

Evolution and achievements of BRQ *Business Research Quarterly* (2014–2022)

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Over the past decade, BRQ *Business Research Quarterly* has undergone a complete transformation from a publication with a predominantly domestic orientation to one with a clear international vocation. One manifestation of this evolution has been an impressive and unexpected increase in the number of original submissions received, from 183 in 2014 to 510 in 2022. As a result of this evolution, the structure of the journal has also been modified accordingly. Following my appointment as editor-in-chief, and at the suggestion of the previous editor, an intermediate link between the editor-in-chief and the associate editors was established, in the form of senior editors. These senior editors have made an extraordinary contribution by conducting a preliminary evaluation of submissions that merit further consideration. BRQ has now expanded its editorial organizational structure to include 4 senior editors and 26 associate editors. Moreover, a new advisory board has been established, comprising of the three former editors of the journal. This initiative has been implemented to strengthen the long-term strategy of the aforementioned journal.

Given the previously discussed context and almost a decade since the former Cuadernos de Economía y Dirección de la Empresa (CEDE) became BRQ *Business Research Quarterly*, it appears to be an appropriate moment to assess the evolution, achievements, and future challenges of BRQ. In this editorial, Alejandro Escribá and Yama Temouri, both former associate editors of the journal, and colleagues provide an analysis of how BRQ has developed since 2014, when it adopted a new strategy to enhance its international reputation as a top-tier management journal.

By actively engaging with and encouraging contributions from authors, reviewers, and editorial board members, BRQ is working toward building a sustainable network of stakeholders who are committed to the journal's mission and values. The continued support and participation of former associate editors, such as Alejandro and Yama, demonstrate the journal's ability to foster long-term partnerships with its community. I would like to

express my sincere gratitude to Alejandro's and Yama's teams for their selfless dedication to this analysis. Their continued involvement with BRQ after the completion of their editorial duties is a testament to the journal's ongoing efforts to foster a strong and committed community.

As BRQ continues to evolve and grow, it is vital to maintain the trust and confidence of its stakeholders. By fostering a sense of community, the journal can ensure that it remains a reputable and influential platform for disseminating high-quality management research.

The diagnosis provided in this editorial represents a crucial step toward addressing the exciting challenges that lie ahead. Looking to the future, BRQ faces several challenges. The journal must continue to maintain its reputation for publishing high-quality research and attracting top-level scholars. In addition, BRQ needs to strengthen its presence in the international academic community by establishing partnerships with leading research institutions and actively promoting its articles to scholars worldwide. The recent agreements between ACEDE and both the Academy of Management and the European Academy of Management are indicative of the journal's positive direction, and it is hoped that they will contribute to enhancing the quality of manuscripts that BRQ publishes.

Overall, BRQ has made significant progress in becoming a leading international management journal. The efforts of the editorial team, reviewers, and authors have culminated in the journal's success and recognition among the academic community. Despite the challenges ahead, BRQ is well-positioned to continue its trajectory of excellence in research and scholarship.

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Introduction

As the official journal of the Spanish Academy of Management¹ (SAM), *Business Research Quarterly* (BRQ) was founded in 1998 and known as CEDE until 2013.² From the outset, the main objective of the journal was to serve as a forum for academics and practitioners to share their latest advances in knowledge of conceptual and practical developments in the area of business economics and management. The journal pursued the exchange of ideas in topics that were of interest to members of the SAM but also serve as a stimulus for rigorous research on management and business issues.

In following decades, the research context, institutions, and evaluation systems for Spanish and European Universities evolved significantly. The inclusion in journal rankings, such as SCOPUS or the Web of Science, became a must for any journal aspiring to attract and publish good quality research. In 2008, the BRQ's editorial team achieved the inclusion of the journal into the Web of Science and embarked on the strategy of transitioning from a predominantly local editorial team to more of an international one.

During the first years as a JCR-indexed journal (publishing good quality papers, mostly in Spanish, and occasionally in English), the impact factor increased significantly. However, the SAM and the editorial team perceived that the impact factor did not reflect the actual quality of the papers. Publishing in Spanish was seen as a key barrier in increasing the visibility of the contributions. This ongoing barrier led to an important strategic move in 2014 with the change of the journal's title from CEDE to BRQ and publishing only in English (Fuentelsaz, 2014). BRQ aspired to become an internationally recognized journal in management research, in line with other well-known international management journals of other scientific associations.

