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## Book

# Hindering and facilitating factors of women's participation in cooperativism : an approach from a comparative bibliometric study of the last 15 years

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**Reference:** Inostroza, M. Alejandra/Sánchez, Paula Miranda (2023). Hindering and facilitating factors of women's participation in cooperativism : an approach from a comparative bibliometric study of the last 15 years. Liège (Belgium) : CIRIEC International, Université de Liège.  
<https://www.ciriec.uliege.be/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/WP2023-05.pdf>.  
doi:10.25518/ciriec.wp202305.

This Version is available at:  
<http://hdl.handle.net/11159/652825>

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# Working Paper

**Hindering and facilitating factors of women's participation in cooperativism: An approach from a comparative bibliometric study of the last 15 years**

M. Alejandra INOSTROZA & Paula Miranda SÁNCHEZ

**CIRIEC No. 2023/05**

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# **Hindering and facilitating factors of women's participation in cooperativism: An approach from a comparative bibliometric study of the last 15 years<sup>\*</sup>**

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**Working paper CIRIEC No. 2023/05**

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<sup>\*</sup> Paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy "Building forward better: Social and Solidarity Economy for a peaceful and fair world", Seoul (Republic of Korea), 4-6 July 2023.

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## **Abstract**

The gender disparities seen in other economic and productive sectors often recur in cooperatives (Díaz, 2015). Given that cooperatives have a number of features that lean towards gender equality, this stands as a stark contradiction to cooperative theory and practice (Alid, 2016). Additionally, based on an awareness of people as a whole, the social market economy's guiding principles support the compatibility of caring obligations and productive activity (Ribas & Sajardo, 2011).

The existence of both objective-material aspects and subjective variables is noted in relation to what would be the hurdles and facilitators of a larger complete, active, and long-term engagement of women in cooperatives (Hernández & Sánchez, 2018; Romero, 2012). Given the foregoing, this study aims to conduct a systematic review of the literature using 80 articles from the last 15 years, as well as comparative bibliometrics in other economies in Latin America, in order to identify any factors that may be preventing or facilitating women's participation in cooperative movements. As a result, we obtained three thematic clusters, Cluster 1: gender-mother-care-work; Cluster 2: education-school-policies-quality of life and Cluster 3: inequality, vulnerability, and economy. Regarding the bibliometric results, it is observed that the most influential authors and journals correspond to first world countries. This gives us a wonderful overview that affects public policies and the significance of considering this type of economy from a gender viewpoint in addition to the academic community.

**Keywords:** Gender, Cooperatives, Participation, Latin America, Other economies

**JEL Codes:** J54, J70, J81

## 1. Introduction

Women's labor-force participation has long been a concern (Gasparini & Marchionni, 2015; Heller, 2010). Academic literature has accounted for many hurdles that impede and reproduce prevailing gender disparities in societies (ILO, 2012). In this context, cooperatives appear as a viable option for eliminating or reducing gender disparities.

Cooperatives are defined as "an association of people who have voluntarily joined together to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically managed enterprise" (International Cooperative Alliance, n. d.). Although in the beginning the focus of cooperatives was on the realization of personal projects from collective organization, this has given way to formations of cooperative movements that have included among their objectives an improvement of the society to which they belong (Martínez Charterina, 2015).

Furthermore, seasonality of activities, possibilities for work-life balance and flexible hours, and self-management are all characteristics of this form of company (Alid, 2016). (Salvador et al., 2017). Furthermore, the social market economy promotes the compatibility of care responsibilities and productive labor, improves women's living conditions, and empowers them (Serra & Davidson 2021; Ribas & Sajardo, 2011; Vickers & Deckert, 2013). Finally, it has been demonstrated that the inclusion of women in executive positions in cooperatives improves the performance of these organizations (Hernández Ortiz et al., 2020).

Cooperatives, on the other hand, provide barriers to increasing full, active, and long-term participation of women, which may be influenced by both objective-material and subjective variables (Hernández & Sánchez, 2018; Romero, 2012).

Studying the limiting and facilitating factors in Latin America is important because one of the region's significant concerns is that women have children and marry at a young age, creating difficulty later in entering the job market (Bando et al., 2019). For example, just 60% of women of working age can labor for a living. Furthermore, 27 percent of them work part-time, which is more than double the rate for men. Finally, more than half of the women who work in this sector do so on the side, which means lesser pay and harsher working conditions. Cooperatives, on the other hand, have a long history of assisting in the generation of income and the creation of employment opportunities in Latin America. Although there is now a lack of integration, which restricts the power of cooperatives, this model has proved its benefits in decreasing poverty and has significant future prospects to reduce informality and boost the development of underprivileged groups (ILO, 2012).

Thus, this study provides light on a subject that has received little attention in the academic literature, particularly when it comes to the variables that impede and facilitate women's participation in cooperatives. It also provides a chance for future public initiatives to take these aspects into account in order to more effectively promote women's labor-force participation and enhance their working conditions.

As a result, this study proposes to conduct a systematic review of 60 articles published in the last 15 years, as well as comparative bibliometrics in Latin American countries and other economies, on the factors reported in the literature as impeding or facilitating women's participation in cooperativism. In this way, three thematic clusters emerged: Cluster 1: gender-mother-care-work; Cluster 2: education-school-policies-quality of life; and Cluster 3: inequality, vulnerability, and the economy. According to the bibliometric statistics, the most influential writers and periodicals are from first-world countries.

This sort of study provides a broad picture of the growth of many themes in the academic world through time, utilizing the number of papers published and citations as indications of productivity in the problem and the impact of the works (Bonilla, Merigó, & Torres, 2015). As a result, the importance of doing bibliometrics on women's cooperative involvement is based on the ability to provide a comprehensive overview of what has been studied on this topic in Latin America, which streamlines research and decision-making on the subject.

The methodology section of the paper explains the systematic literature review (SLR) and bibliometrics. Following that, the findings of the 60-article study, classified into three theme clusters, are provided. In addition, the bibliometrics results are displayed. Finally, the findings are analyzed, and conclusions and constraints for future research are offered.

## **2. Methodology**

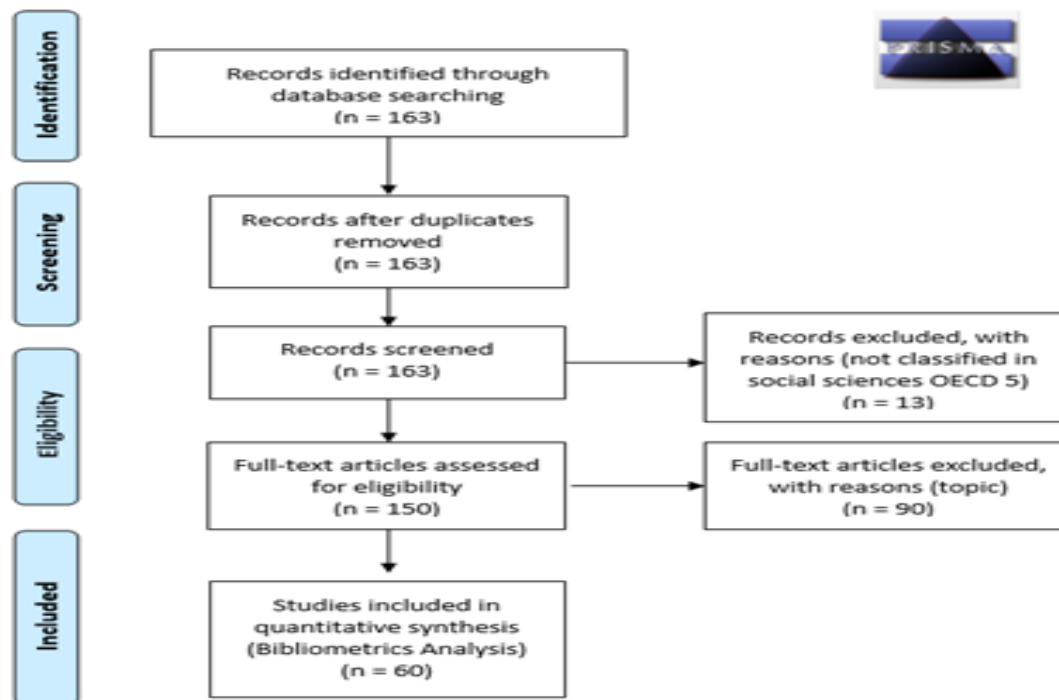
The methodology applied in the present study comprised two consecutive processes. First, a *systematic literature review* (SLR) was carried out, which allowed a replicable and transparent literature review of the topic through inclusion and exclusion criteria. Subsequently, a bibliometric analysis was applied to identify trends, impact, and collaboration in the selection of papers obtained from the SLR.1.1.



