

Understanding the concept of social innovation - a bibliometric analysis

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According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Eurostat (2005), innovation is a key factor for business performance, not only for increasing productivity but also for adding efficiency and quality of its operations, thus resulting in higher demand and profit margins. In addition, innovation allows identifying and responding to the needs of society (Rochester, 2013; Shaw & Carter, 2007), as a key factor for organizations to achieve their goals (Braga & Braga, 2013), through conception of new ideas that potentially to improve the quality of life (Pol & Ville, 2009) of populations.

Over the last decade, social innovation has received greater attention and emerges as a relevant topic for academics, firms and institutions (Sanzo-Perez, Álvarez-González & Rey-García, 2015). Globally, social innovation is acknowledged through the recent focus of the G8 on the theme of impacting investment. In this context, Portugal was invited, in 2015, to be part of a small group of five countries that joined the G8 countries in leading the global social investment agenda. At the European level, social innovation also assumes a special focus through the Social Business Initiative. At this level, Portugal is also included as one of the promoters of social innovation, through the Portugal Social Innovation initiative, as the first program of a Member State aimed at boosting social innovation, financed by European Structural Funds. Currently, Portugal assumes a preeminent role in the field of social innovation, with a growing number of innovation and social entrepreneurship initiatives that have gained national and international recognition.

In order to better understand the concept associated with social innovation, bibliometric analysis was chosen to deliver insights, which allows analyzing the trend of publications associated to the theme. Bibliometric studies have been used in a number of areas, with emphasis on innovation in services, business and economics, entrepreneurship, innovation, social innovation and social entrepreneurship. However, no previous evidence of a systematic literature review was found in the main international journals. In spite of such

lack, this study aims to map and analyze the scientific production in the field of social innovation, using the publications database ISI Web of Science - WoS, for the period between January 1970 and December 2017.

Through the analysis of these articles, it was possible to clarify the concept of social innovation, to recognize the progress achieved in the field of research, to measure scientific productivity in terms of articles and journals, as well as the respective key authors, to present bibliometric maps of citations, co-citations and research topics, and to identify the topics and dimensions that are related to social innovation.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Citations, Co-citations, Social Innovation, Scientific Production, Web of Science

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