QUALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: A BIBLIOMETRIC AND SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This article reviews the relationship between quality and organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) over the period 1988–2025. A total of 596 publications were initially identified, of which 63 were selected and analyzed using the Scopus database. The study adopts a systematic literature review supported by bibliometric analysis and a historical-documentary approach. Data processing was conducted using RStudio (Bibliometrix package) and VOSviewer, while the Ordinatio method was applied to prioritize studies based on impact, recency, and citation metrics.The results identify the most influential countries, authors, institutions, and journals, showing a significant increase in research since the early 2010s, with a predominance of quantitative studies. Key themes include quality management, innovation, knowledge management, strategic management, human resource practices, and technological capabilities as drivers of competitiveness.Despite this growth, the study reveals a lack of conceptual consensus regarding the relationship between quality and competitiveness at the micro level. Overlaps with constructs such as performance, productivity, and competitive advantage generate ambiguity. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for integrated and context-sensitive frameworks that position quality as a strategic determinant of competitiveness, particularly in SMEs operating in emerging environments.
Keywords: quality, competitiveness, performance, productivity, organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Competitiveness remains without a universally accepted definition, reflecting its multidimensional and context-dependent nature. This conceptual ambiguity has led to diverse interpretations across disciplines, especially when transitioning from macroeconomic to microeconomic and organizational viewpoints.Examining organizational competitiveness through multiple theoretical frameworks provides a more comprehensive understanding of its scope and implications. Porter (1990) contends that competitiveness cannot be confined to a single definition; instead, it is fundamentally linked to productivity growth, which is realized through cost efficiency or product differentiation.These mechanisms enable firms to secure advantageous market positions by offering lower prices or superior value propositions.

In this context, quality management has emerged as a critical factor influencing organizational competitiveness, particularly in SMEs. Approaches such as Total Quality Management (TQM), continuous improvement, and process standardization have been widely recognized as mechanisms that enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve customer satisfaction. Consequently, quality is not only an operational concern but also a strategic capability that supports long-term competitiveness and value creation.
A dynamic perspective associates organizational competitiveness with a firm's capacity to operate effectively in complex, uncertain, and rapidly changing environments. Worapongpat and Song (2025) define competitiveness as the organizational ability to respond swiftly to market fluctuations driven by changing consumer preferences, identifying adaptability as a key determinant. Gunasekaran, et al., (2008) argue that competitiveness is demonstrated by a firm's relative market position and its ability to achieve superior performance compared to competitors, reinforcing the relational dimension of the concept.

Subramanian and Gunasekaran (2015) expand the concept of competitiveness beyond market responsiveness to include internal organizational dimensions, particularly the integration of people, processes, and technology. This perspective also emphasizes the role of quality management as a transversal element that enhances process efficiency, consistency, and continuous improvement within organizations. Such an approach aligns with the resource-based view (RBV), which posits that competitiveness arises from the strategic configuration of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources.

In this sense, quality management can be interpreted as a strategic capability that strengthens organizational resources and supports the development of sustainable competitive advantages. Accordingly, organizational competitiveness is understood as the sustained ability to generate superior performance relative to comparable organizations, typically achieved through the effective coordination of internal capabilities. Zhu and Cheung (2017) similarly associate competitiveness with a firm's capacity to achieve long-term value creation objectives.

Barrio et al. (2019) further extend the concept of competitiveness by incorporating sustainability and value generation, defining it as a firm's ability to enter markets, sustain a favorable competitive position over time, and efficiently manage resources while delivering high-quality products at competitive prices. This perspective integrates economic performance with broader value creation for stakeholders, including shareholders and society. Similarly, Escandón and Sandoval (2011) and Orozco et al. (2011) emphasize that competitiveness is closely linked to the efficient management of organizational resources and the capacity to respond to sectoral competition. They conceptualize competitiveness as a multifactorial construct comprising managerial capabilities, labor practices, innovation processes, and technological advancement (Edgar et al., 2024).

Cima et al. (2018) adopt an innovation-oriented perspective, associating competitiveness with an organization's ability to sustain market leadership through continuous improvement, efficient resource utilization, and innovation capabilities. This perspective underscores that competitiveness is a dynamic process driven by learning and adaptation rather than a static condition. Vargas et al. (2020) similarly assert that competitiveness is

directly linked to the development of competitive advantages through differentiation and cost-leadership strategies, enabling firms to create unique value propositions that attract and retain customers.

Iasevoli and Massi (2012), Kumar and Shir (2020), and Kafoe (2024) propose a broader managerial perspective, arguing that competitiveness extends beyond traditional economic indicators such as profitability, productivity, and market share. They suggest that competitiveness also includes the organization's ability to improve internal processes, anticipate future scenarios, and design market offerings that surpass competitors'. This forward-looking approach positions competitiveness as both an outcome and a capability, connecting past performance with strategic foresight.

Recent scholarship highlights organizational culture as a transversal and integrative factor in competitiveness. Jardón and Martínez (2020) contend that the relationship between competitive advantages and organizational performance is mediated by cultural elements that influence behaviors, decision-making processes, and innovation dynamics. Thus, culture serves as a differentiating mechanism that enhances productivity and supports the long-term sustainability of competitive positions.