## 2.1. Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

A *systematic literature review* (SLR) was performed that considered high-impact academic publications indexed in the Web of Science database (Clarivate). This methodology was submitted to the structured protocol Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and MetaAnalyses (PRISMA) to define inclusion/exclusion criteria. Its process is detailed in Figure 1. Thus, the following steps were carried out:

**Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart of literature search and review**



### 2.1.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria were established to avoid bias in the selection of the academic literature. These correspond to:

*Criteria for inclusion of documents:*

- Indexed in Web of Science, Article type.
- With thematic category related to Social Sciences (OECD 5 area).
- Addressing some aspect of the topic of study.



- With authorships affiliated to Latin American institutions and specific countries: Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

*Criteria for exclusion of documents:*

- Duplicate papers presenting the same authorship(s) and body of research, with special attention to results and conclusions.
- Not related to the field of study, when reviewing title, abstract and full text.

### **2.1.2 Identification of the time period**

A time window was considered to provide an overview of published research between 2007-2022. The data were extracted in June 2022.

### **2.1.3 Data Selection**

The Web of Science (WoS) database was chosen to account for peer-reviewed, high-impact Article publications. These are included in the national and worldwide academic literature and are used and cited in the creation of fresh original research.

### **2.1.4 Selection of keywords (search strategy)**

According to the research topic, the following search strategy was structured and applied to the title, abstract and keywords of the documents in WoS: (“Cooperativa” OR “Cooperativas” OR “Cooperativismo” OR “Economía solidaria” OR “Economía social” OR “Economía colaborativa” OR “Economía comunitaria” OR “Colaborative economy” OR “Social economy” OR “Community economies” OR “Solidarity economy” OR “Cooperative” OR “Cooperatives” OR “Cooperativism”) AND (Género OR Gender OR Mujer OR Mujeres OR Woman OR Women OR Feminis\* OR Femenin\* OR Female) AND (Participación OR Participation).

### 2.1.5 Literature selection

In the first instance, 163 documents met the initial criteria, therefore, with indexation, date of publication, document typology and key words, present in the metadata considered.

A total of 103 documents were excluded for being duplicates, not being classified in the OECD 5 Social Sciences area or not being related to the field of research according to the review of bibliographic information and/or full text.

Finally, 60 articles were considered for bibliometric analysis and qualitative synthesis of thematic clusters analyzed in the following process.

## 2.2. Bibliometric Analysis and Mapping

Next, a bibliometric analysis was applied to the set of selected articles using the InCites (Clarivate) and VOSviewer (CWT) tools, each of which focused on providing specific information for the analysis. On the one hand, InCites made it possible to determine the impact and productivity of the main authors, institutions, countries and documents, according to the following indicators:

<b>Total articles:</b>	Total number of papers on the analyzed topic.
<b>Total cites:</b>	Total number of citations received by the papers, according to the information provided by the database at the date of data extraction.
<b>Highest Quartile:</b>	Indicates the best position achieved by the journal, where Q1 corresponds to those journals that rank in the top 25% of the set with the highest impact in the discipline considered.
<b>First Author:</b>	Indicates the number of times an author, institution or country occupied the first position in the list of co-authorships of a paper.
<b>International Collaboration:</b>	Reports the number of co-authored articles linked to international institutions.

In addition, the VOSviewer platform of the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) was used to generate *bibliometrics mapping* that allowed

detection of research topics and validation of the classification established in the "Literature Selection" process. For the present study, the analyses were used: *Network y Overlay visualizations*. The first one presents network information through clusters differentiated by colors; the second one allows detecting trends and impact of the analyzed information. At the same time, the tool allows the choice of multiple types of network analysis, for the purpose of the study: co-authorship applied to Author, Organization and Countries; and co-occurrence of words.

For this analysis, standardized keywords (Keywords Plus) proposed by the database were used. These were improved through manual information processing consisting of homologating similar terms and/or cleaning up terms in singular/plural.

In consideration of the above, the following indicators provided by the tool were used:

<b>Total Link Strength:</b>	Indicates the total number of links that exist between a node and others. A link is a relationship between one node and another, since they are included in the same paper. A node can represent the name of an author, country, keyword. Thus, the greater the number of links, the greater the presence of the node and, in turn, the greater its weight in the network.
<b>Av. Citation:</b>	Indicates the average number of citations a node receives, according to the total for each paper in which it appears. This indicator considers the best citation value obtained in WoS databases.
<b>Av. Pub. Year:</b>	It indicates the average number of years of a node, according to the date of publication of the papers considered, allowing to detect trends.
<b>Co-occurrence:</b>	Indicates the frequency of a node. Thus, the higher the value, the greater the presence in the set of papers analyzed.

Thus, the information analyzed made it possible to provide definitive validation of the main thematic lines addressed in the final section of the literature, since it made it possible to determine their main focus and to classify them according to their main lines of research.

### 3. Results

The following are the results of the research, which are divided into two sections. First, a bibliographic review of the articles categorized in the three clusters. Second, a bibliometric analysis that evaluates the scientific production of the published articles, the number of citations, keywords, authors, countries, and most influential institutions.

#### 3.1. Bibliographic review

##### 3.1.1 *Cluster 1 (gender - mother - care - work)*

The influence of attitudes, prejudices, and preconceptions linked with the status of women in society is noted to be a distinct barrier throughout Latin America (Salcedo et al., 2020). This can even contribute to the absence of women in several cooperatives (Patel-Campillo & Garca, 2018).

Despite the efforts of both public and private organizations, including cooperatives, the conceptions associated with gender roles arise as impediments to women's participation in cooperativism, frequently being invisibilized and veiled even in myths about the origins of cooperatives (Costa, 2011). This is especially visible in Latin America's rural areas, where gender stereotypes are repeated even inside cooperative activity (de Arce, 2018).

One of the issues that could explain this situation is seeing women as a homogeneous group rather than attempting to comprehend this group within its distinctive complexity (Patel-Campillo & Garca, 2018).

There are now experiences that account for the possibilities of women's empowerment through meditation on the importance of their participation in organizations, raising questions about their role in the family economy. This, together with the efforts of the organizations, has the potential to boost women's participation (Montú, 2020).

The cultural barrier crosses regional borders and is visible in the remaining economies investigated. This could be related to a traditional perspective of gender roles, particularly among family members (Ahado et al., 2022; Kimura, 2010; Ugur-Cinar et al., 2022; Wijers, 2019), but it could also be due to issues inside cooperatives and initiatives that encourage women's engagement in cooperative groups (Dubois, 2021; Shamier et al., 2021).

This has a number of negative effects for female engagement. On the one hand, research has demonstrated that at the labor level, gender visions are mirrored in reduced female membership in cooperatives (Matchaya, 2010). As a result,

certain forms of cooperatives, such as women-only cooperatives, are more accessible to women than mixed cooperatives (Dohmwirth & Hanisch, 2019; Dohmwirth & Liu, 2020).

However, certain facilitators may emerge within gender role paradigms, such as interactions inside the household being built on a more equitable balance of power (Meier zu Selhausen, 2016). To enhance female engagement, Niyonkuru and Barrett (2021) advise addressing the cultural and institutional norms that sustain gender inequality at the family and community levels. Participation in cooperatives may also result in women having less authority over their partners in household decisions (Dutt et al., 2016).

Another facilitator is the flexibility of workplace regulations and consequences, such as better options for bargaining (Jimmy & Moumouni, 2015), as well as creating conditions that allow for the care of family members during working hours (Meyers & Vallas, 2016).

### ***3.1.2 Cluster 2 (education - school - policies - quality of life)***

Cluster 2 covers subjects related to education, schooling, policies to promote women's participation in cooperatives and quality of life. Among these concepts, the emphasis on policies was transversal both for the articles that studied the Latin American context and those that worked on other contexts.

Soto Alarcón and Sato (2019) demonstrated the relevance of compensating social rewards in Latin America, such as the support of other cooperative members, the community, and external actors. Thus, mutual trust and cooperation among cooperative members are critical to overcoming other challenges, such as a shortage of time (Soto Alarcón & Sato, 2019). Other good outcomes of cooperative engagement include the quality of life of other household members. Increased education for girls, for example (Gitter et al., 2012).

Regarding policies aimed at boosting cooperatives in Latin America, it is worth noting that the majority of sponsored economic development programs either focus on managing men's activities (Hanson, 2016) or fail to accomplish their objectives (Lyon, 2008). One example is the measures implemented in Peru or Chile, where there was no stated policy for the inclusion of women, as opposed to what occurred in Cuba (Deere, 2019). Thus, it emphasizes the importance of implementing policies that are focused both on the specific social context of societies (Weisz et al., 2022) and on the explicit participation of women (Vargas, 2020), as the Caritas network in Brazil has done, namely, building commitments

and strategies to open spaces for participation and training of women for the future (Martins & Barbosa, 2022).

Other countries' studies emphasize the role of education in cooperative engagement. This is the case in the study by Montanari and Bergh (2019), who show that women's participation in cooperative management is limited to delivering inexpensive or even free labor, whereas cooperative structures can only benefit literate and well-educated people economically. Mwambi et al. (2020) discovered that older, male, and specialized farmers are more likely to engage in cooperatives.

