

**Scholarly Trends and Impact of Hindu Sacred Scripture: A Quantitative Analysis of the  
“Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Bhagavad Gita.”**

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**Abstract**

The present study is based on a systematic bibliometric analysis to identify the research impact of the 3 major Hindu sacred texts- the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita and the Ramayana. The database is collected from the Scopus website from the year 2010 to 2025 by using the keywords Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita and Ramayana. A total of 1590 Articles, including journal articles, Book chapters and Conference proceedings, were selected for analysis. Vos-viewer software is used to identify the key patterns and trends like - co-authorship analysis, keywords analysis, and citations analysis.

The study reveals that these epics are in growing trends in different multi-disciplines like religious studies, history, Literature, Ethics, and Cultural Studies. Verses of the Bhagavad Gita are highly cited in different studies, like leadership and motivation or spiritual teachings. References to Mahabharata & Ramayana are also used in different scholarly texts. With the help of network visualizations, the study highlighted the Authors' and institutions' collaborations. A strong network of India, the United Kingdom and the United States is depicted in patterns. The Keyword Co-occurrences highlighted thematic clusters of “Dharma, Karma, Non-Violence. The Bibliometric study shows a strong global significance of Hindu Texts in different fields of study.

**Keywords-** Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, Cultural, Ethics, Hindu, Religious.

## **Introduction**

### **Background and Rationale**

Mahabharata, Ramayana and Bhagavad Gita are old Hindu sacred religious manuscript that talks about the rules & duties of individuals and regulations for a peaceful life and how to achieve Internal motivation. In Valmiki Ramayana, the story of lord Rama teaches about dharma, relationship management, and management of individual behaviour. The narration by the saint Valmiki is highly beautiful; each line of the sacred book tells a unique concept of life.

The Mahabharata is the most comprehensive written epic; it was written by Saint Ved Vyasa. The Gita highlights the very basic matters concerning Dharma, duty and individual practices.

Earlier, these texts were used for a religious function, but now are used as a foundation of cross-cultural social research. In recent decades, these scriptures have been used by scholars and academicians for different social studies. Many factors contribute to the usage of these epic works, like understanding of Western culture and Asian culture, indigenous knowledge systems, the growth of the early civilizations, and philosophical studies within the post and de-colonial era.

Globalization and its expansion led to increments in global interactions, which also favoured the Hindu sacred text due to its acceptability and universally accepted principles and teachings.

Scholars in fields like anthropology, sociology and psychology think that the text written in Hindu culture is essential for the study of important and complex matters for better awareness and ecological balance.

For psychological counselling, leadership training, corporate ethics and values, the book called “Bhagavad Gita is the best logical option among researchers and academicians around the world. For Political studies and moral and ethics-based studies, the Mahabharata is the best to study. In Mahabharata, there is a solution for every political situation. Nowadays, media and film sector people are using these scriptures to develop new insights that provide a new dimension to the academic field.

These texts are nowadays used as real documents that are shaping the future of the education system in many nations, moreover the governance also.

There is lot of qualitative research available related to these texts, but the growth of quantitative research is very rare. In this study, researchers identified different analyses with the help of bibliometric tools to understand the trends and research interests of authors, countries and institutes

The Research used bibliometric methods to analyse literature related to Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita and Mahabharata to understand the past 15 years of research work in this field. Lots of international partnerships and academic collaborations are found related to sacred texts.

The requirement for this study is crucial at this moment due to the change in academic research toward interdisciplinary methods and data-driven methods. VOS-viewer allows scholars to understand critical relationships between academic literature, authors and important keywords, which benefits them in developing an understanding of research work related to these sacred texts.

The Indian Trilogy of sacred texts upholds their philosophical importance and spirituality together with their rising global academic interest. With the help of bibliometric analysis, this study will examine academic work between 2010 and 2025 to understand the ancient texts' effect on modern-day research

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to analyse research works involving the theories and references of Mahabharata, Ramayana and Bhagavad Gita through the use of the VOS-viewer application. The study explores 1,590 articles collected from the Scopus database between the years 2010 and 2025

- Trends in publication
- Contributing Colleges and universities & authors
- Geographic patterns
- keyword-analysis Thematic-trends
- Collaboration- networks and Co-authorship

### **Methodological Framework**

This study's methodology employs bibliometrics, which quantitatively analyses academic literature through the examination of citation numbers along with publication metadata and research network connections. The study utilised the Scopus database with search terms “Ramayana,” “Mahabharata,” and “Bhagavad Gita” to gather relevant academic literature from

the period of 2010 to 2025. Following dataset standardisation and cleaning procedures, 1,590 distinct documents became the focus of analysis.

