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MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVE OF SHARING ECONOMY. A BIBLIOMETRIC APPROACH

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Abstract:

The sharing economy (SE) has been one of the most controversial concepts in various economic markets. This innovative business model was driven by the rapid development of technology and the pressure of various factors in society. Consequently, the shared economy experienced rapid success and allowed communities to carry out collaborative exchanges of goods and services through digital platforms. Management plays an important role in this business model, allowing decision-makers to maximize the benefits and overcome possible obstacles. The purpose of the research is to highlight the conceptual links between the terms sharing economy and management and also to identify how these concepts intersect with other concepts of interest. To fulfill this goal, a bibliometric analysis was carried out using the WOS database with 300 scientific materials. The results show the historical evolution of the research that intersects the two concepts, frequency of terms, emerging trends and conceptual links between them. From a practical perspective, the study serves as a source of information for all stakeholders of SE business model. It offers practitioners information about the main themes studied by academics, addressing aspects from the experiences of other SE models, which can guide them to solve problems they face. At the theoretical level, the study joins other bibliometric studies and brings a current perspective of research in this field.

Key words: *Bibliometric analysis; customer; hospitality; management; sharing economy.*

1. Introduction

The technological development of the last decade and its implications for the economy have led to the creation of new business models. Thus, the sharing economy (SE) is a phenomenon that has gained the most notoriety in the car sharing and hospitality industry, allowing the parties involved to exchange physical and intangible goods (Rojanakit et al., 2022). Most specialists support this concept of SE, considering that it

alleviates various societal problems, such as environmental problems, pollution, job loss and even poverty (Retamal & Dominish, 2017). Despite its success in the two industries, SE has been applied to other fields as well, and researchers have begun to develop concerns about its other characteristics.

Thus, studies have been developed over time related to the continuity management (Chen et al., 2025) or sustainability of the business model on the economic market (Geissinger et al., 2019), while also researchers (Räisänen et al., 2021) have analyzed the level of trust between the two actors, suppliers and consumers (Graessley et al., 2019). Studies have analyzed the way in what technology can motivate SE beneficiaries, and others focused on how SE impacts the environment (Frenken, 2017) and promotes sustainable economic growth (Hussain et al., 2023).

However, there are still gaps in research regarding SE, especially when we refer to the distribution of income, the quality of services and even the competitiveness between suppliers of goods and services. Most of the gaps are related to the decision-makers who lead or organize such collaborative models.

The purpose of the research is to identify the conceptual links between the terms "sharing economy" and "management". By carrying out this quantitative analysis, it is proposed to carry out a review of the research on the role of management in SE. Also, the study aims to identify emerging trends in the field through bibliometric analysis. In addition, the study also considers how the concepts interact with other terms to highlight new interdisciplinary perspectives.

In the following sections, the research focuses on a brief review of the literature, the research method, while methodological steps will also be presented. The results of the study together with the discussions are included in the final section.

2. Literature review

Recently, the dynamic evolution of the business environment has determined a new form of economy called the sharing economy (SE) that has impacted different sectors of activity (Cheng, 2016). In this context, many studies have begun to analyze SE concept and the way it works in different market contexts. Starting from the definition of SE, (Schor & Fitzmaurice, 2015) describes the terms "sharing economy" and "collaborative consumptions" as the phenomenon by which two actors involved in the process exchange resources from peer to peer and use them to maximize financial benefits. Furthermore, Fagerstrøm et al. (Fagerstrøm et al., 2017) considers that the SE is a model of increased consumption behavior that promises benefits to society. Some academics (Curtis & Lehner, 2019) consider that there are still clear conceptualizations of this phenomenon depending on its field of application. This lack of coherence can mislead readers and researchers analyzing this phenomenon.

Many researchers have focused on the beneficial and negative effects in their studies on SE. Puschmann and Alt (2016) consider that the main advantages of this business model are those brought to users. For example, consumers can use a certain service or product without having to purchase the product, thus this reduces the capital investment of the users. Also, considering the ecological perspective, this phenomenon

could influence the production capacity of products and services, which impacts the environment (Puschmann & Alt, 2016).

