

SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION IN THE FIELD OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

PRODUCCIÓN CIENTÍFICA EN EL ÁMBITO DE LA GOBERNANZA UNIVERSITARIA

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ABSTRACT: Access to information presents the challenge of organizing the vast available knowledge. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis of publications on university governance indexed in Scopus. Keywords "Governance" and "University" were used to select 20 high-impact journals (SJR). A total of 543 publications were analyzed to identify themes, authors, theories, and trends, using VOSviewer to analyze authorship networks, keywords, and country collaborations. The most prolific journals were Studies in Higher Education and Higher Education, with 201 publications in total. The number of articles increased significantly since 2013, with 2020 being the year of highest production. Francisco Ganga-Contreras from Chile was the author with the most publications (27), and Ka Ho Mok from Hong Kong was the most cited (232 citations). Co-authorship analysis showed Ganga-Contreras as a central figure among Latin American authors. In terms of citations, Mok, de Boer, and Shattock led, with the most cited article by Bleiklie and Kogan (193 citations). In terms of country collaboration, the United States stood out as a key player, with strong links to Europe and Asia. The most frequent keywords were 'university governance' and 'higher education,' highlighting topics such as academic autonomy and corporate governance.

Keywords: *University Governance, University, Higher Education, Literature Review, Bibliometric Analysis.*

RESUMEN: El acceso a la información presenta el desafío de organizar el vasto conocimiento disponible. Este estudio realiza un análisis bibliométrico de publicaciones sobre gobernanza universitaria indexadas en Scopus. Se emplearon las palabras clave "Governance" y "University", seleccionando 20 revistas con mayor impacto (SJR). Se analizaron 543 publicaciones para identificar temáticas, autores, teorías y tendencias, utilizando VOSviewer para analizar redes de autoría, palabras clave y colaboraciones entre países. Las revistas más prolíficas fueron Studies in Higher Education y

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Higher Education, con 201 publicaciones en total. El número de artículos aumentó significativamente desde 2013, siendo 2020 el año con mayor producción. Francisco Ganga-Contreras, de Chile, fue el autor con más publicaciones (27), y Ka Ho Mok, de Hong Kong, el más citado (232 citas). El análisis de coautoría mostró a Ganga-Contreras como figura central entre autores latinoamericanos. En citaciones, Mok, de Boer y Shattock lideraron, con el artículo más citado de Bleiklie y Kogan (193 citas). En términos de colaboración entre países, Estados Unidos se destacó como actor clave, con fuertes vínculos con Europa y Asia. Las palabras clave más frecuentes fueron 'university governance' y 'higher education', resaltando temas como la autonomía universitaria y la gobernanza corporativa.

Palabras clave: *Gobernanza universitaria, Universidad, Educación superior, Revisión de literatura, Análisis bibliométrico.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Schmal and Cabrales (2018), governance involves a steering process that guides organizational behavior. It considers not only the division of labor and the distribution of authority but also the values that guide the organization to achieve its objectives.

The literature on university governance has gained interest in offering diverse perspectives on the functioning of these institutions. Although the concept of governance has recently become popular in explaining phenomena that administration and management do not fully capture, its application in the university setting has grown in recent years. This approach is crucial for understanding the dynamics of universities, given the increasingly complex environment in which they operate. Valdés-Montecinos and Ganga-Contreras (2021) extend this perspective by pointing out that university governance must consider the interaction between the diversity of actors involved, both internal and external, as a key factor for the effectiveness of governance mechanisms and the achievement of institutional objectives.

