



# Management and organizational research in Asia Pacific: insights from a 40th anniversary review of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*

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## Abstract

Grasping the evolving landscape of management and organizations in Asia Pacific is vital for addressing the challenges and opportunities they both face in the region and beyond. To do so, we conduct a systematic literature review using a bibliometric analysis of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Management (APJM)*, the leading journal for management and organizational research in Asia Pacific that is celebrating its 40th anniversary. A total of 915 articles published by *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 were retrieved from the Scopus database and subsequently subjected to a performance analysis of productivity (publications) and impact (citations) alongside a science mapping of knowledge (themes). This study reveals a steady increase in *APJM* publications and citations, underscoring the journal's growing influence. The globalization of collaboration networks is a noteworthy trend, highlighting the interconnectedness of research efforts across borders. Major themes include *cultural understanding and interpersonal networks*, as well as the *adaptability of organizations in emerging economies*. Areas such as *innovation, performance, and corporate governance* highlight the importance of growth, competitiveness, and responsible management structures, while research on major Asian markets like China, India, and Thailand underscores the relevance of *globalization and multinational strategies*. The findings offer future directions in key areas such as *emerging economies and institutional environments, relationship networks and social resilience, innovation and digital transformation, managing internationalization, and methodological innovation*.

**Keywords** *Asia Pacific Journal of Management* · Bibliometric analysis · Management · Organization

## Introduction

*Asia Pacific Journal of Management (APJM)* is an academically authoritative and internationally renowned publication dedicated to disseminating cutting-edge insights in management and organizational research in the Asia Pacific region, home to over four billion people, or 60%, of the world's population (United Nations Population Fund, 2024). Established in 1983 at the National University of Singapore, *APJM* covers a broad range of research areas, including entrepreneurship, human resource management, international business, organizational behavior, and strategic management. Honored with the accolade “in Asia, on Asia, and of Asia” (Peng, 2007: 385), *APJM* stands as one of the longest-running and most distinguished academic journals in management worldwide. This paper is a contribution to the celebration of *APJM*'s 40th anniversary.

According to records from the Web of Science, *APJM* first received its Journal Citation Reports (JCR) Impact Factor (IF=3.355) in 2010. Since then, *APJM*'s IF has continued to grow, reaching 4.9 by 2023, with a management category quartile rank of Q1. Additionally, the impact of *APJM* is global. For instance, it was ranked “A” by the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) in the 2022 Journal Quality List (JQL) and rated “3” by the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) in the 2021 Academic Journal Guide (AJG). These indicators affirm *APJM*'s reputation and status as a leading journal in the field of management with a regional focus. Noteworthy, the double-blind peer review process and editorial quality assurance of *APJM* have also been recognized by publishers and scholars for the rigor and relevance of its content. With the continuous development of *APJM*, the journal is anticipated to rise to even higher levels in the coming years.

Several milestone reviews of *APJM* have been carried out by various scholars. Ang (1997) reviewed research published in *APJM*'s early period or “childhood” phase. Subsequently, Pleggenkühle-Miles et al. (2007) conducted an in-depth retrospective on the journal's development as it entered its “adolescence.” More recently, López-Duarte et al. (2018) delivered a comprehensive review during the journal's early “adulthood” period from 2005 to 2014. Given *APJM*'s leading role, this study serves as a proxy for understanding management and organizational challenges and opportunities in the Asia Pacific region. Specifically, the present study seeks to extend understanding of management and organizational research through a review of the developmental trajectory of *APJM* from 2001 to 2024. Since 2001, *APJM* has been publishing four issues annually, and it was during this period that special issues were introduced, marking *APJM*'s “growth” phase. Noteworthy, the thematic evolution of research not only reflects dynamic changes, but also the trends behind these changes (Borah et al., 2023). In this regard, we seek to not only examine *APJM*'s past contributions, but also explore the directions that the journal can pursue to advance and shape the future of management and organizations.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the evolving landscape of management and organizations in Asia Pacific by performing a systematic literature review using a bibliometric analysis of *APJM*, the leading journal for management and organizational research in Asia Pacific. Compared to other review methods (e.g., content analysis, meta-analysis), the decision to adopt bibliometric analysis is pragmatic (i.e.,

large corpus) while the timeframe focus on recent publications (i.e., new millennium) is strategic (i.e., relevance) (Lim, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). To this end, we address the following research questions (RQs) in line with the convention of bibliometric analysis (Donthu et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2024):

**RQ1.** What are the publication and citation trends of *APJM*?

**RQ2.** Which are the most influential articles and journals in *APJM*?

**RQ3.** Which are the most prolific contributors (authors, institutions, and countries) of *APJM*?

**RQ4.** Which are the journals, authors, institutions, and countries that most frequently cite *APJM*?

**RQ5.** How are collaborations manifested in *APJM*?

**RQ6.** What are the major themes explored in *APJM*?

**RQ7.** What are the prospects for future research in *APJM*?

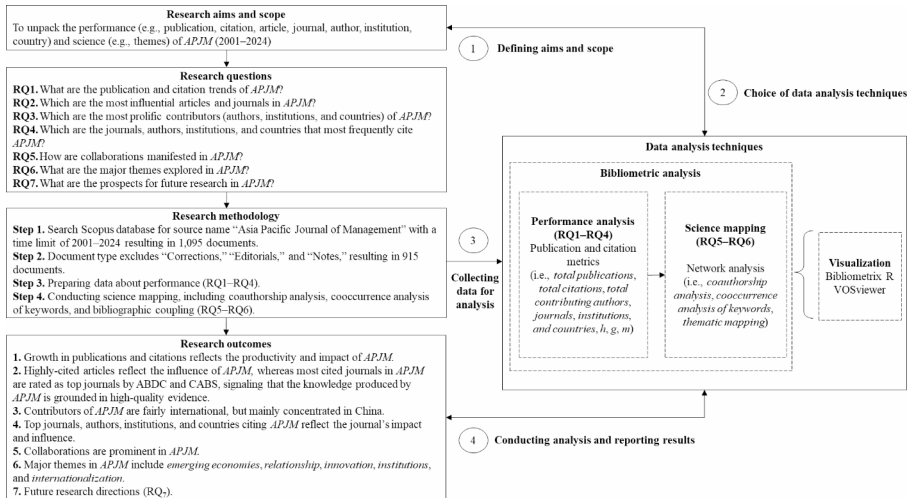
Addressing these questions, this study contributes by unpacking the trends and nomological network of management and organizational research for academic scholars, offering a robust foundation for future research in this space. This study also contributes by delivering actionable insights for industry practitioners, guiding them in navigating the managerial challenges and opportunities for organizations in Asia Pacific. The use of bibliometric analysis (Donthu et al., 2021) enables this to be accomplished in an objective and transparent manner (Mukherjee et al., 2022).