Additionally, the beneficiaries of the SE model highlight the fact that the business model creates unique experiences for them, since in the case of AirBnb accommodation, they can interact with locals and spend less money on accommodation (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2016). The beneficiaries believe that they could access less touristy areas, since the locals share their homes with them (Espada, 2019). Other academics (Forno & Garibaldi, 2015) support the fact that the business model can even support tourism in the cities often visited by tourists, given the opportunity for travelers to choose from a greater variety of accommodations.

There have also been studies (Köbis et al., 2021; Zhu & Grover, 2022) that have focused on the negative aspects of SE. Zhu & Grover (2022) highlight the fact that consumers may feel insecure considering the amount of private data they provide to service providers. Also, Köbis, Soraperra and Shalvi (2021) mention that the SE model can encourage unregulated employment and can put pressure on employees, especially because they receive financial schemes based on the reviews of the beneficiaries. Moreover, some authors (Köbis et al., 2021) consider that SE can lead to serious forms of tax evasion, considering that most of the suppliers do not register their income from these businesses. There are discussions that this business model could also impact on the real estate market, and this arouses the dissatisfaction of potential buyers. From the suppliers' perspective, they can mention the destructive behavior of consumers. Since SE is based on mutual trust between the two parties, there are unpleasant situations when suppliers must report their inappropriate behavior (Schor et al., 2016). Other studies (Guo et al., 2018; Jordan & Moore, 2018) discuss the fact that sharing homes or cars can lead to a crowding of areas for residents. Thus, instead of talking about traffic efficiency, car sharing can lead to more cars in traffic and to increased carbon emissions (Guo et al., 2018).

The implications of management in SE, also attracted the attention of researchers, studies such as Domenico et al. (2024), Faraj et al. (2018), Lee et al. (2015), Möhlmann, & Zalmanson (2017), Popa et al. (2023) bring into discussion the concept of algorithmic management [AM]. They defined AM as a practice of supervision, control and governance carried out by software for remote employees. These investigations suggest that platforms employ AM to incentivize and oversee providers within the sharing economy.

In the studies related to AM and SE, three main perspectives were considered (Basukie et al., 2020) the first one refers to the work mission of the employees in this business model, the second dimension focuses on the remuneration system and performance, and the last one considers the legal aspects and ethics. Furthermore, other studies (Atkins & Gianiodis, 2022) have analyzed the link between SE and supply chain management from several perspectives, many of them as the ability of organizations to manage resources and logistics.

Thus, even though the SE business model has aroused an increased interest of researchers, there are limited existing studies regarding the correlations between it and organizational management, and how service providers can manage their activity.

3. Methodology

To fulfill the purpose of the research, a bibliometric analysis was carried out in order to identify the scientific link between sharing economy and management in the specialized literature and also the links with other key terms. Bibliometric studies can be used for different scientific purposes and have the role of identifying different emerging trends and presenting which are the most productive academic sources or the bestknown research in a field. Thus, this is considered a popular analysis in scientific writings, through which researchers can analyze a large volume of data (Donthu et al., 2021; Gora, 2019; Popa et al., 2023; Verma & Gustafsson, 2020).

In the analysis process, the Web of Science database was selected considering the large volume of data offered by this platform and the rapid indexing process of articles within it. Also, in the process of querying the database, quotation marks were used to accurately identify the terms of interest. In addition, the conjunction "AND" was used between the two concepts to identify the connection between the terms. Furthermore, a series of filers were applied to extract the data of interest for the research: (1) The research from the year 2024 was excluded from the results, considering that there is no complete situation for this year, so the final database included articles from 2016 and 2023. (2) A filter was applied to the WoS indexing field, thus only the materials that were in the field such as Management and Business were selected. Thus, in the final stage, 300 scientific materials were downloaded and evaluated by the authors.

In the second stage of the research process, the authors used the Biblioshiny software developed by Aria and Cuccurullo (2017). Data was analyzed to highlight the evolution over time of the scientific materials, the production of the countries over time, which were the keywords most used, and which were the links between them, completed by the emerging trends.

4. Results/findings

The most frequent analysis carried out by researchers regarding bibliometric studies is to identify the evolution of studies over time. Thus, Figure 1 shows the trend of academic papers in the field of Management and Business that have used concepts of SE and management over time.

