Mapping graduate employability and career development in higher education research

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Mapping graduate employability and career development in higher education research: a citation network analysis

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ABSTRACT

Greater attention than ever is being placed on how universities enable their graduates to achieve their career goals as a key return on significant private and public investment. Scholars in two distinct fields of research have explored the characteristics and conditions that promote or constrain graduates' career success: graduate employability and career development. In this article, we present visualisations of direct citation networks among 4068 journal articles focused on graduate employability and career development and consider the disciplinary landscapes that they reveal. Our findings show that despite a clear alignment of research concerns and educational goals, there has been limited theoretical or practical exchange between the two fields. We argue that purposeful exchange between the two fields will enrich both and, when applied to practice, could inform an evidence-based, integrative pedagogy of careers and employability learning in higher education.

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Employability:

      multidisciplinary
      more than just skills
      antecedent more than outcome
      lifelong psychosocial process of
              learning and adaptation

Graduate employability:

A subfield of *higher education research* into:

> individual,
>
> institutional,
>
> and socio-economic

factors that influence graduates' immediate employment and long-term career outcomes.

Career development:

Draws on applied psychology subdisciplines:

> vocational psychology
>
> industrial and organisational psychology
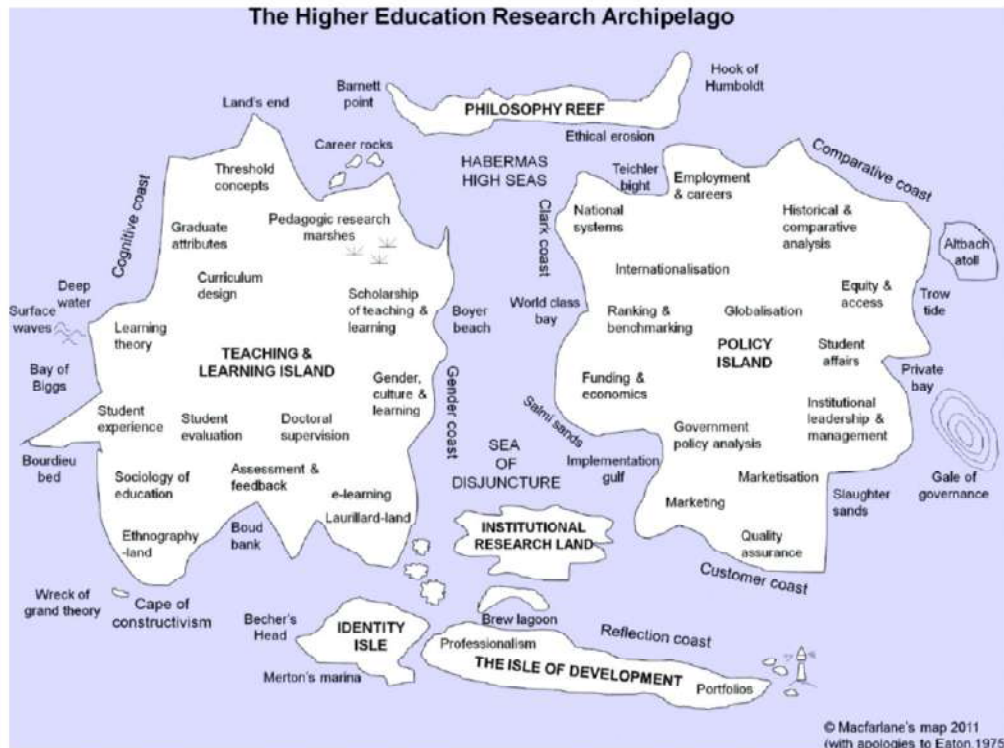
Research into:

> how individuals make career decisions and pursue career goals,
>
> employee recruitment, engagement, and productivity.