This research focuses on exploring the existing literature on university governance through bibliometric analysis. It will use the VOSviewer program to examine networks among authors, countries, and related concepts. The Scopus database will provide the main information, revealing a notable presence of Latin American authors.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Scientific knowledge plays a crucial role in the identification of knowledge gaps, especially in the area of public policy formulation. The greater the number of options based on scientific rationality, the greater the possibility of developing more effective public policies (Delatin et al., 2015), provided that the relevant authorities assume a learning process, understood as the acquisition or modification of ideas from study and reasoning (Zapata-Ros, 2012), and possess the necessary and sufficient knowledge to evaluate the available options. In this sense, universities must generate and disseminate knowledge, which is shared by the scientific community through various means, with indexed journals being one of the most relevant avenues, with Scopus as one of the most influential databases at present (Hernández-González et al., 2018; Zhu and Liu, 2020; Pranckutė, 2021).

For their part, journal indexers such as Scopus continue to be of great interest to the scientific community, reflecting their relevance in the creation of quality assurance systems for scientific publications. Researchers who wish to stand out in the competitive academic arena focus on these indexers because of the visibility and impact they provide in their areas of knowledge. These journals, in turn, seek to attract prestigious authors to increase their visibility and impact factor (Valderrama-Zurián et al., 2016; Ganga-Contreras and Luna, 2018). At the same time, journals aspire to improve their impact by appealing to collaboration with recognized authors, which contributes to increasing their readership and citations (Larivière et al., 2009).

In this context, the Scopus database has been selected as the main source for this research.

METHODOLOGY

The documentary analysis was carried out by the requirements of documentary research, given the need to exhaustively review the literature related to the topic. To represent the analysis of concurrence in the citation of journals, authors, and countries, various techniques and information visualization tools were applied. The indicators used in the study were based on the typology proposed by Arencibia and de Moya (2008), Arencibia-Jorge (2009), and

Chinchilla-Rodríguez et al. (2015). This battery of indicators is composed of four categories subdivided into two indicators of publication analysis, one of productivity and one of scientific collaboration. These indicators are presented in detail below:

Typology of Indicators:

1. Publication analysis indicators: include document typology and identification of the journals with the largest number of documents on the topic addressed.
2. Productivity indicators and citation analysis: they consider co-occurrence by keyword and the journals with the highest impact factor.
3. Indicators of scientific collaboration: they focus on the co-occurrence of authors and collaboration between countries through co-authorships.

The study is a descriptive bibliometric study, using version 1.6.18 of the VOSviewer program. The database used for the search was Scopus, the first search formula being the following, which yielded a total of 709 documents.

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("university governance")

After that, the search was refined by eliminating documents such as editorials, books, notes, book reviews, retractions, among others. Leaving only scientific articles and literature reviews. After the filters, 543 documents were found.

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("university governance") AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "re"))

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 shows a list of the journals that publish articles with the terms associated with this research. The journals have been ordered according to the number of publications, from most to least.

The top journals with the highest number of publications are mostly from Europe and the United States and are published in English. The first Latin American journal identified in this search is *Fronteiras*. It is important to note that several of the journals mentioned are also indexed in the Web of Science, which reinforces their relevance within the scientific community.

This group of 20 journals accounts for 201 of the 543 total publications.

Table 1

Most relevant journals by number of articles published

Journals	Number of publications	SJR Impact Factor	Scimago Quartile
Studies in Higher Education	36	1,565	Q1
Higher Education	26	1,729	Q1
Tertiary Education and Management	19	0,634	Q2
Higher Education Quarterly	16	0,834	Q1
Higher Education Policy	14	0,693	Q1
Interchange	9	0,257	Q2
Academe	8	0,112	Q4
Asia Pacific Education Review	7	0,614	Q2
Fronteiras	7	0,149	Q3
Journal Of Higher Education Policy and Management	7	0,894	Q1
Bordón	6	0,295	Q3
Higher Education Research and Development	6	1,435	Q1
Opción*	6	N/A	N/A
Perspectives Policy and Practice in Higher Education	6	0,467	Q2
Chinese Education And Society	5	0,275	Q2
Espacios*	5	N/A	N/A
International Journal of Educational Management	5	0,462	Q2
Revista De Educación	5	0,338	Q3
Critical Perspectives on Accounting	4	1,381	Q1
International Journal of Educational Development	4	0,755	Q1

