

# Export performance: a comprehensive bibliometric overview

*Beyza Aksoy*

Department of International Trade and Logistics, KTO Karatay University, Konya, Turkey

*Ayhan Akpınar*

Department of Business and Management, KTO Karatay University, Konya, Turkey, and

*Çağatay Ünüsan*

Department of International Trade and Logistics, KTO Karatay University, Konya, Turkey

## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to present a bibliometric overview of the academic research on export performance (EP) in the business and management areas.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A bibliometric overview of 1,463 papers from 1968 to 2021, including performance analysis, science mapping analysis and graphical mapping, was conducted using the Scopus database. SciMAT software was used for thematic analysis and conceptual evolution mapping of the EP domain, and VOSviewer software was used for graphical visualization.

**Findings** – This study shows that EP research experienced spectacular growth, especially between 1998 and 2003, and the interest in this field continues to increase. Also, the USA and the UK appear to be the absolute leaders in EP research, with the best indicators of productivity and influence in all dimensions analyzed. The findings from the analysis through SciMAT indicate that “capabilities” and “R&D” are the main Motor themes that have contributed the most to the EP literature, whereas “global value chain” and “start-up” are emerging themes as new areas of interest.

**Research limitations/implications** – This study develops a baseline for representing certain and exhaustive insights in the EP field and specifies trends over a period. Using a single database and excluding book chapters/conference papers are limitations of this study.

**Originality/value** – EP is a research field that has gained wide acceptance in the academic community and international marketing literature. To the best of the authors’ knowledge, no bibliometric overview has analyzed the EP literature. This study presents the first systematic quantitative analysis of academic research on EP in the business and management areas.

**Keywords** Export performance, Bibliometrics, Performance analysis, Thematic analysis, Science mapping analysis, SciMAT, VOSviewer

**Paper type** Literature review

## 1. Introduction

Today’s cruel competitive environment has made internationalization a necessity for firms. Therefore, it has become inevitable for them to open up to foreign markets to sustain their existence. Generally, export is regarded as the first and most attractive step of the internationalization process (Albaum *et al.*, 2016, p. 280; Leonidou *et al.*, 2002). In addition to sustaining their existence, firms tend to export for several economic and strategic reasons. The indicator of the extent to which the companies achieve these financial (e.g. sales, profit and cost) and strategic (e.g. market expansion, competitive response, gaining a foothold in a foreign market or increasing the awareness of the product/firm) goals by exporting a product to foreign markets is expressed as “export performance” (Cavusgil and Zou, 1994).

Sousa *et al.* (2008) stated that the export performance (EP) literature might be one of the most researched but least

understood topics in international marketing. The fact that the findings of the studies in the literature are often contradictory and that a common definition cannot be developed is an example of the complexity of conceptualization and definition of EP (Bonoma and Clark, 1988). Nevertheless, research on EP is of great importance:

- for public policymakers who see foreign exchange reserves as an important way to increase employment, productivity and, thus, social welfare (Czinkota, 1994);
- for executives, as it accelerates growth, increases the capacity utilization rate, improves financial indicators, increases competitive advantage and ensures the sustainability of the business in competitive market conditions (Kumcu *et al.*, 1995; Samiee and Walters, 1990); and
- for marketing studies who consider as a field for building theory in international marketing (Katsikeas *et al.*, 2000).

---

The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available on Emerald Insight at: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/0885-8624.htm>



Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing  
© Emerald Publishing Limited [ISSN 0885-8624]  
[DOI 10.1108/JBIM-12-2022-0573]

---

The researchers express their appreciation to the editors of the Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback and valuable comments, which have contributed significantly to the successful publication of this paper.

Received 30 December 2022  
Revised 5 October 2023  
29 October 2023  
Accepted 1 January 2024

As a result of the increasing trend toward economic integration and competition around the world, the efforts of enterprises to survive in globally competitive environments are getting increasingly intense. Eventually, it is becoming gradually critical for firms to seek more trade opportunities in foreign markets to maintain their position (Leonidou *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, interest in research on EP continues and is lively discussed today as it was in the past (Figure 1) (Aaby and Slater, 1989; Axinn, 1988; Bilkey, 1978; Cavusgil and Zou, 1994; Godinez *et al.*, 2021; Haddoud *et al.*, 2019; Jongwanich, 2010; Safari and Saleh, 2020). Thus, the field has become a growing body of literature in international business and marketing. Furthermore, authors have synthesized the literature on EP topics, taking different systematic reviews and narrative reviews (Aaby and Slater, 1989; Zou and Stan, 1998; Sousa *et al.*, 2008; Ruppenthal and Bausch, 2009).

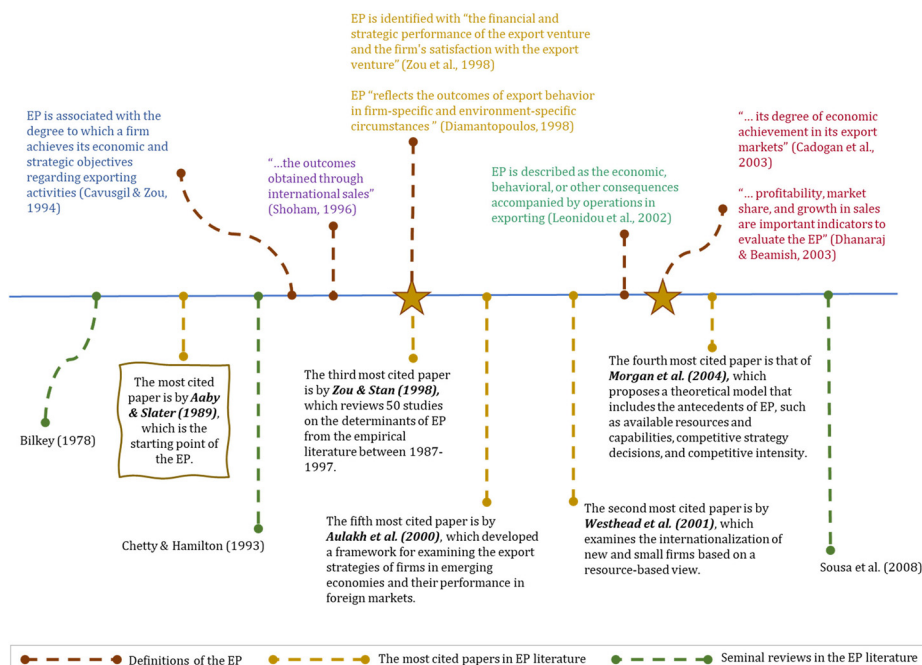
As highlighted by Paul *et al.* (2021), deficiencies observed in earlier reviews can serve as catalysts and reinforcement for the emergence of new review studies. While literature reviews can be conducted using various methods, the most recent three significant reviews within the EP field have all used the vote-counting approach (Chen *et al.*, 2016; Sousa *et al.*, 2008; Zou and Stan, 1998). The shared objective among these related studies is to identify studies that designate EP as a dependent variable and subsequently amalgamate the findings regarding the positive or negative associations with its determinants. However, the vote-counting approach is well-suited for research investigations characterized by a small sample size and a relatively narrow focus, as Newbert *et al.* (2014) outlined. While the studies mentioned earlier have made valuable contributions toward comprehending the development of EP research, their limitations in terms of sampling and temporal

constraints hinder their ability to offer a comprehensive overview of the field as a whole. Hence, a necessity exists to systematically structure and compile all available knowledge within this research domain.

According to Snyder (2019), literature reviews prove to be highly beneficial in such circumstances, and the selection of the review method should be contingent upon the specific objectives of the review. Our review encompasses a broader range and represents a notable advancement compared to the current body of literature, as it seeks to enhance the understanding of the role of EP within the context of international business and marketing. Accordingly, a bibliometric analysis is deemed more appropriate in cases when the review scope is extensive and the data set is large (Donthu *et al.*, 2021).

Bibliometric analysis uses statistical techniques to systematically examine and assess a substantial body of work, typically comprising hundreds to thousands of articles, in an unbiased fashion, as demonstrated by Donthu *et al.* (2021). This analytical approach can validate and enhance the conclusions drawn in prior literature reviews while also offering an objective and comprehensible depiction of the research landscape regarding EP through visualization methods. Even for scholars specialized in international business and marketing, it could be challenging to measure, without bias, which subthemes are highly developed, mature, declined, isolated and emerging or how the field has evolved in recent decades. Hence, this study aims to directly address this gap in the literature and pursue a better insight into the state of the art and how it has evolved thematically since its origins. Thus, this study endeavors to fill the gap in the extant literature by investigating the progression of EP research, the present status of the field and future directions for EP research through the use of performance analysis and

Figure 1 Evolutionary timeline of the export performance field



Source: Authors' own work

science mapping methods. Furthermore, to the best of the authors' knowledge, given the dearth of bibliometric studies that address the subject of EP and the remarkable significance of this notion, the present study is the first systematic quantitative analysis of EP research that applies a bibliometric approach using performance analysis and science mapping analysis. Therefore, we propose the following research questions that we will answer throughout this paper and that also serve as an index and shed light on the scope of the study:

- RQ1.* What are the present publication trends in export performance in terms of years, journals, authors, affiliated countries and universities?
- RQ2.* Which are the most productive and influential studies, authors, journals, countries and universities in this field?
- RQ3.* What were the main research themes related to the export performance in each period studied?
- RQ4.* What is the scholarly nature of export performance research? How has the conceptual evolution of the export performance field changed? What themes are emerging and promising for future research?

Through the attainment of responses to these inquiries, this research offers three primary contributions:

- 1 Based on performance analysis, this study demonstrates the evolutionary process of the knowledge structure of EP.
- 2 It maps the evolutionary path of the EP field by quantitatively assessing, combining and prioritizing significant themes, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of its intellectual framework.
- 3 It identifies emerging subjects that are presently under investigation and could serve as a roadmap for future researchers in the field of EP and international marketing.

The rest of the study has been organized as follows. The following section presents the methodology used, followed by a discussion of the findings under the purpose of this study. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for future research are presented.

## 2. Historical development of the export performance field

The escalation of global competition has prompted a growing number of firms to explore international markets to attain their objectives and secure their market position and survival, particularly after the 1980s. Among the various modes of international market entry, exporting has traditionally been the preferred option, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises (Leonidou *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, investigating the factors influencing the EP has constituted a significant area of study within the domain of international marketing research for more than six decades (Bilkey, 1978; Aaby and Slater, 1989).

EP is regarded as the dependent variable (Katsikeas *et al.*, 2000) and is operationally defined as the results of a firm's activities in export markets (Shoham, 1996). Accordingly, the research goal since the 1960s has been identifying factors affecting export behavior and performance.

In his pioneering research, Bilkey (1978) collated 43 studies on firms' export behavior encompassing 11 nations. Drawing

on relevant research, the author highlighted that exporting is a dynamic process influenced by various factors at different stages and suggested using export profiles alongside behavior models to identify and support firms with export potential.

After the 1980s, during the era of rapid globalization, examining the factors influencing EP has emerged as a significant avenue within the domain of international marketing research. Despite a growing body of research in this area, regrettably, much of the understanding pertaining to effective export practices remains fragmented. As Aaby and Slater (1989) pointed out, as of the late 1980s, a definitive formula for crafting a prosperous export program remains elusive. However, their seminal work highlighted several general conclusions (Aaby and Slater, 1989). Firm characteristics such as size, commitment to export, effective management systems and export experience are crucial, with competencies often outweighing inherent firm traits. Also, an international vision, consistent export goals and favorable attitudes toward exportation are essential for export success, and addressing management misperceptions and beliefs through pre-export programs could benefit non-exporting firms.

A common feature of research conducted on EP during the period spanning from the 1960s to the early 1990s was the prevalence of simplistic relationships involving a sole independent variable and a single dependent variable, with a predominant focus on internal factors (Aaby and Slater, 1989). Moreover, recommendations emerged during this era to enhance the EP field by shifting the measurement of EP from sales to profit-based metrics and by adopting more longitudinal research methodologies instead of cross-sectional approaches. These proposed improvements aimed to reduce the potential for perplexing or contradictory findings within scholarly research, notably concerning variables like firm size and its impact on EP (Cavusgil and Zou, 1994).

Later on, Cavusgil and Zou (1994) expanded the scope of EP beyond internal factors to encompass a more comprehensive perspective that integrates both economic and strategic dimensions, considering both internal (firm and product characteristics) and external factors (industry and export market characteristics). In their seminal work, the unified theoretical framework of export marketing strategy and performance and the proposed advanced methodology have inspired future research in the EP field.

Although previous reviews were conducted over a period of 20 years, because of the increasing number of studies, Zou and Stan (1998) covered a period of 10 years. During this period, scholars agree that evaluating EP requires a dual-level analysis, encompassing both internal and external environmental factors. Subsequently, Zou and Stan (1998) suggested two more dimensions to classify various determinants of EP, namely, controllable and uncontrollable variables. Despite this distinction, a prevailing perspective among scholars is that the firm and its management exert significant influence over the EP, as internal factors such as export marketing strategy and management's attitudes/perceptions remain the most studied variables after the 1990s (Zou and Stan, 1998). Within the same period, despite the existence of various advocated methods, there remains an absence of consensus regarding the methodology for assessing EP. Researchers persist in using distinct nomenclature for their respective measures of EP, thereby yielding a multitude of terminologies (Zou and Stan, 1998).

Similar to previous periods, the main challenge in the EP field pertains to the absence of a coherent theoretical framework or a systematic rationale to inform the selection of independent variables. However, as Katsikeas (2003) aptly remarked, having a substantial and comprehensive theory is crucial to gaining a deeper comprehension of the factors that influence the achievement of exportation. Nevertheless, compared to the previous periods, an increasing number of studies have integrated theoretical and methodological rationale when formulating their research inquiries and hypotheses, such as industrial organization theory (Cavusgil and Zou, 1994), market-orientation (Atuahene-Gima, 1995) and structural modeling (Holzmüller and Stottinger, 1996).

In the following years, critics of the export marketing literature have voiced concerns yet again about its propensity to offer only fragmented findings and its inability to construct a widely recognized EP model (Leonidou *et al.*, Leonidou *et al.*, 2002; Morgan *et al.*, 2004). Despite the positive progress regarding the conceptualization of the EP, an undergoing prominent challenge facing researchers is the absence of consensus regarding the relevant determinants that contribute to EP, as well as the methods used to measure these variables. For instance, Sousa *et al.* (2008) discovered as many as 40 different determinants of EP in 52 studies covering 1998–2006. Nevertheless, the same authors have highlighted some improvements in the EP field, such as the level of sophistication of methodologies and the use of control and moderating variables. Also, within this period, scholars have suggested that EP should be recognized as a multi-faceted concept, necessitating the use of a variety of indicators (e.g. export intensity, export sales, export profits and market share) for a dependable evaluation of this construct (Sousa, 2004).

Notwithstanding, several authors (Cavusgil and Zou, 1994; Sousa *et al.*, 2008) have criticized researchers within the EP literature for failing to consider the consistent measurement of EP. The same authors stated that the proper unit of analysis in EP research should be the export venture; however, the export venture may fail to capture latent firm-level variables (Oliveira *et al.*, 2012). According to previous work, defining the domain of EP represents a key obstacle in the field, as it presents a primary challenge.

