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RESEARCH ARTICLE
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Mapping the Literature on Strategic Human Resource Management and Organizational Agility: A Bibliometric Analysis Based on Web of Science

Stratejik İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi ve Örgütsel Çeviklik Literatürünün Haritalanması: Web of Science Temelli Bibliyometrik Bir Analiz

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ABSTRACT

In today's rapidly changing competitive environment, organizational agility has become a critical capability for businesses to adapt quickly to environmental changes. Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), which refers to the planning of human resource policies in alignment with organizational strategies, plays a significant role in the development of agile organizational structures. This study examines the literature on SHRM and organizational agility through bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in the Web of Science database between 2020 and 2025. The analysis, conducted using the VOSviewer program, reveals a significant increase in academic interest, particularly in the fields of management and business. The findings indicate that the United States, China, and India are the countries contributing most to the field, while the concepts of "strategic human resource management," "human resource management," and "organizational performance" are the most frequently used keywords. Overall, this study provides a bibliometric overview of the literature on SHRM and organizational agility by identifying publication trends, prominent countries, dominant keywords, and network structures, and highlights potential directions for future research.

Keywords: Strategic human resource management, human resource management, organizational performance

ÖZET

Günümüzün hızla değişen rekabet ortamında örgütsel çeviklik, işletmelerin çevresel değişimlere hızlı uyum sağlayabilmesi açısından kritik bir yetkinlik haline gelmiştir. İnsan kaynakları politikalarının örgütsel stratejilerle uyumlu biçimde planlanmasını ifade eden Stratejik İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi (SİKY), çevik örgütsel yapıların geliştirilmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu çalışma, 2020–2025 yılları arasında Web of Science veri tabanında indekslenen yayınlar üzerinden SİKY ve örgütsel çeviklik literatürünü bibliyometrik analiz yöntemiyle incelemektedir. VOSviewer programı kullanılarak gerçekleştirilen analiz, özellikle yönetim ve işletme alanlarında akademik ilginin önemli ölçüde arttığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bulgular, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Çin ve Hindistan'ın alana en fazla katkı sağlayan ülkeler olduğunu gösterirken; "stratejik insan kaynakları yönetimi", "insan kaynakları yönetimi" ve "örgütsel performans" kavramlarının en sık kullanılan anahtar kelimeler olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Genel olarak bu çalışma, yayın eğilimleri, öne çıkan ülkeler, baskın anahtar kelimeler ve ağ yapılarını belirleyerek SİKY ve örgütsel çeviklik literatürüne ilişkin bibliyometrik bir genel bakış sunmakta ve gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalar için potansiyel yönelimleri vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Stratejik insan kaynakları yönetimi, insan kaynakları yönetimi, örgütsel performans.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's business world, rapidly changing environmental conditions and increasing competition require organizations to re-evaluate their strategic decision-making processes and human resource management. In this context, Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) plays a critical role in ensuring a sustainable competitive advantage by aligning organizational goals with human resource practices. On the other hand, an organization's ability to respond quickly to changing conditions—that is, organizational agility—is gaining increasing importance in modern management literature. This study aims to examine the relationship between SHRM and organizational agility using bibliometric analysis, thereby contributing to the literature and laying the groundwork for future research.

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Furthermore, the fact that organizations have faced factors such as digital transformation, artificial intelligence integration, and global supply chain uncertainties—particularly in recent years—has made it even more critical to address organizational agility in conjunction with strategic human resources practices. This situation necessitates evaluating the two concepts not only at the theoretical level but also in terms of application and management strategies.

A review of the literature reveals that while the concepts of SHRM and organizational agility each have a broad research scope when considered separately, studies that address these two areas together remain limited.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is a management approach aimed at enhancing organizational performance by integrating the organization's strategic goals with human resource policies (Yeşilkuş, Özbozkurt, & Bahar, 2021, p. 3050). SHM practices are directly linked to employee engagement, talent management, performance evaluation, and organizational development processes, and they enable human resources to transition from being merely a support unit to assuming a strategic role (Özçelik & Doğan, 2021, p. 300).

