

Bibliometric Analysis Method of Examining the Concept of Green Knowledge Management and Sustainability: A Test for Web of Science Application

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Abstract: The concept of sustainability and organizational green policies is very important from environmental studies perspectives nowadays. Green practices are evaluated in many different aspects, such as environmental, technological, and economic, in organizations. The green and environmental adaptation of all aspects of knowledge management is defined as “green knowledge management,” as well as is being examined by scientists in various aspects, following the organizational structure in the study. The development of green knowledge management, its applications, analyzing it geographically, evaluating its academic performance, and evaluating the existing intellectual accumulation on the subject is possible with bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analysis methods are used in both academic and administrative studies, as well as to quantitatively analyze scientific publications produced by scientists and academic institutions. It plays an active role in the decision-making process, especially in the measurement of academic performance, in the evaluation of a particular subject, publication, institution, and in the collection development policy practices of libraries. In this study, in addition to the distribution of articles on green knowledge management indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) database according to years, countries, and institutions, keywords and institutions are also used to explain the relationship between the concepts related to green knowledge management and sustainability concepts.

Keywords: Green knowledge management, Sustainability, Bibliometrics, Bibliometric analysis

1. Introduction

Knowledge is defined as a justified belief that influences human actions (Nonaka, 1994), a fluid blend of experience, values, contextual information, and expert opinion that forms a basis for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and knowledge. It arises and is applied in the minds of those who know. Knowledge, which is a strategic resource for the organization (Yu et al., 2022), is not only recorded in documents or stored in repositories but also embedded in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms (Davenport and Purusak, 1998; Alavi and Leidner, 2001). To do this, individuals gain practical knowledge when they can apply their own experiences and contextual understanding to interpret the details and implications of action. Organizations need the ability to create or adopt new knowledge to shape the strategic directions of the organization and compete with other organizations. Routines, values, norms, and practices reflect the organizational culture. Managers achieve knowledge management (KM) goals by characterizing the connections between culture and knowledge (De Long and Fahey, 2000). The processes of managing knowledge in companies are actions related to acquiring, storing, using, applying, and creating knowledge to increase the effectiveness and competitiveness of an organization (Abbas and Khan, 2023). KM aims to increase organizational performance by explicitly designing and implementing tools, processes, systems, structures, and cultures to improve the creation, sharing, and use of knowledge that is critical for decision making (De Long and Fahey, 2000). Institutions are taking green approach initiatives from KM practices to increase organizational performance and benefit from competitive advantages such as customer satisfaction and profitability (Abbas and Sağsan, 2019).

Integrating KM with all its dimensions, including green and environmental, is defined as GKM. The important criterion for GKM applications is how these applications affect corporate green performance and how such applications can benefit the environment. Since GKM is a new phenomenon, there is no study in the literature that covers all aspects of the natural environment and the postulates of KM (Yu et al., 2022). In the literature, there are studies on GKM in organizations such as economic, social, and environmental (Al-Faouri, 2023), playing a mediating role between technological sustainability (Riaz et al., 2024), utilizing GKM to develop artificial intelligence capabilities and green technology innovation (Kumar et al., 2025), the relationship between GKM and intellectual capital (Khan, Mehmood, and Kwan, 2024), and associating it with digital technologies such as blockchain, big data and social media (Phung et al., 2024).

Scientific research shows that GKM has been the subject of many different studies. For this reason, this study will conduct a bibliometric analysis to examine the intellectual accumulation on the subject in terms of year, institution, and geography. In this context, the research method, limitations, and bibliometric analysis will be explained first. Then, the analysis results of the bibliographic data obtained from the WoS database were interpreted and evaluated in the Bibexcel and VOSviewer programs. The analysis of the year data in the Bibexcel program, the visualization of the collaboration network in the VOSviewer program, and the analysis of the collaboration network were performed.

2. Methodology

GKM is a popular topic that encompasses environmental protection and clearance in the literature nowadays. Even if the term seems like a fashion and fad, it has to be considered by the sustainability policy, especially in developing countries. To understand the developmental stages of the topic in the literature, bibliometric analysis should be used. Therefore, some of the bibliometric analysis studies in the literature on the GKM topic for different purposes and with limitations (Iliescu, 2024; Phung et al., 2024; Ulhaq et al., 2024) have been emphasized. This study, unlike the studies in the literature, examined the studies related to the GKM topic. The procedure, summarized by bibliometric analysis (Donthu et al., 2021) for the study and including four main steps, was used. In this direction, the purpose and scope of the research were defined, the research technique was selected, data were collected, and the findings were bibliometrically analyzed and reported.

