

Connecting the Dots: A Bibliometric Analysis Exploring the Relationship between Knowledge Management and Organizational Structure

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Abstract. Knowledge management and organizational structure are of utmost importance for organizations to stay competitive in today's constantly changing markets. This paper aims to study the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure using a bibliometric analysis. 296 publications were selected from the Web of Science database for this research and analyzed with VosViewer and Biblioshiny software. The analyses focused on identifying the general academic performance, as well as the thematic and social structure of the academic knowledge in this field. The results have highlighted that China dominates the field in terms of production, the UK in terms of sources, and The US in terms of impact (article, author, and institution-wise). The keyword co-occurrence analysis highlighted a strong connection between knowledge management, organizational structure, and performance. The social structure proved to have China and the US at the top, with the strongest collaboration link and highlighted that the UK has not yet collaborated with the US. The novelty of the current research lies in the insights it provides into the studied topic which could facilitate global managers' development of new strategies focused on the highlighted connections between keywords and on the relationships between researcher bodies.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, knowledge management, organizational structure, knowledge mapping, trends

Introduction

In an era of fluid global context, when the race for competitive advantage has been deemed imperative for businesses, knowledge management has become an asset of utmost importance for any organization. Being conducive to competitive advantage (Rahimli, 2012), knowledge

management is considered the key to added value creation, a strategic power that facilitates goal attainment, and a major booster for productivity and organizational performance. However, the organizations' ability to effectively control knowledge resources is highly dependent on organizational structure (Ho et al., 2014).

Knowledge management was first mentioned in the extant literature by Karl Wiig, who defined it as a framework that enables an organization's effective use of its human resources and knowledge capital in order to efficiently build, leverage, and deploy knowledge in a way it has never been done before (Wiig, 1986). Since then, it has been defined in several ways depending on its applicability in various industries like aerospace, defense, education, energy, government, health, human resources, law, management, science and technology, and systems thinking etc. (Girard & Girard, 2015). Organizations activating in the above-mentioned industries have various types of organizational structures influencing, to a greater or lesser extent, their knowledge management capability (Zheng et al., 2010).

Being one of the most important enablers of Knowledge management, organizational structure has been studied for more than half a century. It was defined by Mintzberg as a suite of approaches an organization utilizes so as to distribute its labor into clearly defined assignments among which coordination is later attained (Mintzberg, 1979). Organizational structure is, in turn, reliant on various elements of the organizational environment, such as corporate attributes, selection of technology, organizational dynamics, manufacturing priorities, and knowledge assets (Kumbali & İrmış, 2023).

Although academics have been exploring the relationship between organizational structure and knowledge management for a quarter of a century, to the extent of our knowledge, it hasn't yet been approached from a bibliometric standpoint. Understanding the link between these concepts from a bibliometric perspective will not only contribute to the extant literature opening new pathways for future research analyzing this intricate connection but will also provide managers and business professionals with valuable information which could lead to the optimization of their decision-making processes in various domains.

This study endeavors to examine the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure from a bibliometric perspective. To meet our objective, we have formulated the following research questions:

RQ1) What is the overall global research performance on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure?

RQ2) What is the researched field's thematic structure?

RQ3) What is the studied theme's social structure?

The subsequent sections of this article are organized in the following manner: first, the state of knowledge will be introduced, followed by the research methodology; next the analysis results will be outlined and discussed; and finally, the conclusions, contributions, limitations, and the future directions will be presented.

Literature review

The organizational structure encompasses a grouping of organizational subdivisions, of organization members, and the relationships established among them, all together aimed at accomplishing the organization's objectives (Burduş & Popa, 2018), while knowledge management is perceived as a determining factor in ensuring organizational performance (Popa & Gora, 2020).

The extant literature (Zheng et al., 2010) identifies a positive influence of knowledge management on organizational effectiveness when associated with a favorable organizational context. Popa & Ștefan (2019) consider that the organizational factors that allow the development of knowledge management based on the relationship between organizational performance and organizational resources are organizational culture (cooperation and learning), organizational structure (formalization and centralization), strategy, transformational leadership, information technology, and management quality. According to Zheng et al., (2010), the relationship between organizational structure, culture, and strategy is the foundation of knowledge formation. The path of knowledge within the organization is realized as follows: knowledge is created and used based on a set of cultural values and norms, it is integrated within some structural relationships, and is reflected in the strategic priorities of the organization.

Implementing knowledge management in the organization's activities requires knowledge of appropriate methods and techniques, appropriate behaviors, and appropriate time allocation in order to complete specific tasks (Varzaru & Varzaru, 2013). To facilitate the exchange of knowledge, both tacit and explicit, within cooperative relationships, it is necessary to divide tasks and responsibilities so that each actor of the organization has the ability to integrate and capitalize on knowledge (Varzaru & Varzaru, 2013). In this sense, the organizational structure plays an essential role because it represents an administrative mechanism aimed at the formal allocation of work roles to make the control and integration of activities more efficient (Liao et al., 2011).

In describing the components of organizational structure, Zheng et al., (2010) refer to centralization, formalization, and control as the most important elements influencing other organizational frameworks including knowledge management. Gold et al., (2001) consider centralization as the most important aspect of organizational structure. Thus, a centralized organizational structure inhibits cooperative relations between organization members and reduces the organization's development capacity, while a decentralized structure facilitates communication, enhances creativity and innovation, ensuring the success of knowledge management (Zheng et al., 2010).

A solution is provided by Mahmoudsalehi et al., (2012), who contend that an increased level of complexity and integration of organizational structure attributes combined with a lower degree of centralization and formalization would lead to elevated knowledge management proficiency.

