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A bibliometric analysis of leadership management

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Keywords: leadership, management, bibliometric, vos viewer, development trends</p>	<p><i>Being a leader means having to use the resources that are available to you, whether they be material or human, in order to achieve goals and maintain organizational unity. Analysts define leadership as the process by which one individual inspires a group of people to work together toward a single objective. The main objective of this study was to quantify and identify the current state of leadership management through bibliometric analysis, to identify emerging issues, and to lay the foundation for subsequent research in the area. We use bibliometric analysis with VOS Viewer and have outlined the research literature from 2013 to 2023 to demonstrate the outlook for leadership management. This paper resulting in a refined dataset of 3691 articles. This study provides an in-depth bibliometric analysis of leadership management, revealing the global research landscape, international collaboration, publication trends, research hotspots, and emerging frontiers. The global output of publications maintains a balanced growth, highlighting the active engagement in this field. The analysis recognizes leading researchers and institutions globally, with the United States standing out as a major contributor.</i></p>

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the ability to build up confidence, enthusiasm and zeal among people and to create an urge in them to be led, and an important element of the direct function of management, wherever there is an organized group of people working towards a common goal, some type of leadership becomes essential (Anjum, 2022). Since it is crucial to fostering success and accomplishing organizational objectives, leadership is crucial for organizations (Genstoudi, 2023). Productivity may be increased, a great work culture can be fostered, and employee motivation can be raised with effective leadership (Genstoudi, 2023). Human motivation is contingent upon their unique demands and their capacity to withstand internal-external or sociopsychic conflict (Hakobyan & Khachatryan, 2022). Leaders provide their staff guidance, establish expectations, and offer encouragement and criticism. They make judgments, assist with strategy development and implementation, and lead their team to success.

Leadership is a purposeful social process in which individuals influence a group toward achieving shared goals by aligning vision, values, and action through communication and



example (Agazu et al., 2025). Effective leadership is conceived as a dynamic, relational phenomenon rather than a static set of traits, where authority and influence are negotiated between leaders and followers to produce coordinated change and shared purpose (Puga et al., 2025). Modern definitions emphasize that leadership creates conditions for others to contribute their capabilities and to develop, by shaping organizational climate, articulating direction, and enabling access to resources and feedback (Karauri & Kyongo, 2024). The role of leadership therefore includes sensemaking during complexity and uncertainty, translating broad strategy into coherent priorities and actionable tasks while maintaining legitimacy and trust among stakeholders (Rosari, 2019).

Leadership emphasizes voluntary followership and shared values, while management involves controlled and predictive behavior (Jahan, 2023). Key distinctions between leadership and management include factors like coercion, shared vision, and voluntary followership. Leadership differs from management in a sense that managers lay down the structure and delegates authority and responsibility, leaders provides direction by developing the organizational vision and communicating it to the employees and inspiring them to achieve it (Jahan, 2023).

Leadership in management research is defined as a relational and purposive social influence process through which individuals mobilize and coordinate the efforts of others to achieve shared organizational goals, and contemporary scholarship frames leadership not as a set of static traits but as dynamic interactions between leaders, followers, and situational contexts that produce collective outcomes (Rosari, 2019). Being a leader means having to use the resources that are available to you, whether they be material or human, in order to achieve goals and maintain organizational unity (Jain et al., 2022). Management research emphasizes that effective leadership requires the articulation of a compelling vision and the communication of clear priorities to reduce ambiguity and guide decision-making at multiple levels of the organization, and empirical studies treat leadership as both an input to and an outcome of organizational processes, where leaders foster environments that enable learning, innovation, and adaptation (Rosari, 2019).

