

Executive Coaching and Organizational Performance – A Bibliometric Approach

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Abstract. *The study examined from a bibliometric approach the published materials concerning executive coaching and the link with organizational performance from the last 5 years. There are almost no bibliometric analyses regarding the executive coaching topic and there is a need to have an overview of this topic to further analyze it. The research was performed using the bibliometric methodology and had as the main objective to gain an overview of the research literature on executive coaching and explore the study materials concerning the relationship between coaching and organizational performance. The analysis focused on the WoS Core Collection and revealed an elevated interest in research on executive coaching with a constant increase in the number of published materials every year. United States, UK and South Africa were the leading countries in the study of executive coaching. The study analyzed 250 sources and revealed that UK and Sout Africa published most of the materials on the subject. The affiliation analysis revealed that South Africa has the leading affiliation for the executive coaching topic. The study analyzed the basic biometric metrics as the structure of relevant sources, authors, affiliations and documents and also advanced analysis as clustering and thematic map. This bibliometric analysis can serve as an alternative approach for summarizing datasets on executive coaching topics, allowing for the mapping of existing knowledge and the identification of potential avenues for future research.*

Keywords: executive coaching, organizational performance, coaching, leadership, bibliometric analysis.

Introduction

There has been a worldwide increase in interest in the coaching industry, accompanied by efforts to professionalize it through accredited programs and coaching organizations. Along with this trend the coaching activity proved to be extremely effective during the pandemic by helping organizations to pass through the crisis and preserve their staff and even increase the organizational performance. In the last years research on coaching and especially on executive coaching can be observed, but what is the structure of the research materials on these topics? Are they linked to the overall increase of the organizational performance ?

Our main objectives were to gain an overview of the research literature on executive coaching and explore the study materials concerning the relationship between coaching and organizational performance.

With these questions in mind, we wanted to analyze the structure of the executive coaching related research published and indexed in the World of Science Core collection. It is extremely interesting to see the amount and the structure of the materials published on executive coaching linked to the organizational performance.

When literature contains numerous studies on a particular topic or field, it is typical for scholars to consolidate findings through various approaches, such as systematic literature reviews or meta-analysis (Cruz AB, Kim H.-D., 2023).

Regarding the executive coaching there is still a lack of material on the subject, but all the analyzed materials in the literature review show a direct link between the executive coaching outcomes and the increase of the performance of the managers as well as the organization overall. In the modern models of leadership, coaching has a determinant role for self-development and work (Bass and Avolio, 2000; Goleman, 2000; Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

There are limited studies on executive coaching's outcomes, solutions, and approaches.

In addition to these two prevalent review methodologies, another approach that has recently gained attention among researchers for analyzing data from multiple studies, is bibliometric analysis. A very effective method to analyze the structure of the research materials on a defined topic.

Bibliometric analysis involves a meticulous process of assessing extensive scientific data to offer insightful interpretations regarding a particular research topic or the intellectual landscape and future directions of a research field (Donthu et al., 2021).

The adoption of structured literature review methods such as bibliometric analysis is increasing in the management fields, yet there is limited understanding of how technology can facilitate these methods. Several freely available software tools exist to assist in literature search, identification, and extraction of relevant publications, as well as in screening and assessing the quality of extracted data. Additionally, these tools enable the analysis of literature to derive insights (Anlesinya, A., Dadzie, S.A. (2023).

The Bibliometrix R-package – Biblioshiny proved to be a very useful instrument for the analysis of the materials on executive coaching and organizational performance.

The bibliometric analysis on the topic of coaching proved that most of the studies are performed regarding sports topics. There are bibliometric studies performed on other business topics and more frequently on health-related topics but on the executive coaching topic we couldn't find any relevant study in the WoS Core Collection.

The objective of our study was to examine the published materials on executive coaching published in the last 5 years, using a bibliometric study and the proper bibliometric methodology.

We wanted to analyze the relevant sources, authors, affiliations, documents and perform a structured analysis on the topic using general documents analysis metrics. With the data revealed we performed clustering, thematic maps and analyzed the most relevant words and themes that emerged from our research.

We mainly used the Biblioshiny platform and the WoS analysis instruments by Clarivate. The study aimed to offer an overall image of the structure of the scientific materials on executive coaching from the WoS Core Collection and establish a starting point for further research on this topic either through a deeper bibliometric analysis or complete research on the links between executive coaching and organizational performance.

Theoretical foundation and related literature

Various definitions of coaching exist across different fields of application, including sports, business, psychology, and personal development. Coaching could be defined as a human development process characterized by structured, focused interaction and the utilization of suitable

strategies, tools, and techniques to facilitate desirable and enduring change for the client's benefit, and potentially for other stakeholders as well (Bachkirova et al, 2014, p.1).

In contemporary times coaching derived from sports and the notion as we understand it, gained prominence through Timothy Gallwey's book "The Inner Game of Tennis." In this work, Gallwey defines coaching as a process aimed at assisting individuals in unlocking their inherent potential and enhancing performance by minimizing interference caused by self-doubt and excessive rumination. He underscores the significance of fostering self-discovery and establishing an environment conducive to autonomous learning and personal growth (Gallwey, 2015). Gallwey's coaching philosophy centers on eliminating mental barriers to facilitate skill enhancement.

Coaching focuses on the future, guiding individuals to achieve their fullest potential through introspection and employing specific techniques to address questions. In coaching, there are no ready-made answers, magic formulas for success, or direct advice; instead, exploration is fostered through responses to open-ended questions. This approach creates an optimal framework for discovery and attainment of objectives.

A coach undertakes several roles, including (A. Opre,2020):

- Guiding the exploration of client needs, motivations, skills, and cognitive abilities.
- Facilitating genuine, enduring, and constructive transformations.
- Observing, listening, and questioning effectively.
- Employing questions to uncover solutions.
- Assisting in goal setting and evaluation.
- Encouraging commitment to action.
- Cultivating a positive, supportive atmosphere grounded in unconditional acceptance.

Coaching originates from psychology and exclusively centers on future-oriented actions. It is frequently conflated with mentoring, and despite being practiced for over a decade, there remains considerable ambiguity regarding the domain of expertise of a coach and the nature of coaching activities.

Perceptions of coaching vary from individual to individual. Literature indicates two perspectives on project managers' perceptions of coaching: one suggesting that coaching resembles other assistance methods such as training or specifically mentoring, and the other highlighting the need for distinct soft skills in coaching (Thompson S., Cox E., 2017).

There are two main branches of coaching: life coaching and executive (business) coaching.

Business coaching is relevant as the industry has broadened in recent years to include executives, senior leaders, entrepreneurs, and managers of small to medium-sized enterprises (Walzer N. & Athiyaman A., 2007).

In the business area coaching practice helps for cultivating soft skills with focus on collaborative abilities.

The adoption of coaching by project managers demonstrated an enhancement in their capability to navigate challenging situations. Change-coaching models were formulated and demonstrated promising outcomes for project managers (Bickerich, K. et al., 2018).

Research indicates a tangible and notable influence of project managers' utilization of coaching. Coaching sessions notably enhanced competencies including management, leadership, and cognitive abilities. Additionally, there were notable improvements in communication skills and communication effectiveness (Ballesteros-Sánchez, L. et al., 2019).

A business coach assists clients in enhancing their personal and business effectiveness within a business setting.

Despite the widespread use of executive coaching interventions in business organizations, there is a lack of consistency in the practices employed by executive coaches. This includes variations in assessment tools, philosophical or scientific approaches, activities, goals, and methods for evaluating outcomes (Joyce B. et al., 2009).

Successful business coaching requires the utilization of genuine leadership attributes. By embodying authentic leadership principles, the business coach can elevate clients' work performance, life experiences, self-directed learning, and personal development (Gatling A., 2014).

