Ahmad & Arfiansyah, 2024). Such multiplicity demands a systemic, evidence-informed approach of covering the vastness and diversity of work conducted on the subject (Beta et al., 2024). A bibliometric study, based on quantitative procedures, assists researchers to study trends of publications, salient themes, interauthor collaboration, and citations (Kaban, 2023). Apart from providing a macroscopic view of the field, the procedure assists to decipher new uncharted domains hitherto explored and promising areas of further studies (Senduk & Arjanto, 2024).

This study includes only scholarly publications on experiential learning that fall under the jurisdiction of the field of higher education (Azeez & Aboobaker, 2024). Analysis comprises research articles, conference papers, and book chapters indexed in the Scopus database from 1976 to 2024. The study spans a wide variety of experiential modalities and disciplinary contexts, aiming to capture both conceptual and practice-informed dimensions of the field (Oh, 2019). While the analysis considers broad trends, special focus is given to the manner that experiential learning is integrated into curricular and co-curricular designs of diverse educational systems (Aithal & Mishra, 2024; Amarathunga, 2024).

The broad objective of this bibliometric analysis is to study the experiential learning research environment of universities with a structured approach. In exact words, the study aims to discern time trends of publications, feature institution-based, country-based, most cited authors, and distinguish collaboration patterns between scholars. It tries to capture the field's intellectual landscape from studies of co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrences, uncover dominant and new research themes, and discover transformations of conceptual focus. Further, the study endeavors to discover gaps or holes of the extant studies and reveal possible future agendas towards informing teachers, policymakers, and researchers aiming to optimally exploit experiential teaching practices in universities.

To achieve a thorough understanding of research on experiential learning in higher education, our analysis employs bibliometric analysis, a valuable tool for quantitatively mapping scientific literature (A. Ali et al., 2023; I. Ali et al., 2022). By examining bibliographic

metadata, such as author keywords, citations, and affiliations, this approach helps to gain insight into the structure, dynamics, and evolution of the subject field of studies (Algorabi et al., 2024; Alsharif et al., 2020). Our analysis yields valuable information regarding most influential studies, collaboration networks, and thematic development, which can be considered an evidence-based foundation for teachers, scholars, and policy-makers for the purpose of transforming teaching practices and broadening the subject of studies (Dao et al., 2023; Heradio et al., 2016).

Analysis was conducted through two interplaying bibliometric tools: Biblioshiny (an interface of Bibliometrix, based on R) and VOSviewer (Guofang et al., 2024; Kumar et al., 2023). Biblioshiny offers a friendly, web-based interface to import, preprocess, and analyze bibliographic data, including overall performance indices, and science mapping (Guleria & Kaur, 2021; Thangavel & Chandra, 2023; Waghmare, 2021). It offers detailed analysis of authorship, citations, source influence, and keyword analysis (Fahamsyah et al., 2023). VOSviewer, being most useful for the construction of, and visualizing bibliometric networks, i.e., co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence maps, completes the picture (Li et al., 2022; Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). Both of these, together, facilitate quantitative evaluation, a graphical interpretation, adding richness, transparency, to the result. Both, together, offer a robust framework for extracting the intellectual landscape of experiential learning from higher education.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The bibliometric dataset selected in this work was accessed in the Scopus database that is known to have a wide access to high-quality and peer-reviewed scientific works (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016; Mongeon and Paul-Hus, 2016). The search query that was used was: (TITLE-ABS-KEY("Experiential Learning") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY("Higher Education")). This search query was narrow on articles concerning the topic of Experiential Learning in Higher Education. Originally, 1,851 records were found in the search including journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters. In order to achieve analytical rigor and thematic coverage, systematic screening was done to rule out non research and supplementary document types. These exclusions covered reviews, conference reviews, books, errata, retracted articles, data papers and short surveys. Following this narrowing down, the end result was 1,737 documents that comprised 1,228 journal articles, 301 conference papers, and 228 book chapters. This data is the most active research period between 1976-2025. To make the full bibliometric analysis, the curated dataset was saved in CSV and RIS formats to use it with Biblioshiny, which is part of the Bibliometrix R package, and VOSviewer.