According to Ahado et al. (2021), institutions should invest in and build capacity for gender sensitization and information transfer channels inside cooperatives. This not only allows women to participate more in these groups, but it also helps to increase cooperative performance (Othman et al., 2021).

According to Ibourk and Raoui (2022), cooperatives, unlike other types of entrepreneurship, have the potential to improve the living conditions and well-being of their members and their families. Serra and Davidson (2021), for example, indicate that membership in cooperatives enables women to improve their self-esteem and find support through self-help groups. Along similar lines, Othman et al. (2021) conclude that membership in these groups has helped women improve their public speaking skills, ability to assume leadership roles, decision-making capability, and self-confidence.

Finally, measures aimed at increasing women's participation in cooperatives have not performed as expected, which can be attributed to a variety of factors. On the one hand, there is a dearth of knowledge about the cooperative system or other mechanisms associated with the solidarity economy (Bonnar-White et al., 2013). In addition to the foregoing, there is a lack of specialized measures that address the requirements and obstacles experienced by women (Ramnarain, 2015; Wiese, 2020), as well as the various contexts, social institutions, and jurisprudence (Blake, 2015; Brent, 2020; Rustinsyah et al., 2021; Sakai, 2010).

### **3.1.3 Cluster 3 (*inequality - vulnerability - economy*)**

Unlike the preceding two groupings, there is less scholarly work in Latin America on the effects of inequality, vulnerability, and economy as barriers or facilitators of women's cooperative engagement. As a result, it can only be concluded that women's empowerment is tied to cooperative engagement (Vickers & Deckert, 2013). Furthermore, female labor insertion in solidarity economy organizations enables women to boost their earnings (Hillenkamp, 2015).

According to research from other countries, as the responsibilities and complexity of organizations expand, women's participation in decision-making roles declines (Hernandez Ortiz et al., 2018). Similarly, in cooperatives, there is imbalance in the tasks undertaken by men and women (Aazami et al., 2019). Masamha et al. (2018) observed this gender-based difference, demonstrating how men inside the cooperative played a significant role in resource control, marketing, and income.

However, there are strategies to encourage more female participation in cooperatives, particularly in decision-making and leadership roles. According to Bezboruah and Pillai (2015), as women's participation increases, so does the number of women in organizational governance.

On the economic front, there is no agreement on the elements that influence women's cooperative involvement. Some authors argue that membership in a cooperative does not automatically strengthen women's control over their income (Dohmworth & Hanisch, 2018), which is due to women having a lesser standing in terms of income inside these organizations than men (Miller, 2012). This is exacerbated by incorporating social class criteria into the analysis, given that it is not the middle and professional classes that tend to receive greater benefits from certain financial solidarity organizations (Pavlovskaya et al., 2020).

A higher poverty rate, on the other hand, can be viewed as a factor that encourages women to join cooperatives. This is because various studies have demonstrated that cooperatives provide an opportunity for women with little resources, including not just the potential to obtain incomes, but also authority over production decisions (Agarwal, 2020; Atmiş et al., 2007; Daya & Authar, 2012; Mwambi et al., 2021; Shangase, 2022; Tsuchiya, 2010). This would even be enhanced if within the cooperatives there were logics of cooperation between men and women (Orr et al., 2016).

Nair and Moolakkattu (2015) find that the way property rights and gender relations are constituted severely limits the amount of women's empowerment through women's cooperatives. Furthermore, when there are fewer males than women in the organizations, women's participation is lower (Mulungu & Mudege, 2020).

To summarize, cooperatives have shown to be a support for female empowerment, which leads to increased participation in decision-making (Elder et al., 2012; Mwambi et al., 2021). As Dutta and Thaker (2020) note out, women's participation in behaviors that materially defy capitalist forms of economic operation disrupts inequities in homes and market institutions,



resulting in greater empowerment through cooperative groups and solidarity economies.

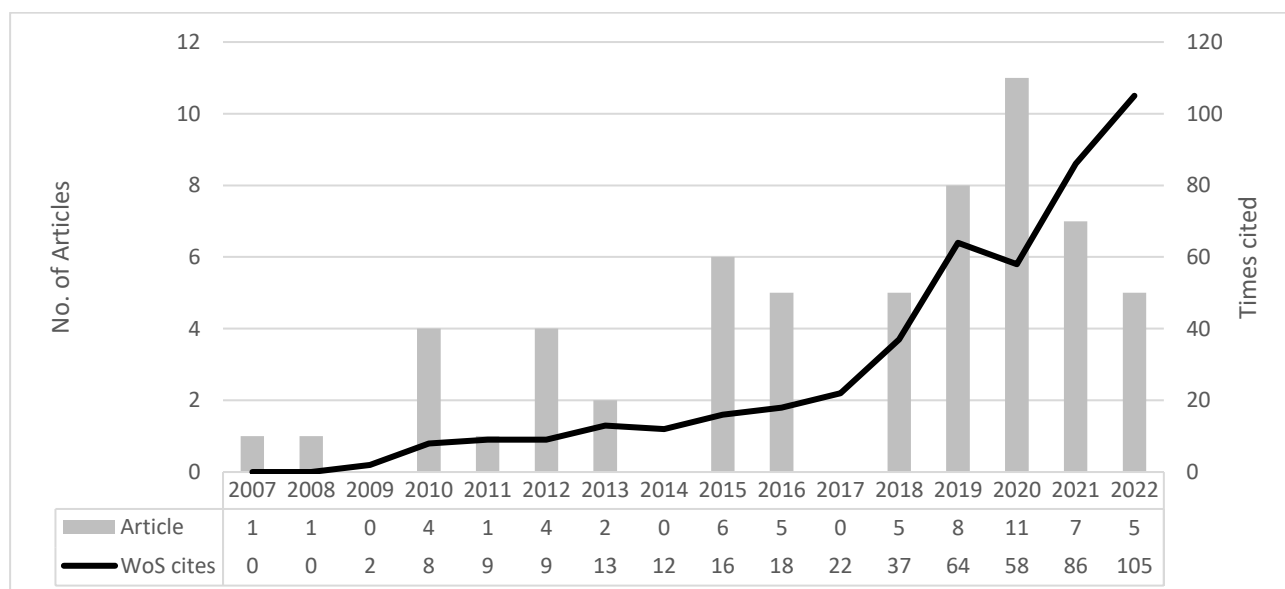
## 3.2 Bibliometric results

### 3.2.1 Evaluation and analysis of scientific production

The following is an analysis of the articles related with the three proposed theme clusters. To do this, an annual distribution of the collection of papers chosen for this study was employed, taking into account that they were published within the last 15 years, i.e. between 2007 and 2022. Graph 1 depicts the number of publications produced each year as well as the number of citations. It should be noted that the latter figure corresponds to all of the articles published up to that point in the year.

Thus, Graph 1 shows that the highest number of published articles occurred in 2020, with 11 publications. An interesting finding is the concentration of publications observed in the last 5 years, concentrating 60% of the publications in the sample. This may be due to a growing interest in the study of gender and cooperatives, which is supported by the number of citations that has been increasing over the years, with 2022 being the year with the most citations (105).

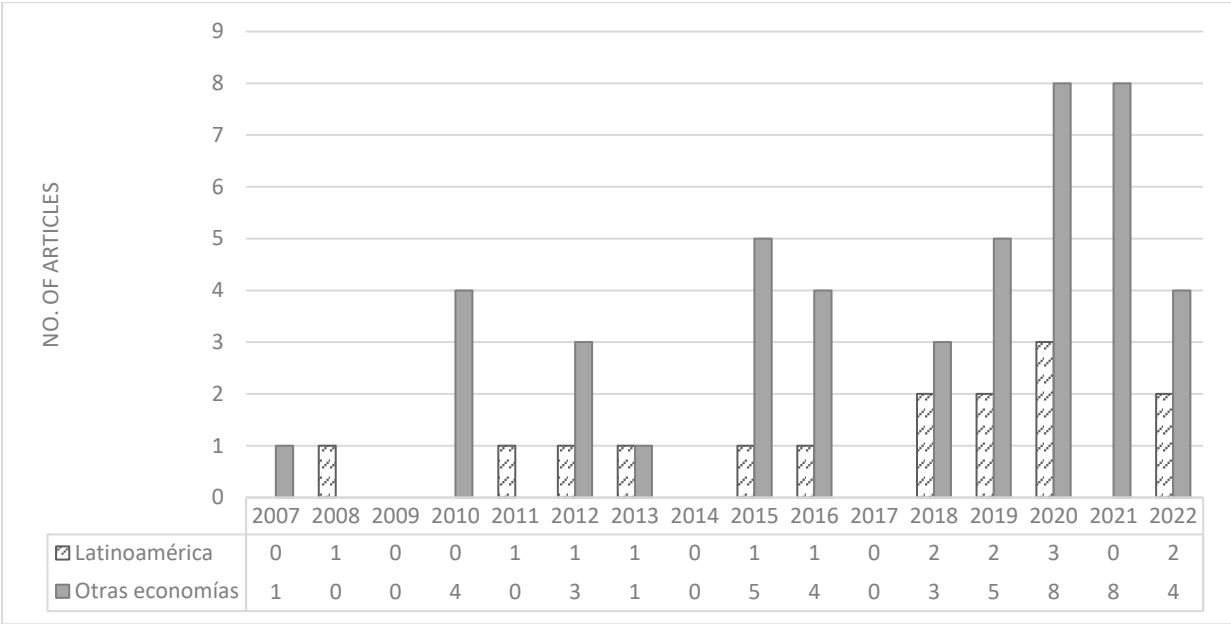
**Graph 1: Annual distribution of articles and evolution of citations between 2007 and 2022**



Source: elaborated by the authors

Now, if we focus on these same indicators according to the type of economy, we can clearly observe a concentration of publications from countries that do not belong to Latin America, obtaining 46 articles, while for Latin American countries there are only 15 publications. As we saw in Graph 1, the highest concentration of articles occurred in 2020 (11 articles), of which 3 belong to Latin America and 8 to other economies (Graph 2).

