

Mapping HRM Research: A Bibliometric Analysis of the HRM Field

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The literature on Human Resource Management (HRM) is diverse and abundant. Several authors have tried to use their intuition to summarize this abundant and diverse literature. However, these authors' intuitions are often in conflict and are not empirically grounded. In seeking to redress the limitations of prior efforts to make sense of the HRM literature, we conduct a bibliometric analysis of the HRM literature, providing both a Science Map and a Taxonomy. From the Web of Science 16,715 articles published between 1990 and 2013 and containing the string "HR", "Human Resource", or "Personnel Manag" are selected. First the VOSviewer term mapping software is used to provide an overview of the key terms in the HRM articles and the interrelation of these terms. In order to designate the topic areas in the literature at different levels of abstraction we also create a dendrogram from the association strength between the terms in the map. Thereby we provide a taxonomy of the literature, while at the same time overcoming the subjectivity related to setting the clustering coefficient in the clustering of a term map. A first dendrogram is created using hierarchical clustering with Ward's method. An alternative "quasi-dendrogram" is also provided, for which the VOS clustering algorithm was used. Since the VOS clustering algorithm is based on the same underlying principle as the VOS mapping algorithm, the quasi-dendrogram is expected to better correspond to the Science Map. A cluster assignment heuristic is introduced for the allocation of terms to clusters at different clustering resolutions. The efficacy of each approach is evaluated in relation to the study of the HRM literature.