Research Methodology

Data Collection

The database containing academic research studies on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure, published between 1999 and 2024, was exported from the Web of Science, on January 26th, 2024. The selection of the database was made based on the premise that it is the most reliable database (Olawumi & Chan, 2018; Tao et al., 2020). The main keywords for our research - specifically “knowledge management” and “organizational structure” - were introduced in the Web of Science Core Collection Database’ “Topic” fields, using “and” as a connecting boolean. The initial search generated 326 publications. Secondly, only four types of publications (articles, proceeding papers, review articles, and early access articles) were included in the study, reducing the number of articles to 325. We further refined the results, limiting them to articles written in English, since it is the language used by most recognized researchers (Liu et al., 2022), obtaining 299 publications which were manually screened, and three more articles - not

pertaining to our research - were eliminated, resulting in a final database of 296 articles to be used for our analysis.

Data Analysis

A bibliometric analysis was employed to interpret our results. Bibliometric analysis is the methodological process applied in the exploration of academic research output aiming to identify either the research performance or the key themes within the selected academic topic(s) (Lim & Kumar, 2024). In order to connect the dots within the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure and answer the research questions, this research has performed the following analyses of the dataset:

- In response to RQ1, the global research performance was identified through: a) a longitudinal analysis of the academic production and citations; b) identification of the most cited universities; c) an exploration of the most productive sources over time ; d) a comparative analysis of the most productive versus most cited countries; e) a comparative foray into the first articles and the most cited ones.
- The answer to RQ2 was reached through: a) a keyword co-occurrence network mapping and b) a keyword co-occurrence overlay analysis
- To reply to RQ3, a country collaboration map was created and analyzed

Data Visualization

Two software packages were used (besides Excel) for data visualization: VOSviewer's 1.6.20 version (Van Eck & Waltman, 2023) of van Eck and Waltman's 2011 package (van Eck & Waltman, 2011) and RStudio's Bibliometrix package - Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). These two packages complement each other because Biblioshiny facilitates the visualization of academic performance data as well as the social structure, while Vos Viewer's mapping technique - (VOS) ((Van Eck & Waltman, 2007) - allows the visualization and exploration of the complex and intricate word links (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010) created within the academic research on the nexus between knowledge management and organizational structure.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. The overall Academic Production Performance - of either production or impact - was observed through the following five analyses:

4.1.a) Longitudinal Analysis of the Annual Scientific Production and Average Citations

The graph in Figure 1 contains the annual scientific production represented by the number of articles published between 1999 - when the first article was indexed - and 2024, illustrated in yellow, as well as its importance suggested by the total mean citations per year, shown in green, and the total mean citations per article depicted in purple.

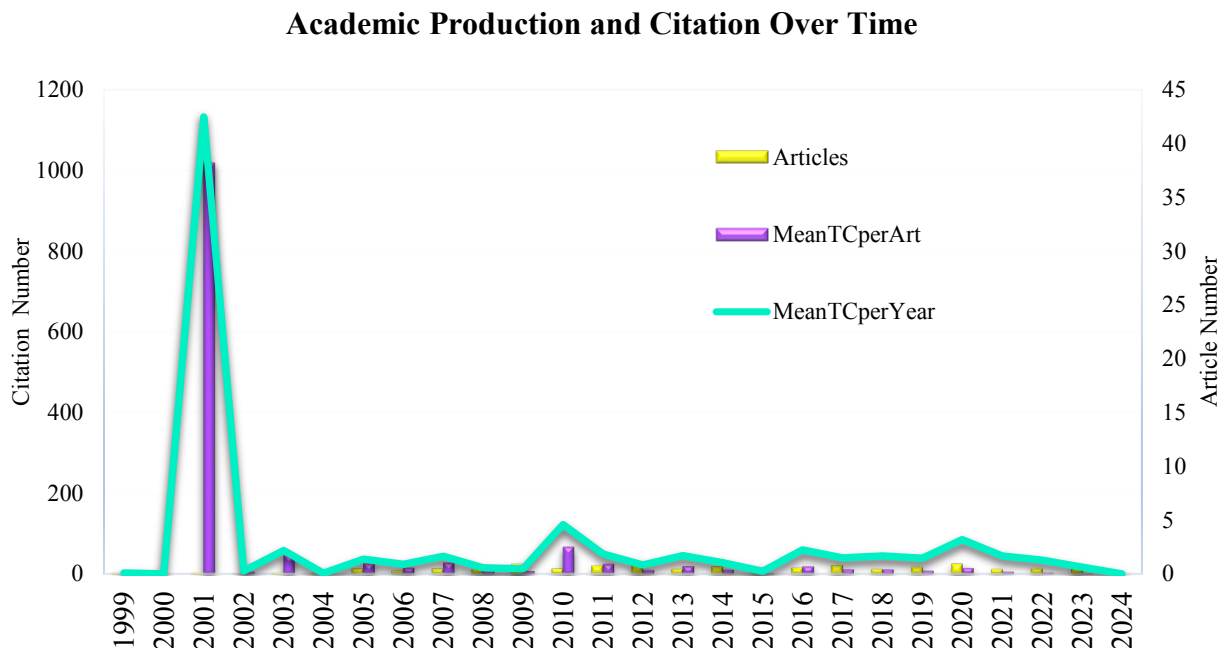


Figure 1. Annual scientific production and total citations

Source: created by authors with Excel based on data from Web of Science.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the scientific production on the topic of knowledge management and organizational structure registered, in 2005, an increase of 12 articles per year and continued to grow until 2020, which represents the most productive year 23 articles on our topic.