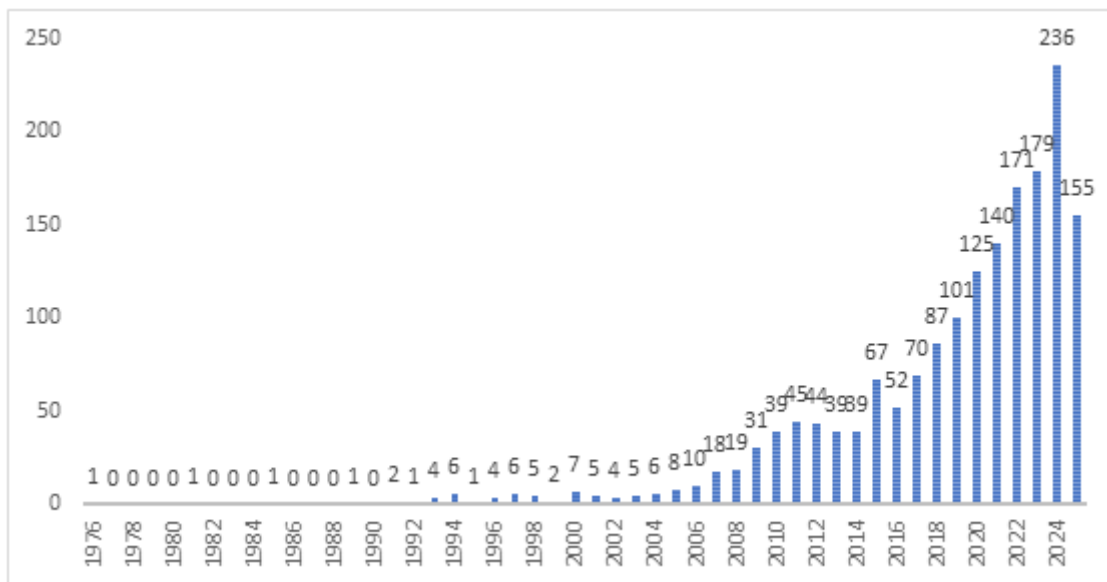
## 3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### 3.1. Main Information Regarding the Investigation

Overall, the study identified 1,737 items across 962 sources, including journals, book chapters, and conference contributions, with an annual rate of increase of 10.84%, indicating that scholarly interest in experiential learning grows year after year. The mean of the documents is 6.38 years, indicating the relevance of the field. The average number of citations per document was 13.3, and the total number of references was 66,094, which proves good citation impact and academic interest. The sample has 2901 Keywords Plus and 3942 Author Keywords, and it boasts of a wide and varied thematic interest. The data on authorship indicates that there are 4,405 authors, 395 authors contribute to single-authored publications, and 416 single-authored documents. There seems to be a moderate level of collaboration, with an average of 2.78 co-authors per document and 16.06% of the works proving to be a result of international collaboration. The collection consists of 1,228 journal articles, 208 book chapters, and 301 conference papers, which are evidence of a perfect combination of formal and practical scholarly dissemination.

**3.2. Annual Scientific Productions**

The scientific output on the topic of experiential learning in higher education measured in terms of articles published annually, as shown in Figure 1, shows unmistakable pattern of growth, in particular, within the past 20 years. Between 1976 and late nineties, publications were few and far in between and this shows little academic interest in the subject. Yet, starting at the beginning of the 2000s, one can notice a certain increase in the number of publications, and since 2005 it is growing steadily. An even stronger increase can be observed after 2010 which demonstrates the growth of scholarly interest and institutional focus on the frameworks of experiential learning. This has seen the growth being exponential since 2015, with publications taking off to 67 in 2015 and peaking to 236 in 2024. It is important to note that 2025 has already achieved 155 publications by June meaning that the year could be even higher than last year. On the whole, the given trend represents a solid and growing academic interest in the concept of experiential learning, which is probably motivated by its pedagogical applicability, international popularity, and the compatibility with competency-based education in higher education.



**Figure 1:** Annual scientific production from 1976 to 2025

**3.3. Most Relevant Authors**

Table 1 indicates the most prolific in the field in terms of publications. At the top of the list is Salinas-Navarro, David Ernesto who published 20 articles which show that there was much and continuous interest in the topic. Membrillo-Hernandez, Jorge and Garay-Rondero, Claudia Lizette follow him with 11 and 8 publications respectively and seem to be prominent colleagues and influencers in this field. Others who have made significant contributions are Caratozzolo, Patricia (7 articles) and Montesinos, Luis

(6 articles), which is also indicative of a steady academic contribution. Besides, other authors like Bell, Robin, Chan, Cecilia K. Y., Vilalta-Perdomo, Eliseo, Vazquez-Villegas, Patricia, and Xu, Jiajun all with 5 publications, constitute significant contributors into the discussion. The fact that various authors produce similar contents indicates an active network of collaboration and that there is an emerging number of researchers focused on the development of experiential learning methods and its effects in higher education.

