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The value of bibliometric measures



Custom Data fuels OECD's Innovation Strategy

Hiroyuki Tomizawa



The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) provides a forum for the governments of 30 like-minded market democracies to compare policy experiences, share best practices and seek answers to common economic, social and governance challenges.

Established in 1948 to lead the Marshall Plan for rebuilding Europe after the Second World War, the OECD has been collecting and analyzing statistical, economic and social data at the request of its members since 1961. These data are used to generate collective policy discussions, leading to decision-making and implementation. For instance, its Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard, which comes out every two years, explores the interaction between knowledge and globalization at the heart of the ongoing transformation of OECD economies.

Impact of globalization on research

In recent years, the OECD has expanded its focus on its 30 member countries to offer analytical expertise and experience to over 100 developing and emerging market economies. This has to a certain extent been driven by globalization, which has made it virtually impossible to study specific areas in isolation. This has seen the scope of the OECD's work shift from the examination of individual policy areas within each member country to the analysis of how various policy areas interact with each other and with other countries, including those outside the OECD group.

The OECD has an ambitious publishing program, releasing a large amount of its research and accompanying data in 250 new titles every year. Through this output, the OECD aims to help governments foster sustainable economic growth, financial stability, trade, investment and innovation, while at the same time striving for environmental preservation, social equity and poverty reduction.

It has also come to realize that data alone are not enough; to truly help governments foster innovation, strategies are needed. To this end, the OECD is developing an Innovation Strategy, which will provide mutually reinforcing policies and recommendations to boost innovation performance, pointing to general

and country-specific practices and, where appropriate, developing guidelines. This work will culminate in a report to ministers in 2010, but some patterns are already clear.

For instance, are governments doing enough to foster collaboration between universities and businesses, and not just within their borders? Many key inventions, such as the World Wide Web, have come from public research. Are governments doing enough to strengthen this bedrock of innovation?

The importance of a reliable data source

In October 2008, the OECD announced it had decided to use Scopus Custom Data in its research, analysis and benchmarking work. Hiroyuki Tomizawa, Principal Administrator in the Economic Analysis and Statistics Division of the Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry at the OECD, explains: "The three key factors behind this decision were the product's broad (international) coverage, clean, flexible data and advanced features, such as the ability to link between authors and institutions."

He adds that the OECD anticipates using the Scopus data for three main purposes:

- to analyze global trends and identify subject areas that are experiencing intense activity;
- to understand research activities at the country level in order to be able to make comparative analyses between countries;
- to understand co-authorship and collaboration across borders. In a competitive knowledge society, countries are deploying policies to attract the best talent, but it is not always easy for them to assess whether they were successful or not.

Three possible groups can benefit from the resulting OECD reports: policymakers, funding agencies, and governments and commercial research organizations. In this way, Scopus data will contribute to the OECD achieving its goals and will help to determine the direction of future economic decision-making.

More information on the OECD, including the full list of members and a wide range of publicly available reports, is available [here](#).