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Sustainable Career Development: A Hybrid Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

Keyword:

Sustainable Career Development;
Career Sustainability; Employee
Well-Being; Career Adaptability;
Bibliometric Analysis

The increasing complexity of modern work environments, digital transformation, and workforce sustainability issues have intensified academic interest in Sustainable Career Development. This study aims to systematically review and analyze the existing literature on Sustainable Career Development to identify research trends, conceptual developments, and future research directions. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method was employed to synthesize previous studies and evaluate the theoretical and practical implications of sustainable career practices for employee well-being, employability, career adaptability, and organizational sustainability. Complementing the SLR, a bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer and the Scopus database was conducted to map publication trends, collaboration networks, and keyword occurrences within this research field. The findings indicate that research on Sustainable Career Development has significantly increased in recent years, particularly regarding career adaptability, work-life balance, and employee resilience. However, research gaps remain concerning digital work design, sustainable HRM practices, and long-term career sustainability strategies in developing countries



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Introduction

In recent years, the concept of Sustainable Career Development has attracted increasing scholarly attention due to rapid technological advancement, workforce transformation, and the evolving nature of work in the digital era. Sustainable careers emphasize the long-term integration of employee well-being, employability, career adaptability, and organizational sustainability, enabling individuals to maintain productive, meaningful, and resilient career trajectories throughout their working lives (Akkermans, 2025; Russo et al., 2023). As organizations continue to face challenges related to digital transformation, workforce instability, and global competition, sustainable career practices have become increasingly important for both employees and organizations in achieving long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

Previous studies have demonstrated that Sustainable Career Development is closely associated with employee well-being, work-life balance, competency development, employability, and organizational resilience (Nakra et al., 2024; Zakariya et al., 2023). Furthermore, sustainable human resource management practices, flexible work systems, and career adaptability have been identified as critical factors supporting long-term career sustainability in modern organizations (Bindhu et al., 2024; Fabra Florit & Sáenz-Diez, 2025). The increasing integration of digital technologies into organizational systems has also accelerated the need for adaptive and

sustainable career strategies capable of responding to dynamic labor market changes and evolving employee expectations.

Despite the growing interest in this field, research related to Sustainable Career Development remains relatively fragmented and limited. Based on data retrieved from the Scopus database, only 58 scholarly publications were identified between 2018 and 2026, indicating substantial opportunities for future research development. Existing studies are predominantly concentrated in developed countries and large organizations with relatively advanced organizational systems and workforce capabilities. Consequently, there remains limited understanding regarding the implementation and effectiveness of sustainable career practices within developing countries and organizations currently undergoing digital transformation processes.

Conducting a Hybrid Systematic Literature Review and bibliometric analysis on Sustainable Career Development is therefore essential for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the field of human resource management and organizational studies. A systematic review enables researchers to identify conceptual trends, methodological gaps, and emerging themes within previous studies while providing a comprehensive synthesis of empirical findings (Karaca-Atik et al., 2023). Moreover, bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer facilitates the visualization of publication trends, collaboration networks, keyword occurrences, and research clusters associated with Sustainable Career Development. Such analysis assists scholars in identifying variables that have been extensively examined as well as underexplored areas requiring further investigation.

From a practical perspective, understanding Sustainable Career Development is increasingly important for organizations seeking to maintain workforce sustainability, employee engagement, and long-term competitiveness in the digital era. Sustainable career practices contribute significantly to enhancing employee resilience, adaptability, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment while simultaneously supporting organizational sustainability and talent retention strategies (McMahon & Knight, 2026). In addition, sustainable career strategies can help organizations create more adaptive, inclusive, and employee-centered work environments capable of responding effectively to rapid technological and economic changes.

This study focuses on exploring the current landscape of Sustainable Career Development research and evaluating the ongoing relevance of this topic as an important agenda for future research. Furthermore, this study examines the evolution of academic discourse related to Sustainable Career Development and aims to identify how this research contributes to human resource management theories and sustainable organizational practices. The research questions proposed in this study are as follows:

RQ1: Is the exploration of Sustainable Career Development a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry?

RQ2: What is the present allocation of research investigations related to Sustainable Career Development?

RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of future research?

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and Bibliometric Analysis to address the research questions related to Sustainable Career Development. The systematic literature review approach is appropriate for synthesizing previous studies and identifying research gaps, emerging trends, and future research directions associated with sustainable career practices. Furthermore, the SLR method provides evidence-based insights that contribute to the advancement of human resource management theories and sustainable organizational practices (Karaca-Atik et al., 2023; McMahon & Knight, 2026).

The bibliometric analysis complements the SLR by quantitatively examining the distribution, development, and impact of scholarly publications related to Sustainable Career Development. Using VOSviewer software and the Scopus database, this study analyzes publications related to Sustainable Career Development across various journals and academic disciplines published between 2018 and May 25, 2026. This methodological approach enables a comprehensive mapping of the evolution of Sustainable Career Development research and provides a deeper understanding of publication trends, collaboration networks, keyword occurrences, emerging themes, and future research directions.