The dataset underwent analysis through VOSviewer, which serves as a robust bibliometric visualisation tool that maps networks by examining co-authorship patterns alongside co-citation and keyword co-occurrence. Through its visual platform, the software displays interactive graphs that demonstrate how topics cluster together as well as show research collaborations and emerging scholarly trends.

### **Significance of the Study**

**The bibliometric study possesses significance because of multiple underlying reasons.**

1. Bridging Knowledge Systems: Through analytical methods, this study connects ancient Indic knowledge systems to modern academia and uncovers their ongoing impact on ethical discussions as well as leadership conflict resolution and spiritual practices.
2. Tracking Scholarly Evolution: A trend analysis over 15 years shows that academic focus has moved from theological interpretations to interdisciplinary methodologies.
3. Identifying Research Gaps: The clustering and network mapping produced by the analysis identified unexplored research fields that involve potential studies about Hindu scriptures about environmental ethics and artificial intelligence or digital humanities.
4. Globalisation of Hindu Texts: This study demonstrates that Hindu scriptures have gained international adoption beyond their cultural origins as evidence of the worldwide spread of religious and philosophical concepts.
5. Policy and Pedagogical Implications: The research findings form the foundation for humanities and religious studies curriculum development as well as policy design to safeguard and disseminate Indic texts.

### **Overview of the Hindu Texts Analysed**

#### **The Ramayana**

It was written by the Hindu Saint Valmiki in the Sanskrit language. It is one of the greatest ancient literature. There are 24000 verses in the Ramanaya, which are divided into seven Kandas. It

follows the story of lord Rama, the prince of Ayodhya. Some believe he was the Incarnation of the God Vishnu. Lord Ram, during his 14-year exile, along with Brother Lakshmana and Sita, travels to different parts of India. Once the demon King Ravana abducted Sita, then Lord Ram killed Ravana along with his brothers and son (Sattar, 2011)

### **The Mahabharata**

The Mahabharata holds the record as the longest epic globally, while Vyasa unveils profound philosophical and ethical questions via a story about family conflicts. The epic explores human behaviour and examines ethical warfare principles along with universal laws and societal responsibilities, which makes it an important research source for multiple academic fields.(The Mahabharata, 2022.)

### **The Bhagavad Gita**

Within the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad Gita, which showcases Prince Arjuna's 700-verse philosophical exchange with Lord Krishna. The Bhagavad Gita integrates Vedanta teachings with Sankhya philosophy and Bhakti principles to offer universal lessons about leadership development and personal growth. (सम्पूर्ण श्रीमद्भगवद् गीता | Bhagwat Geeta, 2022.)

### **Trends in Academic Discourse**

Research data shows that the Bhagavad Gita receives the highest number of citations in publications on leadership studies and ethical frameworks. Present-day research specifies cumulative interest in the Mahabharata because it links ethical values with political philosophy and proportional folklore studies. Research work explores the chronicle structure and social representation existing in the Ramayana while examining its depiction of social norms through caste system studies.

### **Literature Review**

The trilogy of sacred texts “Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Bhagavad Gita” have encouraged academic research across many fields, from literature to mass media studies. The academic works chosen demonstrate how the scriptures generate rich interdisciplinary exploration across various historical and thematic areas.

Hansen's 2023 research investigates how Nautanki theatre acts as a medium to express Ramayana-based performance traditions which showcase local adaptations of epic stories. Richman (2023) explores how E.V. Ramasami reinterprets the Ramayana with a focus on subaltern and rationalist critiques. E.V. Ramasami's work features critical examinations of Hindu narratives through the perspectives of subaltern and rationalist theories.

Numerous studies investigate the psychological and therapeutic aspects. Bhatia et al. Bhatia and colleagues (2013) explore how the Bhagavad Gita can be applied in psychotherapy to achieve cross-cultural therapeutic insights. The work of Reddy (2012) builds upon previous research by demonstrating how the Gita aligns with contemporary therapeutic methods through its psychological effects.