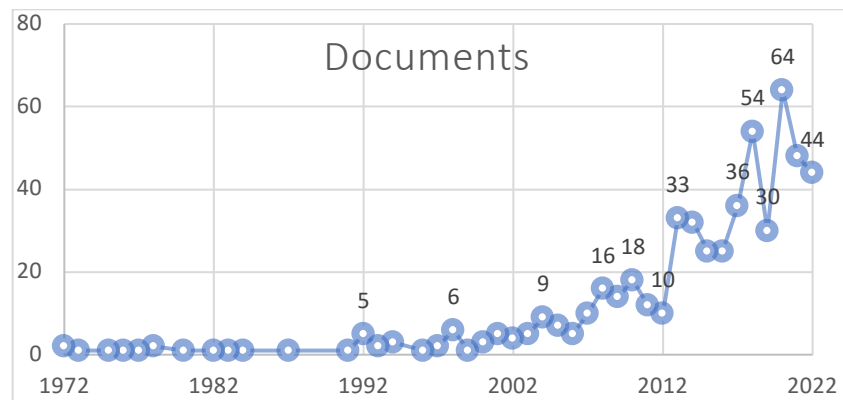
Source: Own elaboration based on Scimago SJR (2021).

*: Both in Spanish, currently not indexed

According to the results, the growth trend in the number of publications has not been constant. Until the late 1990s, the number of annual publications fluctuated between one and five. However, this trend changed from 2005 onwards, with a significant increase since 2013. Since then, the number of annual publications has not dropped below 25, reflecting a growing interest of researchers in both the subject matter and the use of the associated terms. The year with the highest number of publications to date has been 2020, as shown in the graph below.

Figure 1

Number of articles per year



Source: Own elaboration based on search in Scopus.

The following table shows the authors with the highest number of publications obtained in the search. The researcher with the most publications is Dr. Francisco Ganga-Contreras, from Chile, while the most cited author is Ka Ho Mok, from Hong Kong, China.

Table 2

Authors with the highest number of publications

Authors	Publications	Citations
Francisco Ganga-Contreras	27	84
Ka Ho Mok	14	232
Michael Shattock	7	182
Julie Rowlands	6	61
Harry de Boer	5	147
Cristine Musselin	5	108
Emilio Rodríguez-Ponce	5	26

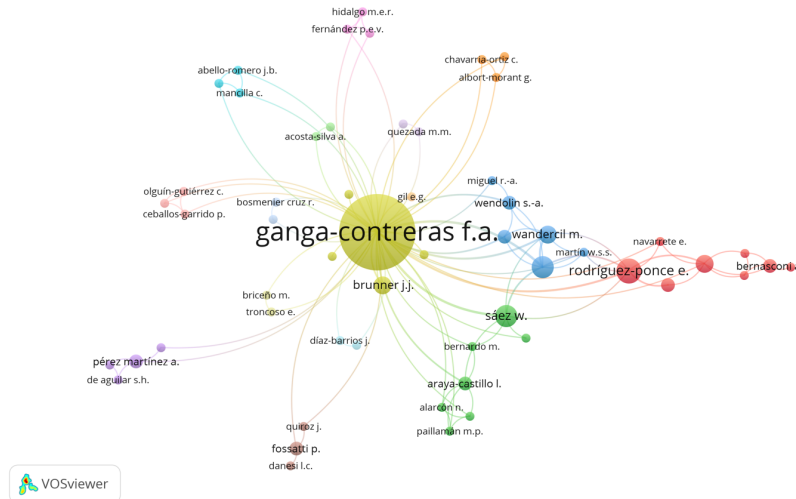
Chang Zhu	5	11
Adolfo Calderón	4	24

Source: Own elaboration based on search in Scopus.