Moreover, the integration of SLR and bibliometric analysis facilitates the identification of extensively investigated variables such as employee well-being, career adaptability, work-life balance, employability, and organizational sustainability, while also revealing underexplored areas that require further scholarly attention (Nakra et al., 2024; Russo et al., 2025; Zakariya et al., 2023). Therefore, this combined methodology offers a comprehensive and systematic perspective for understanding the intellectual structure and future development of Sustainable Career Development research in the digital era.

Literature Review

The concept of Sustainable Career Development has gained increasing attention in recent years due to rapid technological advancement, workforce transformation, and dynamic organizational changes. Sustainable careers refer to career paths that enable individuals to maintain happiness, health, productivity, and employability throughout their lifespan while simultaneously supporting organizational sustainability and long-

term workforce development (Heikkinen et al., 2026). This concept emphasizes the integration of individual well-being, career adaptability, competency development, and organizational support to ensure long-term career continuity in modern work environments.

According to (Müller et al., 2022), sustainable career development is a multidimensional and dynamic process influenced by individual, organizational, and societal factors. The concept extends beyond traditional career success by focusing on long-term employability, work-life balance, resilience, and adaptability to changing labor market conditions. Similarly, (McMahon & Knight, 2026) argued that sustainable careers should align with broader sustainability principles, including social justice, lifelong learning, and human sustainability.

At the individual level, several variables significantly influence sustainable career development. One of the most important factors is career adaptability, which refers to an individual's ability to cope with career transitions, technological disruption, and changing workplace demands (Philip et al., 2025). In addition, employee well-being plays a crucial role in sustaining long-term career satisfaction and productivity. (Soriano et al., 2025) explained that psychological well-being, purpose in life, and organizational citizenship behavior contribute significantly to career sustainability, particularly in maintaining employee motivation and engagement over time.

Another important factor is work-life balance (WLB), which positively affects career sustainability by improving employee well-being and competency development. (Zakariya et al., 2023) found that competency development initiatives mediate the relationship between work-life balance and sustainable careers, while age moderates this relationship across different cultural contexts. Furthermore, resilience and self-directed learning are increasingly recognized as essential competencies for sustaining careers in dynamic and uncertain work environments (Müller et al., 2022).

From an organizational perspective, sustainable career development is strongly influenced by organizational support, leadership, and career development opportunities. Organizations that provide mentoring, professional development programs, competency enhancement, and flexible work arrangements are more likely to foster employee retention, motivation, and long-term career sustainability (Abdykhalykov & Jalmukanova, 2024). (Mahmoud, 2026) also emphasized that supportive leadership and employee-centered human resource practices play significant roles in reducing turnover intentions and promoting sustainable workforce development.

Moreover, workplace environment and organizational culture contribute substantially to career sustainability. (Tyler et al., 2024) stated that supportive workplace environments, fair compensation systems, and recognition mechanisms enhance employee engagement and encourage individuals to remain committed to their professions over the long term. In the context of digital transformation, organizations are increasingly required to create adaptive and flexible career systems that support workforce sustainability and organizational resilience.

At the societal level, sustainable career development is influenced by social context, educational background, and socioeconomic conditions. (Dey, 2026) highlighted that systems theory perspectives help explain how social structures, cultural expectations, and institutional systems shape career sustainability. Educational experiences and job-education matching also significantly affect long-term career satisfaction and employability, particularly among young professionals entering dynamic labor markets (Li et al., 2025).

Several theoretical approaches have been utilized to explain sustainable career development. One of the most prominent frameworks is the Capability Approach, which emphasizes individual agency, social opportunity, meaningful work, and well-being as essential dimensions of sustainable careers (Heikkinen et al., 2026). Another important framework is Systems Thinking, which views career sustainability as a complex interaction between individuals, organizations, and broader societal systems (McMahon & Knight, 2026). In addition, the concept of Sustainable Career Ecosystems highlights the integration of technology, flexibility, organizational support, and employee well-being to enhance long-term career productivity and satisfaction (Asad et al., 2025).

Overall, sustainable career development is a multidimensional construct influenced by individual competencies, organizational practices, and societal conditions. The growing complexity of modern work environments and digital transformation has increased the importance of sustainable career practices in supporting employee adaptability, workforce competitiveness, and organizational sustainability. Therefore, future research should continue exploring the interaction between individual, organizational, and contextual variables in developing sustainable and resilient career systems.

