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Publishing Industry: A Bibliometric Analysis of the Scientific Production Indexed in Scopus

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Abstract

The general goal of this work is to carry out a bibliometric analysis of the scientific production in the publishing industry between 2012 and 2022. For this purpose, the following research posed the following questions: (i) what are the leading academic publications that collect scientific production around the publishing industry? (ii) who are the most productive and influential authors in research on the publishing industry? (iii) from which countries do the published academic works come?, and (iv) in which universities are research on the publishing industry concentrated? This research used the information available in Scopus to address this bibliometric analysis. The analysis conducted in this work is exploratory, descriptive, and quantitative, based on the techniques and tools of bibliometric analysis of the documents stored in the Scopus bibliographic database. This article highlights that research on the global book publishing market is interdisciplinary and, therefore, highly cross-cutting. The economic dimension of the publishing process, and the history and culture of the book dominated the study subjects. There is also a growing trend of research on the impact of new technologies on the value chain and book distribution, without forgetting the increasing studies on new business models in the publishing industry.

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Introduction

Recently, there has been an increasing interest in the publishing industry as an area of research, reflected in the proliferation in the number of works globally published.

Indeed, the publishing industry actively boosts economic development in some countries. According to the latest report from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the revenue generated in 2020 in the publishing industry (commercial and educational sector) amounted to more than USD 64.4 billion.

The countries with the highest net income during 2020 for their publishing industry were: the United States with USD 23.6 billion and Japan with USD 10.8 billion, followed by Germany (USD 10.6 billion), the United Kingdom (USD 4.8 billion), Italy (USD 3.5 billion), France (USD 2.9 billion), Spain (USD 2.7 billion), Brazil (USD 1.0 billion) and Turkey (USD 0.9 billion).

The countries with the highest number of titles published during 2020 were: the United Kingdom (186,000), Italy (125,548), France (97,327), Turkey (88,975), Spain (83,622), Germany (77,272), Japan (69,850) and Brazil (46,083).

These global data show a whole scope of the publishing activity's weight in the World and underlines the relevance of a sector facing significant changes in the last two decades of the twenty-first century (mainly new media, formats, and digital business models) and the new challenges for the third decade focused on an increasingly 'transmedia' and more transversal business context.

All these aspects have promoted a growing body of academic literature on the publishing industry that allows us to know from a scientific perspective the impact and evolution of diverse phenomena and factors shaping the publishing business roadmap in each country.

The general goal of this work is to carry out a bibliometric analysis of the scientific production in the publishing industry between 2012 and 2022. For this purpose, the following research posed the following questions:

1RQ. What are the leading academic publications that collect scientific production around the publishing industry?
2RQ. Who are the most productive and influential authors in research on the publishing industry?
3RQ. From which countries do the published academic works come?
4RQ. In which universities are research on the publishing industry concentrated?

This research used the information available in Scopus to address this bibliometric analysis.

The analysis conducted in this work is exploratory, descriptive, and quantitative, based on the techniques and tools of bibliometric analysis of the documents stored in the Scopus bibliographic database.

Literature Review

Research in any discipline or area of knowledge generates considerable scientific production. This activity results in numerous academic articles whose compilation and analysis are necessary to be able to advance in the different fields of research and where bibliometric studies acquire great importance and utility by making visible themes, authors, and scientific impact of the consulted works [1, 2].

The bibliometric analysis of scientific publications constitutes a fundamental part of the research process tools, becoming an essential evaluation method [3, 4]. The enormous utility of bibliometrics allows us to reflect on the studies carried out in a specific field of knowledge, know the people and institutions related to a concrete research area, and evaluate the performance of said people and institutions [5]. Bibliometric analysis studies and measures the quantity and quality of books, articles, and other forms of publications through mathematical and statistical methods [6], allowing to find not obvious patterns but helpful for the advancement of research and scientific development, as well as to understand the past and forecast the future of a thematic area of research [2, 7].

Bibliometrics is the set of quantitative methods helpful for describing and measuring academic literature [8, 9]. Bibliometric analysis starts from the idea that there is a strong and direct link between citations and the content of the cited articles [10].

Bibliometric studies mainly use quantitative analyzes of publications that pertain to a specific phenomenon [11]. It is an efficient procedure to understand how a field of research emerges and develops. Therefore, it is possible to measure the evolution of a concrete research area through its scientific production and its productivity over a specific period. Bibliometric analysis can examine the intellectual structure, areas of knowledge, geographic areas, research themes and methods, and maturity levels of the topics of a scientific discipline or journal [12].