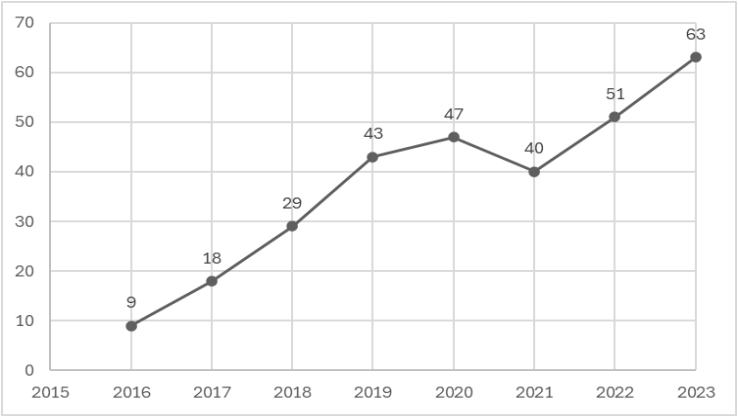

Figure 1. Evolution over time of research. Source: authors with WoS data

Consequently, according to Fig. 1 the results show that the first academic research indexed in the WOS database appeared in 2016. The studies evaluated considerably from a quantitative point of view in the following years, thus until 2019, 43 scientific materials were indexed which were concerned with SE and management. In the last year, 2023, there were more and more concerns in the field, from academics, with 63 published research.

Furthermore, in the following, the countries' contributions to the research field were analyzed, as can be identified from Figure 2. According to the results, China was the country that brought the greatest scientific contribution in the field, participating with the most studies in the academic discourse. In the following positions, countries such as the USA, Great Britain and Italy are identified, which are actively involved in the process of scientific production.

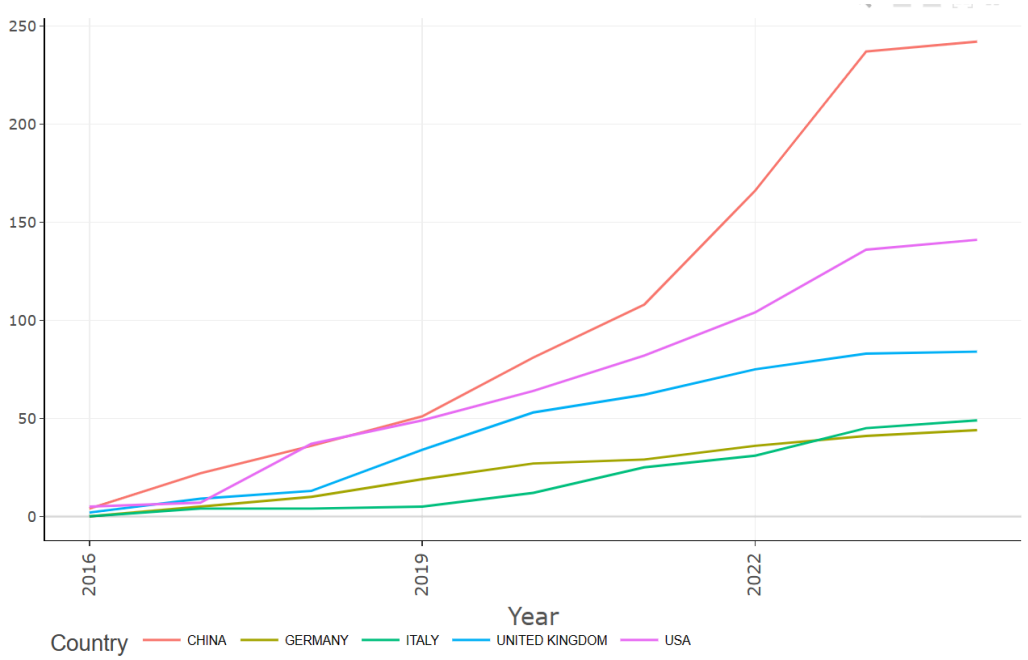

Figure 2. Countries' production over time.
Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

From the perspective of the most used keywords, the bibliometric approach presents the most used keywords in academic research. Consequently, as can be seen from Figure 3 terms such as "management" and "sharing economy" can be identified as concepts with the highest notoriety in the field, suggesting the fact that the research extracted from the WoS database focuses exclusively on the two concepts. Also, in the top 10 most used keywords, other concepts such as "innovation", "framework" and "consumption" were identified. These results highlight the fact that theorists had concerns related to the innovation of organizations in collaborative consumption.