Table 1. Defining Elements of Sustainable Career Development

No.	Defining Factors of Sustainable Career Development	Reference
1	Sustainable Career Development refers to a long-term career process that enables individuals to maintain happiness, health, productivity, and employability throughout their working lives.	(Heikkinen et al., 2026)
2	Sustainable Career Development emphasizes career adaptability, resilience, and continuous learning in responding to dynamic workplace and technological changes.	(Müller et al., 2022)
3	Sustainable Career Development is closely associated with employee well-being, work-life balance, and competency development to support long-term career sustainability.	(Zakariya et al., 2023)
4	Sustainable Career Development requires organizational support through mentoring, leadership, career development programs, and flexible work practices to enhance employee retention and motivation.	(Abdykhalykov & Jalmukanova, 2024)
5	Sustainable Career Development contributes to organizational sustainability by fostering workforce adaptability, employability, and long-term competitiveness in the digital era.	(McMahon & Knight, 2026)

Method

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with a bibliometric approach to quantitatively and systematically evaluate the existing literature related to Sustainable Career Development. The bibliometric method is useful for identifying research trends, publication patterns, collaboration networks, and dominant research themes within a particular scientific field. Furthermore, the integration of SLR and bibliometric analysis enables researchers to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and replicable review of the literature while mapping the intellectual structure and future research directions associated with Sustainable Career Development (Karaca-Atik et al., 2023; Müller et al., 2022)

This study adopted the PRISMA framework to ensure a systematic and transparent article selection process. The inclusion criteria established in this study were: (1) articles published between 2018 and May 25, 2026, (2) publications written in English, and (3) studies specifically focusing on Sustainable Career Development. The bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software to visualize bibliographic networks, including co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrence, country collaborations, and publication trends. This analytical approach assists researchers in identifying influential authors, dominant themes, emerging variables, and underexplored areas within the Sustainable Career Development literature (McMahon & Knight, 2026; Russo et al., 2023)

The integration of systematic review and bibliometric analysis provides a broader understanding of the historical development, conceptual evolution, and future research directions related to Sustainable Career Development. Moreover, this approach facilitates the synthesis of empirical findings from multidisciplinary perspectives, including human resource management, psychology, sustainability, organizational behavior, and career studies. Therefore, combining these two methods is highly beneficial for generating comprehensive insights regarding sustainable career practices in the digital era (Nakra et al., 2024; Zakariya et al., 2023).

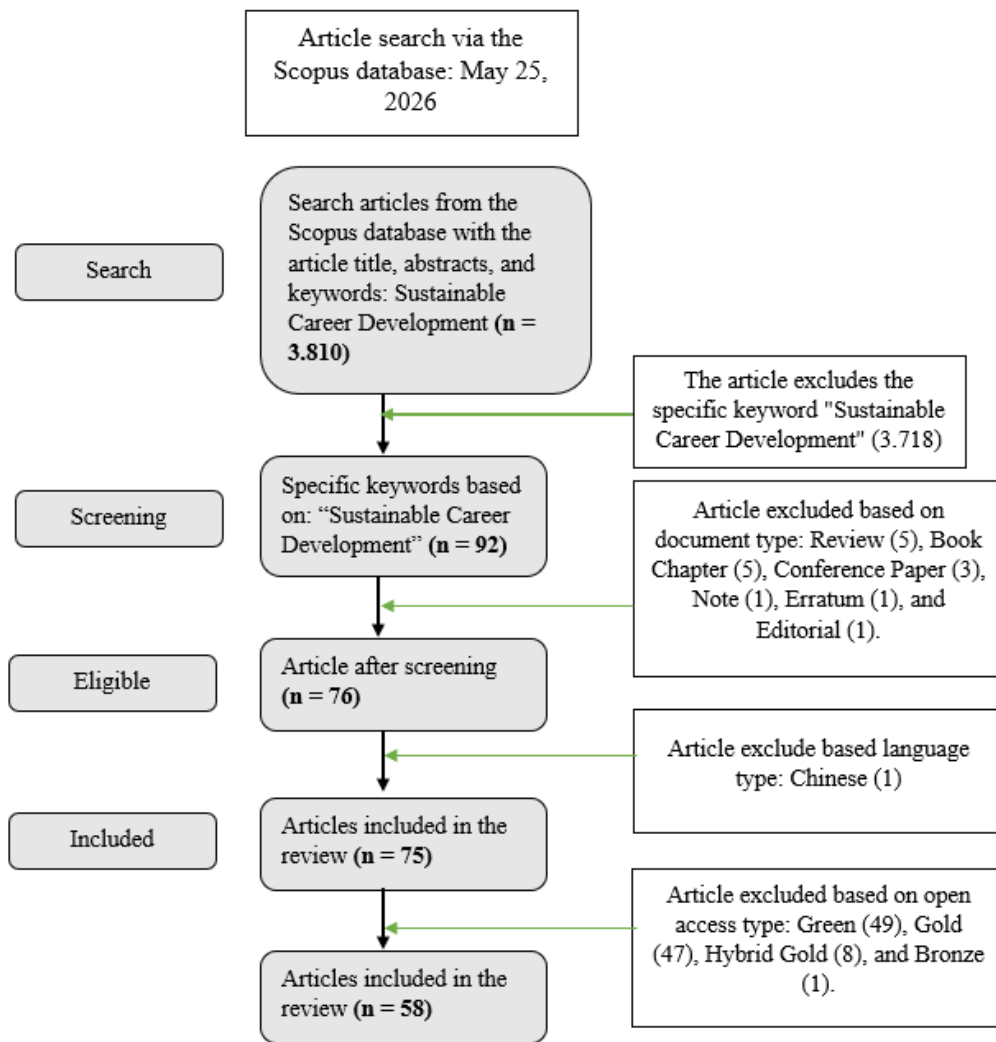


Figure 1. Systematic Literature Review information flow using PRISMA

According to the search results retrieved on May 25, 2026, from the Scopus database using article titles, abstracts, and keywords related to “Sustainable Career Development,” a total of 3,810 documents were identified across various academic disciplines from 2018 to 2026 (see Figure 1).

