

Article

From Management to Support: A Systematic Bibliometric Review of Cross-Cultural Human Resource Management

Tianji GAO¹ (China)
László ERDEY² (Hungary)

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Abstract: Cross-cultural human resource management has become essential for multinational companies. However, the research outputs of this and related fields are still developing. This study utilised CiteSpace to analyse 330 papers on cross-cultural HRM published from 2002 to 2024 in the Web of Science core collection using bibliometric and visualisation methods. Results show an increasing trend of studies in cross-cultural HRM, with American, European, and Asian countries taking the lead. Author, institution, and country co-authorship networks were generated to identify the top productive authors, institutions, and countries, respectively. The journal co-citation network illustrates the distribution of core journals. The document co-citation network reveals the key research. The keywords co-occurrence network explores the research trend and hotspots. References and suggestions for the development of cross-cultural HRM research are provided.

Keywords: Cross-culture, Human resource management, Bibliometric analysis, Visualization analysis, CiteSpace

Classification-JEL: M54, M14, L25

¹ Doctoral School of Management and Business, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary

² Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary; and The Institute of International Relations and Area Studies, Faculty of European Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania

The country of origin of each author is specified in parentheses

INTRODUCTION

Under the wave of globalisation, there are increasingly multinational companies with employees who work for branches worldwide. Managing employees from diverse cultural backgrounds has become essential for these multinational giants. With the developing understanding of employees' values and emotions, it's widely noticed that employees need support from their employers, which is not only about wages but also understanding, especially for cross-cultural affairs. To better understand cross-cultural human resource management, reviewing related literature is needed.

The landscape of a research field can be represented and visualised by a network of cited references, co-occurring keywords, and collaborating institutions and authors (Chen and Song 2019), with the assistance of science mapping tools, e.g. CiteSpace and VOSviewer. This method has been utilised for systematic literature review in a wide range of research, such as regenerative medicine (Chen et al. 2012), citizen science (Kullenberg and Kasperowski 2016), technology and innovation (Li, Porter, and Suominen 2018), and high-speed railway (Chen & Liu, 2020).

This study used CiteSpace as the analysis software to proceed with co-authorship, co-citation, and keywords co-occurrence analysis, expecting to provide references for developing human resource management in a cross-cultural environment.

DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH METHODS

Data Collection

Web of Science (WOS) has been recognised as one of the most authoritative scientific and technical literature indexing tools. It is often considered to be an ideal database for systematic literature review. The data of this study is collected from the core collection of WOS on 20 April 2024, from the online version of the National Library of Hungary, with the retrieval strategies as follows (Fig 1).

Topic = "human resource management" or "human resource" and "cross culture".

Document type = article. Only the data on peer-reviewed original articles were selected to describe the scientific development of the topic.

Timespan = all years. Since there is no exact year when researchers began to focus on human resource management in cross-cultural environments, this research intends to collect all data related to cross-cultural HRM as long as possible. Moreover, the

first study on cross-cultural HRM in the WOS database was published in 2002.

Based on the retrieval strategies described above, this research extracted 330 papers after eliminating irrelevant data.

Research Method

Scientific knowledge mapping has emerged as a research method in recent years. CiteSpace is a software specially developed for science mapping, which can perform cluster analysis on literature in a particular field, helping researchers understand the topic's hot spots and trends.

Thus, this research used CiteSpace (6.1.R6) to visualise the data. There were four main steps for analysis.

Firstly, input the data of 508 articles with full records and cited references in plain text format to CiteSpace.

Secondly, parameters were established, including time slicing (year span from 2002 to 2024, 3 years per slice), term source (Title, Abstract, Author Keywords, and Keywords Plus), node types (Author, Institution, Country, Reference, Cited Author, Cited Journal, Keyword, and Category), selection criteria (top 20%), visualisation (cluster view-Static and show merged network).

Thirdly, networks and data were obtained via CiteSpace, which displays the information of cited authors, institutions, countries, and keywords.