Since the 2000s, the integration of theoretical foundations within the domain of EP has experienced growing prevalence (Chen *et al.*, 2016). This process was tackled through several theoretical lenses, including the resource-based view (Westhead *et al.*, 2001; Dhanaraj and Beamish, 2003), contingency theory (Morgan *et al.*, 2004; Aulakh *et al.*, 2000), institutional-based view (Peng *et al.*, 2008) and organizational learning theory (Lages *et al.*, 2008). At present, integrating several theoretical perspectives yields a valuable synthesis of the viewpoints, as the complexity of EP cannot be fully accounted for by any single theory alone (Chen *et al.*, 2016).

In sum, state-of-the-art research singles out that, despite numerous advancements in the domain of EP, similar issues persist (Chen *et al.*, 2016). Present research endeavors and results continue to exhibit fragmentation, diversity and incongruence. Furthermore, while numerous new variables influencing the subject are explored, developing a comprehensive framework capable of fostering a comprehensive and general conceptual structure remains unrealized. Specifically, the under-study of

external factors, the limited availability of longitudinal investigations, the absence of data gathering from emerging economies, the concentration on particular industry sectors and the disparity between units of analysis present potential avenues for future research (Chen *et al.*, 2016). Over the past 70 years, the EP field has devoted significant efforts to developing theories that facilitate the investigation of the EP variable. Figure 1 provides a timeline of the evolution of EP studies, from their origin to the present day.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Bibliometric analysis: data collection and analysis

Bibliometrics is defined as “a set of methods to quantitatively analyze academic literature and scholarly communication” (Das, 2015). Bibliometric research measures scientific progress, academic performance and organizational performance in several disciplines. Various indices are used in the bibliometric analysis, such as the number of publications, number of citations, impact factors, h- and c-indices and annual average citations (Davidson *et al.*, 2014; Elaheh *et al.*, 2018; Etemadifard *et al.*, 2018; Ghanbari Baghestan *et al.*, 2019). Through bibliometric research based on these indexes, it is possible to determine the influence of various journals and schools of thought in the field (Baumgartner and Pieters, 2003; Ghorbani *et al.*, 2022) to determine the weight of leading academics (Portugal Ferreira, 2011), to discover new trends and latest developments (Shafique, 2013) and to direct future research opportunities.

In this study, publications in the field of EP were classified through bibliometric records obtained from the Scopus database. Citation search engines such as Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic Search and CiteSeerX and databases such as Elsevier-Scopus and Thompson Reuters Web of Science are frequently used to obtain bibliometric data (Andres, 2009; Das, 2015; Guz and Rushchitsky, 2009). However, it is noted that Scopus covers more journals than WOS (Aghaei Chadegani *et al.*, 2013) and is the most extensive database containing research publications, abstracts and citations of peer-reviewed journals (Dunakhe and Panse, 2021). According to Scopus data ([www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus/content](http://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus/content)), 21,500 scientific journals and more than 5,000 international publishers are registered in its database. Moreover, bibliometric studies are typically deployed in just one database to reduce data homogenization issues when working with multiple databases (Mariani *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the Scopus database was used to obtain data for this bibliometric review.

The search was used in the abstract, title and keyword areas. The search terms are the following keywords: “export performance; export effect; export intensity; export sales; export profits; export success; export property; export growth.” The reason for using multiple keywords is that there are different concepts in the EP field. For this reason, keywords were selected by examining previous studies (Baldauf *et al.*, 2000; Ruppenthal and Bausch, 2009). The number of documents obtained in the first search was 4,633 (as of 13.10.2021). Then, the document type is limited to only articles and reviews. We have preferred to depend on articles published in an academic journal instead of the book chapters and conference papers as sources, as peer-reviewed articles can be considered as “certified knowledge”

(Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruiz-Navarro, 2004). Afterward, the articles were limited to “business, management, and accounting” as a subject area. Finally, only “English” articles were included in the sample. In addition, trade journals were excluded from the search because they did not fit the scope of the research. With these limitations, the number of documents obtained in the second search was 1,573. During the initial examination of the papers, it was understood that some trade journals remained on the list and were manually removed. Thus, the final number of 1,463 was reached.

As no bibliometric analysis has been done on this subject before, no date limitation has been applied. Thus, it is aimed to present the results comprehensively. After the search process was completed, the records were subjected to bibliometric analysis. First, the data obtained from Scopus was downloaded in .csv format and transferred to Excel. This document includes the names of the articles, their authors, the year they were published, the number of citations, the journal in which they were published and author keywords. The data were classified by the first author and controlled by the second author.

### 3.2 Analytical tools used

Bibliometric methods are performed using two main approaches: performance analysis and graphical mapping (Noyons *et al.*, 1999). In performance analysis, scientific productions of different actors interacting in a particular research field are evaluated. These actors include countries, universities, departments, funding sources and researchers. The most important indicators are the number of articles and citations. The number of articles published is generally associated with an author’s productivity. In contrast, the number of citations related to an article indicates its impact on the academic community (Merigó and Yang, 2017).

In addition to the methods used in the research, the h-index was also used. The h-index was first introduced by Hirsch (2005), becoming one of the leading bibliometric indices to evaluate a researcher’s scientific performance. Although the h-index was initially designed to measure the scientific performance of researchers, it has also been used to measure the performance of journals (Braun *et al.*, 2006). Combining a measure of quantity and impact in a single indicator is the main superiority of the h-index (Costas and Bordons, 2007). As an exhaustive result was sought, the publications were analyzed according to their number of citations and classified according to their h-index.

Cobo *et al.* (2011) emphasize the importance of using multiple scientific mapping software tools to perform a deep scientific mapping analysis rather than using a single tool for all the key elements (data retrieval, preprocessing, network extraction, normalization, mapping, analysis, visualization and interpretation) in the science mapping workflow. Therefore, we used two complementary tools, SciMAT and VOSviewer, for thematic analysis and visualization.

To enable the study of the evolution of the EP field, a co-word analysis (Callon *et al.*, 1983) was applied using SciMAT with scientific field mapping. The current research conducted a longitudinal framework analysis of co-word following Cobo *et al.* (2011). To identify the foremost theme in each cluster, we used a clustering algorithm on the co-word networks developed for each of the chosen periods. SciMAT

generates strategic diagrams for each period using two metrics, namely, centrality and density, as outlined in Callon *et al.* (1991). Centrality assesses the degree of network interaction with others, whereas density gauges the internal network strength. Thematic networks are categorized into one of four quadrants based on their centrality and density values. These quadrants are (Figure 8):

- *Top right quadrant:* this typically comprises highly developed and essential themes in the research field. These themes are characterized by strong centrality and high density and are commonly referred to as “motor themes.”
- *Top left quadrant:* this depicts highly developed and isolated themes. These themes refer to specialized topics that exhibit strong internal links but weak external links.
- *Bottom left quadrant:* this represents the themes that are emerging or declining in the research field. These themes are underdeveloped and marginal, having low centrality and density.
- *Bottom right quadrant:* this encompasses themes pertinent to the research domain, yet they lack sufficient development and may represent potential future research directions.

These are known as basic and transversal themes.

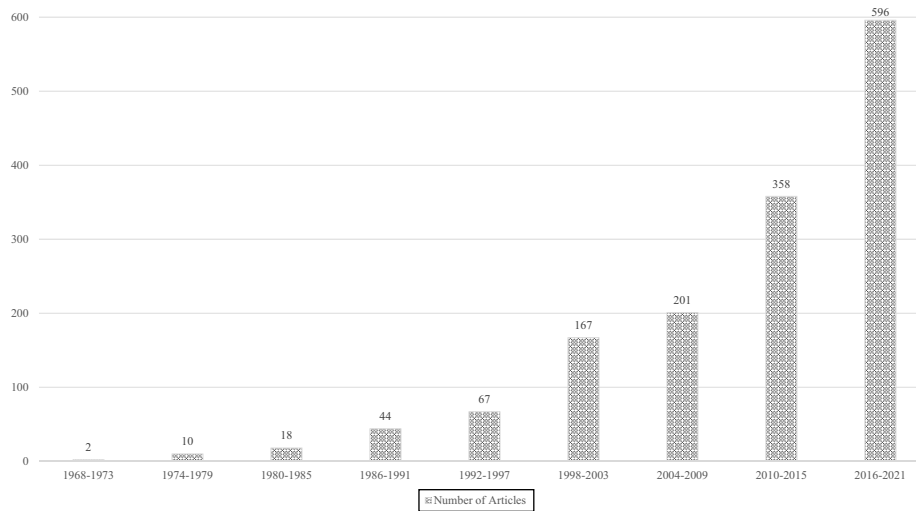
Finally, graphic mapping was done using VOSviewer in this study. Vosviewer is software that allows analysis of networks such as co-citation, bibliographic matching, co-keywords and co-authorship (van Eck and Waltman, 2010). The Vosviewer (van Eck and Waltman, 2010) has been used to visualize co-citations of journals cited in the EP field, co-citation of authors cited in the EP field, bibliographic coupling of countries that publish in the EP field and co-occurrence of authors keywords of documents published in the EP field.

Because of the long period of 54 years, the distribution of the number of articles, the number of citations and the authorship characteristics are shown in the figures at five-year intervals. In the tables, 2017 and before are shown collectively, focusing on the past five years. In summary, the annual distribution of articles, citation numbers, most cited articles, most productive and influential authors, most productive and influential journals and, finally, the most productive and influential countries and universities were included in bibliometric analysis.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1 Annual distribution of articles

To respond to *RQ1*, the annual distribution of publications in the research area from 1968 to 2021 is illustrated in Figure 2. The number of publications associated with EP has increased rapidly over time. The publications were examined in nine periods, and different trends were observed in these periods. In the first two periods from 1968 to 1979, EP publications were no more than three per year. Although there was an increase in the annual number of publications from 1980 to 1991, it reached a maximum of ten papers. As the first publications related to EP appeared, the first milestone observed in the development of the publications is the sixth period, covering the years 1998–2003. The number of publications (167) in only the sixth period was even more than the total number of papers (141) in the first five periods supports this view. This significant growth of EP publications, mainly since 1998,

**Figure 2** Annual distribution of articles published ( $n = 1,463$ )

Source: Authors' own work

implies that this emerging research field attracts increasing attention from scholars. The increases in the total number of publications continued in the seventh and eighth periods. In the seventh period, covering the years 2004–2009, the total number of publications reached 201, and an increase of 20% was observed compared to the previous period. In the eighth period, from 2010 to 2015, the total number of publications increased by 78% compared to the seventh period and reached 358.

The second milestone observed in the development of EP publications occurred in the last period (2016–2021). The number of publications per year was reached the maximum in 2020, and 119 papers were published. In this period, the total number of publications reached 596, but as the search time of the literature collection ended in October 2021, the number of papers from 2021 is incomplete. Nevertheless, considering 95 papers have been published by October 2021, despite this incomplete data, it is clear that the publication trend is still growing.

#### 4.2 Articles and citation frequency

To answer *RQ1*, another way to highlight the impact of work in a particular research area is to investigate the number of citations. The publication and citation patterns generated for nine specified periods between 1968 and 2021 are shown in [Figure 3](#). Over this period, 42,320 citations for 1,463 papers, including self-citations, have been recorded, with an average number of 28.92 citations per paper. As the number of publications, the distribution of citations has shown a stunning development trend during the period under review.

In the first three periods, the total number of citations to the publications was 120 citations to 2 papers, 148 citations to 10 papers and 560 citations to 18 papers. In the fourth and fifth periods, citations increased significantly and reached 2,418 and 2,633 citations. Nevertheless, we do not consider this high acceleration as a milestone. As in the number of publications, the milestone in the number of citations occurred in the sixth

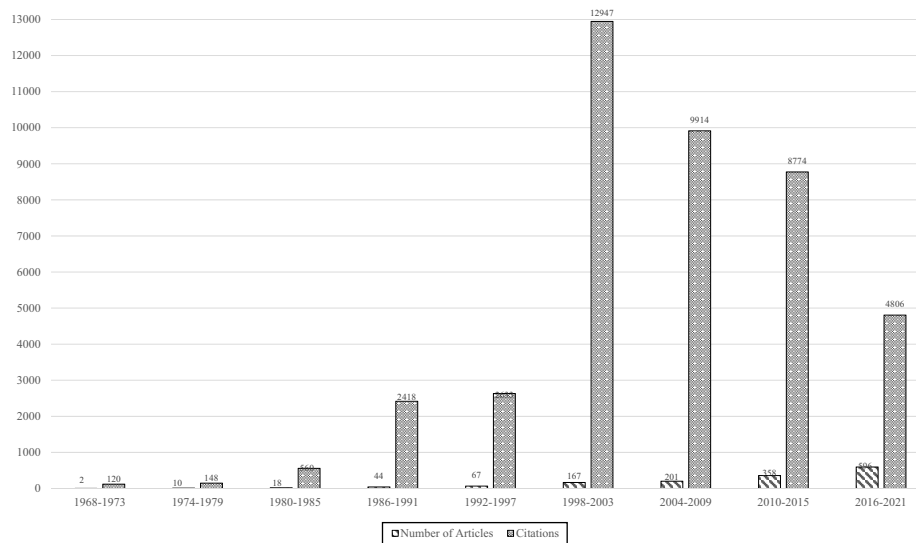
period. With 12,947 citations to 167 papers, the sixth period, spanning 1998–2003, represents the heyday of the EP research area. The fact that 2003, with 2,745 citations to 36 published papers, is in the sixth period also reveals the importance. In addition, 30.59% of 42,320 citations to papers published over 54 years belong to this period. One reason is that the papers published in the sixth period included 14 of the 30 most cited articles in the EP field during the entire period, as shown in [Table 1](#).

Complementing these data, the average citations per paper during each period were 60, 14.8, 31.1, 54.95, 39.30, 77.53, 49.32, 24.51, 8.06 and 28.93. The distribution of citations fluctuated during the first five periods, with the average citation per cited paper between 8.06 and 60. In the sixth period, it peaked with 77.73 average citations per paper. However, this average rate of citation distribution has started to decrease in the past three periods (between 2004 and 2021). Reasons for this may include a year-over-year increase in the number of papers published and papers typically cited only after a particular time has passed from publication.

As seen in [Table 1](#), between 1968 and 2021, there were 463 papers (31.65%) with 20 or more citations, 229 papers (15.65%) with 10–20 citations and 581 papers (39.71%) with 1–9 citations, while 190 (12.99%) of 1,463 papers were not cited yet. Only nine of these 190 uncited papers were published in the first five periods (i.e. in the first 30 years). Similarly, only 41 of 463 papers with 20 or more citations were published within the first 30 years. Among the papers published since 1998, those (422 papers) with 20 or more citations cover 91.14% of the papers (463) with 20 or more citations published during the entire publication period (1968–2021). As mentioned before, this date (1998) is the beginning of the sixth period, which represents the heyday of the EP research area.

#### 4.3 Most cited articles

Over the decades, numerous articles have been published in various fields. One method to see the big picture when

**Figure 3** Number of articles and citations between 1968 and 2021

Source: Authors' own work

reviewing these publications is to analyze the number of citations that reflect the article's popularity and attention received by the academic community (Baier-Fuentes *et al.*, 2019; Merigó and Yang, 2017). In this section, regarding *RQ2*, we analyze the most-cited articles in the fields of business, management and accounting journals of Scopus. Table 2 demonstrates the 30 most-cited papers in the EP research area of these journals.

