Scientific Mapping of Research Evolution on Buddhist Philosophy: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Buddhist philosophy is an important and distinct part of the Indian knowledge tradition. Buddhist philosophy presents its strong signature at the global level due to its medium path and public welfare concerns. The international reach of Buddhist philosophy as an important part of the Indian knowledge system, the kind and how strong the connection of important keywords related to Buddhist philosophy is with various dimensions of various global knowledge disciplines, the analysis of the most productive country, researcher and sources (journal) in the context of Buddhist philosophy is the main concern of this study. In this study, a total of 690 publications related to Buddhist philosophy available on the Scopus database from 1985 to 2024 (09/09/2024 at 16:00 hr) have been bibliometric analyzed with the help of VOSViewer software (version 1.6.20 edition). The results of the study show that the 1st publication of Buddhist philosophy on the Scopus database was in the year 1985 and the maximum (69) publications have been published in the year 2023. United States America is the top country with a total of 240 (about 35%) publications, which has received the maximum (total of 2189) citations. The UK ranks 2nd with 59 publications and 391 citations and India secured 6th rank with 34 publications and 247 citations. The most famous and trending keywords are 'Buddhism' and 'Buddhist philosophy'. The most productive researchers and journals related to Buddhist philosophy are Garfield, J. L. (15 publications and 105 citations in total) and Journal of Indian Philosophy (26 publications and 55 citations) respectively.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, Buddhist Philosophy, Density Visualization Mapping, Indian Knowledge System, Network Visualization and VOS viewer Software.

INTRODUCTION

Buddhist philosophy is an important and distinct tradition of the Indian school of thought and the Indian tradition of knowledge. 2500 years ago, Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama in India and focuses on the imperative of the spiritual development of humans and the deeper insights to enhance morality for a better life. The Buddha's philosophy improves the spiritual development of man with a more ethical and balanced life (Dissanayake, 2023). Buddhism, in its original form, empowers a practical religion with pure moral discipline. It does not believe in God and hence no ritualism has been found at any place in its concept. It is focused on an existing religious phenomenon, while it is humanistic in its approach and purpose. It concerns itself with human life. Buddhism gives a new way of life, which is necessary not for individuals belonging to a particular race or nationality but for a universal community. Buddhist philosophy strongly believes



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that by 'following the eightfold path' as an above-oriented, each person can extricate himself from his current painful state; so that he can have a life that is completely free from suffering in all respects (Prabhu and Manivannan, 2022). Buddhist philosophy is a very detailed philosophy in its ideology. Buddhist philosophy believes that in reality, all phenomena are impermanent, immaterial (selfless) and interdependent. Buddhist thinkers consider insight an antidote to ignorance, but liberation also requires overcoming attachment and hatred, which is achieved through moral discipline (Edelglass and Garfield, 2011). Thus, Buddhist philosophy as an Indian knowledge tradition has a very important role in building a peace-loving global citizenry.

The rationale of the Study

Buddhist philosophy is very strong globally as its philosophical tradition and lifestyle. But is Buddhist philosophy trending with the same speed and expansion in the global academic world, what is the status of research in the field of Buddhist philosophy, in which country research on various dimensions of Buddhist philosophy is being done, अन how and how strong is the link of Buddhist philosophy with other knowledge disciplines at the