**Table 1.** Most Relevant Authors

Authors	Articles
Salinas-Navarro, David Ernesto	20
Membrillo-Hernández, Jorge	11
Garay-Rondero, Claudia Lizette	8

Caratozzolo, Patricia	7
Montesinos, Luis	6
Bell, Robin	5
Chan, Cecilia K. Y.	5
Vilalta-Perdomo, Eliseo	5
Vázquez-Villegas, Patricia	5
Xu, Jiajun	5

**3.4. Most Relevant Sources**

Table 2 shows the most suitable sources of publication that relate to the discussion of experiential learning in higher education. The Journal of Experiential Education has the largest number of 32 articles thus becoming the main journal in the scholarship of this field. And close behind is the ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition, Conference Proceedings with 30 articles, which evidences the powerful involvement engineering education to experiential learning research. An intersection between sustainability education and experiential pedagogy is becoming more prominent in the International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education (26 articles) and Sustainability (Switzerland) (22 articles). The other strong

sources are Education Sciences and Higher Education (19 articles each), Skills and Work-Based Learning (19 articles each), highlighting the themes of interdisciplinary engagement and the workforce readiness. There are numerous conferences such as the IEEE EDUCON and the International Conference on Higher Education Advances, and journals such as the Journal of Geography in Higher Education and Education and Training among others, that demonstrate the full range of application and interest in the field of interest and educational context. These sources together constitute a wide and vibrant publication environment that assists in sharing theoretical and practice based knowledge regarding the concept of experiential learning.

**Table 2.** Prominent Scientific Journals

Sources	Articles
Journal of Experiential Education	32
ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition, Conference Proceedings	30
International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education	26
Sustainability (Switzerland)	22
Education Sciences	19
Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning	19
IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference, Educon	18
Journal of Geography in Higher Education	18
Education and Training	17
International Conference on Higher Education Advances	17

*Table 1. Prominent Scientific Journals.*

**3.5. Global Research Contributions by Nation**

Table 3 indicates the leading nations that are encouraging research of experiential learning in higher education. The United States leads it with 524 items due to a high institutional priority of innovative teaching, student-centred learning and reformation of education. The United Kingdom follows it with 286 items, suggesting that there is a high interest in experiential approaches, especially in professional-vocational schooling and a higher educational setting. There are also notable contributions in Australia (153), Canada (93) and Spain (76), which are the manifestations of the global interest in implementing the use of experiential approach into various educational systems. The emerging regional centers are Mexico (67)

and South Africa (59) where experiential learning is becoming more and more associated with social development and access to education. Interestingly, both India (58) and Malaysia (50) are signs of increased involvement of the Asian region where perhaps the defining factor is the increased focus on skills and employability. Germany (40) with its two-level system of education is the last in the list which helps to emphasize the topicality of work-based learning paradigms. In general, the table also indicates a geographically diverse but focused research production, as the developed and emerging economies have realized the importance of experiential learning in higher education reform.

**Table 3.** Countries Scientific Productions

Country/Territory	Documents
United States	524
United Kingdom	286
Australia	153
Canada	93
Spain	76
Mexico	67

South Africa	59
India	58
Malaysia	50
Germany	40

### 3.6. Network Visualization of Countries Collaborations

The research partnerships in the field are visualized in Figure 2. The nodes depict the countries and the size of the node is proportional to the volume of publications and the connecting lines are depicting the co-authorship between countries. United States and United Kingdom are the most central nodes with largest nodes, and the most interconnections with other nations meaning that they are the leading nodes in the global collaboration networks. Both countries have close contact with the west and non-western world implying that they can act as a major bridging factor in inter-regional academic collaborations. Germany, Australia, Netherlands and Spain are among the other well reach nodes and they indicate great participation of Europe in the collaborative research world.

The map is structured into 10 separate clusters which have varying color patterns of differing color because of

regional or thematic patterns of collaboration. Cluster 1 (Red) incorporates such a country as the UK, Malaysia, China, South Africa, and India, creating an intercontinental network, oftentimes connected with the Commonwealth affiliation and exchange of education. Cluster 2 (Green) links the U.S. to Southeast Asian markets like Thailand, Japan, and the Philippines which is an indication of increased academic collaboration concerning innovation and teaching. Cluster 3 (Blue) incorporates European countries such as Germany, Italy, and Portugal, which have kept high intra-European cooperation. Correspondingly, Cluster 5 (Purple) encompasses Latin American countries such as Mexico, Colombia, and Spain, which suggests shared linguistic and cultural academical cooperation. Overall, the network presents a multifaceted picture of international scholarly cooperation, of which the United States and United Kingdom are centers of a highly interconnected internationalized research community on experiential learning.