According to Table 2, the five most-cited papers exceed the threshold of 500 citations (Aaby and Slater, 1989; Aulakh *et al.*, 2000; Morgan *et al.*, 2004; Westhead *et al.*, 2001; Zou and Stan, 1998). It is important to note that the most-cited paper is Aaby and Slater (1989), which has 674 citations and is considered the EP research area's starting point. The second paper on this list with more citations is Westhead *et al.* (2001), which examines the internationalization of new and small firms based on a resource-based view. The third most-cited paper belongs to Zou and Stan (1998), which reviews 50 studies on the determinants of EP from the empirical literature between 1987 and 1997. The fourth most-cited paper is that of Morgan *et al.* (2004). They propose a theoretical model that includes the antecedents of EP, such as available resources and capabilities, competitive strategy decisions and competitive intensity. Finally, the last of the five papers on the list to exceed the 500 citation threshold is Aulakh *et al.* (2000) study. They developed a framework for examining the export strategies of firms in emerging economies and their performance in foreign markets.

However, it is important to mention the studies that draw attention to the average annual citation, even though the total number of citations is less than 500. The seminal paper *International venturing by emerging economy firms: The effects of firm capabilities, home country networks, and corporate entrepreneurship* by Yiu *et al.* (2007) ranks first regarding the average annual citations, with 31.33 citations per year. It is followed by Westhead *et al.* (2001) with 30.71 citations and Morgan *et al.* (2004) with 29 citations per year.

Not surprisingly, 14 of the papers published in the sixth period (from 1998 to 2003), which marked the milestone in the total number of citations and considered the heyday of the EP, dominate almost half of the list of most-cited articles. Also, it should be noted that this list only includes academic publications such as articles and reviews.

On the other hand, according to Wang (2013), a publication may need three to seven years to reach the highest number of citations. Therefore, we assume that only four of the publications in the eighth and ninth periods are listed because of this time interval between publication and reference.

#### 4.4 Most productive and influential authors

Since its inception, the EP field has been characterized by continuous growth and the participation of many researchers. Therefore, determining the most productive and influential authors in the research area is one crucial issue when obtaining an overview of EP research. To respond to *RQ2*, this section aims to present these authors regarding the number of articles published and the number of citations received, according to the information available in Scopus. For this purpose, Table 3 lists the 20 most popular authors in EP. Thus, some well-known authors do not appear because of the specific ranking algorithm. However, it is important to note that many other authors may also emerge according to different parameters.

Considering the total number of papers, Diamantopoulos is the most productive author in EP, with 18 articles and an h-index of 13. Then, Sousa, with 17 papers and an h-index of 13; Katsikeas and Lages, with 14 papers and an h-index of 13 h-indexes, are on the list. Regarding the total number of citations, Katsikeas is the most influential author with 2,054 citations, Leonidou with 1,300 citations and Lages with 1,088 citations. According to the TC/TP, the most influential authors are Katsikeas, with 146,71 citations per article; Leonidou, with 144,44 citations; and Filatotchev, surprisingly, with 115,14 citations but only seven papers.

Table 1 Articles and citation frequency

Year	No. of articles	Citations	Citations/articles	0	1–9	10–19	20+
1968	1	0	0,0	–	–	–	–
1971	1	120	120,0	–	–	–	1
1974	3	4	1,3	2	1	–	–
1975	2	15	7,5	–	1	1	–
1976	1	11	11,0	–	–	1	–
1977	1	1	1,0	–	1	–	–
1978	1	67	67,0	–	–	–	1
1979	2	50	25,0	–	1	–	1
1980	2	9	4,5	1	1	–	–
1981	1	9	9,0	–	1	–	–
1983	7	332	47,4	1	2	–	4
1984	4	57	14,3	–	2	1	1
1985	4	153	38,3	–	1	1	2
1986	4	69	17,3	1	–	2	1
1987	7	294	42,0	2	1	–	4
1988	9	446	49,6	1	2	1	5
1989	9	1,070	118,9	–	3	2	4
1990	10	323	32,3	–	4	2	4
1991	5	216	43,2	–	1	1	3
1992	2	17	8,5	–	1	1	–
1993	12	582	48,5	–	4	2	6
1994	7	117	16,7	–	2	1	4
1995	7	652	93,1	–	1	2	4
1996	22	462	21,0	2	9	4	7
1997	17	803	47,2	1	3	3	10
1998	30	2,052	68,4	3	7	4	16
1999	16	869	54,3	1	3	3	9
2000	33	2,417	73,2	5	7	4	17
2001	26	2,525	97,1	2	4	4	16
2002	26	2,339	90,0	1	5	4	16
2003	36	2,745	76,3	–	10	3	23
2004	24	1,580	65,8	1	4	3	16
2005	22	1,586	72,1	–	4	1	17
2006	37	1,263	34,1	3	8	6	20
2007	37	2,040	55,1	–	9	9	19
2008	30	1,378	45,9	1	10	6	13
2009	51	2,067	40,5	1	22	4	23
2010	41	1,862	45,4	1	11	5	24
2011	64	1,392	21,8	4	26	14	20
2012	59	1,804	30,6	4	18	10	27
2013	69	1,749	25,3	4	24	14	27
2014	63	975	15,5	6	31	10	18
2015	62	992	16,0	2	29	15	16
2016	93	1639	17,6	7	35	28	23
2017	89	1037	11,7	7	48	18	16
2018	99	980	9,9	12	53	17	17
2019	101	673	6,7	18	63	14	6
2020	119	404	3,4	31	78	8	2
2021	95	73	0,8	65	30	–	–
Total	1,463	42,320	29,82	190	581	229	463

Source: Authors' own work

#### 4.5 Most productive and influential journals

In total, our data set comprised articles published in several journals. Table 4 presents the 20 business and management journals with the highest total papers to provide a general

overview of the most productive and influential journals. Along with the total number of publications in each journal's EP, Table 4 presents more information, including the h-index in EP and the total number of citations in EP.



Table 2 Most cited articles in export performance field

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Total citation	Total citation per year
1	Management Influences on Export Performance: A Review of the Empirical Literature 1978–88	Aaby N.E., Slater S.F.	<i>International Marketing Review</i>	1989	674	20.42
2	The internationalization of new and small firms: A resource-based view	Westhead P., Wright M., Ucbasaran D.	<i>Journal of Business Venturing</i>	2001	645	30.71
3	The determinants of export performance: A review of the empirical literature between 1987 and 1997	Zou S., Stan S.	<i>International Marketing Review</i>	1998	544	22.67
4	Antecedents of Export Venture Performance: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Assessment	Morgan N.A., Kaleka A., Katsikeas C.S.	<i>Journal of Marketing</i>	2004	522	29.00
5	Export strategies and performance of firms from emerging economies: Evidence from Brazil, Chile, and Mexico	Aulakh P.S., Kotabe M., Teegen H.	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	2000	500	22.73
6	Firm-level export performance assessment: Review, evaluation, and development	Katsikeas C.S., Leonidou L.C., Morgan N.A.	<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>	2000	491	22.32
7	International venturing by emerging economy firms: The effects of firm capabilities, home country networks, and corporate entrepreneurship	Yiu D.W., Lau C., Bruton G.D.	<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2007	470	31.33
8	A resource-based approach to the study of export performance	Dhanaraj C., Beamish P.W.	<i>Journal of Small Business Management</i>	2003	437	23.00
9	Marketing strategy determinants of export performance: A meta-analysis	Leonidou L.C., Katsikeas C.S., Samiee S.	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	2002	411	20.55
10	Sectoral patterns of small firm innovation, networking and proximity	Freel M.S.	<i>Research Policy</i>	2003	402	21.16
11	Direct foreign ownership, institutional investors, and firm characteristics	Dahlquist M., Robertsson G.	<i>Journal of Financial Economics</i>	2001	399	19.00
12	Adapting to foreign markets: Explaining internationalization	Calof J.L., Beamish P.W.	<i>International Business Review</i>	1995	395	14.63
13	Born global or gradual global? Examining the export behavior of small and medium-sized enterprises	Moen Ø., Servais P.	<i>Journal of International Marketing</i>	2002	379	18.95
14	Innovative capability and export performance of Chinese firms	Guan J., Ma N.	<i>Technovation</i>	2003	376	19.79
15	Mapping the institutional capital of high-tech firms: A fuzzy-set analysis of capitalist variety and export performance	Schneider M.R., Schuize-Bentrop C., Paunescu M.	<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2010	328	27.33
16	The determinants of export performance: A review of the research in the literature between 1998 and 2005	Sousa C.M.P., Martínez-López F. J., Coelho F.	<i>International Journal of Management Reviews</i>	2008	322	23.00
17	Firms' degree of born-globalness, international entrepreneurial orientation and export performance	Kuivalainen O., Sundqvist S., Servais P.	<i>Journal of World Business</i>	2007	313	20.87
18	Innovation and export performance: Evidence from the UK and German manufacturing plants	Roper S., Love J.H.	<i>Research Policy</i>	2002	301	15.05
19	The export orientation and export performance of high-technology SMEs in emerging markets: The effects of knowledge transfer by returnee entrepreneurs	Filatovchev I., Liu X., Buck T., Wright M.	<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2009	300	23.08
20	Internationalization of small firms: An examination of export competitive patterns, firm size, and export performance	Wolff J.A., Pett T.L.	<i>Journal of Small Business Management</i>	2000	281	12.77
21	The EXPERT Scale: A Cross-National Generalized Export Performance Measure	Zou S., Taylor C.R., Osland G.E.	<i>Journal of International Marketing</i>	1998	259	10.79
22	Successful Export Marketing Management: Some Empirical Evidence	Madsen T.K.	<i>International Marketing Review</i>	1989	253	7.67

(continued)

Table 2

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Total citation	Total citation per year
23	Comparative International Entrepreneurship: A Review and Research Agenda	Terjesen S., Hessels J., Li D.	<i>Journal of Management</i>	2016	242	40.33
24	A "strategy tripod" perspective on export behaviors: Evidence from domestic and foreign firms based in an emerging economy	Gao G.Y., Murray J.Y., Kotabe M., Lu J.	<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2010	241	20.08
25	Analysing the link between export intensity, innovation and firm size in a science-based industry	Pla-Barber J., Alegre J.	<i>International Business Review</i>	2007	238	15.87
26	The RELQUAL scale: A measure of relationship quality in export market ventures	Lages C., Lages C.R., Lages L.F.	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	2005	233	13.71
27	Export market-oriented activities: Their antecedents and performance consequences	Cadogan J.W., Diamantopoulos A., Siguaw J.A.	<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	2002	228	11.40
28	Partner Selection and Venturing Success: The Case of Joint Ventures with Firms in the People's Republic of China	Luo Y.	<i>Organization Science</i>	1997	211	8.44
29	The impact of technological innovation on international trade patterns: The evidence reconsidered	Soete L.	<i>Research Policy</i>	1987	204	5.83
30	On the green and innovative side of trade competitiveness? the impact of environmental policies and innovation on EU exports	Costantini V., Mazzanti M.	<i>Research Policy</i>	2012	200	20.00

Source: Authors' own work

Table 3 Most productive and influential authors

No.	Author	Total paper	H-index	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Subtotal	>2021	Total citation	TC/TP
1	Diamantopoulos, A.	18	13	612	43	37	33	42	51	206	1	819	45.50
2	Sousa, C.M.P.	17	13	343	72	110	135	132	136	585	4	932	54.82
3	Katsikeas, C.S.	14	13	1245	153	170	190	150	144	807	2	2,054	146.71
4	Lages, L.F.	14	13	575	88	114	109	104	98	513	0	1,088	77.71
5	Cadogan, J.W.	13	11	441	76	76	109	132	118	511	3	955	73.46
6	Shoham, A.	12	9	629	23	35	36	34	39	167	0	796	66.33
7	Souchon, A.L.	12	11	269	19	34	35	32	45	165	1	435	36.25
8	Theodosiou, M.	11	11	195	43	49	54	65	66	277	0	472	42.91
9	Katsikea, E.	11	11	164	28	37	30	44	49	188	0	352	32.00
10	He, X.	9	6	31	26	40	54	75	92	287	4	322	35.78
11	Leonidou, L.C.	9	8	725	103	112	137	117	105	574	1	1,300	144.44
12	Boso, N.	8	7	24	17	19	40	38	52	166	2	192	24.00
13	Brouthers, L.E.	8	7	467	52	82	49	57	59	299	0	766	95.75
14	Crick, D.	8	5	19	2	3	8	20	22	55	0	74	9.25
15	Styles, C.	8	8	365	61	66	64	68	58	317	0	682	85.25
16	Charoensukmongkol, P.	7	5	7	8	13	20	20	23	84	1	92	13.14
17	Filatov, I.	7	7	378	68	76	74	95	113	426	2	806	115.14
18	Griffith, D.A.	7	7	190	33	40	28	32	30	163	0	353	50.43
19	Madsen, T.K.	7	6	307	12	23	16	25	28	104	0	411	58.71
20	Rasiah, R.	7	4	42	5	0	0	4	4	13	0	55	7.86

Source: Authors' own work

According to Table 4, the most productive and influential journals in EP research are the *Journal of International Marketing*, *International Business Review*, *International Marketing Review* and *Journal of Business Research*. They all have the highest h-index in the discipline, not necessarily because they have published the most papers on EP but because they have more citations for what has been published.

#### 4.6 Most productive and influential countries

As a precursor to economic development and growth, research is undoubtedly one of the most essential elements determining knowledge advancement. Countries are increasingly getting involved and investing in these activities (Becker, 2015; Harris, 2001; Wang, 2010). From this point of view, the purpose of this section is to analyze the geographical origin of EP research. This analysis highlights the importance of moving researchers from one country to another on publication performance (Merigó et al., 2015). Therefore, an author may have two or more publications from different countries. In this sense, the analysis by country refers to the country where the author worked when the article was published. Table 5 presents a ranking of the 20 leading countries in EP research.

The USA (H-index:57; TP:257; and TC:12794) and the UK (H-index:56; TP:234; and TC:10673) are the leading countries in the list of the most productive and influential countries in EP research (Table 5). Note that the countries are far superior to others regarding the H-index, the total number of papers and citations. Such a pitch that the two countries together have published 33.56% of the papers in the EP field and received more than 50% of the citations, indicating their vast enthusiasm in the research field. Some of the reasons that may explain the ranking of the USA and UK are the size of the country, the number of researchers, language opportunities and investments in R&D. Besides, the UK

data are lower than the US data but are much higher than the third and fourth positions, occupied by Spain and Australia, respectively.

Consider that European countries represent 40% of the list (eight countries). Likewise, we observe that 25% of the list is Asian (five countries), with China being the region's most productive and influential country (H-index:21; TP:73; and TC:1944). Finally, it is interesting to note that Latin American and African countries are not included in the list, so their participation in this field is relatively scarce both in quantity and influence.