Philosophical and ethical interpretations remain central. The 2013 work of Hudson offers a comparative analysis between the Mahabharata and Western ethical frameworks. Feezell (2013) positions the Bhagavad Gita in current philosophical discussions about the "good life", and Bilgrami (2011) examines Gandhian political ideologies by using the Gita's ethical principles as his framework.

The Mughal translation of the Mahabharata, researched by Truschke (2011) and Bayly's (2010) examination of the Gita's impact on Indian nationalism, demonstrate clear political and historical effects. Sartori (2010) and Chaturvedi (2010) investigate the impact of dharma reinterpretations on political identities in postcolonial contexts.

Technological and computational approaches are gaining ground. Chandra and Kulkarni applied semantic and sentiment analysis to Bhagavad Gita verses to demonstrate digital humanities' interaction with traditional texts.

Environmental and societal themes also appear. The Ganga emerges as a sacred narrative element in epics, according to Kumar (2017), who focuses on socio-ecological stories and Agoramoorthy and Hsu (2015), who explore how epics intersect with transgender identities in modern India.

Pandurangi et al. (2014) confirm that Hindu scriptures impact psychological practices. Pandurangi et al. Pandurangi and colleagues (2014) discovered the usage and implementation of Bhagavad-Gita philosophies to psychoanalysis practices within psychiatric atmospheres. The study and work of Dabas & Singh (2018) show how teachings from the Bhagavad-Gita inculcate a moral standard

for better psychology, which allows individuals to develop resilience. Framarin's study in 2014 reveals the influence of the Bhagavad Gita on Hindu societies through its teachings about dharma and interconnectedness. Maharaj's 2015 work presents modern-day work and the significance of the Gita's teachings.

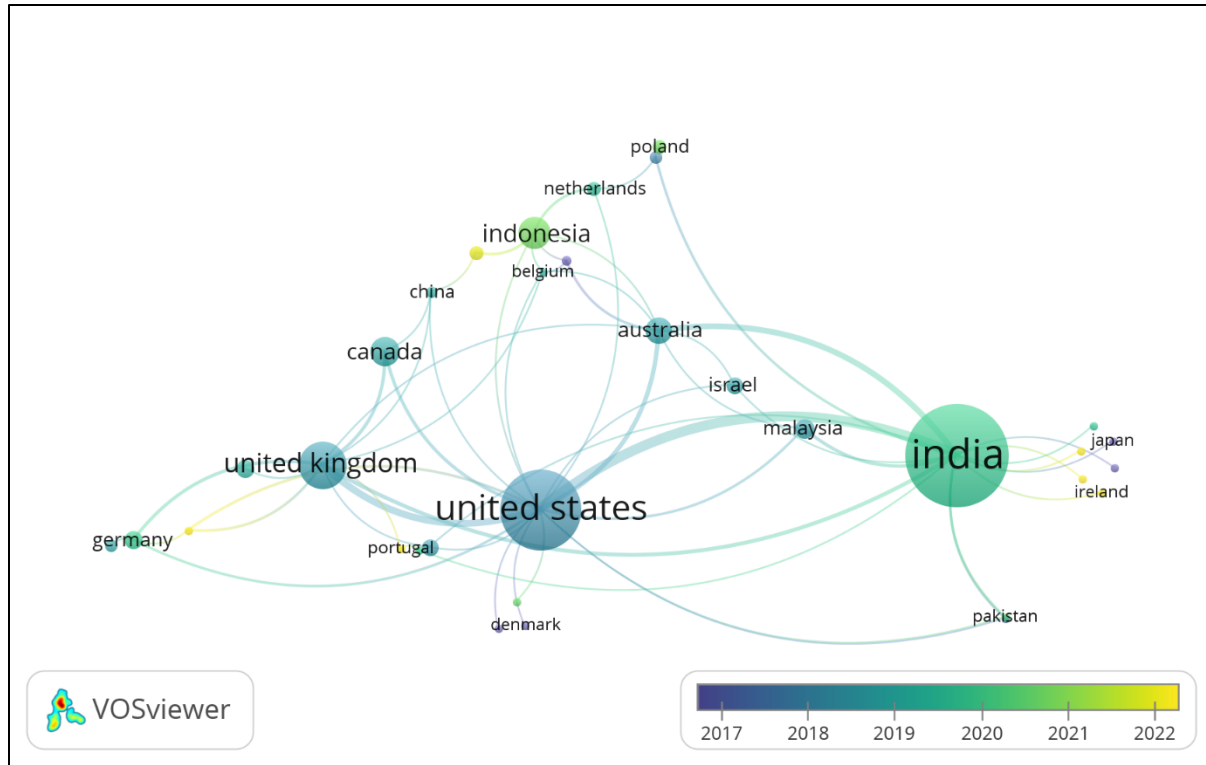
Mehta identified the importance of the Bhagavad Gita in business environments and communication. Chakrabarty and Majumdar analysed the correlation between Gandhian teachings and the Gita to understand the present political systems. Devji (2010) also wrote about ethics and governance by using or implementing the Bhagavad Gita.

