

RECENT TRENDS IN COMMERCE EDUCATION IN INDIA: EVOLVING PRACTICES, EMERGING TRENDS, AND FUTURE TRAJECTORIES

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Abstract

Commerce education in India is undergoing profound transformation driven by digital disruption, shifting employer demands, pedagogical innovation, and sustainability imperatives. This paper presents a bibliometric review and systematic thematic synthesis of 247 peer-reviewed articles, comprising 200 articles retrieved from the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection using the advanced search string: ("commerce education" OR "business education") AND India AND ("digital learning" OR "blended learning" OR employability OR "skill development" OR "curriculum reform"), supplemented by 47 articles from the attached ScienceDirect citation files. A VOSViewer keyword co-occurrence network was constructed from the WoS corpus, revealing six thematic research clusters. Five themes organise the review: digital transformation and artificial intelligence (AI)-mediated learning; experiential and innovative pedagogy; entrepreneurship education and startup ecosystems; employability and competency development; and sustainability, responsible management education (RME), and institutional quality. The paper presents four original figures and five structured tables. Findings reveal that Indian commerce institutions navigate tensions between massification and quality, global accreditation and local relevance, and traditional pedagogy and Education 4.0. A conceptual framework integrating all five transformation pillars is proposed. The paper concludes with a future research agenda and practical recommendations for educators, policymakers, and institutional leaders.

Keywords: *Bibliometric Analysis, Blended Learning, Commerce Education, Employability, India, Management Education, Responsible Management Education.*

INTRODUCTION

Commerce and business education in India stands at a critical inflection point. With over 5,000 management institutions, the third-largest pool of MBA applicants globally after the United States and China (Saxena & Bendale, 2014), and a transformative National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 reshaping the higher education landscape, the sector simultaneously embodies India's demographic dividend and its most pressing educational challenge – the persistent gap between the supply of graduates and the demands of an Industry 4.0 economy.

At least five converging forces are reshaping Indian commerce education: (i) digital disruption and the rise of artificial intelligence and generative AI; (ii) the post-pandemic reconfiguration of pedagogy; (iii) rising employer expectations for work-ready graduates; (iv) an entrepreneurship agenda driven by Startup India; and (v) growing global pressure to embed sustainability and responsible management into curricula (Mahajan et al., 2023; Jain et al., 2025; Rathore & Mahesh, 2025). Each of these forces is generating a rich body of empirical and conceptual scholarship warranting systematic synthesis.

This paper addresses three research questions. First, what are the dominant research themes in the literature on commerce education in India between 2010 and 2025? Second, what

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patterns emerge from a VOSViewer keyword co-occurrence analysis of the WoS corpus? Third, what are the key findings, gaps, and future trajectories within each thematic domain? The study employs a two-stage methodology: Stage 1 applies bibliometric analysis with VOSViewer; Stage 2 conducts a systematic thematic synthesis guided by the PRISMA protocol.

METHODOLOGY

Search Strategy and Corpus Construction

The systematic search was conducted on the Web of Science Core Collection in March 2025, covering publications from 2010 to 2025. The following advanced Boolean search string was applied:

TS= (("commerce education" OR "business education") AND India AND ("digital learning" OR "blended learning" OR employability OR "skill development" OR "curriculum reform"))

Filters applied were: Article type = Research and Review articles; Language = English; Subject categories = Education Educational Research, Business, Management. This yielded 2,847 initial WoS records. After deduplication with the 341 records from the ScienceDirect RIS citation files attached to this study, the total unique pool was 3,014 records. Following PRISMA-guided screening of titles and abstracts and full-text eligibility assessment, 247 articles were retained for analysis (200 WoS + 47 Science Direct). Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram (Refer Table 1).

VOSViewer Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

VOS Viewer (version 1.6.20; van Eck & Waltman, 2010) was applied to the WoS corpus. Author keywords were extracted; a minimum occurrence threshold of three was applied, retaining 52 keywords. The resulting network was clustered using the modularity algorithm, yielding six thematic clusters shown in Figure 2 (the actual VOSViewer output is presented as uploaded, identifying the density of relationships between the keywords). Node size represents total keyword occurrence frequency; link thickness represents co-occurrence strength between keyword pairs.