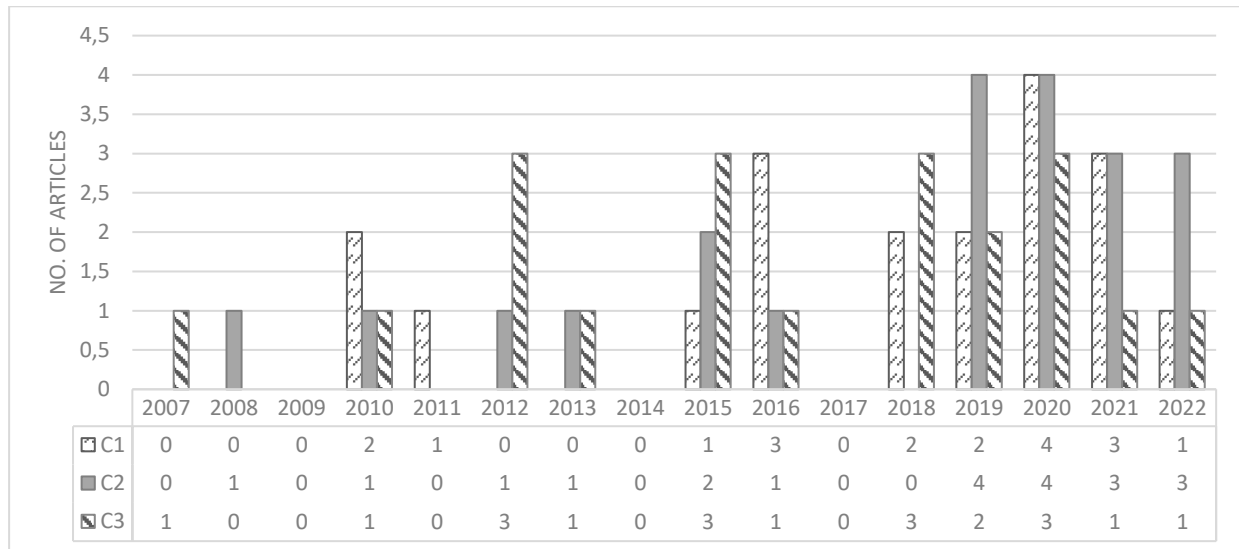
**Graph 2: Annual distribution of items between 2007 and 2022, for Latin America and Other economies**



Source: Elaborated by the authors

Graph 3 shows the production of articles from the clusters, of the total number of articles, 21 belong to cluster 2, with the first article published in 2008 and having its highest concentration between 2019 and 2022 (14 publications). In second place is cluster 3 with 20 articles, with its first publication in 2007 and with a higher concentration between 2018 and 2020 (8 publications). In last place is cluster 1 with 19 articles, with a peak between 2020 and 2021 with 7 publications.

**Graph 3: Annual distribution of items between 2007 and 2022, by cluster**



Source: Elaborated by the authors

Tables 1 and 2 show the most cited articles for Latin America and Other economies. Here we can see the 10 most cited articles, the type of document, the year of publication, the quartile, the number of citations received and the journal in which the publication was published. Thus, Table 1 shows that the most cited publication for Latin America is from 2008. In addition, it is interesting to note that only the first 7 places have citations.

**Table 1: Most cited articles (Latin America)**

Article Title	Document type	Year	Highest Quartile	WoS cites	Source
We want to be equal to them: Fair-trade coffee certification and gender equity within organizations	Article	2008	Q3	34	Human Organization
Fair Trade-Organic Coffee Cooperatives, Migration, and Secondary Schooling in Southern Mexico	Article	2012	Q2	13	Journal of Development Studies
Women's ecological oral histories of recycling and development in coastal Yucatan	Article	2016	Q3	12	Gender Place and Culture
Enacting peasant moral community economies for sustainable livelihoods: A case of women-led cooperatives in rural Mexico	Article	2019	Q1	10	World Development
Un/associated: Accounting for gender difference and farmer heterogeneity among Peruvian Sierra potato small farmers	Article	2018	Q1	6	Journal of Rural Studies
Solidarity Economy for Development and Women's Emancipation: Lessons from Bolivia	Article	2015	Q2	4	Development and Change

Sewing Empowerment: Examining Multiple Identity Shifts as a Mexican Immigrant Woman Develops Expertise in a Sewing Cooperative Community of Practice	Article	2013	Q2	3	Journal of Language Identity and Education
Women and Solidarity Economy: time to discuss the relationship!	Article	2011	n/a	0	Sociedade e Cultura
Cooperativism in Spain and Cuba: converging ideas on women's participation	Article	2020	n/a	0	Revista Cooperativismo y Desarrollo-Coodes
Rural Women and the Agrarian Reforms in Peru, Chile and Cuba	Article	2019	n/a	0	Revista Andina de Estudios Politicos

Fuente: elaboración propia

As for non-Latin American countries, the most cited article in 2016, concentrating 45 citations, while the second place obtains 44. Here we can observe the difference with the citations of the two most cited articles for Latin America, which only obtain 34 and 13 citations the two first places.

**Table 2: Most cited articles (Other economies)**

Article Title	Document type	Year	Highest Quartile	WoS cites	Source
What determines women's participation in collective action? Evidence from a western ugandan coffee cooperative	Article	2016	Q1	45	Feminist Economics
Effects of fair trade certification on social capital: The case of rwandan coffee producers	Article	2012	Q1	44	World Development
Exploring links between women's business ownership and empowerment among maasai women in Tanzania	Article	2016	Q4	25	Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy
Diversity regimes in worker cooperatives: Workplace inequality under conditions of worker control	Article	2016	Q3	26	Sociological Quarterly
Factors affecting women's participation in forestry in turkey	Article	2007	Q1	19	Ecological Economics
What do we mean by women's crops'? Commercialisation, gender and the power to name	Article	2016	Q4	18	Journal of International Development
Does cooperative membership matter for women's empowerment? Evidence from South Indian dairy producers	Article	2020	Q4	16	Journal Of Development Effectiveness
A gendered analysis of the income generating activities under the green morocco plan: Who profits?	Article	2019	Q1	17	Human Ecology

"Gender Trouble": Investigating Gender and Economic Democracy in Worker Cooperatives in the United States	Article	2012	Q4	16	Review Of Radical Political Economics
Which type of producer organization is (more) inclusive? Dynamics of farmers' membership and participation in the decision-making process	Article	2020	Q3	15	Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics

Source: Elaborated by the authors

### 3.2.2 Key words

By analyzing the key words of the articles, we obtain three concepts that guide this research (gender, cooperatives and participation), in addition to empowerment, women, impact and collective action.