The bibliometric analysis provides a more objective approach to exploring research trends and performance, acting as a complementary method to traditional literature reviews [13]. A possible classification of the bibliometric analyzes is the following [14]: (i) Studies on the ranking and assessment of scientific journals. (ii) studies on article identification, which covers the contributions of authors, institutions, and regions, (iii) content analysis, devoted to observing research trends, the growth of scientific production, topics covered, and methodologies applied; iv citation analysis, examining the influence of authors, articles, and journals, and *v* analysis of research carried out in specific countries.

Although there are many bibliometric studies on different thematic, geographic, and institutional areas, fewer focus on analyzing and characterizing the scientific production of the publishing sector. The general goal of this research is to reduce the lack of studies that address the bibliometric analysis of the research carried out in the last two decades around the publishing industry. For this purpose, this work used the third of the five categories mentioned above.

Methodology

This study presents the results obtained from a bibliometric analysis with a time-limited coverage between 2012 and 2021.

It is significant to assess which database to choose to measure academic production [15]. This research opted for the Scopus database as a source of bibliographic information since it offers access to different interdisciplinary databases, provides tools to manage it, and meets other criteria such as the number of citations and accessibility [16]. Elsevier Science introduced the Scopus database in 2004. It quickly became a good alternative as Scopus is currently the largest database of abstracts and citations of peer-reviewed literature containing active coverage of nearly 25,000 journals published by more than 5000 international publishers and covering periods, in many cases, since 1996 [17].

This work conducted two searches in June 2022 in the Scopus database to collect the analyzed documents. Figure 1 shows the methodological process followed in this research.
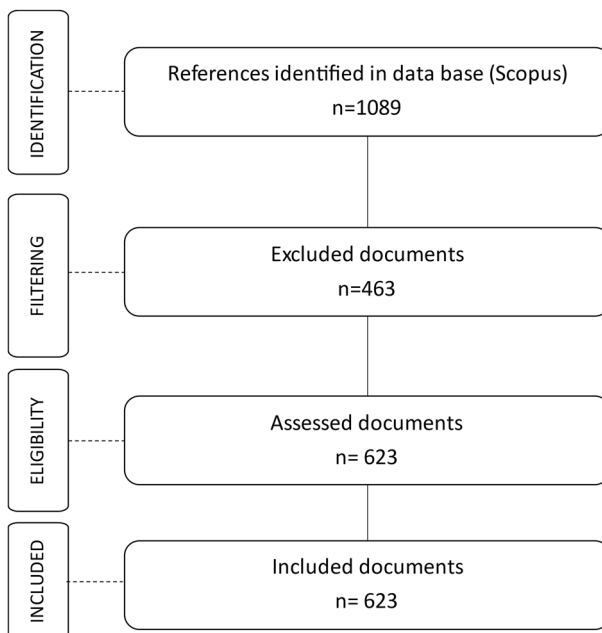

Fig. 1 Process of search, recovery, and information selection for bibliometric analysis (Source: own elaboration)

Table 1 Analysis units (Source: own elaboration)

Document type	Scopus	%
Article	623	57.2
Book Chapter	140	12.8
Conference Paper	135	12.4
Review	109	10.1
Book	53	4.86
Note	10	0.91
Editorial	11	1.01
Short Survey	4	0.36
Letter	2	0.18
Conference Review	1	0.09
Erratum	1	0.09
Total	1089	100

Results and Discussion

Analysis Units and Search Period

The data search procedure followed in this study identified 2130 related documents in Scopus, using the following search algorithm for the titles, abstracts, and keywords: (["publishing sector"] OR ["publishing industry*"]).