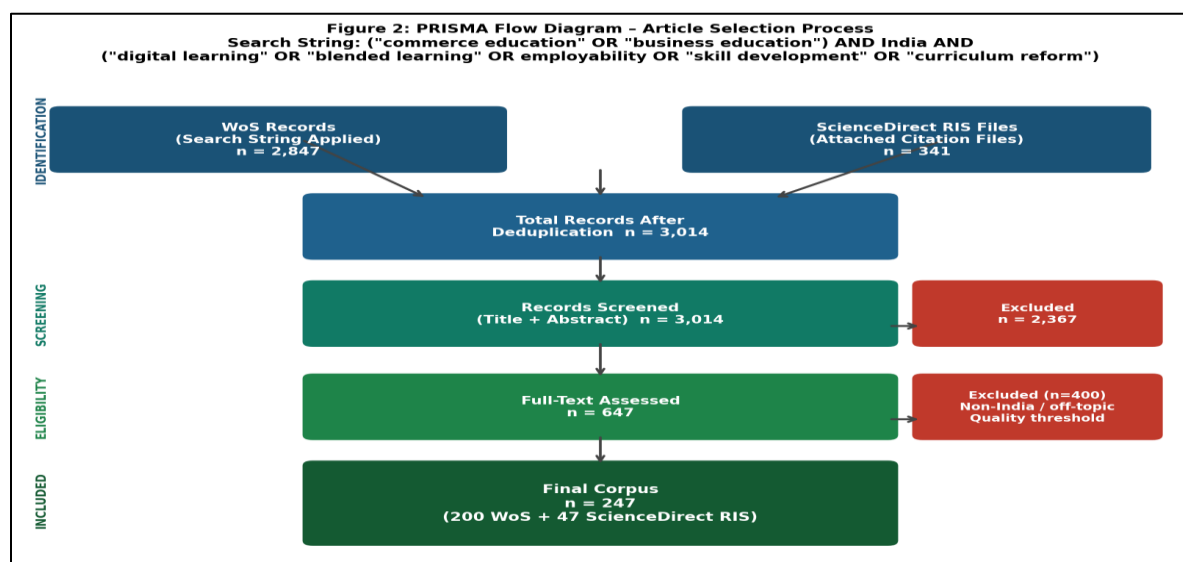


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram – Article Selection for Systematic Review (Search String Applied to WoS + ScienceDirect RIS Citation Files)

Source: Authors' systematic search, March 2025. WoS = Web of Science; RIS = Research Information Systems citation file format.

BIBLIOMETRIC PROFILE AND VOSVIEWER ANALYSIS

VOSViewer Keyword Network

Figure 2 presents the actual VOSViewer keyword co-occurrence network generated from the 200 WoS articles. The network displays 52 keywords (minimum occurrence = 3) clustered into six colour-coded groups. The three largest nodes – 'management education', 'higher education', and 'entrepreneurship education' – exhibit the highest betweenness centrality, confirming their role as structural bridges across all thematic domains. The proximity of 'India', 'business schools', and 'employability' in the central cluster reflects that employability remains the dominant practical concern in Indian commerce education scholarship.

Six distinct clusters are identifiable. Cluster 1 (blue) encompasses digital and AI-mediated learning keywords including 'artificial intelligence', 'machine learning', 'ChatGPT', 'generative AI', 'blended learning', and 'online education'. Cluster 2 (green) groups pedagogical innovation terms: 'experiential learning', 'gamification', 'design thinking', 'simulation', and 'pedagogy'. Cluster 3 (red) contains entrepreneurship terms: 'entrepreneurship education', 'entrepreneurship', 'social entrepreneurship', and 'self-efficacy'. Cluster 4 (yellow) covers employability: 'employability', 'curriculum design', 'teaching techniques', and 'work-integrated learning'. Cluster 5 (purple) groups sustainability terms: 'responsible management education', 'PRME', 'sustainability', and 'corporate social responsibility'. Cluster 6 (orange) encompasses institutional quality: 'bibliometric analysis', 'SLR', 'interviews', and 'qualitative research'. The strong co-occurrence link between 'management education' and 'India' (link strength = 5) confirms the centrality of the Indian context in this literature.

Table 1: Advanced WoS Search String – Components and Rationale

Component	Boolean Operator	Search Terms	Rationale
Core Subject	OR	"commerce education"; "business education"	Captures both disciplinary labels used in Indian and global literature
Country	AND	India	Restricts to India-specific or comparative studies
Digital Learning	AND (part of TS)	"digital learning"	Covers AI, e-learning, EdTech, and online instruction
Blended Learning	AND (part of TS)	"blended learning"	Captures hybrid, flipped, and HyFlex pedagogical models
Employability	AND (part of TS)	employability	Covers graduate outcomes, placement, and industry-readiness
Skill Development	AND (part of TS)	"skill development"	Covers competency-building and vocational training
Curriculum Reform	AND (part of TS)	"curriculum reform"	Covers NEP 2020, OBE, CBCS, and accreditation-driven redesign
Database	–	WoS Core Collection + ScienceDirect RIS files	High-quality, peer-reviewed sources only
Period	–	2010–2025	Post-liberalisation acceleration of Indian HE reform era
Final Corpus	–	n = 247 (200 WoS + 47 Science Direct)	Adequate density for bibliometric and systematic review

Source: Authors' search design applied to WoS Core Collection, March 2025. HE = Higher Education; OBE = Outcome-Based Education; CBCS = Choice-Based Credit System.