Finally, co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence were analysed for the cross-cultural HRM research visualisation analysis.

AN OVERVIEW OF CROSS-CULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Co-authorship, a reliable proxy of research collaborations, helps us investigate how researchers work together, which makes up the mechanism that shapes the scientific community (Kumar 2015). By analysing its three dimensions, individual, institutional, and national, this research gains an insight into the collaboration network and productive researchers on cross-cultural HRM.

Author co-authorship analysis

Fig.2 shows the collaboration among researchers. The size and colour of the nodes represent the number and period of papers the authors published. The links between the nodes mean the co-authorship.

As shown in Fig.2, most nodes are isolated, implying that the authors lack communication among their peers. Herein, authors from Taiwan, Bih-Shiaw Jaw's team, and Liang-Hung Lin's team

have closer relationships with Chinese employees' work values and cultural backgrounds in Chinese economics, respectively.

Institution co-authorship analysis

Fig.3 illustrates the collaboration among institutes. Like the author's co-authorship network, the nodes' size, colour, and links represent the number and period of papers and the cooperation among institutes, respectively.

As shown in Fig.3, the links among the nodes are sparse, and the nodes are small, suggesting that institutes had inactive communication with low output. Ghent University and BI Norwegian Business School are the most productive institutes among them, with only five papers. Both institutes' sub-networks comprised only two institutions. There is still much room for institutes to find more partners in cross-cultural human resource management.

Country co-authorship analysis

Fig.4 shows the country's co-authorship in cross-cultural human resource management. The nodes represent the authors' country, and the bigger it is, the larger the paper volume is. The nodes' purple rings show that their centrality is greater than 0.1. Meanwhile, the links show the cooperation and its strength among countries.

As shown in Fig.4, the network consists of only 19 nodes and 29 links distributed in North America, Europe, and Asia. There are five main nodes with centrality larger than 0.1, including the USA, P.R. China, England, Germany, and Spain, which means these five countries play key roles in the collaboration in cross-cultural human resource management.

It's shown that the output is highly related to the countries' multinational economies. It's also worth noting that it is believed that there is a huge cultural gap between the Western world and Asia, especially East Asia, which may also lead to this situation in that Western developed countries and Asia countries contribute most of the research.

Journal co-citation analysis

Table 1 lists the top 10 cited journals in cross-cultural HRM. As shown in Table 1, all cited journals have a very high H-index, which suggests the core journals related to cross-cultural human resource management were relatively high.

However, the H-index of journals focusing on human resource management is lower. No journal specialises in cross-cultural human resource management; it only deals with relevant subjects like international human resource management. Having influential journals on cross-cultural human

resource management and related domains is still significant for developing this area.

THE TREND OF CROSS-CULTURAL HRM STUDY

Knowledge base

Analysing highly cited literature helps reveal cross-cultural HRM research's origin, knowledge, or methodology base. Fig.5 shows the literature co-citation network map. The documents co-cited 5 times or more were labelled with the first author and the year of publication. Table 2 lists the top 10 most co-cited documents together with co-citation count, citation count, centrality, author, year of publication, and publication information.

Hofstede (2001) laid the foundation for the researchers who study the relationship between culture and economics. His work divided culture into five dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term versus short-term orientation, which was expanded to six dimensions in 2010 by including indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). This cultural values framework was amplified by large-scale studies in cross-cultural research, with evidence from more and more countries (Kirkman, Lowe, and Gibson 2006).

It has been proven that cultural value is highly related to emotions, attitudes, behaviours, and performance (Taras, Kirkman, and Steel 2010), which influence the human resource management strategies and business performance of companies and organisations in different countries (Jiang et al. 2012; Rabl et al. 2014).

However, how to quantify the influence of cultures has been a controversial topic. Some analysis algorithms and ways of controlling method biases are based on quantitative research (Hair 2009; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2012). Taras and his team have provided a detailed conclusion (Taras, Rowney, and Steel 2009).