## Methodology

Bibliometric analysis offers several notable advantages. First, the technique handles large-scale datasets, making it a viable alternative to traditional manual query methods (Lim et al., 2022b). Second, the quantitative and statistical methods of bibliometrics ensure consistency, objectivity, and transparency of results (Donthu et al., 2021). Third, the algorithms used in bibliometrics reveal and visualize key elements and knowledge structures of research fields, assisting scholars in systematic literature examination (Donthu et al., 2021; Mukherjee et al., 2022). Following Donthu et al. (2021) and Singh et al. (2023), we adopt a four-step method: (i) defining aims and scope, (ii) choosing analysis techniques, (iii) collecting data for analysis, and (iv) conducting analysis and reporting results (Fig. 1).

### Defining aims and scope

This study aims to explore the future development directions of management and organizational research by revealing the past contributions of *APJM* to the field. This pertains to patterns around publication and citation alongside noteworthy articles, journals, authors, institutions, and countries, as well as major themes.



**Fig. 1** The review procedure. Notes: Adapted from Donthu et al. (2021) and Singh et al. (2023). Source: Authors’ own illustration

## Choosing analysis techniques

Consistent with previous reviews (Varma et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024), this study employs two variants of bibliometric analysis. Firstly, performance analysis (RQ1–RQ4) broadly analyzes the journal’s publication and citation trends alongside the most cited articles and most prolific journals, authors, institutions, and countries across different dimensions. We assess metrics such as total publications (TP), total cited publications (TCP), total citations (TC), total contributing authors (TCA), average citations per contributing author (C/CA), average citations per publication (C/P), and average citations per cited publication (C/CP) (Donthu et al., 2021). We also consider  $h$ -index ( $h$ —measured as the  $h$  number of publications with at least  $h$  citations),  $g$ -index ( $g$ —indicating the  $g$  number of highly cited articles with at least  $g^2$  citations), and  $m$ -index ( $m$ —a composite of both  $h$  and  $g$ , calculated as  $h/g$ ) (Donthu et al., 2021). Secondly, science mapping (RQ5–RQ6) includes a variety of network analyses to examine knowledge clusters and structural connections between research components (contributors, contributions) (Donthu et al., 2021).

## Collecting data for analysis

To minimize potential human error, a single database is used (Donthu et al., 2021). Scopus, the largest literature database in social science research, served as the source of data. The search term “Asia Pacific Journal of Management” was used in the “source title” search field, limited to the years 2001 (from the beginning) to 2024 (end of June), yielding a total of 1,095 publications. Entries such as corrections, editorials, and notes are excluded to ensure precision. The final dataset includes 915 publications. Appendix Table 6 lists the special issues of *APJM* from 2001 to 2026, demonstrating the journal’s timely attention and exploration of emerging issues.

## Conducting analysis and reporting results

The bibliometric analysis is conducted using the bibliometrix package in the R software (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) and the VOSviewer software (Waltman et al., 2010). Performance analysis and science mapping are conducted to shed light on both contributors and contributions (Donthu et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2024) in *APJM*.

## Findings

### Performance analysis

#### Publication and citation trends of *APJM* (RQ1)

The publication and citation trends of *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 are presented in Table 1. Over this period, *APJM* published 915 relevant publications, averaging 38 per year, with a notable increase in publishing activity starting in 2012 and peaking at 58 publications in 2013. By 2024, 907 *APJM* publications had been indexed in the Scopus database, amassing a total of 42,099 citations, highlighting the journal's significant influence. Although citation numbers were high between 2002 and 2021, a decline occurred from 2022 to 2024. This trend is common in bibliometrics, where publications that are published earlier have more time to accumulate citations, and thus, they typically have higher citation counts. In other words, recent publications may not have reached their peak citation numbers due to the shorter time frame (Chandra et al., 2022; Lim & Kumar, 2024). The *h*-index and *g*-index peaked in 2012 (*h*: 34; *g*: 53), while the *m*-index remained stable, ranging from 0.38 to 0.86. Notably, between 2001 and 2024, 93 articles were cited at least 100 times and 247 articles at least 10 times, revealing further the journal's distribution and influence of high-impact research outputs.

#### Most influential *APJM* articles (RQ2)

A critical analysis of *APJM*'s most influential publications from 2001 to 2024 highlights significant contributions to management and organization (Table 2). The highest-cited article by Mathews (2006) garnered 1,391 citations (77.3 citations/year), showcasing the impact of globalization on emerging multinational corporations. Chen and Chen's (2004) work on guanxi (731 citations; 36.6 citations/year) underscores its pivotal role in Chinese business culture, offering strategies for leveraging these relationships. Mathews (2002) also made substantial contributions with his exploration of latecomer organizations' strategies to overcome resource disadvantages, generating 572 citations (26.0 citations/year). Other influential articles, such as Peng's (2002) institution-based view of business strategy (558 citations) and Dunning and Lundan's (2008) examination of the OLI paradigm (542 citations), reflect the journal's focus on diverse, impactful research themes including business strategy, green human resource management, and social capital. These citations not only dem-