Co-authorships between authors

The analysis of coauthorship between authors was carried out using the VOSviewer software, based on data extracted from Scopus. Figure 2 shows authors from countries with at least two publications, where the lines represent the strength of their relationships. The size of the circles indicates the number of published papers.

The author highlighted in yellow, with the largest circle, is Dr. Francisco Ganga-Contreras, who has the largest number of documents in this search and occupies the center of the author network, composed mainly of Latin American researchers. It should be noted that, due to the limitations of the software, researchers who are not connected to the main network are not shown. In this context, it is observed that most of the English-speaking authors have not yet developed co-authorship networks of this magnitude. The second author with the most publications is Ka Ho Mok. It is foreseeable that, in the coming years, these networks will expand as more collaborations between researchers are generated. In addition to the aforementioned authors, others stand out, such as JJ. Brunner, who appears within the yellow node, composed of those with the highest number of articles and citations.

Figure 2*Co-authorships between authors*

Source: Own elaboration based on Vosviewer from a search in Scopus (2022).

Networks of most cited authors

Using the citation analysis of the VOSviewer software, the following figure shows the main citation networks between authors according to the established search parameters. Unlike the previous figure, in this analysis, the size of the circles represents the number of citations received. Only authors with at least two publications and one citation were considered.

The first cluster, represented in red, is mainly composed of Latin American authors. It is interesting to note that, in addition to sharing publications, as seen in the previous figure, the authors in this cluster are more interconnected in terms of citations among them. A particular case is Dr. Bernasconi, who, although he is cited transversally, is not part of this cluster.

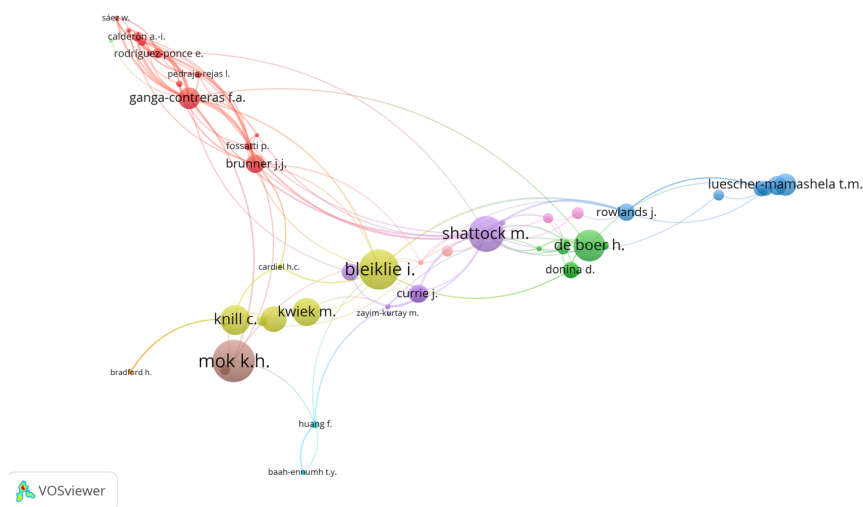
Among the most cited authors are Mok, de Boer, Shattock, and Bleiklie. The latter is particularly relevant, as his article entitled 'Organization and Governance of Universities', published together with Kogan in the journal *Higher Education Policy* in 2007, is the most cited of the set, with a total of 193 citations.

The colors of the other clusters represent predominantly authors from English-speaking countries. The brown cluster consists of four authors, all Mok collaborators and affiliated

with Lingnan University in Hong Kong, representing authors of Chinese nationality. The green cluster includes authors such as de Boer from the Netherlands. The purple cluster, led by Shattock, groups mainly authors from the United Kingdom. The yellow cluster highlights, in addition to Bleiklie, the Polish author Kwiek, with publications related to higher education processes in Europe. Finally, the blue cluster is not associated with a specific region, but groups authors who have maintained significant joint citations.

