

# EJKM Editorial: 2024 State of the Journal

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After completing our first calendar year as editors-in-chief of the *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, we thought it a good idea to look back at what we've learned. As everyone in our field knows, picking up the necessary knowledge to complete any task can take some time. We've experienced that sensation first-hand and are happy to report that we think we've learned how to coordinate effectively with our excellent administrative support at ACI (especially Karen Harris, who keeps everything running at the journal) and manage our work promptly.

*EJKM* received 84 submissions in 2023, similar to the 87 received in 2022. 14 submissions were accepted, slightly up from 2022's 9. And 74 submissions were declined, down from 81 in 2022. As submission, acceptance, or rejection of a given paper don't occur on a calendar-year basis, the numbers don't fully add up but are comparable across the years. Ultimately, the acceptance rate stayed relatively constant at 9%, versus 10% in 2022 and the long-term rate of 11%.

One positive trend is a substantial decline in days to decision, dropping by about 25% (70+ days for acceptances) and precipitously for rejections. Part of the reason for the latter was an increase in desk rejections but a decrease in rejections after review. We view these results as a good thing, earlier decisions on questionable submissions values the time and effort of both authors and reviewers, attaching these resources to the most promising manuscripts.

The journal published three issues in 2023. The articles covered a broad range of topics and methodologies. But one of the more interesting and satisfying outcomes was the geographical range and variety represented by contributors. Africa (Ghana, Kenya, South Africa) and Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal) contributed five articles each. Others came from Europe (Cyprus, Slovakia), the Middle East (Jordan) and the US. Contributions continue to arrive from all over the world, and we welcome submissions from diverse locations.

Going forward, we've noticed a number of trends in this first year and can hopefully provide some guidance on creating submissions that will move successfully through the review process. Initially, make sure the paper has an explicit connection to knowledge and knowledge management. While topics such as human resources and customer communications are related to KM in several applications, they are separate and distinct topics. An HR paper focused primarily on HR theory and practice is probably better off in an HR journal. But if the connection is made to KM, and how that particular HR application is interesting in a KM context, then our journal is a good potential landing spot.

Given the spread of user-friendly structural equation modeling software, a number of SEM papers are being submitted on a consistent basis. SEM, of course, is an extremely useful methodology, and several SEM papers have successfully advanced through the review process. But remember that the models need to be fully justified and explained. SEM requires formal and detailed literature reviews in order to explain the variables chosen and the items gathered together to represent them. Authors make choices about which variables to use and how they are conceptualized, and those choices need to be explained and not just with a reference. SEM is always more convincing when the survey items have already been applied by a previous reference, but it is still up to the current author to explain why that conceptualization makes sense, why the components/items make sense according to the previous literature, and why this choice is best, given other options available. So be sure to tell a good story with SEM papers, including full information on the logic behind the model, not just the final metrics.

As is the case with other journals, we've also seen an increasing number of bibliometric studies. Bibliometric studies have their place, if well done, given their ability to identify and collect potentially massive numbers of references relating to an identified topic. But they can come off as armchair studies, without any real insight or contribution from the authors. In our case, thinking about the bibliometric studies we've seen over the past year, we're looking for contributions based on a solid conceptual foundation. The fact that a study is bibliometric does not remove the need for a deep and effective literature review. The authors need to establish that they

know the field and main literature, otherwise how can we trust their judgement on the correct keywords for the search or that they have the background necessary to analyze the contents of the identified sources. Descriptive statistics for bibliometric studies (what journals?, what countries?, what authors?) can be useful as background but should not be the main findings. Rather, the authors should be looking for trends and connections, discussions that have evolved over time, and other in-depth insights that can come from reviewing such a substantial sample of scholarship. That leads to conclusions about whether there is something new that has been added to existing knowledge.

One pattern that continued into 2023 was the receipt and publication of quality case studies and similar in-depth studies. We welcome these and other less-seen methodologies. There is room in the field for both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Just ensure that the qualitative studies take advantage of their strength, the ability to go into unusual detail in studying a specific application of KM and related concepts. Summary statistics or survey results don't mean as much in case studies as detailed descriptions, quotes, and similar opportunities for insights from a particular case or group of cases.

In terms of journal metrics, those change only slowly over time (e.g. ABDC), of course, but some do. The Scopus CiteScore for 2022 was 2.5, up from 2.3 (2021), 1.8 (2020), 1.2 (2019), and 0.8 (2018), a nice progression. None of that has anything to do with us, but it reflects a great job done by our predecessors. We hope to continue the positive trend. With that in mind, if there are opportunities to cite the journal's articles, please do so. That would obviously include any submissions to the journal but also consider doing so in other papers. We all benefit from a journal perceived as higher quality and that comes from all of us doing our part to keep improving journal submissions, published articles, and the factors contributing to journal metrics.

For 2024, we look forward to continuing to refine the review process, making it more efficient and productive for everyone involved, including more feedback for submissions moving forward or not. We also plan a special issue on KM in South and Central America, so keep your eyes open for that Call for Papers.

Thanks for your continued support of the journal. We look forward to working with everyone in 2024 and into the future.

**Editors-In-Chief**

**Scott and Helen**