**Table 1** Annual publication and citation trend of *APJM* (2001–2024)

Year	TP	TCP	TC	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>	≥ 100	≥ 50	≥ 25	≥ 10
2001	25	25	792	15	25	0.60	1	5	3	13
2002	26	26	3,014	20	26	0.77	8	6	5	3
2003	23	23	1,218	19	23	0.83	2	8	5	5
2004	23	23	1,999	19	23	0.83	5	1	7	7
2005	21	21	1,375	18	21	0.86	4	3	8	6
2006	28	28	3,309	22	28	0.79	8	8	6	5
2007	31	31	2,046	23	31	0.74	5	10	7	6
2008	33	33	2,438	24	33	0.73	7	8	8	8
2009	33	33	2,166	26	33	0.79	6	11	10	5
2010	36	36	2,228	27	36	0.75	7	8	14	7
2011	37	37	2,119	25	37	0.68	6	7	12	11
2012	53	53	3,011	34	53	0.64	8	14	17	6
2013	58	58	2,580	32	50	0.64	6	11	20	16
2014	46	46	2,106	25	45	0.56	5	8	13	11
2015	41	41	2,496	28	41	0.68	6	16	6	8
2016	39	39	1,629	25	39	0.64	2	7	14	13
2017	37	37	1,206	22	34	0.65	1	5	15	10
2018	41	41	1,771	23	41	0.56	3	7	13	12
2019	45	45	1,048	21	30	0.70	1	2	12	20
2020	45	45	1,167	20	33	0.61	1	6	9	19
2021	56	56	1,050	21	29	0.72	0	4	10	19
2022	54	53	740	15	21	0.71	0	1	4	29
2023	56	54	397	10	15	0.67	0	0	2	8
2024	28	23	194	5	13	0.38	1	0	0	0
Total	915	907	42,099	96	151	0.64	93	156	220	247

≥100, ≥50, ≥25, ≥10=Number of papers with at least 100, 50, 25, and 10 citations. The publication and citation statistics were extracted from the Scopus database

Source: Authors' own compilation

TP, Total publications; TCP, Total cited publications; TC, Total citations; *h*, *h*-index; *g*, *g*-index; *m*, *m*-index

onstrate the engagement with *APJM*'s publications, but also highlight the journal's role in shaping discussions in the field.

### Journals cited by *APJM* (RQ2)

A critical analysis of the journals most frequently cited by *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 offers insight into the diversity and quality of research informing its publications (Table 3 Panel A). *APJM* itself ranks highest with 4,311 citations, reflecting its central role in the advancement and dissemination of management research. *Strategic Management Journal* follows closely with 4,014 citations, underscoring the strong interconnection between strategic management and the themes explored in *APJM*. Other notable journals include *Academy of Management Journal* (3,663 citations), *Journal of International Business Studies* (2,773 citations), and *Academy of Management Review* (2,426 citations), all highly ranked by ABDC and CABS, with the *Academy of Management Review* having an impact factor of 16.4 and the *Journal*

**Table 2** Most cited *APJM* articles published between 2001 and 2024

TC	C/Y	Title	Author(s)	Year
1,391	77.3	Dragon multinationals: New players in 21st century globalization	Mathews	2006
731	36.6	On the intricacies of the Chinese guanxi: A process model of guanxi development	Chen and Chen	2004
572	26.0	Competitive advantages of the latecomer firm: A resource-based account of industrial catch-up strategies	Mathews	2002
558	25.4	Towards an institution-based view of business strategy	Peng	2002
542	33.9	Institutions and the OLI paradigm of the multinational enterprise	Dunning and Lundan	2008
432	21.6	Contributing to global management knowledge: A case for high quality indigenous research	Tsui	2004
396	66.0	Green human resource management research in emergence: A review and future directions	Ren et al.	2018
342	20.1	Asian management in the 21st century	Hofstede	2007
313	14.2	The importance of social capital to the management of multinational enterprises: Relational networks among Asian and Western firms	Hitt et al.	2002
308	17.1	Asian management research needs more self-confidence	Meyer	2006

The citation statistics were extracted from the Scopus database

Source: Authors' own compilation

TC, Total citations; C/Y, Average citations per year

of *Management* having a CiteScore of 22.4, illustrating the high-quality scholarly foundations that *APJM* publications draw upon. The diverse range of cited journals, spanning applied psychology, business ethics, international business, organizational science, and strategic management, reflects *APJM*'s interdisciplinary nature and its ability to draw from and contribute to multiple fields within management.

**Publication activity by authors (RQ3)**

A critical analysis of the most prolific authors contributing to *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 highlights key figures in the field of management and organization research (Table 4). Mike W. Peng, with 27 TP and 3,052 TC, and David Ahlstrom, with 20 TP and 1,491 TC, stand out for their significant influence, underscored by their high citation rate. Peng's impressive *h*-index of 22 and *g*-index of 27 further underscore his visibility. Dean Tjosvold, with 13 TP and 487 TC, also demonstrates considerable impact. Other notable contributors, such as Yuan Li, Sunny Li Sun, Garry D. Bruton, Michael G. Carney, Ho Kwong Kwan, Yan Li, and Chi Sum Wong, reflect the high research output and influence within *APJM*'s author community. These metrics not

**Table 3** *APJM*'s most cited and citing entities: journals, authors, institutions, and countries (2001–2024)

Journal	TC	ABDC ranking	CABS rating	WoS impact factor	Scopus Cite-Score
<b>Panel A. Journals most frequently cited by <i>APJM</i> (2001–2024)</b>					
<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Management</i>	4,311	A	3	5.4	7.5
<i>Strategic Management Journal</i>	4,014	A*	4*	8.3	11.7
<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	3,663	A*	4*	10.5	15.7
<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2,773	A*	4*	11.6	16.3
<i>Academy of Management Review</i>	2,426	A*	4*	16.4	18.4
<i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i>	1,717	A*	4*	9.9	14.0
<i>Journal of Management</i>	1,548	A*	4*	13.5	22.4
<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	1,524	A*	4*	10.4	21.1
<i>Organization Science</i>	1,331	A*	4*	4.1	7.4
<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	1,092	A	3	6.1	12.0
<b>Panel B. Journals most frequently citing <i>APJM</i> (2001–2024)</b>					
<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Management</i>	850	A	3	5.4	7.5
<i>Sustainability</i>	604	–	–	3.9	5.8
<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	478	A	3	11.3	16
<i>International Business Review</i>	400	A	3	8.7	12.3
<i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>	396	–	–	3.8	4.5
<i>Journal of World Business</i>	286	A*	4	8.9	12.9
<i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	286	A	3	4.9	11.7
<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	254	A	3	6.1	12.0
<i>Management and Organization Review</i>	235	A	3	2.6	5.2
<i>Chinese Management Studies</i>	206	C	1	1.9	3.9
<b>Panel C. Authors, institutions, and countries most frequently citing <i>APJM</i> (2001–2024)</b>					
<i>Author</i>	TC				
Peng, Mike W.	129				
Ahlstrom, David	85				
Tjosvold, Dean	68				
Cooke, Fang Lee	67				
De Clercq, Dirk	61				
Williams, Colin C.	60				
Meyer, Klaus E.	60				
Buckley, Peter Jim S.	58				
Li, Yuan	53				
Sun, Sunny Li	52				
<i>Institution</i>					
Chinese University of Hong Kong	390				
Xi'an Jiaotong University	384				
Renmin University of China	316				
Zhejiang University	295				
City University of Hong Kong	271				
Peking University	244				
Sun Yat-Sen University	235				
Tsinghua University	233				
Tongji University	229				