#### 4.7 Most productive and influential universities

Many universities around the world have made important contributions to knowledge and understanding of EP. To identify the most productive and influential ones, Table 6 presents a list of the top 20 universities on EP, sorted by the number of publications. Note that many other indicators (such as total citation and h-index) are also used to create a complete picture, considering each university's strengths and weaknesses.

In this analysis, several universities stand out firmly in different indexes. Loughborough University is the most productive university in EP. According to the total paper, the other universities that form the top five are Leeds University, the University of Nottingham, Durham University and Cardiff University. However, Cardiff University is the most influential one, according to citations. Surprisingly, the University of Cyprus rose to 4th place on the list with 1,563 citations, while Durham University, the 4th most productive university, dropped to 12th place with 503 citations (Table 6).

Another interesting result is that although the USA is the most productive and influential country and the seminal authors are from the USA, there is no US university in the list of the 20 most productive and influential universities. In addition, the top five universities on the list are in the UK, the most productive and influential country after the USA (Table 6).

Table 4 Most productive and influential journals

No.	Journal	Total paper	H-index	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Subtotal	>2021	Total citation
1	<i>World Economy</i>	70	16	399	48	88	99	113	123	471	0	870
2	<i>International Business Review</i>	69	34	1627	324	447	465	593	511	2,340	4	3,971
3	<i>International Marketing Review</i>	62	32	2,790	247	305	302	356	320	1,530	5	4,325
4	<i>Journal Of International Marketing</i>	56	35	2,387	306	367	356	389	347	1,765	4	4,156
5	<i>Journal Of Business Research</i>	50	26	1,483	150	179	200	216	266	1,011	2	2,496
6	<i>Journal Of Global Marketing</i>	38	16	570	36	38	35	37	30	176	0	746
7	<i>Journal Of World Business</i>	24	19	796	147	125	136	171	185	764	1	1,561
8	<i>Research Policy</i>	22	17	1,415	135	161	133	147	148	724	0	2,139
9	<i>Small Business Economics</i>	21	15	750	63	90	98	99	111	461	0	1,211
10	<i>Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv</i>	21	11	448	25	21	31	21	24	122	0	570
11	<i>Journal Of International Business Studies</i>	20	17	1,435	238	297	253	296	325	1,409	3	2,847
12	<i>European Journal Of International Management</i>	19	7	38	15	15	14	36	25	105	0	143
13	<i>International Trade Journal</i>	19	5	46	10	1	4	3	10	28	0	74
14	<i>Industrial Marketing Management</i>	14	11	234	31	45	56	58	54	244	2	480
15	<i>Journal Of Korea Trade</i>	14	2	6	1	1	7	3	1	13	0	19
16	<i>Journal Of Small Business And Enterprise Development</i>	14	8	52	16	31	36	35	40	158	0	210
17	<i>International Journal Of Emerging Markets</i>	13	6	24	11	17	9	22	26	85	0	109
18	<i>International Small Business Journal</i>	13	11	477	38	49	48	49	34	218	0	695
19	<i>Journal Of Business And Industrial Marketing</i>	13	9	13	5	14	22	38	56	135	0	148
20	<i>Journal Of International Food And Agribusiness Marketing</i>	13	5	40	9	5	5	6	5	30	0	70
	Total	585										26.840

Source: Authors' own work

Table 5 Most productive and influential countries

No.	Country	Total paper	H-index	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Subtotal	>2021	Total citation
1	The USA	257	57	7,847	851	1,017	965	1,047	1,058	4,938	9	12,794
2	The UK	234	56	5,397	768	972	1,024	1,255	1,240	5,259	17	10,673
3	Spain	94	26	980	231	306	322	423	408	1,690	1	2,671
4	Australia	85	24	896	165	193	207	275	295	1,135	0	2,031
5	India	80	11	143	25	48	70	99	113	355	1	499
6	China	73	21	679	143	183	246	353	330	1,255	10	1,944
7	Italy	67	21	968	201	240	212	310	291	1,254	1	2,223
8	Canada	61	21	1421	161	220	193	224	245	1,043	1	2,465
9	Malaysia	49	10	60	21	39	84	77	62	283	0	343
10	France	47	15	264	79	87	99	145	140	550	0	814
11	Portugal	44	18	715	126	189	205	236	204	960	0	1,675
12	Germany	43	20	630	125	163	161	177	209	835	1	1,466
13	New Zealand	41	15	498	57	69	65	125	120	436	0	934
14	South Korea	40	12	214	28	42	47	65	76	258	1	473
15	Turkey	32	10	250	32	54	55	58	63	262	1	513
16	The Netherlands	31	18	675	116	136	139	200	209	800	0	1,475
17	Finland	26	14	484	90	82	130	157	149	608	2	1,094
18	Norway	26	14	686	87	92	82	103	86	450	0	1,136
19	Poland	26	9	61	21	37	35	52	58	203	1	265
20	Greece	25	18	295	55	73	87	108	111	434	1	730

Source: Authors' own work

#### 4.8 Visualizing bibliometric networks of the export performance field using VOSviewer

Next, to answer *RQ3* and *RQ4*, this section provides a graphical visualization of publications in the EP field with VOSviewer to expand on the bibliometric results in previous sections. VOSviewer creates visual maps regarding co-authorship,

co-occurrence, citation, bibliographic coupling and co-citation. First, we examine the co-citation of journals cited in the EP field. The most productive and influential journals in the EP field are presented in [Table 5](#). However, this analysis allows for a more detailed view and visualization. Co-citation is defined as the frequency with which two documents or journals are cited

Table 6 Most productive and influential universities

No.	University	Country	Total paper	H-index	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Subtotal	>2021	Total citation
1	Loughborough University	The UK	34	21	876	134	142	168	203	224	871	4	1,751
2	Leeds University	The UK	31	18	275	99	142	172	229	241	883	3	1,161
3	University of Nottingham	The UK	24	16	900	129	167	150	189	185	820	0	1,720
4	Durham University	The UK	18	13	38	39	68	91	128	135	461	4	503
5	Cardiff University	The UK	17	13	1180	146	187	187	137	152	809	3	1,992
6	University of Cyprus	Cyprus	17	16	830	125	141	166	153	147	732	1	1,563
7	LUT University	Finland	17	11	364	79	67	122	134	123	525	2	891
8	Universidad de Sevilla	Spain	16	11	106	38	40	50	72	63	263	0	369
9	Athens University	Greece	16	13	215	35	52	58	59	62	266	1	482
10	Universidade Nova de Lisboa	Portugal	14	13	548	88	114	117	110	99	528	0	1,076
11	Universiti Malaya	Malaysia	13	5	44	9	6	6	9	13	43	0	87
12	University of Ottawa	Canada	12	7	411	45	71	55	69	60	300	0	711
13	Universitat de València	Spain	11	7	207	54	79	92	111	84	420	1	628
14	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Spain	11	9	90	21	27	29	26	36	139	0	229
15	Victoria University of Wellington	New Zealand	10	7	97	16	16	16	34	35	117	0	214
16	Universiti Utara Malaysia	Malaysia	10	3	5	2	18	43	37	9	109	0	114
17	University of Warwick	The UK	10	10	350	31	42	52	65	57	247	0	597
18	Univerza v Ljubljani	Slovenia	10	6	23	11	18	23	47	44	143	0	166
19	University College Dublin	Ireland	9	7	323	47	70	83	61	58	319	1	643
20	City University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	9	6	134	22	14	13	26	17	92	0	226

Source: Authors' own work

together (Small, 1973). Figure 4 shows the most cited journals, and the links show the journals cited together between 1968 and 2021 with a citation threshold of 300 and the 33 most illustrative co-citation networks.

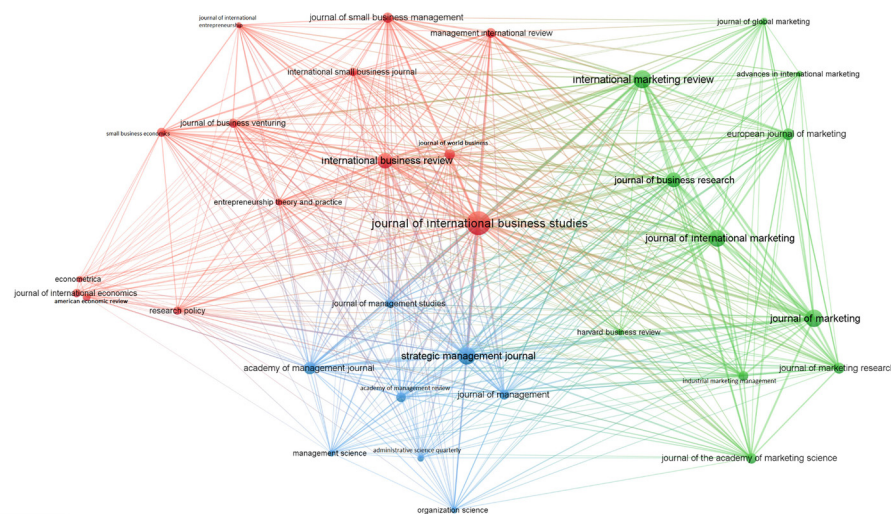
Figure 4 demonstrates the clustering of the journals following their orientation centered mainly on the fields of International Business, International Marketing, Economics and Entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *International Marketing Review*, *International Business Review* and *Journal of International Marketing* are the leading journals in the EP field with the largest number of citations and, therefore, a more comprehensive network of connections. This status makes sense, as these journals are among the most productive and influential. However, it is possible to observe other essential journals, such as the *Journal of Marketing* and the

*Strategic Management Journal*, as they have several of the most cited articles in the EP field.

Another interesting subject to analyze is the co-citation structure of authors in the EP field. The most cited authors and connections are represented in Figure 5. Similar to the previous analysis, an author's minimum number of citations is determined as 300. As a result, 22 meet the threshold, as shown in Figure 5. As stated above, Figure 5 confirms the essential role played by Katsikeas, Diamantopoulos and Lages in the EP field, as they are listed as the most productive and influential authors. Also, this map highlights the importance of Cavusgil and Zou for the EP field. Also, there are other authors strongly connected in the field, such as Morgan, Zahra and Johanson, among others.

Next, we examine the map of the most productive countries with the bibliographic coupling method. Bibliographic coupling

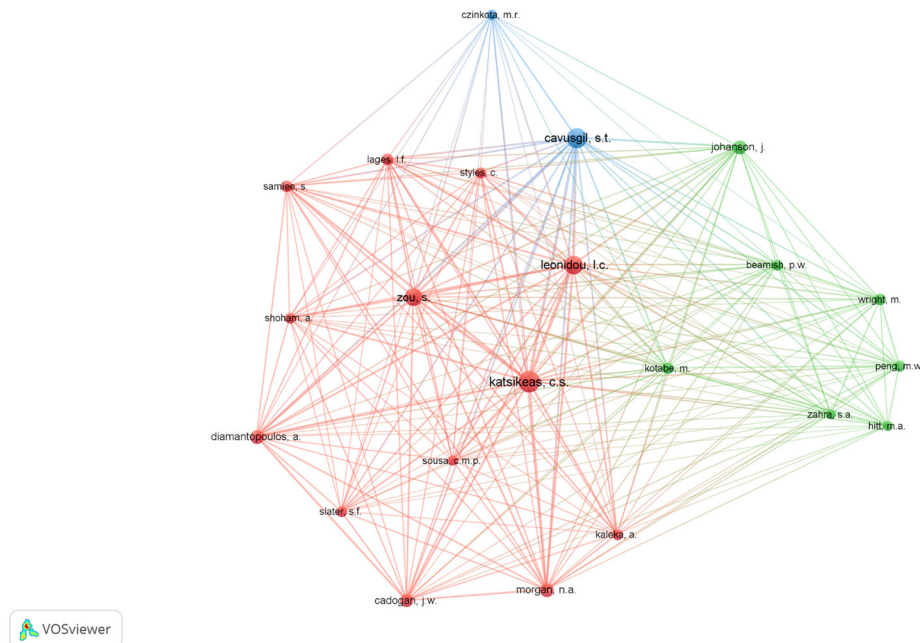
Figure 4 Co-citation of journals



VOSviewer

Source: Authors' own work

Figure 5 Co-citation of authors



Source: Authors' own work

analysis suggests scientific research creates bibliographic couples by citing similar sources (Kessler, 1963). Figure 6 shows the results of 118 countries; 27 meet the threshold. Note that a country's minimum number of documents is determined as 20. Again, as highlighted earlier, the dominance of the USA and the UK is evident. They are positioned in the center of the map and strongly linked to the rest of the countries. In addition, there is a solid European presence on the map, along with several emerging countries such as Turkey, Brazil, China and India.

Finally, the leading keywords of the EP field are analyzed (Figure 7). The co-occurrence of author keywords defines the most frequently used keywords and the documents they are more commonly used (Merigó *et al.*, 2018). The minimum number of occurrences of a keyword is assigned as 15, and 34 meet the threshold. EP, export, internationalization, innovation, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and international trade were the most common.

#### 4.9 Science mapping analysis of the export performance field using SciMAT

We used the SciMAT tool to comprehensively analyze the topics and thematic areas of the 1,463 papers included in this study. To investigate the evolutionary trajectory of the EP field, we segmented the coverage period into three distinct intervals, namely, from 1968 to 2009, from 2010 to 2015 and from 2015 to 2021. Although we initially contemplated analyzing the data in nine time periods by dividing it into equal intervals, akin to the performance analysis, this approach yielded a somewhat uneven sample because of the differing number of articles published in each period. Specifically, the number of articles published between 1968 and 2009, constituting the first seven periods, is nearly equivalent to those published in the subsequent six years (as demonstrated in Figure 2). As such, we

divided the data into three intervals based on the number of articles, resulting in 509 articles for the first period, 358 for the second period and 596 for the third period.

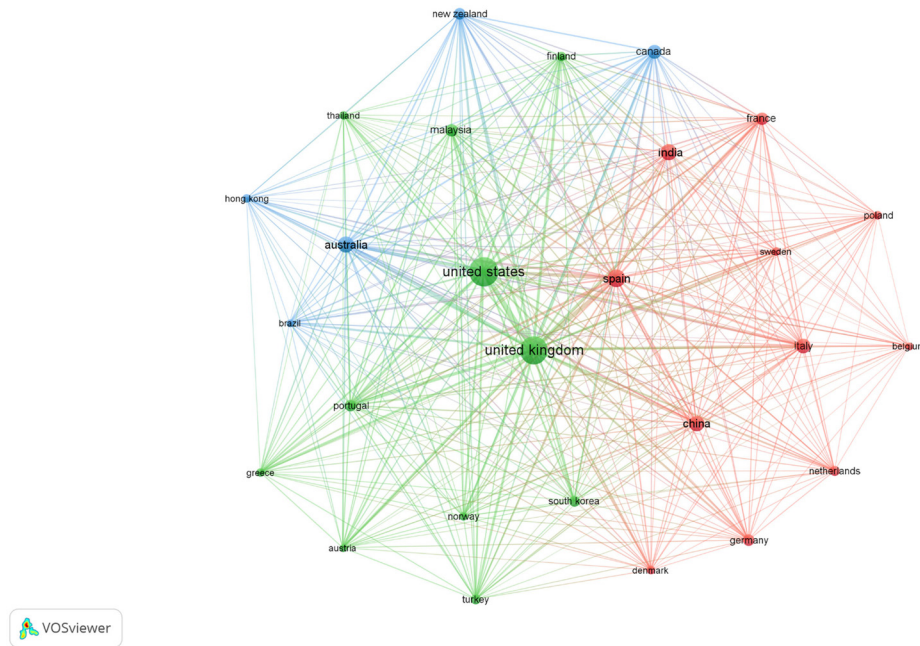
The documents entered into SciMAT underwent a keyword standardization process that aimed to cluster those with similar meanings. This process involved an initial search for plurals, grouping words that referred to the same concept, recorded in singular and plural forms. Additionally, the authors manually consolidated comparable keywords based on their meanings, such as "export market orientation," "export orientation" and "EMO," which were considered to represent the same construct. Initially, the articles generated 3,444 keywords, but after the standardization and grouping process, 1,750 unique keywords were identified, spanning the three periods.