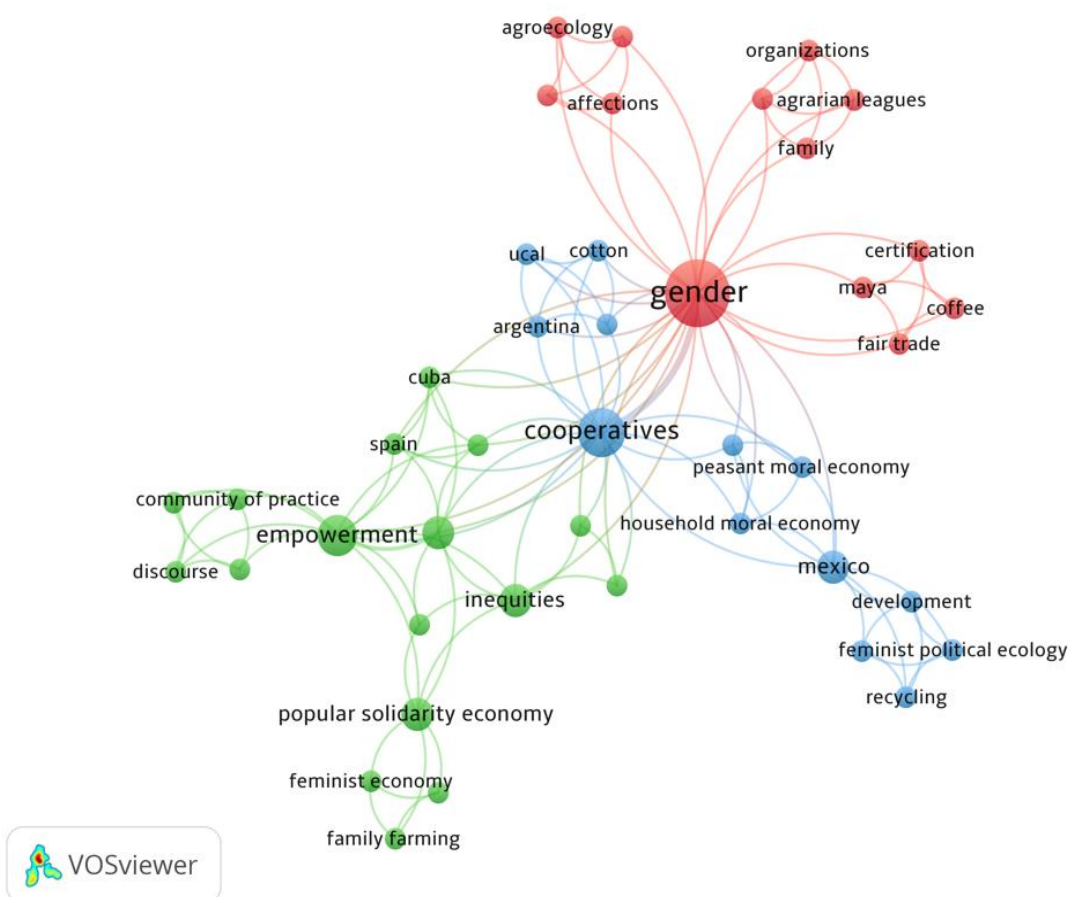
**Table 3: Keywords**

Keyword	Total link strength	Occurrences	Cluster	Avg. Pub. Year	Avg. Citation
gender	112	21	1	2017	10
cooperatives	46	9	2	2017	14
participation	30	5	1	2020	4
empowerment	27	6	3	2017	6
woman	25	7	1	2017	1
impact	24	3	1	2020	3
collective action	19	4	2	2019	15
work	17	3	1	2014	10
microfinance	17	2	1	2017	15
poverty	17	2	1	2019	16
rural development	16	4	3	2020	6
development	14	3	3	2018	8
agricultural cooperatives	13	2	1	2021	4
women's cooperatives	12	3	3	2021	2
fair trade	12	3	2	2011	26
decision-making	12	2	1	2021	11
commercialization	12	2	1	2017	11
organizations	12	2	1	2018	13
inequities	11	3	3	2020	2
ethiopia	10	2	2	2021	12

Source: Elaborated by the authors

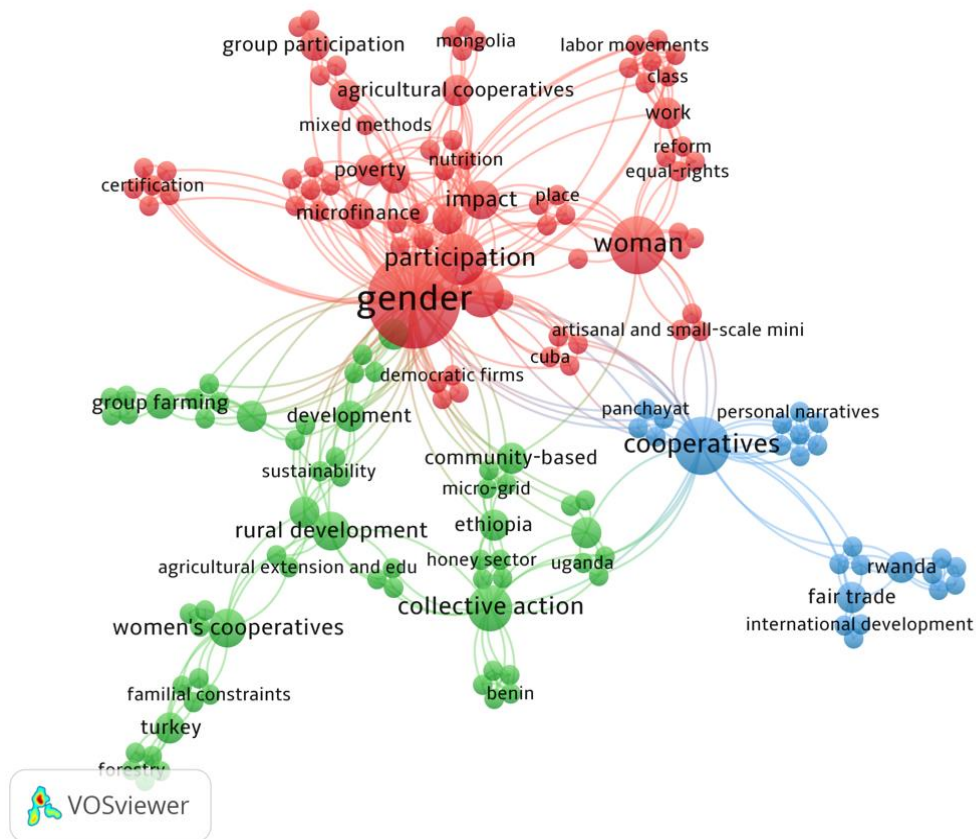
As explained in the methodology, to analyze the keywords, we used the VOSviewer software to visualize the network of co-occurrence between the 3 major clusters: (1) gender-motherhood-care-work, in red; (2) education-school-policies-quality of life, in blue; and (3) inequality-vulnerability-economy, in green. Thus, the bibliometric maps show that the main nodes are gender, cooperatives and empowerment for Latin America (bibliometric map 1), and gender, women, participation, cooperatives and collective action for the rest of the countries (bibliometric map 2).

### Bibliometric map 1: Keywords (Latin America)



Source: Elaborated by the authors

## Bibliometric map 2: Key words (Other economies)



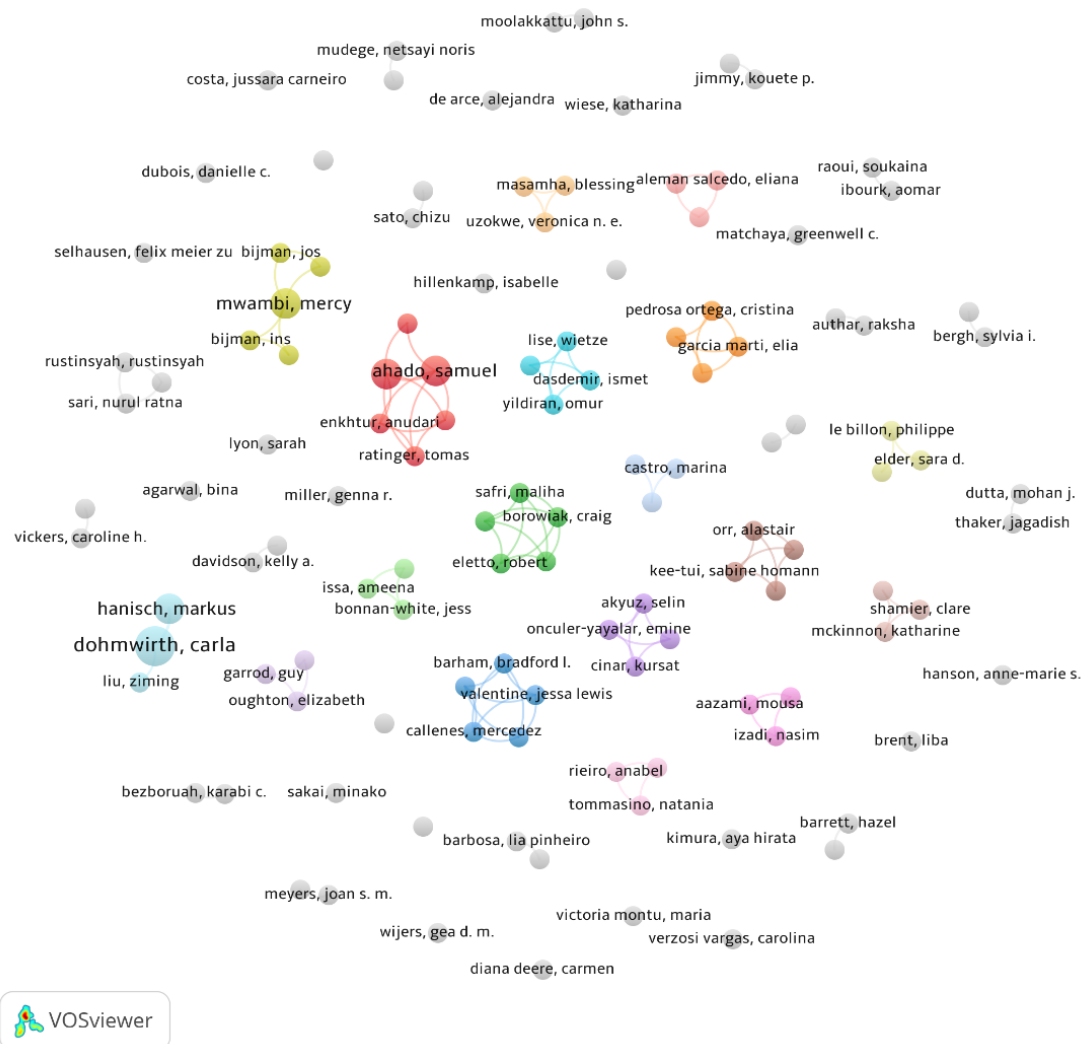
Source: Elaborated by the authors

### 3.2.3 Most influential authors

The following are the names of the co-authorship networks, where some important networks, such as the red, yellow, green, blue and light blue, stand out. In these networks, authors such as Dohmwirth, Ahado, Mwambi, among others, stand out.