**Table 3** (continued)

Journal	TC	ABDC ranking	CABS rating	WoS impact factor	Scopus Cite-Score
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	222				
<i>Country</i>					
China	9,845				
USA	5,033				
United Kingdom	3,538				
Australia	2,184				
India	1,505				
Canada	1,121				
Malaysia	1,039				
Spain	974				
South Korea	974				
Germany	903				

The citation statistics were extracted from the Scopus database

Source: Authors' own compilation

*TC*, Total citations; *ABDC ranking*, Journal ranked based on the Australian Business Deans Council 2022 Journal Quality List; *CABS rating*, Journal rating based on the Chartered Association of Business Schools 2021 Academic Journal Guide; *WoS*, Web of Science

**Table 4** Most prolific authors contributing to *APJM* (2001–2024)

Author	Current affiliation	Country	TP	TCP	TC	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>
Peng, Mike W.	University of Texas at Dallas	USA	27	27	3,052	22	27	0.81
Ahlstrom, David	Hong Kong Metropolitan University	China	20	20	1,491	20	20	1.00
Tjosvold, Dean	Lingnan University	China	13	13	487	12	13	0.92
Li, Yuan	Shanghai Jiao Tong University	China	12	12	728	12	12	1.00
Sun, Sunny Li	University of Massachusetts Lowell	USA	11	11	364	10	11	0.91
Bruton, Garry D.	Texas Christian University/ Jilin University	USA/China	10	10	973	9	10	0.90
Carney, Michael G.	Concordia University	Canada	9	9	462	8	9	0.89
Kwan, Ho Kwong	China Europe International Business School	China	9	9	265	7	9	0.78
Li, Yan	Beijing Institute of Technology	China	9	9	340	8	9	0.89
Wong, Chi Sum	Chinese University of Hong Kong	China	9	9	650	9	9	1.00

The publication statistics and citation counts for contributing authors were extracted from the Scopus database

Source: Authors' own compilation

*TP*, Total publications; *TCP*, Total cited publications; *TC*, Total citations; *h*, *h*-index; *g*, *g*-index; *m*, *m*-index

only reveal the academic activity and research impact of *APJM*'s contributors, but also affirm the journal's authority and influence in the field.

### Publication activity by institutions (RQ3)

A critical analysis of the most prolific institutions contributing to *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 underscores the significant academic influence of these universities (Table 5). The Chinese University of Hong Kong leads with 78 publications, 154 authors, and 3,956 citations, demonstrating its dominance in both research output and impact, further evidenced by its top *h*-index (39) and *g*-index (61). The University of Texas at Dallas follows with 42 publications, 119 authors, and 2,815 citations, showcasing its strong academic presence. Xi'an Jiaotong University (41 publications, 2,136 citations) and City University of Hong Kong (40 publications, 2,069 citations) also contribute substantially. Notably, the University of Macau, with an *m*-index of 0.85, highlights its growing influence. These metrics reveal the leading institutions' pivotal roles in advancing management and organizational research and *APJM*'s authority in fostering high-quality academic contributions across diverse geographic and institutional contexts.

### Publication activity by countries (RQ3)

A critical analysis of publication activity by country from 2001 to 2024, as depicted in Fig. 2, highlights the dominant role of China, which contributed 492 articles, accounting for 53.77% of *APJM*'s total publications. The United States followed with 282 articles, demonstrating its robust research output. Australia and the United Kingdom also made significant contributions with 119 and 103 articles, respectively. The data reveal a sharp increase in publications from China, particularly peaking in 2021 and 2023, indicating a growing focus on management and organizational research within the country. While the United States did not exhibit a consistent annual increase, its

**Table 5** Most prolific institutions contributing to *APJM* (2001–2024)

Institution	Country	TP	TC	TCA	h	g	m
Chinese University of Hong Kong	China	78	3,956	154	39	61	0.64
University of Texas at Dallas	USA	42	2,815	119	26	42	0.62
Xi'an Jiaotong University	China	41	2,136	93	25	41	0.61
City University of Hong Kong	China	40	2,069	96	27	40	0.68
National University of Singapore	Singapore	29	1,406	105	19	29	0.66
Hong Kong Baptist University	China	24	1,461	67	15	24	0.63
Renmin University of China	China	23	993	74	15	23	0.65
Lingnan University	China	21	874	37	16	21	0.76
Xiamen University	China	21	758	57	14	21	0.67
University of Macau	China	20	780	37	17	20	0.85

The publication statistics and citation counts for contributing institutions were extracted from the Scopus database

Source: Authors' own compilation

*TP*, Total publications; *TC*, Total citations; *TCA*, Total contributing authors; *h*, *h*-index; *g*, *g*-index; *m*, *m*-index

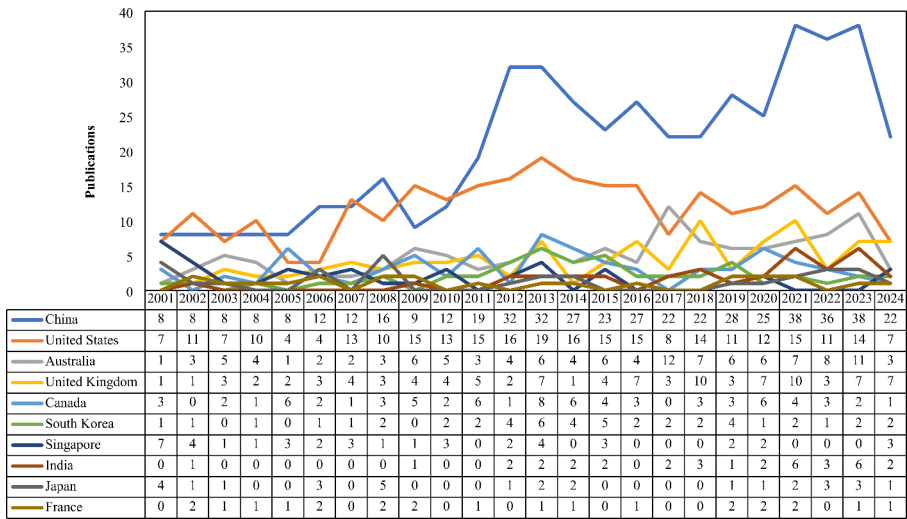


Fig. 2 Countries contributing to APJM (2001–2024). Source: Authors’ own compilation

high-quality output reflects a mature and stable research system. Other countries, such as Canada, France, India, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea, although contributing fewer articles, added valuable international perspectives and diversity to APJM, enriching the journal’s global discourse on management and organizational practices.