Following the identification process, the screening stage was conducted by refining the keyword specifically to “Sustainable Career Development,” resulting in 92 documents. Furthermore, documents were filtered based on document type, consisting of Article (76), Review (5), Book Chapter (5), Conference Paper (3), Note (1), Erratum (1), and Editorial (1).

Subsequently, one document written in Chinese was excluded during the eligibility stage, resulting in 75 documents. In the final stage, articles were further classified based on open access type, including Green (49), Gold (47), Hybrid Gold (8), and Bronze (1). After the complete screening and eligibility process, a total of 58 articles were retained for further analysis in this study. Is this document then further analyzed in this study to answer RQ1: *Is the exploration of Sustainable Career Development a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry?* RQ2: *What is the present allocation of research investigations related to Sustainable Career Development?* RQ3: *What are the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of future research?*

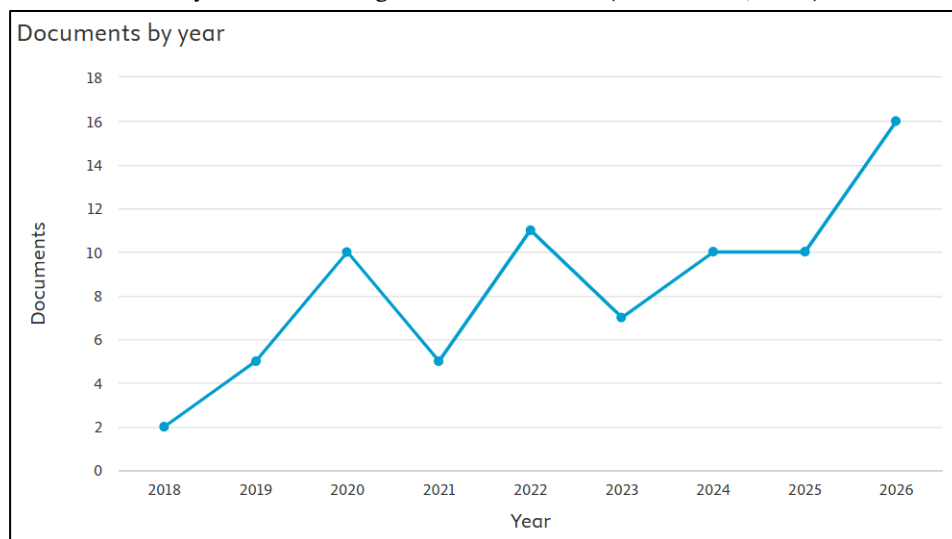
Results and Discussions

The results of this study focus on findings derived from 58 articles indexed in the Scopus database related to Sustainable Career Development. The data were obtained through the identification and analysis of publication trends, yearly publication growth, journal sources, author productivity, institutional affiliations, and country distributions. Furthermore, this study highlights the most influential elements within the Sustainable

Career Development research field, including dominant keywords, collaboration networks among authors and countries, and emerging research themes identified through bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer. The findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and intellectual structure of Sustainable Career Development research, particularly regarding career adaptability, employee well-being, work-life balance, employability, and organizational sustainability in the era of digital transformation.

RQ1: Is the exploration of Sustainable Career Development a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry?

(Balcioglu & Altındağ, 2026; Duong et al., 2026; Ghaempanah & Khapova, 2026) (According to data retrieved from the Scopus database, research on Sustainable Career Development has evolved over recent years, particularly during the last decade. Scholarly studies on Sustainable Career Development consist of 58 articles, indicating that research in this field remains relatively limited, as illustrated in Figure 1. Research on Sustainable Career Development began to develop progressively starting in 2018 (Hanif et al., 2018; Hutchison et al., 2018). Early studies conducted by previous scholars emphasized the importance of career sustainability in responding to changes in the modern workplace, digital transformation, and organizational dynamics. Currently, the development of research on Sustainable Career Development has attracted considerable attention from academics, focusing on various aspects such as career adaptability, employee well-being, work-life balance, employability, competency development, and organizational sustainability (Poulose et al., 2026; Verney & Curtis, 2026; Wu et al., 2026). Furthermore, Sustainable Career Development has been found to contribute significantly to improving human resource quality, organizational resilience, job satisfaction, and the continuity of individual careers in the dynamic era of digital transformation (Zarbo et al., 2026)



Source : Scopus database

Figure 1. Number of Sustainable Career Development

Since 2018, research on Sustainable Career Development has continued to experience progressive growth, although the number of publications remains relatively limited compared to other human resource management topics. Based on the Scopus database, scholarly publications on Sustainable Career Development consist of 58 articles, indicating substantial opportunities for future researchers to further develop this field of study. The increasing trend of publications from 2018 to 2026, as illustrated in Figure 1, demonstrates that Sustainable Career Development has become an emerging and increasingly relevant research topic in the modern organizational era.