Finally, to respond to *RQ3* and *RQ4*, an overview of the science mapping and the hidden relationships between key themes in the main research fields associated with EP is provided. This overview is structured into two complementary parts: a thematic analysis and a conceptual evolution map. The first one helps to reveal the themes emerging from the EP literature, its main concepts and its role in the building of the EP field for each period, while the second one shows both the development of these themes and the relationships between them for the whole period of analysis.

##### 4.9.1 Thematic analysis: subthemes of export performance

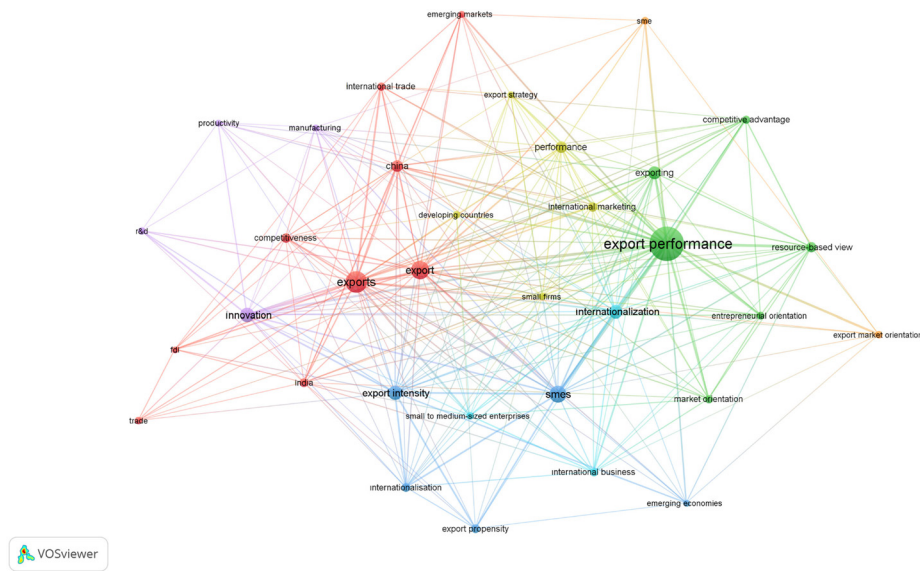
The research themes examined in three periods were identified by SciMAT based on centrality and density. Various strategic diagrams are presented in Figure 8 to analyze the most highlighted themes of the field of EP for each period. Furthermore, the research topics within the strategic diagrams are portrayed as spheres, with their size in proportion to the number of publications linked with each research theme.

Figure 6 Biblio-coupling of countries



Source: Authors' own work

Figure 7 Co-occurrences of keywords



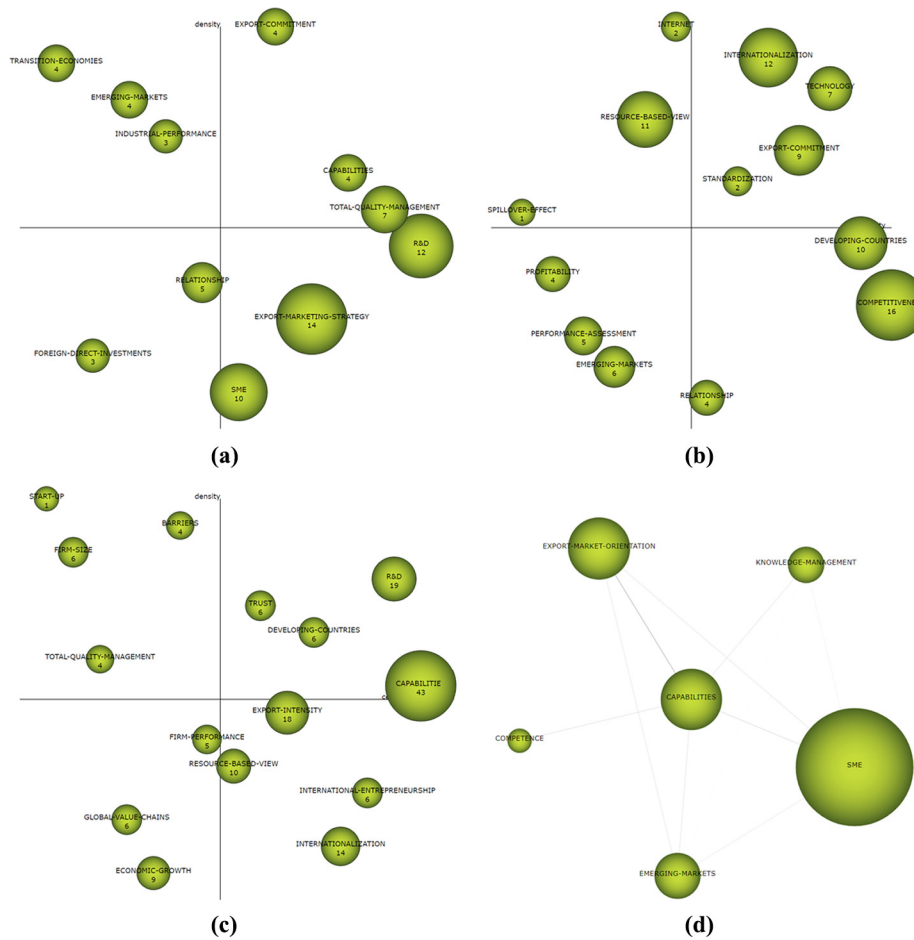
Source: Authors' own work

4.9.1.1 *First period (1968–2009)*. In total, 11 major themes emerge from the SciMAT analysis, among which the Motor themes are CAPABILITIES, TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT and EXPORT COMMITMENT [see the top right quadrant of Figure 8(a)]. The themes are considered important because of their contribution to the growth of the field of EP. The performance measures indicate that TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) was the main motor theme, with seven published papers, 417 citations received and an

h-index of 6 (Table 7). As seen from its cluster network (Table 7), TQM has been studied from different subthemes: developing-countries, resource-based-view, certification, international-standards and technology. For example, at the end of this period, Lages *et al.* (2009) adopted a resource-based perspective to understand how organizational learning, relationship and quality capabilities influence product strategy and EP.

The second quadrant represents highly developed and isolated themes with high density but low centrality.

Figure 8 Strategic diagrams and an example of cluster networks



**Notes:** (a) First period 1968–2009; (b) Second period 2010–2015; (c) Third period 2008–2012; (d) Cluster networks of capabilities (2015–2021)

**Source:** Authors' own work

“TRANSITION-ECONOMIES” represents the concept with the highest degree of intensity (18.06) among both highly developed and isolated themes. Other prominent themes in this quadrant are EMERGING-MARKETS, INDUSTRIAL-PERFORMANCE (Table 7). In the third quadrant, which represents low intensity and low centrality, RELATIONSHIPS and FOREIGN-DIRECT-INVESTMENTS are emerging or declining themes in the first period.

Finally, in the fourth quadrant are the basic and transversal themes with low intensity but high centrality: R&D, EXPORT-MARKETING-STRATEGY and SME. These cross-cutting themes have high internal coherence with other research topics but are internally underdeveloped. It is essential to highlight the EXPORT-MARKETING-STRATEGY cluster, as this theme had the highest number of documents (14), total citations (1,115) and h-index (10) overall. EMS has been studied from the point of view of INTERNATIONALIZATION, STANDARDIZATION and PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT, among others (Table 7). Overall, many studies have focused on Export Marketing Strategy in different contexts (Cadogan *et al.*, 2009; Calof and Beamish, 1995; Gurău and Merdji, 2008; Shoham, 2008).

*4.9.1.2 Second period (2010–2015).* During the second period spanning from 2010 to 2015, a total of 13 research themes pertaining to the EP were identified, as displayed in the strategic diagram in Figure 8(b). Regarding this matter, seven research themes are deemed significant in their contribution to the development of the field of EP, hence considered as the main themes. These include Motor themes (Q1) and Basic and transversal themes (Q4): TECHNOLOGY, EXPORT-COMMITMENT, INTERNATIONALIZATION, STANDARDIZATION, COMPETITIVENESS, DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES and RELATIONSHIP (Table 7).

Directing our focus toward the upper left quadrant depicted in Figure 8(b), we can discern various densely clustered but isolated themes, including RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW, INTERNET and SPILLOVER-EFFECT. The quadrant located in the lower left section reveals either underdeveloped, emerging or declining themes, such as EMERGING-MARKETS, PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT and PROFITABILITY.

Compared to the first period, the Motor themes retain only one theme and include three new themes. These themes are subthemes of the motor and transversal themes that made the



Table 7 Performance measures of themes and cluster networks of export performance ordered by periods, quadrant and centrality

Period no.	Quadrant	Theme	Cluster networks	Centrality	Density	No. of documents	Citations	h-index
P1	Q1	TOTAL-QUALITY-MANAGEMENT	DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES; RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW; CERTIFICATION; INTERNATIONAL-STANDARDS; TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION; NETWORKS; INVESTMENT; LOCAL-MARKET; ORGANIZATIONAL-LEARNING	11.22	9.51	7	417	6
P1	Q1	CAPABILITIES	EXPORT-PROMOTION-PROGRAMMES; FIRM-EXPERIENCE; PSYCHIC-DISTANCE; TRUST; INFORMATION-AND-COMMUNICATION-TECHNOLOGY	10.74	12.3	4	1,186	4
P1	Q1	EXPORT-COMMITMENT	SOFTWARE-EXPORT; HIGH-TECHNOLOGY; MULTINATIONAL-ENTERPRISE; PROFITABILITY; EXPORT-SUCCESS	10.18	21.39	4	285	4
P1	Q2	INDUSTRIAL-PERFORMANCE	EXPORT-BEHAVIOR; EXPORT-MOTIVES; EXPORT-INTENSITY; INSTITUTIONAL-THEORY; EXPORT-PROFICIENCY	8.78	13.95	3	42	2
P1	Q2	EMERGING-MARKETS	ENVIRONMENTAL-ISSUES; INSTITUTIONAL-CONTEXT; SUPPLY-CHAIN; EXPORT-CHANNELS; SPILLOVER-EFFECT	8.61	17.01	4	174	4
P1	Q2	TRANSITION-ECONOMIES	COMPARATIVE-ADVANTAGES; ECONOMIC-GROWTH; EXPORT-VENTURES; CONTROL-MECHANISMS; CULTURE	3.49	18.06	4	94	4
P1	Q3	RELATIONSHIP	SPILLOVER; EXPORT-DIVERSIFICATION; TARIFFS	9.1	5.2	5	344	5
P1	Q3	FOREIGN-DIRECT-INVESTMENTS	PATENT; REGULATION; IPR; COMPETITIVENESS; ECONOMIC-PERFORMANCE	4.59	3.6	3	64	2
P1	Q4	R&D	INTERNATIONALIZATION; PROFIT; SUBSIDIARY; STANDARDIZATION; PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT	21.82	5.99	12	640	9
P1	Q4	EXPORT-MARKETING-STRATEGY	BARRIERS; EXPORT-MARKET-ORIENTATION	10.32	3.8	14	1,115	10
P1	Q4	SME	FOREIGN-DIRECT-INVESTMENTS; INVESTMENT; INDUSTRIAL-POLICY; ADOPTION; DIFFERENTIATION	9.6	2.32	10	233	6
P2	Q1	TECHNOLOGY	TRUST; CULTURE; ADAPTATION; FIRM-EXPERIENCE; FOREIGN-MARKETS	14.78	15.57	7	147	5
P2	Q1	EXPORT-COMMITMENT	BARRIERS; EXPLORATORY-STUDY; COMMUNITY-INNOVATION-SURVEY; EXPORT-INTENSITY; FAMILY-FIRMS	14.45	11.08	9	416	8
P2	Q1	INTERNATIONALIZATION	R&D; KNOWLEDGE-MANAGEMENT;	14.22	20.86	12	750	11
P2	Q1	STANDARDIZATION	CONTINGENCY-THEORY; EXPORT-SUCCESS; PATENT	13.96	9.84	2	62	2
P2	Q2	INTERNET	BORN-GLOBALS; PSYCHIC-DISTANCE; INFORMATION-AND-COMMUNICATION-TECHNOLOGY; E-COMMERCE; EXPORT-GROWTH	12.81	22.36	2	140	2
P2	Q2	RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW	SME; EXPORT-CHANNELS; SERVICE; INSTITUTIONAL-THEORY; THIRD-PARTY-LOGISTICS	12.29	11.42	11	502	10
P2	Q2	SPILLOVER-EFFECT	FIRM-HETEROGENEITY; DECISION-MAKING	3.8	8.64	1	5	1
P2	Q3	EMERGING-MARKETS	ENVIRONMENTAL-ISSUES; UPPER-ECHELON; FIRM-SIZE; EXPORT-DIVERSIFICATION; INTERNATIONAL-ENTREPRENEURSHIP	11.91	3.23	6	242	6
P2	Q3	PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT	SUPPLY-CHAIN; EXPORT-VENTURES; ORGANIZATIONAL-LEARNING; TARIFFS	11.39	3.34	5	306	5

(continued)