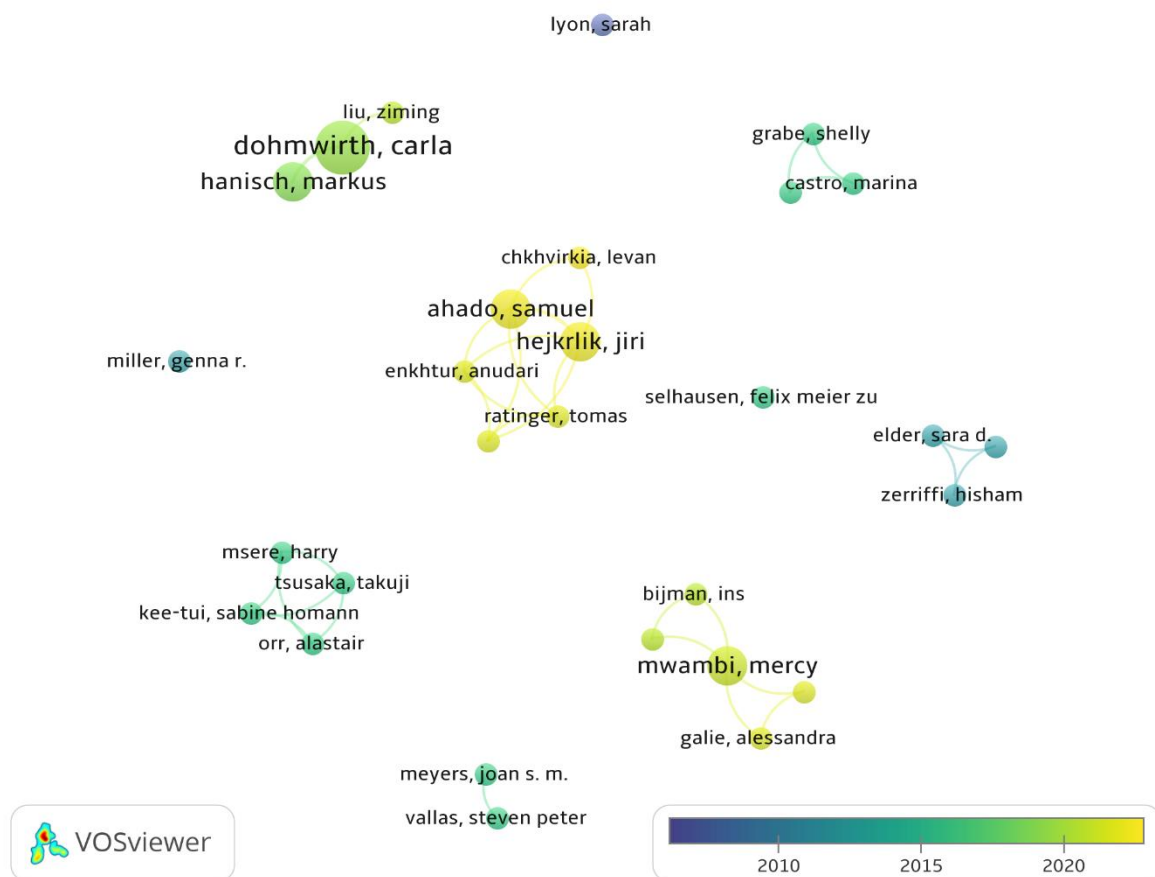
### Bibliometric map 3: Network of co-authors of researchers, in Network visualization (VOSviewer)



Source: Elaborated by the authors

In bibliometric map 4, the author networks that guide the publications can be seen, as well as the approximate year in which the publications were made, ranging from 2010 (blue) and 2020 (yellow). Thus, more publications made in recent years stand out, with green and yellow colors. Among the authors that stand out are C. Dohmworth, M. Hanisch, S. Ahado and M. Mwambi, among others.

#### Bibliometric map 4: Co-author network of leading researchers in Overlay visualization (VOSviewer)



On the other hand, Tables 4 and 5 present a ranking of authors together with their institutional affiliation, country, number of articles, citations and international collaborations for the two categories of countries we are analyzing. Thus, in the Latin American case, Sarah Lyon from the University of Wisconsin Madison, Seth Gitter from Towson University, Anne-Marie Hanson from the University of Illinois Springfield and María Soto-Alarcón from the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Hidalgo stand out. These findings are relevant because they show that the institutions to which the most influential authors belong are not located in Latin America.

**Table 4: Leading authors in the topic's publication. (Latin America)**

Author	Affiliation	Country	Total papers	WoS cites	International Collab.	First Author
Lyon, Sarah M.	University of Wisconsin Madison	Usa	1	34	0	1
Gitter, Seth R.	Towson University	Usa	1	13	1	1
Hanson, Anne-Marie	University of Illinois Springfield	Usa	1	12	0	1
Maria Soto-Alarcon, Jozelin	Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Hidalgo	Mexico	1	10	1	1
Patel-Campillo, Anouk	London School Economics & Political Science	England	1	6	1	1
Hillenkamp, Isabelle	Universite Paris Cite	France	1	4	0	1
Vickers, Caroline H.	California State University San Bernardino	Usa	1	3	0	1
Weisz, Clara	Universidad de la Republica	Uruguay	1	0	0	1
de Arce, Alejandra	Universidad Nacional de Quilmes	Argentina	1	0	0	1
Aleman Salcedo, Eliana	Universidad Pública de Navarra	Spain	1	0	1	1

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Among the publications referring to other countries, C. Dohmwirth of the Humboldt University of Berlin, M. Mwambi of the World Vegetable Center and S. Ahado of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague stand out for the total number of articles. However, when looking at the number of citations we see the importance of the work of F. Meier of Wageningen University & Research and S. Elder of the International Inst. for Sustainable Development.

**Table 5: Leading authors in the topic's publication. (Other economies)**

Author	Affiliation	Country	Total papers	WoS cites	International Collab.	First Author
Dohmwirth, Carla	Humboldt University of Berlin	Germany	3	30	1	3
Mwambi, Mercy	World Vegetable Center	Thailand	2	21	2	2
Ahado, Samuel	Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	Czech Republic	2	3	1	2
Meier zu Selhausen, Felix	Wageningen University & Research	Netherlands	1	44	0	1
Elder, Sara	International Inst. for Sustainable Development	Canada	1	44	0	1
Meyers, Joan	California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo	Usa	1	25	0	1
Dutt, Anjali	University of Cincinnati	Usa	1	25	0	1
Orr, Alastair	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics	India	1	18	1	1
Miller, Genna R.	Duke University	Usa	1	16	0	1
Montanari, Bernadette	Instituto Universitario de Lisboa	Portugal	1	16	0	1

Source: Elaborated by the authors

### 3.2.4 *Leading journals*

The most outstanding journals are analyzed in Table 5, which shows the country of the journal, the quartile, the total number of articles and the total number of citations. At the general level, the journals *Journal of Rural Studies*, *World Development*, and *Feminist Economics* stand out, all three being in the first quartile. It is also noteworthy that 8 of the 10 journals with the highest impact are from England.

**Table 5: Sources with the most significant impact and that publish the most about discipline**

Source name	Publisher Country	Highest Quartile	Total articles	Total cites
<i>Journal of Rural Studies</i>	England	Q1	4	41
<i>World Development</i>	England	Q1	2	54
<i>Feminist Economics</i>	England	Q1	2	48
<i>Women's Studies International Forum</i>	England	Q2	2	18
<i>Journal of Development Studies</i>	England	Q2	2	13
<i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>	Netherlands	Q1	2	11
<i>Community Development Journal</i>	England	Q4	2	9
<i>Development and Change</i>	England	Q2	2	4
<i>European Journal of Development Research</i>	England	Q3	2	3
<i>Human Organization</i>	Usa	Q3	1	34

Source: Elaborated by the authors

However, when looking at the same data segregated by cluster (Tables 6, 7 and 8), we see that for cluster 1 the most influential journal continues to be the *Journal of Rural Studies*, while in second and third place are the *European Journal of Development Research* and *Feminist Economics*, respectively (Table 6). In the case of cluster 2, the most influential journals were *Journal of Development Studies*, *Human Organization* and *Human Ecology* (Table 7). Finally, for cluster 3, the most influential journals were *World Development*, *Ecological Economics* and *Journal of International Development* (Table 8).