METHODOLOGY

To prepare this article, a systematic review of the scientific literature on organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) was conducted. The search for publications was carried out using the Scopus database (Elsevier), which currently includes more than 40,000 indexed journals and is recognized for its extensive coverage across multiple fields of knowledge. The observation period considered spans from 1988 to September 2025.

To analyze studies on organizational competitiveness, a structured search query was employed, including the terms: —quality‖, "organizational competitiveness", "business competitiveness", "competitiveness at the micro level", and "competitiveness of SMEs". The search was conducted using titles, abstracts, and keywords aligned with the research's central theme. As an initial result, 596 documents were retrieved.

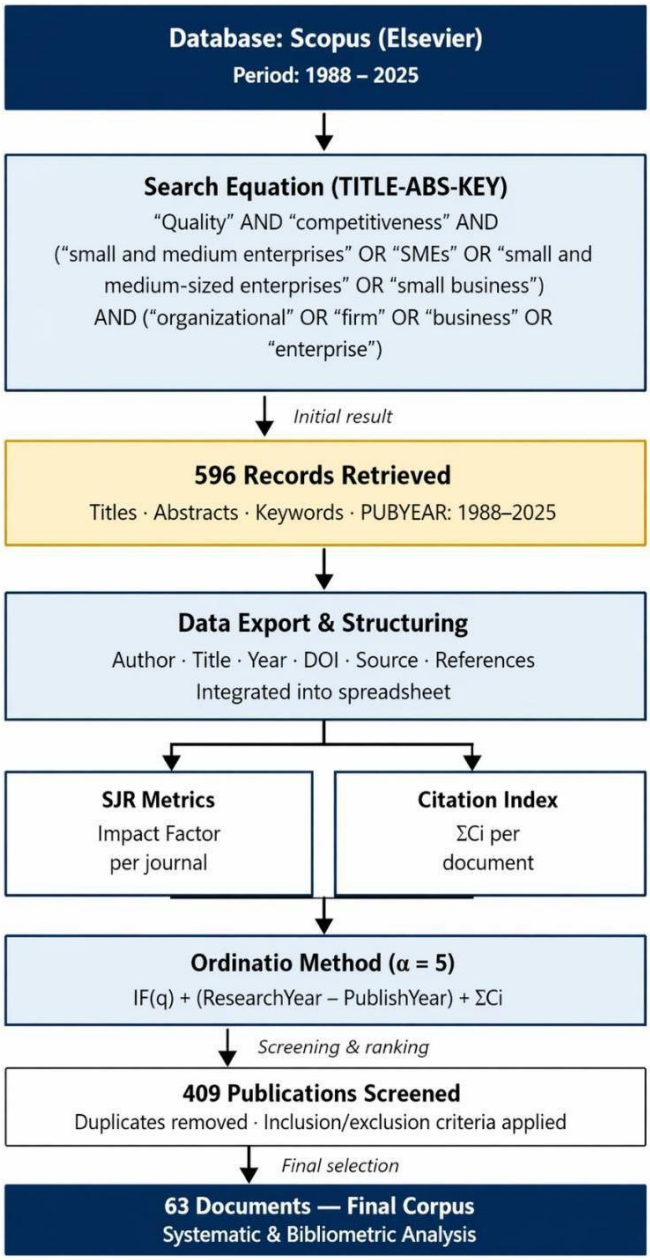
The references obtained were exported from Scopus, including key metadata such as author, title, year, DOI, source, and references, which were subsequently integrated into a structured database in spreadsheet format. For data processing and analysis, specialized bibliometric and statistical tools were used, including RStudio with the Bibliometrix package for quantitative analysis, and VOSviewer for the visualization of co-authorship, co-occurrence, and citation networks. These tools enabled the identification of thematic clusters, research trends, and relationships among key variables in the field.

Subsequently, journal impact metrics were incorporated using the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) indicator to assess the quality and relevance of the publications. The Ordinatio method was then applied to prioritize and select the most relevant studies. This method considers three main criteria: (i) the journal impact factor IF(α), where α ranges from 1 to 10; (ii) the temporal relevance through the difference between Research Year and Publish Year; and (iii) the number of citations (∑Ci) accumulated by each document. For this study, α was set to 5, giving equal weight to recency and impact.

