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“WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT  
SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE?” A BIBLIOMETRIC  
REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH ON  
SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE

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**“What do we mean when we talk about Sustainable Healthcare?” A Bibliometric  
Review of Management Research on Sustainable Healthcare**

**Synopsis:**

Sustainable healthcare is a nascent field of study. This presentation will discuss a bibliometric overview and content analysis that explores the trends in sustainable healthcare research within management literature. The bibliometric methodology employs the use of performance analysis and science mapping. In addition, research gaps within the existing literature have been identified.

## **“What do we mean when we talk about Sustainable Healthcare?” A Bibliometric Review of Management Research on Sustainable Healthcare**

Climate change is recognized as the greatest health threat this century. Warming global temperatures are leading to increased health conditions such as heat-related complications and death. Conversely, healthcare contributes significantly to climate change through carbon dioxide emissions, representing 4% of total global emissions. Healthcare systems and the environment are interrelated. Healthcare systems must support not just this current generation, but also the generations to come. Sustainable healthcare is a developing field of research. The goal of this study is to understand the past and current state of management research within the domain of sustainable healthcare using performance analysis and science mapping approaches.

A keyword search using the terms “sustainable healthcare” and “management” were queried in Scopus. The final sample selection consisted of 176 academic articles published between 2005 and July 18, 2023. Bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer, and content analysis were performed.

Only 15 articles were published over the seven-year period between 2005 and 2012. However, since 2016 there has been a steady increase in the number of publications. According to the search query, only five journals published at least four articles on the topic of sustainable healthcare and management. Sustainability Switzerland published 16 articles, compared to the journals Medical Teacher and Resources Conservation and Recycling, which each published five articles.

A manual search was conducted to reveal the articles published in the top 200 business, management, and accounting journals based on the 2022 SCImago Journal Ranking. Only six articles were published in the top ranked journals. The highest ranked article was published in the 65th ranked journal on the list. Among the top cited articles, none are published by the top 200 business, management, accounting journals despite many articles addressing topics that are related to the field of management. Of the top ten cited articles, nine have a field-weighted citation impact  $\geq 4$ , which indicates higher than average citations based on global average for similar publications.

Co-word analysis and clustering analysis based on “authors keywords” were performed. The cluster analysis revealed four distinct cluster labels comprised of key terms. The four different clusters represent the main research areas in sustainable healthcare and management literature. Based on content analysis of the 176 articles, four main research themes were identified. They were managing health, transforming healthcare, sustainable technology solutions and processes, and sustainable healthcare development.

The recent increase in the number of publications in sustainable healthcare and management likely corresponds with the signing of the Paris Agreement which highlighted the risk of climate change on global temperatures. Despite this, there is a dearth of sustainable healthcare research published in leading business and management journals.

Keywords: Sustainable healthcare – Management – Bibliometric analysis – Systematic literature review