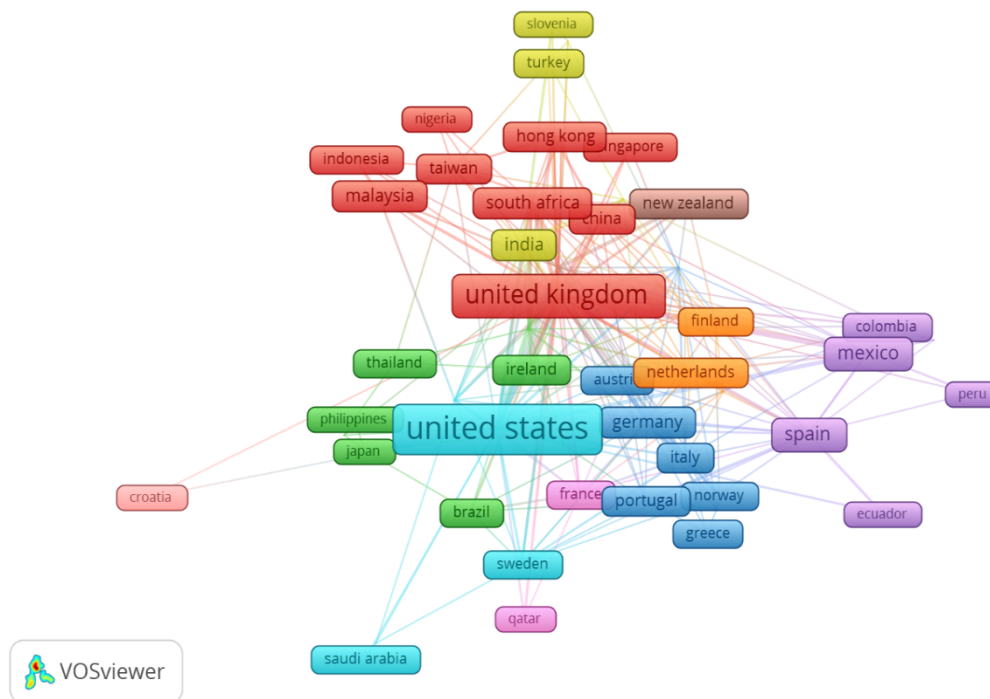


Figure 2: Network Visualization of Countries Collaborations

### 3.7. Network Visualization of Co-Citation of Cited Author

Figure 3 presents a co-citation network visualization of the most cited authors. It reveals 7 various clusters, each of which reflects a thematic or intellectual community of the field based on the frequency of authors being cited together. This largest and most central node refers to Kolb D.A., the father of the experiential learning theory, whose

sheer co-citation connections with authors such as Dewey J., Boud D., Schon D.A., and Vygotsky L.S. mirror his foundational impact on the field's theoretical base. This very centralized green cluster (Cluster 2) envelops the theoretical foundations of experiential learning, centering on reflection, learning cycles, and constructivism. Similarly, authors such as Moon J., Patton M.Q., and

Biggs J. are highly interlinked nodes, giving additional strength to this fundamental intellectual base.

Other groups consist of specialized subfields or new viewpoints. In Cluster 1 (Red), we find authors like Boyatzis R.E., Hair J.F., and Mainemelis C., which suggests studies that blend experiential learning with management, leadership, and organizational behavior. In Cluster 5 (Purple), corresponding to Fayolle A., Cope J., and Linan F., we find entrepreneurial learning. In Cluster 6 (Cyan), corresponding to authors like Wiek A., Leal Filho W., and Sterling S., we find a cluster that appears most

engaged with sustainability and transformative learning. In Cluster 4 (Yellow), we find Dewey J. and Eyer J. central, which suggests a focus on service learning and civic engagement. Cluster 3 (Blue) and Cluster 7 (Orange), while smaller, connect important methodological and interdisciplinary contributions, including instructional design and psychological perspectives. Overall, the map demonstrates a richly interconnected scholarly landscape, with Kolb's experiential learning theory serving as the cornerstone and diverse thematic clusters contributing to the field's evolution and application across disciplines.

