

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF RECENT MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS LITERATURE

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Abstract: *Currently, organizations, in order to develop and cope with a complex, uncertain and ambiguous external environment, in which changes are increasingly rapid and unpredictable, must adapt; adopt flexible strategies and use effective management practices; invest in the development of employee skills and continuous learning, as well as in the development of their performance; stimulate organizational innovation. The paper maps the bibliometric relationship between employee performance and organizational performance in recent management and business literature. To determine this role, a bibliometric analysis was performed using the Web of Science Core Collection database. The results showed that the connection between the two topics is weak to moderate due to the fact that the two topics are approached differently: organizational performance is approached at the macro level, while employee performance is approached at the micro level.*

Keywords: development, management, employee performance, organizational performance

1. Introduction

In an organization, human resources represent one of the most important assets necessary for the sustainability of organizational performance [1] because organizational development, growth, and performance are closely linked to employee performance.

In general, organizational performance refers to the efficiency with which the organization achieves its objectives and fulfills its mission [2, 3] and is influenced by certain internal and external factors, such as: human resources, leadership, strategic orientation, organizational culture, digitalization, innovation [4, 5]. The efficiency with which an organization achieves its objectives plays an important role in increasing organizational performance and is measured through certain indicators, including: operational

efficiency, sustainability, innovation, profitability and market share [6, 7], and for measuring performance, both non-financial and financial results are taken into account [8-10]

Certain practices – business digitalization, competitive strategies, risk management, green innovation – can contribute, through innovation, flexibility or transformation into learning organizations and knowledge sharing, to improving organizational performance [8, 11, 12] and increasing the organization's capacity to adapt quickly to changes in the external environment, to introduce new technologies and, last but not least, to adopt and maintain long-term sustainability [8, 13].

Employee performance refers to the effectiveness with which an employee fulfills responsibilities and achieves job objectives [14, 15] and is measured by the

quality of results, involvement, productivity, adaptability, etc. [16].

Employee performance is influenced by a number of factors, including: work environment, leadership style, individual skills, job satisfaction, institutional context [17-19] and can be improved through continuous learning and development, leadership, and sustained work.

In an organization, employee performance results contribute to increasing organizational innovation, performance and competitiveness, solving problems, implementing new processes or improving existing ones [14, 16, 18].

In the specialized literature, there are studies that show that there is a strong relationship between organizational performance and employee performance [3, 14], and employees' skills, temperament, motivation, effectiveness, well-being, and organizational behavior are determining factors of organizational success and performance [20, 21].

2. Research purpose

The paper aims to map the bibliometric relationship between employee performance and organizational performance in recent (2020-2026) management and business literature.

3. Methodology

To achieve the research goal, the VOSviewer software [22] was used, through which a bibliometric analysis was performed. The data necessary for the analysis were obtained from the Web of Science Core Collection (WoS) database, a database considered to be “a reliable and robust source of bibliometric data” [23], which, due to the high scientific quality of the peer-reviewed and indexed works, reduces unvalidated sources and ensures the high quality of the bibliometric data. The WoS database also provides standardized information, suitable for bibliometric analysis performed using VOSviewer software, ensuring the accuracy of the results.

The research was conducted in May 2026, searching for topics of research interest using the following syntax: “*organizational performance*” OR “*organisational performance*” AND “*employee performance*” OR “*employees performance*” OR “*employees' performance*” OR “*employees performances*”.

The topics in the syntax were:

- Topic 1: “*organizational performance*”; “*organisational performance*”;
- Topic 2: “*employee performance*”; “*employees performance*”; “*employees' performance*”; “*employees performances*”.

4. Results and discussion

Following the search with the syntax presented above, 15,825 results were obtained for the years 1975-2026. Several filters were used to refine the results.

The first filter applied was the choice of English as the language of publication of the documents. English was chosen because it is one of the languages of international circulation and the language used in the majority of published scientific documents (articles, conferences, etc.). The result was 15,325 documents published in the period 1975-2026.

The second filter used was for the document type. Article was chosen because articles are peer-reviewed and only articles with a high scientific level are published and indexed, which ensures the validity of the data used in VOSviewer. 12,465 articles published between 1975 and 2026 were obtained.