According to the proposed research, the researchers established a preliminary filter made by search period (2012–2021), which resulted in 1089 documents. Subsequently, based on the type of document obtained (Table 1), the researchers
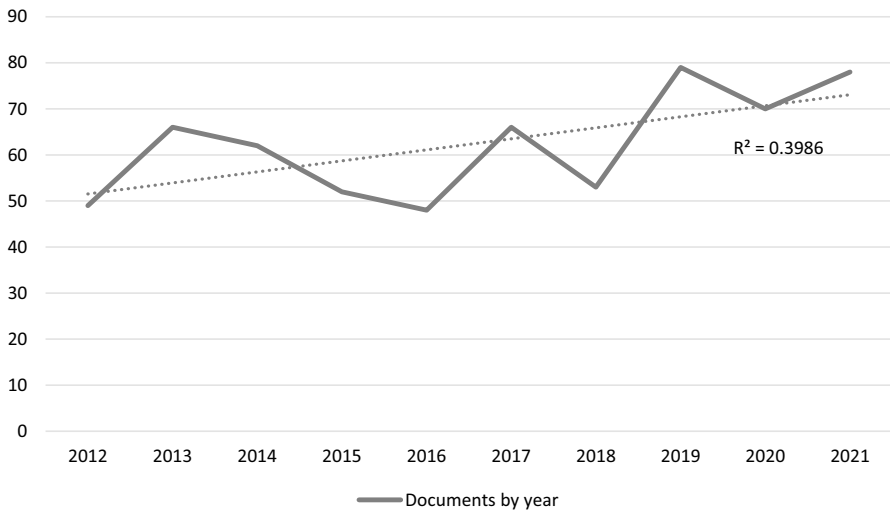
Fig. 2 Quantification of yearly scientific publications (Source: own elaboration)

decided to use only the articles, which would give 623, which will be the documents used for the bibliometric analysis.

Figure 2 shows the number of scientific articles in the period (2012–2021), underlying that the most and less productive years were 2019 and 2016, respectively.

Figure 2 includes a trend line in the graph to assess the relevance of projecting the annual number of publications for the next decade using a simple linear regression, which shows a positive slope. However, the coefficient of determination ($R2$) is 0.3986, which indicates that it is not a result from which to infer a consistent future projection.

Language and Publishing Medium

One of the significant aspects of any line of research is the language since it significantly conditions its reaching and impact on the scientific community. In Scopus, 533 were published in English, 47 in Spanish, 11 in Chinese, 8 in Italian, 7 in French, 6 in Portuguese, 4 in Croatian, German, and Russian, respectively; 3 in Catalan, 2 in Korean, and Malay, respectively, and finally, 1 in Bosnian, Polish and Ukrainian, respectively (Fig. 3).

One of the determining aspects in any bibliometric study is the identification of the publishing media since it helps researchers identify journals for publishing purposes or for identifying studies on the research subject. The bibliometric analysis indicates that 160 academic journals have published at least one study on the publishing industry. Table 2 shows the ten academic journals that publish the most about it.

In the results of the publishing media, it stands out that the first media corresponds to Publishing Research Quarterly: a peer-reviewed publication of original
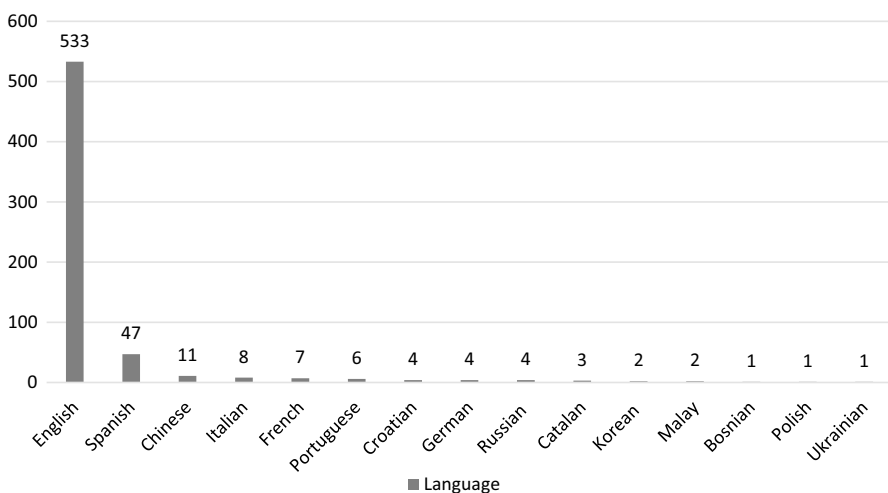

Fig. 3 Publishing language (Source: own elaboration)

Table 2 Top 20 publishing media

No	Source	Documents	No	Source	Documents
1	Publishing Research Quarterly	100	11	Textual Practice	5
2	Logos Netherlands	24	12	Vjesnik Bibliotekara Hrvatske	5
3	Learned Publishing	11	13	Information Services and Use	4
4	Profesional de la Información	8	14	Journal of Educational Media and Library Sciences	4
5	Creative Industries Journal	7	15	Journal of Media Business Studies	4
6	International Journal of The Book	7	16	Journal of Postcolonial Writing	4
7	Insights: The UKSG Journal	6	17	Journal of the Medical Library Association	4
8	Library Philosophy and Practice	6	18	Publications	4
9	New Writing	6	19	Revista General de Información y Documentación	4
10	Journal Of Scholarly Publishing	5	20	Scientometrics	4

