Abstract

A search on the bibliographical database Web of Science of the term "wine" limited to the categories economics and business results in more than 1900 scientific papers published between 1990 and 2021, most of which were produced in the last decade. Such a vast scientific production is due to the heterogeneity, complexity and multi-sectoriality that characterise the wine sector and its current research. Structured on the three main tracks of demand, supply and public regulation (Carbone, 2021), economic research on wine has evolved over the years in response to global changes within and outside the market by posing new questions, using new methodologies and data sources and incorporating aspects that were little considered in the past. As a result, looking out over the vastness and complexity of the relevant wine economics and business literature can be tricky and tedious for new scholars and anyone interested in this topic. Although some reviews have been previously published, traditional review articles might struggle at identifying, organising, summarising, and quantitatively analysing the development of a specific field among a large number of publications on a large time scale. Moreover, many previous reviews focus on specific aspects, such as sources (Weatherbee et al. 2019), topics (Martinho, 2021; Ashenfelter and Storchmann, 2016), products and countries.

In order to provide a systemic overview of the current and previous economic and business research on wine, this study uses bibliometric methodologies and tools and a mixed quantitative-qualitative approach. Bibliometrics applies mathematical and statistical techniques to the scientific literature indexed by scientific databases on a specific subject based on bibliographic data in order to describe patterns of publications within a given period or body of literature and detect relevant information (Jarneving, 2007). However, bibliometrics does not measure quality, and it is essential to analyse the documents combining bibliometric and qualitative methods. We investigate the evolution of economic and business research on wine, identifying and analysing the evolution over time of scientific publications concerning specific factors such as collaborations between institutions and countries, changing trends in research topics and hotspots, main sources and macro-areas of research. To our knowledge, there is no unified and comprehensive bibliometric review of the scientific literature related to wine economics, business and policy; this research analyses and critically appraise this literature using bibliometrics methodologies to provide a quick and objective reference guide for interdisciplinary researchers as well as marketers.

The bibliographic data analysed in this study were collected from the Web of Science library; the term "wine" was searched in titles, abstracts, and keywords, limiting the categories to economics, management, agricultural economics policy, business and business finance. The process resulted in 2032 original scientific articles published between 1990 and 2021. Consistency with the topic was verified by reading the titles, abstracts, and articles when necessary.

We identify the main actors in terms of journals, research areas and topics, and we analyse their evolution over time using graphical networks and quantitative analysis. As the wine market and the world have deeply changed through the last twenty years, the results highlight how global changes have, in many ways, redefined research, its evolution and perspectives. For example, the entry into the global market of non-traditional wine-producing countries, a greater awareness of issues that have become central in both the public and scientific debate and the spread of new technologies that have changed the relationship between wine producers and consumers have deeply shaped the business and economic scientific research on wine.

Furthermore, we examine the extent to which the scientific wine community has become more global through international co-authorships (Glänzel, Reinhilde Veugelers, 2006), discussing the geographical trends in the scientific wine community.

Nevertheless, bibliometric methods are not without limitations. For example, the tendency of authors to cite themselves might partially distort the results, and older contributions receive more citations than newer ones, as they have been available for a longer time. However, the first distortion should be limited when the number of authors is sufficiently high compared to the number of articles published, and some methodologies are not based on the citations. Moreover, although the Web of Science database covers the majority of peer-reviewed journals, it may omit some relevant research on the topic. Lastly, higher-ranked journals are usually cited more often than low ranked ones, contributing to overestimating these productions.

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