The main objectives for the long term were set as follows: (1) to achieve a good reputation in terms of quality, accompanied by a high impact factor, (2) to increase the visibility of the journal, not only geographically but also as a generalist journal in the knowledge areas of management, marketing, and finance, and (3) eventually becoming a reference also to other practitioners and stakeholders in society, beyond researchers.

The authors of this editorial met with the current editor, Juan P. Maicas, and former editors Juan Carlos Bou, Lucio Fuentelsaz, and Xosé Henrique Vázquez, who managed the new strategy since 2014, to identify the more specific objectives that have been consistently pursued since then. The insights from these discussions were invaluable in assessing whether the journal is on the right trajectory in achieving its aspirations. More specifically, the editors were in agreement about the following main and most

consistent objectives that they have been pursuing during these years:

1. *Internationalization of the journal*: To increase the visibility of BRQ as a journal that publishes good research beyond the Spanish-speaking research context. BRQ should be considered by authors from different countries and continents as a potential outlet to publish their research and should also be read and cited by researchers from all around the world.
2. *Quality of research*. To maintain and increase a good quality standard, as this is the main source of reputation for the journal and the SAM.
3. *General approach*. Following the mission of the SAM, BRQ is aiming to publish papers from a wide range of disciplines, such as strategic management, corporate governance, finance, marketing, human resource management, organization theory, managerial economics, and accounting & operations management.

Assessment of the evolution of BRQ since 2014

Internationalization of the journal

To study the level of achievement of this objective, we pay attention to the national origins both from authors who publish in the journal, and from those who cite BRQ's papers. We show two tables (Tables 1 and 2) built with bibliometric metadata of papers published in BRQ from 2014 to 2022. This analysis displays whether BRQ has been able to attract the attention from scholars around the world, both in terms of publications as well as citing published BRQ papers in their relevant work.

Table 1 shows the continent and country of the authors who have published in BRQ between 2014 and 2022. The evidence shows that authors from Asia, Europe, North America, and South America are regularly publishing in BRQ, and Africa is increasing in the last years. In terms of frequency of publication, Europe leads the other continents during these years, but participation from the other continents is increasing. Table 1 also shows that there is an upward trend toward 2022 in attracting papers from almost all continents. In 2022, non-Spanish authors represented 72% of the total. BRQ started publishing in English only in 2014, and the trend so far is headed the right direction. This offers some optimistic for improving the internationalization of the BRQ much further.

A second indicator for measuring the internationalization progress of BRQ is citations of BRQ articles by authors, whose papers are published in other journals.

Table 1. Articles* published in BRQ across continent/country per year.

# Authors	Years									Total
Continent/Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Africa							1	3	2	6
South Africa								3		3
Others (3 countries)							1		2	3
Asia			3	4	1	2	8	7	6	31
China						1	5	2	2	10
South Korea				1			2	4		7
Others (8 countries)			3	3	1	1	1	1	4	14
Europe	22	21	18	17	21	27	44	53	23	246
Spain	18	19	18	13	18	16	26	31	11	170
United Kingdom	1			1	2	2	6	3	1	16
Others (16 countries)	3	2		3	1	9	12	19	11	60
North America	3	1	1	4	3	4	3	10	7	36
United States	1	1		4	3	4	2	8	5	28
Others (2 countries)	2		1				1	2	2	8
Oceania					2			4		6
Australia					2			3		5
New Zealand								1		1
South America	2	2		2	2	1	6	2	1	18
Chile		2		2		1	2	1		8
Colombia	1						4		1	6
Others (3 countries)	1				2			1		4
Total	27	24	22	27	29	34	62	79	39	343
Total without Spain	9 (33%)	5 (20%)	4 (18%)	14 (52%)	11 (38%)	18 (53%)	36 (58%)	48 (61%)	28 (72%)	173 (50%)

*Published articles have one or more authors of the displayed country.

The bold values represent the total for each region/continent in our analysis.

Showing a similar continent/country wise analysis of authors who cite BRQ papers, Table 2 suggests that around 45% of citing authors are from European countries (highest being Spain with 14%), followed by the United Kingdom (6.1%). The second ranked continent is Asia which constitutes almost 33% of authors who cite BRQ (of which 7.8% come from China and 3.5% from India). The remaining four continents have also contributed to the internationalization of BRQ. An overall assessment is that BRQ papers are being cited both in developed and in emerging countries and that the journal's visibility and use is increasing.

We conclude that the internationalization objective of BRQ is progressing well. With further efforts by the editorial team the journal will continue improving this aspect of the journal.

Quality of research

The next objective is to assess the quality and citation impact of BRQ papers. Table 3 shows the total citations, mean total citation per year, and mean total citation per article, whereas Table 4 outlines the evolution of the quality of journals, which have cited BRQ.