2.1 Purpose and Scope

Although the subject of GKM is a current issue, it has become a subject of great interest, especially in recent years. In particular, environmental sustainability is ensured in institutions, and innovation studies are carried out in line with this purpose. When the development status of countries is also taken into consideration, there are differences in the performance of countries, authors, and institutions on GKM. This study aims to evaluate the development of the subject of GKM by analysing the bibliometric analysis method of articles related to and related to GKM, countries, institutions, and related studies. For this purpose, the scope of the study was limited to the WoS database, and the following questions were sought:

- How is the distribution of articles on GKM by year?
- How does GKM affect organizational performance?
- Are there differences in the research areas of countries on GKM?
- How about the relationship between GKM and sustainability in the context of bibliometric analysis results? Are there any differences between the countries?

By limiting the study to the above items, it provides data on the quantitative and relational analysis of the sustainability relationship of the studies on the subject of GKM in terms of year, institution, country performance, and GKM. In addition to evaluating the current situation, the data we have obtained can guide the impact and relationship of quantitative data on GKM on the policies of countries, how the research results of universities develop a proposal on GKM in the country and the world, and whether there is a significant relationship in the cause and effect relationship of the sustainability relationship according to the results of the bibliometric analysis data of the GKM issue.

The scope of the study can be expanded by adding the Scopus database in future studies. In addition, bibliographic data can be downloaded from databases such as Google Scholar and analysed in programs such as Bibexcel and VOSviewer can be added to the scope of the study.

2.2 Research Technique

Performance analysis (total publications, institutional and country performances by years) and science mapping technique (collaboration between authors, collaboration between institutions, and keyword analysis) were used in the study.

2.3 Data Collection

Two Different bibliographic datasets were collected from the WoS database. The first is directly related to GKM, and the second includes data containing terms that have a green relationship with KM. The second query also contains the first one. The purpose of making two queries is to examine the development of GKM, which was given in detail. Since the year 2025 has not been completed yet, bibliographic data for 2025 was excluded. In order to obtain data suitable for the purpose of the study, a query formulation was made with Boolean operators, which are given in Figure 1 below.

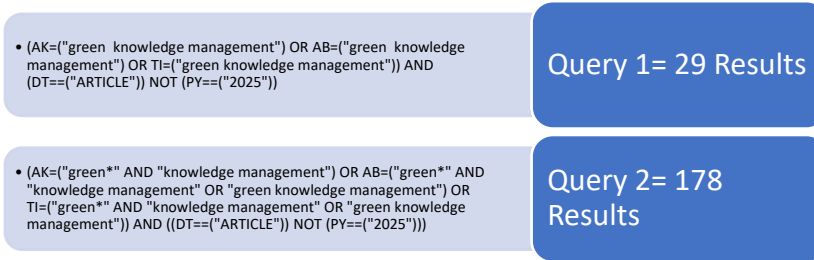


Figure 1: WoS query formulation on GKM!

The results of query 1 and query 2 were downloaded from the WoS database and transferred to Bibexcel and VOSviewer for analysis. Bibliographic tag data were analysed in Bibexcel. The results of query 1 and query 2 were downloaded from the WoS database and transferred to BibExcel and VOSviewer for analysis. Bibliographic tag data were analysed in Bibexcel. Co-authorship and institutional collaboration, and a keyword network map, were created in the VOSviewer programme.

3. Bibliometrics

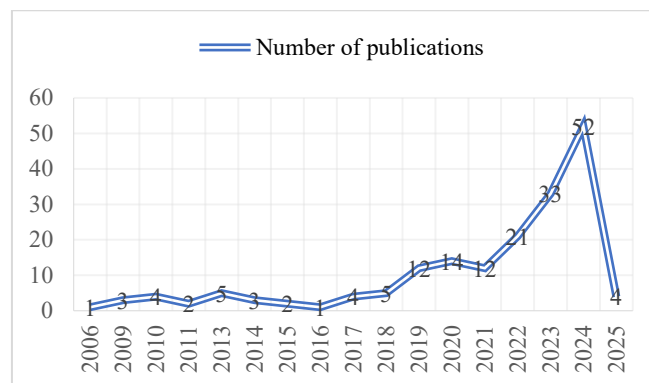
The term bibliometrics, which is the application of quantitative analysis of information sources in general, is based on the term statistical bibliography (Pritchard, 1969; Broadus, 1987). Pritchard defined bibliometrics as the application of mathematical and statistical methods to books and other communication media. The field of application of bibliometrics has developed over the years and has been defined as the logical expression of the measurement of items related to publications and bibliographic citations (Broadus, 1987). By analysing the bibliographic data of articles related to the research question from databases, scientists gain information about the intellectual accumulation in the literature by analysing the performance of journals, institutions, authors, countries, and collaborative studies with a bibliometric analysis method (Donthu et al., 2021a; liescu, 2024; Phung et al., 2024; Ulhaq et al., 2024).