Analysis of the research trend

Keywords imply the core content of papers. Researchers can gain insights into the central themes, topics, and relationships within certain areas by analysing the keyword co-occurrence.

Research evolution

Fig. 6 shows the top 10 keywords with the most robust citation burst. Based on the keywords, an insight into the evolution of the research is shed. The study of cross-cultural HRM can be divided into three stages.

2002-2010. It was a period when culture was part of the influence factor for work performance in developing countries, such as Nigeria, South Africa, and China (Anakwe 2002; Horwitz et al. 2006; Rotundo and Xie 2008). Most of the research was based on Hofstede's five dimensions, among which individualism versus collectivism was the most influential factor pair (Ardichvili and Gasparishvili 2003; Walumbwa and Lawler 2003).

2005-2013. This cultural diversity profoundly influences the work performance of multinational companies' employees and cross-cultural human resource management strategies (Liu et al. 2013; Sturman, Shao, and Katz 2012; Thite, Wilkinson, and Shah 2012). Determining this influence is difficult because cultural differences are inherited in local values, which may be difficult for foreigners to understand (Felfe and Yan 2009; Smith et al. 2012). 2016-2024. With evidence from multiple companies worldwide, researchers provided more knowledge about cultural differences and their effect on organisations and operations strategies (Fu et al. 2016; Lee Park and Paiva 2018). In the meantime, workers' behaviour has returned to our scope. However, this period concerns the working context and employees' voices (Budhwar, Varma, and Patel 2016; Kwon and Farndale 2020).

Main research topics

Fig. 7 shows the five clusters of the keyword's co-occurrence, and the threshold for the keyword's frequency display is 5. The larger the node, the higher the frequency. The keywords with similar topics are clustered into one category and displayed in one colour block. These clusters can be sorted by organisation side and employee side.

The organisation side is about organisational development with different cultural backgrounds and improving management effectiveness in this context.

Ethnocentric and parochial human resource systems have become obstacles to globalisation and may increase turnover intention. Thus, multinational organisations must value their employees differently (Coyne and Ong 2007; Jackson 2002). This is the starting point of cross-cultural HRM.

Because of cultural differences, such as power distance, some human resource management strategies may have different outcomes (Gelade, Dobson, and Gilbert 2006; Jiang et al. 2015; Li and Li 2021). This situation influences the performance of the companies' economic behaviour (Dao and Bauer 2021; Song 2022). It's also worth noting that the importance of justice is underestimated, and it's more influential for women (Biswas et al. 2022; Huang and Aaltio 2014; Woldu and Budhwar 2011). However, the level of employee satisfaction is not

only about how they are treated but also the inherited local culture (Karin Andreassi et al. 2014).

Some new situations are also rising in this area. "Work-life balance" is becoming increasingly popular; employees are not satisfied that they do not have enough time for themselves and their families. Thus, organisations are increasingly seeking a way to support and care about their employees, but the effect may differ because of diverse cultural backgrounds (Mansour and Tremblay 2016; Stock, Strecker, and Bieling 2016). It's much easier to achieve this goal thanks to teleworking, especially for multinational companies (Brandl and Neyer 2009).

All of the efforts from human resource management are to boost the organisational performance and keep its sustainability by attracting, retaining, and motivating human capital (Coff and Kryscynski 2011). Culture is influential not only in the process of management (Ayentimi, Burgess, and Brown 2018) but also in recruiting (Ma and Allen 2009). Thus, multinational companies must consider cultural balance and localisation from the beginning, especially for countries with considerable cultural distances (Ge and Zhao 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

This study used CiteSpace to analyse 330 papers on cross-cultural HRM collected in the WOS database from 2002 to 2024. The data are interpreted from the perspective of issuing authors, institutions, and countries, as well as highly cited journals, key documents, research evolution, and keyword clustering. Based on the analysis, there may be two aspects where research is needed for a deeper understanding.