Since 2014 to 2022, the citations of BRQ papers have exponentially increased from six citations in the year 2014 to 1262 citations in 2022 (Table 3). The H-index of the journal is 35, G-index is 34 and M-index is 3.58, which lends support to the fact that the quality of BRQ research is continuously increasing. Further evidence shows that 22 of its articles have been cited at least 50 times, whereas 37 of its articles have been cited 25 times, 48 of its articles have been cited at least 10 times and 36 of its articles were cited at least five times. Table 3 also shows that the mean total citation per year has increased significantly from 2014 to 2016 and since then has seen a reduction. Similarly, the mean total citation per article has been very impressive in the years 2015 and 2016, but have since then been declining. Over the 2014–2020 period, the years 2015 and 2016 have been exceptionally impressive in terms of citation and impact progress. This has shown rapid initial progress followed by steady progress, but again there seems to be much more room for further improvement to reach a higher potential for BRQ.

Table 4 indicates the evolution of the quality of the journals in which BRQ papers are being cited. First of all, there has been over a 10-fold increase in citations of BRQ papers in Q1 to Q4 journals and among these, the journals in the

Table 2. Articles citing BRQ papers* across continent/country.

Continent/country	# of Citing articles	% of Citing articles
Africa	239	5.0%
South Africa	54	1.1%
Others (21 countries)	77	3.9%
Asia	1,547	32.6%
China	372	7.8%
India	168	3.5%
Malaysia	129	2.7%
Pakistan	122	2.6%
Others (33 countries)	756	15.9%
Europe	2,173	45.7%
Spain	667	14.0%
United Kingdom	291	6.1%
Italy	162	3.4%
France	138	2.9%
Portugal	111	2.3%
Others (37 countries)	804	16.9%
North America	409	8.6%
United States	270	5.7%
Others (8 countries)	14	2.9%
Oceania	132	2.8%
Australia	111	2.3%
South America	250	5.3%
Brazil	91	1.9%
Colombia	62	1.3%
Chile	50	1.1%
Others (5 countries)	47	1.0%
Total	4,750	100.0%

*Citing Articles have cited one or more authors of the selected country.
The bold values represent the total for each region/continent in our analysis.

Q1-Q2 category have seen the highest increase from 2015 to 2020 (i.e., from 4 to 112). This shows that receiving a higher percentage of citations from papers published in journals included in the Q1 and Q2 of the JCR is a strong indicator of the quality of the research published in BRQ over time.

Variety of topics

Using the keywords indicated by the authors, we analyze the main topics of the articles and their connections since 2014. This allows us to assess which perspectives covered by the journal are more or less central in the conversations of the journal (i.e., centrality) and which ones have a higher cohesion and consistency (i.e., density). In this manner, the research themes can be classified into four groups (Cobo et al., 2011), namely (1) motor themes, (2) basic and transversal themes, (3) emerging or declining themes, and (4) highly developed and isolated themes (see Figure 1 below).

The motor themes in BRQ (i.e., the topics that are more central or interrelated to the variety of conversations published in the journal) focus on research-related SMEs, with strong emphasis since 2020 in the COVID-19 impact. As

for the SME context, BRQ has published 17 papers in the field of management and strategy (e.g., internationalization, networks, emerging economies, family ownership, innovation and relationships with stakeholders). This topic provides important visibility to BRQ in terms of citations (348 citations, with an average of 20.5 per paper). The COVID-19 topic has become central in the last 2 years, but traditionally studies on *crisis management* related to the role of leadership, entrepreneurial orientations, and talent management has been the focus. This group has received a total of 347 citations, with an average of 21.69 citations per paper.

The third motor topic is innovation. This theme is related to organizational learning and ambidextrous behavior. We find nine papers on this group, with a total of 169 citations and an average of 18.78 citations per paper.

As for the basic and transversal topics (high centrality but less density), we find three important themes. The largest group of papers focuses on a topic that is frequently studied both from a management and from a finance/corporate governance perspective. From the financial view, this theme covers topics on ownership structure, corporate governance bodies and codes, value creation, or executives'

Table 3. Average citations and impact factor.