Bose & Bose's (2013) Study analysed the Ramayana through a feminist lens by analysing Chandravati's Bengali rendition. Acharya (2013) investigated animal metaphors in the Epic Mahabharata, and Garlough studied feminist activism through epic literature reinterpretations.

Chandra & Rajan (2022) discovered the use of Gita verses in modern computational techniques with the help of artificial intelligence. Kaipa (2014) developed theories of leadership management and principles from the Gita verses. Nayak (2016) and Gowans (2021) talked about the concept of dharma in ethical leadership with the help of sacred texts and the teachings of the Gita. Raghuramaraju (2013) talked about the relationship between Indian philosophical systems and post-colonial theories in epic literature.

## **Analysis**

**Figure 1.0** – Co-Authorship Analysis by Countries



With the help of Vos- viewer Co-authorship networks through country-level analysis explains data about worldwide studies collaborations on the “Ramayana, Mahabharata & Bhagavad Gita”.

According to the Bibliometric map, “India” is the Major contributor as per the size of the node we can identify it. India is leading the studies and making strong collaborative networks with countries like the United States, Malaysia, Australia, and the United Kingdom. The Trilogy of these epic texts plays a great role in Indian culture and Indian philosophy, which is why India is leading, along with the United States, which opens another need for study.

On the other side, the United States emerged as a major contributor to the studies related to the sacred text of Hindu Origin. India, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia are creating strong bonds of co-authorship connections.

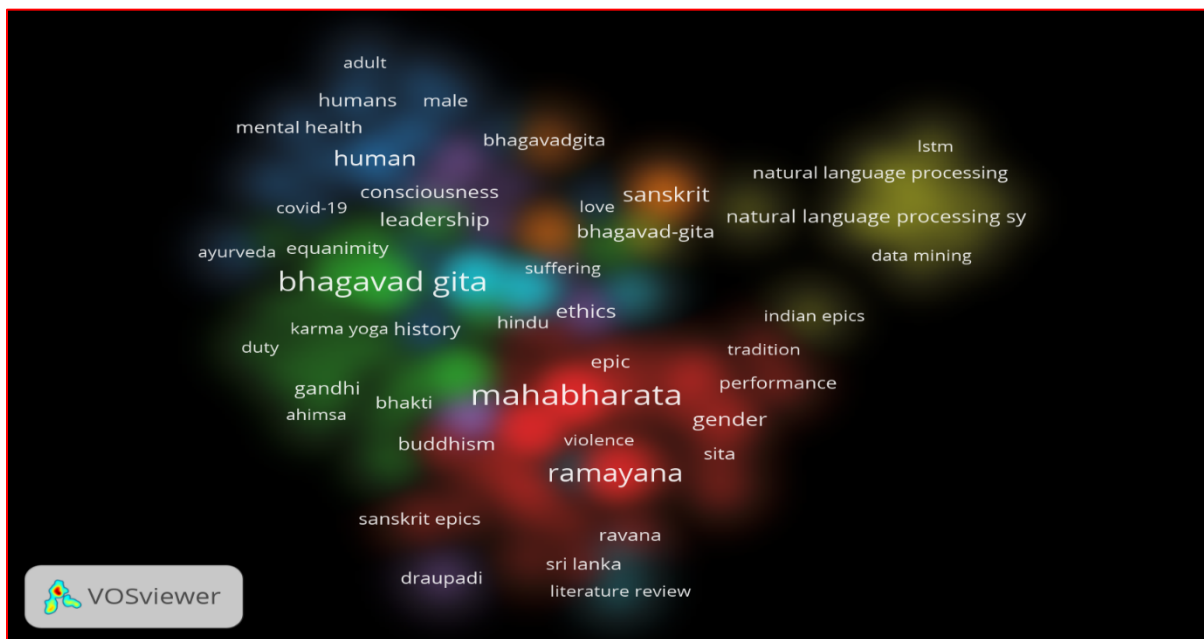
Node size, together with its central placement, proves a continuous academic focus on interdisciplinary fields like religious studies and cultural anthropology. The United Kingdom plays a crucial role in facilitating Indian connections with Western countries, playing a central role. The node connections between Germany, Portugal, and the United States highlight the contribution of these countries in the academic field related to the sacred Hindu text.