After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, removing duplicates, and screening procedures, a final corpus of 63 documents was selected for in-depth systematic analysis. This manuscript is structured as follows: the first section presents the theoretical framework; the second details the methodology; the third reports the statistical and bibliometric results derived from the initial dataset; the fourth develops the systematic literature review based on the selected studies; and the fifth presents the main conclusions and implications of the research.The procedure is described in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Description of the methodological process

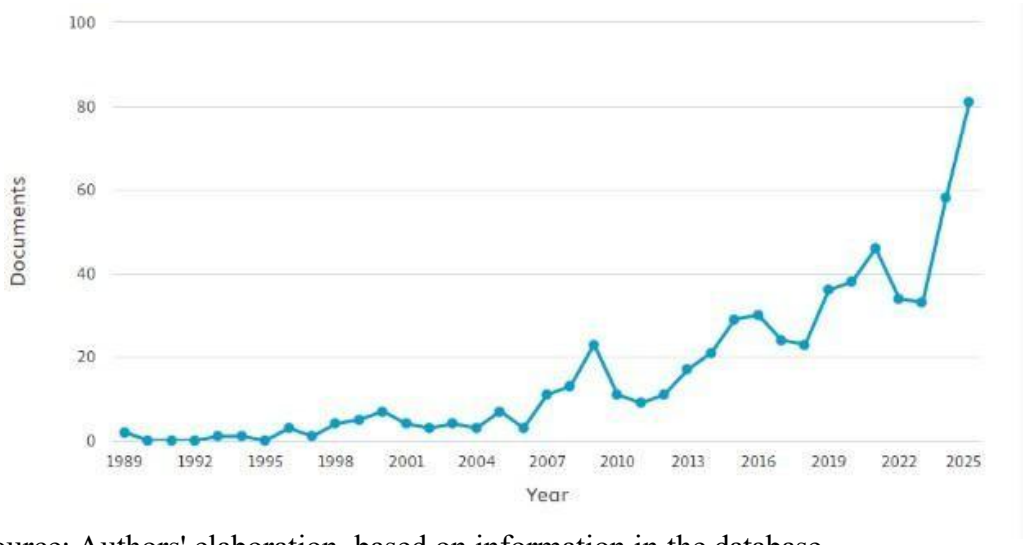


Source: Authors' elaboration

RESULTS

General trend of research on competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises. In order to establish a general trend in research on organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises, the Scopus database was chosen for its scientific and academic prestige, and the search equations used were "organizational competitiveness" "business competitiveness" "competitiveness at the micro level" and "competitiveness of SMEs".The search was carried out taking into account the central theme of the research, filtering by titles, abstracts and keywords, in the time observation window between 1988 and 2025, obtaining as a result 596 published documents, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure2. *Number of articles by year of publication*

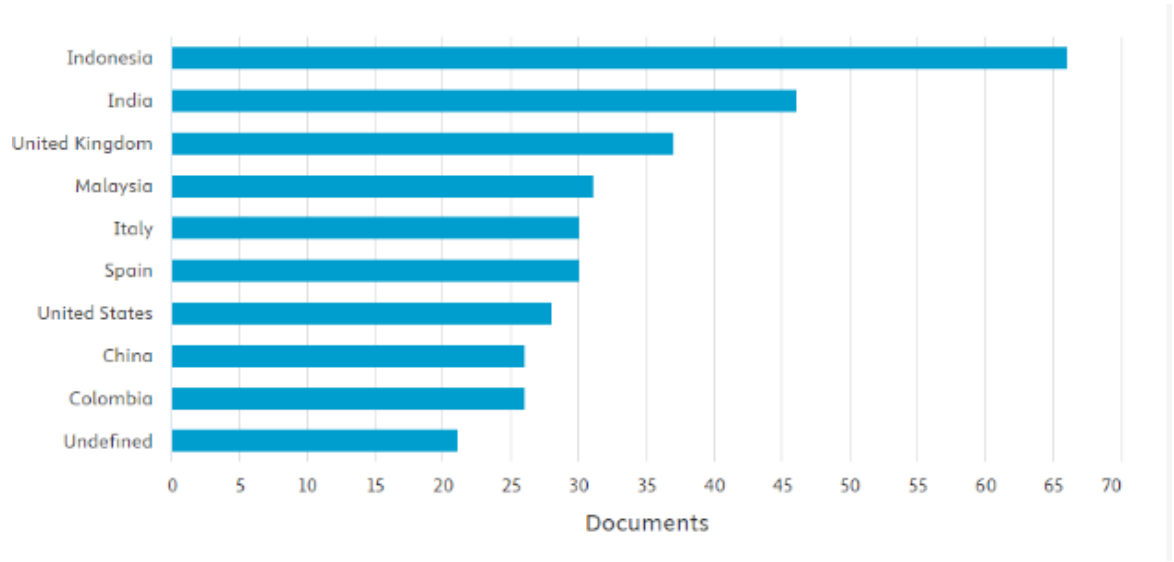


Source: Authors' elaboration, based on information in the database.

As shown in Figure 2, the evolution of scientific production on organizational competitiveness in SMEs exhibits a clear upward trajectory, though with heterogeneous growth patterns. During the initial period (late 1980s to early 2000s), the number of publications remained notably low and relatively stable, reflecting a limited academic focus on the topic. This trend began to shift gradually from the mid-2000s, with a moderate increase in research output.

From approximately 2013 onwards, a more pronounced and sustained growth in publications can be observed, indicating a consolidation of interest in the field. Although earlier studies suggested that production did not exceed 20 documents annually by 2013, the data in Figure 2 reveal that this threshold was subsequently surpassed, with a continuous increase culminating in intermediate peaks between 2015 and 2020. A slight fluctuation is observed around 2020–2022, followed by a significant surge in recent years, culminating in the highest level of scientific output in 2025, with more than 80 publications. This sharp increase reflects the growing importance of organizational competitiveness amid globalization, digital transformation, and changing market dynamics.

