Value of bibliometric analysis for research policy: A case study of Spanish research into innovation and technology management

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The primary aim of this paper is to assess the contribution to the international literature of Spanish scientific production in the research stream of innovation and technology management. For this purpose 72 articles published in the last decade in the most prestigious international journals in this research stream have been evaluated. From this analysis we have concluded that there has been a positive evolution from 1995 to the present time, as much from a qualitative as from a quantitative point of view. Likewise, we have found that research in this research stream is concentrated fundamentally on a reduced group of universities. Nevertheless, these do not focus exclusively on one or a few research subjects, but on a wide range thereof.

Introduction

The purpose of this work is to carry out an exhaustive review of the literature published in international journals with two constraints: a) they must be specialized journals in innovation and technology management and b) papers must be written by researchers contracted by a Spanish institution. To this end, we have analyzed the articles published in the following publications: *International Journal of Technology Management*, *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, *R&D Management*,

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0138–9130/US \$ 20.00 Copyright © 2007 Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest All rights reserved *Research Policy* and *Technovation*.* The period under consideration runs from 1995 to the present, representing a total of 72 published works. Their references are shown in the Appendix.

In order to achieve this aim, the structure of the present work will be as follows. Firstly, the methodology used in the article will be described. Secondly, the most relevant characteristics that define these papers will be presented. Afterwards, the bibliometric analysis as such will be presented. Finally, we shall present the conclusions allowing for a diagnosis of the state-of-the-art research within the research stream of science and technology management.

Methodology

The methodology used in this work is based on the detailed analysis of the five specialised international journals with the greatest prestige at the present time, as manifest from their presence in the *Journal Citations Report* (2004 edition). The journals analyzed are the following: *International Journal of Technology Management, Journal of Product Innovation Management, R&D Management, Research Policy* and *Technovation*. Each issue of these journals was analysed and 72 articles were found in which at least one researcher was linked contractually to a Spanish institution.

In this paper we offer the most relevant results obtained from the current research. Firstly, a general overview of the situation is offered, which will then be analysed and interpreted in greater detail. For this purpose, Table 1 shows the distribution of international innovation and technology management papers by year and by journal (and at the same time a combined grouping based on both criteria). Likewise, the analysis results are discussed by universities and knowledge fields. In the second part of the article (bibliometric analysis as such) we discuss the subject matter approached in the seventy-two papers, their distribution according to the methodology used (hypothesis contrast, conceptual, etc.), the type of data used and the number of authors contributing to the articles. We also show which the main research objectives in every institution are. Finally, we discuss the implications of the previous descriptive data.

Most relevant features of the articles analyzed

Under this heading the main features of the articles analyzed in the present article are shown. These are then catalogued, respectively, by annual distribution and journal (showing also their combined distribution according to both criteria simultaneously).

^{*} Research & Technology Management was also analyzed. However, this has not been included in the analysis, because no published work was found in which a researcher with contractual links to a Spanish institution took part.

At the same time, the relationship of the authors to universities and research issues is discussed.

Annual distribution of the articles analyzed

Table 1 shows the annual distribution of the articles published in the course of the years analyzed. As it can be observed, firstly, there was a period of eight years which can be classified, in practice, as years of inactivity. Afterwards, a considerable increase is found in 2003, which is even slightly greater in 2004. Although in 2005 a slight drop is perceptible, it must nevertheless be taken into consideration that not all issues relating to the 12-month period have been published yet. Consequently, it can be concluded that the scientific community in Spain engaged in the research stream of science and technology management is progressively increasing its participation in specialized international journals with an impact index in *Journal Citations Report*.

Table 1. Distribution of the number of published articles by years

	3 3
Year	Number of published
	articles
1995	3
1996	4
1997	4
1998	6
1999	5
2000	5
2001	4
2002	5
2003	13
2004	14
2005	9
Total	72

Distribution by journals of the articles analyzed

Table 2 presents the distribution of these articles by journals. The two journals in which, by far, most of the papers have been published are, in this order, *Research Policy* and *Technovation*. At a considerable distance, the number of articles published in *International Journal of Technology Management* can be found. Presence in *R&D Management* is even less and in *Journal of Product Innovation Management* it is merely testimonial with just one paper.

