In recent years there has been a remarkable increase in the amount of research and collaboration among researchers and institutions in disciplines based on advancements in the Internet and research methods. This progress has focused on investigating the development of new research agendas for academicians, researchers, scholars, students, editors and practitioners by addressing the following questions:

- How is knowledge created and shared within the academic community?
- What is the best way to evaluate research output?
- How should the impact of researchers and institutions be assessed? (Ye, Song and Li, 2012: p.56)
- Which authors have influenced research the most?
- Which journals and disciplines have had the most impact on research streams?
- What is the “balance of trade” among journals/disciplines?
- Who are the experts in a given research field?
- What are the recommended “reading lists” for various disciplines?
- What is the intellectual structure of literature X?
- Who are the central, peripheral or bridging researchers in various fields?
- How has the diffusion of concepts through literature taken place?
- What is the structure of the scientific community in a particular field?
- How has the structure of the various fields developed over time?
- What is the intellectual structure of recent/emerging literature?
- How does the intellectual structure of the research stream reflect the richness of the theoretical approaches?
- How has the intellectual structure of small niche X developed through time?
- Are authors from different disciplinary backgrounds working together on new research fields, or do they stay within disciplinary boundaries?
- Which factors determine co-authorships?
- What are the impacts of collaboration?
- Are co-authored articles cited more frequently than single-authored articles?
- Do prolific authors collaborate more frequently than non-prolific authors?
- Are internationally co-authored papers cited more frequently than domestic co-authored papers?
- What are the social structures of various fields?
- What are the dynamics of the conceptual structure of a field?
- How do we uncover the conceptual building blocks of literature?
- What are the topics associated with various lines of research?
- How do we track the evolution of concept X? (Zupic and Čater, 2014: p. 11)

To answer these questions, researchers utilise qualitative methods such as a structured literature review and/or quantitative methods such as bibliometric analysis to increase scientific communication (Koseoglu, Sehitoglu and Craft, 2015). Bibliometrics identify the characteristics of disciplines from the findings obtained from past research by using two kinds of bibliometric methods (Pritchard, 1969; McBurney, 2002). The first consists of basic bibliometric methods, including tabulations of research themes by years; contributions by authors, institutions and regions, and keywords used; measurements of productivity of authors, institutions and/or journals; counting of references (Koseoglu, Sehitoglu and Parnell, 2014; Koseoglu, Akdeve, Gedik and Bertch, 2015). The second is advanced bibliometric methods, including co-occurrence analysis (e.g. author co-citation, journal co-citation, co-word and co-authorship) and
bibliographical coupling conducted by mapping or visualising the structure and development of the fields and disciplines (Koseoglu, Sehitoglu and Craft, 2015; Zupic and Čater, 2014). In this respect, bibliometric analyses are helpful for academic communities to construct or reconstruct the history of sciences, to question dogmas, to identify and correct errors of perception (Callon et al., 1993), to hamper or avoid biases, to attest or validate inferences, and to explore and delineate leading schools of thought and the interrelated connections between them (Nerur et al., 2008).

Bibliometric analyses are now easier than ever. While Excel or SPSS spreadsheets are used in basic bibliometric analyses to tabulate the data extracted from the studies, advanced bibliometric analyses are conducted via software, including BibExcel (Persson, Danell and Wiborg Schneider, 2009), Sitkis (Schildt, 2005; Schilt and Mattsson, 2006; Schilt et al., 2006), and SciMAT (Cobo et al., 2012). While exploratory factor analysis (Conway and Huffcutt, 2003), hierarchical cluster analysis (McCain, 1990; Gmur, 2003) and multidimensional scaling (Borner et al. 2003) are used to map and identify the intellectual structure of disciplines based on co-occurrence matrices, network analysis is used to visualise the network of the co-occurrence matrices and calculate individual and group measurements to gain more insights. Network analyses are conducted using packet programs, including Ucinet (Borgatti et al., 2002) and Pajek (Batagelji and Mrvar, 1998). In addition to these, there are many resources available for advanced bibliometric analyses (see http://train.ed.psu.edu/WFED-543/SocNet_TheoryApp.pdf; Leydesdorff and Vaughan, 2006).

Bibliometric analysis or review articles in all business and management genres are increasing (see Koseoglu, Sehitoglu and Craft, 2015; Zupic and Čater, 2014). Furthermore, there are a number of bibliometric or review articles in leading international journals focusing solely on growth issues in industries such as tourism and hospitality management and healthcare management. However, there is no specific journal covering bibliometric or review articles in all business and management disciplines based on industry, country or specific issues. Currently, there is a dearth of research investigating trends or exploring hidden trends in an emerging environment based on countries, industries and disciplines.

The increase in national literature (e.g. Brazil, Russia, Spain, Argentina, India, China, etc.), including journal articles, conference papers, books and thesis/dissertations, should be transferred to international literature by comparing current trends for researchers, students, practitioners, managers and editors. Hence, the International Journal of Bibliometrics in Business and Management (www.inderscience.com/ijbbm), as a succinct and convenient journal for bibliometrics in business and management, addresses these issues. Consequently, IJBBM proposes and fosters collaboration among different research cultures and trends related to bibliometric issues that illustrate innovative models and concepts emerging in business and management.

References