Analysts define leadership as the process by which one individual inspires a group of people to work together toward a single objective (Jain et al., 2022). The main objective of this study was to quantify and identify the current state of leadership management through bibliometric analysis, to identify emerging issues, and to lay the foundation for subsequent research in the area. Bibliometric analyses reveal fragmented thematic clusters in leadership research, with subfields such as inclusive leadership, public leadership, and educational leadership developing largely in parallel rather than through integrated discourse, and recent mapping studies show uneven geographical contributions, with a concentration of authors and institutions in a few countries and regions that shapes the global intellectual structure of leadership scholarship (Udin & Dananjoyo, 2025). Bibliometric reviews also identify underdeveloped attention to multilevel mechanisms that link top leadership practices to frontline behaviors through middle-management processes and organizational routines, and another key objective is to develop multilevel bibliometric frameworks that trace conceptual and empirical pathways from strategic leadership to operational outcomes, thereby clarifying mediators and boundary conditions (Aboagye & Ayikue, 2025).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are roughly as many diverse opinions on leadership as there are traits that set leaders apart from non-leaders, but there are almost twice as many distinct viewpoints on leadership as there are characteristics that set leaders apart from non-leaders. All the elements are still there, even though the majority of recent research has moved away from the theories based on features or public appearance and toward the situation theory, which holds that the leader's actions dictate the conditions under which control is currently exercised. Leadership can be defined as a particular action, as a group and its members, or as a process and connection (Jain et al., 2022). The most widely accepted theories of leadership state that influencing a group of people to achieve a common goal is a necessary component of leadership.

A social movement is a kind of collective activity that focuses on particular political or social issues (Radtke, 2022). Social movement leaders rely more on charisma than power to inspire followers to take action, however, modern management theory demonstrates that the distinctions between the two are eroding as social movements gain greater permanence and firms resemble them more. Within the business sector, a social network consists of people who may have additional interests in addition to their common workplace (Radtke, 2022).

Any organization's human resources perform and are satisfied in large part due to the styles and practices of its leadership (Guterman, 2023). The relationship between a manager and their subordinates that leads to the successful completion of subordinates' responsibilities and, consequently, the achievement of the significant objectives that the leader is accountable for and plays a key part in setting is referred to as the leadership role (Guterman, 2023). Leadership, at its most basic, is giving orders and encouragement to followers so they will perform in the right way (Muczyk & Holt, 2008). There were four distinct choices consistently selected as most consistent with leadership: influencing, coaching, modeling and ensuring resilience (Collins II et al., 2023).

Regardless of their position, all leaders are engaged in the following core roles and activities provided by the four-factor theory of leadership (Muczyk and Adler, 2002) including: (1) Work facilitation refers to leader behaviors that support the achievement of organizational performance goals and these include activities like coordinating, planning, and scheduling as well as giving subordinates the tools, materials, and technical knowledge they need to do their jobs; (2) Support comes in the form of behaviors that increase a subordinate's sense of personal worth and importance; (3) Interaction facilitation refers to leader behaviors that encourage organizational members to develop close and mutually satisfying relationships; (4) Goal emphasis comes in the form of behaviors that motivate organizational members to achieve excellent performance and fulfill the goals set for the organization. Leadership has a significant impact on the strategic management process and facilitates the organization to implement effective strategies (Mjaku, 2020). Strategic leadership is a process that transforms organizations into successful ones through the right strategies and leadership is responsible for motivating and inspiring employees to work together (Mjaku, 2020).

Transactional leadership frames influence as an exchange process where rewards and penalties align follower effort with organizational goals and maintain short-term performance, while transformational leadership contrasts transactional models by proposing that leaders elevate follower motivation and identification through inspiring visions, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Oshame & Maureen, 2023). Servant leadership reorients the leader's purpose toward serving follower development and community well-being, thereby producing ethical climates and sustainable commitment, while authentic and ethical leadership theories foreground leader self-awareness, transparency, and moral conduct as mechanisms that build trust and legitimacy across stakeholders (Oshame & Maureen, 2023).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

We adopt bibliometrics analysis (Chen et al, 2024; Hsu & Chang, 2024; Pizarro et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024) in this paper, consisting of five stages, namely: Determining the keywords, initial searching and repair searching results; Compiling preliminary data statistics (before and after repairing) and saving in RIS format; Enter RIS data into Publish or Perish; Analysis of publications sources and citations; and finally visualize the results using VoS Viewer. We have outlined the research literature from 2013 to 2023 to demonstrate the outlook for leadership management. This paper resulting in a refined dataset of 3691 articles. Figure 1 below depicts the flow chart of our proposed method.