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Fig. 4 Bibliometric map by academic journals (Source: own elaboration)

articles that offers significant research and analysis on the full range of the publishing industry. The journal examines the content development, production, distribution, and marketing of books, magazines, newspapers, and online information services in relation to the social, political, economic, and technological conditions that shape the publishing process. It is indexed in Scopus, WoS, Google Scholar, and Emerging Sources Citation Index, among others. Among the top twenty magazines, two written in Spanish stand out: Profesional de la Información and Revista General de Información y Documentación, which occupy 4th and 19th place, respectively.
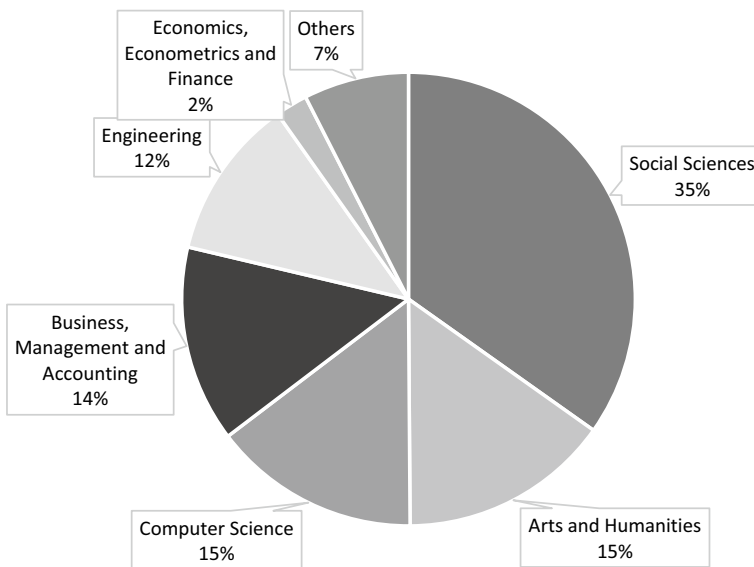

Fig. 5 Document by subject area (Source: own elaboration)

Figure 4 shows the bibliometric map of the scientific production in the publishing industry according to the journals that have published five or more articles with at least one citation.

In the green cluster appears the Publishing Research Quarterly, which occupies the first position for the number of articles and citations received. Besides, it is the academic journal where the most relevant articles on the subject were published.

Serial titles may be in more than one area. Figure 5 shows the most relevant research areas.

The fields of publishing industry studies are Social Sciences (35%), Arts and Humanities (15%), and Computer Sciences (15%). Many works find their starting point in the findings of Information and Computer Science, borrowing methods from Sociology, Cultural Studies, and Economics, without forgetting because of the last technological transformations, the Information and Communication Technologies studies.

Authors, Countries, and Institutions

This section analyzes three parameters: authors, countries, and organizations.

One of the determining aspects is to identify the authors with the highest scientific production on a subject. Their monitoring by other researchers allows for identifying and analyzing how a subject of study evolves. Figure 6 shows the most productive authors who have published at least three articles about the subject of study during the period analyzed.
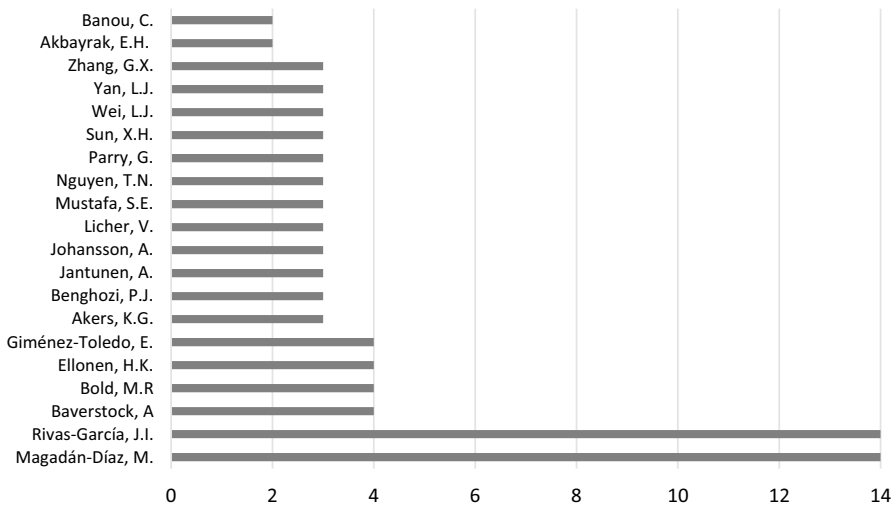