Research engagement with these texts has grown over recent years, and scholars from Southeast Asia and East Asia, especially from Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Japan, have made significant contributions. The visualisation's overlay shows Indonesia and Japan as yellow nodes since their research publications are primarily from 2021 and 2022. The growing interest in Hindu philosophy throughout Asian academic institutions results from regional universities extending their religious and intercultural studies programs.

Canada sustains its academic collaboration network through central partnerships with India together with connections to the United States and the United Kingdom. Pakistan maintains limited academic participation yet continues to sustain direct scholarly connections with India which illustrates their shared cultural and historical ties to these texts despite an academic context that remains limited. From 2017 to 2019, academic collaboration between the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, and Poland reached moderate levels due to research work in theology and classical studies.

The transition in colour from blue to yellow makes the temporal dimension understandable while providing deeper insight. These Hindu scriptures show continuous academic importance while their international scholarly impact expands.

**Figure 1.1** -Interpretation of Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis



A keyword co-occurrence analysis of scholarly publications between 2010 and 2025 generated a comprehensive visual map of the thematic space related to the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita.

The Above graph highlights three major keywords—"Bhagavad-Gita," "Mahabharata," and "Ramayana" These are the major nodes in the complete analysis. The Major thematic construction of the dataset appears from these 3 major keywords and tells their important function in related research fields. A complex web of links shows us how frequently they co-occur with broad philosophical and cultural concepts. The Bhagavad Gita links with "ethics," "karma yoga," leadership," and "consciousness" concepts, demonstrating its current use as a guide for spiritual studies.

The cluster of Mahabharata ties to structure analysis and theatrical concepts by connecting closely with the terms "violence," "gender," "brotherhood," and "Truth. The Ramayana makes a red cluster that connects with "Sri Lanka", "Sita," "Ravana," and "tradition" and displays research interest in culture, Life goals, truth, and family.

The Graphs also reveal cross-disciplinary engagement. The yellow cluster identifies "natural language processing," "data mining," and "LSTM" as key terms representing active AI algorithms and computational methods used in digitising and analysing Sanskrit texts for ancient textual studies. The field of digital humanities and text analytics methods are increasingly being combined during the study of religious and historical writings.

