



## EASE OF DOING BUSINESS: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS (1997-2021)

Saransh Royal<sup>1</sup> and Ramesh Chander<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, University School of Management, Kurukshetra University, Haryana.

<sup>2</sup>Professor, University School of Management, Kurukshetra University, Haryana.

### ABSTRACT:

Irresistible academic curiosity on the ***ease of doing business*** and its policy implications has necessitated documenting the contour of business facilitation by bibliometric and visualization research on the subject. It is based on the study of 202 thematics in the last 25 years (1997-2021) retrieved from the **SCOPUS** and the **Web of Sciences** databases, and the similarities were analyzed using VOS viewer. The key business issues identified in this study were primarily focused on investment and business decision making followed by competitiveness and sustainability facilitation. The bibliometric analysis presented in this paper argues well for the relevance and importance of foreign direct investment and entrepreneurship in people empowerment and income magnification in terms of GDP numbers as vital policy imperatives for emerging economies and developing societies.



**KEY WORDS:** *Doing Business, Visualization Analysis, Systematic Literature Review.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Ease of Doing Business (EODB) is one of the most happening phenomena in the business world. These days, it is used as a wooing tool by the parsimonies to attract businesses (Recalculating Ease of Doing Business - The Hindu, January 2018), so much that nation-states are much interested in improving ranking which in turn resulting in “easy entry” into the business ecosystem. The report is published by “World Bank Group” every year which ranks countries based on eleven well-defined pointers. Doing Business report is one of the prime publication of World Bank Group gauging the protocols that supplement corporate activity and the procedures that imprison it. The present study, in this sequel, has focused and pondered on the Ease of Doing Business from the last 25 years perspective 1997-2021 time-window with the intent of supplementing a healthier understanding of research yields in this knowledge space.

### 2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

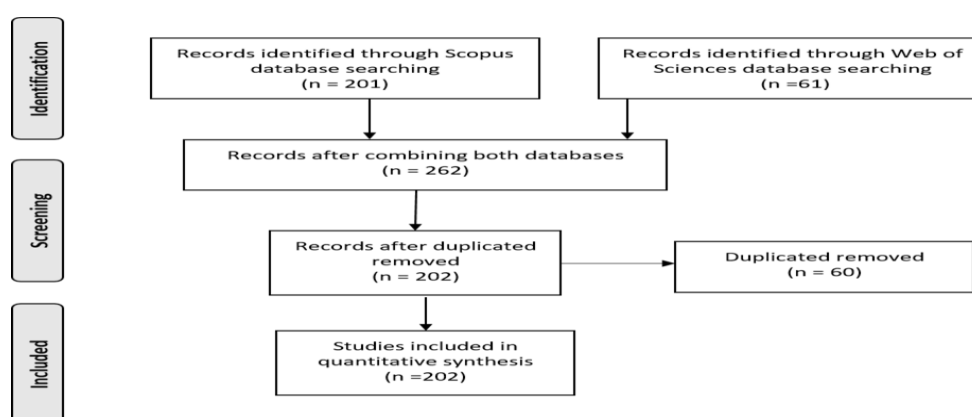
The dataset for the current analysis is derived from the SCOPUS and Web of Sciences - an expertly curated abstract and citation databanks, with enriched data and associated scholarly content. For sorting literature, the PRISMA technique is aimed to assist the authors in improving the commentary of systematic reviews of literature and meta-analysis to generalize reported research outcomes of the concerned subject area (Liberati et al., 2009; Moher et al., 2009) in a sequential

process. In the first step, papers were searched and downloaded from the SCOPUS and Web of Sciences database using the following search strings in the search tab in the table given below:

**Table 1: Search strings Identification and screening**

Sr.no	Database	Search strings	Documents found
1.	Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY("Ease of Doing Business") AND ( LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE, "English" ) )	201
2.	Web of Sciences	("Ease of Doing Business")	61
<b>Total</b>			<b>262</b>

In the next steps, the identified researches on the above strings have been further screened using the *PRISMA* protocol given below:



**Figure 1: PRISMA Protocol presentation of the reported researches.**

As reported, 262 relevant studies were screened and identified of the given ease of doing business string indexed in the said two databases in March 2021. A further advanced search was performed to categorize it to the publications published in the last twenty-five years from 1996-2021 reporting the string *Ease of Doing Business* in the title and/or keyword and topic fields. This comprised of 201 publications that were salvaged from the “SCOPUS” database and 61 from the “Web of Sciences” (WOS) database. Further, the two databases were merged using R- Studio, and 60 duplicates entries were removed from the identified studies, which make an effective sample size of 202 publications. These articles were downloaded into a CSV format and as a reference file format. these were further analyzed using two tools; Biblioshiny in R- Studio version 1.4.1106 and VOS-viewer i.e. visual scientific surfaces viewer version 1.6.16.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the data set identified and the annual scientific publications said databases, 202 documents were analyzed, the maximum number of publications are in the form of article to be precise 146, the second most relevant publications were in the form of conference papers. The author’s collaboration stood at 3.07. The value of average documents per author is 0.419 which means in most of the documents there were more than two authors.

The almanac scientific production over the last 25 years has shown an annual growth rate of 12.26 percent over the years especially after 2016 there is a steep rise in annual scientific production.

### 3.1 Filtered ease of doing business research papers citation matrix analog

The paper titled “International R&D spillovers and institutions” (Coe et al., 2009) published in “European Economic Review” journal have 242 citations, 18.6154 total citations per year with 4.9677 normalized citation score. The ease of doing business incidental verticals often engaged by authors in sorted research papers are plotted in the figure given below in the locally weighted regression is a method for smoothing a scatterplot (Cleveland, 1979).

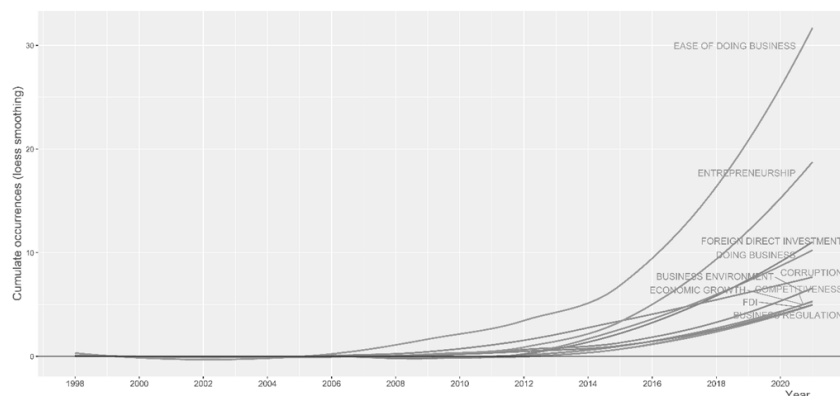


Figure 2: Ease of doing business incidental verticals scatter plot, 1997-2021

It can be inferred from the above smoothing regression plot that *Ease of Doing Business* is the most occurring keyword with 32 occurrences followed by Entrepreneurship, Foreign Direct and Investment. Identification of these verticals speaks louder of its relevance to the theme and also of its paramount significance in its manifestations.

Further, the thematic presentation of the key themes being studies across the globe on the ease of doing business is described in Figure 3, based on keywords and the minimum cluster with a minimum frequency of 5 per 1000 documents (Thematic Map in Bibliometrix: Comprehensive Science Mapping Analysis). The identified ease of doing business themes are further summarized in two prominent categories such as **1. Basic theme:** Make in India, Entrepreneurship, Data development analysis, Foreign Direct Investment **2. Motor theme:** Startups, business environment, ease of doing business, economic freedom, corruption, business environment, and GDP.