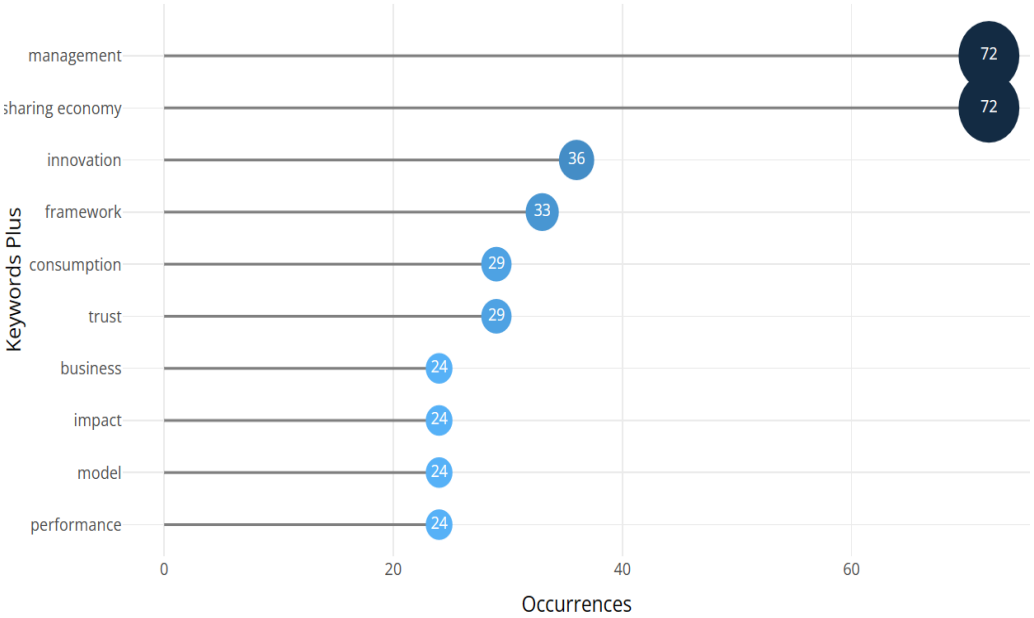

Figure 3. Top 10 most frequent keywords plus.
Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

Also, the presence of the keyword's "trust", "business", "impact", "model" and "performance" may reflect the fact that academics have focused their academic discourse on the factors that raise problems in this business model.

In the following, considering the intention to highlight the links between the keywords plus, a cooccurrence map of them was created. As can be identified in Figure 4 four clusters with different colors were identified. The cluster highlighted in red shows links between terms such as "sharing economy", "framework", "consumption" and "business", suggesting a thematic connection centered on the operational frameworks of SE business models. The blue cluster focuses on concepts such as "management", "innovation", "sustainability" and "collaborative consumption", presenting researchers' thematic approaches to management strategies and sustainable business models.

Within the green cluster, namely three, terms such as "trust", "behavior", "satisfaction" and "value cocreation" are highlighted, suggesting a concern for consumer perception and value creation processes. In the last, the cluster highlighted in purple features keywords such as "performance," "design," "logistics," and "big data," highlighting the researchers' attention to the business model that must be followed to generate performance and effectiveness.

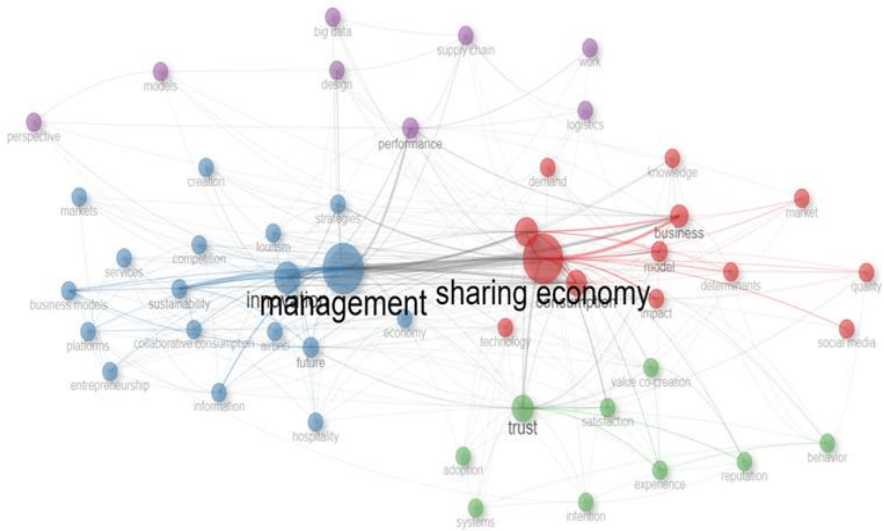

Figure 4. Co-occurrence network between keywords plus. Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