Figure 3.
Publications by country

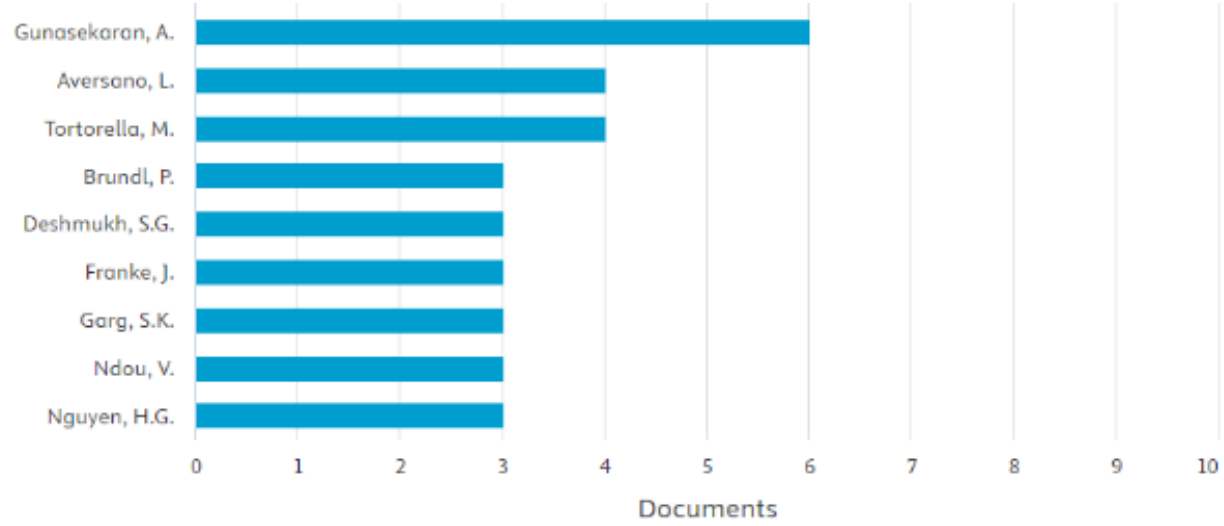


Source: Authors' elaboration, based on information in the database.

The distribution of scientific production by country, as shown in Figure 3, reveals a clear geographical concentration of research on organizational competitiveness in SMEs. Indonesia leads with the most publications (about 65), followed by India (about 45) and the United Kingdom (about 35). This pattern highlights the growing relevance of competitiveness studies in emerging economies, particularly in Southeast Asia, where SMEs play a central role in economic development. Additionally, countries such as Malaysia, Italy, and Spain exhibit a moderate level of production, each contributing close to 30 publications, indicating a sustained but less dominant academic presence.

In contrast, the United States and China, despite their global economic leadership, show comparatively lower production in this specific field, with fewer than 30 documents each. Colombia shows a similar level of contribution, reflecting growing research interest in Latin American contexts. The presence of an ―Undefined‖ category suggests minor limitations in data classification. Overall, the figure indicates that research on organizational competitiveness in SMEs is widely distributed, with a notable participation of emerging economies, reinforcing the contextual and developmental importance of this topic.

Figure4.
Most representative authors

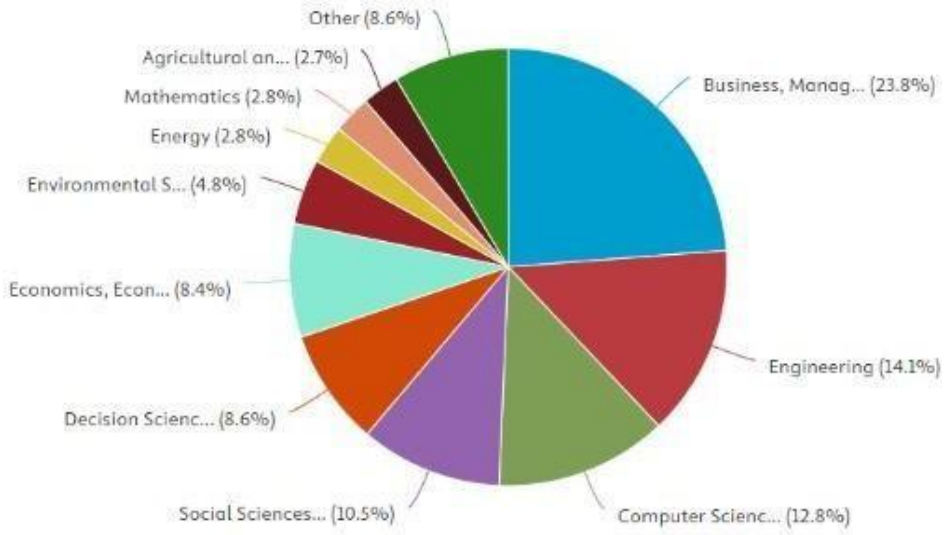


Source: Authors' elaboration, based on information in the database.