**Table 6: Sources with the most significant impact and that publish the most about discipline (Cluster 1)**

<b>Source name</b>	<b>Publisher Country</b>	<b>Highest Quartile</b>	<b>Total articles</b>	<b>Total cites</b>
Journal of Rural Studies	England	Q1	3	29
European Journal of Development Research	England	Q3	2	3
Feminist Economics	England	Q1	1	44
Sociological Quarterly	Usa	Q3	1	25
Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy	England	Q4	1	25
Journal of Development Effectiveness	England	Q4	1	16
Agriculture and Human Values	Netherlands	Q1	1	10
Development Southern Africa	England	Q4	1	5
World Development Perspectives	Netherlands	n/a	1	3
Gender Work and Organization	England	Q1	1	0

Source: Elaborated by the authors

**Table 7: Sources with the most significant impact and that publish the most about discipline (Cluster 2)**

Cluster 2				
<b>Source name</b>	<b>Publisher Country</b>	<b>Highest Quartile</b>	<b>Total articles</b>	<b>Total cites</b>
Journal of Development Studies	England	Q2	2	13
Human Organization	Usa	Q3	1	34
Human Ecology	Usa	Q1	1	16
Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics	England	Q3	1	15
Women's Studies International Forum	England	Q2	1	12
Gender Place and Culture	England	Q3	1	12
Innovation-The European Journal of Social Science Research	England	Q2	1	10
Journal of Agricultural Economics	Scotland	Q1	1	10
World Development	England	Q1	1	10
Community Development Journal	England	Q4	1	5

Source: Elaborated by the authors

**Table 8: Sources with the most significant impact and that publish the most about discipline (Cluster 3)**

Cluster 3

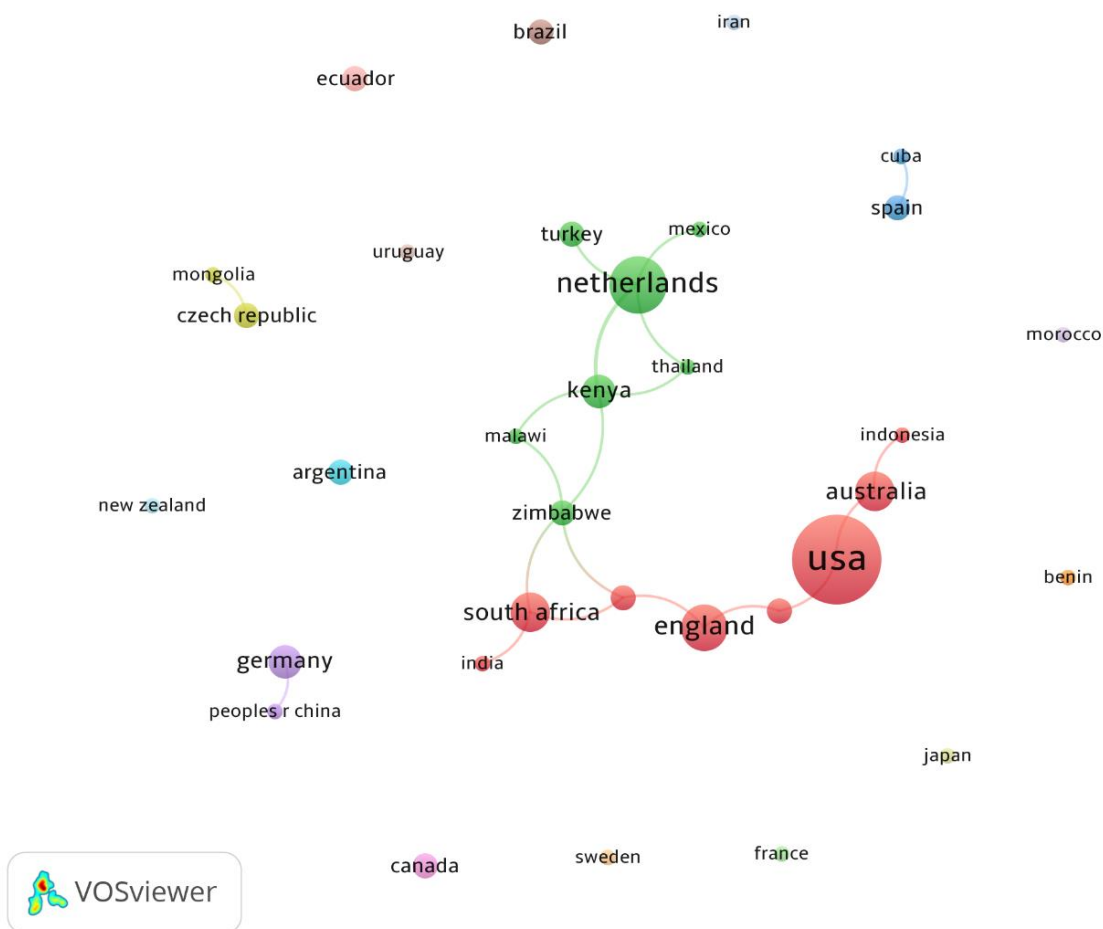
Source name	Publisher Country	Highest Quartile	Total articles	Total cites
World Development	England	Q1	1	44
Ecological Economics	Netherlands	Q1	1	19
Journal of International Development	England	Q4	1	18
Review of Radical Political Economics	Usa	Q4	1	16
Geoforum	England	Q1	1	12
Journal of Rural Studies	England	Q1	1	12
International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal	Usa	Q2	1	9
Voluntas	Usa	Q2	1	8
Women's Studies International Forum	England	Q2	1	6
Asian Journal of Women's Studies	South Korea	Q4	1	6

Source: Elaborated by the authors

### Countries with the highest incidence

Bibliometric map 4 shows the co-authorship networks of the countries, i.e., the collaborative relationship between them. In order to understand, we looked at the largest nodes on the map, obtaining that the most influential countries are the United States, the Netherlands, England, Australia and South Africa.

**Bibliometric map 4: Collaboration network of countries according to papers analyzed in Network visualization (VOSviewer).**



Source: Elaborated by the authors

Table 9 considers the number of articles published, which come from the authors' institutions in the countries under analysis. Thus, the country with the highest productivity is the United States with a total of 16 articles and 174 citations, of which 94% have been cited and only 3 articles have been in collaboration with international coauthors. Once again, the absence of Latin American countries in this list stands out.



**Table 9: Countries with the highest productivity in the discipline**

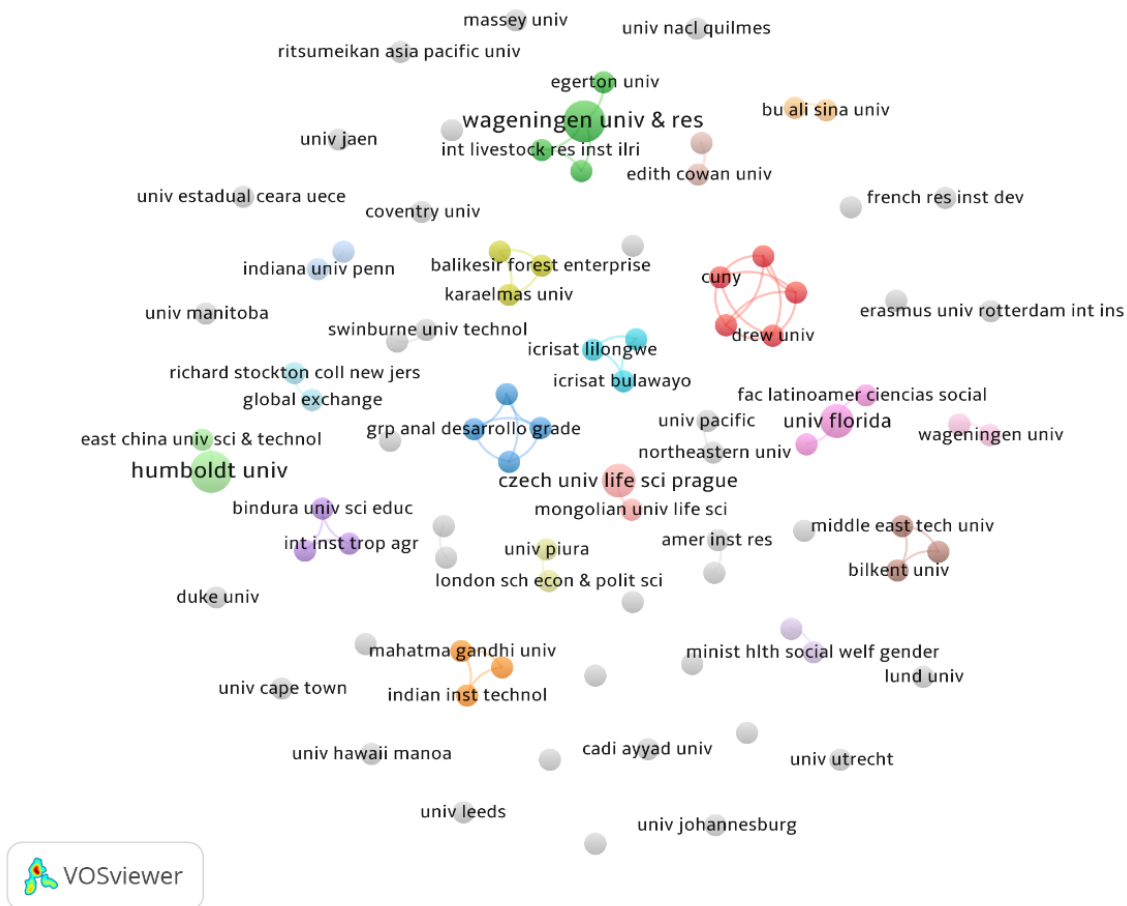
Country	Total papers	WoS cites	% papers cited	International Collab.	Organization	Papers
Usa	16	174	94	3	University of California	1
Netherlands	7	120	100	4	Wageningen University & Research	4
United Kingdom	6	63	100	2	University of Sussex	1
South Africa	4	30	75	2	University of Cape Town	1
Australia	4	14	50	2	University of New South Wales Sydney	1
Kenya	3	39	100	3	Egerton University	1
Germany	3	30	100	1	Humboldt University of Berlin	3
Canada	2	44	50	0	University of British Columbia	1
Zimbabwe	2	30	100	2	ICRISAT Bulawayo	1
Turkiye	2	19	50	1	Bulent Ecevit University	1