Year	NP	Citation	≥50	≥25	≥10	≥5	≥1	Mean TC per Art	Mean TC per year	Citable years	Articles in other sources citing BRQ
2014	22	6	5	5	7	2	3	28.86	2.89	8	1
2015	20	37	3	8	8	0	1	32.35	3.59	7	31
2016	21	91	7	4	5	3	2	46.19	5.77	6	79
2017	21	197	5	4	5	6	1	31.14	4.45	5	164
2018	22	298	1	7	5	4	5	18.09	3.02	4	256
2019	22	466	1	8	7	2	4	21.09	4.22	3	435
2020	40	787	0	1	6	10	23	5.62	1.41	2	692
2021	36	944	0	0	5	6	25	4.89	1.63	1	831
2022	31	1262	0	0	0	3	28	1.97	.98	0	1116
Total	235	4088	22	37	48	36	92				3606

Source: Scopus databases accessed on 07.02.2023, NP: number of publications; ≥50, ≥10, ≥1: number of papers with at least 50, 10, and 1 citations respectively; h index 35, g index 34, and m index 3.58.

Table 4. Distribution of journals that cite BRQ papers according to their relative quality (JCR position) (2014–2020).

Citing journals	Journal category		JCR Q3–Q4	Total
Year	JCR (not indexed)	JCR Q1–Q2		
2015	22 (78.6%)	4 (14.3%)	2 (7.1%)	28
2016	63 (90.0%)	3 (4.3%)	4 (5.7%)	70
2017	120 (83.9%)	14 (9.8%)	9 (6.3%)	143
2018	200 (80.6%)	29 (11.7%)	19 (7.7%)	248
2019	278 (78.1%)	49 (13.8%)	29 (8.1%)	356
2020	436 (72.9%)	112 (18.7%)	50 (8.4%)	598
2021	124 (28.9%)	163 (38.0%)	142 (33.1%)	429
2022	140 (28.2%)	191 (38.4%)	166 (33.4%)	497
Total	1.383 (58.4%)	565 (23.8%)	421 (17.8%)	2.369 (100%)

Note: We start in 2015 (as we only consider citations of papers from BRQ published since 2014) (only two papers from 2014 were cited in 2014).

compensation. From a management perspective, it frequently addresses topics related to boards of directors' diversity (e.g., gender) and composition (dominant owners and directors) or responsible behavior, such as ethics or corporate social responsibility (CSR). This transversal topic is the most numerous in terms of published papers (24), with a total of 421 citations and an average of 17.54 citations per paper. The other two transversal topics are Family Firms and Gender Diversity. Family Firm research in BRQ addresses the influences of entrepreneurial orientations and Socio-Emotional Wealth on firms' performance and other strategic outcomes. This is the second group in terms of number of papers (22), with an average citation of 17.95 per paper. The gender diversity theme is less relevant in terms of quantity (6) but receives more attention (33.86 citations per paper).

Regarding the highly developed and isolated themes (low centrality but high density), we find two main themes. The first one (formal institutions) is related to entrepreneurship research. The three papers in this group address the entrepreneurial behavior of firms and individuals and pay attention to the role of formal and

informal institutions. This theme, although it is somehow isolated from other BRQ conversations, provides important visibility with a total of 207 citations and an average of 69 citations per paper. The cluster entitled Economic Crisis focuses on the influence of boards in the corporate reputation in front of difficult situations. This group includes 5 papers, with a total of 107 citations.

Finally, the fourth quadrant (i.e., emerging, or declining themes) includes a group of papers from a marketing perspective, focused on research about relationship marketing, word-of-mouth effects and customers' satisfaction. There are six papers, which have received 114 citations in total (19 citations per paper in average). This quadrant includes another group of papers (5) focused on corporate strategies (diversification, alliances, turnaround, etc.) with an average of 31.86 citations.

This analysis reveals that the papers published in BRQ mostly focus on conversations that have a management research perspective. Nevertheless, some of the most central themes (corporate governance) also include a finance perspective in the conversation. The marketing perspective is less central in the journal and has no clear line of

