

Mapping The Evolution of “Organizational Development And Change Management” Articles: A Bibliometric Review of Web of Science (WoS) Data

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Abstract

Despite the growing interest in “organizational development and change management” literature, bibliometric studies shedding light on the progression of this body of knowledge are still limited. This study provides a comprehensive review of the field. It aims to identify the intellectual framework and thematic structure of the articles on “organizational development and change management” in management discipline on the Web of Science (WoS) database up to August 28, 2025. A bibliometric analysis was employed on a total of 2,994 articles. The study conducted performance analysis and science mapping techniques including co-word, citation and co-citation analyses. Results reveal that publication volume peaked in 2020, while Smollan R.K. emerged as the most productive author with 13 articles. The *Journal of Organizational Change Management* was the leading journal. Co-word analyses indicated that “organizational change,” “change management,” “organizational development,” “leadership,” “innovation,” “organizational culture,” and “change” were the primary thematic focuses. Within the studied sample, Eisenhardt and Martin’s (2000) work was the most influential article, while Smollan R.K. was identified as the most influential author. Additionally, Weick K.E. was the most frequently cited author in the field. Ultimately, the analysis highlights clear theoretical reflections of an evolving strategic and human-oriented paradigm within the extant literature.

Key words: Bibliometric analysis, Organizational Development, Organizational Change, Change Management

JEL Code: M10, M12

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary business environment, organizations need to acknowledge the vital importance of “organizational development and change management”, since the environment is constantly changing and evolving (Gutiérrez-Iñiguez et al., 2023). Organizational development can be defined as the long-term change processes that organizations undergo through implementing planned interventions to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. On the other hand, organizational change refers to the structural, cultural, and strategic transformations that organizations undertake as they adapt to changing environmental factors (Burnes, 2017). Organizational development and organizational change are enacted through change management. Therefore, change management aims to improve an organization’s ability to smoothly replace its current process with a new one (Hashim, 2013).

Recent academic literature have revealed a significant increase in the amount of studies being conducted on organizations (Donthu et al., 2021). Change management has been one of the highest growing area of interest for organizations by receiving significant attention in the literature examining the causes and consequences of organizational change. The extant literature on 'organizational development and change management' is enriched by focusing on a variety of topics, including leadership, employee readiness for development and change, strategies for coping with resistance and organizational performance (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Giraud and Auttissier, 2013). The rapid growth of this literature makes it essential to comprehensively evaluate the field's fundamental trends, key research themes, and emerging sub-themes (Zupic and Čater, 2015), in order to apprehend its progress to date.

There are literature reviews on the field of “organizational development and change management” by revealing conceptual frameworks (Armenakis and Harris, 2009; Oreg et al., 2011). According to Ramos-Rodriguez and Ruiz-Navarro (2004), these studies may have been affected, to a certain extent, by their authors' subjective views. Traditional literature reviews or methodologies, therefore, have some limitations, such as relying on subjective interpretations, which can hinder a comprehensive and objective assessment of the literature when analyzing the existing knowledge structure of a given field or concept (Donthu et al., 2021). However, bibliometric analysis has emerged as a robust method that facilitates the systematic mapping of academic publications by utilizing quantitative data. It offers objectivity and quantifiability. Thus, bibliometrics sheds light on the intellectual structure of the literature or field being studied, complementing literature reviews (Giraud and Auttissier, 2013; Zupic and Čater, 2015).

A variety of bibliometric techniques can be used to identify different aspects of a given field of study. Citation analysis, for instance, helps to identify influential studies and authors within the sample of a given field of study (Van Eck and Waltman, 2010). Co-citation analysis focuses on the entire field under study,

attempting to identify the documents that are most frequently cited by examining pairs of documents that are cited together in a publication. It is a broader analysis than citation analysis (Osareh, 1996). On the other hand, co-word analysis, one of the most widely used techniques, helps to highlight the research gaps for future studies, as it reveals the knowledge structure of a given field and points out thematic trends in the existing literature (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). Therefore, it is vital to use bibliometric analyses to comprehensively evaluate the extant literature, predict future research directions and provide insights for further studies in the particular field (Donthu et al., 2021).

This study aims to provide a systematic evaluation of the accumulated knowledge in the field of 'Organizational Development and Change Management' by conducting a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the Web of Science (WoS) database up to August 28, 2025. Using inclusion and exclusion criteria, a final dataset of 2,994 articles was analyzed to reveal the current state of the field and its intellectual structure.

To provide a comprehensive view, the study adopts a dual-stage methodological approach combining performance analysis and science mapping techniques. It specifically seeks to guide future scholarship by pursuing three integrated objectives.

Firstly, the study uses performance analysis to explore the longitudinal growth of the field. This involves identifying the most productive years, the most influential authors, the core journals and the indexing patterns. This initial step provides a framework for understanding the trajectory of the relevant literature.

Secondly, the study uses science mapping techniques, particularly co-word, citation and co-citation analyses, to reveal the cognitive landscape of the field. While citation analysis identifies the most influential articles within a given sample, co-citation analysis offers a broader perspective. It explores the reference lists of the dataset to reveal the fundamental ‘implicit colleges’ that form the basis of the research area in question. By examining the co-occurrence of citations, this study seeks to provide a more in-depth analysis than citation analysis alone.

Thirdly, co-word analysis was employed to visualize the thematic framework of the concerned field. Therefore, one of the other purposes of this study is to point out the focal themes or focused key subjects in the field of “organizational development and change management”. Apart from this, the authors also aimed to highlight the themes that are rarely studied or overlooked. This could inform future studies by providing insight into themes that should be addressed in the concerned field.

2. Literature Review and Related Bibliometric Studies on “Organizational Development and Change Management”

Organizational development (OD) is a planned and systematic process of change (French and Bell, 1995) in the long-term to enhance the effectiveness and health of the organization and improve its ability to adapt to changes in its environment (McKendall, 1993). Its main objective is to promote better alignment between organizational dimensions such as structure, processes, strategies, personnel and culture and the broader dimensions (Beer, 1980; Cummings and Worley, 2009).

Organizational change (OC) includes the transformation processes of the organization's sub-systems and the organization itself as a whole. It is the process of applying scientifically based change principles to support effective management and staff through consulting policies implemented by behavioral change agents (By, 2005).

Organizational Development (OD) and Organizational Change (OC) can be implemented through change management (Hashim, 2013). Change management aims to enhance an organization's capability to replace its current process or situation with a new one smoothly. It tries to advance the ability of organizations to survive and thrive when implementing new plans in the challenging environmental conditions (By, 2005).

There is a limited number of bibliometric studies (Erdoğan & Sayın, 2022; Giraud & Autissier, 2013; Lis, 2020; Raamkumar & Swamy, 2023) on the field of organizational development and change management and further research is needed to explore this gap. The key points of these studies are summarized below.

In their study, Giraud and Autissier (2013) aimed to determine the most influential articles in “Journal of Organizational Change Management” (JOCM) and examine how the journal's knowledge structure has evolved over time. A knowledge-stock analysis was conducted in the study to determine the main trends. Then, citation and co-citation analysis of the articles that were most frequently cited in JOCM between 1995 and 2011 were observed. In total, the authors achieved 637 articles.