Source: Elaborated by the authors

### ***3.2.5 Most influential institutions***

Bibliometric map 5 shows the network of co-authorship of institutions, where the collaboration between the various institutions on the subject can be glimpsed. It can be seen here that there are few nodes and concentrations between institutions. However, some can be identified, such as green, red, blue and purple. For example, the green cluster, where Wageningen University & Research and its collaboration with Egerton University stand out. The relationship between Humboldt University and East China University (faded green) also stands out.

## Bibliometric map 5: Analysis of co-authorship of institutions in Network visualization (VOSviewer)



Source: Elaborated by the authors

## 4. Discussion and conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to demonstrate the barriers and facilitators of women's cooperative engagement. We conducted a two-stage examination of 60 academic articles for this aim. First, we conducted a qualitative analysis of the articles to identify the major characteristics that impede or enable women's participation in this type of organization. Second, we used a bibliometric study to determine the production of research on the topic, as well as the influence of various authors, countries, and institutions.

The findings indicate that the biggest hurdles to women's cooperative membership are related to gender roles held by families, communities, cooperatives, and society as a whole. Furthermore, this is a problem that spans the borders of the countries under consideration.

This is primarily supported by the findings in clusters 1 (gender-mother-care-work) and 2 (education-school-policies-quality of life), where it can be seen that policies and proposals implemented both at the governmental and cooperative levels clash with beliefs, perceptions, and visions that tend to reproduce traditional gender roles in societies, i.e., relegating women to a secondary position in the production system.

Furthermore, the study of women's engagement in cooperatives includes not only their membership in these organizations, but also their attributions and capacities inside them. This was evident in the findings obtained in Cluster 3. (Inequality-vulnerability-economy). Thus, we uncover hurdles to their participation in decision-making and in the cooperative's most qualified jobs.

However, we discovered elements that aid in the promotion of women's cooperative engagement. First and foremost, we have seen that developing initiatives that focus on this issue while taking into account the specificities of the society in which they are embedded can have a positive impact on female labor insertion in cooperatives. This was most evident in the examination of Cluster 2, notably in initiatives implemented in Latin American countries.

We have also observed in Cluster 3 how increased female empowerment improves women's participation in home decisions as well as cooperative decisions. In this regard, we believe that increasing this component would aid in the better integration of more women into these organizations.

Despite the growing interest in the subject, it is important to note that there is a strong concentration of publications coming from journals in England, particularly the most prestigious journals, which should raise concerns about how to improve the development of academic journals in Latin America. The same occurs with the countries with the highest incidence, being at least the first three from Europe and North America: the United States, England and the Netherlands. We believe that this may be a barrier to greater knowledge production in Latin American countries.

Finally, some of the study's shortcomings should be made clear. On the one hand, only articles from the Web of Science database were evaluated, which removes publications that could make a significant contribution to the debate on this topic from the analysis. Future research, on the other hand, should consider a more extensive investigation of the different parts of the world in order to compare the findings in locations other than Latin America.

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ISSN 2070-8289

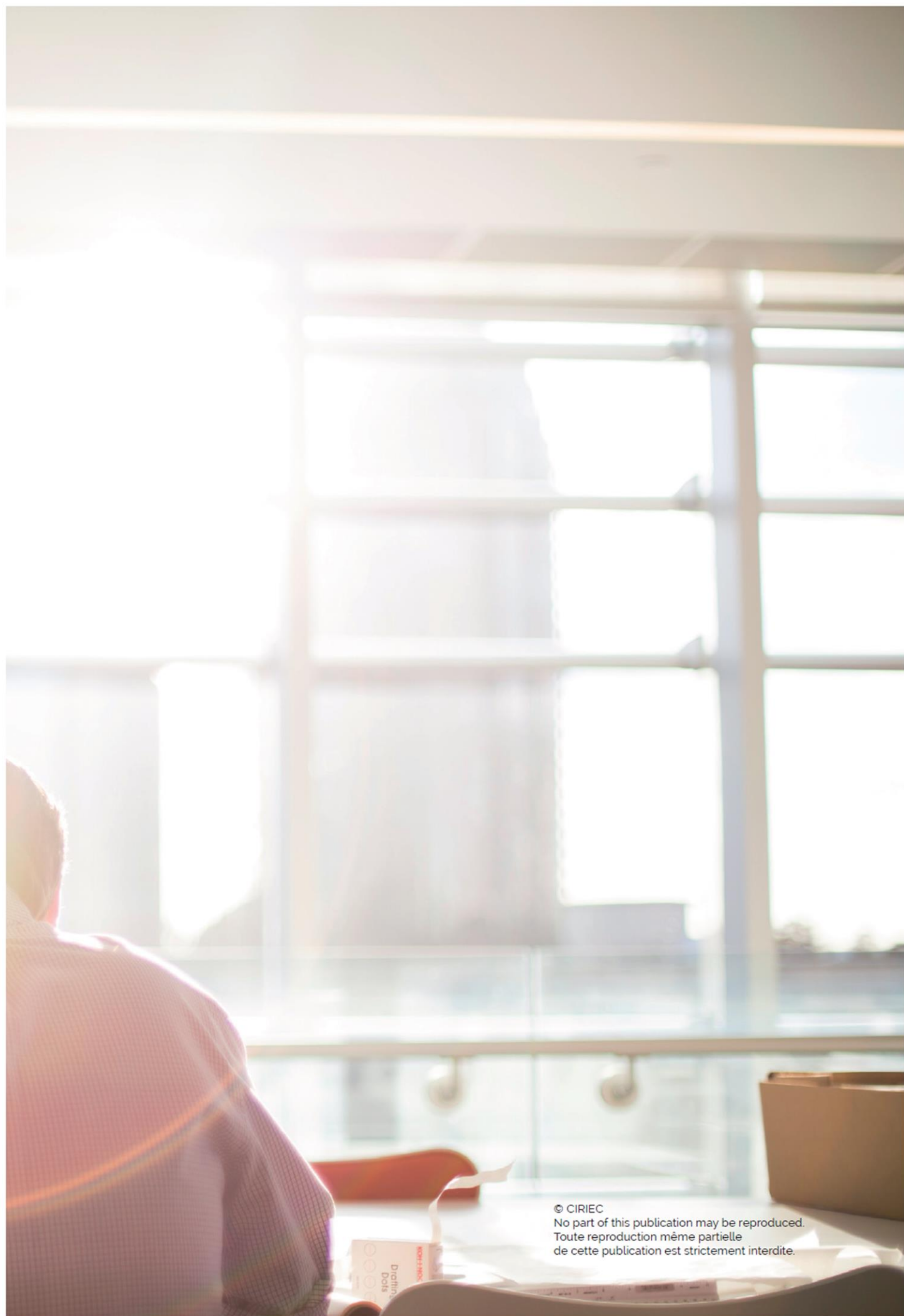
ISBN 978-2-931051-75-7

EAN 9782931051757

<https://doi.org/10.25518/ciriec.wp202305>

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