In this context, HRM has become a fundamental mechanism for sustaining competitive advantage by enabling organizations to view human capital as a strategic resource. Particularly in knowledge-based economies, the strategic management of human resources is considered a decisive factor in organizational success.

Organizational agility, on the other hand, refers to an organization's capacity to adapt quickly and effectively to changing internal and external conditions; this concept encompasses the capabilities to innovate, rapidly adapt processes, and capitalize on competitive opportunities (Elashry, Kortam, & Ali, 2024, p. 45). Organizational agility supports long-term success not only by enhancing operational flexibility but also by improving the effectiveness of strategic decision-making processes.

Alongside the digital transformation process, organizational agility is now evaluated not only as the ability to respond quickly but also as predictive capacity and the skill to develop proactive strategies.

The relationship between Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) and organizational agility has become an increasingly prominent research topic in the literature. Strategic human resources practices play a significant role in helping organizations develop agile structures and adapt quickly to change (Yeşilkuş, Özbozkurt, & Bahar, 2021, p. 3055). Aligning human resources policies with strategic planning strengthens organizational learning, knowledge management, and innovation processes; thus, SHRM forms the foundational building blocks for achieving organizational agility and directly impacts organizational performance (Özçelik & Doğan, 2021, p. 301). For this reason, HRM is considered not only a supporter of organizational agility but also a decisive precursor.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, academic publications from the past five years regarding the concepts of SHRM and organizational agility were examined using bibliometric analysis.

The primary objective of the research is to quantitatively map the relationships between these concepts and to identify trends and gaps in the literature.

Bibliometric analysis, as a quantitative research method that reveals the structural and relational characteristics of scientific production, offers researchers a systematic perspective, particularly in the analysis of large datasets. Through this method, development trends in academic fields, conceptual concentrations, and research networks can be visualized.

The Web of Science database was used as the data source in this study. Web of Science is one of the most widely used bibliometric databases, providing a comprehensive indexing of global academic publications and reliable citation data. This database is recognized as a reliable and standard data source for academic studies, particularly due to its coverage of journals with high impact factors.

Within the scope of the study, a search was conducted on Web of Science using the keywords "Strategic Human Resource Management," "Organizational Agility," and their English equivalents.

As a result of the search, articles published in the last five years were identified and included in the dataset. The analytical approach was inspired by the article titled "Bibliometric Analysis of Studies on the Post-Truth Concept Using VOSviewer" by Demir, Yılmaz, and Kaya (2020), which was used as a case study; however, the data and results are entirely specific to the scope of this study.

The collected data were examined in terms of bibliometric variables such as author, institution, country, publication year, journal, and number of citations. This allowed trends, clusters, and relationships between concepts in the research field to be quantitatively identified and analyzed.

The VOSviewer program was used during the analysis process. These tools were effectively used to visualize connections between concepts, concentrations in the literature, and citation networks. The resulting visualizations reveal the intellectual structure of the research field and clearly reflect the direction of development in the literature. This contributes both to the systematic analysis of the existing body of knowledge and to the identification of future research directions.

FINDINGS

Findings of the Web of Science Bibliometric Analysis

The studies obtained from the Web of Science database were evaluated within the scope of the following bibliometric analyses and examined by adding them according to their titles.

Publication Analysis by Year

This analysis examined the distribution of publications related to the research topic by year using data obtained from the Web of Science database.

Table 1: Distribution of Publications by Year

Publication Year	Number of Publications
2025	94
2021	93
2024	82
2022	77
2020	63
2023	63
2026	12
Total	**484**

Source: Created by the author.

According to Table 1, the highest number of publications occurred in 2025 (94) and 2021 (93). The distribution across the analyzed period exhibits a fluctuating trend, with the relatively lower count in 2026 attributed to incomplete data for the current year. These fluctuations suggest that research interest in the specified concepts varies over time.

Publication Analysis by Country

In this analysis, the countries producing the studies were examined, and the countries contributing the most to the subject are presented in ranked order.