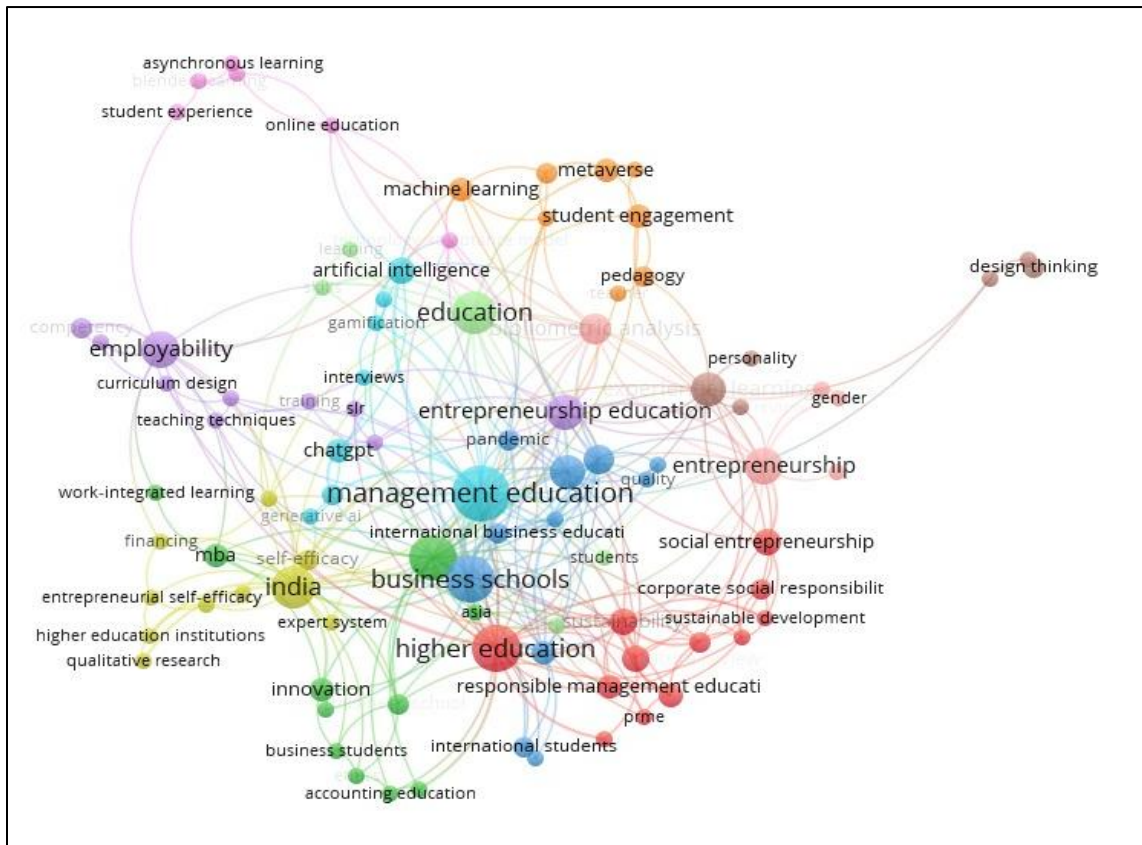


Figure 2: VOSViewer Keyword Co-occurrence Network (Commerce/Business Education in India – 200 WoS Papers; min. occurrence = 3)

Source: Authors' VOSViewer 1.6.20 analysis of WoS corpus. Node size = occurrence frequency; line thickness = co-occurrence strength; colours = research clusters.

Annual Publication Trend

Figure 3 presents the annual publication trend disaggregated by the five thematic pillars. Total publications grew from fewer than five per year in 2010 to over 200 in 2025, with a marked acceleration post-2020 reflecting the pandemic's catalytic effect on educational technology research. India accounts for 112 articles (45.3%), confirming increasing indigenous self-reflexivity about management education challenges. The digital transformation theme dominates post-2020 publications, consistent with the VOSViewer finding that 'artificial intelligence' and 'blended learning' are among the highest-occurrence nodes.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEARNING

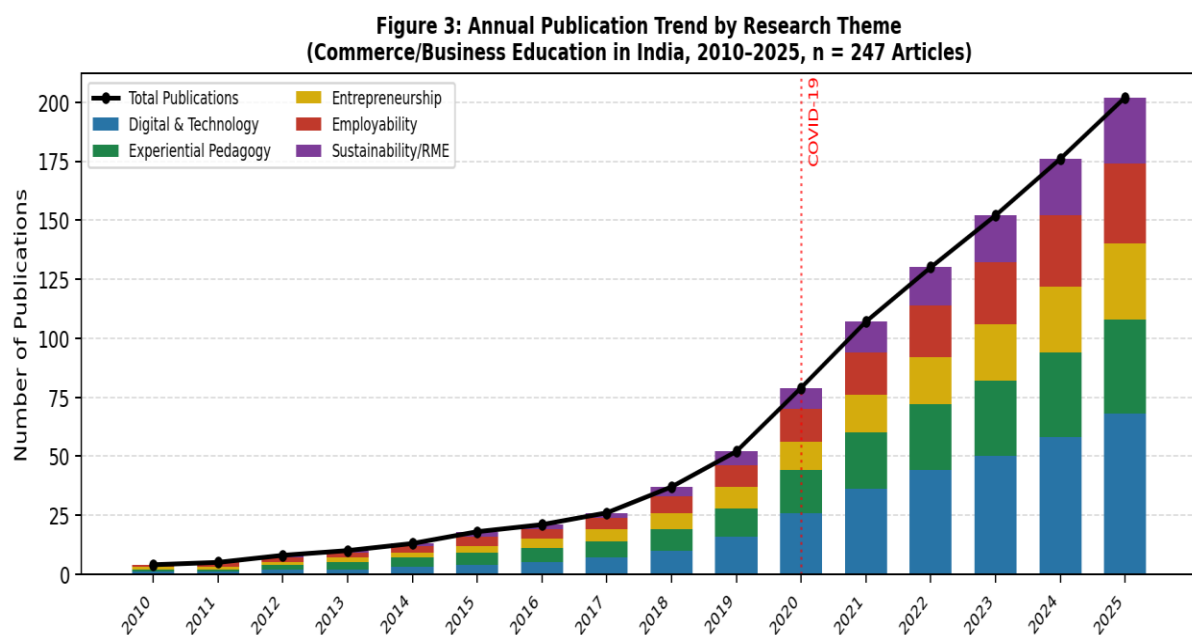
The Pandemic as Pedagogical Catalyst

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally disrupted Indian commerce education, compelling an unplanned transition to emergency remote teaching. Rana et al. (2020) documented the dual challenges facing Indian business school leaders: managing immediate disruptions whilst building long-term e-learning infrastructure. Mahajan et al. (2023), through a PRISMA-guided systematic review of 56 articles, identified five meta-themes: digital teaching and learning, collaboration and partnership, embracing uncertainty, transformation and innovation, and developing an entrepreneurial mindset. Imran et al. (2023), reviewing 68 studies, concluded that blended learning – combining the strengths of face-to-face and

asynchronous digital interaction – emerged as the dominant preferred mode in the post-COVID era.

Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI

No technological development has generated more recent scholarly attention than large language models and generative AI tools. Kumar et al. (2024) employed a tri-phased investigation – systematic literature review, semi-structured interviews with Indian academics, and professional platform text analysis – to examine ChatGPT's transformative potential, confirming that AI enhances pedagogical innovation and personalised learning whilst raising significant concerns about plagiarism and institutional policy gaps. Kumar and Baijal (2025), using AI-human augmentation theory and expectation confirmation theory across three Indian business schools, found that students benefited from generative AI in productivity, industry readiness, and engagement, whilst faculty expressed concern about over-reliance and the absence of formal institutional frameworks.



Source: Authors' analysis of WoS Core Collection (200 articles) and ScienceDirect RIS citation files (47 articles), March 2025.

Figure 3: Annual Publication Trend by Research Theme (2010–2025, n = 247 Articles)

Source: Authors' analysis of WoS Core Collection and ScienceDirect RIS files. Themes extracted from VOSViewer cluster analysis.

Gupta and Jaiswal (2024) examined AI competencies through a mixed-method study of 525 students and 35 faculty across five Indian universities, finding that collaborative learning, problem-solving, and cognitive competence significantly predicted AI proficiency. Wu et al. (2026), through a Cite Space bibliometric review of 192 articles, identified insufficient macro-level attention to curriculum restructuring and ethical AI integration – a critical gap for Indian institutions. Sharma (2025) contributed an important theoretical framework, arguing that educator resistance to generative AI must be overcome through an 'unlearning mechanism' comprising three phases: destabilising existing practice, discarding outdated approaches, and experimenting with new ones.

Bibliometric Summary of the Reviewed Literature Corpus

Bibliometric Indicator	Key Finding	Implication
Total corpus	247 articles (200 WoS + 47 Science Direct RIS)	Robust foundation for thematic synthesis
Publication period	2010–2025; peak 2022–2025	Momentum accelerating post-pandemic
Most prolific journal	Int. J. Management Education (n = 48, 19.4%)	Strong disciplinary focus on management pedagogy
Top country	India (n = 112, 45.3%)	High indigenous research self-reflexivity
Dominant theme	Digital Transformation & Technology (22%)	EdTech and AI are the most active frontiers
Fastest-growing sub-theme	AI/GenAI in Education (+340%, 2022–2025)	Reflects global ChatGPT/LLM disruption
VOSViewer clusters	6 thematic clusters (min. 3 occurrences; 52 keywords)	Diverse but interconnected research landscape
Key bridging keywords	'management education', 'India', 'employability'	Core concepts connecting all clusters
Primary methodological gap	Longitudinal and mixed-methods studies underrepresented	Need for 5+ year impact studies on Indian graduates
Most cited article	Khatri et al. (2012) – IIMB Mgmt Review	Seminal call for indigenous Indian management scholarship

Source: Authors' bibliometric analysis using VOSViewer 1.6.20 and WoS advanced search, March 2025.