One is the lack of collaboration and continuous research. Based on the analysis of publication performance, this research shows that the countries involved are relatively fewer than the highly diverse cultural backgrounds and globalised economies. Most studies focused on comparing Confucian Asia, Europe, and America. However, there are still a lot of emerging economies. Africa is one of the most potent developing regions with comparatively mysterious cultural backgrounds, and promising research could be conducted in this area. In sum, more researchers from different countries should contribute their knowledge to this field, providing different points of view.

The other one is about the research objects. Most of the research is devoted to employees from different countries, with low interest in different generations. With more and more "Z generation" flowing into the labour market, new views for cross-cultural

relationships may influence human resource management strategies. It's also worth noting that the "Z generation" cares more about experience, respect, and work-life balance, which means more emotional and economic support is needed from managers and companies.

This study provides insight into cross-culture HRM and related research, trying to understand the evolution and trend in this field. This study can also be a reference for those wishing to go further with this topic. However, this study has its shortcomings. Only the core data set of WOS was selected, meaning all the papers were written in English, resulting in a linguistic bias and neglect of other sources. Though the importance of getting more countries or regions involved in cross-culture HRM has been emphasised, it is ironic to find the academic circle monopolised by English.

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LIST OF FIGURES

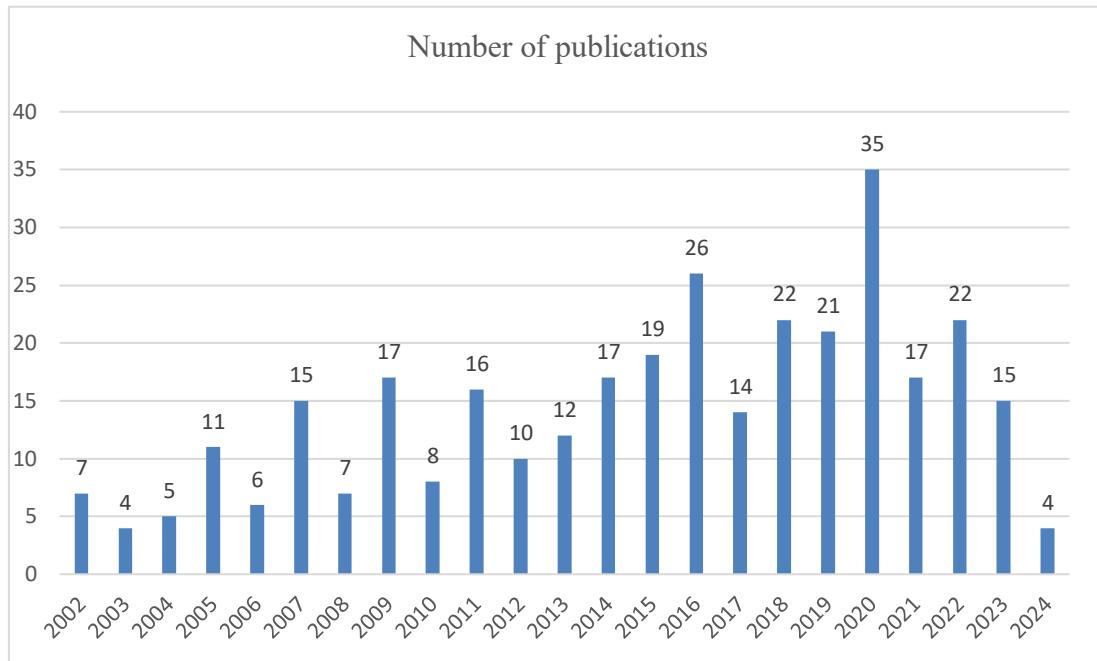


Fig. 1
Studies on cross-cultural human resource management collected in the WOS database