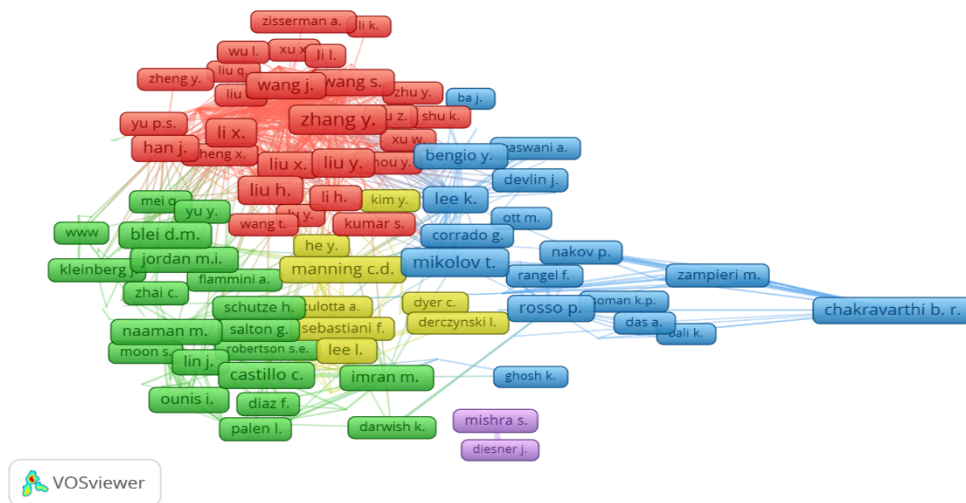


Figure 3. Network visualization of co-citation of cited authors

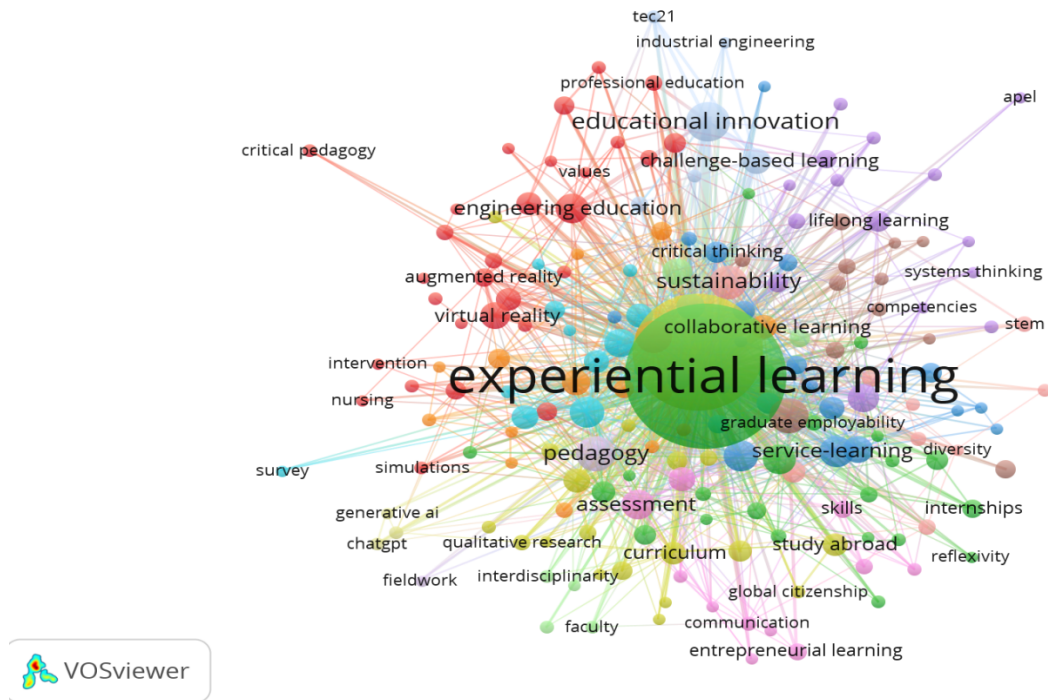
### 3.8. Network Visualization of Co-occurrence of keywords

The visualization in the form of co-occurrence network in Figure 4 represents 186 author keywords out of 3,944 keywords with minimum frequency of occurrence of 5. Each cluster is given a color code and is a thematic group of similar terms in the map. In the middle of the network, there is the keyword "experiential learning" with the most frequent occurrences (754 occurrences), which means that it is the most central concept in defining the intellectual movement in the field. Intimately connected are the notions of higher education, pedagogy, sustainability, collaborative learning and service-learning, which imply that these are core themes that are fueling the academic discourse. These thick ties among the nodes indicate that the thematic interlinkages are great and in most cases, keywords tend to be used together in the same research environments, indicating an integrated research and interdisciplinary environment.