Research on Sustainable Career Development is significant because it provides insights into how individuals can maintain career continuity, adaptability, and employability amid rapid technological advancement, digital transformation, and dynamic organizational changes. Furthermore, this concept contributes to the development of sustainable human resources by emphasizing career adaptability, employee well-being, work-life balance, competency enhancement, and long-term career success.

At present, studies on Sustainable Career Development have attracted growing attention from scholars, particularly in relation to organizational sustainability, employee resilience, talent management, career

satisfaction, and workforce competitiveness. This growing body of literature may facilitate a deeper understanding of the practical and sustainable implementation of career development strategies across various organizational sectors in the digital era.

RQ2: What is the present allocation of research investigations related to Sustainable Career Development ?

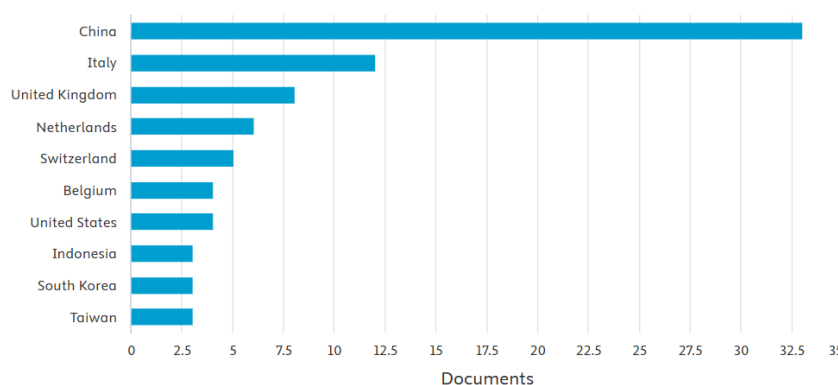
The analysis of the distribution of Sustainable Career Development research within the 58 selected articles was conducted by categorizing the publications based on country or territory. This analysis provides valuable insights for scholars and practitioners in understanding the global development of research related to Sustainable Career Development, particularly in supporting future research agendas and sustainable human resource development strategies.

Based on the distribution of scholarly publications by country or territory, China dominates the field with 33 publications, indicating substantial academic attention toward Sustainable Career Development within the context of workforce sustainability, career adaptability, and organizational transformation. Italy follows with 12 publications, while the United Kingdom contributes 8 publications. Furthermore, the Netherlands contributes 6 publications, Switzerland 5 publications, and both Belgium and the United States contribute 4 publications each. Meanwhile, Indonesia, South Korea, and Taiwan each contribute 3 publications (see Figure 2).

This distribution demonstrates that research on Sustainable Career Development has become an increasingly global academic concern, particularly among countries that are actively responding to digital transformation, workforce sustainability challenges, and changing career patterns in modern organizations. Moreover, the emergence of publications from developing countries indicates a growing awareness of the importance of sustainable career practices in maintaining employee competitiveness, well-being, and long-term employability in the dynamic digital era.

Documents by country or territory

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.



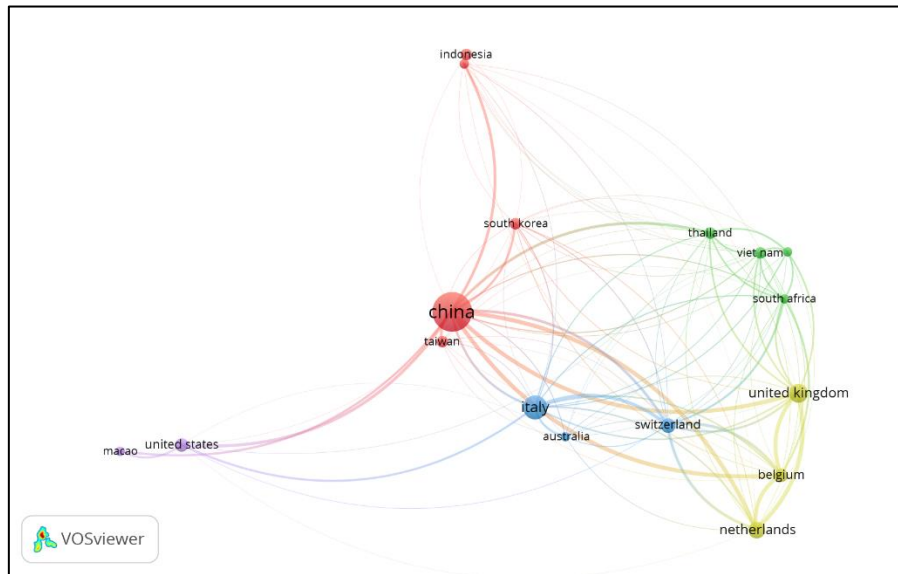
Source : Scopus database

Figure 2. Number of articles by country or territory (top 10 country)

The allocation of scholarly inquiries related to Sustainable Career Development categorized by country or territory reveals the dominance of China with the highest number of publications, followed by Italy, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. In the Asian region, Indonesia, South Korea, and Taiwan also demonstrate notable contributions, reflecting the growing academic interest in Sustainable Career Development within developing economies undergoing rapid digital transformation and workforce changes. Additionally, countries such as Switzerland, Belgium, and the United States have made significant scholarly contributions to this field, indicating that research on Sustainable Career Development has gained attention across both Western and Eastern contexts.