Table 7

Period no.	Quadrant	Theme	Cluster networks	Centrality	Density	No. of documents	Citations	h-index
P2	Q3	PROFITABILITY	EXPORT-ACTIVITY; GOVERNMENT-INCENTIVES; BUSINESS-SERVICE; DISTRIBUTION-CHANNELS; INDUSTRIAL-PERFORMANCE	10.03	5.49	4	97	4
P2	Q4	COMPETITIVENESS	COMPARATIVE-ADVANTAGES; GLOBAL-VALUE-CHAINS; CAPABILITIES; EXPORT-MARKET-ORIENTATION	30.53	3.42	16	428	10
P2	Q4	DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES	INNOVATION; EXPORT-MARKETING-STRATEGY; EXPORT-PROMOTION-PROGRAMMES; GLOBAL-MARKETS; FIRM-PERFORMANCE	15.38	6.29	10	394	9
P2	Q4	RELATIONSHIP	EXCHANGE-RATE; ECONOMIC-GROWTH; SERVICES-EXPORT; HIGH-TECHNOLOGY; INTERNATIONAL-STANDARDS	13.67	2.31	4	142	4
P3	Q1	CAPABILITIES	SME; EMERGING-MARKETS; EXPORT-MARKET-ORIENTATION; KNOWLEDGE-MANAGEMENT; COMPETENCE	17.39	3.65	43	905	19
P3	Q1	R&D	INNOVATION; PATENT; TECHNOLOGY; INDUSTRIAL-PERFORMANCE	13.63	10.94	19	330	9
P3	Q1	DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES	COMPETITIVENESS; CONTINGENCY-THEORY; EXPORT-SUCCESS; STANDARDIZATION	9.38	6.68	6	123	3
P3	Q1	TRUST	PSYCHIC-DISTANCE; ECONOMIC-PERFORMANCE; EXPORT-COMMITMENT; INFORMATION-AND-COMMUNICATION-TECHNOLOGY (ICT); SOCIAL-MEDIA	8.42	6.68	6	91	5
P3	Q2	BARRIERS	EXPORT-MOTIVES; ENABLERS; ADOPTION; EXPORT-PROPENSITY; INTERNATIONAL-STANDARDS	6.01	35.42	4	80	3
P3	Q2	TOTAL-QUALITY-MANAGEMENT	EXCHANGE-RATE; ECONOMIC-POLICY; STRESS-PATTERN; DIFFERENTIATION; CERTIFICATION	4.02	3.86	4	57	3
P3	Q2	FIRM-SIZE	EXTENSIVE-MARGIN; INTENSIVE-MARGIN; SERVICES-EXPORT; BUSINESS-SERVICE; FIRM-HETEROGENEITY	2.69	28.09	6	31	4
P3	Q2	START-UP	EXPORT-ACTIVITY; FOREIGN-MARKETS	1.1	50	1	37	1
P3	Q3	FIRM-PERFORMANCE	INVESTMENT; GOVERNMENT-INCENTIVES; BORN-GLOBALS; CORRUPTION	7.03	3.28	5	48	4
P3	Q3	ECONOMIC-GROWTH	FOREIGN-DIRECT-INVESTMENTS; CULTURE; SPECIAL-ECONOMIC-ZONE; REFORM; DISTRIBUTION-CHANNELS	5.45	1.16	9	63	4
P3	Q3	GLOBAL-VALUE-CHAINS	SUPPLY-CHAIN; GLOBAL-PRODUCTION-CHAIN; ORGANIZATIONAL-LEARNING; EXPORT-GROWTH	5.25	2.08	6	70	4
P3	Q4	INTERNATIONAL-ENTREPRENEURSHIP	NETWORKS; FIRM-EXPERIENCE; IMMIGRANT; EXPORT-VENTURES; INTERNET	11.36	2.76	6	60	4
P3	Q4	INTERNATIONALIZATION	ENTRY-MODE; EXPORT-PROMOTION; EXPORT-MARKETING-STRATEGY; PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT; RISK-TAKING	10.65	1.56	14	270	8
P3	Q4	EXPORT-INTENSITY	COMPARATIVE-ADVANTAGES; FAMILY-FIRMS; ENVIRONMENTAL-ISSUES; EXPORT-DIVERSIFICATION	9.27	3.29	18	286	9
P3	Q4	RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW	TRADE-SHOW; RELATIONSHIP; PROFITABILITY; INSTITUTIONAL-THEORY; BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS-MARKETING	7.57	2.95	10	227	6

Source: Authors' own work

most significant contribution to the development of the field in the previous period.

Table 7 presents each theme's performance indicators and subthemes in the second period. EXPORT-COMMITMENT continues to be one of the motor themes [top right quadrant of Figure 8(b)], with a decrease in intensity but an increase in centrality compared to the first period, achieving a total of 9 published articles, 416 citations and an h-index of 8. INTERNATIONALIZATION, the most related subtheme to EMS among the transversal themes in the first period, appears as the main motor theme with the highest density, the most documents, the most citations and the highest h-index in this period. The cluster network for internationalization shows it to be connected with topics like BARRIERS, EXPORT-INTENSITY and FAMILY-FIRMS (Calabrò *et al.*, 2011; Cerrato and Piva, 2010; Kahiya *et al.*, 2014).

Likewise, COMPETITIVENESS, which was the subtheme of R&D from Basic and transversal themes in the previous period, appears as the theme with the highest centrality (30.53) and the highest number of documents (16) in this period, contributing the most to the development of the field (Table 7).

4.9.1.3 *Third period (2016–2021)*. The final period (2016–2021) witnessed a diversification of research topics and resulted in 15 main themes [Figure 8(c)]. Notably, eight of these themes were newly introduced. The remaining seven themes were carried over from the previous two periods. Table 7 presents the performance indicators of the period themes.

The motor themes of this period are CAPABILITIES as the central node of export market orientation and knowledge management, R&D focusing on innovation, technology and patents, DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES where research focuses on export success and competitiveness, and TRUST, which is closely related to export commitment and is the central node of research on psychic distance, social media and ICT [top right quadrant of Figure 8(c)]. These results are in line with the evolution of the EP field, as research has focused more on these topics in recent years (Boso *et al.*, 2018; Durmaz and Eren, 2017; Edeh *et al.*, 2020; Guarascio *et al.*, 2016; İpek and Tanyeri, 2020; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2020; Navarro-García *et al.*, 2016).

Besides the Motor themes, four research themes are considered critical because of their contribution to the growth of the EP field in the past six years (Basic and transversal themes): INTERNATIONAL-ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INTERNATIONALIZATION, EXPORT-INTENSITY and RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW [see bottom right quadrant Figure 8(c)]. It is pertinent to elucidate certain aspects in this context. First, EXPORT-INTENSITY, a subtheme of the main themes in the previous two periods, emerged as one of the main themes with the highest number of citations (286) and the highest number of documents (18) in this period. Similarly, INTERNATIONAL-ENTREPRENEURSHIP was a subtheme of one of the emerging themes in the previous period. Finally, compared to the second period, the RBV theme seems to be on the decline (considering its centrality and density), having changed position and no longer being in the "highly developed them" quadrant (Table 7).

#### 4.9.2 Conceptual evolution map

SciMAT was used to visually map the development of themes in the EP domain and their connections between the periods

over the three periods investigated. Figures 9 and 10 present the transition map and the main thematic evolution of the EP perspective.

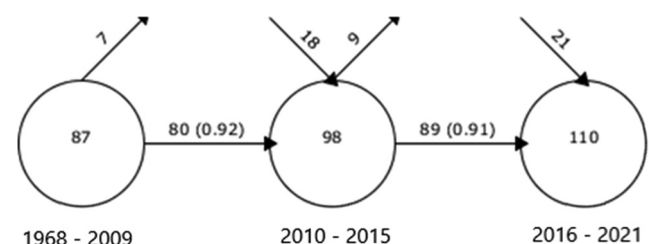
The transition map (Figure 9) generated through the inclusion index indicates strong thematic cohesion, with most themes originating from the preceding period's themes. Therefore, the research field is robust and well-established. In the first period, 87 keywords were identified; 92% of these (80 keywords) were collected again in the second period; and 18 new keywords were added in this second period, resulting in 98 keywords. In the third period, 89 (91%) of the keywords from the second period were collected again, and 21 new keywords were added, resulting in a total of 110 keywords.

SciMAT presents a longitudinal evolution map (Figure 10). To interpret the map correctly, we should take into account that the size of the spheres is proportional to the number of documents of each theme. Additionally, it is crucial to recognize that each column on the map represents a different period and differentiate between the various types of lines connecting the themes. Thematic nexus is indicated by solid lines, which means that the linked themes share either the same name or that one theme is part of the other. On the other hand, a dotted line indicates that the less strongly linked themes share keywords that are not identical to the themes' names. The correlation between the two topics is reflected in the thickness of the lines, with a stronger association being represented by thicker lines (Murgado-Armenteros *et al.*, 2015).

Considering the evolution of the keywords, we now analyze the evolution of the thematic areas in the EP research field (Figure 10). As shown in Figure 10, EP research represents moderate cohesion between periods. Some clusters, such as "BARRIER," "START-UP," "TRUST" and "SPILLOVER-EFFECT," appear only in a single period. In contrast, the clusters such as "CAPABILITIES," "EXPORT-COMMITMENT," "R&D" and "RELATION SHIPS" are observed in more than one period.

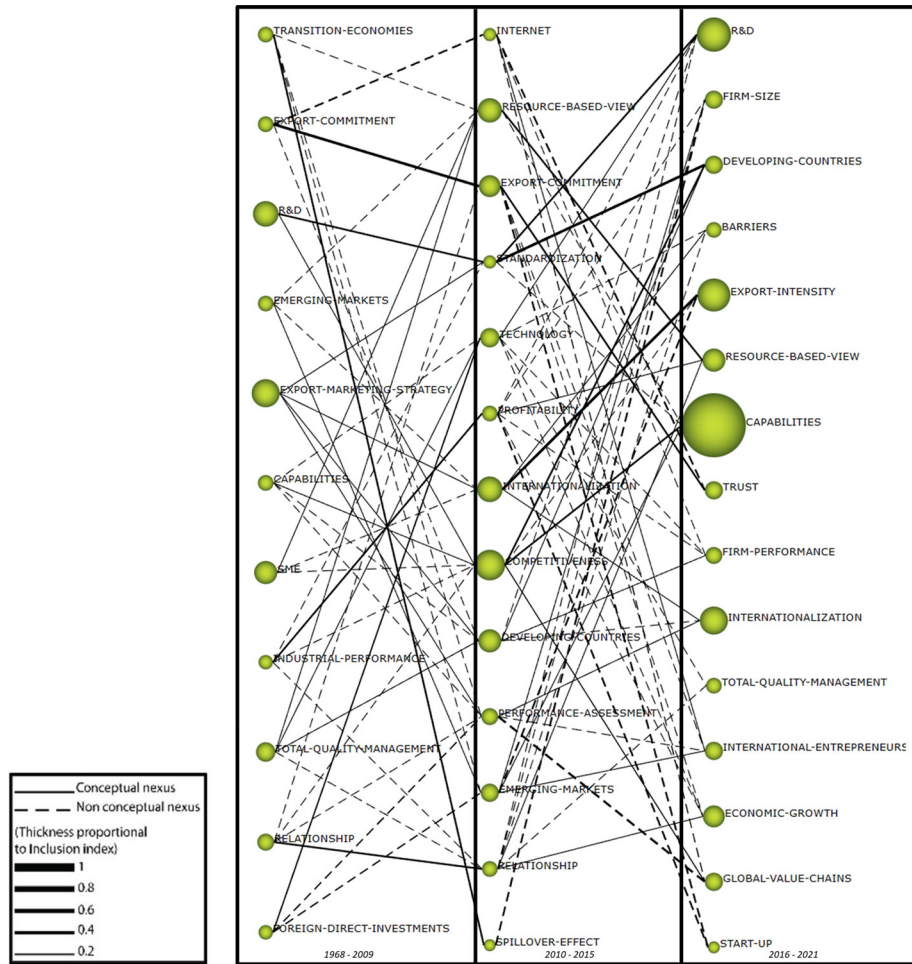
Certain thematic areas such as "EXPORT-COMMITMENT," "RELATIONSHIPS" and "EMERGING-MARKETS" are present in the first two periods, while "RESOURCE-BASED-VIEW," "INTERNATIONALIZATION" and "DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES" span the past two periods. In these two periods, the importance of "EXPORT-COMMITMENT" as a Motor theme is evident. This theme has a high degree of co-occurrence because of the sharing of the main themes with "TRUST" of the third period. Another theme that should be mentioned is "EXPORT INTENSITY," which,

Figure 9 Transition map



Source: Authors' own work

Figure 10 Longitudinal evolution map



Source: Authors' own work

despite appearing for the first time in the third period, has a high number of documents and strong evolutionary trajectories with the themes of the previous period.

“CAPABILITIES” and “R&D” are of particular interest as they have become the main Motor themes that have contributed the most to the EP literature and have attracted a large number of authors. By contrast, “GLOBAL-VALUE-CHAINS” and “START-UP” can be considered emerging themes in the literature in the last period (Montalbano *et al.*, 2018; Stucki, 2016).

Table 7 shows in more detail the most notable themes that characterize the research on EP for each period, with performance indicators and cluster networks.

## 5. Discussion

The authors have conducted a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of 1,463 scientific papers published between 1968 and 2021 using the Scopus database. The study includes performance evaluation, science mapping analysis and graphical mapping techniques, intending to understand the research trends and patterns in the field comprehensively.

RQ1 and RQ2 were concerned with identifying publication trends in the EP field and influential studies and themes over the years. From a general perspective, this study shows that EP research, which has been going on since 1968, experienced spectacular growth, especially between 1998 and 2003, and the interest in this field continues to increase. The most cited article, with 674 citations, is entitled *Management Influences on EP: A Review of the Empirical Literature 1978–88*, co-authored by Aaby and Slater (1989). Among all authors, Adamantios Diamantopoulos is the most productive (18 articles, 13 h-index and 819 citations), and the most influential author is Constantine S. Katsikeas (14 articles, 13 h-index and 2,054 citations). The seminal paper, *International venturing by emerging economy firms: The effects of firm capabilities, home country networks, and corporate entrepreneurship* by Yiu *et al.* (2007), ranks first regarding the average annual citations, with 31.33 citations per year.

Considering authors, Diamantopoulos, Sousa, Katsikeas and Lages are the most productive authors in EP. Katsikeas, Leonidou and Lages are the most influential ones. However, according to TC/TP, the first two most influential authors remained unchanged; the third is Filatotchev, interestingly. Although the author has very few papers, the high number of citations per article explains this situation.

With respect to journals, the *Journal of International Marketing*, *International Business Review*, *International Marketing Review* and *Journal of Business Research* are the most productive and influential journals in this field. It is also observed that the Top Marketing and Business journals, in general, are the most productive and influential, given their high volume of citations.

Regarding the countries, the USA and the UK are the absolute leaders in EP research and have the best indicators of productivity and influence in all dimensions we analyzed. The leading country position of the USA was generally expected, as it was the absolute dominion of research in many other scientific fields. However, the UK has also shown considerable influence in EP, surpassing the USA in citations, especially since 2019.

When it comes to the universities, Loughborough University is the most productive university, and Cardiff University is the most influential one in the EP field. However, even though the USA is the most productive and influential country and has leading authors in the field, there are no universities from the USA on the list of the most productive and influential universities. Also, the top five universities on the list are located in England.