Figure 3

Most cited authors



Source: Own elaboration based on Vosviewer from a search in Scopus (2022).

Most cited articles

The following table includes the articles and literature reviews with the highest number of citations associated with the search for this work.

Table 3

Most cited articles

Title	Authors	Year	Journal	Nº of cites
University corporatisation: Driving redefinition	Parker	2011	Critical Perspectives on Accounting	194
Organization and governance of universities	Bleiklie and Kogan	2007	Higher Education Policy	194

Academic professionalism in the managerialist era: A study of English universities	Kolsaker	2008	Studies in Higher Education	176
An analytical framework for the cross-country comparison of higher education governance	Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle	2011	Higher Education	131
It's been a pleasure doing business with you: A strategic analysis and critique of university change management	Parker	2002	Critical Perspectives on Accounting	108
University governance reforms: Potential problems of more autonomy?	Christensen	2011	Higher Education	104
Modelling university governance	Trakman	2008	Higher Education Quarterly	84
The balance between teaching and research in Dutch and English universities in the context of university governance reforms	Leisyte, Enders and De Boer	2009	Higher Education	71
How peer review empowers the academic profession and university managers: Changes in relationships between the state universities and the professoriate	Musselin C.	2013	Research Policy	70
Student participation in university governance: The role conceptions and sense of efficacy of student representatives on departmental committees	Lizzio and Wilson	2009	Studies in Higher Education	69
Sustainability in the higher education system: An opportunity to improve quality and image	Salvioni, Franzoni and Cassano	2017	Sustainability (Switzerland)	67
Singapore's global education hub ambitions: University governance change and transnational higher education	Mok	2008	International Journal of Educational Management	66
Entrepreneurialism in Japanese and UK universities: Governance management leadership and funding	Yokoyama	2006	Higher Education	66

University governance leadership and management in a decade of diversification and uncertainty	Shattock	2013	Higher Quarterly	Education	65
Re-balancing modern concepts of university governance	Shattock	2002	Higher Quarterly	Education	64
University governance: Typology dynamics and trends [Gobernanza universitaria: Tipología dinámicas y tendencias]	Brunner	2011	Revista de Educación		61
Reference model for virtual education at face-to-face universities [Modelo de referencia para la enseñanza no presencial en universidades presenciales]	García-Peñalvo	2020	Campus Virtuales		59
Student representation in university decision making: good reasons a new lens?	Luescher-Mamashela	2013	Studies in Higher Education		58
Structural changes in the Polish higher education system (1990–2010): a synthetic view	Kwiek	2014	European Journal of Higher Education		54
Governance and trust in higher education	Vidovich and Currie	2011	Studies in Higher Education		53
Distance Education in COVID-19's period: An Analysis from the perspective of university students [Educación a distancia en tiempos de COVID-19: Análisis desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes universitarios]	Pérez-López, Atochero and Rivero	2021	RIED-Revista Iberoamericana de Educacion a Distancia		51
The deadly dull issue of university “administration”? Good governance managerialism and organising academic work	Dearlove	1998	Higher Policy	Education	50
Transformation of university governance through internationalization: challenges for top universities and government policies in Japan	Yonezawa and Shimmi	2015	Higher Education		49

When state centralism meets neo-liberalism: Managing university governance change in Singapore and Malaysia	Mok	2010	Higher Education	48
Personality and ideology: A personological study of women's liberation	Cherniss	1972	Psychiatry (New York)	48

Source: Own elaboration based on search in Scopus.