global level, which is the world's most productive researcher and most published journal in the field of Buddhist studies. Keeping the above questions in mind, the researcher reviewed the published research work related to Buddhist philosophy and found that research work has been done on various aspects of Buddhist philosophy, such as Buddhist philosophy (Mishra, 2024; Edelglass and Garfield, 2011; Spackman, 2012), Buddhist Philosophy for Business Management (Dissanayake, 2023), Buddhist Philosophy as the Basis of Ambedkar's Judicial Philosophy (Queen, 2024), Scientific Naturalism and Buddhist Philosophy (Thompson, 2021), Indian Buddhist Philosophical Literature (Carpenter, 2012; Edelglass and Garfield, 2009; Giri, 2020), Epistemological Understanding of Buddhist Philosophy (Koirala, et al., 2021), The Ethical Value of Buddhist Philosophy (Prabhu and Manivannan, 2022; Benoewski, 2017), Buddhist Econometric Philosophy (Silva, et al., 2020), Personal Identity and Buddhist Philosophy (Sideritz, 2015; Strelkova, 2021), Hindu-Buddhist philosophy (Goswami, et al., 2024), Application of Buddhist Philosophy (Sharma, 2022), Critique-Based Phenomenology and Buddhist Philosophy (Falew, 2018), Causality and Buddhist Philosophy (Bernier, 2020), Buddhist Philosophy and Idiotical Behavior (Marlatt, 2002), Buddhist Ethics and Peace and Harmony (Volkova, 2024; Bawa, 2024), SDG-4 and Buddhist Education System (Janaka, 2024) and Religion and Buddhist Philosophy (Prasad, 2011) have been studied in detail. However, no bibliometric analysis of the studies of Buddhist philosophy that have been done so far has been done. That is why a bibliometric analysis of Buddhist philosophy-related publications has been done in this paper.

Bibliometric analysis is an effective method of presenting the development and interrelationships of texts available as one of the emerging research fields by quantitative analysis with the help of them (Wang *et al.*, 2021). It is a great way to analyze the productivity and global links of a topic or magazine by analyzing the relevant available literature. Bibliometric analysis is one of the mature and effective statistical methods based on quantitative analysis, which provides researchers with a great ability to reveal a comprehensive overview from a global perspective.

Research Objectives

The most important objective of this research study was to present the academic development and keyword trend research trend of Buddhist studies by quantitative analysis and visualization of the studies conducted in the context of various dimensions of Buddhist philosophy. Along with this, the objective of this research study was also to find out the top-producing countries, researchers and sources in the field of Buddhist studies.

Contribution of the Study

The most important contribution of this research study is that this study has done a bibliometric analysis of the bibliography of 'Buddhist philosophy', known as one of the most important and distinct parts of the Indian knowledge tradition published on 'Scopus', the most widely used database globally. Bibliometrics is the cross-disciplinary science of quantitative analysis of all available texts by mathematical and statistical methods (Merigo *et al.*, 2013)., 2017). This bibliometric study has been completed with the help of VOSviewer software, using various options for network and densification visualization. The study used criteria such as the top 10 producers, researchers, sources and countries. Also, the top 15 most popular and globally trending keywords have been analyzed along with their total link strength.

Novelty and Originality of Research

The novelty of this study lies in the fact that it helps to understand the development of global studies related to Buddhist philosophy. In this, studies related to Buddhist philosophy have been visualized by studying bibliometrics. Bibliometric analysis and scientific visualization represent the originality of this research to understand how different dimensions of Buddhist philosophy are linked to different perspectives of global knowledge disciplines and how important and strong its linkage is. The quantitative analysis of Indian Knowledge Tradition studies using VOSviewer software to complete this research is unique in itself. This will motivate the concerned researchers for new research by bibliometric analysis and visualization of various other dimensions of Indian knowledge tradition.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach was used to complete this research study keeping in mind its quantitative nature. In this, the method of bibliometric analysis has been used. 960 relevant publications have been used for the compilation provided by searching 'Buddhist philosophy' on the Scopus database (htt ps://www.scopus.com/sources.uri). The VOSveiwer (version 1.6.20) and Excel (2021) software have been used to perform the provided analysis. The author follows the PRISMA. (Page *et al.*, 2021) Guidelines for data extraction. The PRISMA flowchart is presented in Figure 1 below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Global Research Publications on Buddhist Philosophy

As an important part of the Indian knowledge tradition globally, Buddhist philosophy has made its presence felt in the form of a powerful signature. A total of 690 studies have been conducted (as of 08/09/2024 4:30 PM), available on the Scopus database, correlating different dimensions of Buddhist philosophy with other disciplines in 66 countries. The total number of studies is presented in Figure 1 by dividing them into different periods. The 1st article on Buddhist philosophy on the Scopus database was published in 1985. Since then, there has been a gradual increase in the publication of Buddhist research on the Scopus