**Journals, authors, institutions, and countries most frequently citing APJM (RQ4)**

A critical analysis of the entities most frequently citing APJM from 2001 to 2024 highlights the journal’s extensive influence across various stakeholders (Table 3 Panel B and Panel C). APJM itself leads with 850 citations, followed by journals such as *Journal of Business Research* with 478 citations and *Journal of World Business* with 286 citations, underscoring APJM’s strong recognition in high-impact journals rated by ABDC and CABS. Prominent authors such as Mike W. Peng (129 citations) and David Ahlstrom (85 citations) further reinforce APJM’s scholarly impact. Leading institutions such as the Chinese University of Hong Kong (390 citations) and Xi’an Jiaotong University (384 citations) demonstrate the journal’s widespread academic penetration. Notably, China dominates with 9,845 citations, followed by the United States (5,033 citations), illustrating APJM’s global reach and significant contribution to international management and organizational research. This widespread citation network underscores APJM’s authoritative presence and its pivotal role in advancing management and organizational scholarship.

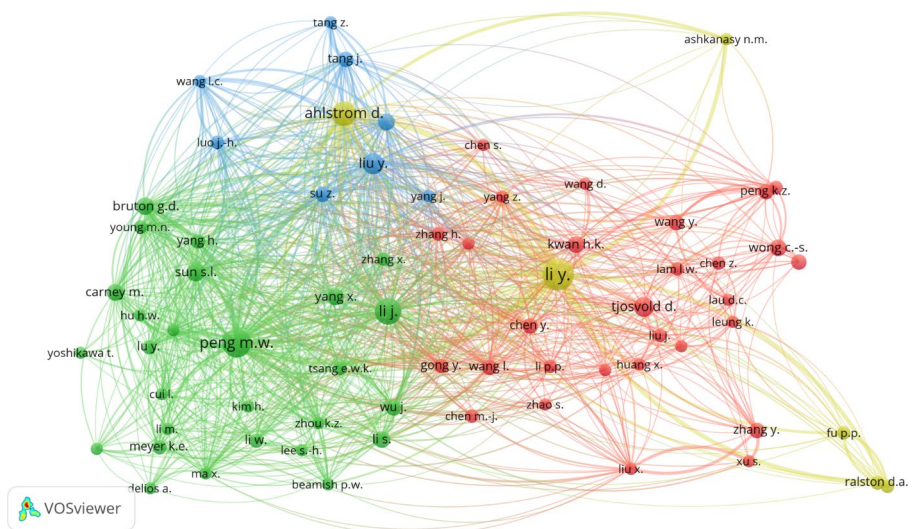
## Science mapping

### Coauthorships in *APJM* (RQ5)

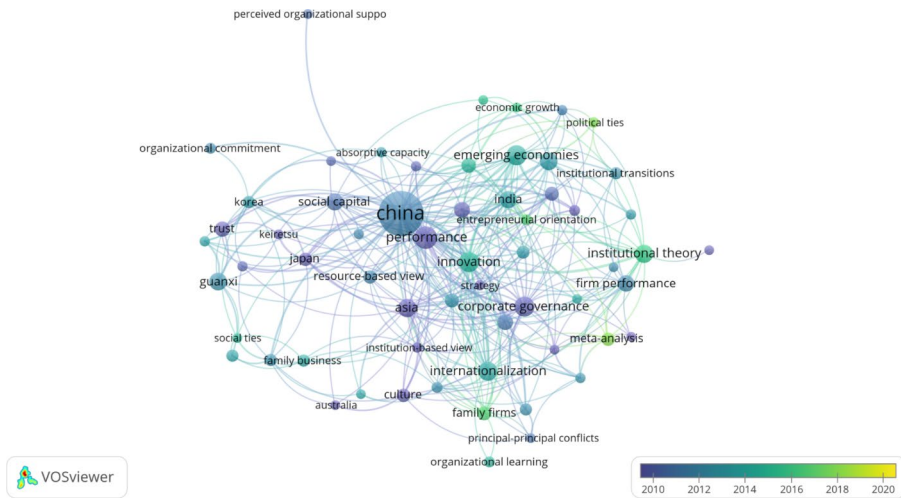
The coauthorship network in *APJM* from 2001 to 2024 is illustrated in Fig. 3, highlighting authors with at least five coauthored articles, each cited over 100 times. The network in Fig. 3 reveals four distinct clusters, with Mike W. Peng and David Ahlstrom emerging as central figures due to their frequent collaboration on themes such as entrepreneurship, innovation, and institutional theory. These connections underscore their status as the most frequently cited authors within the network. This visualization corroborates the data in Table 4, establishing Peng as a key author, and aligns with Table 2, highlighting his significant contributions to *APJM* research.

### Cooccurrence analysis of keywords in *APJM* (RQ6)

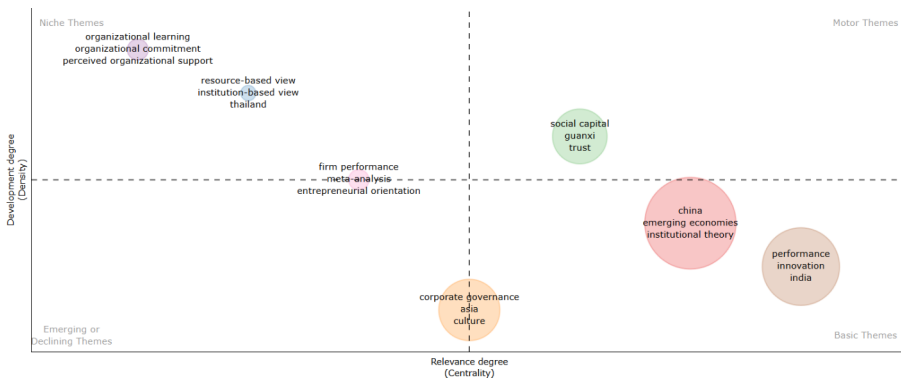
The core themes in *APJM* from 2001 to 2024, with keywords appearing at least five times, are revealed in Fig. 4. Central to this network are terms like “China,” “corporate governance,” “emerging economies,” “innovation,” “internationalization,” “institutional theory,” and “performance,” indicating their prominence and interconnectedness in *APJM* research. The visualization also reveals the evolution of themes, with recent keywords such as “family firms,” “political ties,” and “meta-analysis” emerging as contemporary focal areas. This dynamic shift not only reflects the latest trends, but also points to potential future directions for *APJM*, emphasizing the journal’s responsiveness to evolving scholarly interests and its role in driving forward-thinking management and organizational research.