Higher education:

theoretically and methodologically diverse

weakly bounded

open to scholars from many disciplines

scattered and dis-integrated

Career development:

insular and provincial

two islands: vocational psychology and I/O

lack of exchange between theorists, researchers, and professional practitioners

Macfarlane (2012). "The Higher Education Research Archipelago"

What are the boundaries of GE and CD research, as represented by citation networks, within and between each field, and where are the current and potential points of exchange?
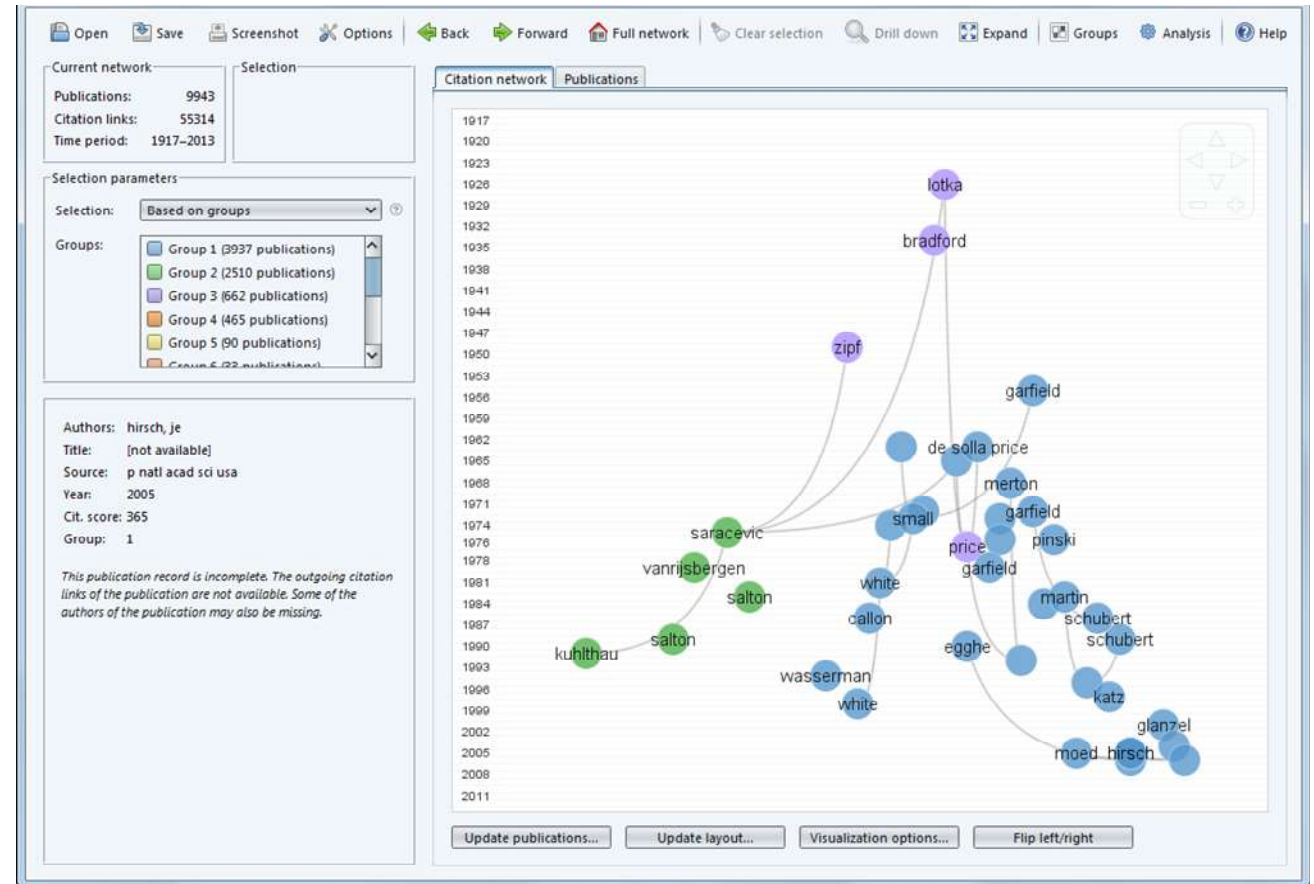
Direct citation network analysis

