arts and humanities

Netnography: an exploratory study from the ISI Web of Science

Fátima Regina Ney Matos,

Maria Manuel Rocha Teixeira Batista, Rafael Fernandes de Mesquita
Department of Languages and Cultures, CLLC, University of Aveiro

Abstract:

The netnography neologism was proposed and is defined by Kozinets (2014, p. 9) as a specialized form of ethnography. The objective of this study is to analyze the ethnography and its variant, netnography, as qualitative research methods. As research questions we will consider the real-life imponderables can not be transformed into imponderables of the virtual world and that this neologism is not suitable as research method because the virtual environment is a non-place. In this sense, there is inconsistency between the epistemological term netnography and the research practice so named. The research will be, in a first step, bibliometric. Then, semi-structured interviews with the authors identified will be held. This study is justified by the proposition of an appropriate term to the method that will be used for research in virtual environments, as well as the steps that could lead to reliability and validity of a research carried out in a non-place.

Introduction

"Imagine the reader alone, surrounded only your equipment, a nearby tropical beach to a native village, watching the boat or the boat that brought him to depart from the sea to disappear from sight" (Malinowski, 1978, p. 19). With the advent of new technologies and the spread of the Internet, is being proposed a new methodology for research in management, netnography (Kozinets, 2014). In an analogy with the above quote, a native village turns into a virtual field, the material into a software and the boat or boat in the Internet user want.

Given the above, the area to be held research involves epistemology studies with an emphasis on qualitative approaches in research in the disciplinary field of management. The research questions will consider the imponderables of real life can not be transformed into imponderables of the virtual world in order that are important phenomena that can only be understood in its essence through observation in their actual context (Malinowski, 1978).

As a product, netnography is "a report by written texts, images, sounds and videos online cyberculture, which informs through the methods of cultural anthropology" (Kozinets, 2014, p. 62). As a process, netnography is a "qualitative research methodology that adapts to new techniques of ethnographic research for the study of cultures and communities that are emerging through computer-mediated communication" (Kozinets, 2014, p. 62).

Method

In this paper an exploratory bibliometric research was carried out in a major international databases, the ISI Web of Knowledge/Web of Science. This type of research was first defined by Pritchard (1969, p. 349) and its use as Raising (1962), has the intention to research a particular field of science from its historical evolution, domestic production and international books and articles and their use.
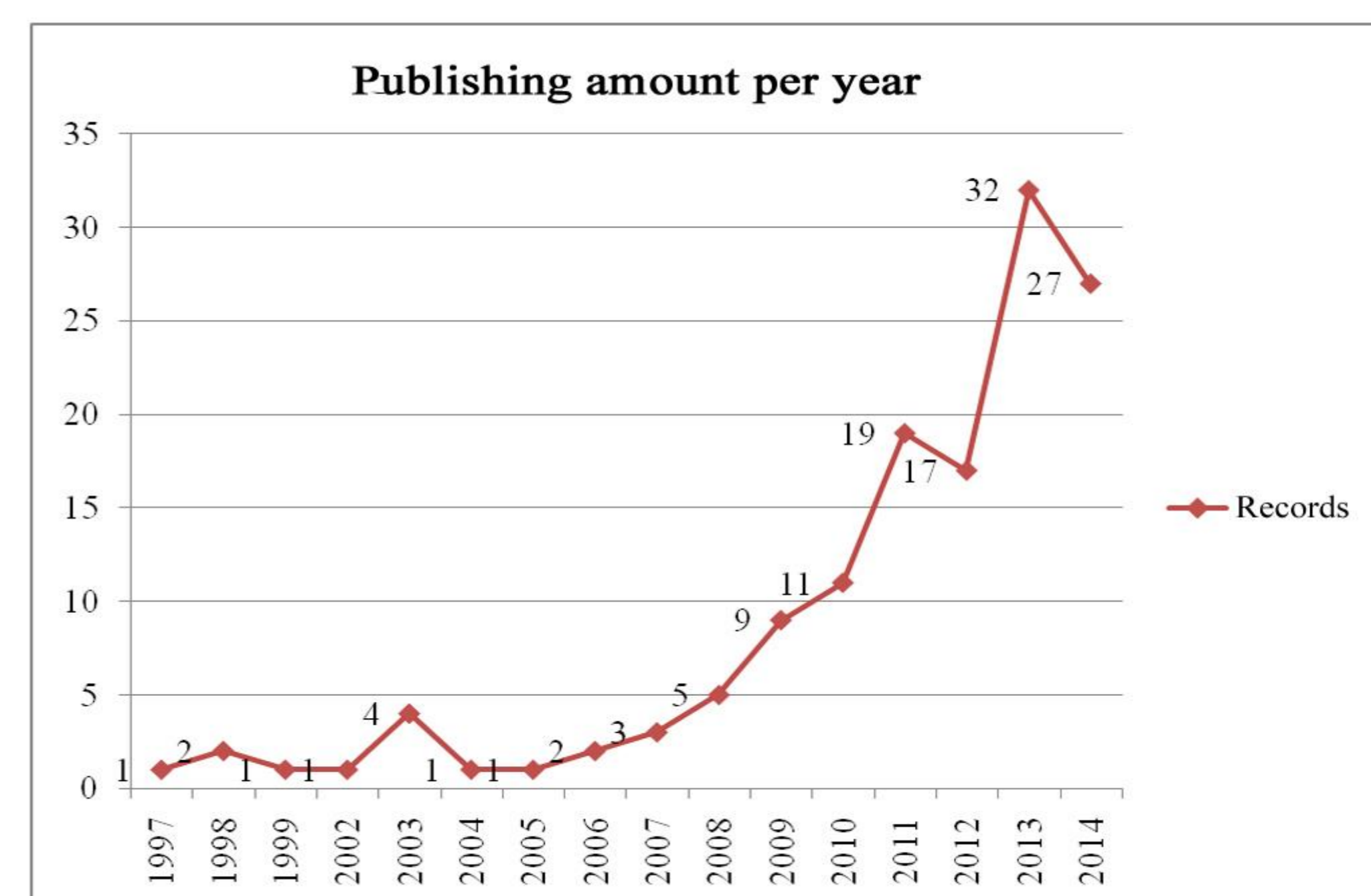
Analysis of Results