**Fig. 3** Coauthorships among authors of *APJM* (2001–2024). Source: Authors’ own visualization via VOSviewer (Waltman et al., 2010)



**Fig. 4** Cooccurrence of author keywords in *APJM* (2001–2024). Notes: The bar on the bottom right of the figure indicates the color coordination signifying the evolution of topics over time. Source: Authors’ own visualization via VOSviewer (Waltman et al., 2010)



**Fig. 5** Thematic evolution based on the cooccurrences of keywords in *APJM* (2001–2024). Source: Authors’ own visualization via bibliometrix in R (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

**Thematic evolution of research themes in *APJM* (RQ6)**

A thematic map is developed to comprehensively examine the evolution of research themes in *APJM* from 2001 to 2024. The thematic map visualizes clusters of research themes across four quadrants, illustrating patterns in terms of centrality (thematic importance) and density (thematic development), thereby revealing implicit connections and underlying dialogues (Lim et al., 2024). The 915 *APJM* publications are segmented into research themes mapped across these four quadrants (Fig. 5).

The upper right quadrant represents *motor themes*, indicating well-developed and central areas in research. Key areas like “social capital,” “guanxi” (relationship), and “trust” highlight the significance of cultural understanding and interpersonal net-

works in business environments, especially in Asian contexts. These areas are currently pivotal in driving academic research and business practices and may evolve with environmental changes.

The upper left quadrant represents *niche themes*, which are highly developed but relatively isolated. Areas such as “Thailand” indicate regional focus, while “organizational learning,” “organizational commitment,” and “perceived organizational support” emphasize enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness. Theoretical concepts like “resource-based view” and “institution-based view” provide essential support for corporate strategy, though they may require more interdisciplinary work to gain broader recognition.

The lower right quadrant encompasses *basic themes* involved in multiple domains. Areas related to emerging economies and institutional environments, such as “China,” “emerging economies,” and “institutional theory,” underscore the adaptability and strategies of organizations in specific contexts. Areas such as “innovation” and “performance” highlight how organizations can enhance growth and competitiveness amid global economic changes. The importance of “India” in studying globalization and multinational strategy is also noted.

The lower left quadrant represents *emerging or declining themes*, indicating areas in early development or undergoing transformation. Areas like “meta-analysis” suggest methodological innovation, while “firm performance” and “entrepreneurial orientation” may vary with economic cycles and market environments. Their movement toward niche themes suggests a future specialization in these areas, potentially becoming more refined and focused on specific contexts or industries. Other domains like “Asia” and “culture” reflect specific business practices and cultural values, while “corporate governance” reflects a growing interest in ensuring responsible management structures in both emerging and established economies. Their movement into the direction of basic themes suggests these areas may become more foundational as they gain broader recognition and relevance in management and organizational research. Overall, these areas require close monitoring to understand their future roles and impacts, as they may either solidify into core themes or experience further transformation depending on global trends and organizational needs.

## Discussion

### Key takeaways (RQ1–RQ6)

In light of *APJM*'s 40th anniversary, this review is particularly timely and relevant. Structured around six major research questions (RQs), this study offers critical insights into the performance analysis and scientific mapping of *APJM*, with a seventh RQ addressing future directions to be discussed subsequently.

**Publication and citation trends (RQ1)** From 2001 to 2024, *APJM* has firmly established itself as a premier journal focusing on Asian organizations and their global economic interactions. The journal's output surged, with 915 articles published,

peaking in 2013. Citations reached the highest for 2006 with 3,309, highlighting the journal's growing academic impact and suggesting potential for continued growth.

**Most influential articles and journals (RQ2)** Highly cited articles by Mathews (2006) and Chen and Chen (2004) underscore the journal's influence, despite potential limitations in scope and selection criteria. *APJM* and the *Strategic Management Journal* were the most cited journals from 2001 to 2024. Notably, 80% of the journals cited by *APJM* were rated "A\*" by ABDC and "4\*" by CABS, underscoring *APJM*'s high academic standards.

**Most prolific authors, institutions, and countries (RQ3)** Mike W. Peng (27 articles) and David Ahlstrom (20 articles) were the top contributors, with Peng's work being the most cited (3,052 citations). The Chinese University of Hong Kong emerged as the leading institution (78 articles). Geographically, China, the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom dominated contributions, though regions like Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and South America remain underrepresented, signaling opportunities for future research collaborations.

**Top journals, authors, institutions, and countries citing *APJM* (RQ4)** *APJM* itself was the most cited journal from 2001 to 2024, with about 70% of citing journals rated "A" by ABDC and "3" or higher by CABS. Mike W. Peng (129 citations), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (390 citations), and China (9,845 citations) were the top citing entities, reflecting *APJM*'s international influence.

**Collaborations in *APJM* (RQ5)** Several authors have published at least five coauthored articles, each cited over 100 times. Notably, Mike W. Peng and David Ahlstrom emerge as central figures due to their frequent collaboration on themes such as entrepreneurship, innovation, and institutional theory, underscoring their status as the most frequently cited authors within the network. These connections affirm Peng and Ahlstrom's position as key authors and collaborators in *APJM* and highlight their significant contributions to *APJM* research.