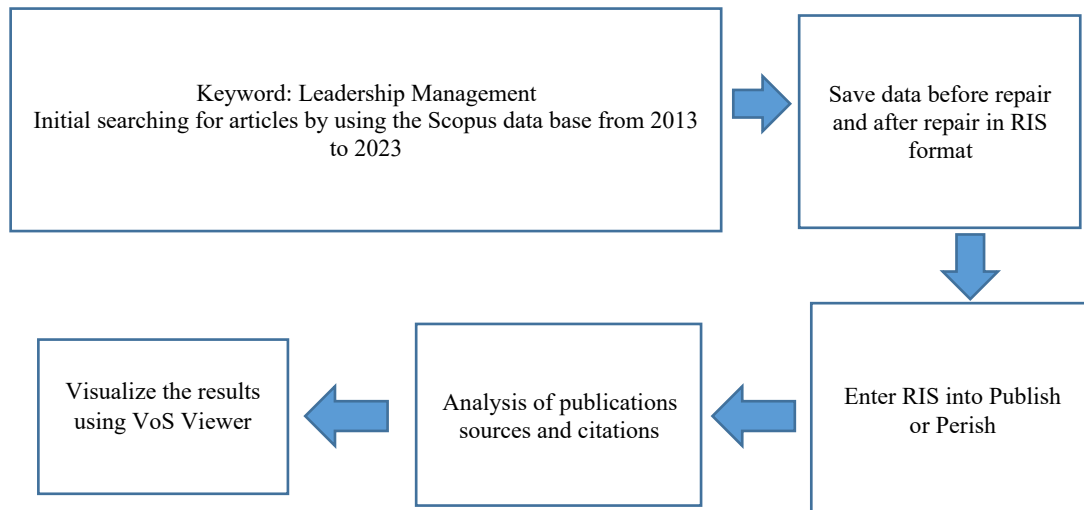


Figure 1. Flow chart of the proposed method

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study performed a bibliometric analysis to comprehensively explore the research landscape on leadership management by conducting a quantitative examination, detailed information regarding countries, institutions, authors, and keywords over the past decade have been collected, shedding light on the current state and future trends in this field. The annual publication trends revealed a consistent level of research activity, highlighting the sustained interest and significance of leadership management.

Table 1. Comparison Matrix

Data	Initial Search Results	Search Results Repair
Database	Scopus	Scopus
Year publishing	(2013-2023)	(2013-2023)
Year citation	10	10
Number of Articles	3915	3691
Number citation	37559	36612
Number Citation per Year	3755.90	3661.20
Number Authors per Year	2.25	2.23
H index	73	72
G index	123	123
hI Normal	45	45
hI Annual	4.50	4.50

For knowing comparison of the citation matrix on the data taken via Scopus, then researcher make the table in which containing number article, number citation, number citations per year, number authors per year, H Index, G Index, Normal hI, and hI yearly at the beginning search and on results repair. Comparison data matrix in result search start and result search after repair could be seen in Table 1.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of related publications each year

Year	TP	% (N=3691)	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP
2013	314	0,09	209	4815	15,33	23,04
2014	248	0,07	192	5709	23,02	29,73
2015	272	0,07	211	4175	15,35	19,79
2016	378	0,10	260	4116	10,89	15,83
2017	379	0,10	285	4016	10,60	14,09
2018	356	0,10	263	4281	12,03	16,28
2019	367	0,10	254	3601	9,81	14,18
2020	380	0,10	285	3446	9,07	12,09
2021	408	0,11	216	1514	3,71	7,01
2022	384	0,10	175	776	2,02	4,43
2023	205	0,06	59	163	0,80	2,76
	3691	100%				

Note: TP= total number of publications; NCP= number cited publications; TC=total quotes; C/P=average citations per publication; C/CP= average citation per cited publication