These findings highlight that Sustainable Career Development has become an important global research topic, particularly in response to challenges related to career sustainability, employee adaptability, workforce competitiveness, and organizational resilience in the digital era. Researchers further analyzed the interrelationships among these countries using VOSviewer software, which visualizes collaboration patterns and co-authorship networks among scholars. The findings demonstrate strong linkages between China, European

countries, and several Asian nations, signifying that research on Sustainable Career Development has evolved into a global academic discourse that integrates diverse cultural, organizational, and economic perspectives (see Figure 3).



Source: Output VOSviewer software

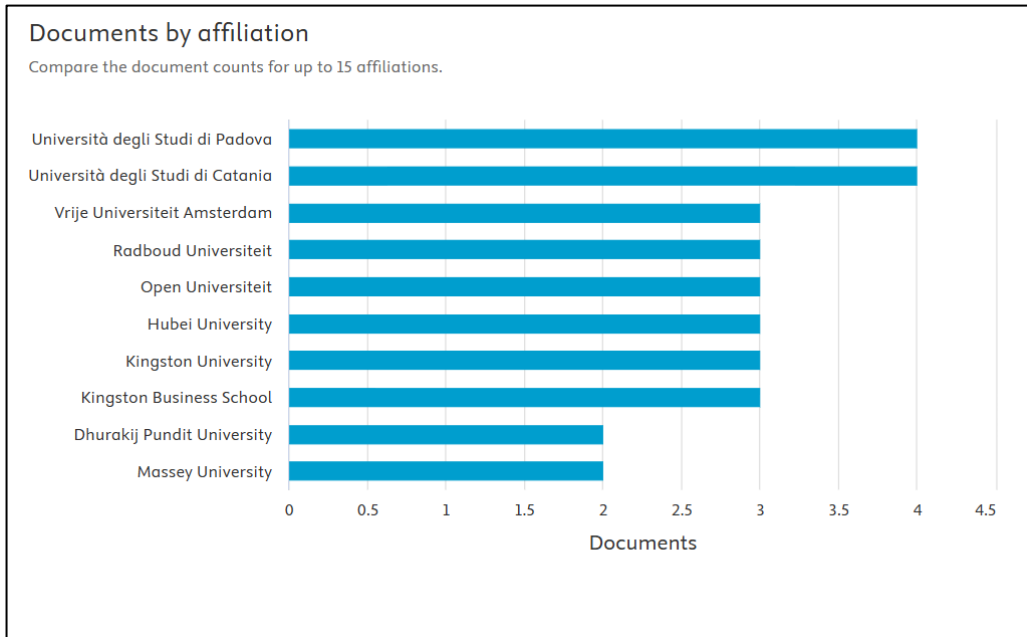
Figure 3. Network Country Visualization

The visualization illustrates the network of countries contributing to research on Sustainable Career Development. The map shows that China occupies the most central position, indicating its significant influence and strong collaboration intensity in global studies related to Sustainable Career Development. China is closely connected with several countries such as South Korea, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Italy, demonstrating extensive academic engagement in issues related to career sustainability, workforce adaptability, and organizational transformation in the digital era.

Furthermore, European countries such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy also demonstrate strong collaborative relationships, reflecting the growing research interest in sustainable career practices, employee well-being, and long-term employability. In addition, countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, and South Africa form another collaborative network, indicating that research on Sustainable Career Development has expanded across both developed and developing nations.

Overall, the visualization highlights that Sustainable Career Development has evolved into a global research discourse involving diverse cultural, organizational, and economic perspectives, particularly in addressing challenges related to digital transformation, workforce sustainability, and changing career patterns in modern organizations.

Second, the allocation of scholarship related to Sustainable Career Development based on institutional affiliations indicates that research productivity is concentrated among several prominent universities and academic institutions. Università degli Studi di Padova (Italy) and Università degli Studi di Catania (Italy) emerge as the most productive institutions, each contributing 4 documents. Furthermore, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Netherlands), Radboud Universiteit (Netherlands), Open Universiteit (Netherlands), Hubei University (China), Kingston University (United Kingdom), and Kingston Business School (United Kingdom) each contributed 3 documents related to Sustainable Career Development research.