Regarding the total number of citations, the most cited year was 2001 which is also the year when the most cited article appeared. This fact makes this year, and the articles indexed then - in number of three -, a landmark year for research related to knowledge management and organizational structure

4.1.b) Analysis of the Most Cited Universities

The bar graph in Figure 2) illustrates the most impactful universities on the horizontal line, and the total number of citations for each university on the vertical line.

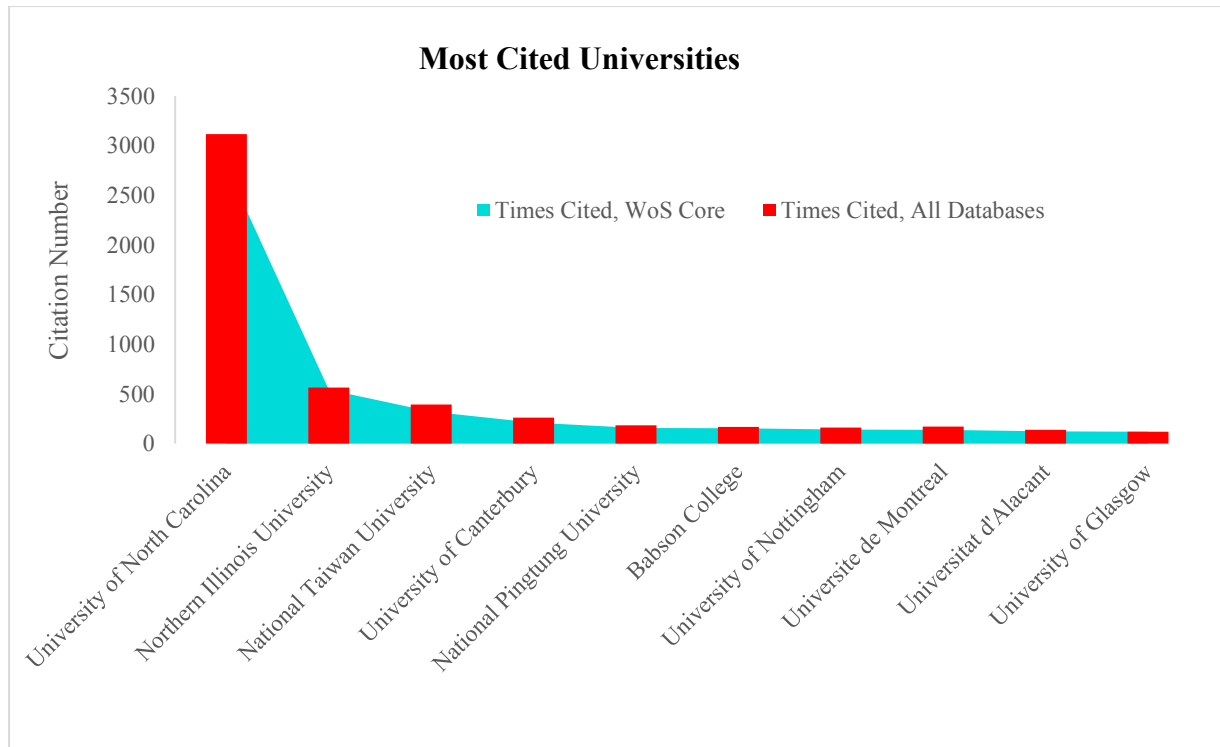


Figure 2. Most cited universities

Source: created by authors with Excel based on data from Web of Science.

It can be observed from Figure 2) that University of North Carolina received the highest number of citations, followed by Northern Illinois University. National Taiwan University is also among the top three universities cited on the topic of knowledge management and organizational structure.

4.1.c) Identification of the most relevant sources and their longitudinal evolution

To present a synopsis of the most prolific journals which have published research related to knowledge management and organizational structure, we constructed a graph, represented in Figure 3), which illustrates the most relevant sources over time.

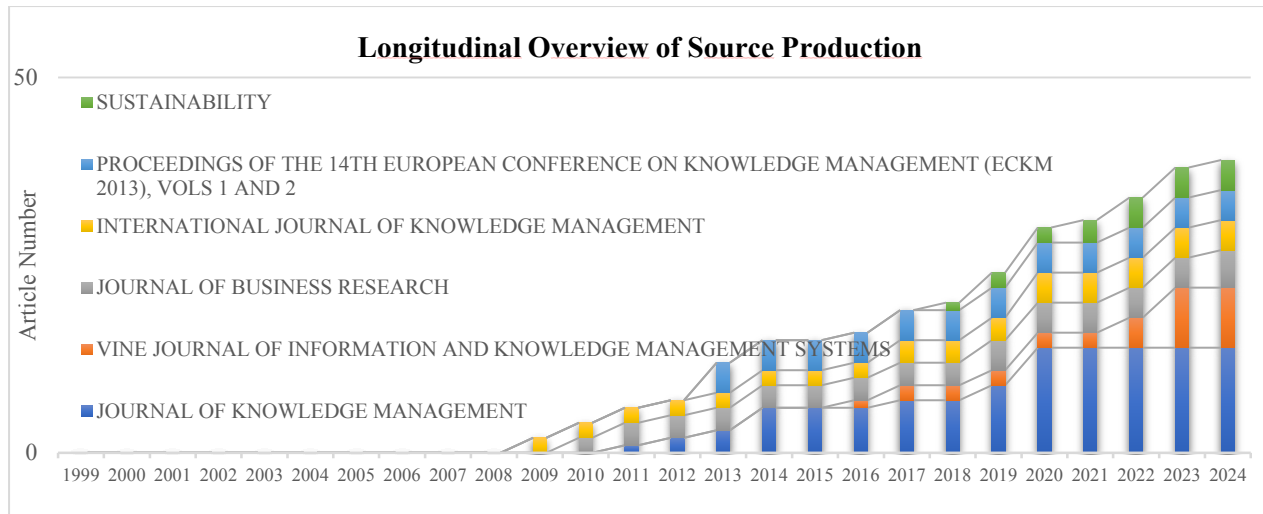


Figure 3. Most relevant sources and their longitudinal evolution

Source: created by authors with Excel based on data from Web of Science.

