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Hotspots and Frontier Trends of Urban Governance Research in China Based on Knowledge Graph—— Literature Analysis Based on CNKI (2000-2022)



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Abstract

The research uses the Citespace, and takes 1041 urban governance literatures indexed by CSSCI in CNKI database from 2000 to 2022 as the analysis object. This paper statistically analyzes the research hotspots and frontier trends in this field. The results show that research in this field is highly sensitive to policy changes. In the 21st century, research hotspots have focused on "community governance", "grassroots governance", "multiple co-governance", "governance system", "consultative democracy" and "rural governance". At present, the most cutting-edge research focuses on the topic of smart city construction. There are problems such as unstable cooperative relationship, "chasing hot spots", insufficient traceability theoretical research, and lack of integration of interdisciplinary methodology in current study. Therefore, future research can start from these aspects and continuously improve the urban governance research system with Chinese characteristics.

Keywords: Urban Governance; Knowledge Graph; Research Frontier; Co-word Analysis

Introduction

Urban governance is an essential component of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capabilities. Since the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, a series of related ideas, such as refined urban governance, collaborative governance with the rule of law, enhanced grassroots governance efficiency, and the awakening of a people-centered ideology, have flourished. These ideas have not only become the governing principles for urban management departments but have also ignited enthusiasm in academic research. This article's technical implementation was carried out using the Citespace software, which was designed and developed by Professor Chen Chaomei[1]. He developed this software based on the theories of co-citation analysis and pathfinding network algorithms, enabling text-based analysis for visualizing literature research.

Discussion

This article takes 1,041 journal papers in the field of urban governance from the China Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI)

published between 2000 and 2022 as samples. Utilizing Citespace visualization analysis software as a tool, it conducts bibliometric analysis. The study generates a knowledge map of urban governance research in the 21st century, showcasing the hotspots in the field, reviewing the evolutionary trends of research, analyzing the current research deficiencies, and outlining future improvement directions. This research provides support for the construction of a unique Chinese-style urban governance research system.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, several characteristics of research in the field of urban governance in China can be observed. Firstly, research in the field of urban governance is highly sensitive to policy changes. Significant events such as important conferences or policy releases drive increased research interest. This reflects the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of research related to urban governance, indicating that it is a vibrant field. Secondly, since 2000, research in the field of urban

governance has gone through several stages. In the early period (2000-2008), research topics were more concentrated, focusing on community governance, pluralistic governance, governance structures, and governance models. After 2008, research topics diversified, evolved quickly, and became more interdisciplinary, especially with the integration of smart cities, marking a new trend in research. Thirdly, since 2000, research hotspots in the field of urban governance have concentrated on areas such as “community governance,” “grassroots governance,” “pluralistic governance,” “governance systems,” “deliberative democracy,” “rural governance,” and more. In recent years, topics related to urban smartification and emergency management, particularly in response to epidemics, have gradually become research hotspots. However, due to their relatively recent emergence, the overall volume of literature in these areas lags behind research fields that have received continuous attention since the early 21st century.

At the same time, this article also identified some shortcomings in urban governance research. Firstly, researchers in this field have not formed long-term and stable academic circles. Most collaborations are based on short-term relationships such as teacher-student connections or temporary cooperation on specific topics. This reflects the characteristic of scholars in the field of public administration expressing diverse views and engaging in spirited debates, but it also results in issues related

to the lack of continuity and difficulty in building a systematic body of research. Secondly, research in urban management tends to “chase hot topics” rather than establishing in-depth and stable research frameworks. Due to the continuous shifts in research focus in response to policy trends, there is a lack of in-depth theoretical research. Without a solid foundation and consistent theoretical frameworks, it is challenging to construct a robust disciplinary foundation in this field. Thirdly, research in this field leans towards qualitative analysis and lacks the intervention of technical methods. Keyword analysis reveals that there is an absence of vocabulary related to methodological aspects among high-frequency keywords. In contrast, English-language literature frequently includes terms related to statistics, engineering technology, and systems theory, providing robust support for urban governance research.

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