Source: Scopus database

Figure 4. Network country visualization

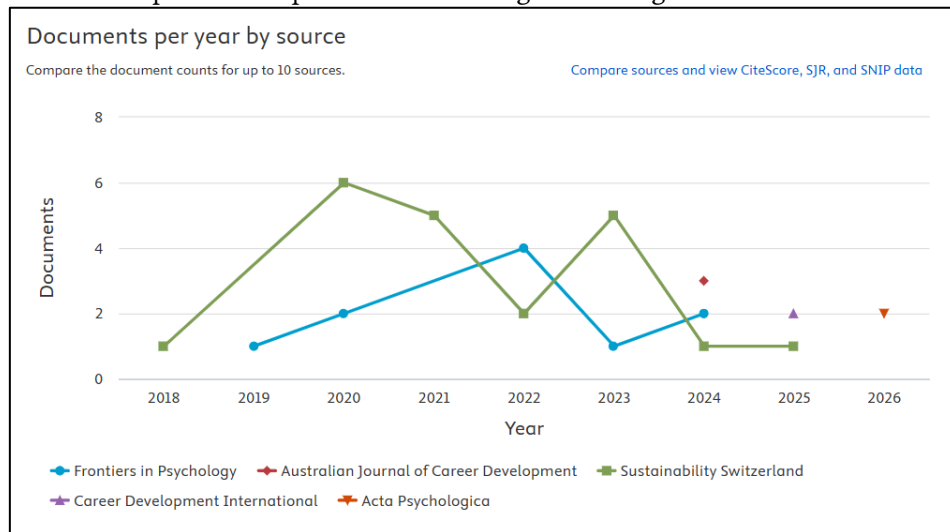
Meanwhile, Dhurakij Pundit University (Thailand) and Massey University (New Zealand) each recorded 2 publications in this field (see Figure 4). These findings indicate that research on Sustainable Career Development has gained substantial academic attention from universities across Europe and Asia, particularly in relation to career sustainability, workforce adaptability, employee well-being, and organizational resilience in the era of digital transformation.)

The dissemination of Sustainable Career Development scholarship, as reflected in the leading publications and institutional affiliations, demonstrates that this research theme has gained increasing global academic attention. The concentration of studies in universities located in countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, China, and the United Kingdom indicates that scholarly interest in Sustainable Career Development is strongly associated with issues related to career sustainability, workforce adaptability, employee well-being, and organizational resilience in the era of digital transformation. Furthermore, these findings highlight that modern organizations and academic institutions are increasingly recognizing the importance of sustainable career strategies to maintain long-term employability and competitiveness in dynamic work environments.

Third, the allocation of scholarly inquiries related to Sustainable Career Development based on publication sources is predominantly represented by Sustainability Switzerland, which demonstrates the highest and most consistent number of publications across several years. Furthermore, *Frontiers in Psychology* also shows significant contributions to the development of Sustainable Career Development research, particularly between 2019 and 2024. Other important publication sources include the *Australian Journal of Career Development*, *Career Development International*, and *Acta Psychologica*, which also contributed scholarly publications related to career sustainability, employee well-being, career adaptability, and long-term employability (see Figure 5).

These findings indicate that research on Sustainable Career Development is primarily published in journals focusing on psychology, career studies, sustainability, and organizational behavior. Moreover, the increasing diversity of publication sources reflects the multidisciplinary nature of Sustainable Career

Development, which integrates perspectives from human resource management, organizational sustainability, psychology, and career development in response to the challenges of the digital era.



Source: Scopus database

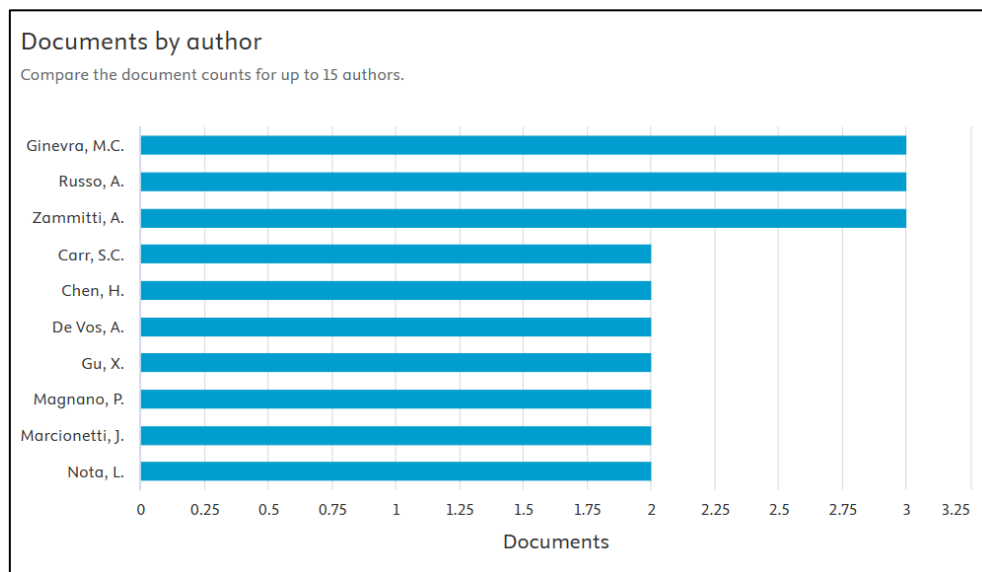
Figure 5. Number of articles by sources (top 10 sources)

