

Impact of the Sustainable Development Goals on the academic research agenda. A scientometric analysis

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Abstract

Today, global challenges such as poverty, inequality, and sustainability are at the core of the academic debate. This centrality has only increased since the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whose scope is to shift the world on to a path of resilience focused on promoting sustainable development. The main purpose of this paper is to develop a critical yet comprehensive scientometric analysis of the global academic production on the SDGs, from its approval in 2015 to 2020, conducted using Web of Science (WoS) database. Despite it being a relatively short period of time, scholars have published more than five thousand research papers in the matter, mainly in the fields of green and sustainable sciences. The attained results show how prolific authors and schools of knowledge are emerging, as key topics such as climate change, health and the burden diseases, or the global governance of these issues. However, deeper analyses also show how research gaps exist, persist and, in some cases, are widening. Greater understanding of this body of research is needed, to further strengthen evidence-based policies able to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs. © 2022 Sianes et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.