As can be noticed in Figure 3), the journal with the highest number of publications on the topic of knowledge management and organizational structure is Journal of Knowledge Management, which reached a number of 14 publications between 2010 and 2024. It is followed by Vine Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems, which reached a total number of eight publications between 2015 and 2024. The next three sources contain a topic which includes knowledge management as a central keyword, as well.

It is worth noticing that in the latest period 2022-2024, the most relevant source has become Sustainability, a journal which publishes a variety of articles on the social, cultural, economic or environmental sustainability of a number of four publications in two years.

4.1.d) A comparative analysis of the Most Productive Countries versus the Most Cited Ones

Figure 4 depicts the geographical distribution of academic production on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure between 1999 and 2024 as well as the most cited countries. For better visualization, a heat map was created in Excel, with the colors and their intensity representing the number of publications. Thus the numbers of articles in the higher range are illustrated in turquoise, the ones in the lower range in purple, and nuances of blue indicate numbers of studies in the middle range. The color intensity symbolizes a higher number of research papers for each color. The pie chart in the bottom-left corner of the figure illustrates the total number of citations in the top ten cited countries.

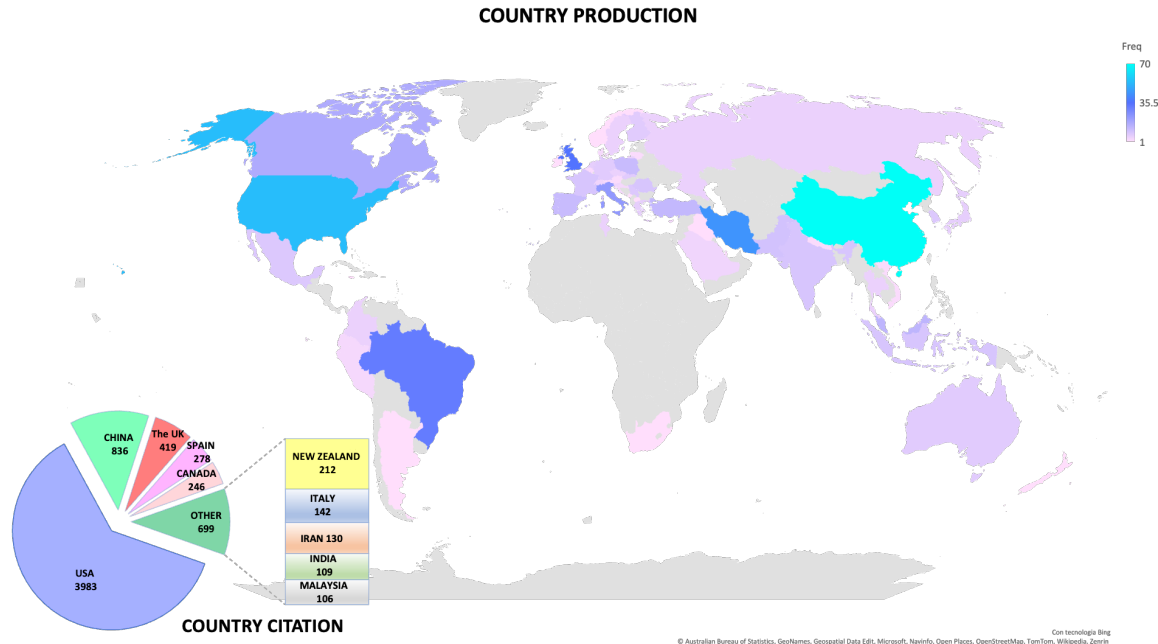


Figure 4. Most productive versus most cited countries on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure

Source: created by authors with Excel based on data from Web of Science.

Observing the top five most productive countries, it can be noticed that China holds the top position (with 70 articles), followed by the United States (with 54 articles), Iran (with 44 articles), the UK (with 36 articles), and by Brazil (with 32 articles). China's leading position can be attributed to the emphasis it placed on researching the topic of knowledge management particularly related to organizational culture and structure, meant both to heighten its understanding of these concepts' foreign application as well as to facilitate the local cultural adaptation of these concepts (Zhao et al., 2012; Tong & Mitra, 2009) in order to gain a competitive edge against the US or Japan. It is also noteworthy that it holds the second position in the most cited countries' classification - with 836 total citations - reflecting its significant contribution to the emergence of new concepts (Han et al., 2024) in the field.

The fact that the United States is a trend setter in the research focusing on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure could explain its second position, the first five publications on the topic being produced in the United States (see Table 1). Given the fact that it is not only the country with the most management experience but also the one whose management is the most appreciated in the world (Bloom et al., 2011), it can be assumed that it didn't necessitate to focus on quantity, but more on quality, a fact which is also proven by the fact that it is the country with the most impact on the researched topic, having the highest total number of citations (3983). This can be justified by the existence of numerous specialists who studied the emergence of knowledge management associated with globalization and the increased attention on the knowledge-centric view of organizations. Besides, American researchers are also the initiators of knowledge transfer to other cultures (Spender, 2015), not to mention that the US is known for studying organizations, especially with an eye on organizational performance, and hence not only the interest in researching organizational factors such as organizational structure, culture, strategy, etc. but also the impact of such research all over the world.