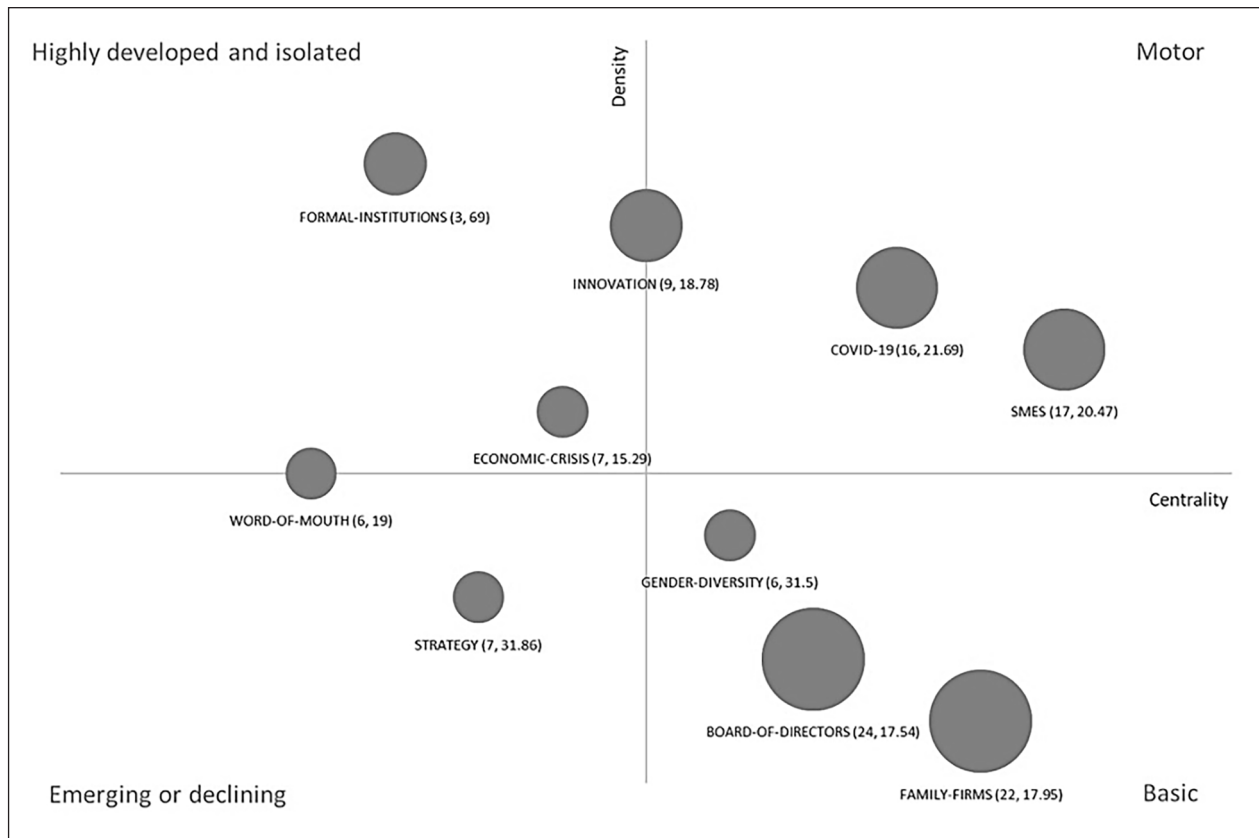


Figure 1. Variety of topics between 2014 and 2022.

The sphere size is proportional to the number of articles associated with each research theme.

The number of documents and the average of citations are given in brackets.

Source: Own elaboration.

conversation, while the entrepreneurship theme achieves good visibility and impact, even if it is also somehow disconnected from the most central themes.

Conclusion

BRQ is evolving in the right direction with respect to the three strategic objectives that have been part of its strategy in the last decade. The journal is attracting every year more papers from authors of an increasing number of countries and continents, and published papers are being used and cited in a growing number of countries. The internationalization goal is progressing well. In terms of quality, all indicators show that impact of BRQ's published research is increasing, both in terms of impact factor, but also in terms of the relevance of the citing works (over a 10-fold increase in citations of BRQ papers in Q1 to Q4 journals and among these, the journals in the Q1-Q2 category have seen the highest increase from 2015 to 2020 (i.e., from 4 to 112). With regard to the general approach and variety of topics, our analysis shows that BRQ publishes research with direct and

impactful implications. This is shown by the fact that COVID-19 and Economic crises are dense topics in the journal and that they approached from many different perspectives (finance, management, or marketing).

In addition to a serious and rigorous editorial work (providing constructive perspective in papers with potential, and early rejection of those that have less chances), the journal has benefited from a series of actions like the internationalization of the editorial team and the efforts to include the journal in specific rankings such as ANVUR ranking (Italy), the Academic Journal Guide (ABS), the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC), the Comité National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in France the Danish BFI Index or the Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, as well as the collaboration with editorial companies that have helped to enhance the audience and to professionalize the editorial processes.

Our assessment shows consistency over time, with close coordination and collaboration between current and former editors, as well as the support and patience from the SAM. All share a common long-term perspective, and there are no short-term pressures to increase the impact

factor. These are the key factors to increase the international reputation of the journal.

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Notes

1. ACEDE in its Spanish acronym.
2. Up until the year 2013, the journal's name was *Cuadernos de Economía y Dirección de la Empresa* (CEDE).

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