

How Empirical Research Became Dominant: A Bibliometric Analysis of the Transformation of the Research Field of Economic Science

Economic science has come a long way: from a collection of household views to a full-blown social science that claims to explain virtually every aspect of human life. The expansion of the subject boundaries of economic science has naturally led to an increase in the influx of scholars into the discipline. However, the number of reputable academic journals in economics was growing much slower than the number of scientists [2]. This process, which began in the 1960s-1970s, continues to this day. Around the same time, the introduction of various scientometric methods of evaluating the work of academic researchers is accelerating in the advanced countries of the world.

Against this background, the first signs of the so-called "empirical revolution" - gradual displacement of purely theoretical articles by works based primarily on experimental and (or) quasi-experimental methods - begin to emerge in economic science. Thus, D. Hamermesh (2013) points out that in the second half of the 20th century the number of theoretical articles decreased significantly, they began to be replaced by articles with field and laboratory experiments, as well as works based on empirical analysis. E. Duflo (Duflo, 2017), in his essay "The Economist as Plumber", reveals the importance and value of knowing the economy as some system with a set of functions similar to plumbing. This approach is based on the deep instrumental skills of the researcher, in which theoretical postulates are derived from a set of stylized facts or natural experiment. This view of cognition is thought to be beginning to supplant the 'doctrinal-theoretical' approach, where a systematic theoretical judgement that explained a set of accumulated facts played a central role (Osterloh, Frey, 2020). In this study, we want to investigate whether these two phenomena - a change in the research style of economists and a change in the academic profession itself - are related.

The working hypothesis of our study is as follows: 1. the low growth rate of scholarly journals in economics, combined with the intensification of the struggle in the academic labor market, as well as the cheapening cost of computing power and the appearance of a huge number of diverse (and easily accessible) databases made empirical research more rapid and accessible to penetrate the pages of established

publications in economics than purely theoretical papers; 2. additionally, the processes of displacing theoretical papers by empirical ones accelerated the spread of different kinds of The pressure of scientometric assessments of scholarly output forced scientists to increase their publication activity, as a result of which empirical works began to crowd out theoretical ones.

The study assumes the following methods: selective textual study of the sources, as well as instrumental analysis of the texts for the structure of the articles and their content. The composition of these two methods will make it possible not only to trace the semantic relationship between the chain of works, but also to assess the quantitative component of the thematic substitution of different scientific fields of economics.

Bibliography

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