Iran being placed in the third position, could, perhaps have a similar explanation to the reason provided for China, having a culture totally different from the Western culture. The most productive country in Europe is the United Kingdom which could be justified by the facilitation of the English language, but also by the UK's importance in the European business environment. The fact that Brazil is ranked the fifth most productive countries could be explained by its size and language popularity - being the eighth most used language in the world (Statista, 2023), as well as by its ties to the United States (Fouad & Gouvea, 2018).

The other countries with more than ten publications are, in decreasing order, Italy (with 32 publications), Canada (with 17 publications), Malaysia (with 14 publications), Turkey (with 13 publications), Poland, Portugal, Spain (all three with 12 publications), and Pakistan (with ten publications). In the citation ranking, we observe countries with a number of citations above 200, like the UK (with 419 citations), Spain (with 278 citations), Canada (with 246 citations), and New Zealand (with 212 citations). Italy has been cited only 142 times. It is followed by Iran (with 130 citations), India (with 109 citations), and by Malaysia (with 106 citations). An interesting point to observe is that most of the productive countries are also among the most cited ones (Canada, Iran, Malaysia, Spain, and the UK), and vice-versa even though their rankings differ slightly in these two categories which suggests that those countries place great importance on the overall performance of the research on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure.

4.1.e) Article impact

To understand the publication impact in the field related to the link between knowledge management and organizational structure, a comparative foray into the first articles and the most cited ones was conducted. Table 1. presents the first five articles written on the studied topic in chronological order, their authors, the affiliations, the countries the affiliations were located in, and the total citations.

Table 1. A comparative foray into the first articles and the most cited ones

Oldest Order	Year	Authors	Title	Author Affiliation	Author Country	Total Citations
1	1999	Joyce, T. & Stivers, B. P.	"Knowledge and innovation focus: a classification of US and Canadian firms"	Kennesaw State Univ	USA	9
2	1999	Vassallo, P.	"The knowledge continuum - organizing for research and scholarly communication"	National Institute of Standards and Technology	USA	5
3	2001	Gold, A. H., Malhotra, A., & Segars, A. H.	"Knowledge management: An organizational capabilities perspective"	The University of North Carolina	USA	2795
4	2001	Lapr�, M. A., Van Wassenhove, L. N.	"Creating and transferring knowledge for productivity improvement in factories"	Vanderbilt Univ INSEAD	USA FRANCE	115
5	2001	Davenport, T. H., Harris, J. G., Kohli, A. K.	"How do they know their customers so well?"	Babson College Emory University	USA	156

Source: created by authors with Excel based on data from Web of Science.

Referring to Table 1, it can be stated that 1999 is considered the starting point of the research on our topic since it is the year when the first two articles on the relationship between the two concepts appeared. One of them studied these two concepts in a firm environment while the other analyzed these concepts in academic organizations, with the similarity that both have authors from the United States. They have been cited nine and, respectively, five times in the specialized literature so far.

The third article appeared two years later, in 2001, and studied knowledge management from an organizational capabilities' perspective, a very suggestive topic for our research. Therefore, this article became the most cited publication on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure with a total number of citations of 2795. Moreover, the author's affiliation with the University of North Carolina is also worth noticing, since it is one of the most cited universities besides being the first public university in the United States. Thus, it can be asserted that this article is the basis of the research on the link between the two mentioned concepts.

The next two articles appeared in the same year - 2001. The fourth publication represents the first international collaboration between authors affiliated with universities from the US and France, while the fifth article is the first result of an inter-university collaboration on our topic, which also took place in the USA.

A noteworthy point is the fact that all top five research papers were related to the United States, the first three being written by authors belonging to State or Nation sponsored universities, while the last two were written by authors affiliated with private universities.

4.2. Keyword Analysis

In order to understand the thematic structure of the academic literature on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure, we created a keyword network map as well as a keyword overlay map based on the bibliographic dataset, using the VOSviewer software (Van Eck & Waltman, 2023).

4.2.a) Keyword Network Map Visualization

To create the keyword network map and conduct the co-occurrence analysis, all keywords with an occurrence frequency higher than five times were introduced into VOS Viewer, which generated the keyword clustering represented in Figure 5.