Another filter was applied to the years in which the articles were published. The years 2020-2026 were chosen because in 2020, organizations, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, had to switch to hybrid working mode, with employees working from home; become more flexible and adaptable to environmental changes; focus on employee health and well-being; and accelerate digitalization. The changes made during the pandemic have become part of the way organizations operate today.

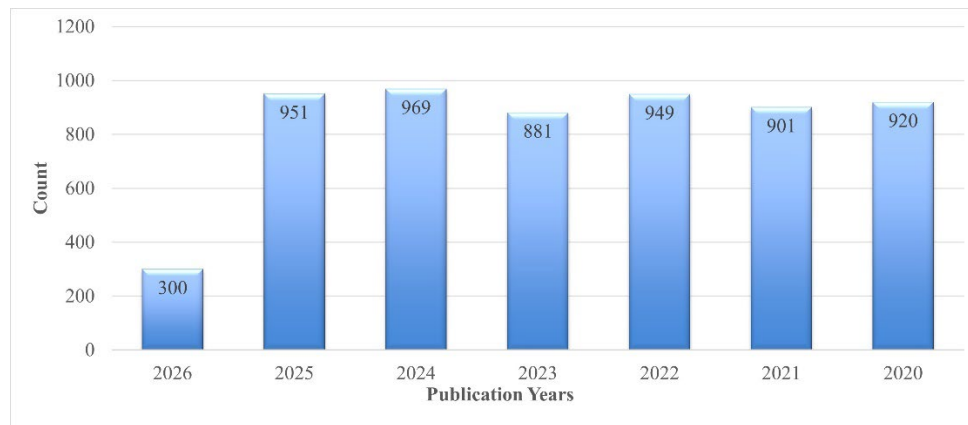


Figure 1: Scientific production 2020-2026– Evolution
Source: Authors, based on WoS information

Figure 1 shows that the most articles were published in 2024 (969 articles) and the fewest in 2023 (881 articles). In 2026, in the first 4 months of the year, 300 articles were published. One explanation may be that currently the articles have become more specialized and deal with certain components of the concepts of “organizational performance” (e.g.:

productivity, performance, innovation, etc.) and “employee performance” (e.g.: employee well-being is included in performance, continuous learning, etc.). Figure 2 shows the WoS domains in which at least 200 articles dealing with the topics researched in this scientific paper are published.

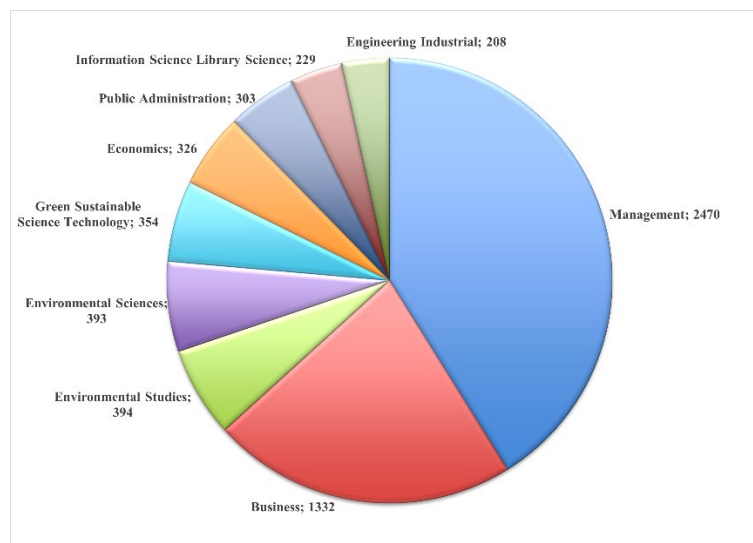


Figure 2: WoS domains of articles in the research sample
Source: Authors, based on WoS information

Analyzing Figure 2, it is noticeable that the Management field ranks first with 2470 articles published in the period 2020-2026, followed by the Business field with 1332 articles. One explanation may be that the research topics represent key concepts in achieving the objectives of organizations.