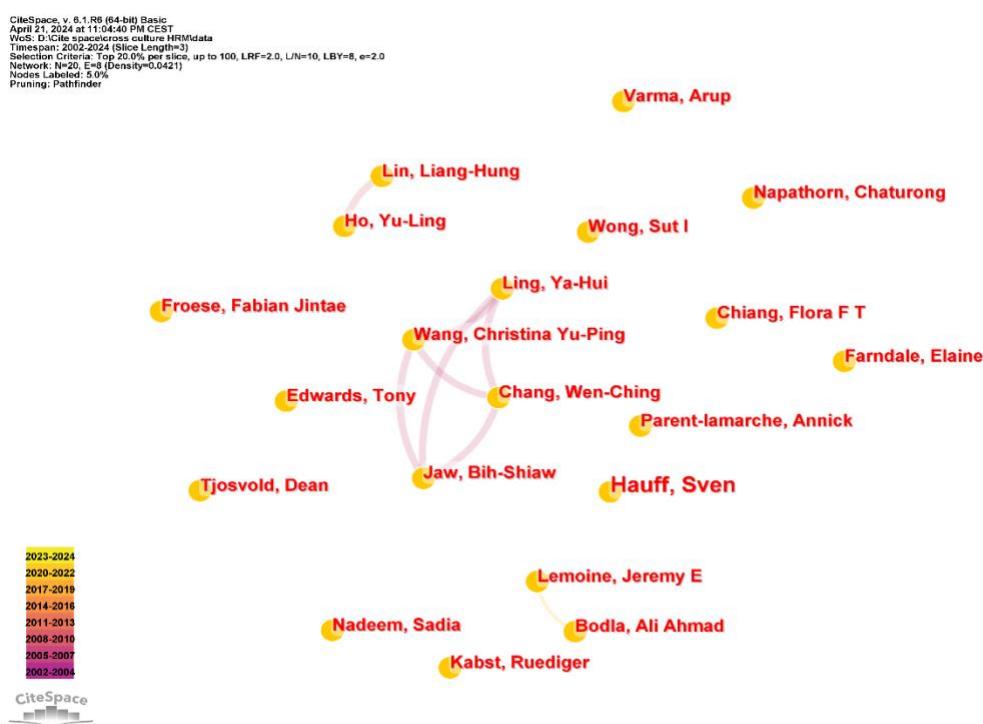


Fig. 2
Map of the author co-authorship network of cross-cultural HRM

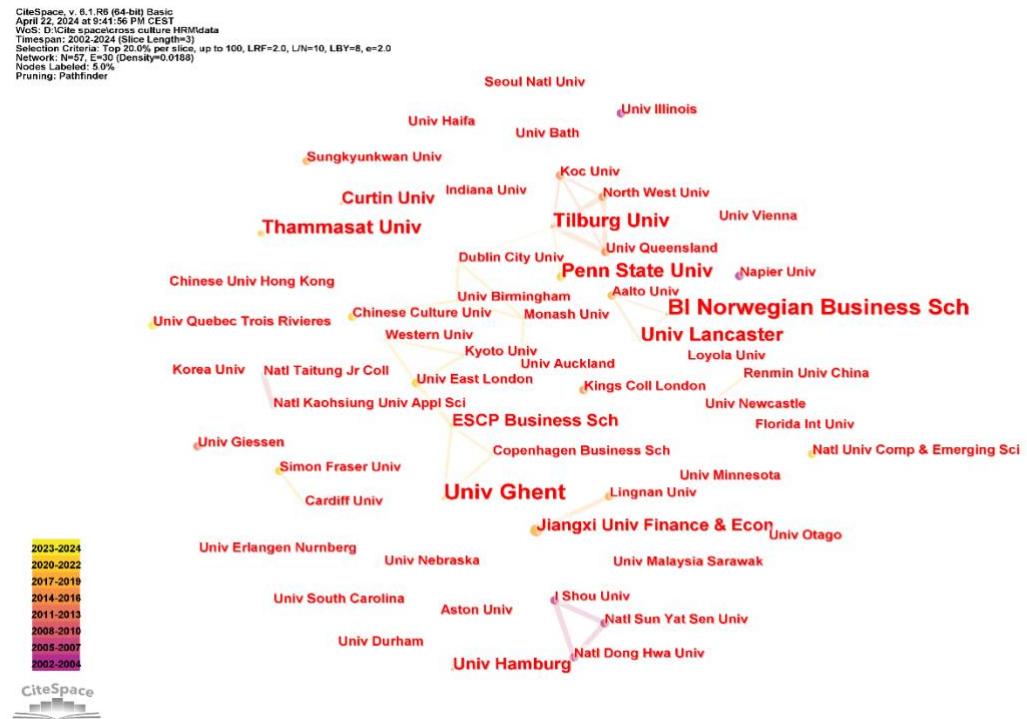


Fig. 3

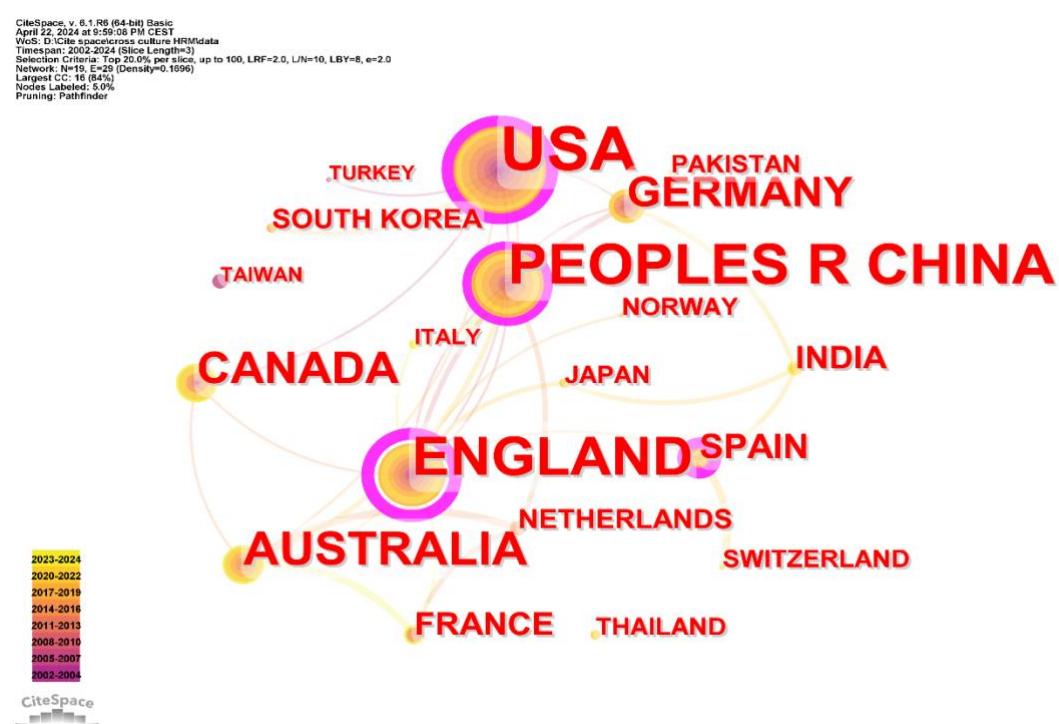


Fig. 4
Map of the country's co-authorship network of cross-cultural HRM

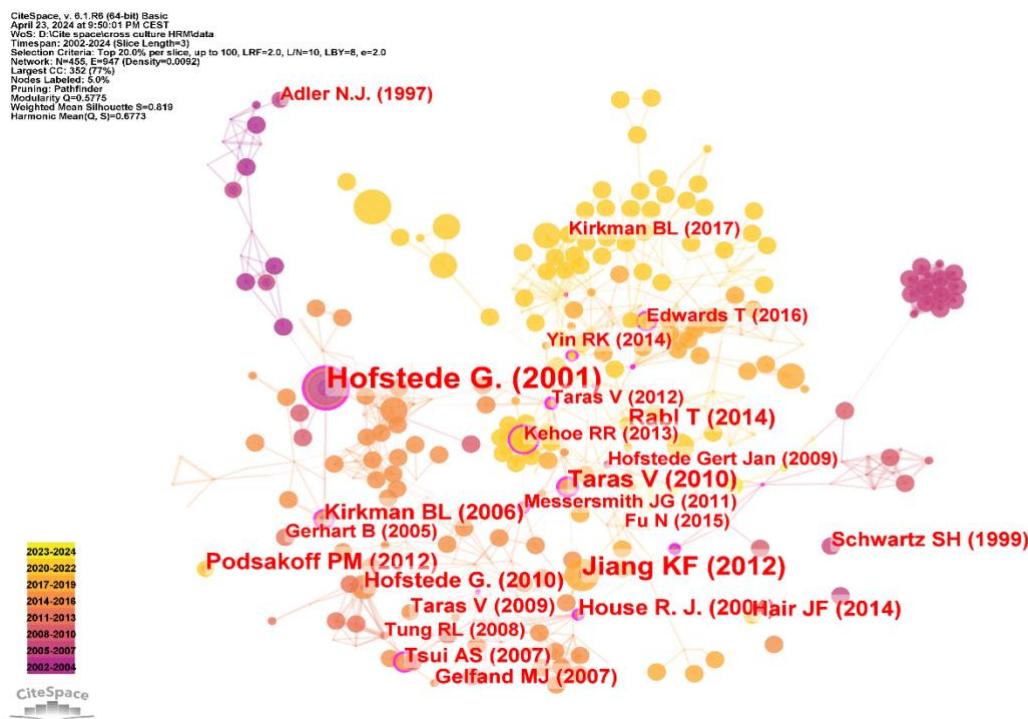


Fig. 5
Map of the document co-citation network of cross-cultural HRM



Fig. 6
Top 10 Keywords with the strongest citation bursts



Fig. 7
Map of the keywords co-occurrence network of cross-cultural HRM

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1
Top 10 cited journals of cross-cultural HRM

Ranking	Count	Centrality	H-index	Journals