Table 2. Distribution of the number of published articles by years and journals

					3	
Year	Int. J. Technology Management	J. of Product Innovation Management	R&D Management	Research Policy	Technovation	Total
1995	0	0	0	1	2	3
1996	0	0	0	2	2	4
1997	3	0	0	1	0	4
1998	1	0	0	2	3	6
1999	1	0	2	1	1	5
2000	2	0	0	0	3	5
2001	1	0	0	2	1	4
2002	0	0	1	0	4	5
2003	1	1	0	8	3	13
2004	4	0	0	8	2	14
2005	2	0	2	1	4	9
Total	15	1	5	26	25	72

Distribution by journals and years of the articles analyzed

Table 2 shows, in addition to what is described in the preceding paragraph, the results by years of the articles published in each of the journals taken as reference. Thus, taking the analysis one step further, the evolution by years of publications in each of these journals must be examined, considering these on an individual basis. The evolution in International Journal of Technology Management has been practically linear, without appreciable variations over time. Journal of Product Innovation Management cannot be subjected to analysis, since only one study with Spanish authors has been published in this journal. Neither does there seem to be any clear evolution upwards or downwards in R&D Management. This tendency towards constancy is a characteristic feature also in Technovation. Research Policy, on the other hand, showed a spectacular surge in 2003, which continued in 2004.

Detection of stable research groups in innovation and technology management

If detection of current research groups in the research stream of innovation and technology management in Spain is set as an aim of this paper, there must first be an appraisal of the number of published articles by researchers from different centres and universities.* Table 3 reflects the number of articles by staff from different Spanish institutions. Many of these have participated in one article or another of this kind. However, only one group of public universities has participated in a constant, systematic way in research related to this research stream. Two of these have done so on a large number of occasions: Universidad de Zaragoza and Universidad de Oviedo.

^{*} It must be taken into consideration that the total number of participations is greater than 72 (the total number of articles detected), since researchers under contract to different institutions may participate on the same article

Others have participated, though to a lesser degree than the aforementioned two, on numerous occasions: Universidad Jaume I, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Carlos III and Universidad de Granada.

Table 3. Number of published articles where researchers from different universities have taken part

Institution	Number of	
	published papers	
Centro de Información y Documentación Científica	1	
CIEMAT	1	
CSIC	2	
IESE	1	
Instituto de Empresas	1	
Instituto de Investigación Médica	1	
UNED	1	
Universidad Alcalá	1	
Universidad Autónoma Barcelona	2	
Universidad Autónoma Madrid	3	
Universidad Burgos	1	
Universidad Cádiz	2	
Universidad Carlos III	5	
Universidad Complutense Madrid	6	
Universidad Granada	4	
Universidad Jaume I	7	
Universidad Juan Carlos I	1	
Universidad La Laguna	2	
Universidad Las Palmas	1	
Universidad León	2	
Universidad Málaga	2	
Universidad Miguel Hernández	1	
Universidad Navarra	2	
Universidad Oviedo	13	
Universidad Pablo Olavide	1	
Universidad País Vasco	1	
Universidad Politécnica Barcelona	1	
Universidad Politécnica Madrid	2	
Universidad Rioja	1	
Universidad Salamanca	2	
Universidad Santiago	2	
Universidad Zaragoza	14	

Grouping of the articles analyzed by fields of knowledge

Table 4 shows the assignment of participating researchers to different knowledge fields in the 72 articles analyzed in the present study. It is worth pointing out the clear predominance of researchers from the field of Management. After these we can find those from the field of Economics, albeit lagging far behind. Finally, fields related only very tangentially have participated occasionally in research in innovation and technology management.

Table 4. Distribution of papers according to fields of knowledge

Knowledge field	Number of papers	
Management	53	
Economics	13	
Technology	2	
Others	4	
Library Science and Documentation		
Biomedicine		
Centro de Estudios Sociales Avanzados		
Comparative Policy Unit		

Bibliometric analysis

The main results of the bibliometric analysis of these 72 articles following below. We will analyze, respectively, their distribution according to the type of article, of the data used, of the number of authors and of the subjects dealt with, and finally we will reach conclusions regarding the present scene with respect to publications in the research stream of innovation and technology management.

Distribution of the articles analyzed according to the methodology used

Next there is an examination of the distribution of the articles published according to the type of methodology employed. Table 5 shows their distribution. A clear predominance of empirical research can be observed. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out the high number of conceptual articles in the research during the period analyzed. This suggests that the degree of development of the research in this field has gone beyond a merely embryonic stage, shown by the high number of studies with an empirical character. However, the significant amount of conceptual studies suggests the need for further discussion of a larger number of issues.

Table 5. Distribution of articles published according to methodologies used

Used methodology	Number of published paper
Conceptual	20
Descriptive	1
Method	1
Hypothesis contrast	49
Model	1

Distribution of the articles analyzed according to the type of data used

As regards the type of data, taking into consideration only studies of an empirical nature, models or methods, attention must be drawn to what Table 6 shows. The survey method is resorted to be predominant, whilst secondary data serve as a basis for a relevant group of studies. With respect to the subject matter dealt with, total dispersion was found, i.e. there is no specialization in specific subjects.