4. Findings

Within the scope of the study, the data from 178 articles were analysed. The results were interpreted as the distribution by years, distribution according to institutions, distribution by countries, and keywords occurrence network.

4.1 Distribution by Years

The rate of increase of articles over the years provides information about the annual article production performance. According to the results obtained from bibliographic data in the WoS database on the subject of GKM, the number of publications according to years is given in Graph 1. The data were analysed in the Bibexcel programme.



Graph 1: Distribution of articles on GKM according to years!

Graph 1 above indicates that the number of articles started to increase, especially in 2019. While the average number of articles between 2006 and 2018 was 2,31, the average number of articles between 2019 and 2024 reached 24. The average number of articles between 2006-2024 is 9.16. When the distribution of the subject over the years is examined, it is seen that the number of studies on the subject has increased. This shows that the importance of GKM has increased, especially in the last six years. The increase in green knowledge

management between 2019 and 2024 is important in terms of evaluating the research topics of the articles and the performance of inter-institutional cooperation.

4.2 Distribution According to Institutions

382 institutional data points were obtained from 178 articles. The number of institutions that do not cooperate between institutions is 31, and the total number of articles (18.54%) is 33. The number of articles produced in cooperation with at least one institution (81.46%) is 145. According to the data obtained from the analyses, the top ten institutions are given in Table 1 below, taking into account the number of citations of the data of the institutions that produce the most articles.

Table 1: Institutions producing the most articles on

Organization	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
Zhengzhou University	10	233	14
University of Turin	5	133	15
Lahore Garrison University	4	386	5
University of Central Punjab	4	357	12
University Alicante	4	96	0
Dalian University of Technology	3	527	8
Jaipuria Institute of Management	3	253	6
North China Electric Power University	3	179	9
Zhejiang University of Technology	3	85	5
Asia University of Taiwan	3	42	11

As Table 1 indicates that most of the articles are produced with institutional cooperation. The institution that produced the most articles without collaboration is the University of Alicante. In addition to the production of scientific publications, the number of citations received by a publication plays an important role in evaluating a publication. Information on the ten most cited institutions is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Most cited institutions on GKM

Organization	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
Dalian University of Technology	3	527	8
Friedrich Schiller University Jena	1	410	1
Near East University	1	410	1
Lahore Garrison University	4	386	5
University of Central Punjab	4	357	12
Mohammad Ali Jinnah University	1	312	3
Tongji University	1	312	3
London Metropolitan University	2	275	4
Jaipuria Institute of Management	3	253	6
University of St.Gallen	1	246	0

The institution with the highest number of citations on an institutional basis is Dalian University of Technology.

Studies produced through institutional cooperation play an important role in the production of knowledge between civilisations and countries, and eliminate the borders in scientific studies. For this reason, the measurement of data such as publication production, citation rate, and the number of institutional cooperations has gained importance, especially in recent years. Bibliometric maps, which have an important place in expressing institutional cooperation, are important in interpreting institutional cooperation. An institutional collaboration map was created from the data obtained within the scope of the study and is given in Figure 2.