Giraud and Autissier (2013) determined the most frequently cited 40 articles and their impact levels by citation analysis. Senge (1990) and Weick (1979, 1995) were the most cited authors. When the impact levels of the most cited articles were examined, it was stated that Weick (1995), Eisenhardt (1989) and Czarniawska (1998) were the ones that increased their impact during the period under consideration.

In the intellectual structure of JOCM articles of the overall period concerned (1995-2011), Morgan (1986), Burrell and Morgan (1979), Schein (1985), Pettigrew (1985), Weick (1979, 1995), Argyris and Schön (1978) and Senge (1990)'s studies

were the most influential ones. According to Giraud and Autissier (2013), these studies were written by the most influential JOCM authors.

The authors also examined the journal's development trend periodically. In the first period (1995–2000), Senge (1990), Argyris and Schön (1978), Weick (1979), Morgan (1986), Schein (1985)'s studies were the most influential ones. They formed the initial development of the journal. In the second period (2001–2006), Argyris and Schön (1978), Morgan (1986), Senge (1990) and Weick (1979)'s studies were the most cited ones. In this second period, Weick (1995) took its place in the central position. During the third period (2007–2011), the studies by Senge (1990) and Weick (1995) formed the basis of the central cluster.

Overall, some of the classical studies had made significant contributions to the intellectual structure of JOCM, but their influence had faded over time. On the other hand, the impacts of some studies (Senge, 1990; Weick, 1995) had been stable in the last two sub-periods. Therefore, it was observed that the studies in book format had a greater impact, but the effect of the articles increased towards the end of the period under review. Additionally, articles published in JOCM were mostly focused on the "change process".

In their study, Erdoğmuş and Sayın (2022) aimed to determine the changes in organizational development and change management field by examining the studies published in Turkey between 1990 and 2021. In the study, articles, theses and books on "organizational change" and "organizational development" were subjected to a bibliometric analysis. The main themes have been examined periodically over 3 time periods (1990-2000, 2001-2010, 2011-2021).

The study used "Dergipark" database for the articles. Searches were conducted using "organizational change" and "organizational development" keywords. A total of 55 articles on the topic of "organizational change" were found. The most common themes studied in the first and second period were "leadership". In the third period, although the most studied theme was "leadership"; "organizational change cynicism", "resistance to change" and "communication" were the following related themes.

The authors of the study obtained a total of 11 articles on 'organizational development'. The articles covered topics such as "promoting the quality of life", "organizational structure", "effectiveness", "efficiency", "success evaluation", and the role of public institutions, development agencies, and trade unions.

In their study, Raamkumar and Swamy (2023) aimed to identify the most influential articles published in "Journal of Organizational Change Management (JOCM)" and discover how the field has evolved. They used "Scopus" database. The selection process only included articles published between 2012 and 2022. A bibliometric analysis was performed on a total of 714 articles to oversee the publication trend of JOCM. When the authors evaluated the concerned data under the criteria of author keywords, they found that the basic themes of the journal were

"organizational change", "change management", "change", "leadership" and "organizational culture". In addition, the authors pointed out that, according to the co-citation analysis, Weick (1995), Tsoukas and Chia (2002), Armenakis et al. (1990), Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), Barney (1991) and Eisenhardt (1989) were the most cited authors.

In his study, Lis (2020) conducted a bibliometric study of the organization development literature in order to determine the leading themes. The author used "Scopus" database to obtain the relevant articles. It was founded that "organization development" articles were mostly focused on the topics of "organization transformation, change and learning", "sustainability and sustainable development", "human resources", "talent management", "leadership" and "development".

3. Methodology

This study seeks to identify the current state of the art and intellectual structure of 'Organizational Development and Change Management' articles in the Web of Science (WoS) database. This will be achieved by conducting a bibliometric analysis of articles published by August 28, 2025. The selection process of the relevant articles is clearly explained by PRISMA protocol to clarify the exclusion and inclusion criteria.

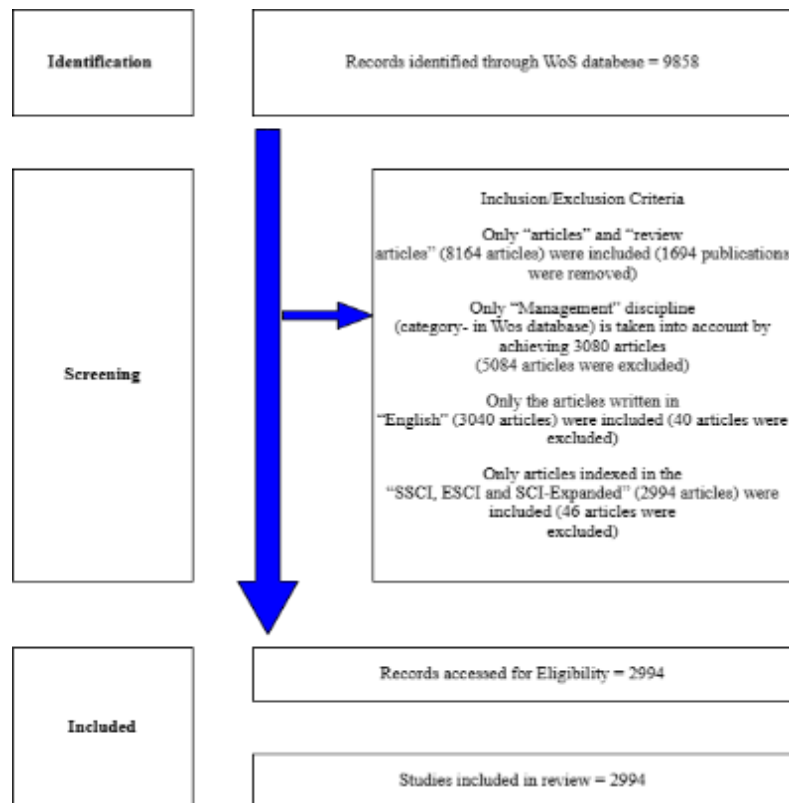
Bibliometrics utilizes methodologies designed to examine or quantify data, particularly in large data clusters through mathematical and statistical analyses. The primary purpose of bibliometrics is to measure scientific output and productivity (Cobo et al., 2011). It is a tool used by researchers for a variety of purposes, such as evaluating the performance of publications (e.g. articles, conference papers and theses), journals and authors; examining collaboration patterns and discovering the knowledge structure of a specific field (Donthu et al., 2021).

WoS database is used in this study for its reliable indexing standards and broad interdisciplinary coverage. Researchers frequently use WoS database to access various types of publications because it is a digital database recognized for its high quality (Thelwall, 2008). It is an authoritative search engine for research literature, covering important scientific publications worldwide. It is one of the most trusted and leading global science databases (Zheng et al., 2023).