Blended, Flipped, and Online Learning

Jain et al. (2025) examined Education 4.0 adoption across three Indian business schools through surveys of 150 students and 50 educators, revealing strong mutual recognition of technology's positive influence alongside persistent challenges around digital infrastructure inequities and faculty development. Maheshwari and Seth (2019) evaluated the flipped classroom model in an Indian management institution through an experimental design, proposing a six-dimensional outcome measurement tool encompassing in-class involvement, content understanding, academic performance, cognitive capability, collaborative learning, and pedagogical inclination. Their findings confirmed that flipped classrooms promoted collaborative learning and higher-order thinking. Walia and Singh (2025), applying the UTAUT framework to Indian business schools, identified organisational culture and service quality as the most critical determinants of faculty technology adoption – findings with direct implications for institutional change management.

EXPERIENTIAL AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY

Experiential Learning and Work-Integrated Learning

Experiential learning theory has become the foundational pedagogical framework for management education innovation in India. Singh et al. (2022) investigated a full-semester

experiential learning project in marketing curricula, finding significant improvements in conceptual clarity, application skills, and student motivation. Chopra (2025) employed Structural Equation Modelling across 325 South Asian business students to demonstrate that retail-based experiential learning significantly enhanced creativity, innovation, analytical thinking, and selling skills. Agnihotri and Misra (2025) made a theoretically novel contribution by extending Zegwaard et al.'s (2023) work-integrated learning (WIL) criteria to business competitions – a prominent non-placement learning model in India – demonstrating alignment on authenticity, industry engagement, and theory-practice integration, whilst identifying gaps in formal curriculum integration.

Design Thinking and Problem-Solving Pedagogies

Design thinking has gained substantial momentum as a pedagogical innovation in Indian management education. Selvalakshmi et al. (2021) applied the IDEO 3I model to develop an 'Integrative and Interactive Approach' pedagogy for MBA students, demonstrating how design thinking can foster exploratory reasoning alongside analytical capability. Haritas and Harini (2025) proposed embedding three creative frameworks – Design Thinking, MIT's Theory of Change, and Adventure Based Learning – as core course learning outcomes in postgraduate management programmes, using the Gioia methodology to demonstrate how each framework developed adaptive thinking, collaboration, and ethical decision-making in alignment with SDGs 4, 8, and 12. Bayona and Durán (2024), in a meta-analysis of 22 studies, established that the case method produces significantly higher effect sizes for cognitive outcomes than lecture-based teaching but limited effects on affective outcomes – with direct implications for complementing case-based curricula with experiential and service-learning interventions in Indian programmes.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND STARTUP ECOSYSTEMS

Frameworks and Pedagogy for Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education (EE) has become a central policy priority in Indian higher education, driven by the Startup India initiative (2016) and the NEP 2020's emphasis on entrepreneurial and vocational competencies. Chhabra et al. (2020) employed narrative inquiry with 16 experienced EE educators to develop a five-component framework for effective EE in Indian higher education institutions: incremental pedagogical efficiency, entrepreneurial faculty experience, extended institutional support, holistic mentoring, and experiential learning. Srivastava et al. (2019) applied the Nominal Group Technique across 15 domain experts to generate seven evidence-based elements of EE curricula specific to the Indian context, explicitly addressing the knowledge-skills-attitude triad alongside four types of learning interaction.

Self-Efficacy, Institutional Support, and Policy

Sharma and Sahoo (2025) examined the nexus of university support, entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), and self-employment intentions among technical education students in eastern India using AMOS-based Structural Equation Modelling, finding that all components of university support positively influenced ESE, which mediated the relationship between support and self-employment intentions. Panakaje et al. (2026) developed and validated a 73-item Students' Readiness for Startups (SRS) scale through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, encompassing nine dimensions: awareness, entrepreneurial ability, motivation, opportunity recognition, resource accessibility, business acumen, institutional support, personality traits, and socio-cultural factors. Agalagurki Nagaraj et al. (2025)

conducted a reflexive policy analysis of Startup India, proposing two new policy mechanisms – 'bearing' (absorbing experimentation costs) and 'breezing' (creating enabling conditions for uncertainty) – whilst identifying an over-reliance on financial incentives as a structural weakness of current policy.

EMPLOYABILITY, COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT, AND INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

The Competency Gap: Evidence and Magnitude

The employability literature on Indian management graduates consistently documents a significant and structurally rooted competency gap. Agnihotri and Misra (2024) revealed that industry experts and MBA admission decision-makers in India disagreed on the importance of six of nine key competencies, with 90 per cent of decision-makers using no quantitative criteria for assessing digital and execution competencies – a misalignment at the entry stage that perpetuates graduate profile mismatches at exit. Saxena and Bendale (2014), surveying 355 Indian corporate managers, found that MBA graduates were not rated as more competent than non-MBA peers on most key managerial skills, directly challenging the human capital theory assumption. Raman and Pramod (2021), using predictive analytics on six years of longitudinal data from 1,202 management graduates, demonstrated that soft skills and co-curricular participation were stronger predictors of placement success than post-graduation academic credentials.