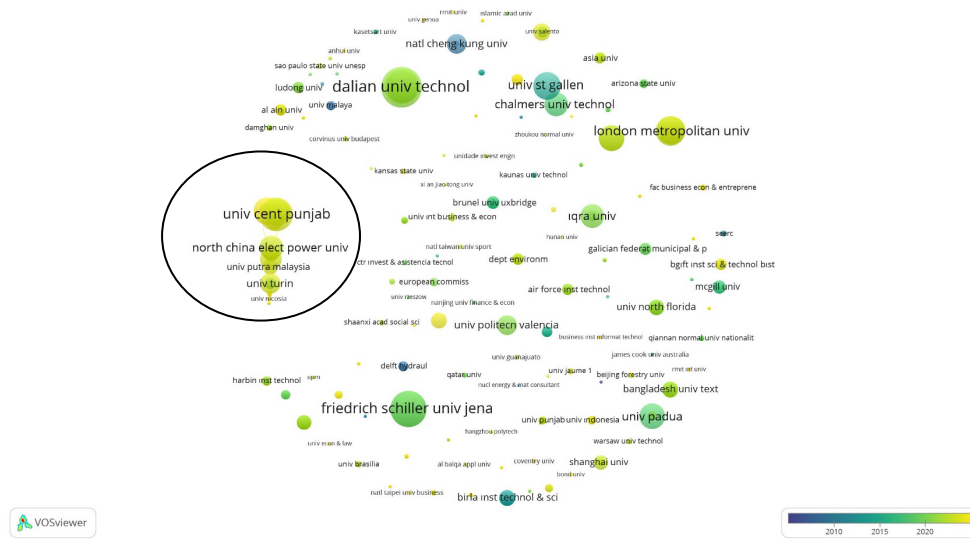
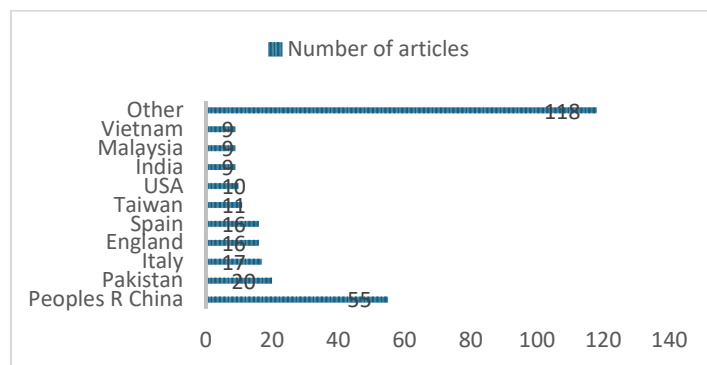


Figure 2: Institutional collaboration map related to GKM

Figure 2 shows the collaboration map of 382 institutions, derived from 178 articles, resulted in 119 clusters. Out of these, 31 clusters correspond to studies from a single institution. In the figure, the size of the circles represents the number of citations received, and the colors indicate the average publication year. The region highlighted in the figure is where the most collaborations occur. It includes articles published between 2018 and 2025, showcasing cooperation among 53 institutions across 5 clusters. Among the studies conducted without inter-institutional collaboration, the most cited institution is the University of St. Gallen, which published in 2014.

4.3 Distribution by Countries

An important evaluation criterion in bibliometric analysis results is the distribution by countries. The distribution by countries on a subject provides information about important issues, such as identifying important topics for a country, and analyzing the research questions of the country on any subject. From the data obtained from WoS, it was determined that 56 countries published articles on GKM. The distribution of countries publishing articles is given in Graph 2.



Graph 2: Distribution of articles on GKM by countries

When Graph 2 is analysed, it is seen that Asian countries such as China, Pakistan, and Taiwan have published more on GKM. Especially, the articles produced by China constitute 30.90% of the data obtained. China produced the first article on GKM in 2018, and there was a rapid increase in the number of articles in 2022.

While evaluating the data of countries on GKM, it would be useful to examine the cooperation studies between countries. In order to evaluate the inter-country cooperation of WoS data on GKM, the inter-country cooperation map is given in Figure 3.

