Critical Themes in Entrepreneurship Research: A Citation/Co-citation Analysis

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Abstract

Citation analysis combined with a network analysis of co-citation data from SSCI is used to reveal the critical themes of entrepreneurship research between 2000 and 2009. By analyzing 89,984 citations of 2,179 articles published in SSCI journals in entrepreneurship area, this study maps the knowledge networks of entrepreneurship studies. With a factor analysis of the co-citation data, this study suggests that contemporary entrepreneurship research is organized along different concentrations of interests: characteristics of entrepreneurship, corporate entrepreneurship, determinants of entrepreneurial activities, new venture creation, and organization development. The results help profile the knowledge network production in entrepreneurship and provide important insights on the change of critical themes of current entrepreneurship studies.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Intellectual Structure, Citation, Co-citation, Social Network Analysis

1. Introduction

Over the last decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of publications on entrepreneurship [1]. Many reviews and assessments of the entrepreneurship research field have concluded that the development of a cumulative body of knowledge has been limited and slow because there is lack of agreement on many key issues regarding what constitutes entrepreneurship [2], because researchers fail to build upon each others’ results [3], and because measurements of key variables are typically weak. Another obstacle to the development of entrepreneurship lies in the subject’s unusually high degree of interaction with other disciplines [2][4]. This overlapping blurs the boundaries of entrepreneurship and, as a result, its distinct theoretical model and analytical tools are unjustly attributed to other competing fields. With limited resources contributing to the development of entrepreneurship, the cross-fertilization of ideas between scholars in entrepreneurship will be much more difficult to obtain. Consequently, while there is