The connection between executive (business) coaching and organizational performance represents a recent area of research that unveils a direct impact of coaching programs on the overall enhancement of performance.

There continues to be a lack of research examining the effectiveness of executive coaching. Ambiguity persists regarding its definition, methodology, and outcomes. Nevertheless, executive coaching remains a viable business opportunity. Professionals offer services to the business sector that go beyond conventional performance management consultations, establishing autonomous "performance-driven" partnerships with executives (Natale, SM. 2005).

The study of the results of the executive coaching on the organizational performance represent a very interesting research subject that will be more and more researched in the following years due to the increase of the coaching popularity at a global level.

Methodology

The goal of our research was to explore how coaching is perceived as a research objective and the framework for research in this sector.

Our primary goals were:

- to obtain an image of research literature on executive coaching.
- see the study materials on the relationship between coaching and organizational performance.

We aimed to answer a key question for our future research objectives:

- What is the structure of the research materials on executive coaching linked to organizational performance?

We consider bibliometric analysis to be the most appropriate study method of research for our purposes. It can give us a very accurate image of the structure and different aspect of the research on this topic.

We used PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) as a framework for collecting data. Although PRISMA is not designed for bibliometric research it brings structure, rigor, and transparency to the review process.

Literature search and data collection

We have conducted a comprehensive literature search using Web of Science, WoS Core Collection (Clarivate, 2024). WoS represents the most reputable global research database from over 250 countries.

We have researched by topic, using relevant keywords such as (“coaching”) OR (“coach”) AND (“leadership coaching”) OR (“business coaching”) OR (“executive coaching”) OR (“executives coaching”) AND (“coaching skills”) OR (“coaching behavior”) AND (“leadership

development”) OR (“management coaching”) OR (“coaching research”) OR (“coaching literature”) AND (“performance”) OR (“organizational performance”) AND (“coaching outcome”) OR (“coaching effectiveness”) OR (“coaching performance”).

The keywords were carefully selected by relevance and use in the coaching industry.

We have used (“executive coaching”) as an alternative because with the search by “AND” the database didn’t return any results.

The database search focused on articles, proceeding papers and early access.

The method used for data collection is presented in the figure 1 shown below.

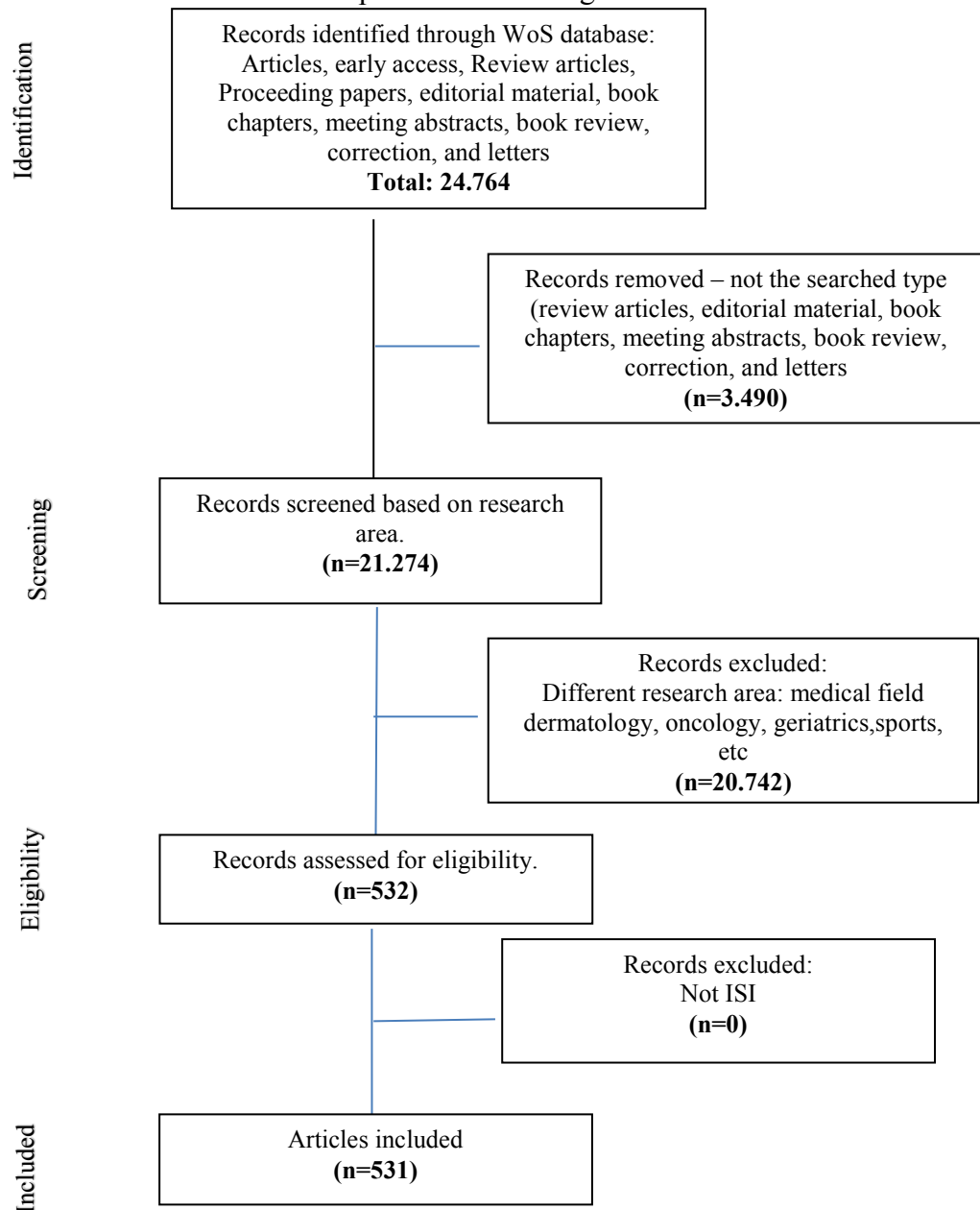


Figure 1. PRISMA for eligibility

Source: Authors’ own research.

The data was gathered from the period spanning 2018 to 2023. We excluded 2024 to ensure a full year of research coverage.

It was important to exclude articles from the sport area that would give a deformed image of the analysis due to the massive research levels on sports coaching and its implications. Sports related coaching does not represent the target of our analysis,

Data analysis and visualization

The analysis was conducted using Bibliometrix R-package-Biblioshiny. The bibliometrix is recommended as very good tool for science mapping analysis that supports an organized and recommended workflow for bibliometric analysis (Aria, M. & Cuccurullo, C.,2017)

Biblioshiny represents the visual interface of the Bibliometrix package and was used for the visualization of the analyzed data. The visual representations helped us to get a better image of the relationship among publications and concepts in the field.

We have performed an analysis of the leading countries, relevant sources, authors, affiliations, and documents.

We have also performed a word analysis by clustering and thematic map. These instruments revealed very interesting results and links between citation networks and keywords.

The information was analyzed mainly through representative tables and figures obtained by the Biblioshiny instrument of Bibliometrix R-package.

The data was also analyzed with the statistical instruments provided by World of Science platform by Clarivate.

We have identified gaps and future research directions that will be very helpful for further research. By this bibliometric analysis, we can gain a deeper understanding of the existing research and opportunities for further research on this topic.

Results and discussions

The results of our analysis show a complete image of the published research on coaching and organizational performance from 2018 to 2023. We wanted to see if after COVID- 19 pandemic we can see an increase in the amount of published work on coaching and the relationship between coaching and performance during crisis. Also, we wanted to see if there is a unity of terms regarding the executive coaching category and we found out that the search by “TOPIC” for (“executive coaching”) had no results. Although the correct term is “executive coaching” in articles are used mainly “business coaching” or leadership coaching” or “management coaching”.