Table 2: Top 10 Countries by Number of Publications

Rank	Country	Number of Publications
1	USA	96
2	People's Republic of China	67
3	India	52
4	England	45
5	Australia	34
6	Italy	22
7	Germany	20
8	Pakistan	20
9	Netherlands	16
10	South Korea	16

Source: Created by the author.

The table presents the distribution of publications across countries, ranked from highest to lowest output.

According to Table 2, the United States ranks first in terms of publication output (96), followed by China (67) and India (52). The findings indicate that, while the research field is predominantly driven by a limited number of countries, it nevertheless demonstrates a global distribution.

Analysis by Research Field

Using the categories in the Web of Science database, the academic fields in which the studies are concentrated were identified.

Table 3: Publication Distribution by Research Field

Research Field	Number of Publications
Management	206
Business	65
Industrial Relations and Labor	48
Applied Psychology	46
Environmental Sciences	33
Green and Sustainable Science and Technology	30
Environmental Studies	29
Public Administration	16
Interdisciplinary Social Sciences	14

Source: Created by the author.

The table presents the distribution of publications across research fields in descending order.

According to Table 3, the highest concentration of publications is observed in the field of Management (206). This is followed by Business, Industrial Relations and Labor, and Applied Psychology. The findings indicate that the examined concepts are not confined solely to the management domain but are also strongly linked to multiple disciplines, demonstrating the multidisciplinary nature of the research area.

Analysis by Document Type

Table 4: Distribution of Publications by Document Type

Document Type	Number of Publications
Article	484
Early Access	22
Book Chapters	9

Source: Created by the author.

According to Table 4, the vast majority of publications are articles, while other document types such as early access and book chapters remain limited in number.

VOSviewer Network Analysis Findings

Co-authorship Analysis

"Co-authorship analysis is a bibliometric analysis method that examines the structure of collaboration among researchers based on the presence of multiple authors in scientific publications and is accepted as a direct indicator of scientific collaboration" (Moed, 2005, p. 204).

In this context, the co-authorship network visualization generated using VOSviewer is presented below.

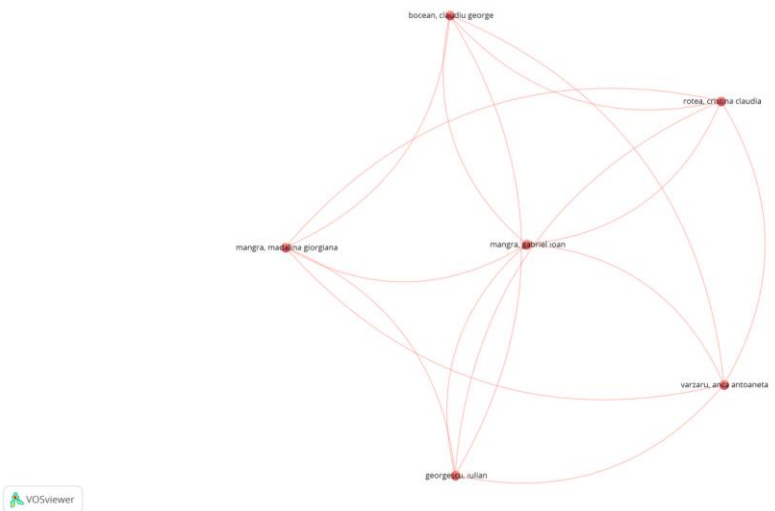

Figure 1: Co-Author Links Illustrating Collaboration Among Authors
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

The analysis, based on a threshold of at least one publication and one citation, reveals a low-density co-authorship structure consisting of a single small cluster with 6 researchers and 15 collaboration links. Overall, the findings indicate limited interconnectedness and a fragmented collaboration pattern among authors in the field.

Citation Analysis of Authors

"Citation analysis is a bibliometric method used to measure research impact based on the number of citations received by scientific publications and is widely used in academic performance evaluation" (Garfield, 1979, p. 359). Accordingly, the network visualization of the authors' citation analysis (Citation of authors), created using the VOSviewer program, is presented below.