Regarding our *RQ3* and *RQ4*, a sequence of diagrams that depict the main research themes that have emerged during each of the examined periods (1968–2009, 2010–2015 and 2016–2021), along with their longitudinal evolution, was generated through scientific mapping analysis. In this section, the study's primary outcomes are synthesized, providing a concise overview of noteworthy contributions, significant issues and potential directions for future advancements. The key findings of this research can be summarized as follows:

- In all, 32 major themes addressed in the EP field over time include, such as “TOTAL-QUALITY-MANAGEMENT,” “CAPABILITIES,” “EXPORT-COMMITMENT,” “TRUST,” “R&D,” “INTERNATIONALIZATION,” “DEVELOPING-COUNTRIES,” “TECHNOLOGY” and “STANDARDIZATION.”
- The themes of “GLOBAL-VALUE-CHAINS” and “START-UP” have garnered considerable focus in recent times, suggesting a potential for sustained interest in the future. Before 2016, the Global Value Chain theme was not well-explored in the EP literature. However, since 2016, there has been a significant increase in publications on this theme. Additionally, the theme of “START-UP” has recently gained attention in the field and has been the subject of recent studies, such as [Joo & Shin \(2020\)](#) and [Faroque, Morrish and Ferdous \(2017\)](#). Conversely, interest in “EXPORT-COMMITMENT,” “RELATIONSHIPS” and “EMERGING-MARKETS” appears to be declining.
- Core themes that have matured over the previous period comprise “CAPABILITIES,” “R&D” and “TRUST.” Additionally, specialized themes such as “BARRIERS,” “TOTAL-QUALITY-MANAGEMENT,” “FIRM-SIZE” and “START-UP” have also undergone significant development. Over the years, certain themes have been identified as the driving forces behind the most significant advancements in the field of EP literature. The enduring relevance of the “CAPABILITIES” theme in the field of literature has been demonstrated by several studies, including those conducted by [Yiu et al. \(2007\)](#) and [Rua,](#)

[Franca and Ortiz \(2018\)](#). These studies indicate the theme's continued prominence since the early days of research in this area.

## 6. Future research agenda

The current bibliographic analysis establishes a robust foundation for discerning potential avenues for future research. As delineated in Section 4.9.2, we have outlined the transformation of research themes from the initial to the subsequent periods. Finally, we recommend the following areas for future development in particular:

- *Global value chains*: Global value chains are characterized as a production framework that relies on the division of labor, wherein distinct companies located in diverse countries assume specific tasks ([Grossman and Rossi-Hansberg, 2008](#)). Recent studies in international trade highlight that firms aim to increase their participation in global value chains and, thus, increase their EP by improving the quality of their exported commodities ([Bustaman et al., 2022](#); [Isnawangsih and Lu, 2018](#)). As [Olasehinde-Williams and Oshodi \(2021\)](#) remarked, despite the rapid expansion of data availability, studies remain scarce examining the impact of integration into global value chains on EP.
- *Barriers*: Export barriers encompass a range of factors, including structural, attitudinal, operational and environmental elements, which impede or discourage firms, particularly SMEs, from engaging in, expanding or sustaining export activities ([Leonidou, 1995](#)). In this research stream, scholars fundamentally addressed the same question over the years: “What are the common barriers encountered, and how do they influence international activities?” ([Kahiya, 2018](#)). However, future studies should examine different topics, such as superior technological capabilities, immigrant effects, global mind-sets and protectionism, as new areas of interest.
- *Knowledge management*: The notion of knowledge management processes is intricately intertwined with the realm of marketing activities ([Day, 1994](#)). Although scholars have acknowledged the impact of specialized marketing capabilities within export markets, there is a lack of understanding regarding how higher-level dynamic marketing capability strategies enable exporters to effectively leverage knowledge-based resources for enhancing customer value in the internationalization process ([Hoque et al., 2022](#)).

## 7. Managerial implications

This bibliometric analysis emphasizes the need to include recently emerging topics such as global value chains, knowledge management and barriers in future studies and reveals that the contribution of academic research to practice is also important. Therefore, collaboration between industry and academia will further revitalize this research area and facilitate its progress.

As is well known, information asymmetry between parties (exporters and importers) in international trade can be eliminated or reduced if they are better informed about issues

that can be export–import barriers of destination countries, such as tariffs, quotas and international standards (e.g. product quality and insurance). To tackle these obstacles, international trade professionals should prioritize knowledge management and conduct extensive research on the subject of export–import barriers. This action would require a deep understanding of the technical details involved and a commitment to staying up-to-date with the latest developments in the field. By doing so, trade professionals can better navigate the complexities of international trade and ensure that their organizations remain competitive in the global marketplace.

## 8. Limitations

Based on the findings of this study, it is possible to identify some of the most productive and influential ones in the field of EP in terms of authors, journals, countries and universities. Also, in response to calls for more literature reviews for advancing theory (Breslin and Gatrell, 2023), the EP field’s main research themes and conceptual evolution over the years are investigated. However, a significant limitation is that they provide only general guidance, and much good research in EP has not been included in this research. Some primary considerations limit the study. First, we used only a single database (Scopus) because of data homogenization issues when working with multiple databases. Consequently, we suggest a prospective avenue for further investigation, which involves employing diverse databases to compare the acquired outcomes, such as Web of Science or Google Scholar. Second, we excluded book chapters and conference papers because they are no longer substantial in promotion and tenure decisions, giving authors little incentive to write them (MacInnis, 2011). In future research endeavors, including such publications is possible; however, it should be acknowledged that they pose a challenge because of the potential absence of a double-blind peer review system, which ensures a specific level of scientific rigor and quality. Third, using SciMAT creates an opportunity to extend present research by using different software tools such as CiteSpace or Bibexcel. Finally, other bibliometric techniques, such as co-authorship analysis or different clustering techniques, such as hierarchical clustering, could be used. Nevertheless, these limitations suggest directions for future research.

## 9. Conclusion

The objective of this study is to present an overview of the EP field through an exhaustive bibliometric analysis. The analysis used three main bibliometric approaches: bibliometric performance analysis, scientific mapping analysis (SciMAT software) and graphical mapping (VOSviewer software) of the EP field. Through this analysis, it will be possible to understand the present publication trends in EP, how the literature has developed in this research area and what themes have been established or have been declining and/or developing in the EP field. To the best of our knowledge, this study presents the first effort within the bibliometric analysis to offer a panoramic view of academic research in the EP field.

## References

- Aaby, N.E. and Slater, S.F. (1989), “Management influences on export performance: a review of the empirical literature 1978–88”, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 7–25, doi: [10.1108/EUM0000000001516](https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000001516).
- Aghaei Chadegani, A., Salehi, H., Md Yunus, M.M., Farhadi, H., Fooladi, M., Farhadi, M. and Ale Ebrahim, N. (2013), “A comparison between two main academic literature collections: Web of Science and Scopus databases”, *Asian Social Science*, Vol. 9 No. 5, pp. 18–26, doi: [10.5539/ass.v9n5p18](https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n5p18).
- Albaum, G., Duerr, E. and Josiassen, A. (2016), *International Marketing and Export Management*, 8th Edition, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow.
- Andres, A. (2009), *Measuring Academic Research: How to Undertake a Bibliometric Study*, Chandos Publishing, Oxford.
- Atuahene-Gima, K. (1995), “The influence of new product factors on export propensity and performance: an empirical analysis”, *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 11–28.
- Aulakh, P.S., Kotabe, M. and Teegen, H. (2000), “Export strategies and performance of firms from emerging economies: evidence from Brazil, Chile, and Mexico”, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 43 No. 3, pp. 342–361, doi: [10.2307/1556399](https://doi.org/10.2307/1556399).
- Axinn, C.N. (1988), “Export performance: do managerial perceptions make a difference?”, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 61–71, doi: [10.1108/eb008353](https://doi.org/10.1108/eb008353).
- Baier-Fuentes, H., Merigó, J.M., Amorós, J.E. and Gaviria-Marín, M. (2019), “International entrepreneurship: a bibliometric overview”, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 385–429, doi: [10.1007/s11365-017-0487-y](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-017-0487-y).
- Baldauf, A., Cravens, D.W. and Wagner, U. (2000), “Examining determinants of export performance in small open economies”, *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 61–79, doi: [10.1016/S1090-9516\(99\)00034-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-9516(99)00034-6).
- Baumgartner, H. and Pieters, R. (2003), “The structural influence of marketing journals: a citation analysis of the discipline and its subareas over time”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 67 No. 2, pp. 123–139, doi: [10.1509/jmkg.67.2.123.18610](https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.67.2.123.18610).
- Becker, B. (2015), “Public R&D policies and private R&D investment: a survey of the empirical evidence”, *Journal of Economic Surveys*, Vol. 29 No. 5, pp. 917–942, doi: [10.1111/joes.12074](https://doi.org/10.1111/joes.12074).
- Bilkey, W.J. (1978), “An attempted integration of the literature on the export behavior of firms”, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 33–46.
- Bonoma, T.V. and Clark, B.H. (1988), *Marketing Performance Assessment*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Boso, N., Annan, J., Adeleye, I., Iheanachor, N. and Narteh, B. (2018), “Examining the paths from export strategic orientations to export performance: the mediating role of export resource transformation capability”, *Thunderbird International Business Review*, Vol. 60 No. 2, pp. 207–230, doi: [10.1002/TIE.21878](https://doi.org/10.1002/TIE.21878).

- Braun, T., Glänzel, W. and Schubert, A. (2006), "A Hirsch-type index for journals", *Scientometrics*, Vol. 69 No. 1, pp. 169-173, doi: [10.1007/s11192-006-0147-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-006-0147-4).
- Breslin, D. and Gatrell, C. (2023), "Theorizing through literature reviews: the miner-pro prospector continuum", *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 26 No. 1, pp. 139-167.
- Bustaman, A., Indiatuti, R., Budiono, B. and Anas, T. (2022), "Quality of Indonesia's domestic institutions and export performance in the era of global value chains", *Journal of Economic Structures*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 1-29, doi: [10.1186/s40008-022-00293-5](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40008-022-00293-5).
- Cadogan, J.W., Kuivalainen, O. and Sundqvist, S. (2009), "Export market-oriented behavior and export performance: quadratic and moderating effects under differing degrees of market dynamism and internationalization", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 71-89, doi: [10.1509/JIMK.17.4.71](https://doi.org/10.1509/JIMK.17.4.71).
- Calabrò, A., Mussolino, D., Calabrò, A. and Mussolino, D. (2011), "How do boards of directors contribute to family SME export intensity? The role of formal and informal governance mechanisms", *Journal of Management & Governance*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 363-403, doi: [10.1007/S10997-011-9180-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/S10997-011-9180-7).
- Callon, M., Courtial, J.P. and Laville, F. (1991), "Co-word analysis as a tool for describing the network of interactions between basic and technological research: the case of polymer chemistry", *Scientometrics*, Vol. 22, pp. 155-205, doi: [10.1007/BF02019280](https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02019280).
- Callon, M., Courtial, J.-P., Turner, W.A. and Bauin, S. (1983), "From translations to problematic networks: an introduction to co-word analysis", *Social Science Information*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 191-235, doi: [10.1177/053901883022002003](https://doi.org/10.1177/053901883022002003).
- Calof, J.L. and Beamish, P.W. (1995), "Adapting to foreign markets: explaining internationalization", *International Business Review*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 115-131, doi: [10.1016/0969-5931\(95\)00001-G](https://doi.org/10.1016/0969-5931(95)00001-G).
- Cavusgil, S.T. and Zou, S. (1994), "Marketing strategy-performance relationship: an investigation of the empirical link in export market ventures", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 58 No. 1, pp. 1-21, doi: [10.1177/002224299405800101](https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299405800101).
- Cerrato, D. and Piva, M. (2010), "The internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises: the effect of family management, human capital and foreign ownership", *Journal of Management & Governance*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 617-644, doi: [10.1007/S10997-010-9166-X](https://doi.org/10.1007/S10997-010-9166-X).
- Chen, J., Sousa, C.M.P. and Xinming, H. (2016), "The determinants of export performance: a review of the literature 2006-2014", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 626-670.
- Cobo, M.J., López-Herrera, A.G., Herrera-Viedma, E. and Herrera, F. (2011), "Science mapping software tools: review, analysis, and cooperative study among tools", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, Vol. 62 No. 7, pp. 1382-1402, doi: [10.1002/ASI.21525](https://doi.org/10.1002/ASI.21525).
- Costas, R. and Bordons, M. (2007), "The h-index: advantages, limitations and its relation with other bibliometric indicators at the micro level", *Journal of Informetrics*, Vol. 1 No. 3, pp. 193-203, doi: [10.1016/j.joi.2007.02.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2007.02.001).
- Czinkota, M.R. (1994), "Executive insights: a national export assistance policy for new and growing businesses", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 91-101, doi: [10.1177/1069031X9400200106](https://doi.org/10.1177/1069031X9400200106).
- Das, A.K. (2015), "Introduction to research evaluation metrics and related indicators", *Open Access for Researchers*, UNESCO, Paris, pp. 1-18, available at: <http://eprints.rclis.org/24815/>
- Davidson, P.M., Newton, P.J., Ferguson, C., Daly, J., Elliott, D., Homer, C., Duffield, C. and Jackson, D. (2014), "Rating and ranking the role of bibliometrics and webometrics in nursing and midwifery", *The Scientific World Journal*, Vol. 2014, pp. 1-6, doi: [10.1155/2014/135812](https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/135812).
- Day, G.S. (1994), "The capabilities of market-driven organizations", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 58 No. 4, pp. 37-52, doi: [10.1177/002224299405800404](https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299405800404).
- Dhanaraj, C. and Beamish, P.W. (2003), "A resource-based approach to the study of export performance", *Journal of Small Business Management*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 242-261.
- Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N. and Lim, W.M. (2021), "How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: an overview and guidelines", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 133, pp. 285-296, doi: [10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2021.04.070](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2021.04.070).
- Dunakhe, K. and Panse, C. (2021), "Impact of digital marketing – a bibliometric review", *International Journal of Innovation Science*, Vol. 14 Nos 3/4, pp. 506-518, doi: [10.1108/IJIS-11-2020-0263](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIS-11-2020-0263).
- Durmaz, A. and Eren, M.S. (2017), "Export performance: is it possible through knowledge and capabilities? Evidence from Turkish manufacturing firms", *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 180-196, doi: [10.1080/08911762.2017.1350896](https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2017.1350896).
- Edeh, J.N., Obodoechi, D.N. and Ramos-Hidalgo, E. (2020), "Effects of innovation strategies on export performance: new empirical evidence from developing market firms", *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, Vol. 158 No. 120167, pp. 1-11, doi: [10.1016/J.TECHFORE.2020.120167](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TECHFORE.2020.120167).
- Elaheh, F., Md Nor, M., Abbas, G.B., Nader, A.E. and Nasrin, M. (2018), "Five decades of scientific development on "attachment theory": trends and future landscape", *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 26 No. 3, pp. 2145-2160.
- Etemadifard, S.M., Khaniki, H., Baghestan, A.G. and Akhtari-Zavare, M. (2018), "Iran's social sciences issues in web of science (WoS): who said what?", *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 1159-1174.
- Faroque, A.R., Morrish, S.C. and Ferdous, A.S. (2017), "Networking, business process innovativeness and export performance: the case of South Asian low-tech industry", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 32 No. 6, pp. 864-875, doi: [10.1108/JBIM-06-2015-0113](https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-06-2015-0113).
- Ghanbari Baghestan, A., Khaniki, H., Kalantari, A., Akhtari-Zavare, M., Farahmand, E., Tamam, E., Ebrahim, N.A., Sabani, H. and Danaee, M. (2019), "A crisis in 'open access': should communication scholarly outputs take 77 years to become open access?", *SAGE Open*, Vol. 9 No. 3, p. 2158244019871044, doi: [10.1177/2158244019871044](https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019871044).