In addition, to identify possible emerging trends, Figure 5 was created and presents a thematic map of the main concepts used in the SE and management literature. Thus, as can be seen, the thematic map is organized into four frameworks, called niche, engine, emerging or declining frameworks and fundamental themes (Alkhammash, 2023) and was created with the plus keywords. Thus, the clusters positioned in the upper right quadrant indicate their high centrality and high density, highlighting their importance in the context of SE research. The concepts within these clusters are considered essential for the direction of future research. In addition, themes that are positioned in the upper left quadrant have a high centrality with a low density, indicating that these are focused or even isolated niche concepts. At the same time, the themes positioned in the lower left quadrant are characterized by a low density and low centrality. These are considered as such in academic studies, emerging themes that can be developed in future research. Last, the themes positioned in the lower right quadrant show a high density, but a low centrality and are considered fundamental themes in the research landscape (Jain, 2021).

Thus, by analyzing the thematic map of keywords (Fig. 5), each quadrant can be analyzed based on the clusters identified within them. Within the quadrant called "Niche Themes", three clusters were identified. The first cluster creates conceptual associations with those in the automotive industry or with automobilerelated terms. The keywords identified are: "car", "durable goods" and "rational expectations". In the next cluster, conceptual associations between the terms "opportunities", "business model", and "operation management" are presented, highlighting the emphasis placed by the researchers on the managerial operational frameworks of the SE business model. In the last group, concepts related to consumer experiences can be identified, such as "empirical evidence", "cost" and "customer experience".

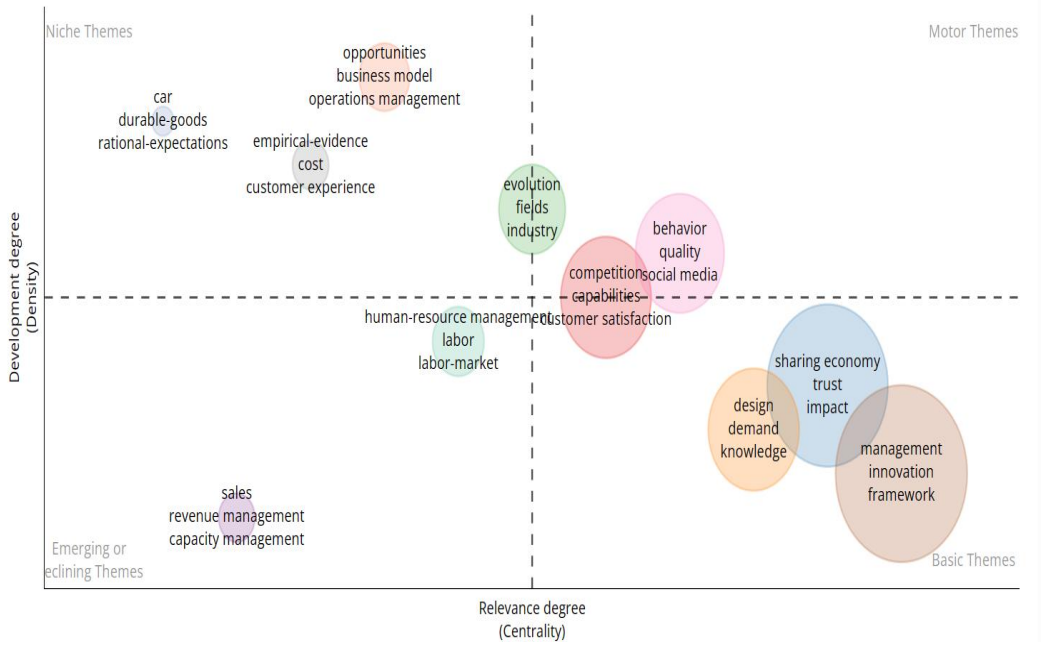

Figure 5. Thematic map of the keywords plus. Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

In the next quadrant called "Motor Themes", three clusters were also identified, one of them being even positioned between motor themes and niche themes. Within these clusters, the most conceptual links are presented between terms such as "competition", "capabilities", "customer satisfaction", "behaviour", "quality", "social media", etc. The relevance of these multidisciplinary terms goes beyond the SE field, presenting the emphasis placed by researchers on organizational capabilities to achieve quality and sustainability.