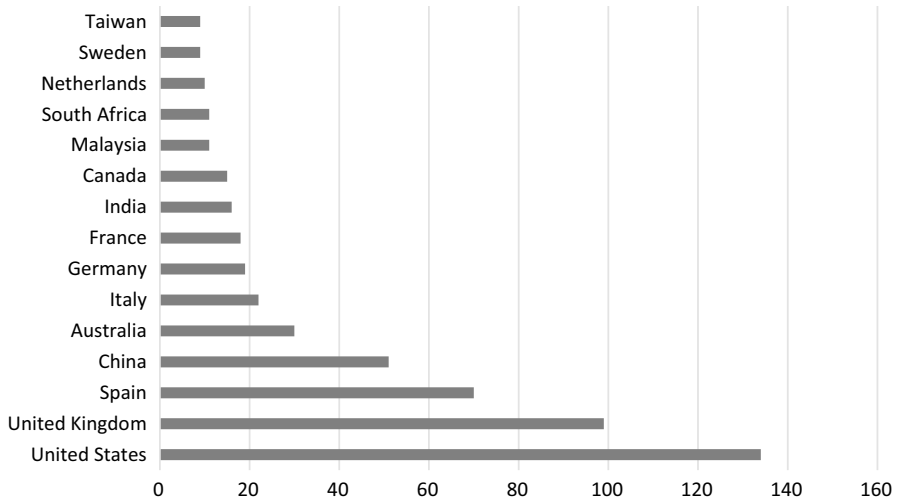**Fig. 6** The 20 most productive authors (Source: own elaboration)

Fig. 7 Most productive countries according to the authors' affiliation (Source: own elaboration)

The most productive authors are Marta Magadán-Díaz and Jesús I. Rivas-García, professors at the International University of La Rioja in Spain who store a maximum of 14 documents in Scopus.

The results show that the United States is the first country by affiliation of its authors (125). In second place is the United Kingdom (100) and, in third place, Spain (62). Figure 7 shows the documents from the top 20 countries by affiliation of their authors.

On the other hand, Table 3 shows the top fifteen producing organizations (research centers, universities) with the highest representation in production in the publishing industry.

As can be seen in Table 3, the following institutions stand out in the Spanish geographical area: "International University of La Rioja" with 15 documents, the University of Salamanca and the University of Granada with 6, the Complutense University with 5, and the University of Barcelona and the CSIC with 4.

Citations and Keywords

Table 4 shows the 20 most relevant articles in Scopus within the historical series, indicating the year of publication, the authors, and the journal.

As seen in Table 4, 55% of the 20 most relevant articles in the Scopus database appear published in the Publishing Research Quarterly.

Table 5 shows the 20 most cited articles in the publishing industry research, ordered according to the number of citations. It also includes information on authors, specialized journals, year of publication, total citations, and the average number of citations per year for each article.

Another relevant indicator to analyze corresponds to the structure of the published documents. Figure 8 shows the influence of the existing network connections

Table 3 Production in the top 20 research centers and universities

No	Research Center or University	Country	Documents	No	Research Center or University	Country	Documents
1	Universidad Internacional de La Rioja	Spain	15	10	Kingston University	United Kingdom	5
2	University College London	United Kingdom	8	11	Jönköping International Business School	Sweden	5
3	Chinese Academy of Press and Publications	China	6	12	Thuongmai University	Vietnam	4
4	CNRS Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique	France	6	13	Emory University	United States	4
5	Oxford Brookes University	United Kingdom	6	14	Universitat de Barcelona	Spain	4
6	Universidad de Salamanca	Spain	6	15	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)	Spain	4
7	Universidad de Granada	Spain	6	16	University of Leeds	United Kingdom	4
8	University of Oxford	United Kingdom	5	17	University of Reading	United Kingdom	4
9	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Spain	5	18	LUT University	Finlandia	4
10	Kingston University	United Kingdom	5	19	Edinburgh Napier University	United Kingdom	4
11	Jönköping International Business School	Sweden	5	20	University of Pretoria	Sudáfrica	4