The authors used PRISMA method to select articles available for the analysis. PRISMA is a set and organized way of carrying out a literature review. It improves the quality of reporting in bibliometric studies, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses. Using a predefined method can reduce the possibility of bias and make the review clearer by providing a more transparent review (Moher et al., 2009).

'Organizational development' OR 'organizational change' OR 'organization development' OR 'organization change' OR 'change management' words were searched for, each in the “Author Keywords” criteria, respectively. A total of 9858 publications including different document types were obtained. Four filters were applied to narrow the data obtained, with the aim of ensuring the relevance and accuracy of the results. First of all, only “articles” and “review articles” were taken into account and we achieved 8164 articles. Secondly, a total of 3080 articles were yielded by filtering the data by 'Management' discipline. Thirdly, only the articles written in “English” were taken into account and the authors obtained a total of 3040 articles. Lastly, the data was filtered by “index” category. A total of 2,994 articles indexed in the SSCI, ESCI and SCI-Expanded were obtained. Therefore, 2,994 articles were subjected to bibliometric analyses in this empirical study. Figure 1 shows the PRISMA diagram.

Figure 1. PRISMA diagram



Source: By authors

In this study initially the performance analyses were performed. Secondly, co-word, citation and co-citation analyses were conducted on the concerned articles as part of science mapping. In this phase, VOSviewer 1.6.20 software was used.

According to Noyons et al. (1999), “performance analysis” and “science mapping” are the two main techniques used in bibliometric analysis. Performance analysis, which is commonly used in bibliometrics, assess the performance of the

authors, journals, institutions, countries, articles or disciplines (Donthu et al., 2021). It is often similar to the descriptive statistics phase of a research article. For instance, one way to evaluate performance is to look at the distribution of publication years of articles, which reflects the most productive years and changes in research intensity in that field over time. It also includes discovering the most productive journals, authors, indexes, countries et al (Cobo et al., 2011; Donthu et al., 2021).

On the other hand, science mapping, the second main technique in bibliometric analysis, is a way to show the intellectual framework of a scientific field (Börner et al., 2003; Noyons et al., 1999). It is a method that shows the connections or collaborations between various topics, fields, articles, citations or authors via social networks (Small, 2006). Citation, co-citation, bibliographic coupling, co-word and co-authorship analyses are the methods utilized in science mapping (Donthu et al., 2021). This study conducts co-word, citation and co-citation analyses as part of science mapping.

4. Results

Performance Analyses

Initially, performance analyses were conducted on 2,994 articles. The findings show how the number of articles is distributed according to the "year", "author", "journal" and "index" criterions.

The first article published in this field dates back to 1980. Notably, only four articles were published before 1991. A rising trend emerged in 2005, with a total of 107 articles published that year. The highest number of articles in the concerned literature were published in 2020, with 165 articles. It should be noted that the data for 2025 only includes articles published up to August 28, 2025. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of the number of the articles per year. Figure 2 shows the annual publication trend of articles in the field of 'organizational development and organizational change' over time.

Table 1. Number of articles per year*

No	Years	Frequency of articles	%	No	Years	Frequency of articles	%
1	2020	165	5.569	14	2015	112	3.780
2	2012	162	5.467	15	2023	112	3.780
3	2011	148	4.995	16	2005	107	3.611
4	2013	147	4.961	17	2017	106	3.577
5	2021	137	4.624	18	2008	104	3.510
6	2019	136	4.590	19	2018	104	3.510
7	2010	135	4.556	20	2007	92	3.105
8	2024	134	4.522	21	2025**	51	1.721
9	2006	127	4.286	22	1999	45	1.519
10	2016	127	4.286	23	2003	43	1.451
11	2009	123	4.151	24	2000	42	1.417

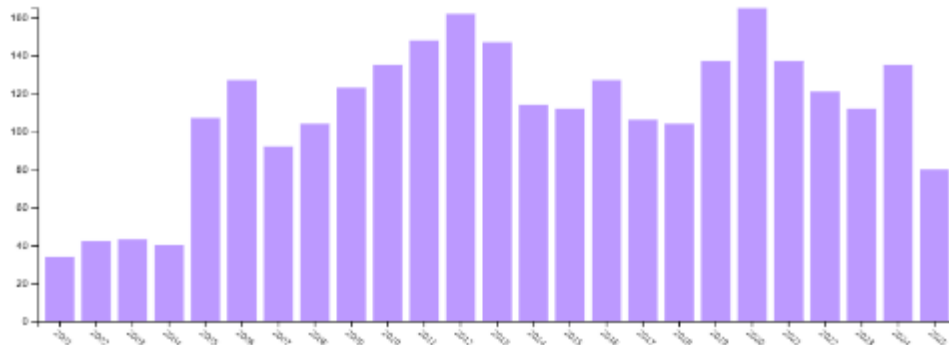
12	2022	121	4.084	25	2002	42	1.417
13	2014	114	3.847	26	2004	40	1.350

* Only the highest ones are shown.

** The year 2025 includes the articles published up to August 28, 2025

Source: By authors

Figure 2. Publication Trend



Source: By authors

Table 2 shows the top ten authors in terms of overall productivity. The five most productive authors were Smollan, Bartunek, Burnes, Coghlan, and Schwarz. Smollan was the most prolific author, having published 13 articles in the relevant literature. Bartunek, Burnes, Coghlan and Shani were the following most prolific authors, with 10 articles each.

Table 2. The Most Productive Authors

No	Authors	Frequency of articles	%
1	Smollan RK	13	0.439
2	Bartunek JM	10	0.337
3	Burnes B	10	0.337
4	Coghlan D	10	0.337
5	Shani AB	10	0.337
6	Schwarz GM	9	0.304
7	Appelbaum SH	8	0.270
8	Vakola M	8	0.270
9	Demerouti E	7	0.236
10	Duxbury L	7	0.236

Source: By authors

Table 3 shows the most productive (top ten) journals. “Journal of Organizational Change Management” was the leading journal with the highest number of articles published. This journal dominated the field with 510 articles,

accounting for 17.034% of the 2,994 articles in our dataset. Respectively, “Journal of Change Management” with 173 articles and “Journal of Applied Behavioral Science” with 157 articles followed the top one.

Table 3. The Most Productive Journals

No	Journal	Frequency of articles	%
1	<i>Journal of Organizational Change Management</i>	510	17.034
2	<i>Journal of Change Management</i>	173	5.778
3	<i>Journal of Applied Behavioral Science</i>	157	5.244
4	<i>Human Relations</i>	62	2.071
5	<i>Journal of Management Development</i>	58	1.937
6	<i>Organization Science</i>	58	1.937
7	<i>Business Process Management Journal</i>	54	1.804
8	<i>Organization Studies</i>	53	1.770
9	<i>International Journal of Operations Production Management</i>	48	1.603
10	<i>Management Decision</i>	48	1.603

Source: By authors

Table 4 presents the distribution of the indexes the journals of the 2994 articles were published in. As shown in Table 5, 67% of the articles (2,035) were indexed in SSCI journals, while 955 are indexed in ESCI.