In the following, the quadrant with the most clusters called "Basic Themes" is analyzed. Thus, the concepts within this quadrant have been the most studied over time by academics. The most used words in scientific research make conceptual connections between the terms "management", "innovation", "framework", "trust", "impact" and others. The conceptual links between them suggest that the impact brought by the SE business model induced the innovation process in most business markets and determined the interested parties to have trust in the operations.

Furthermore, analyzing the last quadrant called "Emerging or Declining Themes" within the thematic map, two clusters can be identified. The cluster with higher centrality offers a perspective on the concepts used by academics that can be capitalized in the SE business context. These terms are: "human resources management", "work" and "labor market". The second cluster, which is characterized by a lower centrality, focuses on conceptual links between terms such as "sales", "revenue management" and "capacity management" indicating the attention granted on the financial side of this type of business.

A recently developed analysis within bibliometric studies is the factorial analysis and was carried out through keywords plus, it can be visualized in Figure 6. Characteristics of the factorial analysis, two frameworks with different characteristics are determined. The

first quadrant can be found in the figure under the name D1 and shows the concentration of research in a certain field, while the second quadrant called D2 concentrates the conceptual elements considered from studies with qualitative impact. Also, both quadrants show positive and negative values with different characteristics.

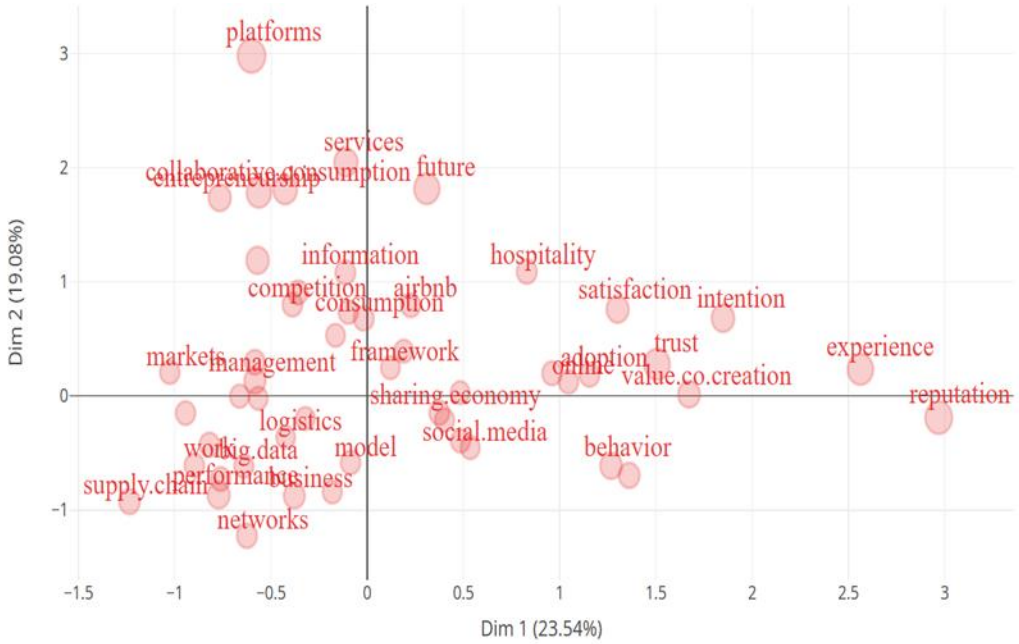

Figure 6. Factorial analyses of the keywords plus. Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

In quadrant D1 in the positive area, terms such as "hospitality", "intention", "future", "experience" and "Airbnb" are identified. This result highlights the focus of scientific writers on specific and niche topics in the field of SE. While the concepts that are found in the negative area of the quadrant, respectively "social media", "behavior" and "reputation" indicate a downward trend in research, being concepts that are no longer considered emerging by academics.