Another filter was the selection of Open Access articles, resulting in 2870 articles. We chose Open Access articles because they have increased visibility, are easy to access by researchers, do not involve costs to be studied.

The last filter used was the choice of the

Management and Business domains. This resulted in 1216 articles, which represent the research sample that will be analyzed using the VOSviewer software.

The analysis yielded 4955 keywords. To eliminate duplicates, keywords that were unrelated to the two researched topics, correct variations of the same word, unify different terms that mean the same thing, standardize terms, avoid duplication of nodes on the map, and obtain the most accurate database possible, we used the Thesaurus option.

For the final determination of the number of keywords, a threshold of 5 was established as the minimum number of occurrences of a keyword, resulting in 146 words that met all criteria.

For each of the 146 keywords, the total strength of the links that appear simultaneously with other keywords was calculated and only keywords that had link strength greater than 200 were selected. The final result consisted of 50 items, distributed

across 3 clusters, consisting of between 8 and 21 items (Figure 3a), each cluster being colored with a distinct color (Figure 3b).

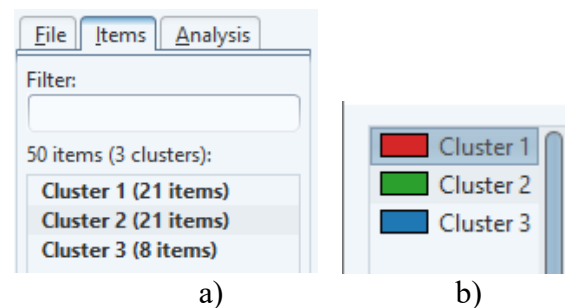


Figure 3a: Distribution of items into clusters

Figure 3b: Cluster colors

Source: Authors, using VOSviewer

Figure 4 shows the links between keywords within the three clusters. The keywords are interconnected, with stronger or weaker connections. There are no keywords that are not connected to each other (Links: 1056; Total Link Strength: 8809).

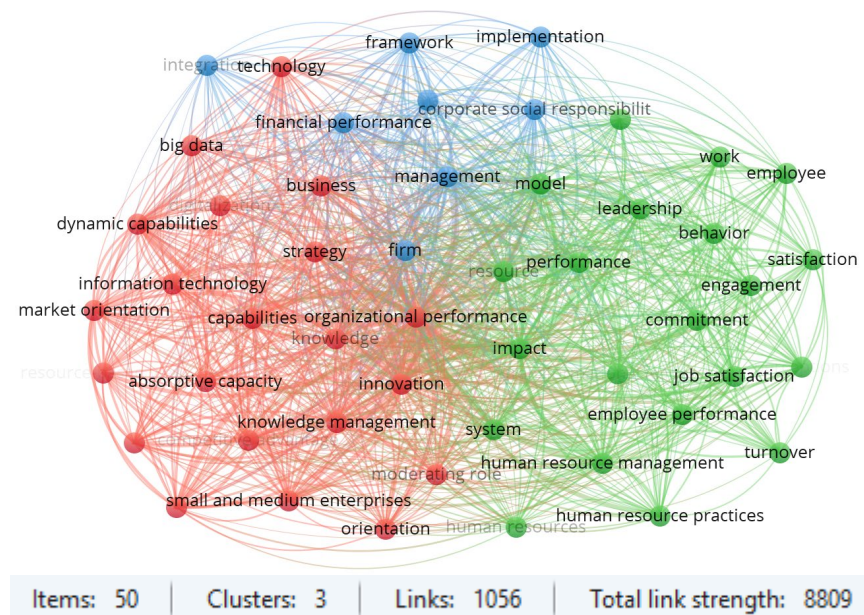
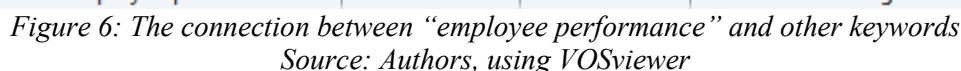


Figure 4: Distribution of items into clusters

Source: Authors, using VOSViewer

“organizational performance” is in cluster 1 (Links: 49; TLS: 2371) and has links to keywords that are in all 3 clusters, which indicates that this is an important, central

and well-integrated concept in the specialized literature (Figure 5).