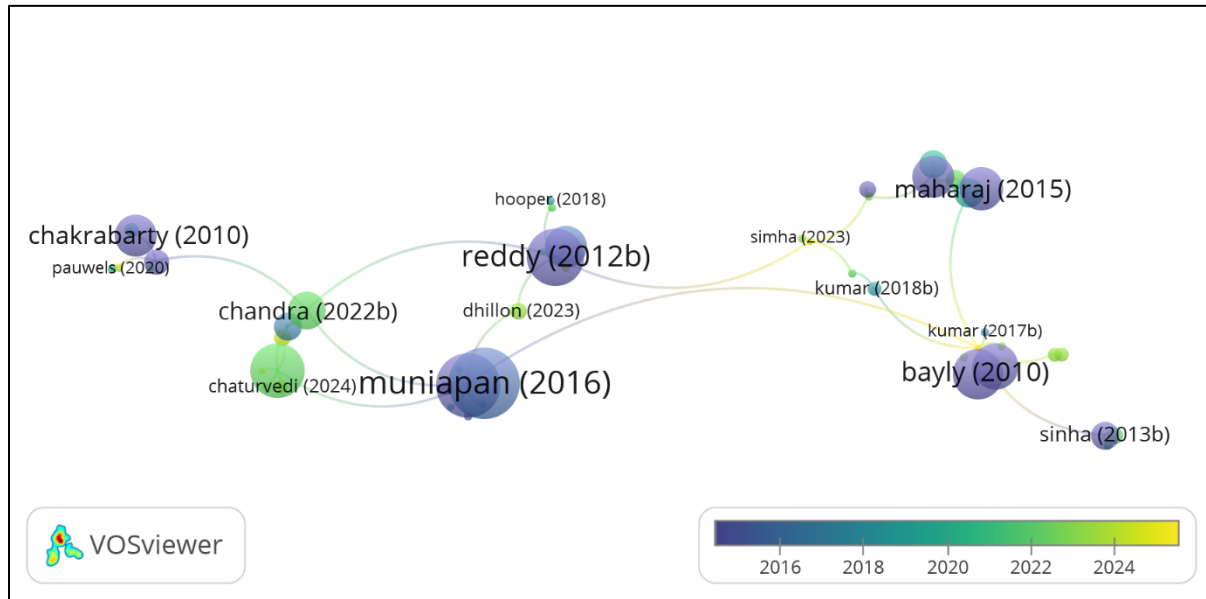
Research shows current interests through the usage of "human," "mental health," "consciousness," "COVID-19," and "Ayurveda," with scholars examining ancient Hindu texts for their relevance to modern health science and psychological resilience during global crises. The employment of "Gandhi," "ahimsa," and "duty" as keywords uncovers both the ethical dimensions and socio-political messages in the scriptures while showing their re-evaluation for their effects on non-violence doctrines, moral standards, and national self-understanding.

Research into "Sanskrit" and "Sanskrit epics" persists through philological studies alongside literary analysis, while "Indian epics" maintain this academic interest.

The keyword co-occurrence map reveals the extensive interdisciplinary research being conducted about these scriptures. The analysis demonstrates the interaction between traditional literary,

historical and theological research alongside modern themes, including leadership principles, gender justice machine learning advancements and mental health topics. Findings reveal that the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita transcend religious studies through their current involvement in multiple academic discussions that address the evolving demands of international scholars.

**Figure 1.3** -Interpretation of Citation Analysis – Document-Level



Through document-level citation analysis, VOSviewer visualizes key scholarly publications in Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Bhagavad Gita studies. The visualisation map features 1,394 scholarly articles that surpassed the citation threshold, while key publications stood out as central nodes because of their citation impact and network connections.

Municipal (2016) stands out as a leading contributor to this scholarly network due to his work functioning as a central hub, which shows both high citation frequency and strong connections to other significant publications, including Reddy (2012b) and Chandra (2022b). Muniapan's research serves as a foundational reference point for later studies through its probable focus on leadership ethics drawn from the Bhagavad Gita, and it has achieved extensive referencing over time.(Muniapan, 2021)

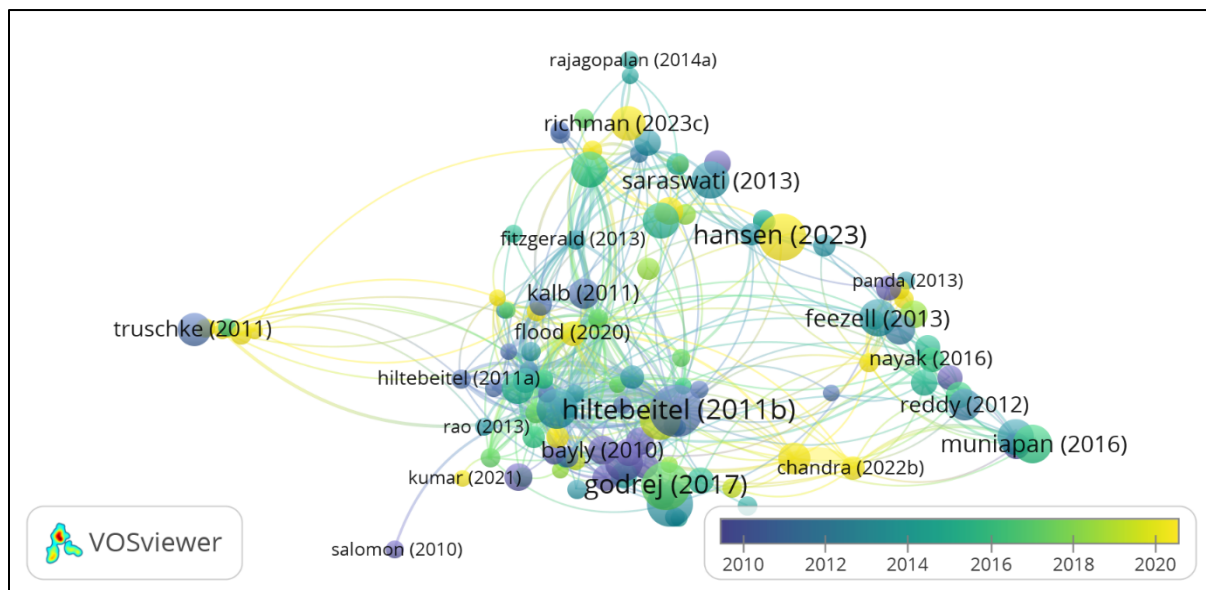
The Network between Maharaj (2015) & Bayly (2010) display good citation thickness and positioning, which specifies their long-term contributions that sustain their impact on present