Table 4. Distribution of the “indexes”

Source: By authors

Web of Science Index	Frequency	Rate
Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)	2,035	67.969%
Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)	955	31.897%
Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI-EXPANDED)	208	6.947%

Science Mapping Analyses

Co-word Analysis

The words used for co-word analysis can be extracted from abstracts, titles, or author keywords. For this study, 'author keywords' were used in the co-word analysis to reveal the frequency of the words appearing in the “author keywords” of 2,994 articles, as well as the network formed by these keywords. For the co-word analysis in the VOSviewer program, it was first determined that the minimum number of co-occurrences for each keyword was 5. Of the 6,209 author keywords, 424 exceeded this criterion.

Table 5 and Figure 3 show the results of the co-word analysis. The colors in the keyword network map show the distinction between keyword clusters. Figure 3 presents that a total of 13 clusters, 5,025 links and 10,393 link strengths were identified for author keywords that appeared together at least five times.

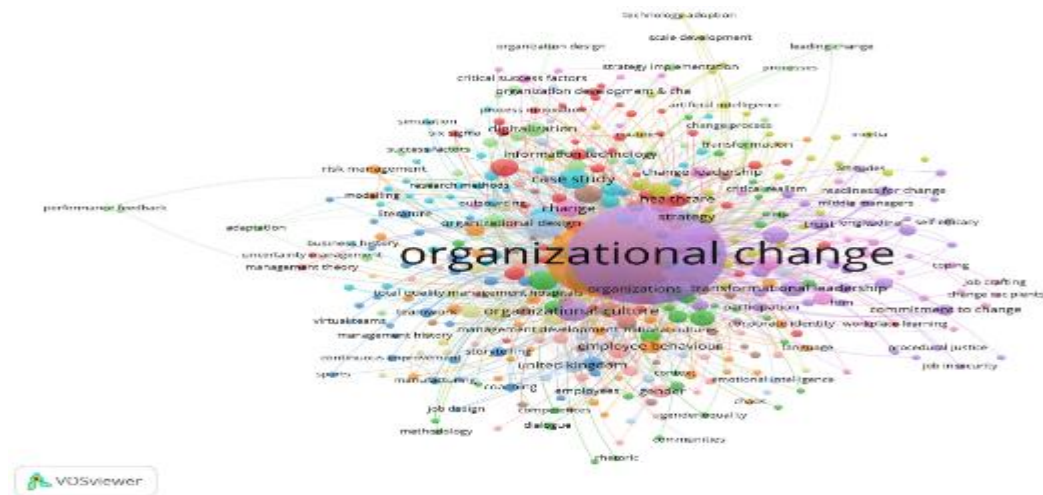
Co-word analysis revealed that “organizational change” keyword was used in occurrence with 424 keywords on the map a total of 1,679 times. The total strength of these links was found to be 3,247. The keywords that stand out apart from the 'organizational change' keyword are 'change management' (952 times), 'organizational development' (280 times), 'leadership' (151 times), 'innovation' (107 times), 'organizational culture' (76 times), 'case study' (66 times), 'action research' (61 times), 'project management' (56 times) and 'organizational learning' (54 times).

Table 5. Keyword co-occurrence analysis

Source: By authors

Figure 3. Network visualization of keyword co-occurrence analysis

Keyword	Occurrences	Links	Total Link Strength
Organizational change	1679	404	3247
Change management	952	355	1948
Organizational development	280	221	579
Leadership	151	164	423
Innovation	107	121	300
Organizational culture	76	104	221
Case study	66	79	154
Action research	61	78	163
Project management	56	67	159
Organizational learning	54	72	152



Source: By authors

Secondly, in the VOSviewer program, the minimum co-occurrence number for each keyword was set to 20. Out of 6,209 keywords, 69 exceeded this criterion. Increasing the number of keyword co-occurrences made it easier to identify the topics that articles dealing with organizational development and organizational

change frequently focused on. Additionally, the aim was to reduce the number of keyword clusters in order to enable a more in-depth analysis.

As shown in Table 6, the term 'organizational change' appeared 1,679 times alongside 69 keywords on the map, with a total strength of links of 1,522. The key themes that stand out beyond the 'organizational change' author keyword were 'change management' (952 times), 'organizational development' (280 times), 'leadership' (151 times), 'innovation' (107 times), 'organizational culture' (76 times), 'change' (52 times), 'case study' (66 times), 'human resource management' (53 times) and 'organizational learning' (54 times).

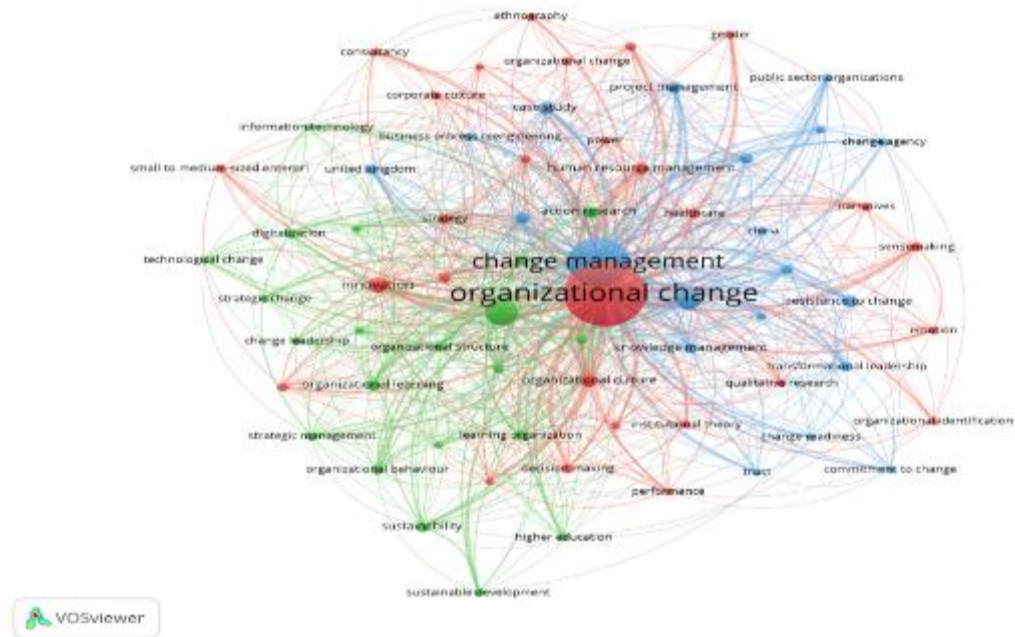
Table 6. Keyword co-occurrence analysis

Keyword	Occurrences	Links	Total Link Strength
Organizational change	1679	67	1522
Change management	952	67	1031
Organizational development	280	56	290
Leadership	151	56	287
Innovation	107	44	193
Organizational culture	76	41	151
Change	52	39	111
Case study	66	30	101
Human resource management	53	32	100
Organizational learning	54	29	99

Source: By authors

As can be seen in Figure 4 and Table 6, the keywords 'organizational change', 'change management', and 'organizational development' are at the center of the list, indicating that these are the focal terms, subjects, or themes of our sample of 2,994 articles in terms of author keywords. “Organizational change” keyword in Cluster 1 was connected to 67 of the 69 keywords. “Organizational development” keyword in Cluster 2 was connected to 56 keywords; whereas “change management” keyword in Cluster 3 was connected to 67 words.