Search Web of Science for key terms

Export results with full bibliographic data
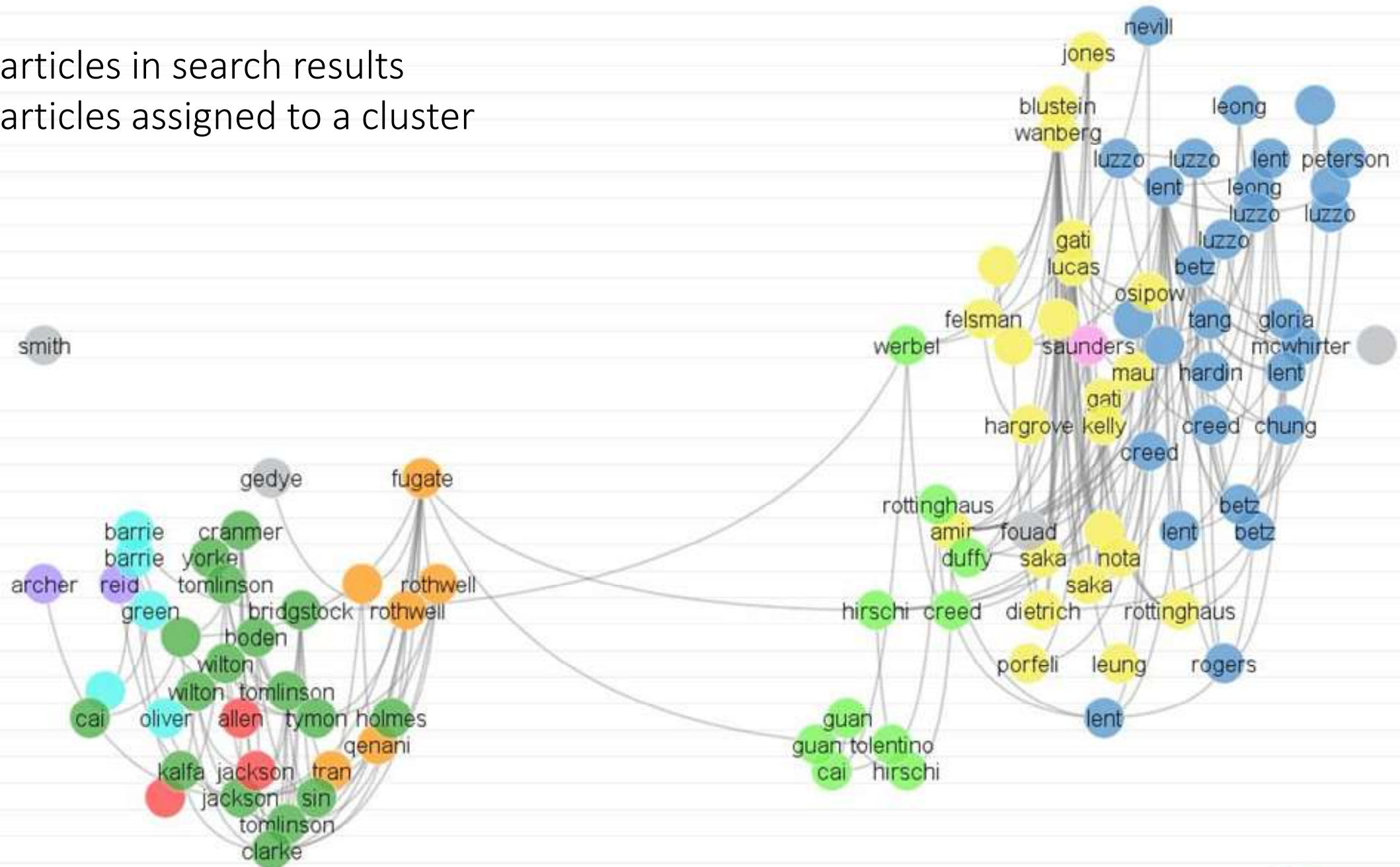