academic work. The work of Bayly examines sociocultural and historical dimensions, and also creates a network between various studies, such as Sinha (2013b) and Kumar (2017b), highlighting the theoretical impact of Indian epics through historical and political lenses. Green-yellow lines represent work by current authors like Chaturvedi (2024), Simha (2023), & Dhillon (2023) and specify growing research activity alongside their present-day significance. The strategic placement advocates that these works will gain central importance in the future, despite currently having few citations

The network demonstrates the combined effects of individual author contributions along with collaborative research efforts while maintaining thematic consistency as newer publications both expand upon and differentiate from seminal texts. The colour scheme transitioning from dark blue to yellow demonstrates the scholarly timeline by displaying older citations in dark blue and newer ones in yellow through a temporal visualization. The existence of dense clusters alongside connecting links demonstrates interdisciplinary intersections and thematic groupings, which show how mature the field is and how scholars remain engaged with ancient Indian scriptures.

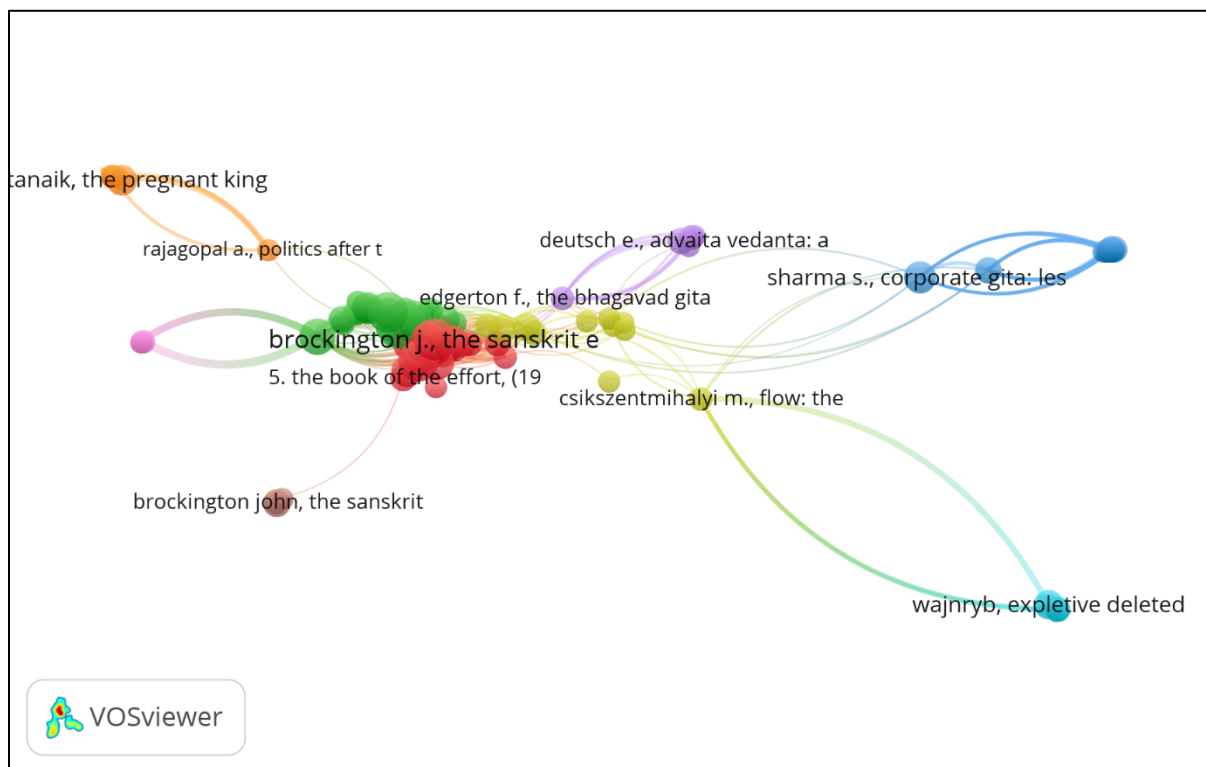
The citation analysis functions as a guide to intellectual influence in the field, where established scholars Muniapan, Reddy, Bayly, and Maharaj act as foundational figures, while emerging authors demonstrate continued research diversification and expansion in Indian epic studies and philosophy.