Figure 4. Network visualization of keyword co-occurrence analysis



Source: By authors

Accordingly, the network map in Figure 4 reveals three clusters, 803 links and a total link strength of 3,586. These three clusters are presented in Table 7, which shows their categorization.

Cluster 1 (Strategic and Socio-Cultural Dimensions): This cluster represents the high-level framework of change in organizations. It connects “organizational change” and “strategy” with deeply social variables such as culture, emotion, and human resource management. Therefore, it demonstrates that organizational change is a significant strategic and socio-cultural process.

Cluster 2 (Systemic Development and Technological Adaptation): This cluster focuses on how organizations build their capabilities. It connects “strategic management” and “organizational development” phenomenon with variables like digitalization and learning mechanisms. Consequently, this second cluster shows how systems strategically adapt to technological shifts.

Cluster 3 (Human-Centric Leadership and Behavioral Responses): This third cluster focuses significantly on the human side of implementing organizational development and change processes. It groups “change management” and “leadership” with critical behavioral variables like trust, communication and readiness to change. Ultimately, it shows that successful execution of organizational change processes relies on human-oriented and behavioral dynamics.

Table 7. Categorization of Clusters

Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
Consultancy	Action research	Australia
Corporate culture	Change leadership	Business process reengineering

Culture	Digitalization	Case study
Decision making	Higher education	Change
Discourse	Information technology	Change agency
Dynamic capabilities	Leadership development	Change management
Emotion	Learning	Change readiness
Entrepreneurship	Learning organization	China
Ethnography	Organizational behavior	Commitment to change
Gender	Organizational design	Communication
Healthcare	Organizational development	Employee behavior
Human resource management	Organizational learning	Employee engagement
Innovation	Organizational performance	Knowledge management
Institutional theory	Organizational structure	Leadership
Management	Organizations	Project management
Narratives	Strategic change	Public sector organizations
Organizational change	Strategic management	Resistance to change
Organizational culture	Sustainability	Transformational leadership
Organizational identification	Sustainable development	Trust
Performance	Technological change	United kingdom
Power	Technology	
Public sector		
Qualitative research		
Resistance		
Sensemaking		
Small to medium-sized enterprises		
Strategy		

Source: By authors

Citation Analysis

In this study, citation analysis was performed at the document and author levels.

Citation Analysis at the Document Level

Since this study only uses articles as its sample, citation analysis is conducted in terms of 'articles' as the document type. The analysis was conducted at the 'citation-document' level to identify the most influential articles or the ones having the most impact in the social network of these 2,994 articles, in terms of the number of citations they receive from each other. Therefore, this analysis ranks documents (articles) based on how often they cite each other within the sample in consideration. Articles with at least one citation were included in the analysis. Of the 2,994 articles in our sample, 2,784 passed the threshold, and 1,893 of these 2,784 articles were found to be interconnected.

Citation analysis revealed that the total number of citations for 2,994 articles on “organizational development and organizational change” was 113,534. When self-citations were excluded, the total number of citations for the articles in the sample decreased to 107,473. It was observed that, on average, each article received

37.92 citations. Therefore, there are 107,473 links between these 2,994 articles in terms of the citations they have made to each other, excluding self-citations.

Table 7 shows the articles that have been cited the most within the 2,994 articles. The article by Eisenhardt and Martin (2000), published in the Strategic Management Journal, received the highest number of citations (8,712), with an annual average of 335.08. Consequently, it is the most frequently cited article in our sample.

Eisenhardt and Martin (2000)’s article was followed by Huber (1991)’s article which was published in the “Organization Science” journal and received 4,222 citations. Legris et al. (2003)’s article which was published in the “Information & Management” journal took the third place among the most cited articles by receiving a total of 2133 citations.

Table 8. The 10 most-cited (referenced) articles in the field of “organizational development and organizational change” within a total of 2994 articles

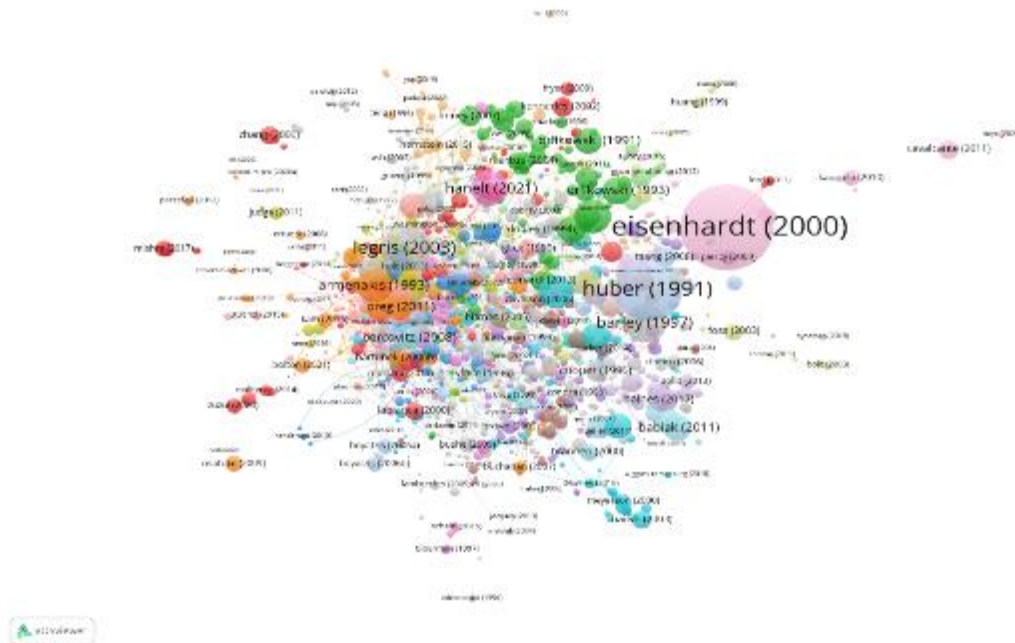
Authors (Year)	Article Title	Total citations	Citations/year	Links
Eisenhardt, KM & Martin, JA (2000)	Dynamic capabilities: What are they?	8712	335.08	49
Huber, GP (1991)	Organizational learning: the contributing processes and the literatures	4222	120.63	38
Legris, P; Ingham, J & Collette, P (2003)	Why do people use information technology? A critical review of the technology acceptance model	2133	92.74	4
Barley, SR and Tolbert, PS (1997)	Institutionalization and structuration: Studying the links between action and institution	1325	45.69	36
Hanelt, A; Bohnsack, R; (...); Marante, CA (2021)	A systematic review of the literature on digital transformation: insights and implications for strategy and organizational change	1111	185.17	20
Leonardi, PM (2011)	When flexible routines meet flexible technologies: affordance, constraint, and the imbrication of human and material agencies	1060	70.67	14
Teece, DJ (2012)	Dynamic capabilities: routines versus entrepreneurial action	966	69	10
Armenakis, AA; Harris, SG & Mossholder, KW (1993)	Creating readiness for organizational-change	965	29.24	151
Orlikowski, WJ (1996)	Improvising organizational transformation over time: A situated change perspective	933	31.1	47
Orlikowski, WJ (1993)	Case tools as organizational-change - investigating incremental and radical changes in systems-development	642	19.45	10

Source: By authors

Figure 5 shows the citation analysis network map in terms of “documents”. When "citations" were taken into account as the “weight” type, the most influential articles in the relevant field within 2,994 articles are presented in Figure 5. Additionally, Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of citations within the total sample of articles from 1980 to 2025.