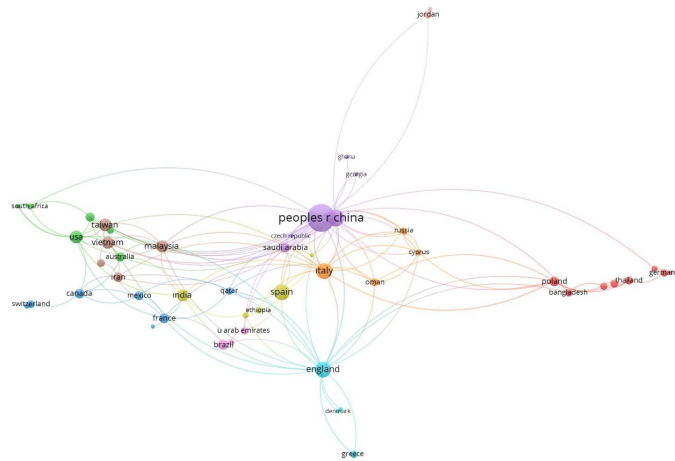


Figure 3: Map of inter-country co-operation

As a result of the inter-country cooperation analysis in VOSviewer, the cooperation network of 54 countries was created and is given in the figure. As a result of the analysis, the cooperation network of 54 countries, consisting of 10 clusters, was obtained. Scotland and Sweden, which do not cooperate with any country, were not included in the analysis. The size of the circles in the figure shows the number of articles, and the colours show the clusters. It is seen that China is the country with the highest number of publications and co-operation networks between countries on GKM. China has cooperated with a total of 25 different countries, and its total cooperation strength is 45. Among the countries with which China cooperates, Pakistan is the country with which China cooperates the most. The number of publications that China and Pakistan have co-operated on is 9, and it constitutes 45% of the publications produced by Pakistan on GKM. China has cooperated with Asian countries such as Pakistan, Malaysia, South Korea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, as well as European countries such as England, Italy, Spain, Cyprus, and African countries such as Ghana on Green Information Management.

4.4 Keyword co-Occurrence Network

In scientific publications, the keywords are the words that express what the publication is about and are determined by the author and/or authors to express the entire study. In addition to expressing what the study is about, it has an important place for researchers to search and find sources. In order to analyse the articles related and related to GKM in the basic approach of this study, firstly, GKM was queried from the keywords. As a result of the queries made in WoS, bibliographic data of articles directly related to GKM were downloaded, and a keywords network was created from the data obtained. As a result of the network analysis, 103 keywords were analysed. The network of 103 keywords related to GKM was created and given in Figure 4.

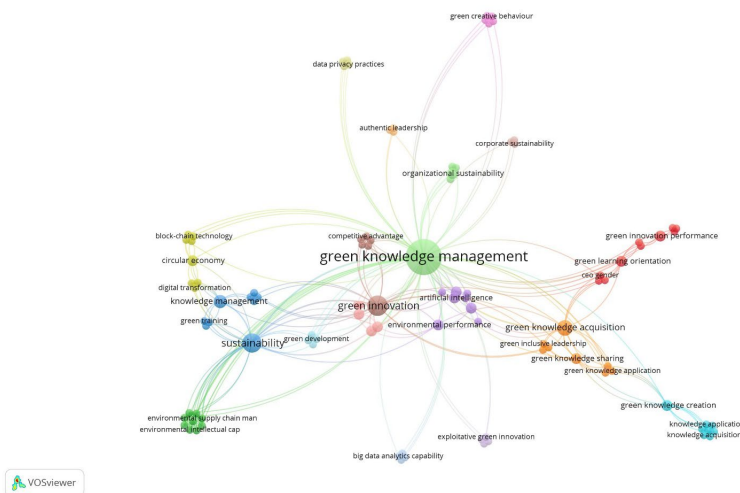


Figure 4: Keyword co-occurrence network related to GKM

As a result of the keyword analysis, 17 clusters were obtained from 103 keywords. The keyword relationship network from the obtained data is given in Figure 4. In the figure, the size of the circles indicates the frequency value, and the colours indicate the keyword cluster. When the relationship between terms is examined, the keyword GKM is at the centre. It is seen that the keywords with the highest frequency of repetition with GKM are ‘green innovation’, ‘sustainability’, and ‘green knowledge acquisition’. The relationship of these terms with GKM also provides information about the relationship of the terms with which they are related to GKM. Firstly, if we examine the term ‘sustainability’, the terms ‘green knowledge’, ‘environmental knowledge’, ‘green supply chain management’, and ‘environmental supply management’ are associated with GKM together with the term ‘sustainability’. One of the two important keywords related to the term sustainability is ‘KM’, and the other is ‘green innovation’. The keyword ‘KM’ is related to the terms ‘blockchain technology’, ‘institutional factors’, ‘strategic factors’, ‘circular economy’, ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘digital transformation’, and ‘innovation’. The term ‘sustainability’ stands out in its relationship with GKM. The fact that the terms ‘green training’, ‘voluntary behaviour’, ‘hotel industry’, ‘government support’, ‘generative artificial intelligence’, ‘resource orchestration theory’, ‘green entrepreneurship’ do not appear to GKM is because the authors did not write GKM as a keyword (Wang, 2024; Lubis et al., 2024).