Also, the positive area within quadrant D2 is characterized by the quality of scientific materials through the concepts found within it. Thus, the concepts that present a high quality of studies are: "platforms", "collaboration", "information", "competition", "management" and "marketing." Additionally, the negative area is characterized by the poor quality of research determined by the concepts that are found. These concepts are: "logistics", "working data", "supply chain", "networks" and others.

Next, the evolution over time of the key terms from the selected research was analyzed in order to highlight their evolution, and subsequently the way in which SE decision-makers can investigate emerging elements. Thus, from Figure 6 you can see two columns, the first column on the left contains the keywords plus identified in the research during 2016-2019, and the column on the right shows the evolution of the terms in 2020-2024. Between the two columns there is a series of lines marked in gray color that highlight the transaction between the two periods.

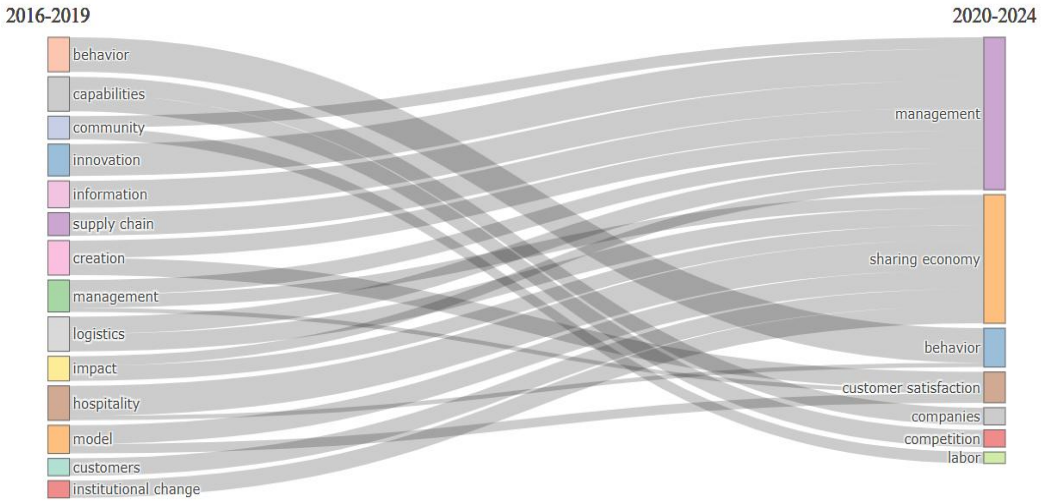

Figure 7. Thematic Evolution of the keywords plus between 2016-2024. Source: authors with Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

Based on the results, it can be seen that in the period of 2016-2019 the most used key-words referred to ”behavior”, ”capabilities”, ”community”, ”innovation”, ”information”, ”supply chain”, ”creation”, ”management”, ”logistics”, ”impact”, ”hospitality”, ”model”, ”customers” and ”institutional change”. Each of these concepts has evolved along the way, depending on the direction of the researchers in the field of research, for example, the keywords ”behavior”, ”capabilities”, ”community” are currently considered key elements of customer satisfaction, the latter being an element of competitiveness in a certain sector of activity. Also, in the field of SE, the keywords, ”community”, ”innovation”, ”information”, ”supply chain”, ”creation”, ”management”, ”logistics”, are analyzed as fundamental management problems today. The existence of a sustainable and efficient management model can be key success factors in a collaborative business model, given the dynamics of the market. These results highlight the fact that management and the characteristic elements of this concept are important for practitioners and researchers, considering all the challenges that these models meet and overcome, they exceed the theoretical limits, and new conceptual management approaches are needed.