- Ghorbani, Z., Kargaran, S., Saberi, A., Haghighinasab, M., Jamali, S.M. and Ale Ebrahim, N. (2022), "Trends and patterns in digital marketing research: bibliometric analysis", *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 158-172, doi: [10.1057/s41270-021-00116-9](https://doi.org/10.1057/s41270-021-00116-9).
- Godinez, J., Sanchez-Barrios, L.J., Lopez-Gomez, S. and Gomez-Nuñez, L. (2021), "Beyond financial resources: analyzing the determinants of export activities of emerging market social enterprises", *Latin American Business Review*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 235-263, doi: [10.1080/10978526.2021.1873799](https://doi.org/10.1080/10978526.2021.1873799).
- Grossman, G.M. and Rossi-Hansberg, E. (2008), "Trading tasks: a simple theory of offshoring", *American Economic Review*, Vol. 98 No. 5, pp. 1978-1997.
- Guarascio, D., Pianta, M. and Bogliacino, F. (2016), "Export, R&D and new products. a model and a test on European industries", *Journal of Evolutionary Economics*, Vol. 26 No. 4, pp. 869-905, doi: [10.1007/S00191-016-0445-9/TABLES/20](https://doi.org/10.1007/S00191-016-0445-9/TABLES/20).
- Guräu, C. and Merdji, M. (2008), "The internationalization process of online SMEs in the UK, US and Australia", *Journal of Asia-Pacific Business*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 55-81, doi: [10.1080/10599230801971267](https://doi.org/10.1080/10599230801971267).
- Guz, A.N. and Rushchitsky, J.J. (2009), "Scopus: a system for the evaluation of scientific journals", *International Applied Mechanics*, Vol. 45 No. 4, pp. 351-362, doi: [10.1007/s10778-009-0189-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10778-009-0189-4).
- Haddoud, M.Y., Nowinski, W., Jones, P. and Newbery, R. (2019), "Internal and external determinants of export performance: insights from Algeria", *Thunderbird International Business Review*, Vol. 61 No. 1, pp. 43-60, doi: [10.1002/tie.21972](https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.21972).
- Harris, R.G. (2001), "The knowledge-based economy: intellectual origins and new economic perspectives", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 21-40, doi: [10.1111/1468-2370.00052](https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2370.00052).
- Hirsch, J.E. (2005), "An index to quantify an individual's scientific research output", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 102 No. 46, pp. 16569-16572, doi: [10.1073/pnas.0507655102](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0507655102).
- Holzmueller, H.H. and Stottinger, B. (1996), "Structural modeling of success factors in exporting: cross-validation and further development of an export performance model", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 29-55.
- Hoque, M.T., Ahammad, M.F., Tzokas, N., Tarba, S. and Nath, P. (2022), "Eyes open and hands on: market knowledge and marketing capabilities in export markets", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 39 No. 3, pp. 431-462, doi: [10.1108/IMR-01-2021-0003](https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-01-2021-0003).
- Isnawangsih, A. and Lu, Y. (2018), "Diversifying merchandise exports", in Breuer, L.E., Guajardo, J. and Kinda, T. (Eds), *Realizing Indonesia's Economic Potential*, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, pp. 187-209.
- İpek, İ. and Tanyeri, M. (2020), "Home country institutional drivers and performance outcomes of export market orientation: the moderating role of firm resources", *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 806-836, doi: [10.1108/IJOEM-10-2019-0803](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOEM-10-2019-0803).
- Jongwanich, J. (2010), "Determinants of export performance in east and southeast Asia", *World Economy*, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 20-41, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-9701.2009.01184.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9701.2009.01184.x).
- Joo, S.H. and Shin, G.H. (2020), "Empirical analysis of effect of entrepreneurship on export performance: focusing on the mediated effect of technology capability and export support policy of start-ups", *Journal of Korea Trade*, Vol. 24 No. 6, pp. 173-193, doi: [10.35611/jkt.2020.24.6.173](https://doi.org/10.35611/jkt.2020.24.6.173).
- Kahiya, E.T. (2018), "Five decades of research on export barriers: review and future directions", *International Business Review*, Vol. 27 No. 6, pp. 1172-1188, doi: [10.1016/j.ibusrev.2018.04.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2018.04.008).
- Kahiya, E.T., Dean, D.L. and Heyl, J. (2014), "Export barriers in a changing institutional environment: a quasi-longitudinal study of New Zealand's manufacturing exporters", *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 331-364, doi: [10.1007/S10843-014-0131-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/S10843-014-0131-7).
- Katsikeas, C.S. (2003), "Advances in international marketing theory and practice", *International Business Review*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 135-140.
- Katsikeas, C.S., Leonidou, L.C. and Morgan, N.A. (2000), "Firm-level export performance assessment: review, evaluation, and development", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 493-511.
- Kessler, M.M. (1963), "Bibliographic coupling between scientific papers", *American Documentation*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 10-25, doi: [10.1002/asi.5090140103](https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.5090140103).
- Kumcu, E., Harcar, T. and Kumcu, M.E. (1995), "Managerial perceptions of the adequacy of export incentive programs: implications for export-led economic development policy", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 163-174, doi: [10.1016/0148-2963\(94\)00038-G](https://doi.org/10.1016/0148-2963(94)00038-G).
- Lages, L.F., Jap, S.D. and Griffith, D.A. (2008), "The role of past performance in export ventures: a short-term reactive approach", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 304-325.
- Lages, L.F., Silva, G. and Styles, C. (2009), "Relationship capabilities, quality, and innovation as determinants of export performance", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 47-70, doi: [10.1509/JIMK.17.4.47](https://doi.org/10.1509/JIMK.17.4.47).
- Leonidou, L.C. (1995), "Empirical research on export barriers: review, assessment, and synthesis", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 29-43.
- Leonidou, L.C., Katsikeas, C.S. and Samiee, S. (2002), "Marketing strategy determinants of export performance: a meta-analysis", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 55 No. 1, pp. 51-67, doi: [10.1016/S0148-2963\(00\)00133-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(00)00133-8).
- MacInnis, D.J. (2011), "A framework for conceptual contributions in marketing", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 75 No. 4, pp. 136-154, doi: [10.1509/jmkg.75.4.136](https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.75.4.136).
- Mahmoud, M.A., Adams, M., Abubakari, A., Comney, N.O. and Kastner, A.N.A. (2020), "Social media resources and export performance: the role of trust and commitment", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 273-297, doi: [10.1108/IMR-02-2019-0084](https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-02-2019-0084).
- Mariani, M.M., Perez-Vega, R. and Wirtz, J. (2022), "AI in marketing, consumer research and psychology: a systematic literature review and research agenda", *Psychology & Marketing*, Vol. 39 No. 4, pp. 755-776, doi: [10.1002/mar.21619](https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21619).
- Merigó, J.M. and Yang, J.B. (2017), "A bibliometric analysis of operations research and management science", *Omega*, Vol. 73, pp. 37-48, doi: [10.1016/J.OMEGA.2016.12.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.OMEGA.2016.12.004).



- Merigó, J.M., Mas-Tur, A., Roig-Tierno, N. and Ribeiro-Soriano, D. (2015), "A bibliometric overview of the journal of business research between 1973 and 2014", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 68 No. 12, pp. 2645-2653, doi: [10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2015.04.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2015.04.006).
- Merigó, J.M., Pedrycz, W., Weber, R. and de la Sotta, C. (2018), "Fifty years of information sciences: a bibliometric overview", *Information Sciences*, Vol. 432, pp. 245-268, doi: [10.1016/j.ins.2017.11.054](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ins.2017.11.054).
- Montalbano, P., Nenci, S. and Pietrobello, C. (2018), "Opening and linking up: firms, GVCs, and productivity in Latin America", *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 50 No. 4, pp. 917-935, doi: [10.1007/S11187-017-9902-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/S11187-017-9902-6).
- Morgan, N.A., Kaleka, A. and Katsikeas, C.S. (2004), "Antecedents of export venture performance: a theoretical model and empirical assessment", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 68 No. 1, pp. 90-108, doi: [10.1509/jmkg.68.1.90.24028](https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.68.1.90.24028).
- Murgado-Armenteros, E.M., Gutiérrez-Salcedo, M., Torres-Ruiz, F.J. et al. (2015), "Analysing the conceptual evolution of qualitative marketing research through science mapping analysis", *Scientometrics*, Vol. 102, pp. 519-557, doi: [10.1007/s11192-014-1443-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-014-1443-z).
- Navarro-García, A., Peris-Ortiz, M. and Barrera-Barrera, R. (2016), "Market intelligence effect on perceived psychic distance, strategic behaviours and export performance in industrial SMEs", *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 365-380, doi: [10.1108/JBIM-03-2013-0065](https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-03-2013-0065).
- Newbert, S.L., David, R.J. and Han, S.K. (2014), "Rarely pure and never simple: assessing cumulative evidence in strategic management", *Strategic Organization*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 142-154.
- Noyons, E.C.M., Moed, H.F. and Luwel, M. (1999), "Combining mapping and citation analysis for evaluative bibliometric purposes: a bibliometric study", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 115-131, doi: [10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-4571\(1999\)50:2<115::AID-ASIS3>3.0.CO;2-J](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-4571(1999)50:2<115::AID-ASIS3>3.0.CO;2-J).
- Olasehinde-Williams, G. and Oshodi, A.F. (2021), "Global value chains and export growth in South Africa: evidence from dynamic ARDL simulations", *Transnational Corporations Review*, 1-13, doi: [10.1080/19186444.2021.1959833](https://doi.org/10.1080/19186444.2021.1959833).
- Oliveira, J.S., Cadogan, J.W. and Souchon, A. (2012), "Level of analysis in export performance research", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 114-127, doi: [10.1108/02651331211201561](https://doi.org/10.1108/02651331211201561).
- Paul, J., Lim, W.M., O'Cass, A., Hao, A.W. and Bresciani, S. (2021), "Scientific procedures and rationales for systematic literature reviews (SPAR-4-SLR)", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Vol. 45 No. 4, pp. O1-O16, doi: [10.1111/ijcs.12695](https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12695).
- Peng, M.W., Wang, D.Y. and Jiang, Y. (2008), "An institution-based view of international business strategy: a focus on emerging economies", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 39 No. 5, pp. 920-936.
- Portugal Ferreira, M. (2011), "A bibliometric study on Ghoshal's managing across borders", *Multinational Business Review*, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 357-375, doi: [10.1108/15253831111190180](https://doi.org/10.1108/15253831111190180).
- Ramos-Rodrigue, A.R. and Ruiz-Navarro, J. (2004), "Changes in the intellectual structure of strategic management research: a bibliometric study of the strategic management journal, 1980-2000", *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 25 No. 10, pp. 981-1004, doi: [10.1002/smj.397](https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.397).
- Rua, O.L., Franca, A. and Ortiz, R.F. (2018), "Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance", Chapters, in Da Rocha Brito, S.M. (Ed.), *Entrepreneurship – Trends and Challenges*, IntechOpen, doi: [10.5772/intechopen.72009](https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.72009).
- Ruppenthal, T. and Bausch, A. (2009), "Research on export performance over the past 10 years: a narrative review", *European J. of International Management*, Vol. 3 No. 3, pp. 328-364, doi: [10.1504/EJIM.2009.026995](https://doi.org/10.1504/EJIM.2009.026995).
- Safari, A. and Saleh, A.S. (2020), "Key determinants of SMEs' export performance: a resource-based view and contingency theory approach using potential mediators", *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 35 No. 4, pp. 635-654, doi: [10.1108/JBIM-11-2018-0324](https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-11-2018-0324).
- Samiee, S. and Walters, P.G.P. (1990), "Influence of firm size on export planning and performance", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 20 No. 3, pp. 235-248, doi: [10.1016/0148-2963\(90\)90015-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0148-2963(90)90015-6).
- Shafique, M. (2013), "Thinking inside the box? Intellectual structure of the knowledge base of innovation research (1988-2008)", *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 34 No. 1, pp. 62-93, doi: [10.1002/SMJ.2002](https://doi.org/10.1002/SMJ.2002).
- Shoham, A. (1996), "Marketing-mix standardization: determinants of export performance", *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 53-73, doi: [10.1300/J042v10n02\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J042v10n02_04).
- Shoham, A. (2008), "Standardization of international strategy and export performance", *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol. 16 No. 1-2, pp. 97-120, doi: [10.1300/J042V16N01\\_05](https://doi.org/10.1300/J042V16N01_05).
- Small, H. (1973), "Co-citation in the scientific literature: a new measure of the relationship between two documents", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 265-269, doi: [10.1002/asi.4630240406](https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.4630240406).
- Snyder, H. (2019), "Literature review as a research methodology: an overview and guidelines", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 104, pp. 333-339.
- Sousa, C.M.P. (2004), "Export performance measurement: an evaluation of the empirical research in the literature", *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, Vol. 9, pp. 1-22.
- Sousa, C.M.P., Martínez-López, F.J. and Coelho, F. (2008), "The determinants of export performance: a review of the research in the literature between 1998 and 2005", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 10 No. 4, pp. 343-374, doi: [10.1111/j.1468-2370.2008.00232.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2008.00232.x).
- Stucki, T. (2016), "How the founders' general and specific human capital drives export activities of start-ups", *Research Policy*, Vol. 45 No. 5, pp. 1014-1030, doi: [10.1016/J.RESPOL.2016.02.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.RESPOL.2016.02.010).
- van Eck, N.J. and Waltman, L. (2010), "Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping", *Scientometrics*, Vol. 84 No. 2, pp. 523-538, doi: [10.1007/s11192-009-0146-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-009-0146-3).
- Wang, E.C. (2010), "Determinants of R&D investment: the Extreme-Bounds-Analysis approach applied to 26 OECD

- countries”, *Research Policy*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 103-116, doi: [10.1016/j.respol.2009.11.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2009.11.010).
- Wang, J. (2013), “Citation time window choice for research impact evaluation”, *Scientometrics*, Vol. 94 No. 3, pp. 851-872, doi: [10.1007/s11192-012-0775-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-012-0775-9).
- Westhead, P., Wright, M. and Ucbasaran, D. (2001), “The internationalization of new and small firms: a resource-based view”, *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 333-358, doi: [10.1016/S0883-9026\(99\)00063-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(99)00063-4).
- Yiu, D.W., Lau, C.M. and Bruton, G.D. (2007), “International venturing by emerging economy firms: the effects of firm capabilities, home country networks, and corporate entrepreneurship”, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 519-540.
- Zou, S. and Stan, S. (1998), “The determinants of export performance: a review of the empirical literature between 1987 and 1997”, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 15 No. 5, pp. 333-356, doi: [10.1108/02651339810236290](https://doi.org/10.1108/02651339810236290).

### Further reading

- Cadogan, J.W., Charles, C.C. and Erik, K.Y.L. (2003), “Export market-oriented behavior and export performance: the moderating roles of competitive intensity and technological turbulence”, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 20 No. 5, pp. 493-513.
- Chetty, S.K. and Hamilton, R.T. (1993), “The export performance of smaller firms: a multi-case study approach”, *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, Vol. 1 No. 4, pp. 247-256.
- Diamantopoulos, A. (1998), “From the guest editor”, *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 3-6.
- Zou, S., Taylor, C.R. and Osland, G.E. (1998), “The EXPERF scale: a cross-national generalized export performance measure”, *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 37-58.

### Corresponding author

Ayhan Akpınar can be contacted at: [ayhanakpinar2@gmail.com](mailto:ayhanakpinar2@gmail.com)