Import into CitNetExplorer
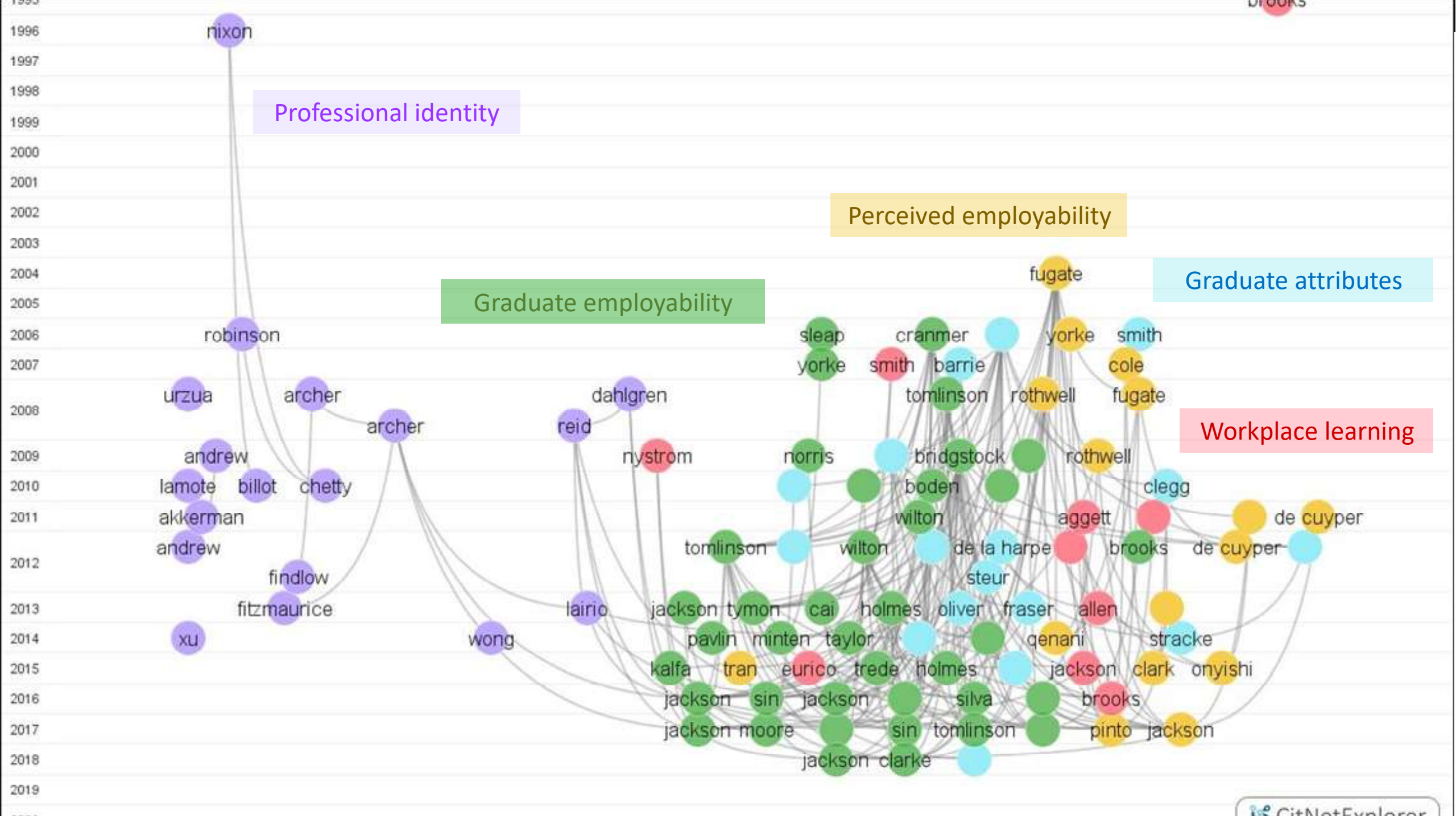
Apply clustering algorithm, iteratively