A complete image of the analysis is presented in Table 1 shown below.

The materials analyzed were written by 1352 authors with 25 % international co-authorships. This proves a very strong international collaboration on the topic of coaching. There are also 69 single authored docs in the research.

According to “documents type” the analysis included 264 articles: 230 early access articles, and 48 proceeding papers (including one article/proceeding paper). Most of the analyzed documents are articles, and we have a 2,79 average of Co-Authors per document.

Table 1. Main information of the bibliometric study

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2018:2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	250
Documents	532
Annual Growth Rate %	-28,84
Document Average Age	3,35
Average citations per doc	5,932
References	25871
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1172
Author's Keywords (DE)	1841
AUTHORS	
Authors	1352
Authors of single-authored docs	67
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	69
Co-Authors per Doc	2,79
International co-authorships %	25
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	264
article; early access	230
article; proceedings paper	1
proceedings paper	37

Source: Authors' own research. On the results obtained by Biblioshiny.

In the timespan 2018:2023 the AGR is negative by 28,84 % which means that the number of articles registered a decrease over the years. Negative growth rates can occur for various reasons, but we estimate a growth in the following years due to an increase in popularity of the “coaching” topic. In Table 2 there is a presentation of the yearly evolution of the publications.

Table 2. Annual Scientific Production

Year	Articles
2018	77
2019	87
2020	74
2021	96
2022	113
2023	75

Source: Authors' own research. On the results obtained by Biblioshiny.

The largest number of articles were published in 2022, but we can observe an average of 81,8 articles/ year for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2023.

It is important to point out that during the pandemic the number of publications registered a slight increase from 77 in 2018 to 87 in 2019. The increase of the number of publications from 2021 and 2022 is an indication of the increase in popularity of the coaching research and the need to analyze the impact of coaching on different post pandemic situations. Also starting from 2020 there is an increase in the number of coaching schools around the world.

Leading countries publishing on coaching or executive coaching.

The leading country that publishes on coaching is USA with 166 records, followed by UK with 61 records and South Africa with 39 records. It is interesting to point out that the top three countries represent 50 % of the entire database of research. These are the countries that focused in the last five years on executive coaching research in relationship with organizational performance and the overall spectrum of coaching outcomes (development of coaching skills, coaching behavior, performance, etc.).

Romanian scientists published seven articles representing 1,318% of the material gathered in our database.

South Africa has seen a significant increase in materials related to coaching for several reasons, the most important are the growing demand of coaching services, professionalization of coaching by certification programs and the global strong influence. The International Coaching Federation reported a growth of 74 % of the coach practitioners in the Middle Est and Africa in 2023 (ICF, 2023).

North America remains the leader of the coaching industry with 34.200 registered coaching practitioners (ICF, 2023).

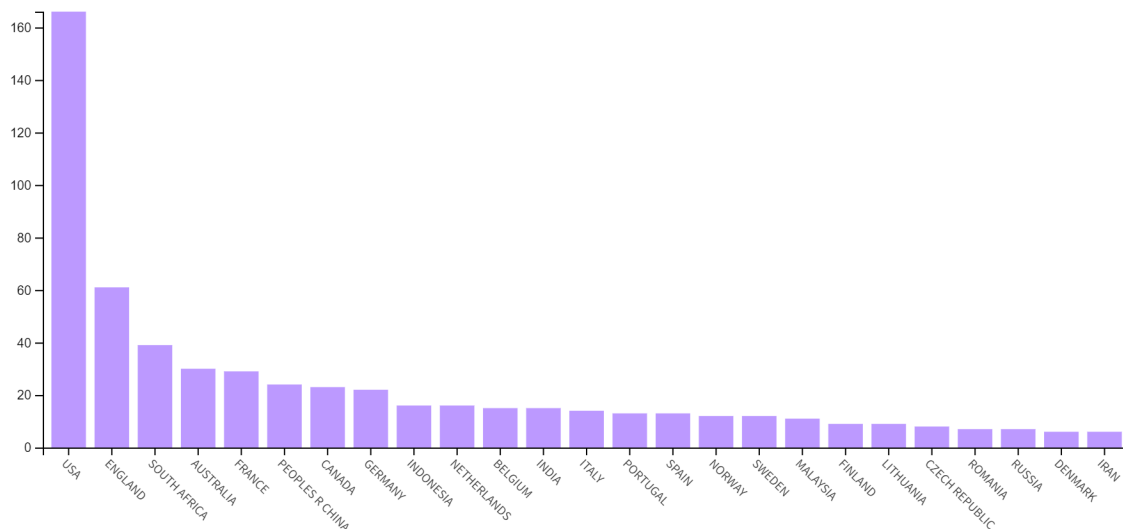


Figure 2. Leading countries publishing on coaching.

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Web of Science – Clarivate.

Relevant sources analysis

The database covered 532 documents published by 250 sources (journals, proceedings etc.). The most relevant sources originate from Europe and South Africa.

The journal “Managing Sports and Leisure” published by Taylor & Francis Group from UK is a peer-reviewed academic journal that focuses on research, theory, and best practices in the management of sports and leisure activities, and it published 32 articles on the coaching topic.

The next journal that has a significant activity in the publication of articles relevant for our research is “European Journal of Training and Development” who published 15 articles regarding the coaching topic. The “European Journal of Training and Development” is published by Emerald Group from UK.

The third journal with a significant activity in publishing on the coaching topic comes from South Africa. “SA Journal of Human Resource Management” published 14 articles relevant for our research.

These three journals published a total of 61 articles representing 24,4 % of the total of materials published on the subject.

It is noticeable that none of the top 5 journals are from North America although most of the articles originate from the USA.

The analysis of the sources revealed that the increased interest on coaching in South Africa it is reflected also in the structure of the relevant sources. In the first ten sources there are two South African important journals who published 22 articles on coaching and organizational performance.

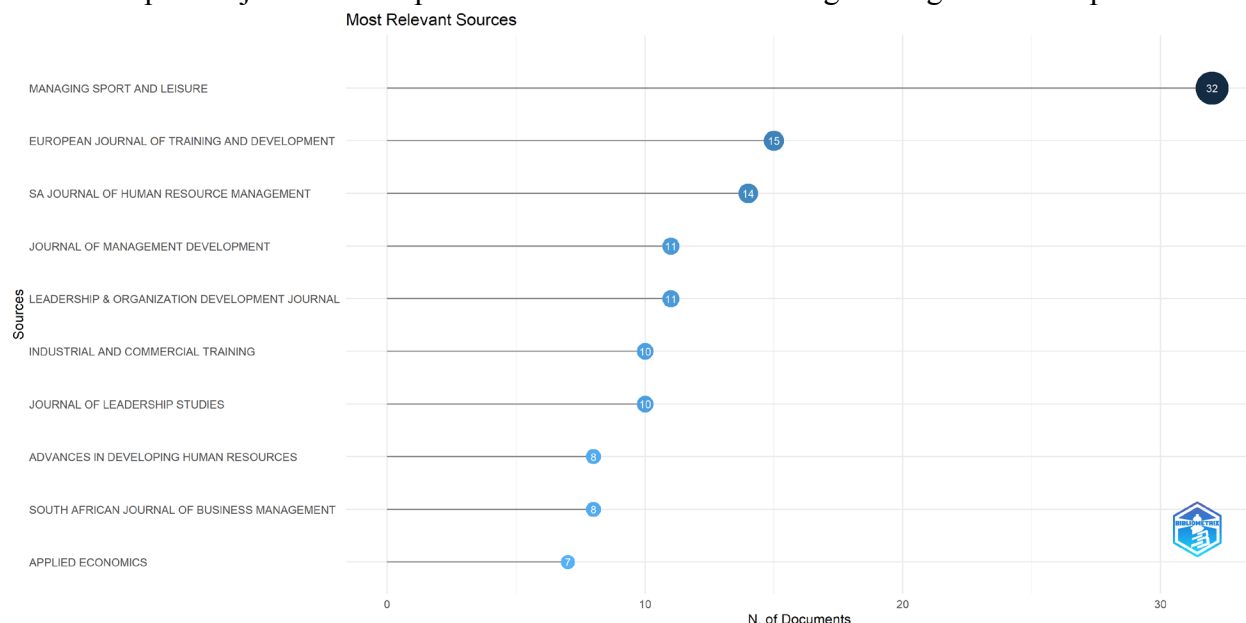


Figure 3. Most relevant sources

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Bradford's Law of Scattering is one of the most used methods in bibliometric research (Wardikar V., 2013). According to Bradford's Law the sources are divided into three categories, the first one represented by core sources.