Source: own elaboration

Table 4 Most relevant articles

No	Document title	Author/s	Year	Source
1	What Challenges Does the Publishing Industry Face in Iran?	Haji Zeinolabedini, M., Hemmat, M., Rahmani Katigari, M., Keshtkar, Z., Talebi Azadboni, T	2019	Publishing Research Quarterly 35(3), pp. 485–499
2	A revenue analysis on Taiwan's publishing industries from the prospective of knowledge discovery using government's financial database	Hsu, M.-J	2017	Journal of Educational Media and Library Sciences 54(2), pp. 161–184
3	Reconceptualization of the definition of publishing in the Republic of Korea	Han, J	2015	International Journal of Software Engineering and its Applications 9(7), pp. 33–42
4	Standardization in China's News and Publishing Industries in the Past Thirty Years	Xiang, J	2021	Publishing Research Quarterly 37(3), pp. 484–493
5	The School of Mandarin Duck and Butterfly's creative push on early Chinese publishing industry	Li, B	2012	Asian Social Science 8(12), pp. 164–170
6	A Study on Transitions to Knowledge-Based Service in China's Publishing Industry	Zhang, L., Wu, S., Zhou, D	2020	Publishing Research Quarterly 36(3), pp. 479–486
7	International competitiveness of the Chinese publishing industry	Huang, X., Tian, C	2014	Publishing Research Quarterly 30(1), pp. 104–114
8	The Publishing Industry in New China: Eventful 7 Decades	Fan, J	2019	Publishing Research Quarterly 35(4), pp. 629–647
9	A Mouse in the bookstore: Maus and the publishing industry	Hutton, R	2015	South Central Review 32(3), pp. 30–44
10	Current Data Scale of the Traditional Publishing Industry in China	Zhang, L	2019	Publishing Research Quarterly 35(1), pp. 138–163
11	Cultural and economic ties: Developing links and relationships between the Chinese and Australian publishing industries	Taylor, E	2013	Publishing Research Quarterly 29(4), pp. 371–382
12	Japanese "merchants of culture": The publishing business in Japan	Moeran, B	2014	Research in Economic Anthropology 34, pp. 97–125

Table 4 (continued)

No	Document title	Author/s	Year	Source
13	Review of Identifier and Metadata Standards in the Publishing Industry	Rosenblatt, B	2022	Publishing Research Quarterly 38(2), pp. 396–404
14	The Publishing Industry in Spain: A Perspective Review of Two Decades Transformation	Magadán-Díaz, M., Rivas-García, J.I	2020	Publishing Research Quarterly 36(3), pp. 335–349
15	Deconstructing Social Media: An Analysis of Twitter and Facebook Use in the Publishing Industry	Criswell, J., Canty, N	2014	Publishing Research Quarterly 30(4), pp. 352–376
16	"Simple devices are always best": An examination of the amateur play publishing industry in the United States	Byrne, K	2014	Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America 108(2), pp. 217–237
17	The scholarly publishing industry in China: Overview and opportunities	Xu, J., Wahls, M	2012	Learned Publishing 25(1), pp. 63–74
18	Cultivation of Entrepreneurial Psychology and Innovation Ability by New Media Art Under the Reform of Publishing Industry	Zhang, M., Song, F	2021	Frontiers in Psychology 12,725,749
19	The future of book publishing: Seven technology trends and three industry goals	Danet, P	2014	Publishing Research Quarterly 30(3), pp. 275–281
20	On Editing	Clarson, S.J	2014	Silicon 6(4), pp. 265

