

The Changing Trend of Collaboration Patterns in the Social Sciences: Institutional Influences on Academic Research in Korea, 2013-2016

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Abstract : Collaborative research has become more prevalent and important across disciplines because it stimulates innovation and interaction between scholars. Seeing as existing studies relatively disregarded the institutional conditions triggering collaborative research, this work aims to analyze the changing trend in collaborative work patterns among Korean social scientists. The focus of this research is the performance of social scientists who received research grants through the government's Social Science Korea (SSK) program. Using quantitative statistical methods, collaborative research patterns in a total of 2,354 papers published under the umbrella of the SSK program in peer-reviewed scholarly journals from 2013 to 2016 were examined to identify changing trends and triggering factors in collaborative research. A notable finding is that the share of collaborative research is overwhelmingly higher than that of individual research. In particular, levels of collaborative research surpassed 70%, increasing much quicker compared to other research done in the social sciences. Additionally, the most common composition of collaborative research was for two or three researchers to conduct joint research as coauthors, and this proportion has also increased steadily. Finally, a strong association between international journals and co-authorship patterns was found for the papers published by SSK program researchers from 2013 to 2016. The SSK program can be seen as the driving force behind collaboration between social scientists. Its emphasis on competition through a merit-based financial support system along with a rigorous evaluation process seems to have influenced researchers to cooperate with those who have similar research interests.

Keywords : coauthorship, collaboration, competition, cooperation, Social Science Korea, policy

Conference Title : ICSET 2018 : International Conference on Sociology of Education and Technology

Conference Location : Sydney, Australia

Conference Dates : January 29-30, 2018