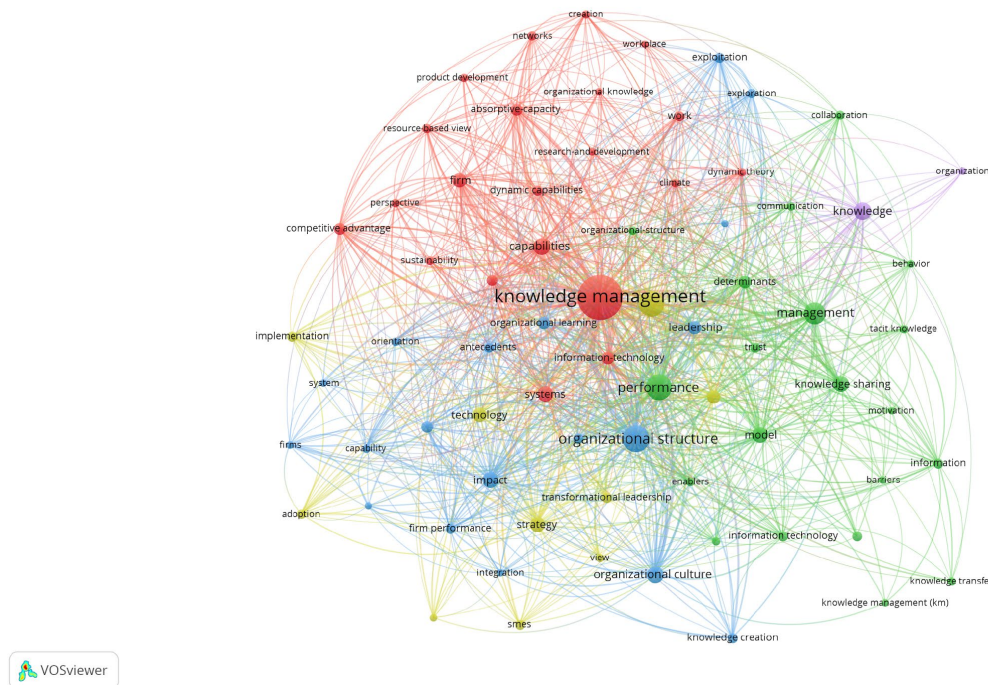


Figure 5. Keywords co-occurrence

Source: authors with VosViewer.

From 1133 keywords identified by VosViewer, only 72 met the threshold. Therefore, five clusters were formed, with a total of 1917 links, each cluster being represented in a different color. According to Popa & Gora (2020), every keyword which appears on the map represents a node.

The first cluster is colored in red and has knowledge management as a central node. This cluster groups elements both equal to and existing in the composition of knowledge management: creation, capabilities, and elements on which knowledge management exerts influences: competitive advantage, networks, organizational knowledge, product development, sustainability.

The second cluster has performance as a central node and is colored in green. This contains items related to experience exchange, influence or control, such as: knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, model, determinants, information technology, collaboration. The third cluster is centered around the organizational structure and includes keywords reflecting concepts on the same level with organizational structure like organizational culture or system, keywords suggesting influence like impact, integration, orientation, as well as concepts indirectly affected by organizational structure, like organizational learning, leadership.

The fourth cluster is colored in yellow and has innovation as a central node. This includes items related to determinants of innovation like strategy and technology as well items implying a transition towards innovation, like transformational leadership or implementation. The fifth cluster has only two items: knowledge and organization. The central node is knowledge and shows that this keyword is closely related to all other components of the organization, and of the business environment in general.

Regarding relationships between keywords represented on map, the strongest closeness is knowledge management - organizational structure, with a link strength of 41, which shows that

there is a reciprocal influence between the two terms. Also, the relationship knowledge management - performance has a strong relatedness with a link strength of 41, followed by the pair organizational structure - performance, with a link strength: 24, which leads to the idea that the concepts from our topic are performance achievement enablers.

As a result, the mapping of keywords has illustrated the essential components of the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure and it could be asserted that the adoption of knowledge management (in terms of knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, creation, capabilities, collaboration) and its integration in be all components of the organization (organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational learning, strategy, leadership) determine an organization to achieve performance and gain a competitive advantage.

4.2.b) Keyword Overlay Map

The keywords' evolution over time is another important step in our analysis. For better visualization, a keyword overlay map was created with the help of VosViewer, and it is represented in Figure 6.

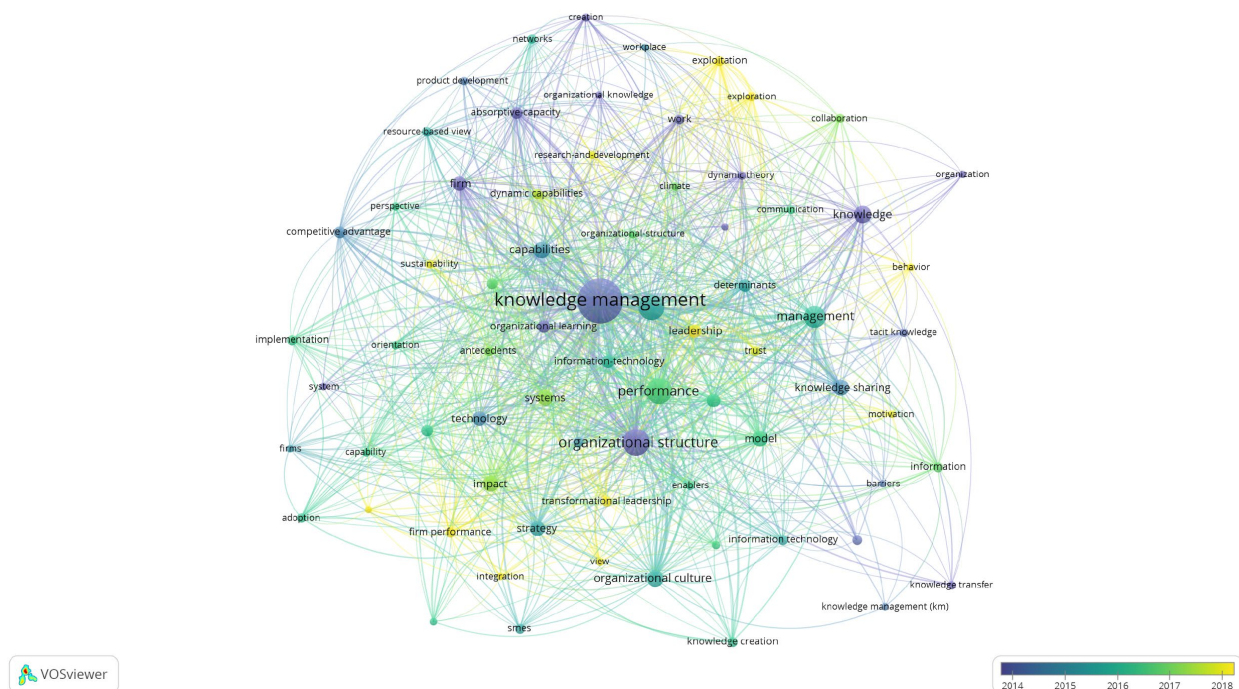


Figure 6. Keywords Overlay Visualization

Source: authors with VosViewer.