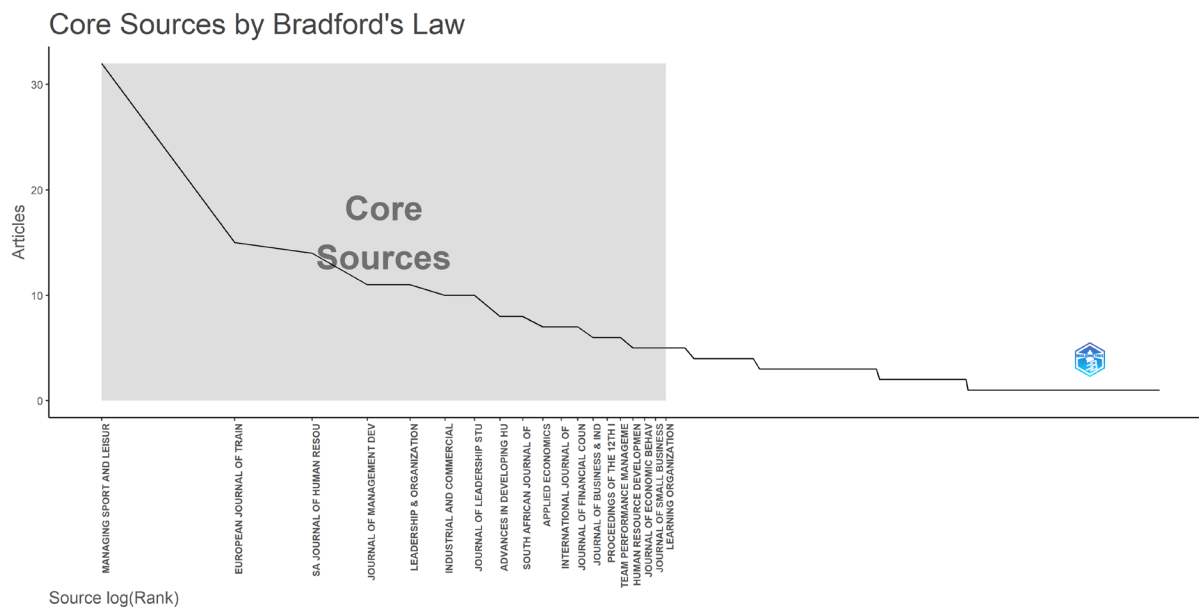


Figure 4. Core sources by Bradford's Law

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

The studied sources are divided in the three categories of the Bradford's Law as shown below:

Table 3. Bradford's Law

Zone	Number of sources
Zone 1 – core sources	19
Zone 2	64
Zone 3	167

Source: Authors' own research. On the results obtained by Biblioshiny.

The graphic of the most local cited sources is represented as follows:

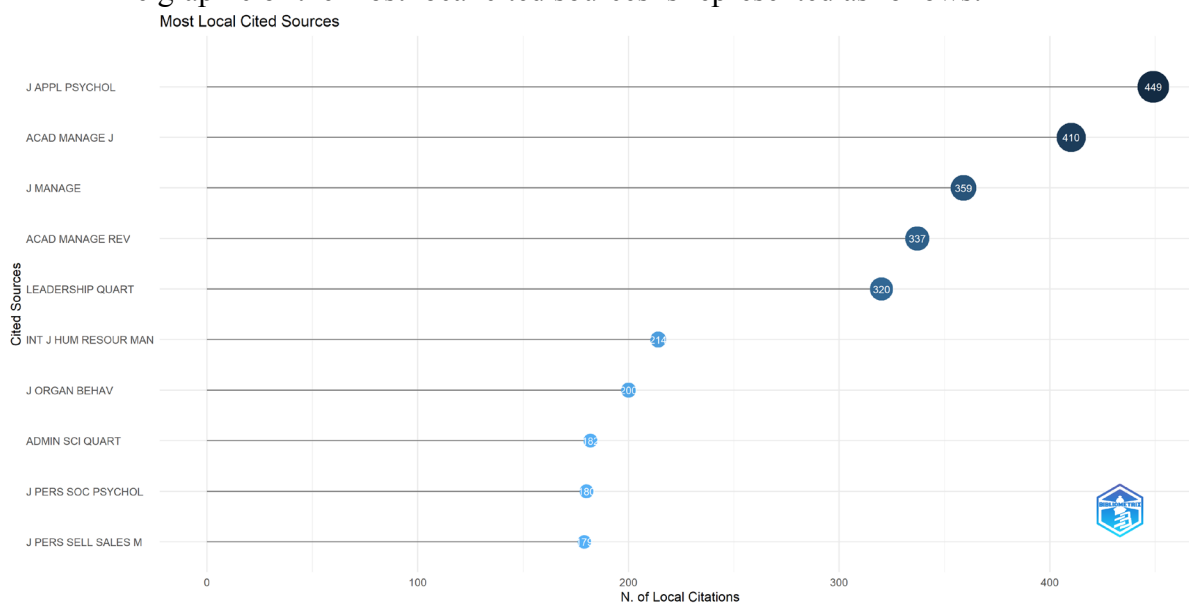
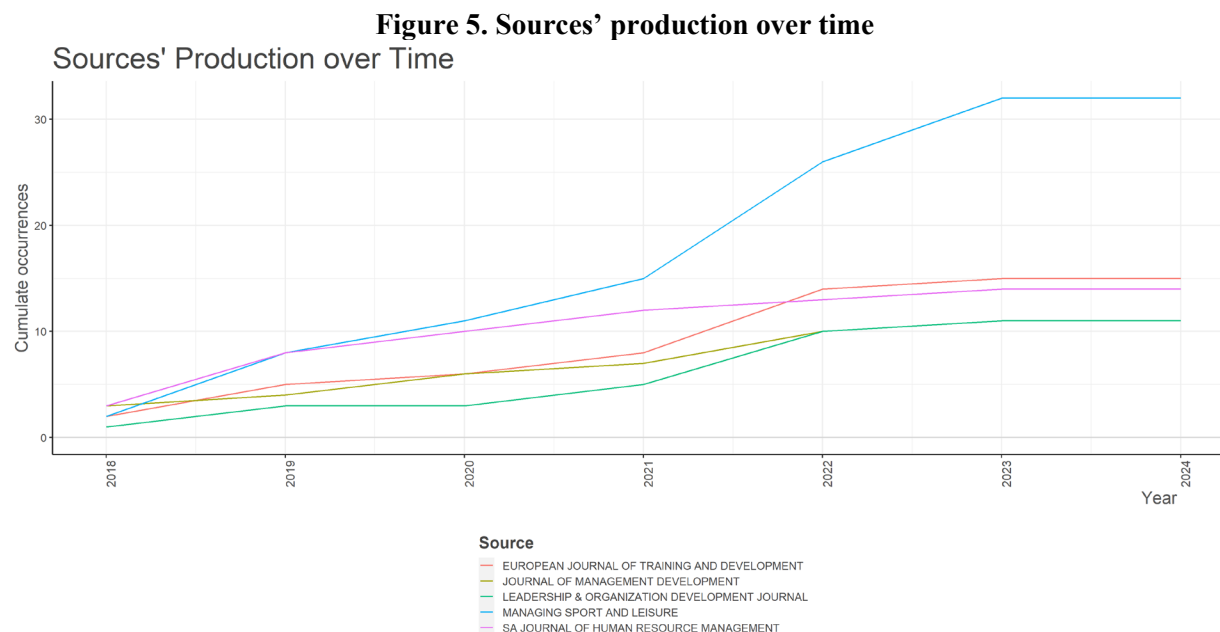