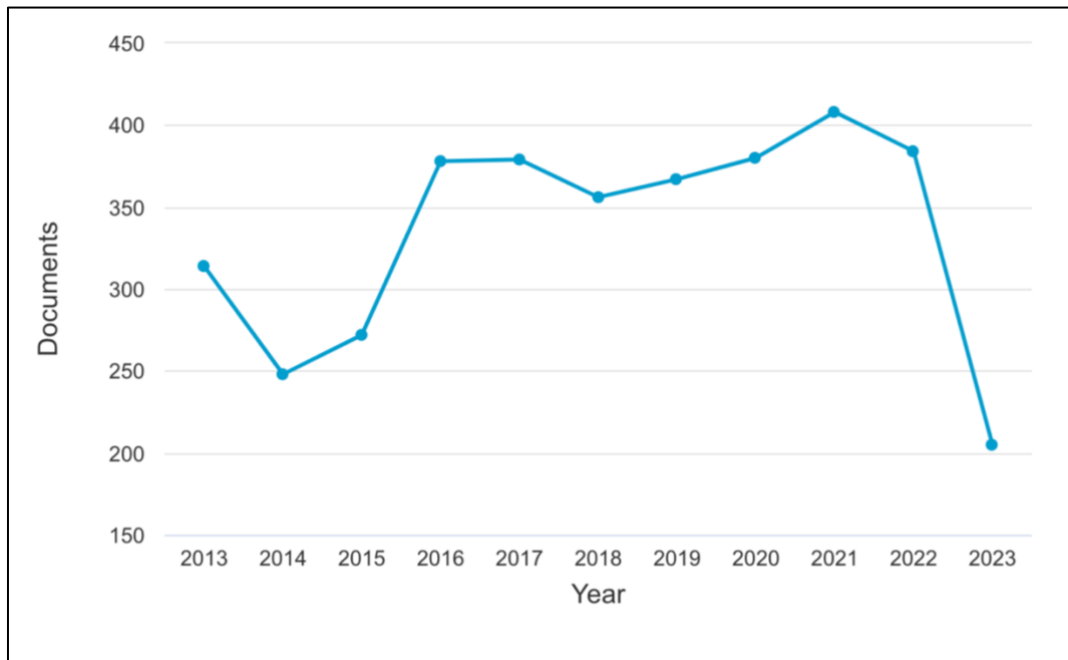


Figure 2. Publication from 2013-2023

Figure 3 shows shows two categories: Economics (31.0%, red) and Business/Management (69.0%, blue). The distribution indicates a clear dominance of Business/Management over Economics by more than two-to-one.

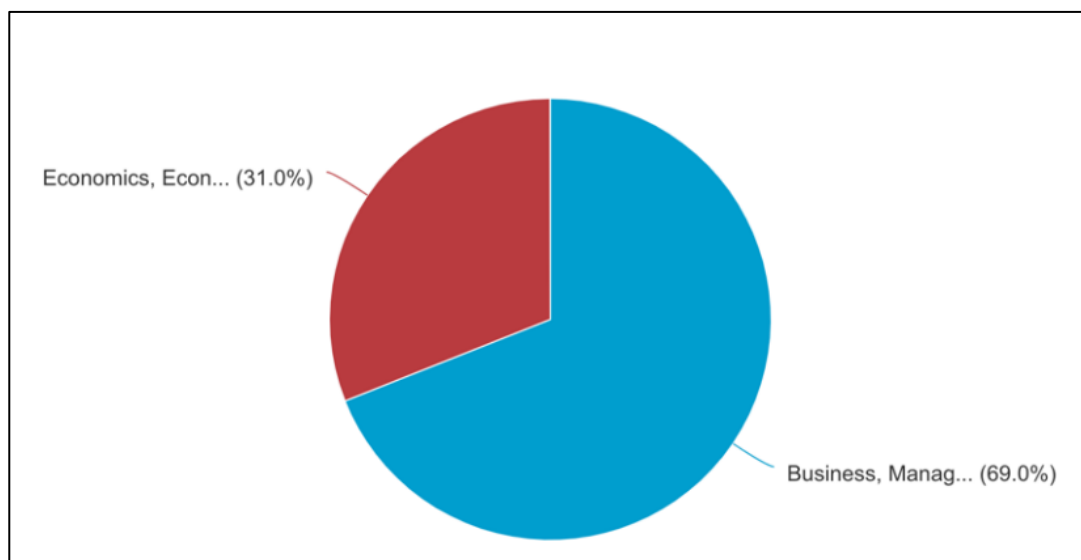


Figure 3. Documents by subject area from 2013-2023

Interpretive observations linked to leadership theory as follows:

- Upper-echelons and leader background

A workforce or sample weighted toward Business/Management suggests that leaders are more likely to have managerial training and vocational orientations, which aligns with upper-echelons theory where leaders' educational and professional backgrounds shape strategic choices and organizational priorities.

- Trait and skills perspectives
The predominance of Business/Management implies an emphasis on managerial skills (planning, organizing, controlling) rather than economics-oriented analytical traits. Expect leadership competency models to prioritize interpersonal, operational, and strategic management skills over pure economic modeling or policy analysis.
- Behavioral and situational implications
In contexts dominated by Business/Management actors, leadership behaviors may favor transactional and performance-monitoring styles that drive execution and short-term targets. Conversely, a larger Economics presence might correlate with more analytical, policy-oriented, or systems-level situational approaches.
- Transformational vs transactional balance
A Business/Management majority suggests organizations may lean on transactional mechanisms (KPIs, incentives, performance management) while transformational leadership (vision, inspiration) will be required to shift culture toward long-term innovation or social value, especially if economic complexity increases.
- Distributed leadership and network effects
When one discipline (Business/Management) dominates numerically, distributed leadership may concentrate within managerial networks, risking homogeneity of perspectives. Deliberate cross-disciplinary collaboration is needed to foster emergent leadership from economics experts who can contribute different analytical frames.
- Ethical and servant leadership considerations
The composition revealed by the chart matters for ethical priorities: business-oriented majorities might emphasize shareholder/value metrics, whereas economics representation could bring welfare, equity, or macro-policy lenses. Leadership development should therefore include ethical and servant leadership training to balance these tendencies.

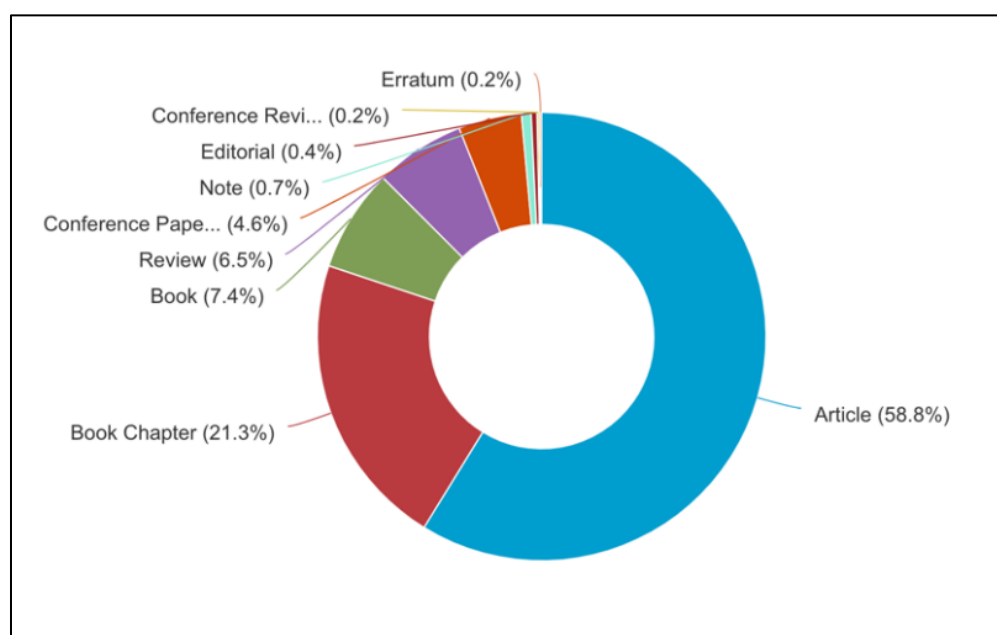


Figure 4. Documents by type from 2013-2023

Table 3. Documents' type

Type	Number	Percentage
Article	2170	0,59
Book chapter	787	0,21
Book	273	0,07
Review	240	0,07
Conference paper	168	0,05
Note	26	0,01
Editorial	15	0,00
Erratum	6	0,00
Conference review	6	0,00
	3691	100%