The analysis of the most productive authors in the field, as illustrated in Figure 4, shows a clear concentration of scientific output among a limited group of researchers. Gunasekaran, A. stands out as the leading contributor, with approximately six publications, significantly surpassing the rest of the authors. This prominence highlights his central role in shaping the research agenda on organizational competitiveness, particularly in operations management and supply chain integration.

The remaining authors, including Aversano, L. and Tortorella, M., present a moderate level of contribution with around four publications each, followed by a group of researchers such as Brundl, P., Deshmukh, S.G., Franke, J., Garg, S.K., Ndou, V., and Nguyen, H.G., who each contribute approximately three publications. This distribution suggests a relatively fragmented authorship structure, where knowledge production is not dominated by a single research cluster but rather dispersed among multiple contributors. Such a pattern indicates an emerging, evolving field characterized by diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches.

Figure5.
Knowledge areas



Source: Authors' elaboration, based on information in database.

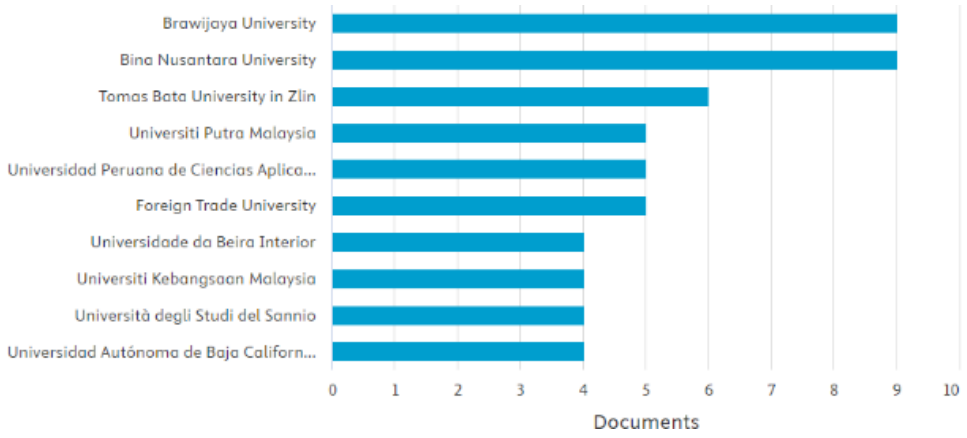
The distribution of publications by subject area, as presented in Figure 5, shows that research on organizational competitiveness in SMEs is predominantly in Business, Management and Accounting, accounting for approximately 23.8% of the total scientific production. This is followed by Engineering (14.1%) and Computer Science (12.8%), highlighting the strong connection between competitiveness and operational efficiency, technological capabilities, and digital transformation. Additionally, Social Sciences (10.5%) and Decision Sciences (8.6%) contribute significantly, reflecting the field's interdisciplinary nature and its relevance to strategic decision-making and organizational behavior.

Other areas, such as Economics, Econometrics, and Finance (8.4%) and Environmental Sciences (4.8%), indicate the growing integration of sustainability and economic performance into competitiveness studies. Meanwhile, fields such as Energy, Mathematics, and Agricultural Sciences show a more limited but still relevant participation, with each contributing less than 3%. The —Other‖ category (8.6%) suggests additional disciplinary diversity. Overall, the figure demonstrates that organizational competitiveness is a multidimensional research domain, with a strong managerial and technological orientation, supported by complementary contributions from social, economic, and environmental perspectives.

On the other hand, the analysis of institutional affiliation, as shown in Figure 6, reveals a concentration of scientific production among universities with a strong presence in emerging and developing contexts. Brawijaya University and Bina Nusantara University stand out as the most productive institutions, each contributing approximately 10 publications, which reflects the growing academic leadership of Indonesian universities in the field of organizational competitiveness in SMEs.

This is followed by Tomas Bata University in Zlín with around 6 publications, while institutions such as Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universidad Peruana de CienciasAplicadas, and Foreign Trade University present a moderate level of contribution, with approximately 5 documents each. Other universities, including Universidade da Beira Interior, UniversitiKebangsaan Malaysia, UniversitàdegliStudi del Sannio, and Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, show a similar participation level, with around 4 publications each. Overall, this distribution highlights a diversified institutional landscape, with a notable prominence of universities from Asia and emerging economies, reinforcing the contextual relevance of competitiveness research in these regions.