Additional analysis of the clusters reveals diversity of possible areas of research through experience learning. As an example, Cluster 1 (red) contains such words as educational innovation, engineering education, virtual reality, and augmented reality, which implies the fact that they are interested in the technology-assisted model of experience and application in the area of STEM. In contrast, cluster 5 (purple) includes more expanded and

more social oriented anchored learning principles like lifelong learning, systems thinking and global citizen that put experiential learning into perspective in the context of sustainability and social responsibility. The Clusters like Cluster 4 (yellow) and Cluster 6 (cyan) are more concerned about the questions of method and pedagogy and adhere to such phrases like curriculum, assessment, interdisciplinarity, and qualitative research, which are the central problems in the evaluation and design of the experiential approaches.

Future emerging trends are seen in the network, too. newer words such as "generative AI", "ChatGPT", "simulations", and "gamification" that are found predominantly in burgeoning but peripheral clusters are signals of the integration of innovative technologies and adaptive learning environments for experiential learning. Terms such as employability, skills, entrepreneur\*, and entrepreneurial learning are a pointer to growing curiosity about workforce development and innovation. This suggests a shift of emphasis towards a convergence of experiential learning with real-world implications, global competencies, and digital literacy. Overall, the co-occurrence network reveals experiential learning to be a dynamic, inter- and trans-disciplinary, and rapidly expanding field of study, where various streams of study converge around the core construct of active, engaged, and context-informed learning for higher education.



**Figure 4.** Co-occurrence of keywords

**3.9. Thematic Evolutions**

Figure 5 exhibits the thematic evolution of experiential learning for higher education for five discrete periods spanning 1976 to 2025. In the initial period (1976–2010), themes of experiential education, leadership, education, and case study dominated the field, documenting the initial focus on ideas of pedagogy and educational philosophy. In 2011–2015, the thematic climate expanded to more formalized uses such as blended learning, civic engagement, faculty development, and workplace learning, indicating a shift towards combined experiential approaches with curricula and institutional use. Such terms as social constructivism and critical reflection came to prominence, documenting aggregation of a theoretical approach. Years 2016–2020 diversified further with new technology-driven themes such as virtual reality and virtual worlds adding more practical areas such as entrepreneurship education, assessment, competencies, and student engagement. This indicates a broadening convergence of experiential learning towards employability, innovation, and technology infusion.

Since 2021, the field experienced a very large thematic increase, with global challenges and current technologies. The period of 2021-2024 is characterized by the prevalence of sustainability, lifelong learning, graduate employability, higher education institutions, and online learning, as well as the continued interest in critical thinking and interdisciplinarity. Interestingly enough, the development of such themes as reflection, training, and university-community collaboration may be regarded as the indicators of focusing on holistic, skills-based, and socially responsive learning. The first trends of 2025 are continuity and expansion of previous trends with such keywords as experiential learning theory, gamification, leadership development, developing countries and Sustainable Development Goals, as well as frontier technologies such as ChatGPT and artificial intelligence. It means that experiential learning does not just follow the tendencies of global education but is also being redefined in digital, inclusive, and future-proof paradigms.

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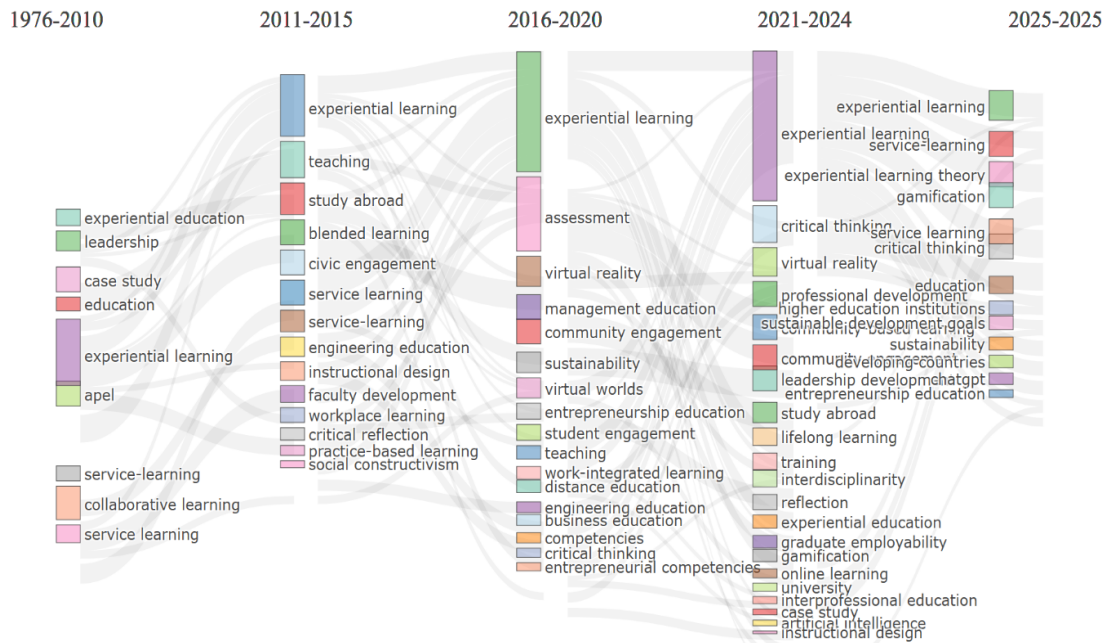