An important issue in measuring the performance of a subject in scientific studies is the citations received by the publication. The values of the average citations received by the articles on GKM according to the keyword network are given in Figure 5.

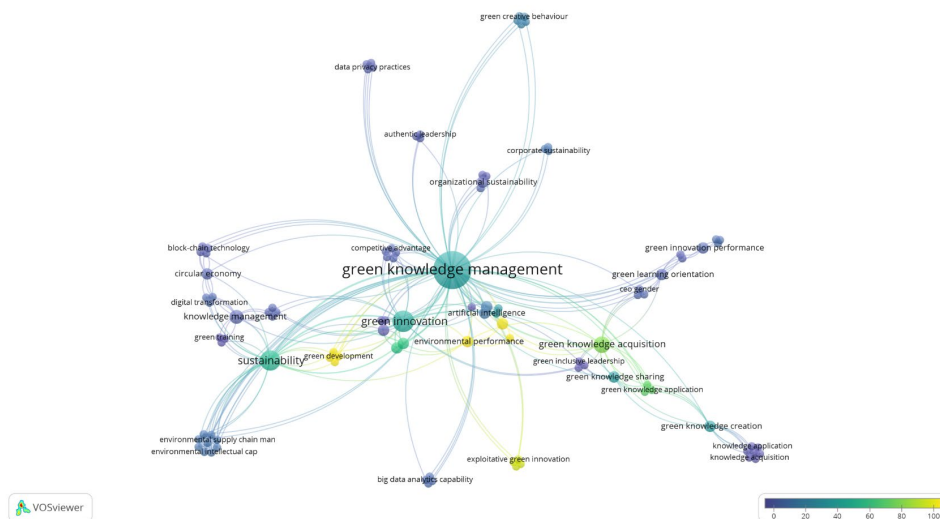


Figure 5: Distribution of citations received by articles on the subject according to keywords

When Figure 5 is examined, it is seen that the most cited studies on GKM are the terms “sustainability”, “green innovation”, and “green knowledge acquisition”. In the relationship between the keywords GKM, “sustainability” and “green innovation”, the terms “green environment”, green development, “organizational green culture”, “organizational strategy”, “green culture”, “green performance”, “environmental performance” come to the fore (Wang et al., 2022; Abbas and Khan, 2023).

One of the keywords of the most cited publications on GKM is “green knowledge acquisition”. The terms “green technology innovation”, “business strategy”, “environmental performance”, “instrument development”, “green knowledge storage”, “green knowledge application”, “Green knowledge sharing”, “Green knowledge creation” come to the fore with “Green knowledge acquisition” (Sahoo, Kumar and Upadhyay, 2023; Yu et al., 2022).

The study on the terms “green entrepreneurial orientation”, “exploitative green innovation”, “exploratory green innovation”, and “resource orchestration capability” regarding GKM also appears to have a high citation value (Shehzad et al., 2023).

When the keywords related to the keyword GKM are analysed, it is seen that the keywords related to sustainability and innovative approaches come to the forefront. Especially when the relationship between the keywords and other terms is examined, it is seen that information management practices in information centers or organizations are associated with the green approach. In addition to the term GKM, which comes to the forefront as the evaluation of information management within the framework of green standards, green

approaches related to information management should be evaluated. Therefore, as stated in the methodology, the query of information management and green concepts was analyzed. As a result of the analysis, the ten terms with the highest frequency of repetition are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency of occurrence of keywords related to the topic of GKM

Keyword	Occurrences	Total link strength
Knowledge management	65	296
Green innovation	31	142
Sustainability	27	134
Green knowledge management	21	96
Sustainable development	11	52
Corporate social responsibility	9	37
Environmental performance	8	38
Knowledge management process	8	31
Green supply chain management	6	32
Green knowledge sharing	6	30

Table 3 examines the terms green innovation and sustainability that come to the fore according to the results obtained from the information management and green terms data. It was determined that there were 33 different keywords in the relationship of the term “Sustainability” with information management, with a total frequency of 78 repetitions. To better understand the relationships of the keywords, a relationship map of 573 keywords obtained from 178 articles was created. Because of the analysis, the relationships of 504 keywords were determined and are given in Figure 6.

