



## GLOBAL TREND OF SOCIAL INNOVATION RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Submission: 01 April 2021

Revised: 28 April 2021

Accepted: 25 May 2021

*Peer-review under responsibility of 5th ASIA International Multidisciplinary Conference 2021 (Online)*

*Scientific Committee*

<http://connectingasia.org/scientific-committee/>

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to identify the latest trends of the scientific publications in the social innovation literature. This research is conducted through bibliometric analysis of the available data from 1966 to 2019 in the Scopus database. The bibliometric analysis is carried out on all 'published' articles in the Scopus database. The search phrase used was "Social Innovation". Out of 3140 articles, 1280 articles were included in the study based on their relevance to the objectives of this study. This research investigates parameters such as publications in line with the years, subject areas, top journals, top authors and countries contributing to the social innovation field, and also the collaborations of author and co-occurrence of keywords. Results indicate that Frances R. Westley (University of Waterloo) is the most productive author in field. Additionally, we found that the most prolific journal is "sustainability" and the most productive country is the United Kingdom. A significant increase in the number of scientific publications in the social innovation field is observed since 2016 which leads to the conclusion that the topic has gained relevance among academicians in recent years. We used VoS Viewer visual bibliometric analyser to identify the co-occurrence of keywords and co-authorship of countries.

**Keywords:** *Social Innovation, Systematic Review, Bibliometric Analysis, VoS Viewer*

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. The findings highlights that the European scholars make nearly 41% of the contribution in social innovation literature.
2. There is a significant growth in the SI related research all over the world, indicating that social innovations have gained relevance among the academicians in recent years.
3. The most productive journal is in SI field is "sustainability" and the most productive country is United Kingdom.

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## Research Objectives

The concept of social innovation that we know of today gained its relevance from the work of (Taylor, 1970) and (Gabor, 1970). The aim of this research is to identify the research patterns and latest trends in the social innovation literature There have been several reviews and bibliometric studies conducted in the field of SI (Agostini, M. R., Vieira, L. M., Tondolo, R. P., Vilmar Antonio Gonçalves Tondolo, 2017; Blanco-Ariza et al., 2019; Gaitán-Angulo et al., 2018; Ozbag et al., 2019; Pacheco et al., 2018; Silveira and Zilber, 2017; van der Have and Rubalcaba, 2016; Weerakoon et al., 2016; Westley et al., 2018) but conducted either on different databases or are based on older Scopus data. A summary of the previous studies is shown in the table 1. This study is unique because its fills the gap by doing the most comprehensive literature review considering "published" research articles from Scopus database during the period of 1966 to 2019.

**Table 1. Similar studies on Social Innovation**

Authors	Database	Duration	Subject Area (Social Innovation)
Kaya Özbağ, Gönül, Esen, Murat, & Esen, Dilek. (2019)	WOS	1975-2018	All areas
Silveira et al., (2017)	Scopus	1991-2015	Theoretical Frameworks
M. Gaitán-Angulo et al. (2018)	Scopus and Dialnet	2007-2017	Social Innovation and complexity
Weerakoon et al., (2016)	Scopus	1966-2015	All Areas
Ayob et al., (2016)	Google Scholar	1989-2013	Conceptualisation
Pacheco et al., 2018	WOS and Scopus	1966-2015	Framework and different themes
Have et at., (2016)	WOS and Scopus	1986-2013	Relevance to innovation studies
Agostini et al., (2017)	Web of knowledge	2006-2013	All areas
Foroudia et al., 2019	WoS	1970-2019	All areas

This study through bibliometric analysis investigates the authors, institutions, country, and cooperation's among authors, subject areas, and keywords and published in the Social Innovation field. In this regard, the following are the research objectives of this study.

1. To analyse how has the concept of Social Innovation evolved over the years.
2. To identify the most productive authors, journals, countries and institutions associated with the social innovation literature.
3. To find out the contribution of different authors and countries who contributed by doing collaborative research by doing co-authorship analysis.
4. To investigate the important keywords associated with social innovation through co-occurrence of keywords analysis.

## Methodology

This research is conducted through bibliometric analysis of the available data from 1966 to 2019 in the Scopus database. The bibliometric analysis is carried out on all 'published' articles in the Scopus database. The search phrase used was "Social Innovation". The initial search displayed 3140 articles which were then reduced to 1443 after applying the filter for 'journal' and 'published' articles. Total 162 review articles were removed from the study and resulting 1280 articles were included in the study based on its relevance to the objectives of this study.

## Results and Findings

Findings of this review revealed that there has been observed an increased growth of articles in SI has been discovered from the year 2005 as suggested by researchers previously (Fraisse, 2013; Jessop et al., 2013; Moulaert et al., 2013; Pacheco et al., 2018). The European scholars make nearly 41% of the contribution in SI literature. The top most productive counties are the United Kingdom with 177 publications, USA with 161 publications and Italy with 141 publications. Even though UK has highest number of publications in the social innovation field but Canada has contributed more than 2/3 of the overall publications in this area. Some interesting facts are also discovered in the analysis, for instance, Frank Moulaert is ranked second according to the number of publications but has the highest number of citations as compared to Frances R. Westley who has the

highest number of publications. Social innovation articles are distributed in different journals from various disciplines like social sciences, business management, environmental studies, economics, arts, engineering and medicine. This leads to a highly scattered and fragmented work with a lack of conceptual clarity and vague theoretical concepts provided by many authors from different fields. Scholars who chose to study social innovation should bear the responsibility to define, refine and further extend the construct (Weerakoon et al., 2016). Scholars believe that the reason behind the poor theory development in the social innovation field is also the absence of a dedicated journal for SI research.

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