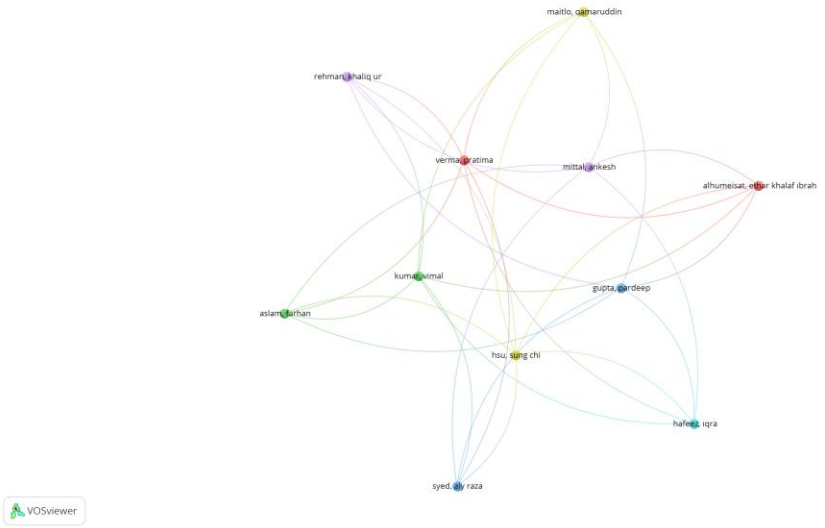

Figure 2: Authors' Citation Networks
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

To analyze the authors' citation networks, a visualization study was conducted based on a minimum threshold of one publication and one citation. As a result of this analysis, which was carried out on 11 units identified as being in interaction, a total of 30 distinct connection lines and 6 separate cluster structures were identified. According to the findings, Judith Wiemann, Netra Ganesh Neelam, and Suchitra Ajgaonkar stand out as the most cited researchers in the field, each with 52 citations. However, it was observed that these three authors do not rank among the top positions in terms of total link strength.

Citation Analysis by Country

"Country-level citation analysis enables the evaluation of national research performance and the geographical dimension of scientific impact by examining the distribution of citations to scientific publications across countries" (Moed, De Bruin, & Van Leeuwen, 1995, p. 383). In this context, the network visualization of the citation analysis of countries (Citation of Countries), created using the VOSviewer program, is presented below

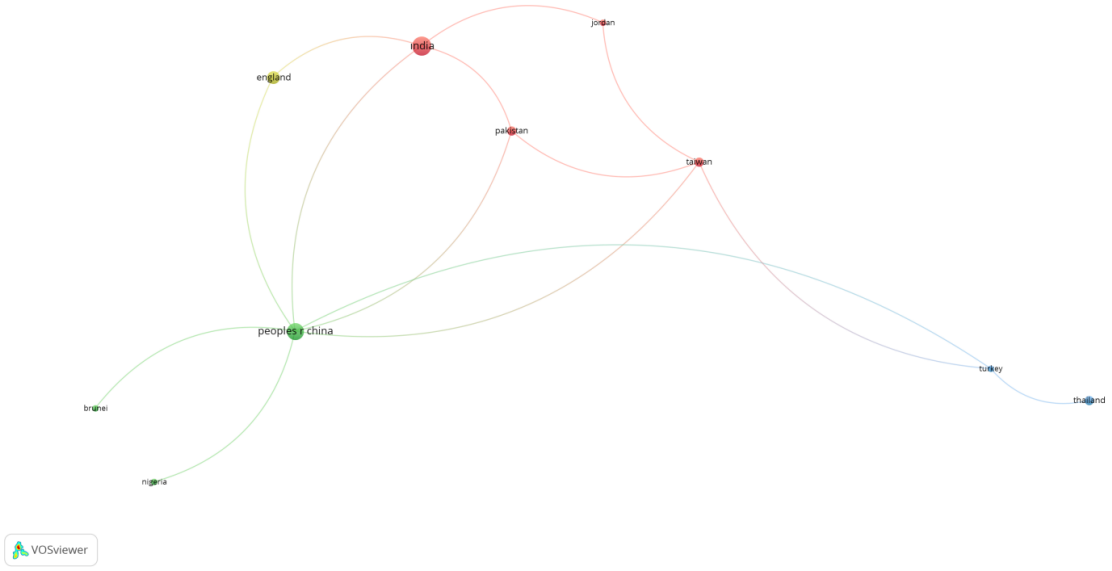

Figure 3: Citation Networks of Countries
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