Figure 5 shows that 134 documents from Human Resource Management International Digest Journal, 134 from Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 109 from Journal of Management Development, 100 from Strategic Direction, and 88 from Advances in Developing Human Resources Journal.



Figure 5. Documents each year by source from 2013-2023

Figure 6 shows many colors that represent keywords. The top five are red color represent keywords “social media, talent management, human resources”, green represent “authentic leadership, employee engagement, empowering leadership”, blue for “emotional intelligence, human resources development, leadership development”, yellow for “development, education, relational leadership”, and purple represent “job satisfaction, mentoring, leader.”

Figure 6 above contains several gaps, as follows:

- Underrepresentation of ethical and distributed leadership nodes
If ethical leadership and distributed/shared leadership appear smaller or peripheral, this suggests relative under-emphasis on moral governance and collective, networked influence in the dataset.
- Potential siloing between practice-oriented and theory-oriented clusters
Dense subclusters around talent management and corporate governance may indicate practical, applied streams that do not fully integrate with identity or learning theories.
- Limited explicit multilevel markers
The visualization highlights concepts but less visibly marks cross-level mechanisms linking top leadership to frontline outcomes, pointing to a gap for multilevel, process-oriented theorizing.

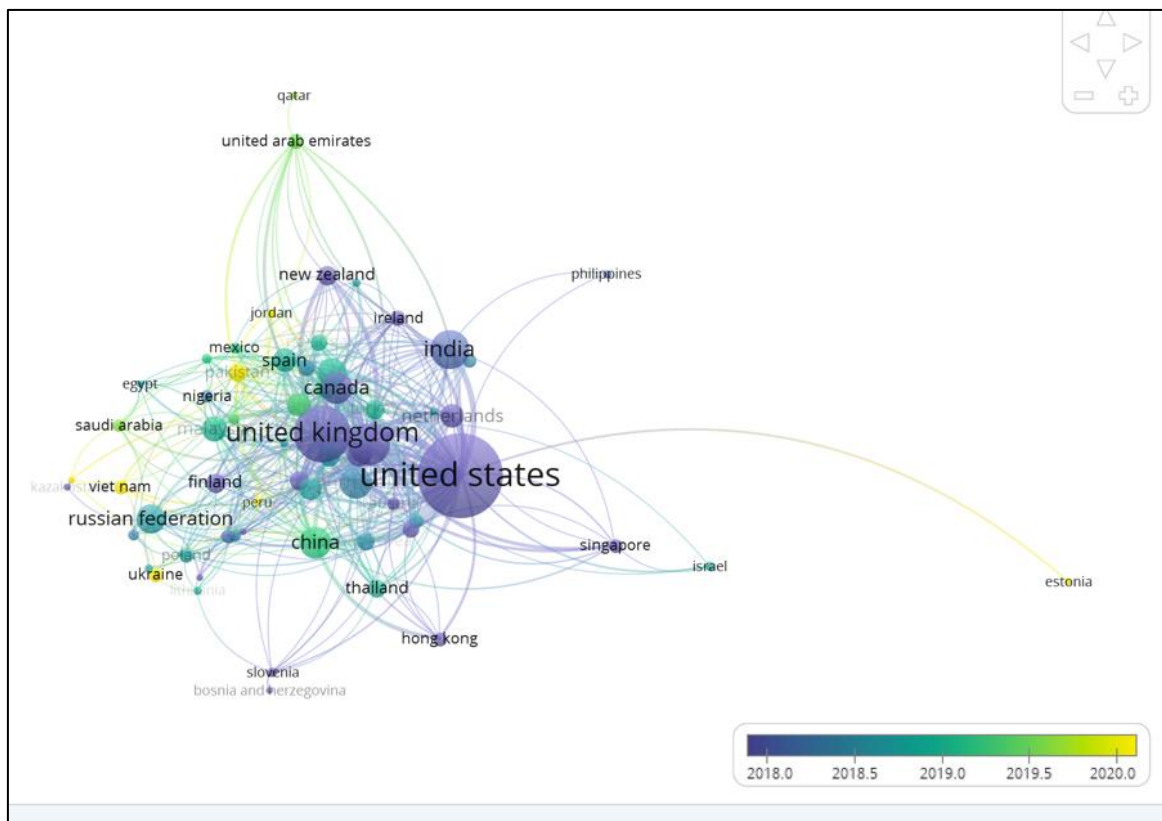


Figure 7. Visualization country area using overlay visualization

The collaborative analysis of countries demonstrated that United States ranked first in both publication output and centrality. Notably, the highest publication number was located in the United States, US in the field of leadership management. This significant contribution might be backed by the implementation of leadership management in the country.

The map unfolds like a living atlas of influence, where the United States, the United Kingdom, China, Canada, and India stand out as luminous hubs drawing lines of connection across continents. These nations do more than exchange goods and ideas; they shape agendas, broker resources, and set rhythms that others follow, their prominence reflecting

concentrated institutional power and the outsized impact of where decisions are made. Over time the network shifts in color and texture, early ties glowing warm and familiar while newer links cool into fresh pathways, showing how collaborations are born, evolve, and sometimes fade as contexts change.

Rather than a single captain steering the ship, leadership here emerges from relationships. Dense clusters of ties act as highways for information and norms, and central nodes operate like brokers, translating knowledge between distant communities and converting social capital into strategic advantage. Mid-level connectors and boundary spanners quietly perform crucial work, moving ideas between regions, adapting practices to local logics, and knitting together collaborations that would otherwise remain isolated.