Source: own elaboration

Table 5 The top twenty more cited articles

No	Document title	Author/s	Year	Source	Cited by	Cited for year
1	The oligopoly of academic publishers in the digital era	Larivière, V., Haustein, S., Mongeon, P	2015	PLoS ONE10(6), e0127502	439	73,1
2	Servitization, digitization and supply chain interdependency	Vendrell-Herrero, F., Bustinza, O.F., Parry, G., Georgantzis, N	2017	Industrial Marketing Management 60, pp. 69–81	269	67,2
3	Toward a capability-based conceptualization of business model innovation: Insights from an explorative study	Mezger, F	2014	R and D Management 44(5), pp. 429–449	95	13,5
4	The diamond model of open access publishing: Why policy makers, scholars, universities, libraries, labour unions and the publishing world need to take non-commercial, non-profit open access serious	Fuchs, C., Sandoval, M	2013	TripleC 11(2), pp. 428–443	67	8,3
5	Digitization of publishing: Exploration based on existing business models	Øiestad, S., Bugge, M.M	2014	Technological Forecasting and Social Change 83(1), pp. 54–65	49	7
6	Assessing value creation in digital innovation ecosystems: A Social Media Analytics approach	Suseno, Y., Laurell, C., Sick, N	2018	Journal of Strategic Information Systems 27(4), pp. 335–349	18	6
7	How and where the R&D takes place in creative industries? Digital investment strategies of the book publishing sector	Benghozi, P.-J., Salvador, E	2016	Technology Analysis and Strategic Management 28(5), pp. 568–582	30	6
8	Online Book Shopping in Vietnam: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic Situation	Nguyen, H.V., Tran, H.X., Van Huy, L., (...), Do, M.T., Nguyen, N	2020	Publishing Research Quarterly 36(3), pp. 437–445	24	24
9	Fusión, coedición o reestructuración de revistas científicas en humanidades y ciencias sociales	Rodríguez-Yunta, L., Giménez-Toledo, E	2013	Profesional de la Información 22(1), pp. 36–45	23	2
10	The impact of e-book distribution on print sales: Analysis of a natural experiment	Chen, H., Hu, Y.J., Smith, M.D	2019	Management Science 65(1), pp. 19–31	18	9
11	Imbalance in scientific publishing	Toledo, E.G	2017	Revista de Investigación Educativa 32(1), pp. 13–23	16	4

Table 5 (continued)

| No	Document title	Author/s	Year	Source	Cited by	Cited for year
12	Digitization and Business Models in the Spanish Publishing Industry	Magadán-Díaz, M., Rivas-García, J.I	2018	Publishing Research Quarterly 34(3), pp. 333–346	15	5
13	Self-publishing: Opportunities and threats in a new age of mass culture	Carolan, S., Evain, C	2013	Publishing Research Quarterly 29(4), pp. 285–300	15	1,8
14	Immersive Audio Storytelling: Podcasting and Serial Documentary in the Digital Publishing Industry	Dowling, D.O., Miller, K.J	2019	Journal of Radio and Audio Media 26(1), pp. 167–184	13	6,5
15	Applying Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explore Users' Behavioral Intention to Adopt a Performance Assessment System for E-book Production	Liao, S., Hong, J.-C., Wen, M.-H., Pan, Y.-C., Wu, Y.-W	2018	Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education 14(10), pp. 1–12	13	4,3
16	Mobile and Digitally Mediated Publishing Strategies in China: An Overview of Evolving Business Models	Peng, Y	2016	Publishing Research Quarterly 32(3), pp. 247–260	11	2,2
17	Print-on-demand: New models and value creation	Gallagher, K	2014	Publishing Research Quarterly 30(2), pp. 244–248	11	1,5
18	Adaptación de la industria del libro en España al cambio tecnológico: Pasado, presente y futuro de la digitalización	Magadán-Díaz, M., Rivas-García, J.I	2019	Información, Cultura y Sociedad 40, pp. 31–52	10	5
19	Negotiating Collaborations: BookTubers, The Publishing Industry, and YouTube's Ecosystem	Tomasena, J.M	2019	Social Media and Society 5(4)	9	4,5
20	Who survives a recession? Specialization against diversification in the digital publishing industry	Mangani, A., Tarrini, E	2017	Online Information Review 41(1), pp. 19–34	9	2,25

Source: own elaboration
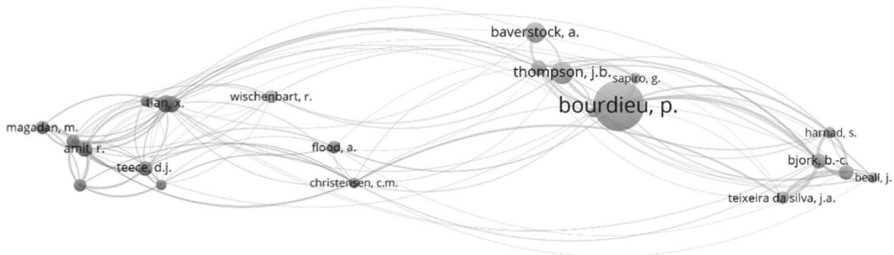
Fig. 8 Bibliometric map of the co-citations-articles relationship (Source: own elaboration)