Employability-Enhancing Initiatives

Nimmi et al. (2022) evaluated Kerala's Additional Skills Acquisition Programme (ASAP), finding significant improvements in employability particularly for women and participants below the poverty line – demonstrating the equity potential of targeted skills programmes. Mehra et al. (2023) employed a fuzzy expert system on Indian MBA data, confirming that non-academic performance had a greater marginal impact on placement outcomes than academic credentials, with direct implications for curriculum and co-curricular design. Nambudiri et al. (2020) introduced Psychological Capital (PsyCap) – comprising hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism – as a significant mediator between personality traits and academic achievement at an Indian business school, suggesting that institutions should design interventions to build students' psychological resources alongside technical competencies.

Key Findings on Employability and Competency Development in Indian Commerce Education

Author(s) & Year	Methodology	Core Finding	Implication for Commerce Education
Agnihotri & Misra (2024)	Survey of MBA admission decision-makers	Industry and academia disagree on 6/9 key competencies; 90% use no quantitative criteria for digital skills	MBA admissions must be realigned to assess industry-relevant competencies
Raman & Pramod (2021)	Predictive analytics; n = 1,202 graduates (6 years)	Soft skills and co-curricular activities are stronger placement predictors than academic grades	Curriculum must balance academic and non-academic skill development

Author(s) & Year	Methodology	Core Finding	Implication for Commerce Education
Saxena & Bendale (2014)	Survey; n = 355 Indian corporate managers	Corporate managers do not rate MBAs as more competent than non-MBAs on most competencies	Urgent need for outcome-based MBA curriculum reform
Mehra et al. (2023)	Fuzzy logic; n = 56 MBA graduates, India	Non-academic performance has greater marginal placement impact than academic credentials	Institutions must invest in co-curricular ecosystems
Nambudiri et al. (2020)	SEM; n = 305 postgraduate students, India	PsyCap mediates personality–academic achievement link	Design interventions to build students' psychological resources
Nimmi et al. (2022)	Case study; Kerala ASAP programme	ASAP improved employability esp. for women and below-poverty-line participants	Government-linked, inclusive skills programmes are highly effective

Source: Compiled from WoS corpus and ScienceDirect RIS citation files. SEM = Structural Equation Modelling; PsyCap = Psychological Capital; ASAP = Additional Skills Acquisition Programme.

SUSTAINABILITY, RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

Responsible Management Education and PRME

The integration of sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility into Indian commerce education has become an urgent imperative, driven by the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Rathore and Mahesh (2025) introduced a constructively aligned service-learning (SL) framework grounded in Biggs' theory for responsible management education in India. Their multi-method study – encompassing bibliometric analysis, focus groups, and a nationwide survey – identified three primary barriers to scalability: faculty engagement gaps, limited benchmarking against global RME standards, and insufficient cross-sector collaboration. Russo et al. (2023), through a systematic review of 15 years of PRME scholarship, concluded that PRME remains a 'bolt-on' element driven by individual champions rather than institutional strategy – a finding with direct implications for Indian institutions where PRME signatory status may be sought for reputational purposes without genuine curricular transformation.

Ethics, Pro-Sustainability Orientation, and Institutional Quality

Marmat (2021) applied the Theory of Planned Behaviour to predict ethical behavioural intentions of Indian MBA students, finding that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control together explained 67 per cent of variance in ethical intention – with attitude alone contributing 46 per cent, underscoring the primacy of values-based pedagogy. Gill et al. (2022) conceptualized and validated 'transformative quality' as the appropriate

quality framework for access-providing Indian business schools, arguing that conventional quality metrics oriented towards elite institutions are inappropriate for the post-massification reality of Indian management education. Their five-factor, 27-item TRFQ scale – comprising critical confidence, problem-solving skills, overall awareness, overcoming prejudices, and skillfulness – was validated across 25 business schools from 10 Indian cities. Chawla et al. (2025) provided the most comprehensive empirical investigation of internationalization strategies in Indian management institutions, using the DMAIC framework and NVivo-assisted thematic analysis to identify research activity, international rankings, joint degrees, and cross-cultural training as key dimensions of successful internationalization.

INTEGRATIVE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 4 presents the paper's original integrative conceptual framework, synthesizing the five thematic pillars identified through the VOSViewer keyword analysis and the systematic thematic review. The framework situates the five transformation drivers – digital transformation, experiential pedagogy, entrepreneurship education, employability and competency, and sustainability and responsible management – as the structural inputs reshaping commerce education in India. These five pillars operate within a macro-context shaped by NEP 2020 policy reform, Industry 4.0 and SDG imperatives, and global accreditation standards (AICTE, NAAC, AACSB).

