



PALGRAVE STUDIES IN CROSS-DISCIPLINARY
BUSINESS RESEARCH, IN ASSOCIATION
WITH EUROMED ACADEMY OF BUSINESS

Non-Profit Organisations, Volume IV

Structures, Models and Technology

Edited by Alkis Thrassou · Demetris Vrontis ·
Leonidas Efthymiou · Yaakov Weber ·
S. M. Riad Shams · Evangelos Tsoukatos

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1

Delineating Non-Profit Organizations: Structures, Models and Technology

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1.1 Introduction

Nonprofit organisations are non-governmental entities that have complex sets of rules and procedures to be able to achieve their missions, activities, personalities and policies under the defined law, in

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response to particular human needs (Dicke & Ott, 2023). The range and scope of such organisations is broad, varying from Governmental, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Charities, Hospitals, Universities, Humanitarian Aid Agencies, Trade Unions, Religious Institutions, Environmental-, Health-, Civil Right-, Volunteering-, Social- and Sports-organisations, among others (Bloodgood et al., 2022). At the same time, non-profit organisations can be scientific, educational, and literary, fostering national or international amateur sports competitions, preventing cruelty to children or animals, defending human and civil rights, eliminating prejudice and discrimination, combating poverty, offering relief to the underprivileged, and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency, among others (Svara, 2021). However, while non-profit organisations act as catalysts for sustainable development (Vrontis et al., 2023, 2024), they also face challenges that can impact their effectiveness, including global crises (Vrontis et al., 2022), the digital transformation (Thrassou et al., 2022) and resource constraints.

Within this context, the current chapter examines the many types of non-profit organizations as well as the impact of technology advances on their development and operation. The study produced 39 academic and published articles that will provide answers to the following research inquiries:

1. What distinguishes modern kinds of Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), and how do they interact?
2. How do developing technologies affect the operations of these organizations?
3. What steps may be taken to improve the successful integration of new technology into operational frameworks?

A systematic literature review was conducted using two databases, Ebscohost and Scopus. The selection of these two specific databases was based on their suitability for the study, with EBSCOhost chosen because it serves as a comprehensive scholarly database that encompasses various databases. It provides access to a diverse range of resources, including

books, magazine articles, visuals, charts, and primary sources. The efficiency of EBSCOhost at the initial stages of research makes it a time-efficient option. Moreover, this database, among others, offers extensive coverage coupled with user-friendly features, ensuring comprehensive access to articles (Vrontis et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Scopus was chosen because of its continuous updates and reputation as a reliable resource for getting global academic information effectively and efficiently (Di Vaio et al., 2022). The h-index, which indicates the quality of a book, author, or journal, is another notable aspect (Hirsch, 2005). The goal of this review is to use these two databases to obtain as much detailed and up-to-date information on the subject under examination as possible.

This chapter is structured as follows: The method used is discussed first, by presenting the keywords utilized in the research, followed by the inclusion and exclusion criteria, from which 39 articles were gathered for additional analysis. Following that, we give the descriptive analysis of the results, followed by the thematic analysis and research findings, with theoretical and practical implications and some suggestions for future research.

1.2 Methodology

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

After selecting the appropriate databases for this research, we confined our research to only peer-reviewed papers written in English, as indicated by Sousa et al. (2008), to assess the interaction between non-profit organizations and technology. Following that, we developed a collection of keywords for in-depth analysis that were not limited to a specific time window, thereby including all relevant publications up to November 2023. The search string that we used in our research is (any field contains “non-profit organization*” OR “nonprofit organization*” OR “non profit organization*” OR “non-governmental organization*” OR “non governmental organization*” OR “non-profit models” OR “nonprofit models” OR “non profit models” OR “Corporate social Responsibility” OR “participatory modelling” OR “participatory modeling” OR

“public sector” OR “Non-profit Governance Models” *AND* any field contains technology OR blockchain OR digitalization OR “digital transformation initiatives” OR “technological innovation” OR “electronic communication” OR “digital communication” OR “artificial intelligence” OR “Digital Platforms” OR “metaverse” OR “virtual reality” OR “augmented reality” OR “digital media”).

Then, we eliminated articles that were not published in leading business journals, adhering to the criteria outlined by John and Lawton (2018). Following this schedule, the review of literature specifically targets journals with rankings of 4*, 4, and 3 in the 2021 Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Quality Guide (ABS 2021) (Mabey, 2012).

According to Vrontis et al. (2020), we excluded all articles that were not peer-reviewed, such as conference proceedings and book chapters, articles that were not in the English language, and articles that were not related to the subject. Using the cross-referencing procedure at the end of the process, a total of 39 articles were left as eligible for further analysis.