**Figure 1.4** -The bibliographic coupling analysis



Analysing bibliographic coupling between documents with at least five citations shows major academic linkages in research about Hindu scriptures such as the Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita, and Mahabharata. Hildebeitel's 2011b publication stands out as a pivotal document that establishes strong links with a range of other scholarly works, demonstrating its fundamental impact in the field. The influential works by Godrej (2017), Hansen (2023), and Bayly (2010) stand out as major reference points throughout related research studies. The visualisation presents a vibrant academic environment where recent publications, including Hansen (2023), Richman (2023c), and Chandra (2022b), claim top positions, demonstrating a growing academic interest and evolving research viewpoints. The colour gradient shows how research publications evolved from foundational works around 2010 to new contributions in 2023. The network of document links demonstrates extensive interdisciplinary collaboration through shared references that connect religious studies, philosophy, cultural analysis, and political theory. The bibliographic coupling map demonstrates the sustained impact of key academic works alongside the introduction of novel perspectives that influence current discussions about Hindu scriptures. (Violence and Non-Violence across Time: History, Religion and Culture -, 2022.)(Richman, 1991)(Hildebeitel, 2011)

**Figure 1.5** – The co-citation analysis of cited references



VOSviewer visualization demonstrates distinct thematic groupings and key sources from references with at least five citations in the field of Hindu scriptures research. The core of the network features Brockington, J., *The Sanskrit Epics*, with its multiple strong co-citation links demonstrating its essential role in research on the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Brockington's research stands out as a significant reference point within academic literature due to its extensive recognition and citation by numerous scholarly texts.

The node next to Brockington's features Edgerton, F., *The Bhagavad Gita*, as a central but text-specific source that heavily influences philosophical and scriptural interpretation fields. Works such as Deutsch, E., *Advaita Vedanta: The interdisciplinary scope of co-cited sources* becomes clear with works like Deutsch's *Advaita Vedanta: A Philosophical Reconstruction* and Sharma's *Corporate Gita: Lessons for Management*, which link classical philosophy concepts with modern management practices. (Edgerton, 1997/1972; Sharma, 1999)

The co-citation structure illustrates a complex interaction between established philological and philosophical references and new interdisciplinary approaches. The analysis demonstrates the continued significance of classical Sanskrit scholarship while identifying new directions that integrate modern cultural psychology and management insights into Hindu scripture studies.

## **Conclusion**

This Bibliometric study is based on the keywords "Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Bhagavad-Gita" to validate their deep spiritual and religious connections and how they together develop the Indian way of living. The preachings and philosophical focuses of these sacred texts unite to form the ethical and spiritual framework that has guided Indian civilization.

The Mahabharata stands as a classy epic that observes moral complexity through dramatic human conflicts between societal demands and personal responsibilities; these texts provide a complex canvas of Indian philosophical thought that unifies virtuous principles with human nature's intricacies and transcendent goals. The Ramayana highlights Lord Rama as a true ethical figure who establishes a perfect balance between dharma and family duties. The story demonstrates that virtue defeats evil while emphasising core values of selflessness, honesty and leadership based on dharma. Their timeless messages persist across every culture and era, motivating introspection and ethical living while guiding people toward a balanced existence. The quantitative study establishes

how these sacred epics serve as philosophical treatises that lead humanity to comprehend duty, righteousness, and the eternal self beyond their literary and religious contexts.

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