**Major themes in *APJM* (RQ6)** The thematic evolution of *APJM* publications from 2001 to 2024 reveals several key areas of focus. Cultural understanding and interpersonal networks, such as *guanxi* and social capital, underscore the importance of relationships in business environments across Asia. Themes like enhancing employee performance and organizational effectiveness, supported by concepts like organizational commitment and support, reflect the growing interest in optimizing human capital. Emerging economies and institutional environments illustrate how organizations in specific contexts—such as China, India, and Thailand—adapt their strategies to navigate globalization and multinational dynamics. Meanwhile, innovation and performance themes highlight how organizations can enhance growth and competitiveness amid global economic changes. Themes around firm performance and entrepreneurial orientation reflect the variability in organizational success linked to economic cycles and market conditions. Research on Asia and culture emphasizes the region's unique business practices and cultural values, while growing interest in

corporate governance demonstrates the focus on responsible management structures in the face of rapid economic development. These evolving themes not only mirror global trends but also provide distinct insights into the challenges and opportunities specific to the Asia Pacific region, paving the way for future research directions.

### Future research directions (RQ7)

This bibliometric review of *APJM* publications from 2001 to 2024 highlights the journal's significant academic contributions and developmental trends in management and organizational research. Building on these findings, several critical future research directions are proposed to further advance *APJM* and related fields.

**Emerging economies and institutional environments** Given the central role of emerging economies in management and organizational research, future research in this area must critically examine the dynamic changes in these markets, particularly in the context of globalization and geopolitical shifts. Understanding how institutional environments shape market structures, corporate behavior, innovation capabilities, and competitiveness is paramount (Huang et al., 2023; Sarwar et al., 2024; Mandrinos & Lim, 2023). A robust legal system and transparent policy environment, for instance, are crucial for fostering investment and entrepreneurship, while corruption and unstable policies can severely hinder economic development (Garcia & Orsato, 2020; Liu & Huang, 2024; Singh et al., 2024). The interplay between economic growth and institutional reform in emerging economies deserves close scrutiny (Lu et al., 2023; Pattnaik et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022). As these economies grow, there is often a push for institutional reforms to adapt to new economic realities and international standards (Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci & Morgan, 2022). Future research should address the heterogeneity within emerging markets, critically analyzing how different nations develop and implement effective strategies tailored to their unique conditions. This will illuminate how emerging economies can achieve inclusive economic growth and sustainable development amidst varying institutional landscapes. Focusing on these dynamics, future studies can offer valuable insights into the strategic interactions between economic development and institutional evolution, providing a roadmap for business leaders and policymakers in emerging markets.

**Relationship networks and social resilience** In today's globalized and rapidly changing world (Lim, 2023), relationship networks are becoming increasingly important. As society transitions from traditional "fixed" models to "floating" post-modern ones, social relationships between individuals and their environments, as well as between individuals and groups, are continuously evolving (Mu & Chen, 2022). This evolution reflects the diversity of cultural dynamics and reveals new trends in social relationships (Li et al., 2023). Relationship networks serve as crucial channels for accessing social capital and support. While existing studies have demonstrated the impact of relationship on business (Du & Zhou, 2019; Yu et al., 2023), there is a significant gap in empirical analyses from countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Western nations (Hemmert, 2019; Horak & Taube, 2016). Future research should be



conducted in a broader international and cross-cultural context to better understand the dynamics of relationship networks across different cultures. Furthermore, scholars should focus on enhancing the resilience of relationship networks and improving society's ability to withstand risks. Particularly in times of crisis, such as climate change (Gangadhari et al., 2023), sustainability challenges (Lim, 2023), the COVID-19 pandemic (Lim, 2021), and geopolitical conflicts (Lim et al., 2022a), relationship networks can provide critical support and resources for organizations to navigate difficulties effectively. Understanding the mechanisms of relationship networks in these contexts will offer valuable insights for the sustainable development of both business and society.

**Innovation and digital transformation** While innovation remains a central theme in management and organizational research, future studies must critically explore the profound impact of digital transformation on innovation and organizational performance across various industries. The current focus on business model innovation in small enterprises (Loon & Chik, 2019) and its influence on organizational innovation (Liu et al., 2017) needs to be expanded to incorporate the role of digital technologies (Ciasullo & Lim, 2022). Digital transformation is increasingly recognized as pivotal for corporate competitiveness, necessitating a shift toward innovation research from a digital perspective (Sarwar et al., 2024). Noteworthy, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain are revolutionizing business processes (Kumar et al., 2023). AI enhances production efficiency and market understanding through advanced data analysis and pattern recognition (Basu et al., 2023). Blockchain, by providing transparency and thus strengthening trust, is critical for financial transactions, intellectual property protection, and supply chain management (Centobelli et al., 2022; Sahoo et al., 2022). Future research should critically examine how digital transformation can drive corporate innovation and maintain competitiveness in the digital age. This includes exploring new innovation strategies and digital transformation pathways that organizations can adopt in response to rapidly changing market environments and evolving consumer demands. Such studies will provide invaluable insights for organizations striving to adapt and thrive in an increasingly digital world.

**Managing internationalization** Reflecting the emphasis on internationalization in management and organizational research, existing research has examined various aspects such as internationalization strategies of family businesses (Lin & Wang, 2021), global expansion of emerging economy enterprises (Li et al., 2017), and organizational learning during internationalization (Tsang, 2020). Internationalization grants organizations access to new markets, resources, and knowledge, thereby enhancing their competitiveness and innovation capabilities. However, it also presents challenges, including cross-cultural management, international talent allocation, and compliance issues (Chan & Ananthram, 2020; Lahiri & Dhandapani, 2021; Treviño et al., 2021). Future research should deepen this foundation by examining the role of cultural adaptability, emerging technology applications, and sustainable development in internationalization strategies. Scholars should investigate how cultural intelligence and cultural sensitivity facilitate more effective integration into international markets. Moreover, research should analyze

how emerging technologies, such as AI, cloud computing, and internet of things, are reshaping the operational models of firm internationalization. This includes innovative practices in market entry strategies, supply chain management, as well as customer service. Finally, it is crucial to study how organizations can balance economic benefits with social responsibilities during the internationalization process, achieving both profitability and sustainable performance. Such research will provide insights into how organizations can navigate the complexities of internationalization while laying a foundation for long-term development and global success.