Figure 5. Thematic evolution

3.10. Thematic Map

Figure 6 displays a thematic map, which classifies themes by their centrality (relevance to the field) and density (level of development), which gives a strategic picture of the conceptual framework of experiential learning in higher education. On the upper-right corner, which is Motor Themes, we have the highly relevant and well-developed themes, which include experiential learning, higher education, and pedagogy. These are forces that operate the field, which are highly internally coherent and widely connected to other themes. Other motor themes such as student engagement, simulation, and gamification describe active, practical topics in which experiential methodologies are impacting the learning process and innovations.

In the top left, under Niche Themes, there are those themes that are accomplished but further off the core of the central discussion in the field. Some of the ones that are included in this category are entrepreneurial learning, project-based learning, skills, work-integrated learning and environmental education. They are highly developed in terms of internal development and methodology, which in more cases is often based on a subfield or area of application. Less central and more related on the field in general, they add depth and expert knowledge, none of which are least applicable in the applied environments like the workplace learning, sustainability, and professional development.

Comparatively, the bottom-right quadrant, under Basic Themes, holds those concepts that are central and non-formal. Learning, engineering education, entrepreneurs, and learning are the themes of early knowledge of the field. These are at any rate basic to the comprehension of the big picture of experiential learning without in any way necessarily bearing the conceptual clearness or theoretical incisiveness of motor themes. Their manifestation implies that they are points of convergence when it comes to interdisciplinary and theoretical groundings, which are yet to be expanded via new paradigms of pedagogy.

The lower-left quadrant is Emerging or Declining Themes -spaces having low centrality and density. Such concepts as virtual reality, augmented reality, instructional design as well as online learning are presented here. These themes, which are presently peripheral, give signs of future trends or the spheres that are being developed conceptually. The emergence of immersive technologies in this quadrant, as an example, can indicate the new interest in establishing immersive technologies in pedagogy, but the effects are not fully developed. With improved educational technologies, these themes will become relevant and change to become more dominant research topics in the field of experiential learning.

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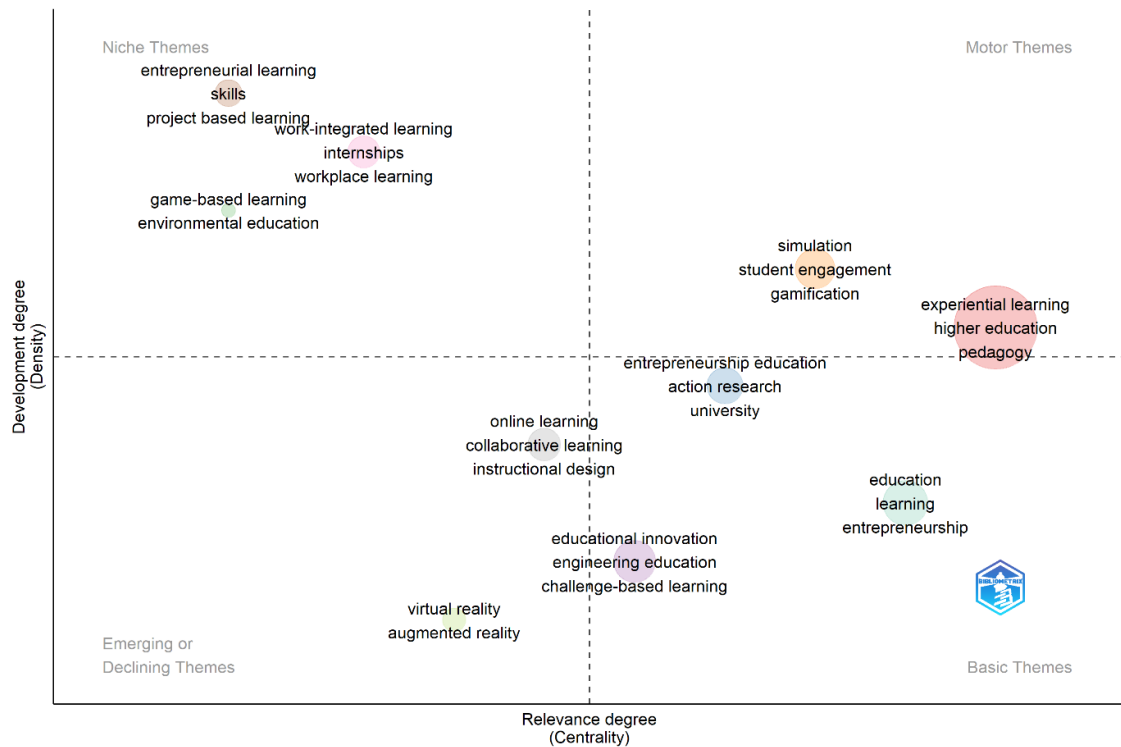