Figure 5. The most local cited sources

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Journal of Applied Psychology is the most local cited source with 449 local citations. The largest number of articles was published in 2023. The number of articles increased every year starting from 2018. Overall, Emerald Publishing published in its journals the largest number of articles regarding coaching and organizational performance.



Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Authors analysis

The database documented 1352 authors across all 532 materials analyzed, with 25% of them having international collaborations. This indicates significant international collaboration in the field of coaching. Only 67 of the articles were published as single-authored.

The most relevant author is Jonathan Passmore from Henley Business School in the UK. He has published seven articles on coaching related themes. He has 33 publications in the Web of Science Core Collection.

The most relevant authors are shown in Figure 6 below:

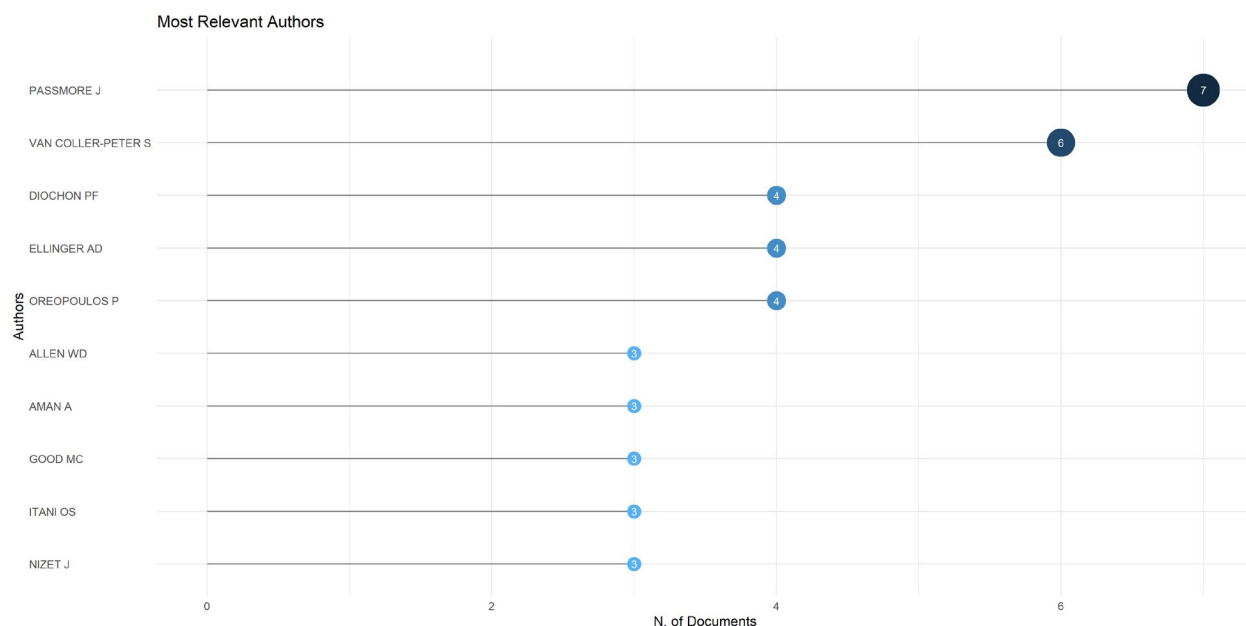


Figure 6. Most relevant authors

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

The most local cited author is Grace McCarthy from University of Manchester with 16 local citations, followed by Milner Julia from France also with 16 local citations.

Table 4. Most local cited authors

Author	Local Citations
MCCARTHY G	16
MILNER J	16
COX E	9
MILNER T	9
SHOUKRY H	9
AHMED S	8
IDRIS MA	8
LEE MCC	8
TUCKEY M	8
DIOCHON PF	6

Source: Authors' own research. On the results obtained by Biblioshiny

The author's 'production over time is presented in Figure 7 that reveals the distribution of the articles in the researched years for every relevant author. Jonathan Passmore published two articles in 2019 and has an average of 1 article/years in the rest of the timespan researched. He had 1,25 citations in 2021.

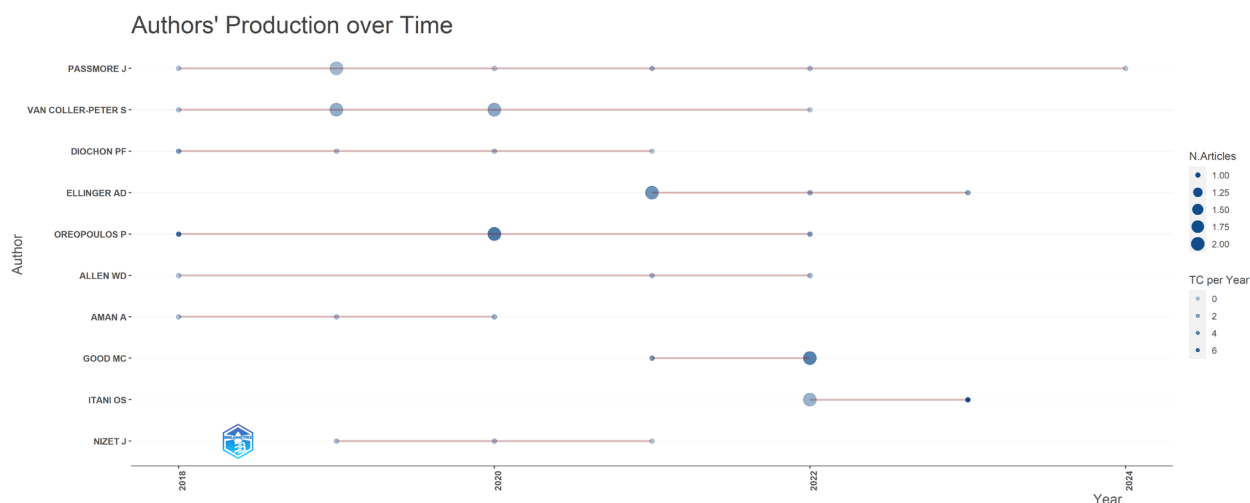


Figure 7. Authors' production over time

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Lotka's Law, attributed to Alfred J. Lotka, is a bibliometric principle elucidating the distribution of author productivity within a specific domain. It notes that a minority of authors contribute the bulk of publications, whereas most authors produce only a limited number of works (Kawamura M et al, 1999).

The graphical representation of Lotka's Law in Figure 8 illustrates that 0.001 fraction of all authors produced 7 articles and 0,921 fraction of all authors produced an average of 1 article.

