

To What Extent Has the Scope of Business and Management Knowledge Changed Over Time? A Comparative Examination on Encyclopedias

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Extensive Summary

The scope of this review is to assess the change over time in the scope of knowledge that is generally focused on business and management fields. The study is based on the assumption that the articles of the encyclopaedias related to the field of business and management published at different dates are evaluated as knowledge (concept, model, approach or theory) considered important at that time and that comparison of the articles of these encyclopaedias published at different dates can help in assessing the change in knowledge. In the study, the encyclopaedias published in different dates that we can associate with the fields of business and management were examined comparatively on the basis of the substances they contain and what kind of changes were found in terms of scope. With these encyclopaedias based comparison, it can be questioned how the extent the scope of business and management fields has changed from the time when the business and management fields have begun to occupy higher education and were seen as separate scientific disciplines. Through the comparison, it has been attempted to understand the scope of historical change of knowledge both in the field of business and in the field of management.

This study compares the articles of the encyclopaedias published in different dates in the business and management literature. The data for the research comes from the four encyclopaedias. *The Encyclopaedia of Management*, edited by Heyel, published in

1963; *Encyclopaedia of Management*, edited by Hill and published its seventh edition in 2012; *The Business Man's Encyclopaedia* published in 1905, and *Encyclopaedia of Business in Today's World*, edited by Wankel and published in 2009. While the first two works were categorized under the heading of management and compared among themselves, the last two encyclopaedias were compared among themselves under the general business category.

In comparison, it has been found that, as can be expected, the scope of business and management knowledge has changed significantly. Compared with the two general business encyclopaedias, almost all of the articles in the two encyclopaedias are completely different. The difference in terms of the issues discussed in the management encyclopaedias is quite high. Only 12% of the articles taken part in the management encyclopaedias published in 2012 are related to the encyclopaedia published in 1963. The research findings also suggest that the words may have different meanings in the historical flow of the words. When the main topics in *The Encyclopaedia of Management*, edited by Heyel in 1963 and Hill's *Encyclopaedia of Management* in 2012, are compared, the former can be considered more suitable for general business. When we look at the content of the management encyclopaedia in 2012, it is seen that the weight of today's management issues is increasing and the weight of other fields related to business is decreasing.

It may be useful to conduct two interrogations on future researches. First of them, the changes may be questioned by categorizing the items in the management encyclopaedias as management subfields (organizational theory, organizational behaviour, human resource management, strategic management) and fields outside the management subfields. Thus, it is possible to examine how much the weights of the items in the management subfields have changed over a certain period of time. Second, it may be the determination of how many of the articles in the encyclopaedias represent popular or fashion management issues, and how much it represents a scientific approach.