Figure6.
Distribution of scientific production by institutional affiliation

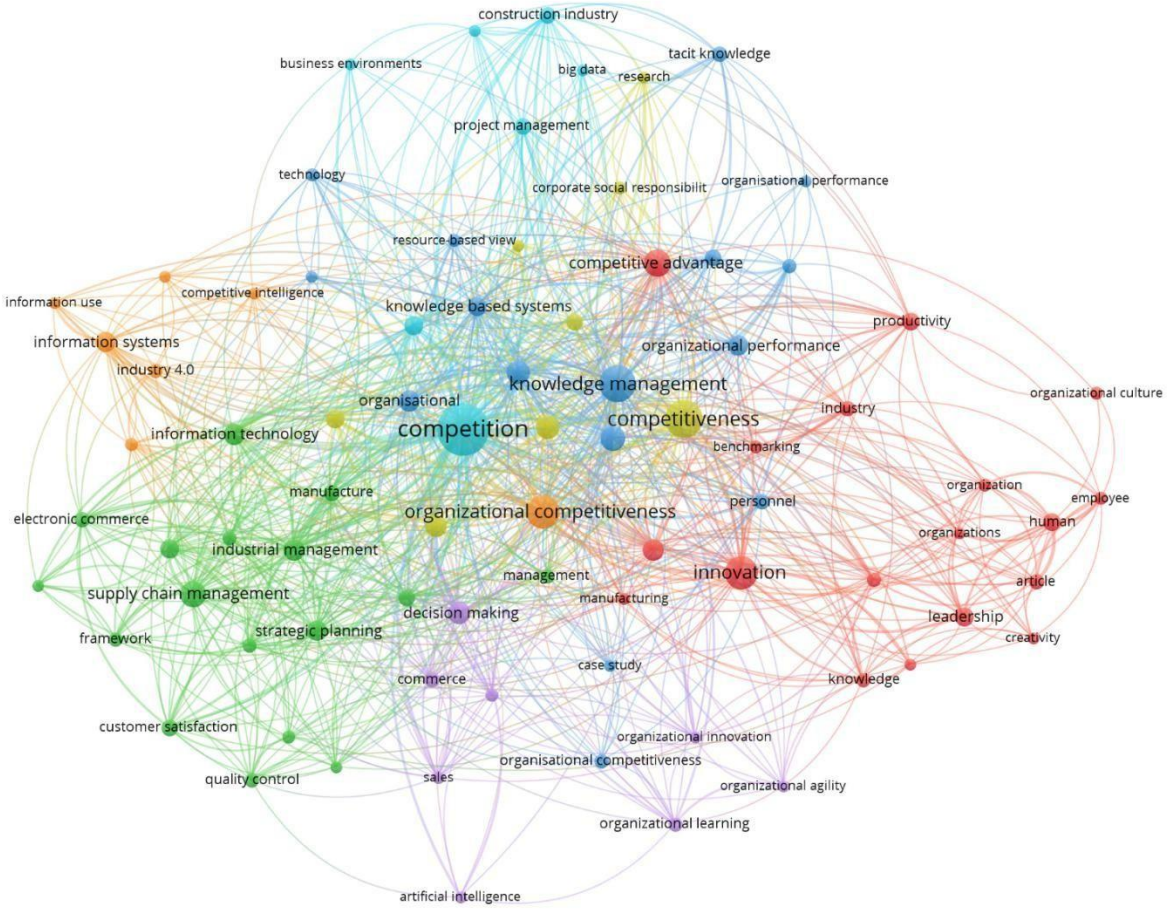


Source: Authors' elaboration, based on information in the database.

Regarding the keyword co-occurrence network presented in Figure 7 reveals the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of research on organizational competitiveness in SMEs. The map shows a dense, highly interconnected network in which ―competition, ―competitiveness,‖ ―knowledge management‖, and ―organizational competitiveness‖ emerge as central nodes, indicating their pivotal role in structuring the field. The proximity and strength of the links between these terms suggest a strong conceptual association between competitiveness and knowledge-based capabilities, reinforcing the importance of intangible resources in organizational performance.

The visualization also identifies several thematic clusters differentiated by color. One cluster is oriented toward innovation, leadership, and organizational performance, highlighting the role of human and strategic factors in enhancing competitiveness. Another cluster focuses on supply chain management, industrial management, and quality control, reflecting an operational and efficiency-driven perspective. Additionally, a technology-oriented cluster includes terms such as information systems, Industry 4.0, and big data, emphasizing the growing influence of digital transformation. Finally, an emerging cluster associated with organizational learning, agility, and artificial intelligence suggests new research directions. Overall, the figure demonstrates that organizational competitiveness is a multidimensional and evolving field that integrates strategic, technological, and operational dimensions within a knowledge-driven framework.

Figure7.
Keyword co-occurrence network



Once the analyses described above were implemented, the 596 documents were analyzed, allowing identification of a low level of publications on the subject from 1998 to 2025.

After reviewing all the articles, according to their systematic analysis, it was possible to select the 63 most important publications taking into account the impact level of the journal, the year of publication, and the citation index, in different journals that are directly related to the object of study, which corresponds to 15.4%.

It is important to highlight trade and services, construction, industry, tourism, and public organizations as sectors of study. Regarding language, 95% of publications are in English, and the remaining 5% are in Spanish and Portuguese. In relation to the methodology used in the articles, there is a strong tendency towards empirical studies, 85% of the research is quantitative analysis and 15% qualitative analysis. The main variables studied in the research are competitiveness and innovation, leadership, competitive strategy, marketing, and performance. The indicators most analyzed in relation to organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises were performance, profitability, innovation, and technological infrastructure.

On the other hand, the topics of supply chain, strategy, human management, knowledge management, innovation, and green practices were identified and are related to publications on organizational competitiveness.

Review and characteristics of research on quality and organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized companies.