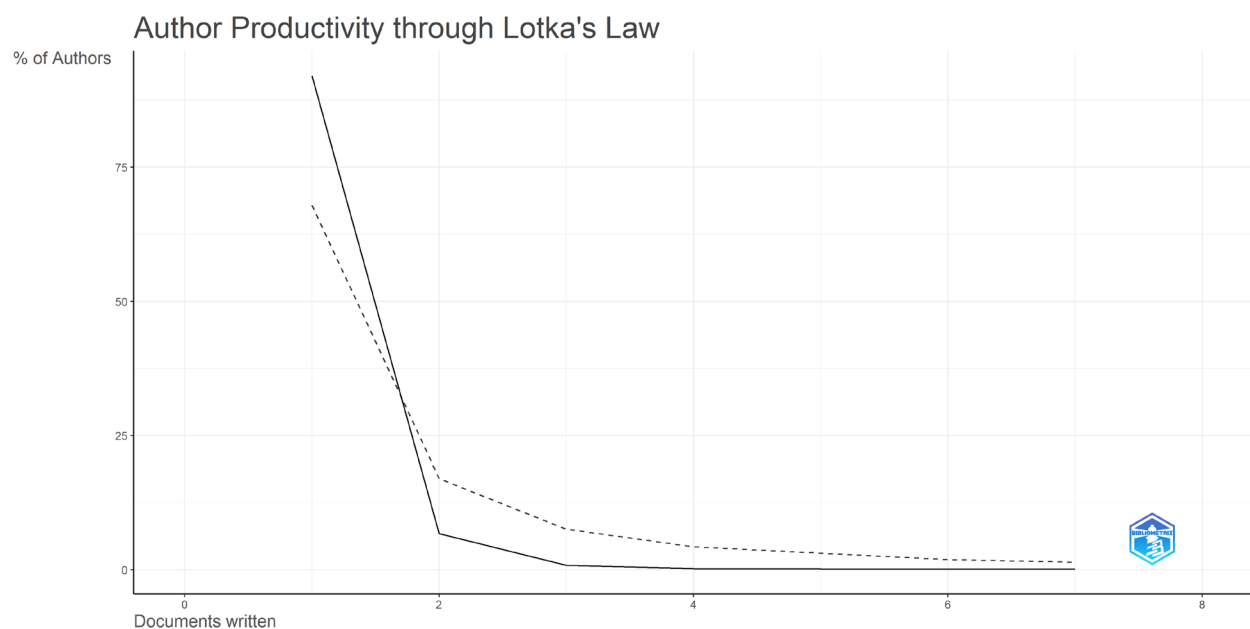


Figure 8. Authors' productivity through Lotka's Law

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Affiliations

Affiliations are vital in bibliometric research as they offer essential insights into the scholarly landscape, aiding in the evaluation of institutional performance, the delineation of research networks, and the monitoring of trends in academic research.

The affiliation of the authors is relevant and linked to the distribution of the overall published articles.

Stellenbosch University represents the institution with the most authors affiliated for 13 articles. Stellenbosch University is a renowned public research university located in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Pennsylvania State University has 10 articles produced by affiliated authors.

The top three institutions with relevant affiliations are from South Africa and USA, countries with a proved steady research activity on executive coaching,

The most relevant affiliations are presented in Figure 9.

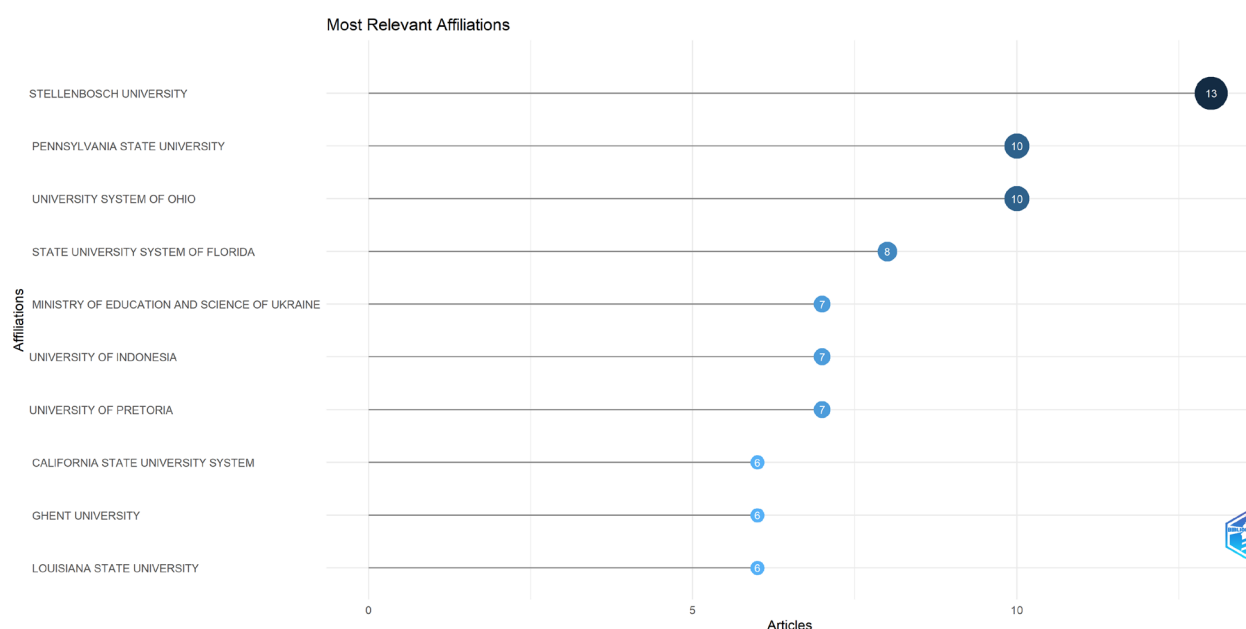


Figure 9. Most relevant affiliations

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Documents

Examining the most widely cited documents in bibliometric analysis offers valuable insights into the global impact, influence, and importance of scholarly works. This analysis informs research methodologies, collaboration approaches, and policymaking not only within academia but also in broader contexts.

The most global cited documents analysis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Most global cited documents

Paper	DOI	Total Citations	TC per Year	Normalized TC
LEE MCC, 2019, HUM RESOUR DEV INT	10.1080/13678868.2018.1530170	72	12,00	7,40
LUO XM, 2021, J MARKETING	10.1177/0022242920956676	62	15,50	10,05
FISCH C, 2020, J CORP FINANC	10.1016/j.jcorpfin.2020.101679	62	12,40	8,71
CIUCHTA MP, 2018, ENTREP THEORY PRACT	10.1177/1042258717725520	62	8,86	6,43
ERSKINE SE, 2019, J LEADERSH ORG STUD	10.1177/1548051819848993	56	9,33	5,75
BOWES A, 2022, MANAG SPORT LEIS	10.1080/23750472.2020.1825988	52	17,33	16,60
VINK J, 2019, J SERV MANAGE	10.1108/JOSM-08-2017-0186	50	8,33	5,14
REINHOLD S, 2018, INT J TRAIN DEV	10.1111/ijtd.12115	49	7,00	5,08
SOLAIMANI S, 2019, J BUS RES	10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.042	43	7,17	4,42
SOUSA MJ, 2019, J BUS RES	10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.01.057	43	7,17	4,42

Source: Authors' own research. [Times New Roman, 10, aligned to the right].

The most global cited document was “Supervisory coaching and performance feedback as mediators of the relationships between leadership styles, work engagement, and turnover intention” published by Michelle Chin Chin Lee, Mohd. Awang Idris & Michelle Tuckey in 2019 in the Human Resource Development International Journal. This article had a total of 72 global citations with an average of 12 total citations per year.

The second cited document was ‘ Artificial Intelligence Coaches for Sales Agents: Caveats and Solutions” by Luo, X., Qin, M. S., Fang, Z., & Qu, Z. published in the Journal of Marketing in 2021. This article had 62 global citations but a better citation per year percentage than the previous with an average of 15,50 citations.