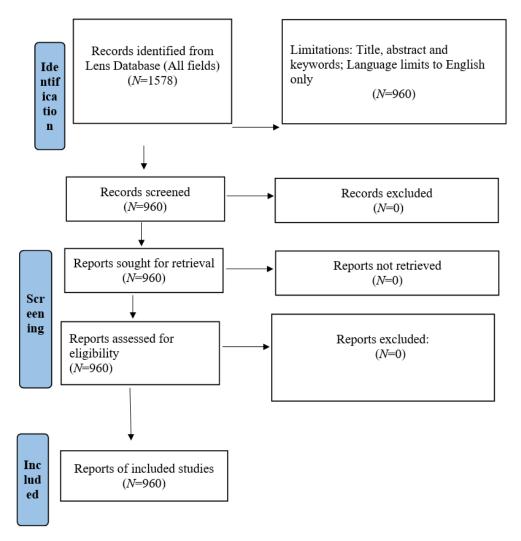


Figure 1: Identification of studies on Buddhist philosophy from lens database. Source: Page *et al.* (2021); Edited by Author.

database. It is clear from the observation of Figure 1 that there has been a significant increase in the number of publications of Buddhist studies on the Scopus database after 2005. The highest (69) publication took place in the year 2023. In Figure 2, the countries of the researchers doing Buddhist philosophy research are presented as a 'Network Visualization Map'. Network Visualization Map is one of the most important features of VOSviewer software, with the help of which the interaction (links or connections) between countries, authors, keywords, etc. is visualized in a meaningful way. Along with this, the Density Visualization Map is also a great feature of VOSViewer software, which displays the density of the producing country/researcher/ source based on the number of publications, links and total link strength. A dense visualization map of countries publishing research related to Buddhist philosophy is presented in Figure 3 respectively.

Most Productive Countries

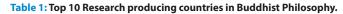
So far, a total of 690 research works related to different aspects of Buddhist philosophy from 66 countries have been published on the Scopus database. Of these, the top 10 countries are presented in Table 1. It is clear from the perusal of Table 1 that out of the total 66 countries, the top publishing countries are the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Russia, India, Thailand, China, Japan and Sri Lanka respectively. Out of the total 690 publications, 240 publications belong to the United States of America alone. This is 34.78% of the total publications. The US ranks at the top not only in terms of the number of publications but also in the total citations and total link strength. The US received an average of 9.12 citations/Document. A total of 240 USA publications received a total of 2189 citations. The total link strength of the USA is 22. India is ranked 6th in the list of top 10 countries with 34 publications. A total of 247 (7.27%) citations have been received on a total of 34 (4.93%) publications in India. The total link strength of India is only 2. Which is very low compared to other top countries. It is clear from this that there is a need to do

better research work on Buddhist philosophy as a distinct part of the Indian knowledge tradition in India. The top 10 countries publishing research related to Buddhist philosophy can be seen in Figure 4 as a map.

Keywords used in Buddhist philosophy-related publications

The Co-Occurrences option with All Keywords was run with the help of VOSviewer software to analyze important keywords included in publications made in the context of various dimensions of Buddhist philosophy globally. A total of 2241 keywords were used in 690 studies. Out of the total 2241 keywords used, 2035 keywords are linked with each other. These 2035 keywords are linked together to form a total of 72 clusters and 16958 links. The total link strength of the said 2035 keywords is 18926. This shows how important and useful Buddhist philosophy as a unique part of Indian knowledge wealth is for diverse disciplines and dimensions of knowledge at the global level. The density and network visualization map feature of the VOSviewer software has been used to visualize the keyword analysis. The entire keyword density visualization map is presented in Figure 5. A density visualization map of keywords used in Buddhist philosophy-related publications can be seen in Figure 5.