This is a network that prizes adaptability. The temporal gradient makes clear that successful actors do more than hold status; they sense opportunities, form timely partnerships, and reconfigure connections when circumstances demand. Cultural and institutional differences punctuate every interaction, so effective global leadership requires cultural intelligence and the ability to make sense of divergent norms while crafting shared purpose across borders.

The story the graph tells is both a warning and an invitation: concentration of ties around a few hubs can create fragility if those hubs dominate agendas, yet the same network also contains the raw material for resilience when brokers and peripheral actors are empowered. Building a healthier, more robust global leadership ecosystem means investing in those bridging roles, encouraging diverse partnerships, and tracking collaborations over time so that promising ties can be nurtured rather than assumed to endure.

Leadership management is a crucial aspect of organizational success, involving the development of vision, goal-setting, and employee guidance (Gentsoudi, 2023). It encompasses both leadership and management skills, with leadership focusing on influence and vision, while management involves formal authority and organizational processes (Popovici, 2012). Effective leadership can significantly impact public sector performance, including financial instruments and risk management (Gentsoudi, 2023). While communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are crucial abilities, emotional intelligence, authenticity, and strategic thinking are crucial attributes of a leader. Leadership is vital in creating enthusiasm and integrating diverse talents within an organization (Anjum, 2022). For leaders, it is imperative that they engage in ongoing personal growth that includes self-evaluation, feedback seeking, and role model learning. Overall, leadership management is a multifaceted discipline that requires ongoing growth and adaptation to meet organizational challenges.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study provides an in-depth bibliometric analysis of leadership management, revealing the global research landscape, international collaboration, publication trends, research hotspots, and emerging frontiers. The global output of publications maintains a balanced growth, highlighting the active engagement in this field. The analysis recognizes leading researchers and institutions globally, with the United States standing out as a major

contributor. The investigation has focused on leadership and leadership management. Despite these insights, gaps remain, particularly in understanding the optimization of leadership management, necessitating further investigations. Nevertheless, this research sheds light on the current landscape of research into leadership management, providing a solid groundwork for further academic exploration. This study is limited to testing literature through bibliometric analysis. Suggestion for further research is to conduct empirical research on the results of this study.

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