The most cited documents were published in the UK and USA, both countries with a structured and matured coaching culture.

Words analysis

Words constitute the fundamental elements of analysis in bibliometric research, acting as the cornerstone for the identification, examination, and comprehension of scholarly literature. Their significance resides in their capacity to streamline search and retrieval processes, enable content analysis, facilitate classification, and enhance the visualization of research outcomes, thereby fostering the progression of knowledge across diverse domains.

It is important to mention that all the words studied are in connection with coaching, executive coaching, and organizational performance.

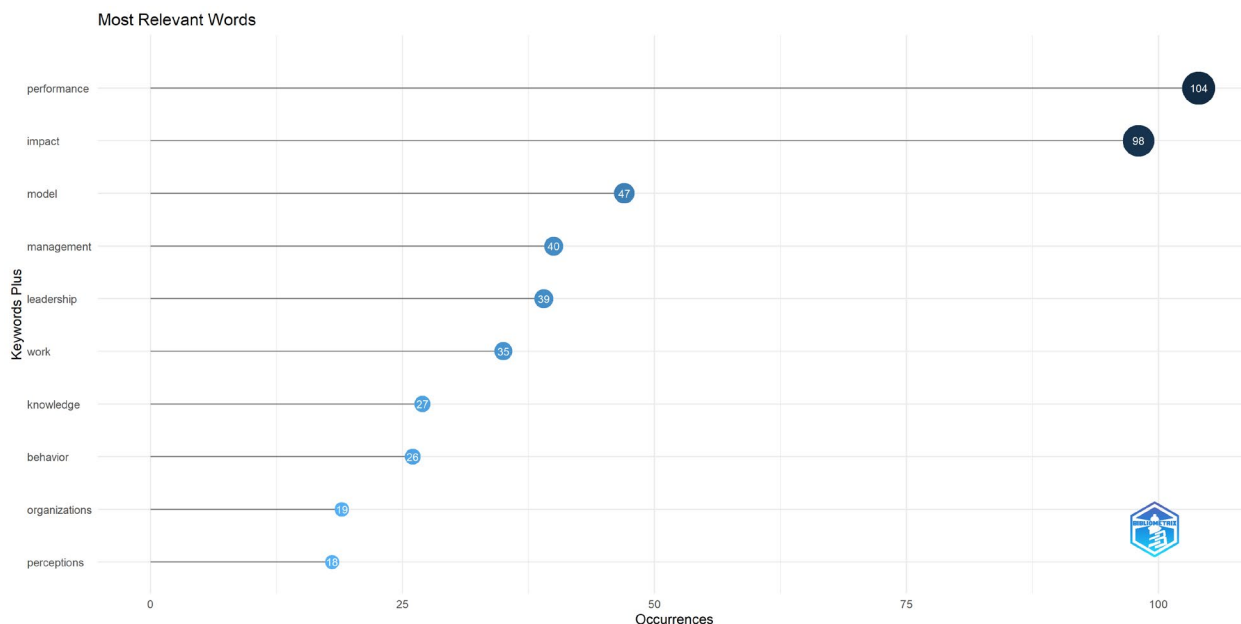


Figure 10. Most relevant words

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

The most relevant word is “performance” with 104 occurrences in the researched documents. The following relevant words are impact, model, management and leadership.

The most relevant words are best represented in Figure 11.

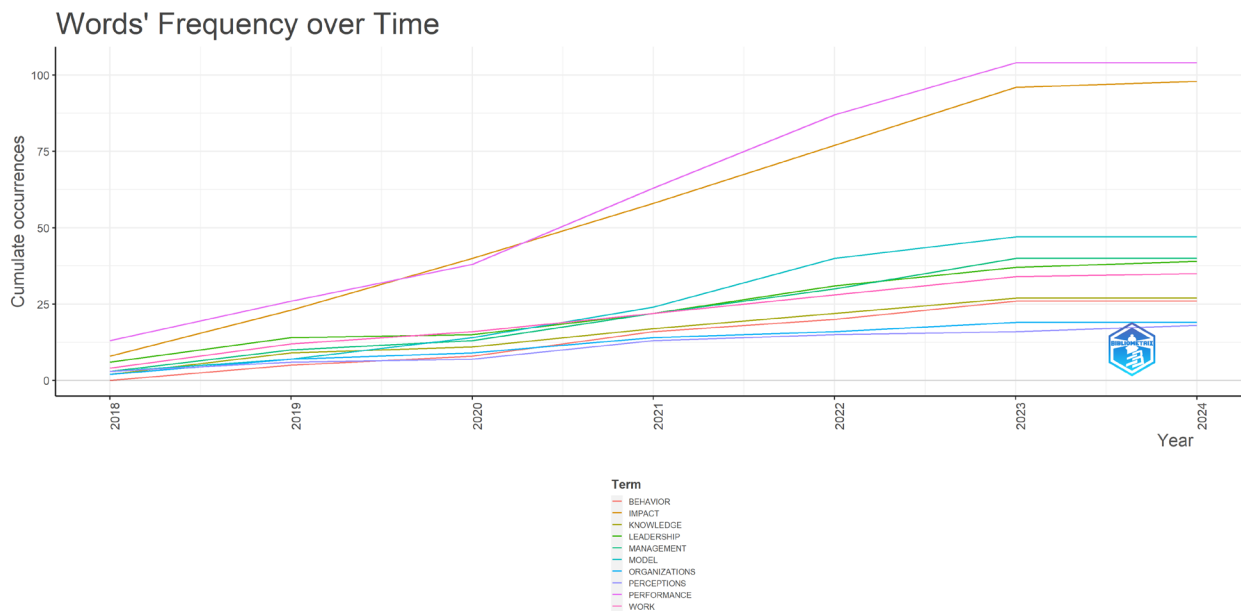


Figure 11. Words' frequency over time

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

Performance and impact are used more and more frequently, and the graphic shows an exponential increase in occurrence from 2020 to 2023. The rest of the relevant words have also registered an increase in occurrence but a more moderate one.

The analysis of the most relevant words shows the main coaching outcomes regarding the increase of the organizational performance. Words like impact, management, leadership, behavior show what the overall scientific research reveals, that adopting a coaching behavior has a powerful impact on the performance of management and leadership.

Clustering by coupling

In bibliometric analysis, "Clustering by Coupling" generally denotes a technique for categorizing documents according to the robustness of their associations or interrelations. This method entails pinpointing documents with shared attributes, such as keywords, references, or co-citations, and consolidating them into coherent clusters.

The results of clustering by coupling using documents as unit of analysis and the coupling measured by reference is presented in Figure 12.