Initially, Porter (1990) considered that competitiveness is directly related to the capacity to sustain and increase participation in international markets, in turn, with the improvement of the quality of life and the standard of living of the population. The only solid way to achieve this is based on increased productivity.

According to Guasca and Buitrago (2012), competitiveness was initially considered as an important factor for the development of a nation. Later, the concept gained greater strength and was expanded to encompass the behavior not only of countries but also of institutions, companies, and individuals, becoming a common objective. Similarly, Medeiros et al., (2019) consider that competitiveness has great relevance due to its positive relationship with the growth of countries in the medium and long term, where there is the influence of different factors such as the management of resources, the increase of production, the improvement of the quality of life of its citizens, among others.

Indeed, the large number of studies on competitiveness makes it clear that its definition varies according to the object of study; i.e., the process of analysis, evaluation, and interpretation depends on whether it is a country, sector, company, or individuals. Taking into account that the object of study of this research is companies, the analysis focuses on the concept of "organizational competitiveness," which has been studied from the point of view of different authors:

Rodríguez and Ordóñez (2003), through a literature review, analyzed the relationship between knowledge management, organizational competitiveness, and human resources management, which allowed them to propose an integrating framework that links research

processes with current theories related to these variables, combining the characteristics of value and uniqueness, which exist in organizations.

In this sense, Stavrou (2005) explored the categorization of flexible work arrangements for human management and their relationship with organizational competitiveness, through a survey applied to 2811 companies, identified a positive relationship between labor flexibility and competitiveness, and a direct relationship between non-standardized work patterns with lower staff turnover, increased performance, and decreased absenteeism with work performed outside the office.

Saeed et al., (2021) consider that "organizational competitiveness" is the ability to operate in a continuous and unpredictable environment, reacting quickly and effectively to market changes and consumer preferences.Walter (2020) relate it directly to competitive advantage, being a characteristic that allows organizations to create a unique offer, based on two main factors: differentiation and cost reduction.

In the same sense, Zhao and Shen (2008) evaluated the degree of competitiveness of Chinese contractors in international markets, through qualitative research and interviews with 25 contractors, the research allowed them to identify that the degree of competitiveness of the companies studied has been increasing, mainly due to two strengths such as lower construction costs and the degree of labor experience, which has allowed them to expand and remain in the market.

Zhang et al. (2010) through qualitative research and semi-structured interviews with 20 experts analyzed the key competitiveness indicators that guide new real estate developers during the initial stage of their activity, which led to the identification of 5 main indicators, such as: capital operation, entrepreneurship, land reserve capacity, high income from sales of the first real estate development project and innovation capacity.

Escandon and Sandoval (2011) developed a research on companies created by women, from the theory of resources and capabilities and the application of a survey to 2,000 women, through this study they identified the variables that influence the competitiveness of such organizations such as innovation, technology and the educational level of women entrepreneurs, ratifying according to the authors the exposed by the theory, regarding the importance of such variables for the construction of strategies that allow them to achieve better results.

Researchers Iasevoli and Massi (2012) through the review of 100 scientific articles in different databases, analyzed the relationship between sustainable business management and competitiveness, suggesting that as competitiveness strategies are introduced to improve the organization's capacity, the number of strategies for the reduction of environmental impacts generated by the economic activity of the company increases, finally, the growing trend in the study of organizational competitiveness is highlighted.

On the other hand, Gomez et al., (2015) analyzed the impact of organizational culture on competitiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency in Moroccan companies. Their study found

that the competitiveness of the companies under study is mainly influenced by staff participation, the degree of decision-making centralization, and the organization's emphasis on procedures and results.

While Anning (2016) used an analytical model grounded in the main arguments of neoinstitutional theory and transformational leadership theory, they examined the mediating effects of organizational culture and leadership on the competitiveness of family firms. The model allowed them to prove the existence of positive relationships between the values that define organizational culture (commitment, harmony, long-term orientation, and customer service) and performance.

For their part Kwayu et al., (2018) developed an investigation on how to improve organizational competitiveness through the use of social networks, through a case study, the authors determined that the practices associated with the use of these digital tools, significantly improved the performance of the company, specifically identified that organizational competitiveness was achieved by imitation and through the product development strategy.

Similarly, Cima et al., (2018) identified the internal factors that drive organizational competitiveness of micro and small companies engaged in software development, for which they conducted a quantitative research through surveys of 40 companies. The authors identified quality management, technological infrastructure, innovation practices, human resources practices, and marketing practices as key factors influencing the performance of software companies.

Finally, Vargas et al. (2020) present the factors that affect the competitiveness of SMEs in the commerce and services sector in the municipality of Palmira (Colombia) and describe the business dynamics of these companies. Among the factors identified, the most influential for achieving competitiveness is effective management of supplier relations; on the other hand, the lack of training and synergy among SMEs is a significant weakness that affects competitiveness.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study confirm that organizational quality and competitiveness in SMEs constitute a growing and evolving field of research, characterized by conceptual dispersion and theoretical diversity. The increase in scientific output, especially since 2013, aligns with the arguments of Iasevoli and Massi (2012), who identified a growing academic interest in competitiveness as organizations face increasing environmental complexity. This trend also supports Worapongpat and Song's (2025) perspective, which emphasizes the need for adaptive capabilities in dynamic, uncertain contexts. Bibliometric evidence suggests that competitiveness is no longer a static attribute but a dynamic construct shaped by continuous interaction with the environment.