The longitudinal trend presented in Figure 5 reveals dynamic fluctuations in publication output related to Sustainable Career Development from 2018 to 2026. Sustainability Switzerland demonstrates the most consistent and dominant publication trend, with a significant increase between 2020 and 2023, indicating strong scholarly attention toward sustainability-oriented career issues and workforce development. Meanwhile, Frontiers in Psychology also shows a progressive contribution to the field, particularly from 2019 to 2024, reflecting growing academic interest in the psychological dimensions of sustainable careers, such as employee well-being, career adaptability, and work-life balance. In addition, journals such as the Australian Journal of Career Development, Career Development International, and Acta Psychologica contribute to the advancement of research on career sustainability, employability, and long-term career success. This publication pattern indicates that research on Sustainable Career Development spans multiple disciplines, including psychology, sustainability, organizational behavior, human resource management, and career studies.

Furthermore, the dominant role of journals such as Sustainability Switzerland and Frontiers in Psychology highlights the increasing global interest in understanding how sustainable career practices influence employee resilience, organizational sustainability, workforce competitiveness, and long-term employability in the era of digital transformation.

Fourth, the distribution of research related to Sustainable Career Development based on authors demonstrates relatively balanced scholarly contributions, indicating that no single author overwhelmingly dominates the field. Among the leading authors, Ginevra, M.C., Russo, A., and Zammitti, A. emerge as the most productive scholars, each contributing 3 publications related to Sustainable Career Development. Furthermore, several other prominent researchers, including Carr, S.C., Chen, H., De Vos, A., Gu, X., Magnano, P., Marcionetti, J., and Nota, L., each contributed 2 publications to this research area (see Figure 6).

This distribution indicates that research on Sustainable Career Development is collaborative and widely dispersed among various scholars and academic institutions. Moreover, the diversity of contributing authors reflects the multidisciplinary nature of Sustainable Career Development, which integrates perspectives from career development, psychology, sustainability, organizational behavior, and human resource management in addressing long-term career sustainability in the digital era.



Source: Scopus database

Figure 6. Count of publication by author (top 10 sources)

RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of future research?

The longitudinal trend presented in Figure 5 reveals dynamic fluctuations in publication output related to Sustainable Career Development from 2018 to 2026. Sustainability Switzerland demonstrates the most consistent and dominant publication trend, with a significant increase between 2020 and 2023, indicating strong scholarly attention toward sustainability-oriented career issues and workforce development. Meanwhile, Frontiers in Psychology also shows a progressive contribution to the field, particularly from 2019 to 2024, reflecting growing academic interest in the psychological dimensions of sustainable careers, such as employee well-being, career adaptability, and work-life balance. In addition, journals such as the Australian Journal of Career Development, Career Development International, and Acta Psychologica contribute to the advancement of research on career sustainability, employability, and long-term career success. This publication pattern indicates that research on Sustainable Career Development spans multiple disciplines, including psychology, sustainability, organizational behavior, human resource management, and career studies. Furthermore, the dominant role of journals such as Sustainability Switzerland and Frontiers in Psychology highlights the increasing global interest in understanding how sustainable career practices influence employee resilience, organizational sustainability, workforce competitiveness, and long-term employability in the era of digital transformation.

From Table 2, the occurrences of Sustainable Development (135), Sustainability (121), Workplace (108), Sustainable Careers (102), Sustainable Career Development (97), Career Choice (89), Employment (88), Self Concept (65), Future Prospect (63), and Training (63) were identified as the most frequent keywords. These findings indicate that research on Sustainable Career Development is closely associated with sustainability issues, workplace dynamics, career decision-making, employability, and long-term workforce development. Finally, these 10 most frequent keywords are presented in Table 2.

technological advancement and the evolving nature of work in the digital era. (Bal & Alhnaity, 2024; Heikkinen et al., 2026)

Conclusions

This study concludes that Sustainable Career Development has become an increasingly important research topic in the era of digital transformation and dynamic workforce changes. The systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis reveal that Sustainable Career Development plays a significant role in enhancing employee adaptability, employability, well-being, and long-term career sustainability. Furthermore, the findings indicate that sustainable career practices contribute positively to organizational resilience, workforce competitiveness, and sustainable human resource management.

However, the study also identifies several challenges and research gaps related to career adaptability, organizational support, sustainable HRM practices, and the implementation of sustainable career strategies within developing countries and organizations undergoing digital transformation. The implications of this study emphasize the importance for organizations, policymakers, and human resource managers to develop evidence-based career development strategies that support employee well-being, competency enhancement, and long-term workforce sustainability.

Future research is recommended to focus on longitudinal and cross-cultural studies examining the long-term impact of Sustainable Career Development on employee performance, organizational sustainability, and workforce resilience. In addition, future studies should explore the integration of emerging variables such as digital work design, artificial intelligence, flexible work systems, and sustainable leadership within the context of sustainable careers. By integrating these insights, organizations can create adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable career systems aligned with the evolving future of work.

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