The use of the term netnograph* returned 136 results in any major database collection Web of Sciencetm. The use of the asterisk at the end serves to filter results in various forms of the word form, so it written in the singular and plural and its variations (mainly "netnography" and "netnographic").

The first record in 1997, is the author Kozinets with the work "'I want to believe': the netnography of the X-Philes' subculture of consumption" published in the journal "Advances in consumer research." He remains the author with the highest number of publications from the research with the term netnograph * with six published papers, 170 citations within the set of items that use the same term and 795 citations of these works across the Web of Sciencetm, regardless the search term.

References

Kozinets, R.V. (2014). Netnografia - Realizando pesquisa etnográfica online. Porto Alegre: Penso.

Malinowski, B. (1978). Argonautas do Pacífico ocidental. São Paulo: Abril Cultural.

Pritchard, A. (1969). Statistical bibliography or bibliometrics? Journal of Documentation, 25, n. 4, p. 348-349.

Raising, L. (1962). Statistical Bibliography in the health science. Bulletin of the Medical Library Association, vol. 50, n. 3, p. 450-461.

Year	Records
1997	1
1998	2
1999	1
2002	1
2003	4
2004	1
2005	1
2006	2
2007	3
2008	5
2009	9
2010	11
2011	19
2012	17
2013	32
2014	27

Table 1 / frequency distribution of academic productions records by year.

Graph 1 / Evolution of publications on netnography by year.

Distribution of publications that used netnography by all countries with records in the main collection of Web of Science								
	Pais	n	TLCS*	TGCS*		Pais	n	TLCS	TGCS
1	USA	37	147	1111	16	New Zealand	3	1	31
2	Australia	19	7	72	17	Spain	3	0	2
3	United Kingdom	18	13	153	18	Germany	2	3	9
4	**uninformed**	13	55	212	19	Netherlands	2	4	137
5	Canada	8	46	159	20	Russia	2	0	2
6	China	8	20	141	21	Taiwan	2	4	10
7	Norway	7	1	16	22	Belgium	1	1	9
8	Sweden	6	0	6	23	Cyprus	1	0	0
9	Finland	5	6	32	24	Denmark	1	0	1
10	France	5	0	59	25	Greece	1	0	0
11	Israel	4	3	29	26	India	1	0	0
12	Italy	4	0	11	27	Singapore	1	0	3
13	Austria	3	5	96	28	Switzerland	1	0	0
14	Brazil	3	0	16	29	Turkey	1	0	0
15	Ireland	3	0	8	30	Vietnam	1	0	12

Table 2 / frequency distribution of academic productions records by geographical locations (countries).
*TLCS – Total local citation score
* TGCS – Total global citation score