Table 6 Frequency of keywords in scientific production in Scopus

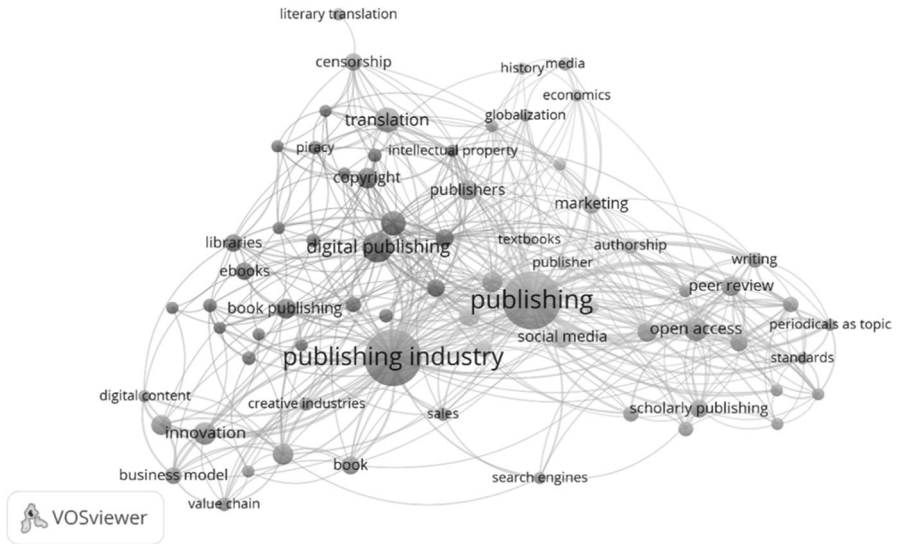| Keyword	Frequency
Publishing	109
Publishing industry	104
Digital publishing	30
Ebooks	17
Innovation	17

Source: own elaboration

Fig. 9 Networks among keywords of the articles published on the publishing industry in Scopus (Source: own elaboration)

when analyzing the co-citations, for which authors with a minimum number of 20 citations were included.

The research topics, according to the keywords of the articles, allow for analyzing the conceptual blocks addressed in the scientific production. Table 6 shows the six most recurrent keywords, and Fig. 9 presents the network map among keywords according to the frequency and keywords' co-occurrence in the analyzed documents.

When analyzing the keywords, we observe that the terms 'publishing', 'publishing industry', and 'digital publishing' are among the most representative.

This analysis selected the 1000 keywords repeated in at least five different articles. Figure 9 shows that the network contains five clusters identified by a particular color (in order of importance): green, blue, red, purple, light blue, and yellow. Each one presents the most used concepts in research in the publishing industry, and the concept size is related to its absolute frequency.

Conclusions

The general goal of this study has been to review the scientific production of the publishing industry in the Scopus database.

Since 2012, production in the publishing industry has been gradually increasing. On the other hand, the majority language in which research is published in English, followed by Spanish.

The top four academic publications that collect scientific production around the publishing industry include Publishing Research Quarterly, Logos Netherlands, Learned Publishing, and Profesional de la Información.

The most productive and influential authors in research on the publishing industry are Marta Magadán-Díaz and Jesús I. Rivas-García, professors at the International University of La Rioja in Spain who contributed a maximum of 14 documents to Scopus in the period analyzed.

Regarding the countries with the highest scientific production on this subject, the United States stands out, followed by the United Kingdom and Spain. In relation to the geographical scope of influence, Europe stands out (the United Kingdom and Spain). The United Kingdom counts with the University College London as the most representative institution, followed the Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford. Spain appears represented by the International University of La Rioja, the University of Salamanca, and the University of Granada.

Finally, the analysis of the relational nodes of the keywords shows us that there are six main trends related to (a) digital publications (digital and electronic publishing, digitization, formats, platforms, applications, devices, digital developments, content management), (b) those linked to academic publishing and the development of open Access, (c) studies based on technological change, new business models and their effects on the value chain, as well as pricing strategies and distribution options based on book format and reader preferences, (d) those that refer to book marketing, (e) the use of social networks and the proliferation of self-publishing, and (f) everything related to intellectual property and the sale of rights. Many of these works borrow methods from the social sciences:

sociology, social communication, and media studies, as well as studies of history, culture, and literary studies. The most used are the quantitative studies.

This article highlights that research on the global book publishing market is interdisciplinary and, therefore, highly cross-cutting. The economic dimension of the publishing process, and the history and culture of the book dominated the study subjects. There is also a growing trend of research on the impact of new technologies on the value chain and book distribution, without forgetting the increasing studies on new business models in the publishing industry.

This bibliometric analysis on the publishing industry presents a descriptive and analytical overview using Scopus: one of the databases with the highest impact on the scientific community. Therefore, it allows researchers, professionals in the field, and institutions to visualize the most developed trends and emerging lines of research to continue advancing in the study area.

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