As can be depicted from Figure 6, the oldest keywords for our topic are knowledge management, organizational structure, firm, absorptive capacity, system, and information technology, which have been used since 2014. These keywords are the basis of the development of knowledge management which controls processes of knowing and learning in organizations, using information technology and diverse systems to achieve firm performance (Spender, 2015).

The period 2016-2017 comes with new keywords like: strategy, organizational culture, innovation, capabilities, competitive advantage, which bring an important contribution to the development of the academic research on the topic of knowledge management and show its impact

on the themes of culture and organizational strategy in terms of innovation and competitive advantage.

The recent years 2017-2018 bring even more keywords on this topic such as: performance, collaboration, orientation, transformational leadership, motivation, sustainability. Here, we can observe that performance comes to the attention of the researchers, and they identify new elements from the knowledge management field which can lead an organization to achieving sustainable performance.

4.3. Social structure of the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure - Countries' collaboration map

Co-research importance has been acknowledged for decades now, but it is deemed even more relevant when authors originated from different countries as, according to Crane (1977), its varied outcomes are considered more in-depth and farther-reaching. The country collaboration analysis in Figure 7 aims to emphasize the global cooperation avenues between countries on research related to our studied topic between 1999 and 2024. The study included only papers whose authors' affiliations were located in different nations, the country selection being determined based on the origin of the author's affiliation (Aria et al., 2021). The states on the map are highlighted in blue, with the color intensity symbolizing the academic production levels. The pink lines connecting nations indicate the flow of cooperation between countries, with the line thickness indicating the collaboration intensity.

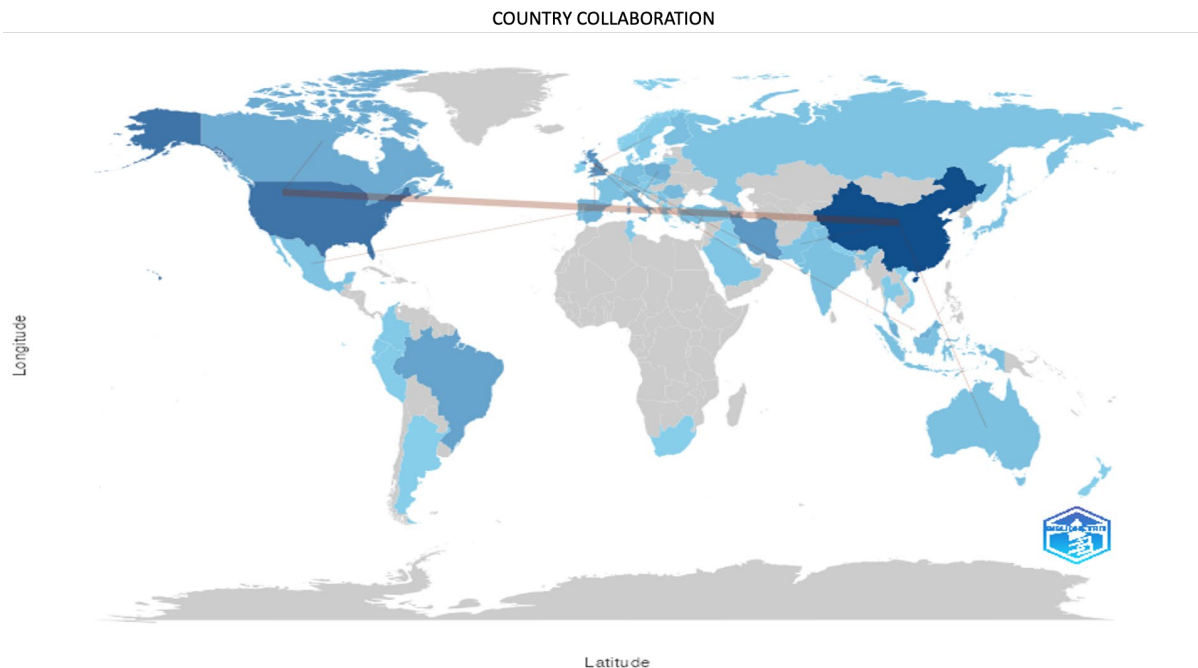


Figure 7. Countries' Collaboration Map

Source: authors with R-Biblioshiny

Out of the 296 studies included in the research, only 99 entries of inter-country collaborations were identified. The top five pairs of countries with the most frequent collaboration were: 1) China -The United States (four articles), 2) China - Australia (two articles), 3) China - Pakistan (two articles), 4) Italy - Poland (two articles), 5) Spain - Mexico (two articles).