To map the citation networks of the countries of origin where the studies were published, 10 distinct units engaged in mutual interaction were analyzed, provided that each country had at least one publication and one citation. As a result of the analysis, four main cluster structures and a total of 14 connection lines were identified. When evaluated based on citation counts, India (94), the United Kingdom (84), and Australia (75) stand out as the countries with the highest influence. On the other hand, when the total link strength variable is considered, India, China, and the United Kingdom are seen to share the top three positions. In terms of publication productivity, the ranking was determined to be the United States with 96 publications, China with 67, and India with 52.

Citation Analysis of Organizations

"Evaluating organizations through citation analysis enables the measurement of research performance and scientific impact by examining citations to scientific publications at the organizational level" (Moed, De Bruin, & Van Leeuwen, 1995, p. 383). In this context, the network visualization of the citation analysis of organizations (Citation of Organizations), created using the VOSviewer program, is presented below.

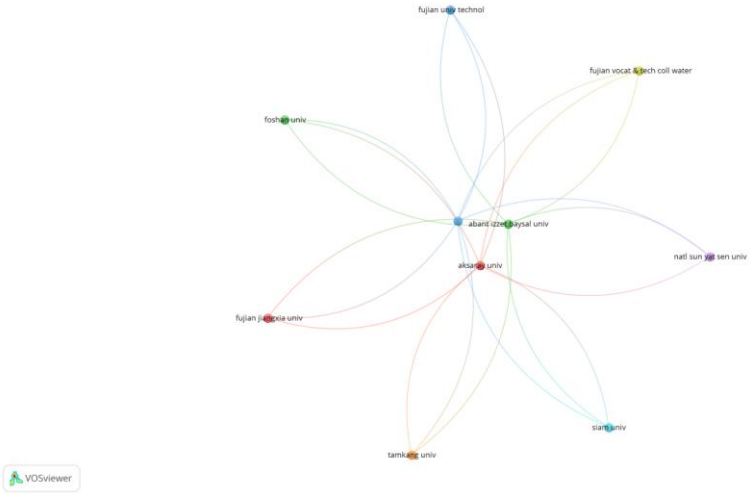

Figure 4: Citation Networks of Institutions
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

To map citation networks among academic institutions, a dataset of 531 interacting units was analyzed, provided that each institution met the threshold of at least one publication and one citation. In terms of publication counts, Ghent University stands out with three publications, while King's College London and Tilburg University each have two. In the analysis of citation impact, King's College London (56 citations), Ruhr University Bochum (52), and Symbiosis Centre for Management Human Resource (52) were identified as the institutions with the highest impact values. It was determined that the network structure consists of a total of seven distinct clusters and contains 21 separate connection lines.

Keyword Analysis (Co-occurrence of All Keywords)

"Keyword analysis is a bibliometric method that examines the relationships between concepts used together in scientific publications to reveal the conceptual structure and thematic development of a research field" (Callon, Courtial, & Laville, 1991, p. 162). Accordingly, the conceptual network map obtained from the keyword analysis conducted using the VOSviewer program is presented below.