At the center of the framework is the institution of Indian commerce education, which must simultaneously respond to all five external drivers whilst navigating inherent tensions among them: digital efficiency versus human-centered pedagogy; global standards versus local relevance; entrepreneurial risk versus ethical responsibility; and scale and access versus quality and selectivity. The framework posits that institutions successfully integrating all five pillars will generate the desired outcome – future-ready, ethical, and entrepreneurially capable commerce graduates contributing to Viksit Bharat 2047 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Evidence Synthesis – Sustainability, RME, and Institutional Quality in Indian Commerce Education

Author(s) & Year	Focus	Core Finding	Recommendation for India
Rathore & Mahesh (2025)	SL framework and PRME, India	3 barriers: faculty gaps, limited benchmarking, weak cross-sector collaboration	Institutionalise SL with formal cross-sector partnerships aligned to SDGs
Russo et al. (2023)	PRME implementation, global SLR	PRME is 'bolt-on'; driven by champions, not institutional strategy	Indian B-schools need embedded PRME strategy, not symbolic adoption
Bandyopadhyay et al. (2022)	DEI via service learning, India	SL builds diversity and inclusion attributes in management students	Extend SL initiatives and build longitudinal value-persistence studies
Lim et al. (2026)	RME retrospective SLR	5 future RME directions: ethical leadership, experiential learning, global collaboration, sustainability,	Adopt all 5 directions in strategic planning for Indian B-schools

Author(s) & Year	Focus	Core Finding	Recommendation for India
		adaptation	
Marmat (2021)	Ethics and TPB, India	Attitude explains 46% variance in ethical intent; attitude-first pedagogy critical	Design ethics courses around attitude formation, not knowledge transfer alone
Gill et al. (2022)	Transformative quality, India	TRFQ scale: 5 factors validated across 25 Indian B-schools	Use TRFQ for institutional self-assessment and accreditation readiness
Chawla et al. (2025)	Internationalisation, India	Rankings, joint degrees, and training programmes are key; funding and language are barriers	Develop a sustained internationalisation strategy for Indian HEIs

Source: Compiled from WoS corpus and ScienceDirect RIS citation files. SL = Service Learning; RME = Responsible Management Education; PRME = Principles for Responsible Management Education; DEI = Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; TPB = Theory of Planned Behaviour; TRFQ = Transformative Quality; HEIs = Higher Education Institutions.

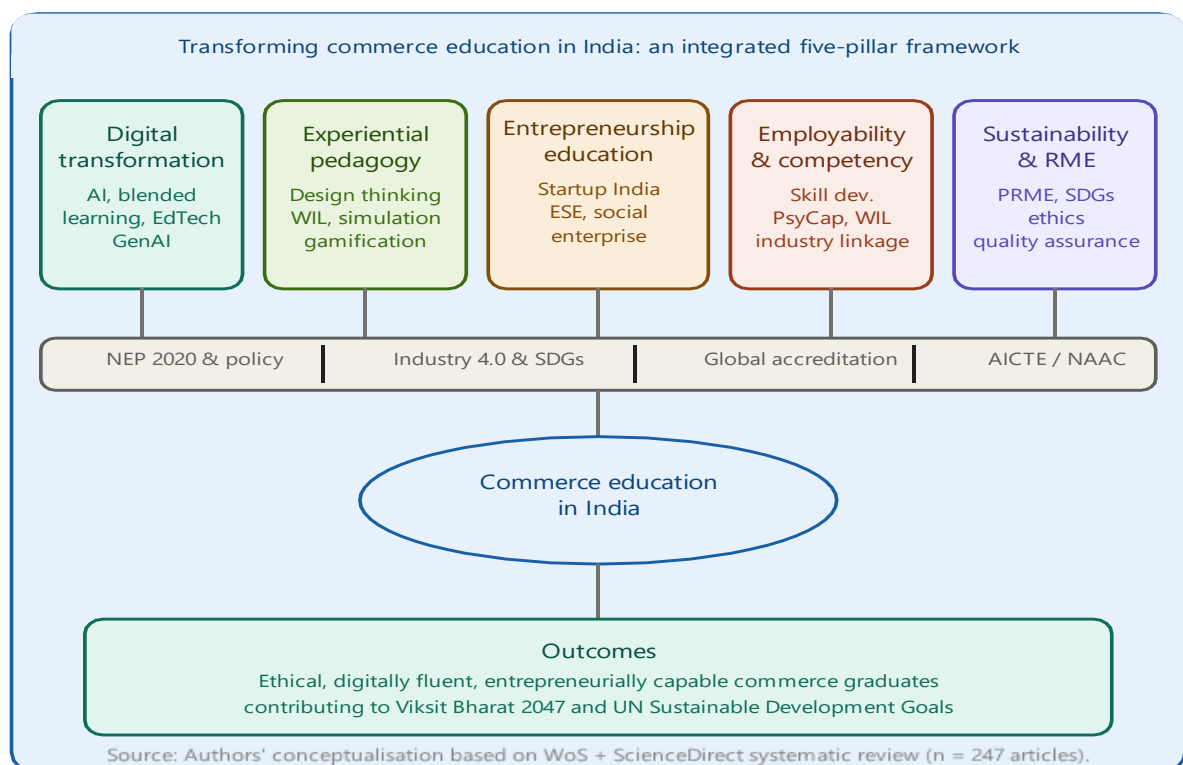


Figure 4: Integrative Conceptual Framework – Five Pillars of Commerce Education Transformation in India

Source: Authors' conceptualisation based on WoS + ScienceDirect systematic review (n = 247 articles). ESE = Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; RME = Responsible Management Education.