From a conceptual standpoint, the results reinforce Porter’s (1990) assertion that competitiveness is closely linked to productivity and value creation, while also revealing the limitations of this traditional view. The diversity of definitions in the literature confirms

the observations of Guasca and Buitrago (2012) and Medeiros et al. (2019), who argue that competitiveness varies across levels of analysis. At the organizational level, the results align with Subramanian and Gunasekaran (2015), who highlight the importance of integrating people, processes, and technology. This integration is evident in the prominence of variables such as innovation, knowledge management, and technological capabilities, which were identified as central themes in the bibliometric analysis. They also align with the resource-based perspective and the dynamic capabilities approach, suggesting that quality and competitiveness arise from the effective coordination of internal resources and an appropriate culture.

The co-occurrence analysis further supports the relevance of knowledge-based perspectives, as proposed by Rodríguez and Ordóñez (2003), by positioning knowledge management as a central node within the research network. This finding also converges with Zhu and Cheung (2017), who associate competitiveness with long-term value creation through innovation capabilities. Similarly, the importance of organizational learning and agility identified in emerging clusters is consistent with Walter (2020), who highlights the conceptual ambiguity of agility but recognizes its strategic role in enhancing organizational responsiveness. In this sense, competitiveness appears increasingly linked to intangible assets and adaptive capabilities rather than solely to cost or market positioning.

Furthermore, the results support the role of organizational culture as a cross-cutting factor, in line with Jardón and Martínez (2020), who argue that culture mediates the relationship between competitive advantages and performance. This is also consistent with Gómez et al. (2015) and Anning (2016), who demonstrate that cultural and leadership factors significantly influence organizational outcomes. In this regard, competitiveness cannot be understood solely in terms of structural or economic variables; it must also take behavioral and cultural dimensions into account.

Despite these convergences, the study confirms a persistent gap in the literature regarding the conceptual clarity and operationalization of the relationship between quality and organizational competitiveness. The overlap with related constructs, such as performance, productivity, and competitive advantage, creates ambiguity, as noted by Walter (2020). This lack of consensus limits the comparability of empirical findings and hinders the development of standardized measurement models. Therefore, there is a clear need for integrative frameworks that unify perspectives and provide more precise definitions and measurement approaches.

Finally, it is important to note that this study contributes by offering an integrated perspective on the relationship between quality and organizational competitiveness in SMEs, identifying quality management as a strategic driver that enhances key organizational capabilities, such as innovation, knowledge management, and technological development. Furthermore, it synthesizes the main determinants of competitiveness within a multidimensional framework and highlights the growing relevance of emerging economies in shaping this field of research.

CONCLUSIONS

This study conducted a systematic and bibliometric review of the scientific production on organizational competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), based on data retrieved from the Scopus database over the period 1988–2025. The findings reveal sustained, accelerated growth in research interest, particularly from 2013 onwards, with a peak in 2025, confirming the increasing relevance of competitiveness as a strategic construct in dynamic, globalized environments. The analysis also demonstrates that the field is predominantly concentrated in Business, Management, and Accounting, with significant interdisciplinary contributions from engineering, computer science, and social sciences, highlighting the multidimensional nature of organizational competitiveness.

From a geographical perspective, the results indicate a shift in knowledge production toward emerging economies, with countries such as Indonesia and India leading scientific output, followed by the United Kingdom and other nations with moderate contributions. Similarly, institutional analysis shows a concentration of research in universities from Asia and developing contexts, reinforcing the contextual relevance of competitiveness in regions where SMEs play a critical role in economic development. In terms of authorship, the field exhibits a fragmented structure, with a limited number of leading authors and a broad dispersion of contributions, suggesting an evolving and interdisciplinary research domain.

Despite the growth in scientific production, the study confirms the persistent lack of conceptual consensus regarding organizational competitiveness at the micro level. The diversity of definitions, measurement approaches, and explanatory variables—often overlapping with constructs such as performance, productivity, and competitive advantage—continues to generate ambiguity. Furthermore, the bibliometric analysis highlights that key determinants of competitiveness are consistently associated with innovation, knowledge management, technological capabilities, human resource practices, and strategic management, reinforcing the relevance of the resource-based and dynamic capabilities perspectives.

The study has certain limitations, primarily related to the exclusive use of the Scopus database and the application of the Ordinatio method, which may restrict the inclusion of relevant studies indexed in other databases. Therefore, future research should expand its scope by incorporating additional sources, such as Web of Science and Dimensions, and by adopting complementary methodological approaches. Moreover, there is a need to develop integrative, context-sensitive frameworks that enable clearer operationalization of organizational competitiveness, particularly in SMEs operating in emerging, low-competitive environments. Future studies should also explore comparative analyses across sectors, firm sizes, and geographical contexts, as well as the interaction between micro- and macro-level determinants of competitiveness.

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