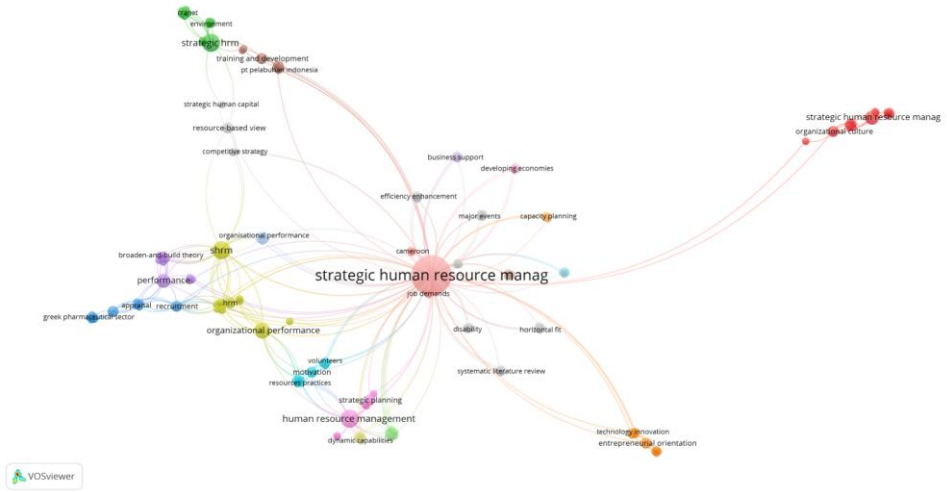

Figure 5: Most Frequent Keyword Connections
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

When examining the keywords with the highest frequency in the literature on strategic human resource management (SHRM) and organizational agility, the concept of "strategic human resource management" ranks first with 106 occurrences. This core concept is followed, in order, by the terms "human resource management" with 25 occurrences and "organizational performance" with 22 occurrences. As a result of the network analysis conducted on 162 units that were repeated at least once and interacted with one another, 25 distinct cluster structures, 501 connection lines, and a total connection strength of 508 units were identified.

Bibliographic Coupling Analysis of Texts

"Bibliographic coupling is a method that measures the similarity between two publications based on their citations of the same sources and reveals relationships within the scientific literature" (Kessler, 1963, p. 10). In this context, the network visualization obtained from the bibliographic coupling analysis (Bibliographic Coupling) created using the VOSviewer program is presented below.

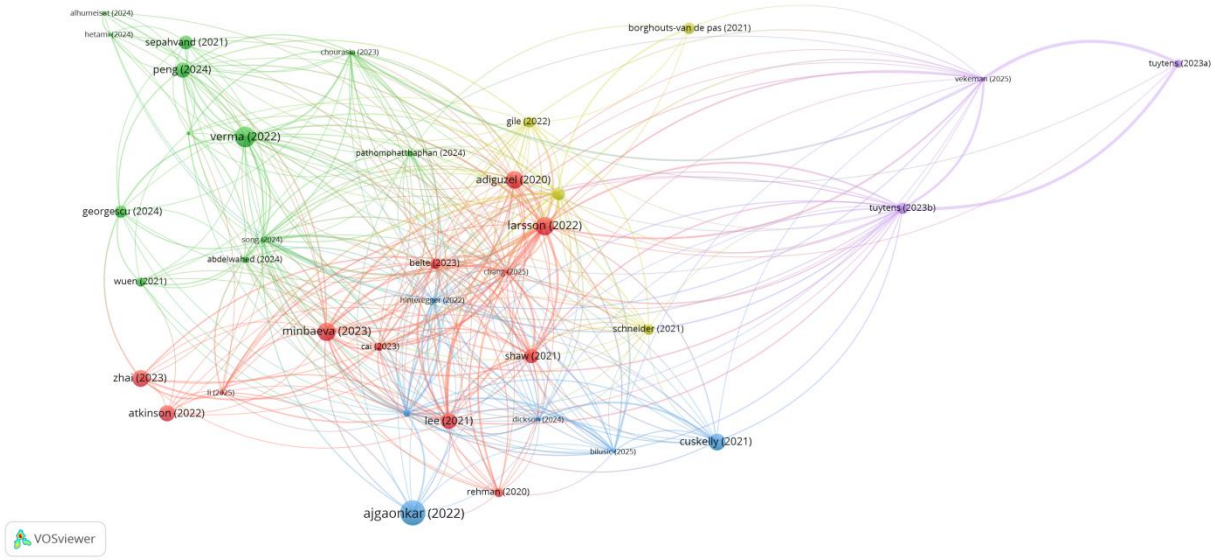

Figure 6: Bibliographic Coupling Links Between Works
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

The concept of bibliographic coupling represents the intellectual connection formed when two separate publications cite the same common work. As a result of the analysis, which examined 37 core works that met the minimum citation requirement and were in interaction with one another, five distinct cluster structures, 357 connection lines, and a total connection strength of 784 units were identified. When examining the works with the highest bibliographic matching density, Larsson (2022) with 114 citations, Chang (2025) with 84 citations, and Wright (2022) with 83 citations emerged as the leading works. On the other hand, it was determined that the publications with the highest values for the total link strength variable were authored by Ajgaonkar (2022), Verma (2022), and Minbaeva (2023).