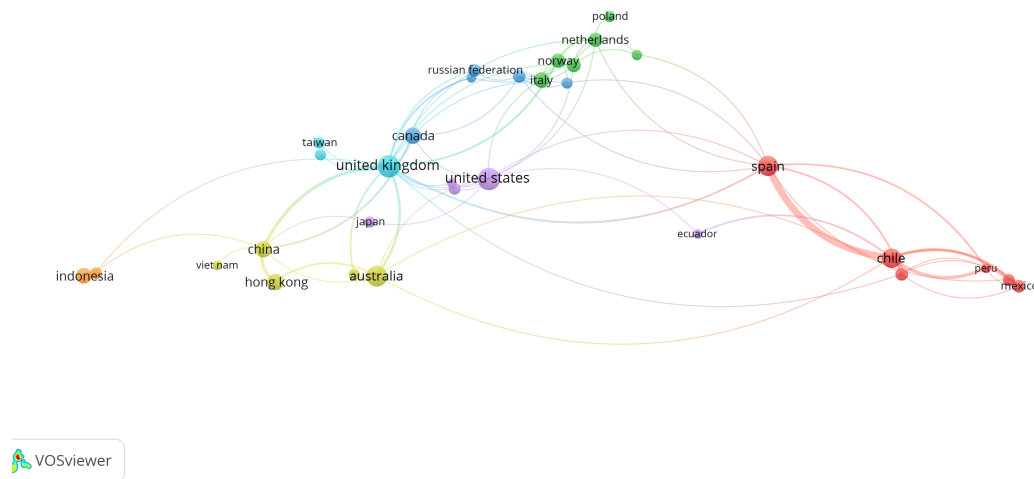
Co-authorships between countries

The following figure shows an analysis of co-authorship between countries, carried out with the VOSviewer software. This analysis is based on the nationality of the authors of scientific publications to identify how they are related to each other. Only countries with at least two articles and one citation in the search results were included. The size of the circles represents the number of publications, while the thickness of the lines indicates the level of interactions between countries.

In the lower right part of the figure, there is a red cluster grouping Ibero-American authors, with Spain, Chile, and Brazil standing out. The close interaction between authors from Chile and Brazil is notable, suggesting that both countries act as the main links between authors from the rest of the region. Interestingly, Ecuador is not part of this cluster but is grouped in the purple cluster.

The most relevant country in the analysis is the United States, which occupies a central position in the figure, in the purple cluster, and is connected with countries such as South Africa, Ecuador, Japan, and Slovenia. The green cluster groups authors from several European countries, with no one country predominating over the others. The light blue cluster, also located in the center, is composed of the United Kingdom together with Canada, Belgium, Austria, France, and Russia, forming a group closely related to other European nations.

The yellow cluster includes Asian countries and Australia, with China and Hong Kong (treated separately in this analysis) as the main players, accompanied by Vietnam. Finally, the orange cluster, located at a greater distance from the rest, is composed of countries with a small number of items, such as Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Figure 4*Co-authorships between countries*

Source: Own elaboration based on Vosviewer from a search in Scopus (2022).

Keyword co-occurrence

VOSviewer software was used to perform a concurrence analysis of the keywords used in scientific papers, considering only those with at least five matches between them. This analysis identified 40 keywords that met these criteria. In Figure 5, the circles represent the number of documents that include each keyword, while the lines indicate the strength of the relationships between them.

The most frequent keyword is 'university governance', with 181 occurrences. It is followed by 'Higher education', with 88, and in third place is 'governance', with 55 occurrences.

The first cluster to highlight, in red and located in the center of the figure, includes keywords such as 'China', 'Japan', 'University Autonomy', 'Internationalization', 'Academic Work', and 'Academic Profession'.

The second green cluster is led by “Higher education”, which also includes the concept of “university”. To a lesser extent, concepts related to good governance, institutional performance, and power appear.

The light blue cluster is all over the table and does not highlight any particular keyword. But they all include concepts associated with autonomy, academic freedom, higher education reform, and shared governance.

The fourth cluster in yellow highlights the concept of “universities” as a keyword, in addition to covid-19, university rankings, evaluation, accountability, and corporate governance.

The fifth cluster in purple includes the word governance along with the keywords decision-making, leadership, and management. It closes with the concept of Latin America as a keyword.

