Analysis of the Usage of the World Bank OKR

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🌐 Project Overview

The objective of the project was analysing the usage of the 1,966 books in the Open Knowledge Repository (OKR), a virtual archive where of World Bank knowledge, books, articles, working paper, is stored and can be accessed for free by everyone. All the data on the books analysed was extracted from the OKR Output file generated on the 30th of June 2015. The analysis of this book collection was made up of two phases:
1. Cleaning and filling gaps in the books metadata
2. Measuring, analysing and visualising the usage of the OKR books

◎ Methodology – Phase 1

The first phase of the analysis, the metadata cleaning, was time consuming (18 days). However, this face was necessary.

In order to pursue an analysis based on official WB topic, region and country metadata in Phase 2, it was in fact essential to clean topic, country and region metadata in Phase 1, making sure these all conformed to WB official taxonomy.

Region and topic metadata in the OKR Output file corresponded already to the official WB regions and countries and they did not need any cleaning.

The most problematic and time consuming part of this phase was normalising the topics which did not correspond to the 29 official World Bank topics. These non-conventional topics were a great deal: some topics in the OKR Output file were in fact official World Bank subtopics, other topics in the OKR Output file were neither official WB topics, nor official WB subtopics.

The pros of this phase: I improved my Excel skills (Vlookup, IF, CountIF, Trim Functions, Text to Column, etc.).

The cons of this phase: the actual analysis of the books collection in the OKR (Phase 2) was delayed, as a consequence of a time consuming data cleaning (Phase 1).
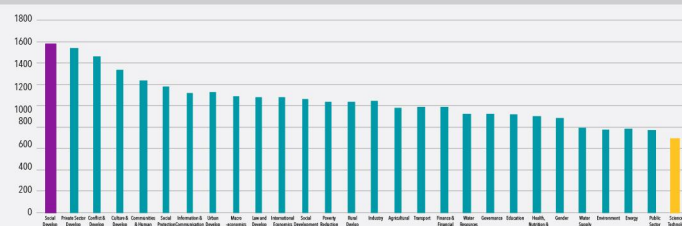
◎ Methodology- Phase 2

- The second phase of the analysis, measuring, analysing and visualising the usage of the OKR Books, started on the 27th of July and finished on the 24th of August.
- Before this phase, the BRICS and CIVETS country reports on the usage of the OKR books, which are subsets of the comprehensive OKR Output file (illustrating the global usage of the OKR), were incorporated in the OKR Output file.
- This second phase was carried out through the creation of pivot tables to mine for the data needed and bubble graphs, pie charts and column graphs to represent the findings.
- Every key finding has been thought through academic and journalistic sources
- All the steps of Phase 1 and Phase 2 were documented in a Diary, in order to replicate this analysis with other OKR collections.
- The top 3 findings will be here illustrated.

Key Finding 1

The topic of "Social Development" is below the global average in all the BRICS countries. "Social Development" is in fact the 10th most downloaded topic in India, the 9th in South Africa, the 3rd in Russia and the 12th in China.

Only in Brazil, Social Development is the most downloaded topic overall. This is however due to the book "Economic Mobility and the Rise of the Latin America middle class", which addresses Brazil and South America directly and it is one of the five most downloaded books in the OKR.
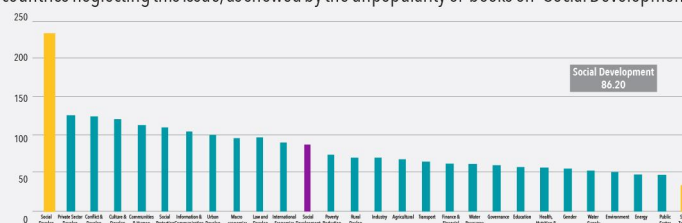
It seems that OKR users from booming BRICS countries are not as interested in "Social Development" as users from developed countries. "Social Development" is, for instance, the most popular topic in the USA.

Average downloads based on topic metadata globally

There is evidence that the gap between the richest and poorest tiers in Indian (OECD 2011), Chinese (Chen-Bloomberg Business 2014),Brazilian (BBC 2014), Russian (Frank- CNBC 2014) and South African (Donelly- Mail & Guardian 2011) societies is growing larger and larger.

Is this reflected in the OKR? Are policy makers, scholars and development practitioners from BRICS countries neglecting this issue, as showed by the unpopularity of books on "Social Development"?

Average downloads based on topic metadata in China

Key Finding 2

After "East Asia and Pacific", the second most popular region in China is "Middle East and North Africa". This is interesting as MENA is, on average, the second least downloaded region in the OKR globally. Hence, MENA does particularly well in China, being above the global average.
Top books on MENA in China: 1)"Striving for Better Jobs : The Challenge of Informality in the Middle East and North Africa", 2)"Trust, Voice, and Incentives : Learning from Local Success Stories in Service Delivery in the Middle East and North Africa", 3)"Opening Doors : Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa".

The most downloaded publication on MENA in China is "Striving for better Jobs: The Challenge of Informality in the Middle East and North Africa" (995 downloads). This is interesting as globally the most popular book on MENA is "Opening Doors : Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa"(13,602 downloads), with "Striving for better Jobs: The Challenge of Informality in the Middle East and North Africa" being only the 8th most popular book globally.
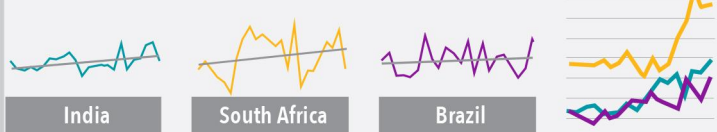
China seems to be learning from MENA about informality and informal employment. Urban workers employed informally in China range, in fact, from 19.9% to 37.2% (Park et Al -Economic Policy Forum 2013)

Key Finding 3

This growth in the number of downloads on "International Economics and Trade" in India, Brazil and South Africaseems to mirror the activities of IBSA

It is extremely interesting that the growth in the number of downloads on "International Trade and Economics" in each of the three countries from 2013 to 2015 appears to correspond to each country's actual growth of exports within IBSA from 2003 to 2012.

It seems that the more a country exported from 2003 to 2012 within IBSA, the more pronounced is the country's growth in the number of downloads of titles on "International Economics and Trade" from 2013 to 2015.

India   South Africa   Brazil

Total downloads on International Economics and Trade in IBSA countries (2013-2015)

Intra IBSA exports (2003-2012))

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