5. Discussions

Other studies (Bunea, 2021; Kraus et al., 2020; Lima & Carlos Filho, 2019; Mody et al., 2021) also analyzed the SE phenomenon together with other concepts. The study elaborated by Kraus et al. (2020) highlighted the historical evolution of the SE concept being considered to be an emerging phenomenon considering the fact of the predominance of qualitative studies in this field. Furthermore, the study by Mody, Hanks and Cheng (2021) believes that despite the fact that most studies in SE are focused on hospitality and tourism, the ability to understand this business model in management remains limited. In this context, it is evident that the intersection between the two analyzed concepts, "sharing economy" and "management" is noteworthy as an emerging research

topic for most researchers. Over time, there have been discussions related to the operational aspects of a business in the SE field, being associated with elements from the managerial field (Tunca, 2019). Thus, the studies support the discussions related to the main advantages and disadvantages brought to this collaborative economic market and the challenges that this business model generates for the decision makers and the stakeholders involved.

Regarding the results of this study, the findings from the keyword analysis, the thematic map and factor analysis reveal the concern of academics for the income and costs that this type of business generates and are in accordance with the results of the analysis carried out by Saglietto (2021). Moreover, a study carried out by Lee and Haupt (2020) highlighted the fact that the strongest countries in scientific research are China and the USA, since the two countries host prestigious research institutions and universities. Thus, in following the results of the present study, research Guo et al. (2020) suggests that these two countries have been influenced by this business model since its inception and that the researchers had the opportunity to analyze both the negative and the positive impacts.

In addition, the emphasis placed on consumer behavior in the SE paradigm is highlighted, as can be seen from the results of the thematic groupings of keywords as well as the results of the studies (Parguel et al., 2017; Toni et al., 2018). Thus, most researchers have emphasized the fact that the element of trust between the two parties, namely the participant and supplier in SE, is essential for the efficient development of the business model. Also, SE providers must obey the legal regulations in the market in which they operate without violating existing regulations and laws. Also, consumers or beneficiaries must respect ethical norms subject to this type of experimental service without having a destructive character (Zhu & Grover, 2022).

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, most of the companies involved in the SE business model have managed to achieve success at a fast pace that has aroused the interest of both stakeholders and academics. This bibliometric analysis aimed to identify the connections between the terms "sharing economy" and "management" and especially how these concepts interact in academic studies with other terms. The main results of the study revealed the evolution of the works over time, the countries most involved in the research process, the most used keywords, the network between keywords plus, the thematic map, and the factorial analysis of the concepts of "sharing economy" and "management". Thus, following the methodological process, the results of the study can be summarized as follows: (1) The studies on the intersection between the two fields such as SE and management were approached for the first time in 2016, the subject being an emerging one and in full development for practitioners and researchers. (2) Countries such as China, the USA, and Germany are the most involved in the research process regarding SE. This may be due primarily to the large prestigious research centers according to the results of other studies (Lima & Carlos Filho, 2019). (3) From the co-occurrence map of the keywords plus, the most important conceptual links highlighted the research attention on

collaborative behaviors, on performance, and business models and also on elements in innovation to promote sustainability. (4) The thematic map of the key-words presents the most emerging trends in this field, correlated with the income and managerial capabilities of these business models, the emphasis is also placed on the labor market and human resources management. (5) The impact of the qualitative studies was determined by the factorial analysis carried out on the two concepts. Thus, it was revealed that the most qualitative research used concepts such as "platforms", "collaboration", "information", "competition", "management" and "marketing."

The practical implication of the study serves as sources of information for all parties involved in the SE business model. Thus, the study can help SE regulatory organizations to confirm the importance of this field in order to reach a consensus regarding the necessary and minimum requirements for SE to function at an optimal and efficient level. Also, the study offers practitioners information about the main themes studied by academics, addressing aspects that are from the experiences of other SE models, which can guide them in the analysis of studies to solve problems they face. Not only that, but the research results also guide the decision-makers of SE models, considering the conceptual link that was revealed between SE and other relevant concepts.

Regarding the theoretical implications of the research, the study is related to the body of literature on SE and brings a current perspective of research in this field. Carrying out a bibliometric analysis between the two concepts deepens the academic discourse regarding the role of management in SE even though the subject has not been sufficiently analyzed by researchers until now. Thus, the paper has the role of opening a research area for other academics interested in this interdisciplinary connection. This can even be considered the degree of novelty of the study.

From the perspective of research limits, the study can be limited considering the selection filter from the WOS database, considering that only the categories of scientific materials from Management and Business were selected. Also, a specific bibliometric element is the quantitative review of scientific materials, and a content analysis of them is also necessary to determine their quality. These limits can be developed in future research.

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