The results of the analysis of the links created between “employee performance” and the keywords analyzed in relation to “organizational performance” are the following:

b) “employee performance” (cluster 2) with “management” (cluster 3) – LS 5, also indicates a weak thematic relationship, the two keywords being relatively rarely directly associated. In the articles studied the two keywords are treated as distinct research directions, with differences in theoretical perspective and level of analysis. Thus, “employee performance” is predominantly oriented towards the individual and behavioral level, while “management” is used in a broader sense, at the organizational level,

c) “employee performance” (cluster 2) with “human resource management” (cluster 2) – LS 7, indicates a weak to moderate thematic relationship. Even though the two keywords belong to the same cluster, in the articles

d) “employee performance” (cluster 2) with “capabilities” (cluster 1) – LS 3, shows a very weak thematic relationship, which indicates that the two keywords appear, in the studied articles, very rarely together and that there is a significant conceptual distance between “employee performance” (individual level) and “capabilities” (organizational level). As previously mentioned, “employee performance” represents an individual result, influenced by a series of factors related to individual performance, while “capabilities” are commonly associated with dynamic

e) “employee performance” (cluster 2) with “performance” (cluster 2) – LS 5, indicate, despite their conceptual proximity, a weak thematic relationship. Although the two keywords appear in the same cluster (which suggests that they are part of the same general area of research – performance at the employee and organizational level), the low intensity of the link shows that the two keywords are not directly connected frequently, but appear in different contexts of analysis: “employee performance” is approached at the individual level, while “performance” is used as a general, multidimensional term (organizational performance, managerial performance, etc.), depending on the level of analysis.

To observe the concentration of keywords and the area of concentration in which the two studied topics are located, the Density Visualization mode was used (Figure 7).

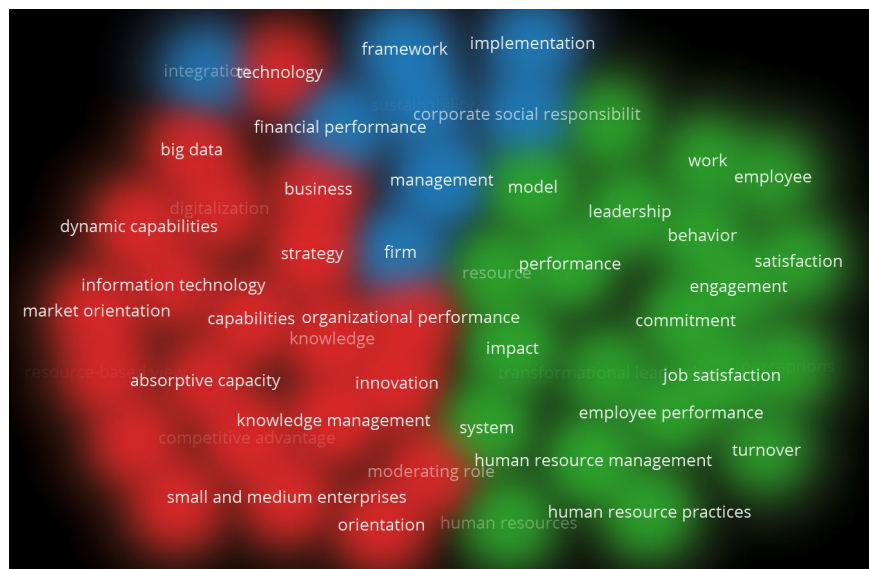


Figure 7: Density Visualization
Source: Authors, using VOSViewer

The analysis of Figure 7 can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 Topic analysis by area of concentration
Source: Authors

Topic	Area	Comments
“organizational performance”	Red	a) area where concepts addressed with increased frequency in scientific works are located; b) the topic is closely correlated with concepts that describe different dimensions of how modern organizations function, develop, become increasingly flexible and competitive.
“employee performance”	Green	a) the area where concepts whose frequency is average are found, are found in a smaller number of scientific papers and are less explored; b) the connections between keywords in this area are not as strong as in the red area; c) the topic is closely correlated with concepts that characterize how people in the organization influence its performance.