Figure 6: Thematic Visualization of Keywords

4. DISCUSSIONS

The bibliometric analysis of experiential learning in higher education showed that there is a strong and continuously increasing stream of academic literature. The overall scientific output of the yearly output indicates a significant increase in the output since 2010, which makes it evident that experiential learning is increasingly becoming a significant part of the global approaches in pedagogies. Both the United States and the United Kingdom produced more publications and were more involved in international collaboration, due to their role of pioneers in the field of pedagogical change and the ability to carry out research at an institutional level. Both individual and institutional dedication to the development of this educational paradigm is pointed out by the most prolific authors and resources, including David Ernesto Salinas-Navarro and the Journal of Experiential Education, respectively. Co-citation and co-authorship networks highlight the high intellectual groundwork provided by such scholars as Kolb and Dewey, whose work still affects current practice in various fields.

The thematic co-occurrence and evolution studies also give evidence of dynamic and multidimensional nature of experiential learning research. Basic themes include pedagogy, higher education, service-learning and collaborative learning, which are the fundamental discourse and applied and emergent topics include virtual reality, sustainability, entrepreneurship education and gamification, which are indicators of the widening scope of the subject. The thematic progression through the time suggests a quite vivid movement of the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks (1976-2010) to institutional

integration and technological innovation (2016-2025). In recent years, the concepts such as ChatGPT, artificial intelligence, and lifelong learning start to develop new directions, and this indicates that in the future, experiential learning may be based on the principles of reflective practices as well as be driven by real-time digital interactivity and global relevance.

Even though the growth is rich, there are a number of research gaps. Themes of the lower-right section of the thematic map, including engineering education, entrepreneurship, and education, are not conceptually developed enough, which means that there can be further theoretical investigation and the possibility of their empirical confirmation. In the meantime, the bottom-left corner is occupied with the new themes such as online learning, instructional design, and augmented reality, which have not yet gained full entry into the popular discussion. These gaps indicate that longitudinal and cross-contextual studies that address effectiveness, scalability, and equity of digitally mediated experiential practices are necessary. Moreover, the lack of representation of the Global South states in high-impact clusters of collaboration also indicates geographic differences in the visibility of research and institutional support, which should be more and more often included and invested in various educative ecosystems.

On a practical level, the findings would be important pieces of advice to policy-makers, curriculum developers, and educational leaders. The motor themes of student engagement, reflection, interdisciplinarity, and sustainability imply that the approach of experiential

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learning should be further incorporated into the frameworks of institutional approaches to skills-based and socially aware learning. Moreover, increased power of the emerging technologies necessitates capital in training faculty and curriculum design that would take advantage of simulations, immersive environments, and AI-driven tools. Lastly, the development of more significant international partnerships, particularly with underrepresented areas, will have the potential to liberalize knowledge sharing and make the field more culturally responsive to pedagogies. These insights combined make experiential learning not only a way of doing things, but also a transformative means of delivering higher education that is future ready.

## CONCLUSION

Such a bibliometric review shows that the concept of experiential learning has acquired considerable momentum within the higher education sector and has now become a multidimensional and interdisciplinary research field. The discipline has solid theoretical backgrounds and adjusts to new pedagogical and technological developments. The most important themes of student engagement, sustainability, and reflection also have not lost their importance, whereas such aspects as virtual reality and artificial intelligence can be seen as the promising frontiers. The number of areas and subjects still being underrepresented by this increase despite the expansion, which means that more all-inclusive and exhaustive research should be conducted. It is also suggested that institutions invest in faculty training so that they can successfully incorporate experiential approach to various curricula. Also, it is possible to encourage international research cooperation and fill the gaps on the regional level and contribute to the global discussion. Lastly, researchers ought to examine longitudinal researches that determine the long-term effectiveness of experiential learning on student performance and organizational success.

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