Table 6. Distribution according to the data used

Data used	Number of published papers*
Secondary	20
Primary from questionnaire	27
Case analysis	8
Panel data	4

^{*} The total is different from the number of papers except the conceptual ones because some papers used more than one kind of data.

Index of co-authorship

Table 7 shows the distribution of articles published according to the number of authors participating in them. From this it can be deduced that, in the same way as the articles published are not usually very long, it is also true that the most frequent ones are not those signed by a single author. Most common are groups of a somewhat limited size (two or three researchers in each case).

Table 7. Distribution of the published articles according to the number of authors

Number of authors	Number of articles
One	12
Two	34
Three	24
Four	2
Total	72

Specialization by subject of the authors taking part in the articles analyzed

It must also be pointed out that, nonetheless, the issues approached by the researchers of every university cover a diverse range of subject matter in many cases. That is, Universities have not opted for specialization in any specific subjects. Table 8 shows the issues approached in the articles produced in every university.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper is to analyze current research tendencies in the research stream of technology and innovation management in Spain. Taken into account for this purpose were all the articles published by researchers associated with Spanish institutions in the international journals with the greatest prestige specialized in this research stream – *International Journal of Technology Management, Journal of Product Innovation Management, R&D Management, Research Policy* and *Technovation* – from 1995 until nowadays. Seventy-two articles were found.

Table 8. Issues analyzed by the universities most involved in research

Institution	Issues
Universidad Complutense Madrid	Cooperation agreement
1	Technical change
	Spillover effect
	Public financing
	Internacionalization of the innovative companies
	Use of information technologies
Universidad Carlos III	Innovation indicators
	Joint-ventures
	Public financing programs
	Technological forecasting
	Start-ups
Universidad de Granada	Research teams
	Organizational flexibility
	Scientific production
Universidad Jaume I	Organizational development
	Knowledge management
	Industrial districts
	Innovation indicators
	Influence on the export of the innovative activity
	Product innovation
Universidad de Oviedo	Organizational learning
	Barriers to imitation
	Technical change and productivity
	Sectorial differences
	Knowledge management
	Entrepreneurship
	ISO 9000
	Public aid programs
	Intangible resources
	Technological substitution
Universidad de Zaragoza	Technology adoption
	Innovation cycles
	Physical demand
	Technology diffusion
	Entrepreneurs
	Product innovation
	Involvement of the suppliers into the innovative process
	University-firm relationships
	Spin-offs
	Technology substitution
	Telework

The main conclusions reached were those presented below. Firstly, there were eight years practically of stagnation. A considerable increase took place in 2003, which was even surpassed in the following year. The journals that researchers most turned to for publication were, in this order, *Research Policy* and *Technovation*. The number published in each journal has remained practically constant over time, except in the case of *Research Policy*, where this number has increased substantially, especially in the last few years. Most of the articles analyzed of authors are associated with the knowledge field of Management, although a large number belongs to the field of Economics; from

this an interest in issues of an economic nature and, more particularly, the role of innovation and technology in companies can be deduced. As regards the methodologies used, a clear predominance can be observed of those of an empirical nature, although a large number of articles of conceptual nature are still produced. This shows that research, while not having reached its maximum level of development, has already gone beyond the merely embryonic stage. This can be seen from the high number of articles of an empirical nature. The most usual number of co-authors of the articles is 2 or 3. The Spanish institutions with the greatest presence are Universidad de Zaragoza and Universidad de Oviedo. Nevertheless, there is also a noteworthy presence of Universidad de Jaume I, Universidad de Carlos III, Universidad de Complutense de Madrid and Universidad de Granada. At each of these, different authors have, however, dealt with diverse subject matter, i.e. there is no specialization in particular issues according to the university. Consequently, it appears that what has been published in this research stream is not a consequence of any planned action on the part of research group leaders within the different universities, but rather a product of the interest and work of individuals or groups of a small size with regard to a given field.

To summarize, it can be deduced that there has been a positive evolution both in quality and quantity of international scientific production in the research stream of technology and innovation management on the part of Spanish researchers. Nonetheless, certain deficiencies have been noted, especially the lack of planning in research activity within universities. This may be a subject of interest for future articles, i.e. how to rationalize this activity, what systems of incentives would be necessary and what ways of organizing this activity would be capable of promoting cooperation. Moreover, what we have seen up to now is but one facet of one of the dimensions of a system of science and technology. Nevertheless, to produce a reasoned report on the present situation of the latter requires an assessment not only of other questions related to the public system, but also the study of other dimensions of the system of science and technology, especially of the role of entrepreneurial world, which indeed is considered the weak link of the system in Spain. This evaluation must be the subject of future articles.

Appendix Bibliographic data of the 72 papers analyzed in the study

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