Bibliographic Coupling Analysis of Authors

"Bibliographic coupling is a method that measures the similarity between two publications based on their citations of the same sources, and when this approach is adapted to the author level, it reveals the intellectual proximity among researchers" (Kessler, 1963, p. 10). In this context, the intellectual similarity network map obtained from the bibliographic coupling analysis of authors conducted using the VOSviewer program is presented below.

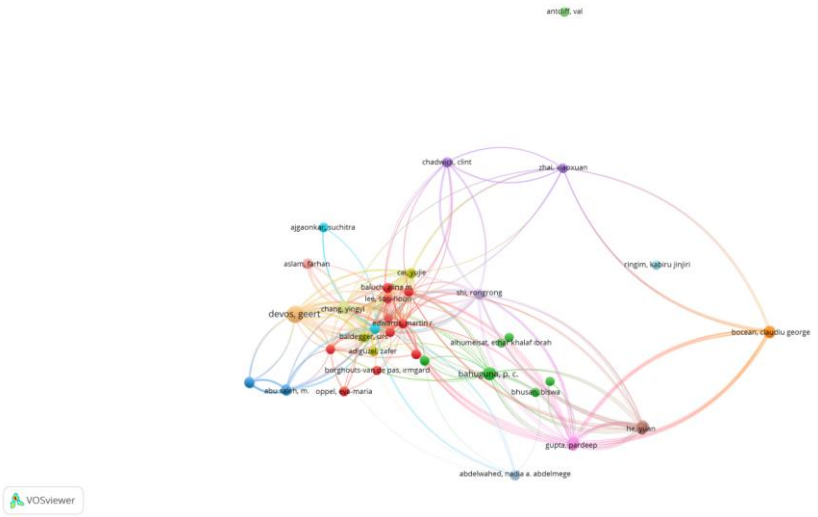

Figure 7: Bibliographic matching links among authors
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

Within the scope of the analysis, 109 units that met the threshold of having produced at least one publication and received at least one citation, and were in interaction with one another, were examined. As a result of this examination, 16 distinct cluster structures, 3,381 connection lines, and a total connection strength of 19,696 units were identified. When evaluating the researchers with the highest bibliographic interaction, Suchitra Ajgaonkar, Netra Ganesh Neelam, and Judith Wiemann were found to lead the list, each with 52 citations and a total link strength of 206 units.

Co-citation Analysis of Co-authors

"Co-citation analysis reveals the intellectual structure and core knowledge clusters of a research field based on the frequency with which researchers are cited together" (White & Griffith, 1981, p. 164). Accordingly, the intellectual structure network map obtained from the co-citation analysis conducted using the VOSviewer program is presented below.

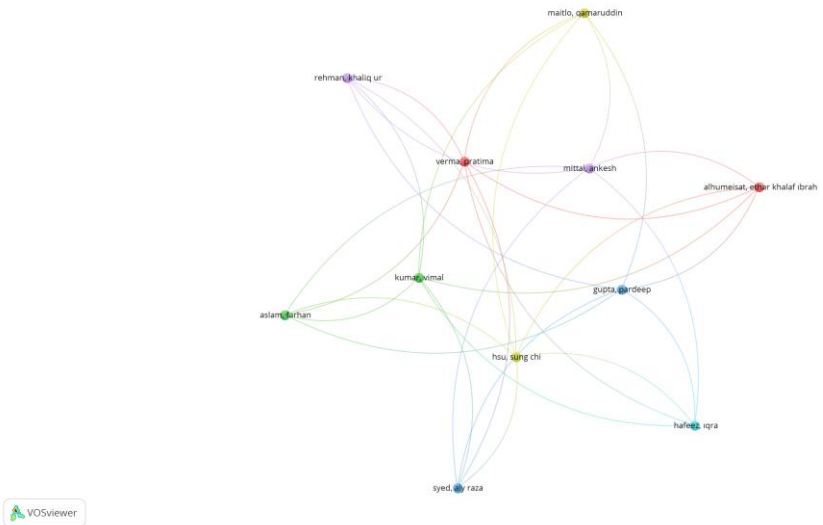

Figure 8: Links between co-cited authors
Source: Created by the author using the VOSviewer tool