As can be seen in Figure 5, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000)’s article was the most influential one within a total of 2994 articles. The articles written by Huber (1991) and Legris et al. (2003) were the following prominent influential articles.

Figure 5. Network visualization of citation analysis at the document level

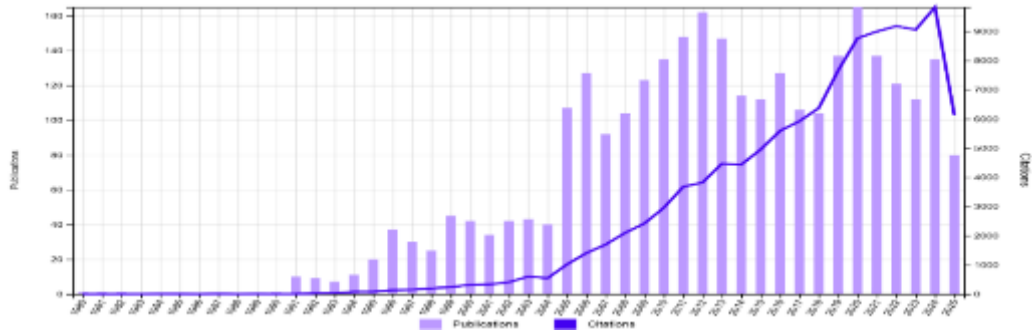


Source: By authors

Figure 5 and Table 7 shows that Eisenhardt and Martin (2000)’s article (the most influential article in the sample of 2994 articles) is connected to 49 articles (by having 49 links in the sample of 2994 articles’ network). In other words, these 49 articles cite each other and/or are cited by each other.

It’s notable that the article by Legris et al. (2003) is connected (linked) to only 4 (four) articles (as seen in Table 7- by having 4 links) in the network of 2,994 articles in terms of citations they make each other. This means that there were just 4 articles in this network of 2994 articles which cited each other and/or have been cited by each other.

Figure 6. Citation Number of “Organizational Development and Organizational Change” Articles (2994 articles) per Year



Source: By authors

Citation Analysis at the Author Level

This analysis ranks authors based on the number of citations they make to each other within the sample of 2994 articles. A network map was generated at the 'citation–authors' level (See Figure 6), using the criteria of at least one document (article) and one citation to identify citation networks.

Of the 5,823 authors, 5,373 exceeded the threshold and 3,691 of whom were found to be interconnected. This analysis revealed 16 clusters in total, with 29,381 links and a total link strength of 32,578. Figure 6 and Table 8 presents the results.

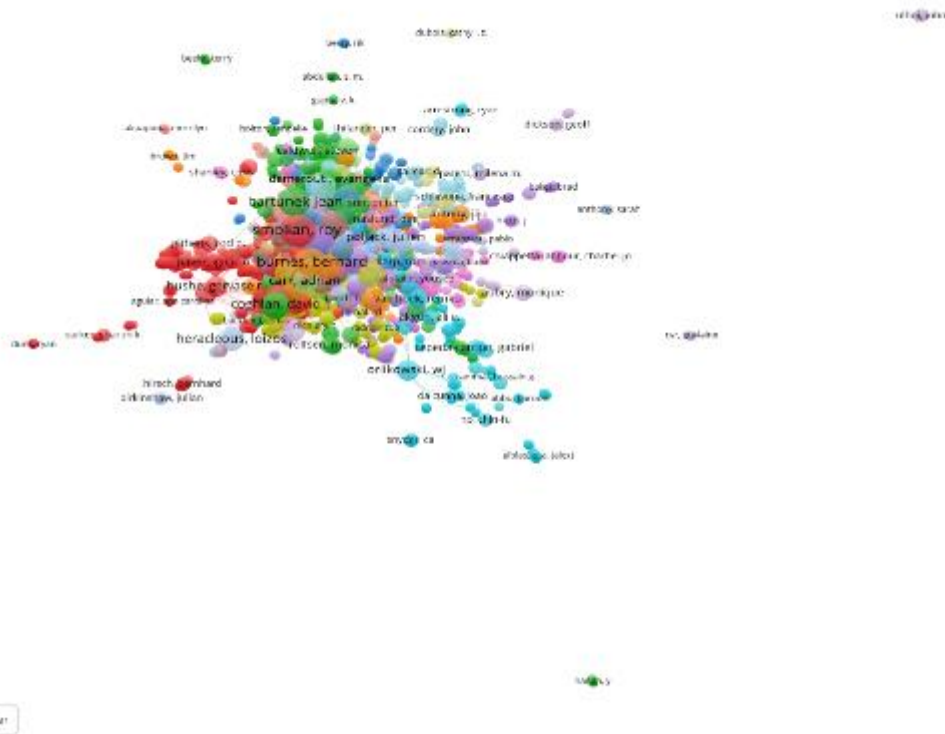
As can be seen in Table 8 and Figure 6, Smollan R. was the most influential author in terms of the number of occurrences (13). Smollan R. had 215 links, with a total of 319 citations.

Table 9. Citation analysis at the author level

Source: By authors

Author	Occurrences	Citations	Links	Total Link Strength
Smollan Roy	13	319	215	276
Bartunek Jean	11	387	210	236
Burnes Bernard	10	640	221	270
Schwarz Gavin M.	10	153	164	169
Coghlan David	9	189	44	77
Vakola Maria	8	950	434	615
Appelbaum Steven H.	8	153	97	143
Duxbury Linda	8	133	112	123
Shani Abraham B. (rami)	8	183	44	70
Armenakis Achilles	7	2253	695	1224

Figure 7. Network visualization of citation analysis at the author level



Source: By authors

Co-citation Analysis

Co-citation analysis is a type of document coupling which calculates how many studies have cited a given pair of studies together. Co-citation occurs when a researcher references one author's study alongside another author's study in a new document (Farooq, 2024). In this part of the study, an analysis was conducted at the level of 'co-citation-cited authors'. The number of minimum citations was set to 20. Of the 60,282 authors, 1,072 exceeded this threshold. The authors achieved 4 (four) clusters (4 colours in Figure 7), each of which had a minimum of 150 items.