**Methodological innovation** Future management and organizational research must prioritize methodological innovation and rigor. Mixed-methods research, which integrates the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Lim, 2024a, b), is becoming increasingly important (Singh et al., 2023). This approach ensures statistical reliability while uncovering deeper insights, bridging theory and practice effectively. The rise of AI technologies and big data heralds a new era of data-driven research paradigms. Tools such as data mining and machine learning offer fresh perspectives and solutions for complex management and organizational challenges. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of management and organizational research is fostering a more integrated paradigm. Incorporating theoretical frameworks and techniques from economics, psychology, and sociology enables researchers to analyze management and organizational issues from multiple dimensions, leading to more comprehensive and profound insights. This interdisciplinary integration enriches the field and promotes innovative solutions. To enhance research precision and predictive power, experimental designs (e.g., Patnaik et al., 2022; Tu et al., 2023) are highly valued. Controlled experiments allow researchers to evaluate management and organizational strategies' effectiveness while minimizing external variable interference. These methodologies enable decision-makers to navigate uncertainty with greater confidence and foresight, advancing the field's theoretical and practical frontiers.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature by offering not only an objective evaluation of *APJM* publications but also valuable insights for the future development of both the journal and the larger field of management and organizational research. Through bibliometric analysis, this study explores the productivity, impact, and thematic structure of research in *APJM*, providing a multifaceted perspective for evaluation. Since its inception 40 years ago, *APJM* has shown a positive development trend, achieving significant growth in publications, citations, and international collaborations. This analysis helps the *APJM* community better understand the journal's productivity and impact while also identifying where key expertise in management and organizational research resides (e.g., authors, articles, journals) and where opportunities for new research may emerge (e.g., countries). Amidst the fluctuations of globalization and the rise of emerging technologies, *APJM* is establishing new research focuses, such as digital transformation and internationalization strategies. The thematic mappings presented in this study not only inspire intellectual exploration with the *APJM* community but also open up new research opportunities, ensuring that *APJM* continues to serve as one of the leading management journals in the Asian region.

## Appendix

**Table 6** Special issues published by *APJM* (2001–2026)

Year	Volume	Issue	TP	Editor(s)	Special issue title (theme)
2001	18	2	6	Phillip H. Phan	Corporate Governance in the Newly Emerging Economies
2003	20	3	5	Stewart R. Clegg	Constituting Management in China
2004	21	1–2	10	David Ahlstrom, Garry D. Bruton	Corporate Crisis and Turnaround in Asia
2005	22	4	7	Tina Dacin, Andrew Delios	Networks in Asia Pacific Business
2006	23	4	10	Mike W. Peng, Andrew Delios	Conglomerates and Business Groups in the Asia Pacific
2008	25	3	10	Yuan Lu, Eric W. K. Tsang, Mike W. Peng	Knowledge Management and Innovation Strategy in the Asia Pacific
2009	26	3	9	Michael Carney, Eric Gedajlovic, Xiaohua Yang	Varieties of Asian Capitalism: Indigenization and Internationalization
2010	27	3	11	David Ahlstrom, Shyh-er Chen, Kuang S. Yeh	Managing in Ethnic Chinese Communities
2011	28	1	8	Steven Globberman, Mike W. Peng, Daniel M. Shapiro	Managing Corporate Governance Globally: An Asia Pacific Perspective
2012	29	2	16	Long W. Lam, Xu Huang, Dora C. Lau	Leadership in Asia
2013	30	2	13	Sheila M. Puffer, Daniel J. McCarthy, Mike W. Peng	Managing Favors in a Global Economy
2013	30	3	16	Yuan Lu, Kevin Au, Mike W. Peng, Erming Xu	Strategic Management in Private and Family Businesses
2015	32	1	12	Garry D. Bruton, David Ahlstrom, Steven Si	Entrepreneurship, Poverty, and Asia: Moving Beyond Subsistence Entrepreneurship
2015	32	4	10	Naga Lakshmi Damaraju, Sanjay Jain, Rishikesh Krishnan, Anil Nair, Jaideep Prabhu, David Ahlstrom	Innovation and Entrepreneurship in India
2016	33	3	10	Peter Ping Li, Tomoki Sekiguchi, Kevin Zhou	Indigenous Management Research in Asia
2017	34	1	10	Bersant Hobdari, Peter Gammeltoft, Jing Li, Klaus Meyer	Emerging Economy Multinationals and Home Country Effects: Does Origin Matter?
2017	34	4	9	Jane Lu, Xufei Ma, Lucy Taksa, Yue Wang	From Emerging to Emerged: A Decade of Development of Dragon Multinationals
2018	35	3	9	Daphne W. Yiu, Long W. Lam, Ajai Gaur, Seung-Hyun Lee, Chi-Sum Wong	Asia Pacific Journal of Management Review Issue
2019	36	2	9	Peter Ping Li, En Xie, Seok Choon Lew, Yoshimichi Sato, Steven Lui	Informal Social Networks in East Asia
2020	37	2	10	Kimberly A. Eddleston, Peter Jaskiewicz, Mike Wright	Familial Organizations and International Business: Individual, Organizational and Institutional Variety in and Beyond Asia

**Table 6** (continued)

Year	Volume	Issue	TP	Editor(s)	Special issue title (theme)
2020	37	4	12	Sunny Li Sun, Weilei (Stone) Shi, David Ahlstrom, Li (Rachel) Tian	Institutions and Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies
2022	39	3	14	Jiatao Li, Gongming Qian, Kevin Zhou, Jane Lu	De-Globalization and Institutional Changes: Implications for Firms in Asia
2023	40	3	15	Kelly Zhengmin Peng, Fang Lee Cooke, Xuhua Wei	Diversity and Minority in Organizations in Asia: Towards a More Inclusive Workplace?
2024	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	Yingying Zhang-Zhang, Saba Colakoglu, Matevž (Matt) Rašković, Rebecca Piekkari, Li-Qun Wei	Theorizing Gender in Management Studies: An Asia Pacific-Perspective
2025	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	Xiao Zhang, Luqun Xie, Jiatao Li, Lin Cui, Yu Li, Han Jiang	Digital Globalization: An Asia-Pacific Perspective
2026	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	Xianghua Lu, Noman Shaheer, Weiguo Zhong, Lin Tian, Jianyu Zhao, Chinmay Pattnaik	AI and the New Era of Organizational Dynamics

Source: Authors' own compilation

TP, Total publications; N.R., Not reported, as they were forthcoming at the time this review was conducted

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**Ethical approval** The authors did not carry out any study with human participants or animals for this article.

**Competing interests** The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to declare.

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