Rank	Country	Total Publications	Total Publications (%)	Total Number of Citations	Citations/ Letters	Total Link Strength	
1	USA	240	34.78	2189	9.12	22	
2	UK	59	8.55	591	10.02	9	
3	Australia	49	7.10	405	8.27	6	
4	Canada	38	5.51	358	9.42	1	
5	Russian Federation	38	5.51	16	0.42	0	
6	India	34	4.93	247	7.27	2	
7	Thailand	26	3.77	77	2.96	2	
8	China	21	3.04	24	1.14	2	
9	Japan	19	2.75	34	1.79	0	
10	Sri Lanka	17	2.46	60	3.53	0	



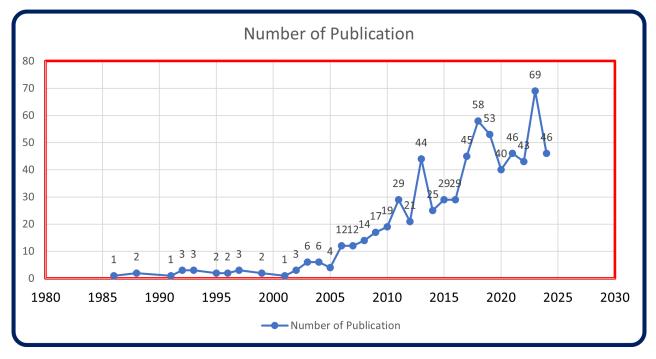


Figure 2: Total number of publications from 1985 to 2024.

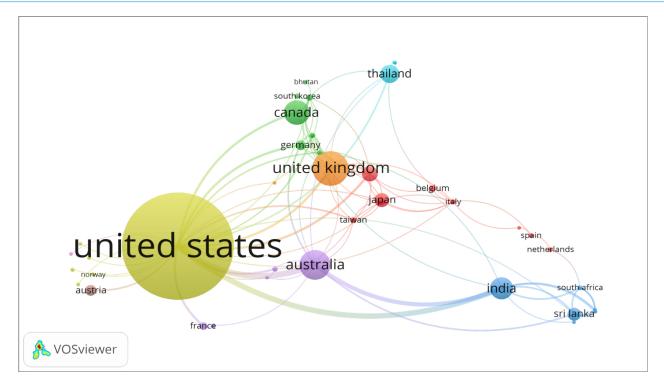


Figure 3: Network visualization map of Buddhist philosophy research publishing countries.

Source: Screenshot of VOSviewer software output.

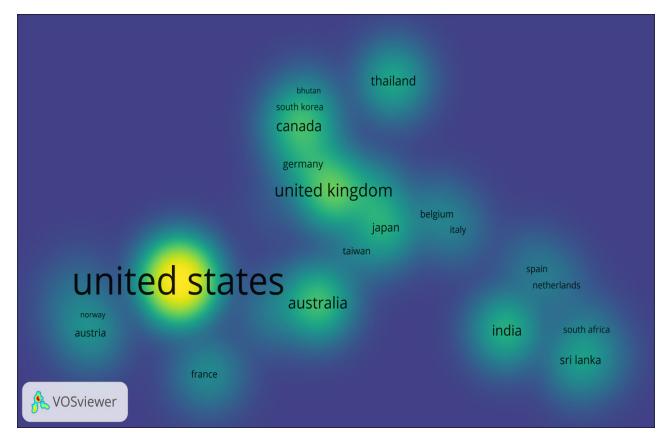


Figure 4: Dense visualization map of countries publishing Buddhist philosophy-related research.

Source: Screenshot of VOSviewer software output.

Cluster	Keywords	Total Occurrences	Total Link Strength
1 st	Human	44	166
	Philosophy	35	114
	Religion	32	87
	article	25	117
	Humans	25	99
	Buddhist	20	86
2 nd	Buddhism	129	161
	Buddhist philosophy	111	72
	Madhyamaka	25	36
	Nagarjuna	17	27
	Ethics	16	25
	Emptiness	15	17
3 rd	Mindfulness	41	102
	Meditation	32	73
	Consciousness	23	38
Total	15	590	1220

Table 2: Details of Top 15 Keywords.