Despite the fact that the highest collaboration frequency is fairly low (only four articles), it is important to notice that the most frequent co-authorship takes place between the most productive country (China) and most cited one (The United States). Another point worth noticing is China's endeavor to collaborate with countries located not only on the same continent as them (Pakistan), but also on other continents (America and Australia). This fact confirms China's openness to diverse perspectives, which could bring a major contribution to research on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure, bringing distant business perspectives together, thus providing valuable solutions to organizations all over the world. The pairs of countries in the fourth and fifth positions (both pairs with two articles) show different collaboration patterns with China. Italy and Poland (rank fourth) prove to choose the geographical proximity which could imply a preference for similar organizational structure patterns, while Spain and Mexico (rank fifth) opt for the language similitude in collaboration which might suggest a predilection for similar knowledge or culture. Both the territorial proximity and the language or culture similarity could be beneficial to research, being able to draw insights from similar (still different) management patterns. Except for the top five pairs or countries, eight other pairs have collaborated on two articles, while the other 86 pairs have only cooperated on one article each. Despite the importance of collaboration in strengthening the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure in the business environment, it is surprising to observe that collaboration initiatives account for only 33.4% of the total academic production, out of which only 1% have collaborated on more than two articles (China and The United States - four articles). Another 12% of the collaborative pairs have co-produced two articles, and the remaining 87% have only collaborated on one article. One last point worth observing is the gray areas in Africa, Greenland, Latin and South America, North, North-West Asia as well as in Eastern Europe which need more support in undertaking collaboration initiatives. In this respect, highly collaborative countries like China and the United States could set an example, inspiring new research endeavors among academics from unrepresented nations (Donthu et al., 2021). An interesting observation can also be made about The United Kingdom which, despite its 13 one-article collaborations with countries from Europe, North America, South America, The Middle East and Asia, has not yet had any collaborations with the United States.

One last point worth observing is the gray areas in Africa, Greenland, Latin and South America, North, North-West Asia as well as in Eastern Europe which need more support in undertaking collaboration initiatives. In this respect, highly collaborative countries like China and the United States could set an example, inspiring new research endeavors among academics from unrepresented nations (Donthu et al., 2021).

Conclusions

Our research focused on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational structure through a bibliometric review of the bibliographic data obtained from Web of Science. The results highlighted the global research performance through five most essential analyses. The first step was a longitudinal analysis of the academic production and citations, which shows an increase of annual scientific production in 2005 with a number of 12 articles per year and a continuous growth until 2020, which represents the most productive year, with 23 articles on our topic. Regarding the total number of citations, both the most cited article and the most cited year can be found in 2001, which can be considered a pivotal year in the research on the link between the two mentioned concepts. The second analysis identified the most cited universities, with University of North Carolina in the first position. A longitudinal exploration of the most productive

sources followed, and the results emphasized that the journal with the most publications on the topic of knowledge management and organizational structure is Journal of Knowledge Management. Another remarkable journal was Sustainability, which published research on our topic after 2022. The fourth step was a comparative analysis of the most productive versus most cited countries, which pointed out that among the top five most productive countries, China holds the top position, followed by the United States and Iran, while regarding the most cited countries, the USA has the highest total number of citations. The last analysis of overall performance was a comparative foray into the first articles and the most cited ones, which proved that the first two articles on the topic of knowledge management and organizational structure appeared in 1999, analyzing the relationship between the two concepts both in organizational and academic environments. The third article appeared two years later, in 2001. It studied knowledge management from an organizational capabilities perspective and was the most cited publication in our field.

To understand the field's thematic structure and answer the second research question, we created a keyword co-occurrence network mapping, whose clustering highlighted the main four concepts related to our topic (knowledge management, organizational structure, innovation, performance). Therefore it can be posited that the adoption of knowledge management (in terms of knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, creation, capabilities, collaboration) and its integration in all components of the organization (organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational learning, strategy, leadership) lead an organization to achieve performance and gain a competitive advantage. Also, keyword co-occurrence overlay analysis showed the evolution of keywords over time, the results illustrating that the word variety has expanded over time, contributing to the development of academic research on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure, being simultaneously connected to organizational culture and strategy in terms of innovation and competitive advantage.

To respond to the last Research Question, a country collaboration map representing the most frequent collaborations was created. This highlighted that most frequent collaboration takes place between the most productive country (China) and most cited one (The United States). This fact proved China's openness to diverse perspectives, which could bring a major contribution to research on the link between knowledge management and organizational structure, bringing distant business perspectives together, thus providing valuable solutions to organizations all over the world.

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that there is a direct and strong relationship between organizational structure and knowledge management, which can have a major impact on the main organizational indicators, like performance, innovation and competitive advantage. All the above-mentioned elements depicted from the main word cluster nodes can be considered confirmed enablers of an organization's success and sustainable development.

Contributions

The novelty of the current research lies in it being the first bibliometric approach to the link between knowledge management and organizational structure as well as in the insights it provides into the studied topic which could facilitate global managers' development of new strategies focused on the highlighted connections between keywords and relationships between researcher bodies as well as inspire future researchers.

Limitations

The scope of the current research was limited to four publication formats (articles, conference papers, reviews, and early access papers) as well as to publications written in English. Other limitations include the subject breadth (only two key phrases - “knowledge management” and “organizational structure” - being included in the search field) and the limited article database (only 296) for an accurate interpretation of the relationship between the two topics.

Future directions

Considering the fact the literature review pointed to a close connection between organizational culture and organizational structure as enablers of knowledge management, and that the keyword co-occurrence analysis revealed a strong connection performance and knowledge management, we recommend future studies focus on a broader approach to the topic conducting a bibliometric and systematic review on the quadrant among organizational culture, organizational structure, knowledge management and organizational performance or extend it to competitive advantage.

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