The initial research by using only the keywords, resulted in 180,538 articles and 203,507 articles in EBSCOhost and SCOPUS Database, respectively. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the research resulted in 8 articles from EBSCOhost and 31 articles from SCOPUS database. By applying the cross-reference procedure, no further articles came about, so there were finally 39 articles in total left.

Descriptive Statistics

In the following section, a descriptive analysis is conducted on the articles resulting from the systematic review. The statistical data pertains to several characteristics, some of which include their time distribution, the articles' type, Journals, Research Field and Rankings, and the populations under study. In the thematic analysis that will follow below, they will be grouped into subcategories and analyzed separately to provide a comprehensive approach to all the details of the topic.

Year of Publication, Type, and Methodology

The first writings about non-profit organizations and their engagement with technology date from shortly before the year 2000 (Fig. 1.1). For the past two decades, there appears to be a lack of significant interest in the scientific community, with the number of published articles hovering in the single digits per year. Approximately 49% of these articles were published between 2022 and 2023, demonstrating a significant growth in scholarly interest in non-profit organizations during the previous two years. The articles published during this period primarily focus on the progress of technology and the incorporation of artificial intelligence into public institutions, emphasizing the importance of restructuring and adapting to advancements to attain societal efficiency.

This surge in interest suggests a growing recognition of the pivotal role that technology, particularly artificial intelligence, can play in enhancing the operations and impact of non-profit organizations. The articles underscore the imperative for these organizations to embrace restructuring and innovation, thereby aligning with contemporary technological advancements to ensure social effectiveness. As the scientific community directs its attention towards this intersection of non-profits and technology, it opens avenues for transformative strategies that may shape the future landscape of socially impactful endeavors.

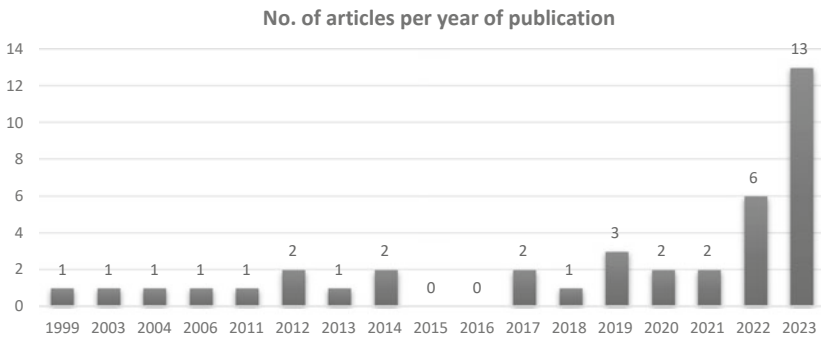


Fig. 1.1 Number of articles per year of publication (Source Authors' own)

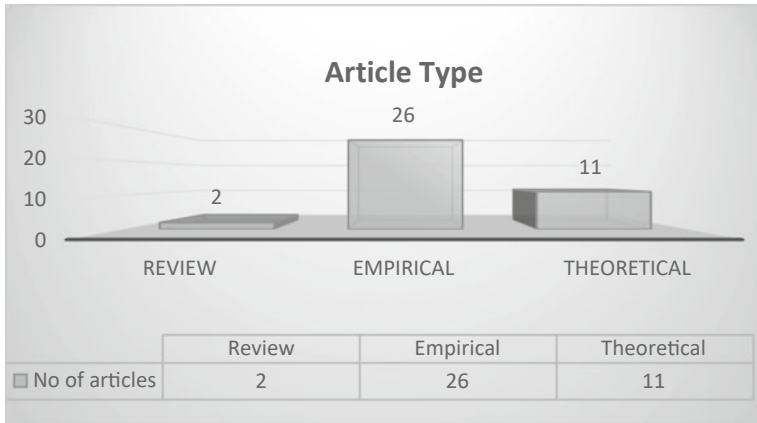


Fig. 1.2 Article type (Source Authors' own)

Regarding the types of published articles, it appears that the majority focus on empirical research (67%), followed by theoretical research (28%), and reviews (5%) (Fig. 1.2). Among the articles based on empirical research, approximately 85% pertain to quantitative research, 11% to mixed methods, and the remaining 4% involve qualitative analyses.

This distribution reflects a strong emphasis on gathering and analyzing tangible data to understand the dynamics of non-profit organizations and their interaction with technology. The prevalence of quantitative research suggests a keen interest in numerical insights and statistical patterns within this context. The inclusion of mixed methods indicates a recognition of the value of combining quantitative and qualitative approaches for a more comprehensive understanding. These findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of the evolving landscape of non-profit organizations and their engagement with technology, providing a foundation for evidence-based strategies and informed decision-making in both academic and practical domains.

Journals, Research Field and Ranking

The majority of articles seem to have been primarily published in two journals, namely, “Government Information Quarterly” and “Nonprofit