The most popular and trending keywords

From observing the keyword density in Figure 5 above, it is clear that Buddhist philosophy is closely related to various disciplines of knowledge on a global scale. A total of 2241 keywords have been used a total of 3672 times in a total of 690 studies. Important keywords trending globally were checked with the help of VOSviewer software based on increasing the order of their occurrences. We found 78 keywords with at least 5 occurrences, 25 with at least 10 occurrences and 15 with at least 15 occurrences. All 15 keywords with at least 15 occurrences form three clusters among themselves. The related links of the above three clusters can be seen with the help of Figure 6. The 1st cluster is shown in red, the 2nd cluster in green and the 3rd cluster in blue. The 1st and 2nd clusters have 6 keywords each while the 3rd cluster has 3 keywords. These 15 keywords are the most famous and trending top 15 of the 690 Buddhist philosophy-related publications published on the Scopus database. The total links of these 15 keywords are 81 and the total link strength is 1220. The top 15 keywords with the most frequency and most popular along with their occurrences, total link strength and respective clusters are presented in Table 2 below

It is clear from the perusal of Table 2 above that in the 1st cluster there are a total of 6 keywords (Human, Philosophy, Religion, Article, Humane and Buddhist); in the 2nd cluster also a total of 6 keywords (Buddhism, Buddhist Philosophy, Madhyamka, Nagarjuna, Ethics and Emptiness) and in the 3rd cluster three keywords (Mindfulness, Meditation and Conscience). The most famous and most frequently used keyword is Buddhism, which is used in 129 publications. The total link strength of this keyword is 161. Similarly, other top keywords are Buddhist Philosophy 111 times (Link Strength- 72), Human 44 times (Link Strength-166), Mindfulness 41 times (Link Strength- 102), Philosophy 35 times (Link Strength- 114), Religion 32 times (Link Strength-87), Meditation 32 times (Link Strength- 73), Article 25 times (Link Strength- 117), Humans 25 times (Link Strength- 99) Madhyamaka 25 times (Link Strength- 36), Consciousness 23 times (Link Strength- 38), Buddhist 20 times (Link Strength- 86), Nagarjuna 17 times (Link Strength- 27), Ethics 16 times (Link Strength- 25) and Emptiness 15 times (Link Strength- 17) have been used. The links to the above top 15 keywords are displayed in their respective clusters as Network Visualization Map in Figure 6 below.

It is clear from the observation of Figure 6 above that the figure consists of three clusters of red, green and blue colors. The link between your cluster of keywords related to the three clusters and the keywords of the other cluster is connected with the help of a curved line. In Figure 6, each keyword is presented as a circle. The larger the sphere (see Figure 6) or the brighter the color of the sphere, the more often the keyword related to it is used. The more useful of the two most important features of VOSViewer software- 'Network Visualization Map' and Density Visualization Map- is that the size of the sphere used in the network visualization map can be used to determine the use of a keyword more or less often relative to another keyword. Similarly, the above conclusion can be drawn by looking at the brightness of color in the density visualization map. It does not require any high-quality skills or knowledge. It is clear from the perusal of Figure 7 that keywords like Buddhism and Buddhist Philosophy

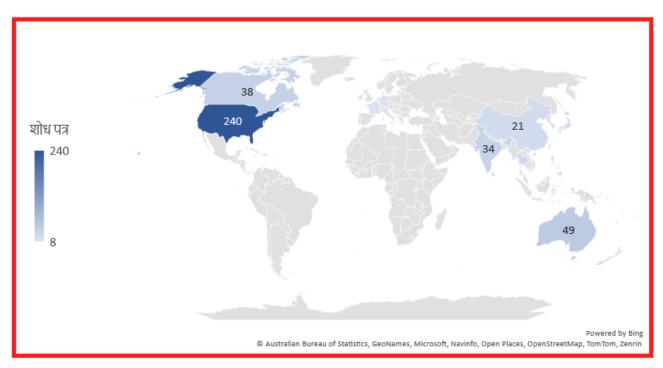


Figure 5: Map representation of the most productive countries.

ag	şinsky datsan
indian buddhism anusaya mental suffering dharma advayavajra peace buddhist theory peace buddhist theory	bayesian brahmavihārā buddhist economics

Figure 6: Density visualization map of Total keywords.

Source: Screenshot of VOSviewer software output.

are the most frequently used keywords globally, which are most popular among researchers and are trending in the academic world of Buddhist philosophy-related research.