Analyse results and characterise clusters

www.citnetexplorer.nl

4068 articles in search results
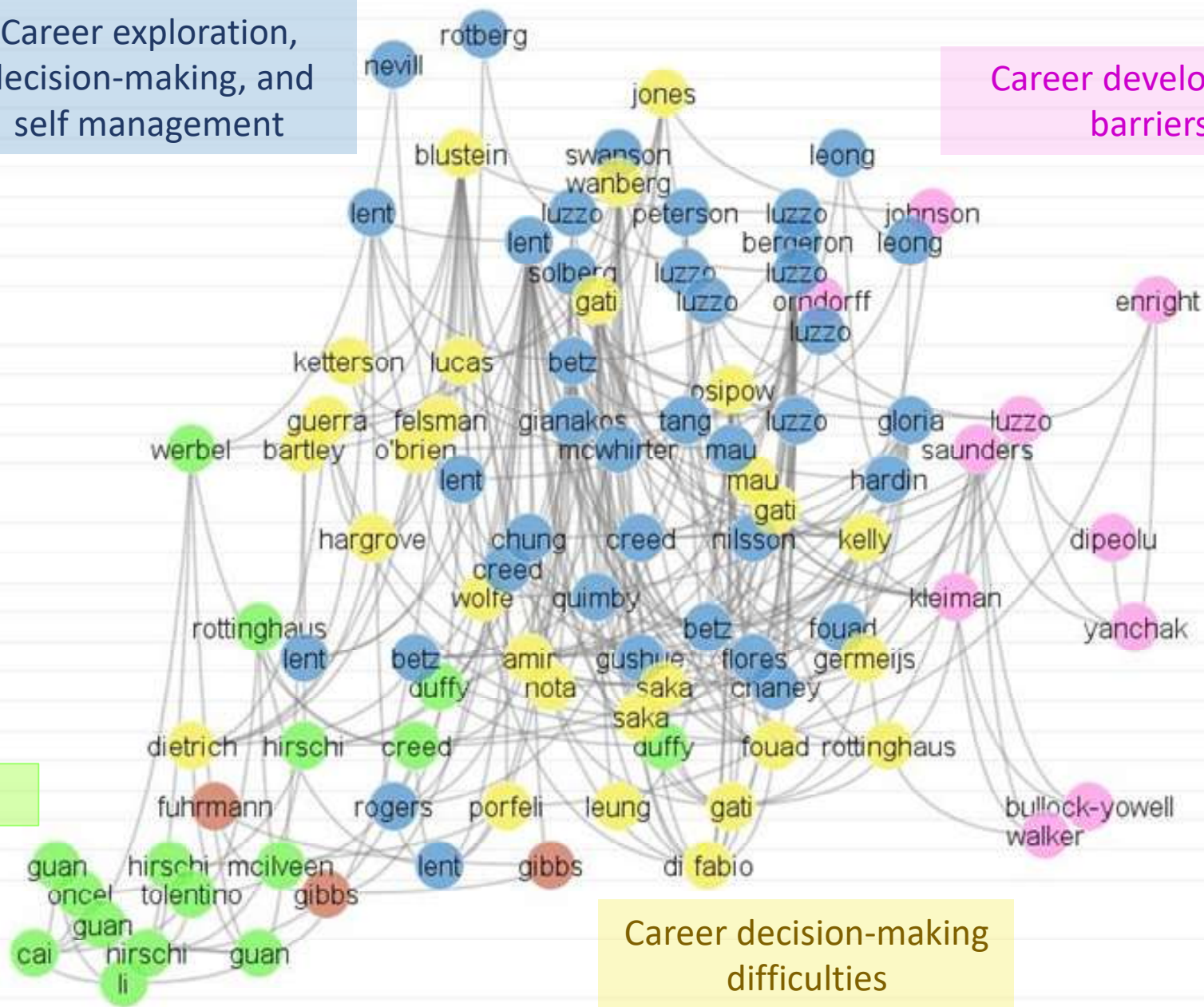1850 articles assigned to a cluster

Professional identity

Perceived employability

Graduate employability

Graduate attributes

Workplace learning

1995
1996   nixon
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004   fugate   brooks
2005
2006   robinson   sleap   cranmer   yorke   smith
2007   yorke   smith   barrie   cole
2008   urzua   archer   dahlgren   tomlinson rothwell   fugate
              archer   reid
2009   andrew   nystrom   norris   bridgstock   rothwell
2010   lamote billot chetty   boden   clegg
2011   akkerman   wilton   aggett   de cuyper
2012   andrew   tomlinson   wilton   de la harpe brooks   de cuyper
              findlow   steur
2013   fitzmaurice   lairio   jackson tymon   cai holmes oliver fraser allen
2014   xu   wong   pavlin minten taylor   qenani   stracke
2015   kalfa tran eurico trede holmes   jackson clark onyishi
2016   jackson sin jackson   silva   brooks
2017   jackson moore   sin tomlinson   pinto jackson
2018   jackson clarke
2019

CitNetExplorer

The jingle jangle fallacy?

Same name applied to different concepts, or different names applied to the same concept (Marsh et al., 2019).

For example:

vocational identity
occupational identity
career identity

professional identity
pre-professional identity
graduate identity

"Further purposeful exchange between graduate employability and career development researchers will enrich both fields of scholarship and, when applied to practice, inform an evidence-based, integrative pedagogy of careers and employability learning in higher education."

Healy, Hammer, and McIlveen (2020, p. 11)

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