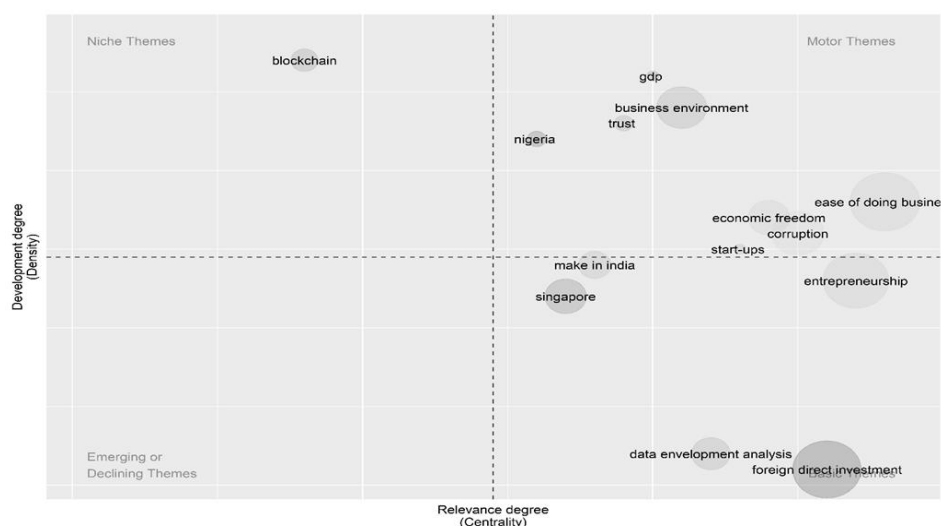


Figure 3: Thematic map of key ease of doing business themes, 1997-21

### 3.2 Authors cross-collaboration network

This paper reviewed and obtained two collaboration networks using VOS-viewer software. The first network was obtained related to the co-citation network and the second one was of co-occurrences network of the keywords that appeared in the studies reviewed on the ease of doing business, 1997-2021. It is represented by Figure 4 which is a co-citation network that uses the Author as the unit of analysis and the full counting method was used with a minimum network strength of at least 200 counts.

**Table 2: Top Authors Co-citation Network on ease of doing business, 1997-2021**

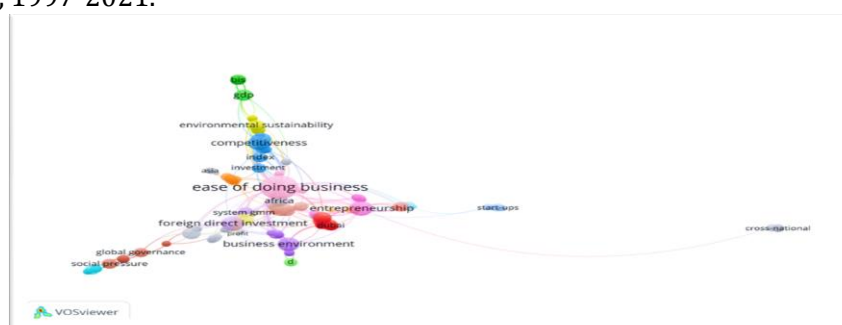
Sr.no	Author	Total link strength
1	World Bank	991
2	Djankov, S	800
3	Acemoghulu, D	461

Figure 4 shows the co-citation network representing 11 clusters with 52 items and 534 links with a total cross citation link strength of 3692 on the ease of doing business during the study time.



**Figure 4: Authors Co-citation Network on ease of doing business, 1997-2021**

Similarly, the co-occurrence network of ease of doing business verticals presented in Table 3 represents the top 4 keywords occurrence has been shown based on total link strength. Similarly, Figure 5 does the same in relation to the ease of doing business manifestations in sorted publications during the period, 1997-2021.



**Figure 5: Ease of doing business verticals Co-occurrence network, 1997-2021**

**Table 3: Ease of doing business verticals Co-occurrence network, 1997-2021**

Sr.no	Keyword	Total link strength
1	Ease of doing Business	164
2	Entrepreneurship	48
3	FDI	47
4	Competitiveness	44

## CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Over the past twenty-five years, 1997-2021 *Ease of Doing Business* has gained significant traction in academia both in terms of empowerment tool and the underlying policy instrument in developing societies and large-sized emerging economies across the globe. Its verticals in terms of the business ecosystem, competitiveness, foreign direct investment, and business data processing by state agencies have seen a piercing escalation in terms of research curiosity all over the globe, especially since 2016. The maximum number of studies were reported from the USA, with a total citation of 425 with an average citation score of 28.333. The analysis reported in this paper has identified multiple widely debated themes as sustainable development, business development, competitiveness, and the scale of investment. The reported study outcomes appeared very relevant as policy tools for people empowerment with a renewed focus on the technological transformation and entrepreneurship as has been witnessed in previous research publications on the ease of doing business across the globe.

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