In the analysis process, an examination of the 11-unit dataset—defined using a threshold of at least one citation—revealed a total of six cluster structures and 30 distinct connection lines. According to the findings, the researchers with the highest co-citation frequency in the literature were identified as Suchitra Ajgaonkar, Netra Ganesh Neelam, and Judith Wiemann, each with 52 citations.

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, academic works published in the last five years on the concepts of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and Organizational Agility were examined using a bibliometric analysis method. The study aimed to create a quantitative map of the concepts of strategic human resource management and organizational agility. Both the quantitative analysis conducted and the review of the studies included in the analysis yielded several important findings. These findings indicate that the relationship between these concepts highlights organizational agility as a critical capability for businesses to respond swiftly to environmental changes in an increasingly competitive environment, and that Strategic Human Resource Management—which emphasizes the need for human resource policies to be aligned with organizational strategies—plays a significant role in enabling organizations to develop agile structures (Elashry, Kortam, & Ali, 2024, p. 45). Precisely for this reason, this study examining the meaning, scope, relationships, and analysis of the concepts of strategic human resource management and organizational agility is significant in terms of paving the way for future studies and generating knowledge (Yeşilkuş, Özbozkurt, & Bahar, 2021, p. 3050).

Analysis results indicate that these two concepts are gaining increasing importance in the literature and that research interest has been rising, particularly in recent years (Özçelik & Doğan, 2021, p. 300). When examining the distribution of publications by year, an increase in publications was observed in 2025; however, overall fluctuations in both increases and decreases were identified. This situation suggests that Strategic Human Resource Management has attracted varying levels of academic interest in the context of organizational agility over time.

From the perspective of countries and institutions, data obtained from the Web of Science database reveal that the greatest contribution to the literature has been made by developed countries. In particular, the United States, China, and India stand out in terms of publication output, indicating that interest in the research field has become increasingly globalized (Elashry, Kortam, & Ali, 2024, p. 46).

When examining cited studies, it is evident that the role of human resources is prominent in topics such as the effects of Strategic Human Resource Management practices on organizational performance, the strategic importance of human resource practices, and organizational agility (Yeşilkuş, Özbozkurt, & Bahar, 2021, p. 3055). In addition, when examining key concepts, it is observed that certain studies in the literature form thematic clusters. These clusters are generally centered around strategic human resource management, human resource management, and organizational performance (Özçelik & Doğan, 2021, p. 301). The findings obtained in this study indicate that the concepts of strategic human resource management and organizational agility play a significant role in helping organizations adapt to changing environmental conditions and gain competitive advantage.

In addition to these key findings, the study has several limitations. First, the analysis was limited to publications indexed in the Web of Science database. Second, the study focused on a specific time period (2020–2025), meaning that earlier studies were excluded from the analysis. Third, the findings are based on bibliometric indicators and therefore do not provide direct empirical evidence regarding causal relationships between SHRM and organizational agility. Future research may expand the dataset by including other databases such as Scopus, compare different time periods, and complement bibliometric findings with systematic literature reviews, qualitative interviews, or quantitative empirical studies.

For future studies, it is recommended to broaden the scope by including different databases and to incorporate comparative analyses across various sectors, countries, and organizational contexts. Additionally, a more in-depth examination of the relationship between SHRM and organizational agility within the framework of variables such as innovation and employee engagement, supported by sector-specific qualitative and quantitative data, would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Overall, this study provides a bibliometric overview of the recent literature on SHRM and organizational agility. By identifying publication trends, leading countries, dominant keywords, and network structures, it offers a general map of the field and highlights potential directions for future research.

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