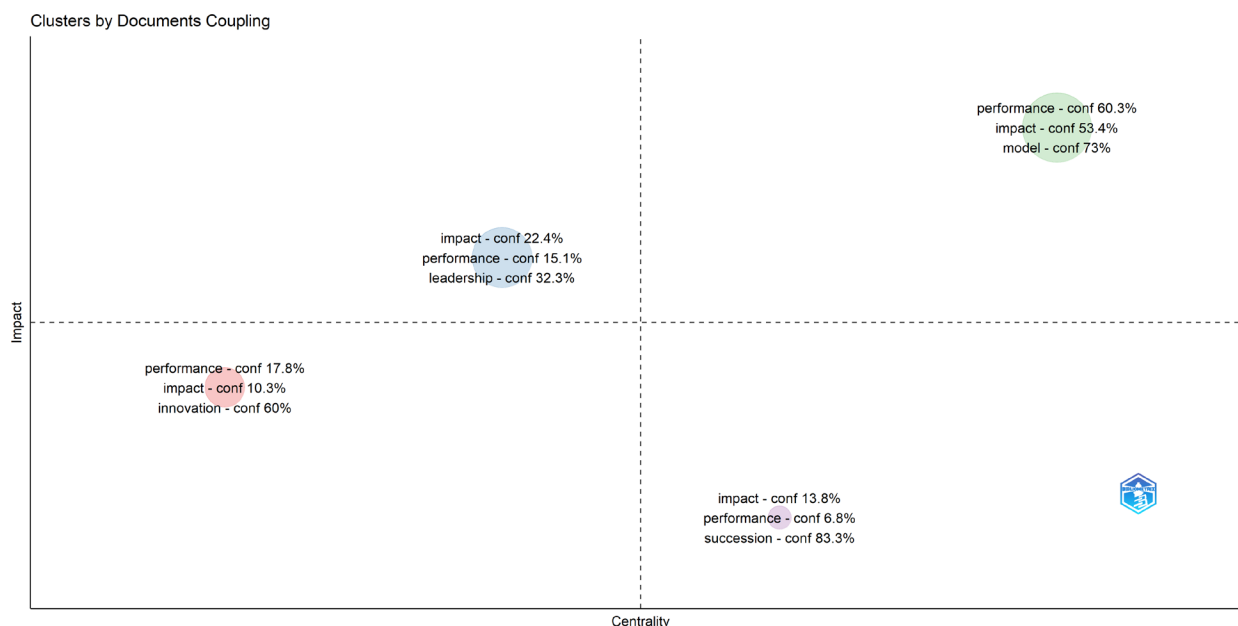


Figure 12. Clusters by documents coupling.

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

The impact measure used is the Global Citation Score. Documents with higher centrality are those that are more centrally located or connected to other documents within the cluster. The green cluster formed by performance, impact and model have a higher centrality and a higher impact than the other clusters.

Documents with greater impact are those that have received more frequent citations or have exerted a stronger influence on subsequent research within the cluster.

Thematic map analysis

Thematic map analysis in Biblioshiny offers a graphical depiction illustrating how research themes or topics are spatially distributed, aiding researchers in discerning trends, clusters, and relationships within scholarly literature.

We have obtained a thematic map based on clusters distributed by development degrees and relevance degree as presented in Figure 13.

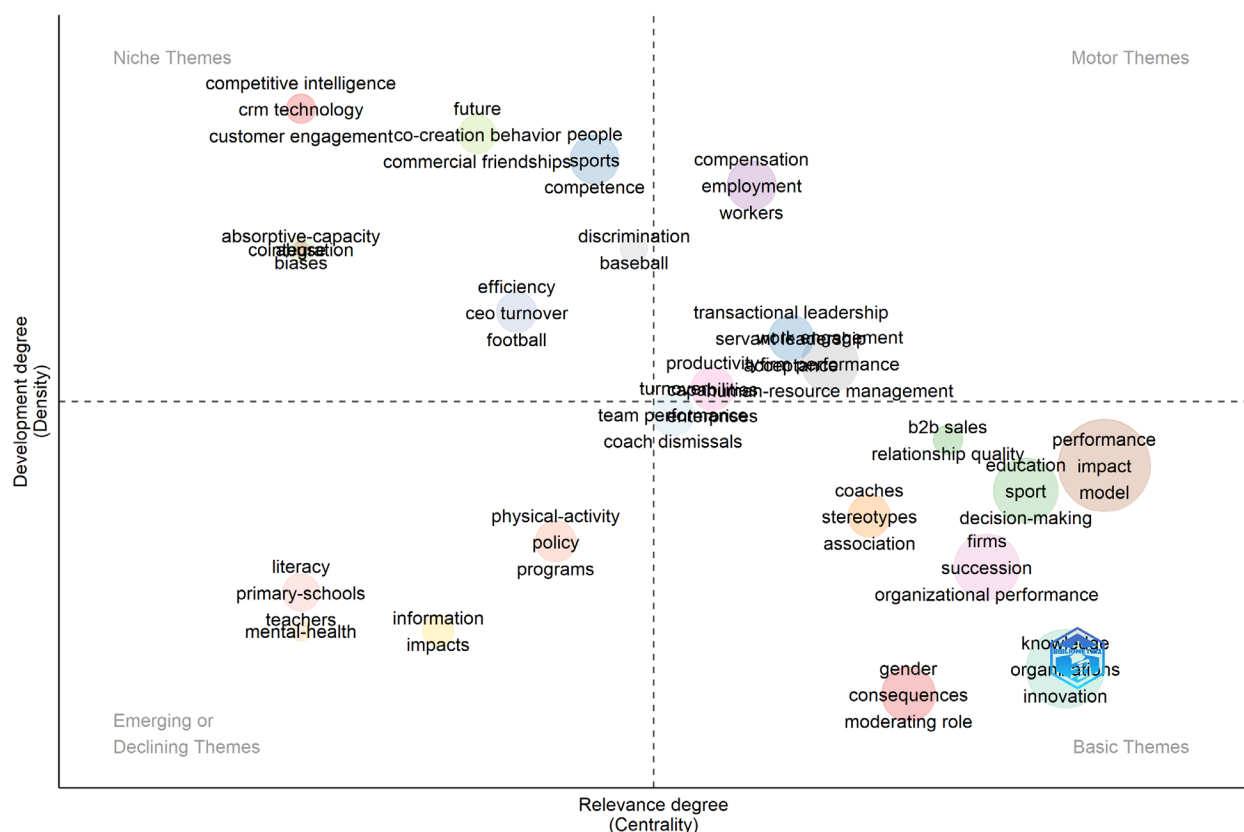


Figure 13. Thematic map

Source: Authors' own research - retrieved from Biblioshiny.

The cluster formed by keywords like performance, impact and model which represent basic themes have a higher relevance degree and as seen in the analysis are the most relevant words in this field of research, The cluster formed by compensation, employment and workers represent motor themes who represent a new trend in the coaching research that focuses more on employees (workers) than on managers. There is a shift of perspective in the coaching industry that addresses the executive coaching from the employees' angle and the performance obtained by an increase in the workplace satisfaction.

Conclusion

The analysis focused on the bibliometric research of the coaching related research focused on the increase in organizational performance. We have analyzed the main components of bibliometric research such as authors, documents, sources countries and affiliations and performed a complex

analysis of words by clustering and developing a thematic map. The analysis focused on executive coaching and the words associated with this topic.

There is still a lack of research on the coaching topic but with a visible increase in the post pandemic years. The number of articles has increased and due to the popularity of the coaching industry we can observe a notable impact of South Africa from the point of view of the affiliations, number of articles published and citation impact. Even if USA remain the main source of scientific research on this topic, we can see the importance of the UK journals and the rise of the South African level of research.

The link between executive coaching and organizational performance is obvious from the results of our analysis and the strong clusters formed around “performance” are extremely important in further research of this topic.

As leaders and practitioners increasingly prioritize the development of emotional intelligence competencies among employees, executive coaching represents an instrument to enhance emotional intelligence. This approach aims not only to improve performance but also to promote personal well-being (Wittmer, J. L. S. et al, 2023). The bibliometric study proved the shift in perspective regarding the focus of the executive coaching on employees and the increase of performance through an increase of the well-being of the workers.

The limitations of the analysis are represented by the uneven use of terminology regarding the use of the specific notions from the coaching industry. Researchers use terms like business coaching and leadership coaching and even simple coaching when talking about the business area represented by executive coaching. The search on executive coaching had no results even if there are articles published with this terminology.

There is also a limitation in analysis regarding the research from Asia written in Asian languages. It would be interesting to see a word analysis of the Asian research on this topic.

For further research it can be interesting to make a three-plot analysis on this topic from the sources, authors and countries perspective and further research on coaching and the link to the results on preparing organizations for dealing with crisis situations and also on the overall impact of executive coaching on the organizational activity.

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