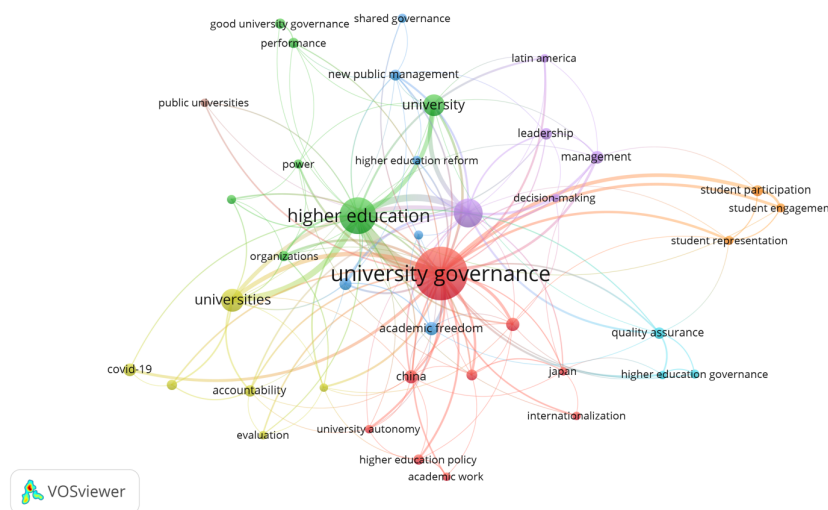
The sixth cluster in light blue contains only 3 words with very few documents, these are financing, quality assurance, and governance of higher education.

The seventh cluster has little relevance, represented in orange. However, its themes are interesting, as they include student participation, student representation, and student care.

In contrast, the last cluster focuses solely on the concept of public universities.

Figure 5

Keyword co-occurrence



Source: Own elaboration based on Vosviewer from a search in Scopus (2022).

CONCLUSIONS

This research has made it possible to identify the main milestones, authors, countries and trends in the literature on university governance, as well as the relationships between them. It has been shown that Latin American researchers play a relevant role in this field, with Dr. Francisco Ganga-Contreras standing out as one of the most influential authors. However, it is foreseeable that this situation will evolve in the coming years due to the growing international interest in the subject, which could diversify the main actors in this field of study.

The use of VOSviewer software has been essential to effectively visualize collaborative networks between authors and countries, as well as citation networks. An important finding is that researchers interested in this area must unify their keywords coherently and strategically if they wish to increase their visibility and improve their impact in the academic community. The use of common terms can facilitate the recognition of their work within the field and improve citations, strengthening the connections between authors and their respective research.

Despite the progress achieved, this research has limitations derived from the search terms used, which could be expanded by incorporating other databases such as Scielo or the Web of Science. Likewise, the analysis could be deepened by reviewing the bibliographic references used by the authors, which would make it possible to identify the most common theories and methodologies in this field of study. A complementary approach could be the analysis of the abstracts of the publications, which would help to delineate methodological and theoretical patterns with greater precision.

In terms of future perspectives, it is necessary to consider the strengthening of collaborative networks among researchers. In particular, it would be useful to explore how these networks could expand in areas or regions where they are currently weaker. Comparative studies between different regions of the world would allow a better understanding of the dynamics

of collaboration and the barriers that impede its growth, offering solutions to increase international cooperation in the field of university governance.

On the other hand, a detailed analysis of the temporal evolution of publications could provide a clearer picture of how the issues surrounding university governance have changed over time. This approach would help to identify emerging trends, allowing researchers to anticipate the most relevant topics in the coming years and thus increase the impact of their work.

Finally, it would be relevant to examine the impact of the geopolitical and academic context on collaborative networks. Funding policies, higher education reforms, and geopolitical dynamics can significantly influence scientific production and international collaborations between authors. Further analysis of these factors could provide valuable insights into how national contexts affect university governance research, and how countries can adopt strategies that promote greater scientific collaboration at the global level.

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