5. Conclusions

The aim of the paper was to map the bibliometric relationship between employee performance and organizational performance in recent (2020-2026) management and business literature.

The analysis determined in the analyzed articles the existence of a weak to moderate connection between the studied topics and confirms the fact that there is a relationship between “organizational performance” and “employee performance”, but this

relationship does not represent the main direction of research in the respective articles. This is due to the fact that there is a clear separation between approaches oriented towards the individual level of performance (micro level) and those oriented towards the organizational level (strategic level). The separation was also visible in the analysis of the existing connections between the two topics and certain keywords (Table 2).

Table 2 Connections between the two topics and certain keywords
Source: Authors

Keywords	Links	Comments related to the articles that formed the research sample
“innovation”	– “organizational performance” and “innovation”, LS = 158; – “employee performance” and “innovation”, LS = 5.	– More attention is paid to the impact that innovation has on organizational performance than on the individual performance of employees. – The low value of the link between “employee performance” and “innovation” signals the existence of a potential research gap, which may represent an opportunity to develop interdisciplinary research on both the role played by innovation in increasing employee performance, and the ways in which employees, through individual performance, can contribute to increasing innovative processes in the organization.

Keywords	Links	Comments related to the articles that formed the research sample
“management”	– “organizational performance” and “management”, LS = 122; – “employee performance” and “management”, LS = 5.	– The connection between management and organizational performance was much stronger than the connection between management and individual employee performance. – Research that has as its main theme management and the relationship with organizational performance is much more numerous, and studies on individual employee performance are found in few management researches.
“human resource management” (HRM)	– “organizational performance” and “human resource management”, LS = 95; – “employee performance” and “human resource management”, LS = 7.	– Research has mainly focused on HRM policies and practices and the impact on organizational performance and has explored less the relationship with individual employee performance. – In the field of HRM there is a fragmentation of research, which determines the existence of "subtopics" in which the links between HRM policies and practices and individual employee performance are analyzed separately.
“capabilities”	– “organizational performance” and “capabilities”; LS = 82; – “employee performance” and “capabilities”; LS = 3.	– Capabilities are much more frequently analyzed as determinants of organizational performance. – There was rarely a direct link between capabilities and individual employee performance. – There is a separation between macro-level and micro-level studies.
“performance”	– “organizational performance” and “performance”; LS = 79 – “employee performance” and “performance”; LS = 5.	– The connection of the general concept of “performance” was stronger with the topic of “organizational performance”. – The low connection with the topic of “employee performance” is due both to the fragmentation of research between the general level of performance and the individual level of employees, but also to the ambiguity of the term “performance” in some of the articles.

The existing links between the researched topics and the analyzed keywords show that more attention was paid to the strategic factors of organizational performance to the detriment of the individual performance of employees.

Regarding the topics that formed the research syntax, the existence of a weak to moderate connection indicates that although

there is a conceptual and thematic relationship, being associated in some articles, the connection between them is not very frequent. This connection shows that there are separate research directions in which the two topics are analyzed independently or in different contexts, but at the same time, there is a gap in research in this area.

From a practical perspective, the link between “organizational performance” and “employee performance” shows that organizations need to:

- invest in developing employee skills. Employee participation in continuing professional development programs, specialization courses, training courses, will result in well-trained employees who are up-to-date with the latest developments in the field, but also more efficient, more adaptable and more efficient, and the services offered to customers will be improved;
- use performance evaluation systems based on objectives and performance indicators. By setting clear objectives for each employee or team and periodically monitoring the achievement of these

objectives, problems can be quickly identified and measures implemented to correct the problems.

- motivate employees through financial and non-financial rewards. By offering performance bonuses, the possibility of working remotely or hybrid, etc., employee job satisfaction increases, as well as their performance.
- emphasize employee well-being. Team-building activities, flexible schedules, psychological support, and work-life balance increase employee creativity, productivity, and performance.
- adopt participatory leadership. Involving employees in decision-making and setting organizational goals increases their accountability and performance.

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