Top 10 Producing Authors

The total number of authors conducting research studies on different dimensions of Buddhist philosophy is 758. The top

researchers were leveraged with the help of VOSViewer software to analyze. On running the option that at least 3 publications on the said software and those publications received at least 3 citations, the top 32 researchers out of 758 researchers were found. These 32 top researchers were arranged in decreasing order of their publications and 10 researchers were separated from the top. The details of the top 10 global authors who have published Buddhist philosophy-related works are presented in following Table 3.

It is clear from the observation of the above Table 3 that Garfield, J. L. is at the top among the top 10 authors, who have published studies related to Buddhist philosophy. Garfield has a total of 15 publications of which he has received a total of 105 citations. Garfield's citations/document and citations/year are 7 respectively. Similarly, Westrhow and Thompson have a total of 7 publications each, on which they have received 39 and 14 citations respectively. Other researchers in the top 10 authors' list are Smith, Siderite, Gunery, Adelglass, Dessen, Klosser and Chadha.

Top 10 Producing Sources

The total number of journals that publish research studies on various aspects of Buddhist philosophy is 421. At least 7 publications on VOSViewer software and those publications received at least 5 citations to analyze the top magazine, the top 10 magazines out of 421 magazines were received on running the option. The details of the top 10 global journals publishing Buddhist philosophy-related publications are presented in Table 4.

It is clear from the perusal of Table 4 above that the Buddhist philosophy related most publications are published in the 'Journal of Indian Philosophy'. Springer publishes this journal. The Journal of Indian Philosophy has published a total of 26 publications in the field of Buddhist philosophy, and these 26 publications have received a total of 55 citations. The rate of Citations per publication is 2.12 for this magazine. Similarly, the journal 'Philosophy: East and West' published by Hawaii Press University is last in the list of top 10 producing journals with 8 publications in Buddhist philosophy. Of the above 8 publications, the journal has received a total of 160 citations at the rate of 20

	Documents	Citations	Citations/ Document
L.	15	105	7.00

Table 3: Details of Top 10 Authors.

Ranking	Author	Documents	Citations	Citations/ Document	Citations/Year
1	Garfield, J. L.	15	105	7.00	7.00
2	Thompson, Evan	7	251	35.85	16.73
3	Westerhoff, Jan	7	39	5.55	2.16
4	Ganeri, Jonardon	5	85	17.00	12.14
5	Siderits, Mark	5	114	22.80	7.60
6	Coseru, Christian	4	96	24.00	8.00
7	Priest, Graham	4	39	9.75	5.57
8	Duerlinger, James	3	26	8.66	0.81
9	Goodman, Charles	3	174	58	10.88
10	Tillemans, Tom J.F.	3	210	70.00	13.12

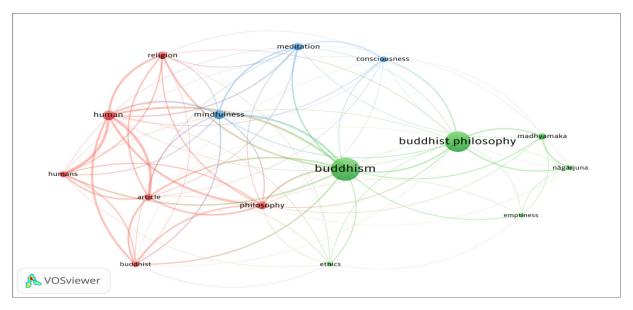


Figure 7: Network visualization map of top 15 keywords.

citations per publication. Similarly, with the help of Table 3, the details of other top journals can be known.

Top 10 Cited Documents

The details of the top 10 documents that received the highest number of citations out of the total 690 publications published in the context of Buddhist philosophy are presented in Table 5.

From the perusal of Table 5 above, it is clear that the top-cited document is the book 'Self, No Self? Perspectives from Analytical,

Phenomenological and Indian Traditions', which was written by Siderits *et al.*, In 2010. This book has received a total of 163 citations. Similarly, the details of other top-cited documents related to Buddhist philosophy can be seen in Table 5.