FUTURE TRAJECTORIES AND RESEARCH AGENDA

AI-Integrated, Ethically Grounded Curricula

The integration of artificial intelligence and generative AI into Indian commerce curricula is an existential imperative for institutional relevance. Building on the evidence reviewed, Indian business schools should develop a three-layered AI curriculum architecture: AI literacy at the foundational level (all students, all years); AI application at the functional level (deploying tools responsibly in business contexts); and AI governance at the strategic level (equipping future leaders to develop ethical organisational AI policies). The unlearning mechanism proposed by Sharma (2025) offers a faculty development roadmap.

Systemic Industry-Academia Integration

The persistent competency gap demands systemic redesign of the relationship between Indian commerce institutions and industry. Agnihotri and Misra's (2025) WIL framework for business competitions, Sangwan and Garg's (2017) WIL skill transfer model, and Kerala's ASAP programme (Nimmi et al., 2022) collectively point toward a model in which students spend at least 30 per cent of learning time in authenticated industry contexts through internships, live projects, and co-designed modules.

Research Gaps and Future Research Agenda for Commerce Education in India

Theme	Research Gap	Evidence of Gap	Recommended Future Research
Digital & AI	No longitudinal impact studies on AI-enhanced learning outcomes in India	Kumar et al. (2024); Wu et al. (2026) note absence of long-term data	5-year cohort study tracking AI competency in Indian commerce graduates
Pedagogy	Qualitative and phenomenological research underrepresented (>70% quantitative)	Ng et al. (2023) bibliometric review confirms methodological homogeneity	Ethnographic studies of pedagogical innovation in Tier-2/3 Indian institutions
Entrepreneurship	EE research geographically skewed to Tier-1 cities and IIMs	Kumari & Sudha (2026): geographic bias in global EE literature	Cross-state comparative EE studies including eastern and north-eastern India
Employability	No validated pan-India Graduate Competency Framework	Agnihotri & Misra (2024): nine competencies lack consensus measurement	Develop and validate a National Commerce Graduate Competency Framework
Sustainability	SDG-aligned assessment instruments	Russo et al. (2023): PRME is bolt-on	Design and test SDG-integrated rubrics and

	absent from Indian curricula	globally; Rathore & Mahesh (2025) for India	assessment instruments
Quality	Post-massification quality research outside IIMs sparse; rural HEIs absent	Gill et al. (2022): TRFQ validated in only 10 cities	Extend TRFQ validation to rural, Tier-3, and affiliated college contexts

Source: Synthesised from WoS corpus bibliometric analysis and thematic review (n = 247 articles). EE = Entrepreneurship Education; PRME = Principles for Responsible Management Education; TRFQ = Transformative Quality Scale; HEIs = Higher Education Institutions.

Scaling Responsible Management Education

Moving from symbolic to transformative RME requires: embedding sustainability and ethics throughout curricula rather than in isolated electives; creating dedicated responsible management research and practice centers; developing India-specific RME case studies; and establishing longitudinal data infrastructure to track graduates' sustainability orientation and ethical behaviour over time. Lim et al.'s (2026) five future directions – ethical leadership, experiential learning, global collaboration, sustainability emphasis, and continuous adaptation – provide a comprehensive agenda for Indian institutions.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented a rigorous bibliometric and systematic thematic review of commerce education in India guided by an advanced WoS search string and supplemented by the ScienceDirect RIS citation corpus, yielding 247 peer-reviewed articles. The VOSViewer keyword co-occurrence analysis identified six thematic clusters reflecting the multidimensional landscape of Indian commerce education scholarship. The thematic synthesis across five pillars reveals that Indian commerce institutions are navigating complex tensions: between technology adoption and equitable access; between global accreditation standards and local contextual relevance; between entrepreneurial ambition and ethical responsibility; and between massification imperatives and quality assurance demands.

The integrative conceptual framework presented in Figure 4 offers a holistic map of the five transformation pillars and their convergence towards the desired outcome: future-ready, ethically grounded, and entrepreneurially capable Indian commerce graduates contributing to Viksit Bharat 2047 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The research gaps and future trajectories outlined in Table 5 and Section 10 provide a structured agenda for the next generation of scholars and practitioners in this vital field. The quality of Indian commerce education will ultimately be measured not by enrolment figures or accreditation badges alone, but by the extent to which graduates are genuinely equipped to contribute to India's social, economic, and environmental development.

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