1	236	0.04	375	Academy of Management Journal
2	225	0.08	340	Journal of Applied Psychology
3	222	0.09	139	International Journal of Human Resource Management
4	213	0.04	306	Academy of Management Review
5	203	0.03	280	Journal of Management
6	175	0.02	229	Journal of International Business Studies
7	157	0.08	217	Journal of Organizational Behavior
8	151	0.02	162	Human Relations
9	148	0.01	167	Personnel Psychology
10	132	0.03	210	Administrative Science Quarterly

Source: output of journal co-citation analysis in CiteSpace and SJR from Scimago.

Table 2
Top 10 co-cited documents of cross-cultural HRM

Ranking	Co-citation counts	Citation counts	Centrality	Documents
1	18	49534	0.15	Hofstede G., 2001, Cultures Consequence
2	12	3085	0.01	Jiang KF, 2012, ACAD MANAGE J, V55, P1264
3	9	1457	0.34	Taras V, 2010, J APPL PSYCHOL, V95, P405
4	8	13376	0.00	Podsakoff PM, 2012, ANNU REV PSYCHOL, V63, P539
5	8	233	0.04	Rabl T, 2014, J APPL PSYCHOL, V99, P1011
6	7	63788	0.07	Hofstede G., 2010, Cultures and Organizations Software of the Mind
7	7	149370	0.00	Hair JF, 2014, Multivariate Data Analysis
8	7	14742	0.17	House R. J., 2004, Culture, Leadership, and Organizations
9	7	3078	0.17	Kirkman BL, 2006, J INT BUS STUD, V37, P285
10	6	812	0.01	Taras V, 2009, J INT MANAG, V15, P357

Source: output of reference analysis in CiteSpace and citation counts from Google Scholar.