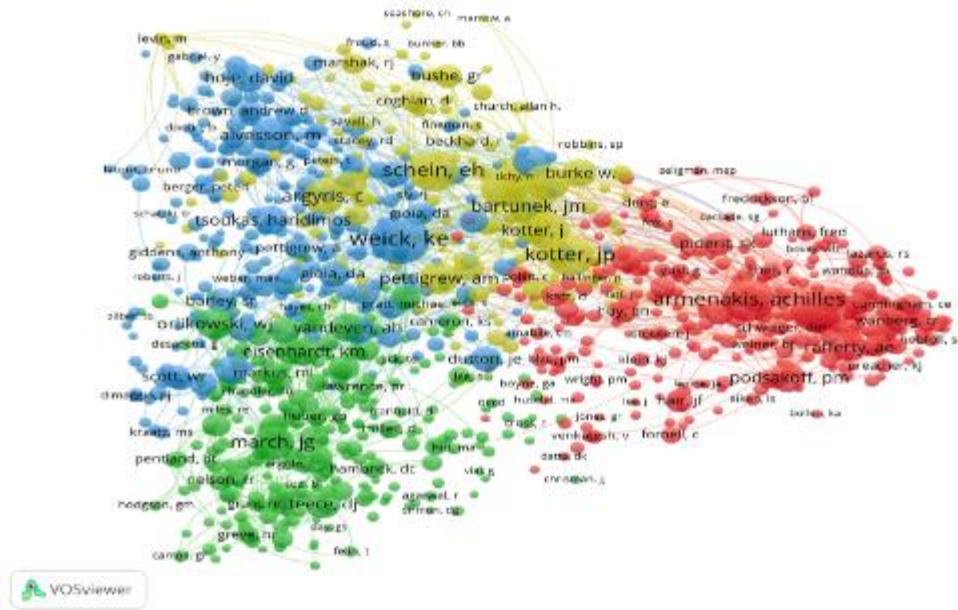
Table 9 and Figure 7 illustrate the results of the co-citation analysis in terms of cited authors. As can be seen in Table 9, Weick K.E. was the most frequently cited author, with 692 citations. The next most prominent authors were Armenakis A. (537 citations) and Oreg S. (501 citations). Figure 7 shows that Weick K.E. was at the center of the network with the highest number of citations and links. Therefore, Weick K.E. was the most cited author in the field of “organizational development and change management”.

Table 10. Co-citation analysis at the author level

Author	Citations	Links	Total Strength	Link
Weick KE	692	1056	22176	
Armenakis Achilles	537	986	19188	
Oreg S	501	911	17452	
Kotter JP	480	1016	13200	
Schein EH	477	984	12829	
Lewin K	436	1008	11969	
Beer M	383	978	11811	
Burnes Bernard	378	955	12329	
Argyris C	337	903	8552	
March JG	328	925	10267	

Source: By authors

Figure 8. Network visualization of Co-citation analysis at the author level



Source: By authors

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This empirical study conducted a bibliometric analysis on 2,994 articles obtained from the Web of Science (WoS) database in “organizational development and change management” field. Performance analysis results show that literature on organizational development and organizational change in management discipline spans over a period of 45 years. It is important to note that the number of articles has raised growingly since 2005.

According to Burnes and Cooke (2012), in the late 1990's and early 2000s, there were concerns whether the models used in organizational development and change management field was suitable for all change situations. However, the field did not experience a period of stagnation during this time; in fact, it expanded to encompass new perspectives at the turn of the millennium (Burnes and Cooke, 2012). This could be one of the reasons for the sudden increase in articles in the concerned field since 2005.

Gereffi (2005) states in his study that the emergence of globalization in the modern era, its acceleration in the 1990s and its transformation into a global network economy in the 2000s have necessitated structural, cultural and strategic changes within organizations. For example, the development of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems in the early 2000s, had a direct effect on the structure, processes, and labour force arrangements of organizations (Markus et al., 2003). The restructuring of organizations following the crises of the 2000s and the emergence of new terms in this field, such as 'change management', 'restructuring' and 'transformation' (Gillan and Martin, 2007), may also explain the increase in publications in this field since 2005. Additionally, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, one of the main journals and the most productive journal with the highest number of publications on this field according to our results, published special issues on 'change and transformation' subjects in the mid-2000s. Such special issues could lead to an increase in articles in the relevant field.

Our performance analysis showed that Smollan was the most productive author in our sample of 2,994 articles, having been published 13 articles. He was one of a total of 5,849 authors. Another notable finding of the performance analysis is that the “*Journal of Organizational Change Management*” (JOCM) was the journal in which the highest number of articles (510 articles out of 2994 articles) on the “organizational development and change management” field were published in the “management” category on the WoS database. This represents one-fifth of our sample, which is a substantial proportion. As we explained in the literature review, there are two related bibliometric studies (Giraud and Autissier, 2013; Raamkumar and Swamy, 2023) focusing solely and particularly on this journal as a sample, evaluating the articles published in it. These articles also emphasize the significant importance of JOCM, as evidenced by the results of this study. Our performance analysis results revealed that the second most productive journal was the “*Journal of Change Management*” (JCM), with 173 articles. This makes these two journals as the pioneering and leading journals in the 'Organizational Development and Change Management' field, as well as being the top two journals in the field.

Out of a grand total of 2,994 articles, 2,035 of them were indexed in the SSCI. Of these, 510 were published in the JOCM, also indexed in the SSCI. This substantial proportion — nearly one quarter — of SSCI articles provides further evidence that the JOCM is the leading and most productive journal in 'Organizational Development and Change Management' field. Giraud and Autissier (2013) emphasized that the articles published in the JOCM constitute a significant

proportion of the concerned field. This peer-reviewed journal is one of the leaders in its field, rejecting 92–94 per cent of submitted articles. Consequently, when examining the journals, particularly addressing the question of the concerned research, it becomes clear that the JOCM is one of the most reliable data sources of the field (Giraud and Autissier, 2013).

In terms of science mapping techniques, co-word, citation and co-citation analyses were conducted. We carried out the co-word analysis twice in order to clarify the results. In the first one, the co-occurrence number had been set to 5. Then it was increased to 20 to obtain more direct and clarified results. In both of the analyses, 8 of the keywords were the same.

Our results regarding the two co-word analyses show that “organizational change, change management, organizational development, leadership, innovation, organizational culture and organizational learning” author keywords were the leading focal themes of the concerned field. This means that these subjects form the knowledge structure or focal topics of the field. Also, as evidenced by the first two focal author keywords, 'change' in organizations constitutes the foundation of the 'organizational development and change management' field.

According to citation analysis conducted at document level, the most cited article in our sample of 2,994 articles was Eisenhardt and Martin (2000), which had been cited 8,712 times, an average of 355 times per year. In their article, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) assessed “organizational change” in terms of “dynamic capabilities” from a strategic perspective. The article suggested that organizations could achieve a competitive advantage by restructuring and reintegrating their resources as a response to environmental uncertainties. This article, therefore, emphasizes 'change' term in organizations, stating that “it is a continuous process of restructuring, not a result”.