Top 10 Contributing Institutions

All 690 documents are published by a total of 787 institutions. The top 10 institutions out of 787 institutions are presented in Table 6.

Ranks	Source/Journal	Publisher	Number of	Total	Citations/
			Publications	Citations	Documents
1	Journal of Indian Philosophy	Springer	26	55	2.12
2	Religion	Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI).	19	27	1.42
3	Asian Philosophy	Routledge	18	58	3.22
4	Voprosy Filosofii	Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences.	16	34	2.13
5	Sophia Studies in Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Traditions and Cultures	Springer	14	57	4.07
6	Sophia	Springer	13	21	1.62
7	The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy	Oxford University Press.	12	5	0.42
8	A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy	Oxford University Press	11	55	5.00
9	Dao Companion to Chinese Philosophy	RUDN university	11	7	0.63
10	Philosophy East and West	University of Hawaii Press.	8	160	20.00

Table 4: Details of Top 10 Sources.

Table 5: Details of Top 10 Documents.

Ranks	Author and Year	Title	Document Type	Citations
1	(Siderits <i>et al.</i> , 2010)	Self, No Self? Perspectives from Analytical, Phenomenological and Indian Traditions.	Book	163
2	(Goodman, 2009)	Consequences of Compassion: An Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics.	Book	148
3	(Acharya, 2011)	Dialogue and discovery: In search of international relations theories beyond the West.	Article	142
4	(Khanna and Greeson, 2013)	A narrative review of yoga and mindfulness as complementary therapies for addiction.	Review	108
5	(Salmon et al., 2004)	Mindfulness meditation in clinical practice.	Article	107
6	(Siderits, 2015)	Personal Identity and Buddhist Philosophy: Empty persons.	Book	104
7	(Marlatt, 2002)	Buddhist philosophy and the treatment of addictive behavior.	Article	88
8	Thompson (2020)	Why I am not a Buddhist.	Book	87
9	(Westerhoff, 2009)	Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction.	Book	86
10	(Sharf, 2015)	Is mindfulness Buddhist? (and why it matters)	Article	79

Table 6: Details of Top 10 Institutions.

Rank	Institute	Country	Number of Publications	Total Citations
1	Smith College	USA	7	70
2	University of Massachusetts	USA	5	46
3	Australian National University	Australia	4	27
4	University of Melbourne	Australia	4	39
5	University of Toronto	Canada	4	117
6	Durham University	UK	3	208
7	Harvard Divinity School	USA	3	41
8	University of Lausanne	Switzerland	3	39
9	Central University of Tibetan Studies	India	3	38
10	Department of Endocrinology, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo	Sri Lanka	3	23

Source: Created by author.

CONCLUSION

In this research paper, studies conducted in the field of Buddhist philosophy at the global level have been analyzed bibliometrically with the help of VOSViewer software. Bibliometric analysis helps to find the structure and evolution in the concerned field. The widely used database for bibliographic analysis is 'Scopus'. A total of 690 Buddhist philosophical publications are available on the Scopus database. The 1st article on Buddhist philosophy on the Scopus database was published in 1985 and the highest (69) publications were published in 2023. United States America is the top country with a total of 240 (about 35%) publications, which has received the most (total of 2189) citations. The UK ranks 2nd with 59 publications and 391 citations and India 6th with 34 publications and 247 citations. With a total of 129 instances and 161 total link strength, the most popular and trending keyword is 'Buddhism', which is the top keyword. The 2nd top keyword globally is Buddhist Philosophy, with a frequency of 111 and total link strength of 72. The most productive researchers related to Buddhist philosophy are Garfield, J. L. Garfield has a total of 15 publications on which he has received a total of 105 citations. Similarly, Westerhoff and Thompson have a total of 7 publications each, on which they have received 39 and 14 citations respectively. The most productive journal in terms of Buddhist philosophical publications is the Journal of Indian Philosophy. Journal of Indian Philosophy has published a total of 26 publications related to Buddhist philosophy and these 26 publications have received a total of 55 citations. One of the most important limitations of this study is that it has only quantitatively analyzed texts available on the Scopus database.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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