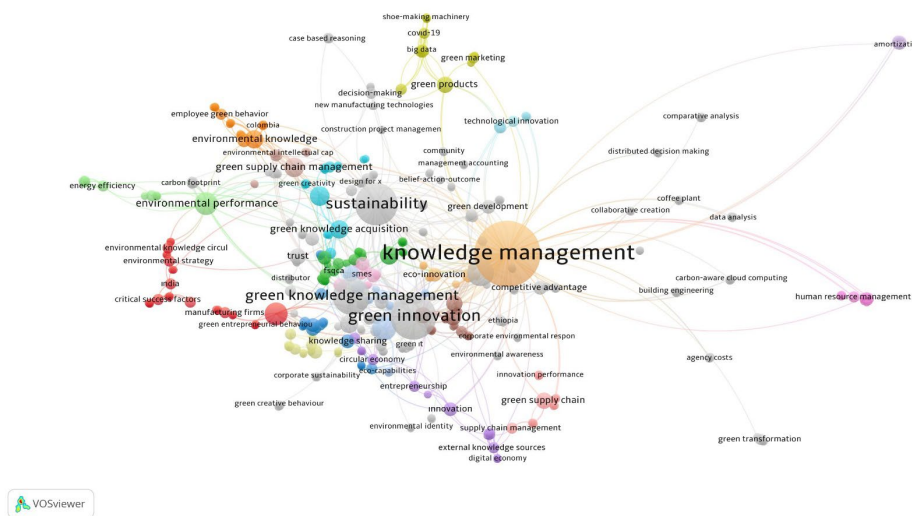


Figure 6: GKM relationship keyword network

As a result of the keyword relationship, 61 clusters were formed from 504 keywords. When Figure 6 is examined, the keyword KM is at the center. The terms that are close to the center and have the highest frequency of repetition are “sustainability”, “green innovation”, and “GKM”. When the term relationships between GKM and “sustainability” are examined, it is understood that the concept of “sustainability” has an important place in GKM. In addition, the keywords “corporate social responsibility”, “environmental performance”, “knowledge management process”, “green knowledge sharing”, “green supply chain management”, “environmental knowledge”, “green knowledge acquisition”, “green product innovation”, “structural equation modelling” with at least 5 frequency values are located at the center of the terms “GKM”, “sustainability”, “green innovation”.

Figure 5 and Figure 6. The terms “sustainability” and “green innovation” have an important place in the GKM subject. In addition, it is understood that the terms “sustainability” and “green innovation” come to the fore in

the GKM subject, which are among the related keywords, in topics such as environment, technology, organizational activities, and digital transformation.

5. Conclusion

Bibliometric analysis is used to evaluate the scientific performance and intellectual accumulation of authors, subjects, institutions, and countries by making quantitative evaluations of scientific publications. In this study, the subject of GKM was analyzed in the WoS database. Two important reasons should be clarified from the two topics that were captured in the study. Initially, the reason why GKM has been selected is directly related to the current debate, which is very popular and fashionable in the literature, not only limited to KM literature but also discussed by the international scientific authorities nowadays due to uncontrolled biodiversity, environmental pollution, etc. Moreover, WoS was selected because it has the highest prestigious database, which is considered by scientific authorities in the world.

When the findings of the study were evaluated according to years, institutions, and countries, evaluations were made about the institution's performance, collaboration studies, and related studies on the subject of GKM. Both literature studies and study findings on GKM show that the subject of GKM is one-to-one with the subject of sustainability and innovation. In general, the study findings are evaluated as follows:

- The country that produces the most articles on GKM is China. China's article performance is a cooperation from other countries, the issues and findings that China examines on GKM are a situation that other countries should take into consideration and research.
- When the subject of GKM is examined by continent, it is seen that the most articles belong to the Asian continent. China and Pakistan, which are Asian countries, have an important place in the overall total. Pakistan is the second Asian country that produces the most articles, and 45% of its studies were conducted in cooperation with China.
- The subject of GKM is directly related to the terms sustainability and innovation. Within the framework of these terms, GKM practices, organizational studies, and blockchain come to the fore in different subjects.

Bibliometric analysis data on GKM is a guide for the analysis of the current situation as well as for the research of the studies carried out by countries and institutions on this subject, according to the analysis data of the subject. In particular, the green policies of the countries and the decisions related to GKM on sustainability in government programs should also be investigated. The performance of academic institutions on green knowledge management over the years should be examined to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the knowledge management practices of institutions and countries and sustainability.

Ethics declaration: There is no need to obtain ethical approval for this study.

AI declaration: Artificial intelligence was not used in this study. The Turnitin report on the artificial intelligence rate is attached.

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