As the most cited article (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000) in the field reflects, co-word analysis of the concerned 2994 articles also demonstrate that “change” in organizations forms the foundation of the relevant literature by achieving “organizational change, change management and organizational development” author keywords as the focal themes of the field.

In their article, Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) reviewed the articles on 'organizational change' between 1990 and early 1998 and developed a typology that classified the themes focused on in the relevant publications. The study includes four categories in the typology: 'change content', 'change context', 'change process' and 'change outcomes'. The first category, 'change content', consists of articles which explore the essence of modern organizational changes. The second category, 'change context', consists of publications dealing with 'forces or existing circumstances within an organization's environment. The third category, 'change process', involves publications that emphasize the actions taken during the implementation of a planned change and how employees react to these efforts. Lastly, the 'change outcomes' group comprises publications examining common

'criterion variables' evaluated as “consequences of organizational changes” (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). Therefore, 'change' is at the heart of the field, forming its foundation as clarified by our analyses results and the relevant literature.

The two co-word analyses carried out in this study show that the field mostly consists of WoS articles focusing on the topics of 'change, leadership, organizational culture and organizational learning'. Thus, these 4 (four) subjects were the focal themes mostly studied in the WoS articles of “organizational development and change management” field up to August 25, 2025 in management discipline. Therefore, leadership, organizational culture and organizational learning are also among the main themes of the knowledge structure of the relevant field, alongside the 'change' theme in organizations.

According to the document-level citation analysis, the second most frequently cited article was by Huber (1991) and had 'organization learning' among its author keywords, addressing it as the focal theme of the article. The third most frequently cited article was by Legris et al. (2003), which includes the word 'innovation' in its keywords. These keywords also form the basis of our co-word analysis results, reflecting the themes on which the field focuses most.

In our study, the citation analysis in terms of authors showed that Smollan was the most influential author. In their article, Smollan and Sayers (2009) have most frequently addressed the terms of organizational change alongside 'employee emotions, stress and psychological well-being' words. The article has examined organizational change in terms of communication methods during the process, employees' perception of cultural adaptation and how emotions are shaped within this framework. It focused on 'resistance to change and the support of leaders during the change process'. “Organizational culture” and “leadership” subjects from Smollan and Sayers (2009)’s article are two of the most prominent topics, as evidenced by our co-word analysis results. This demonstrates that the results of this study are all consistent with one another and reliable in terms of different analyses performed in the study.

In our sample, we also identified other articles focusing on leadership, as revealed by our co-word analysis results (Starke et al., 2011; Taylor-Bianca and Schermerhorn, 2006; Magsaysay and Hechanova, 2017). In their study, Starke et al. (2011) conducted a qualitative method examining the 'transformational organizational change' process from a strategic leadership perspective. Taylor-Bianca and Schermerhorn (2006) propose a self-regulation model for strategic leadership during organizational change. The study integrates the literatures of 'self-regulation, strategic leadership and organizational change'. Magsaysay and Hechanova (2017) present an implicit change leadership model to improve the effectiveness of change management. One of the main results of this study is that leaders should have “strategic” competence to manage organizational change. These articles reflect the particular strategic perspective of the leadership studies in organizational development and change management literature apart from other

types of leadership such as transformational leadership. These themes and keywords are mutually in relation with our results, forming the basis of our co-word analysis results and revealing the subjects on which the relevant field focuses on.

In our sample of 2994 articles, there were also other recently published leadership articles handling different types of leadership, such as inclusive leadership (Arshad et al., 2025) and servant leadership (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2025). These articles could serve as a ground for further studies in this field from a leadership perspective.

According to the results of co-word analysis, author keywords with lower weights like “trust”, “change readiness”, and “commitment to change” appear as less explored topics in the relevant literature. In addition, the lower weight of themes such as “technological change” and “organizational design” suggests a gap in our understanding of how structures adapt to digital shifts. Future studies could focus on these themes, using qualitative techniques like “ethnography” to better apprehend the human side of organizational change processes.

Theoretical Implications: Reflections of a Strategic and Human-Oriented Paradigm

Findings of this study indicate that the extant literature on organizational development and change management is generally structured around a strategic and human-oriented paradigm.

Considering that the leading journals indexed in WoS generally require up to 8-10 keywords from submitted articles, the results of the second co-word analysis are more reliable and comprehensive than the first co-word analysis. When we compare the results of the two analyses, there are some differences in terms of two keywords, since eight of the ten keywords are the same. In the first co-word analysis, 'action research' and 'project management' were among the keywords reflecting the scope of articles with a maximum of five keywords in total on organizational development and change management field. But when the number of keywords was increased to 20 in the Wosviewer software, the differing keywords are “human resource management” and “change”. Therefore, the second co-word analyze pushes these two keywords into the top 10 list of focal themes. This shift provides clear empirical proof that the relevant literature has moved toward a strategic and human-centered approach. It shows that contemporary change management is no longer just a technical or operational process. Instead, change is now seen as a long-term strategic goal that depends heavily on human capital as a source of competitive advantage.

Reflections of a Strategic-Oriented Paradigm

The acceleration of articles in the WoS database, particularly after 2005, reaching a notable peak around 2020, implies that the field is highly sensitive to environmental factors. This trend provides evidence that global challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, geopolitical risks and economic uncertainties have turned "change" theme to a permanent requirement for survival.

Our co-word analysis seems likely to reinforce the 'change' issue as a 'continuous process', with 'organizational learning' appearing as a key author keyword. This shows that the literature tends to see 'change' as a strategic capability, where the ability to learn and adapt is the main way of dealing with an ever-changing global environment.

The citation analysis at document level further strengthens this strategic perspective. The prominence of Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) and their focus on 'dynamic capabilities' supports the idea that sustainable advantage is increasingly seen as the result of continuously integrating resources in response to external changes. Moreover, the same analysis showed that Huber's (1991) study was the second most frequently cited article. In this study, the concept of 'organization learning' was identified as one of the author's key keywords, with the article itself focusing on this theme.

Reflections of a Human-Oriented Paradigm

Co-citation analysis findings point towards a current literature or field with strong psychological and humanistic underpinnings of change. Karl E. Weick's central position (692 citations) signals that the emphasis on 'sensemaking' in his article (Weick, 1995) could be the field's primary intellectual reference point. This points to an academic focus on how individuals perceive and interpret organizational changes during unpredictable circumstances.

The significant number of citations received by Armenakis (537) and Oreg (501) in the co-citation analysis further supports this human-oriented approach. Respectively, their emphasis on 'change readiness' (Armenakis et al., 1993) and 'resistance to change' (Oreg et al., 2011) suggests that the literature places greater importance on internal psychological aspects and the psychological contract rather than purely administrative procedures. Furthermore, co-word analysis highlighted 'leadership', 'culture', and 'HRM' author keywords among the central research themes. These findings support the human-oriented theoretical perspective, implying that the success of change efforts largely relies on 'soft factors'.

In conclusion, it seems that the literature on organizational development and change management views change not as a temporary structural remedy, but as an ongoing strategic competency based on a human-oriented paradigm.

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