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## BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

This article complements the initial studies based on bibliometric analysis. The relevance of bibliometric analysis is the study of a large amount of data in scientific research. The purpose of the study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis to determine the state of research toward reforming public administration and future areas of research and mapping.

In our research strategy, 151 articles were selected on the reforms carried out in the civil service in 1991–2023. With VOSviewer software, bibliometric networks were created and visualized. The bibliometric analysis of the study used the Scopus academic base to reform the public administration system. The conclusions of these studies were drawn and presented in this article providing an opportunity for further understanding of the systematic development of the study.

The success of the study informed the dynamics of research development in the public administration system. The best articles, publications, and studies of the most cited authors and organizations on the management of the state system are identified, and they contribute to the scientific literature, describing its current state.

In studies using bibliometric analysis, elements of transparency and productivity have been identified that can be used in public administration and e-government reforms. In addition, the study demonstrated the experience of developing public system management reforms in peer-reviewed publications around the world. In Kazakhstan, these studies have been intensively conducted since 2020, while in developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, a high rate of use has been observed since 2010.

**Key words:** Kazakhstan, public administration reforms, VOSviewer, bibliometric analysis, literature review, scientific mapping, analysis of joint words.

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### Мемлекеттік басқару жүйесін реформалау бойынша зерттеулердің библиометриялық талдауы

Зерттеу мемлекеттік әкімшілік жүйені басқару негізінде жүргізілген реформалардың алғашқы библиометриялық талдауы. Библиометриялық талдаудың өзектілігі деректердің үлкен көлемін өңдеп талдауда. Мемлекеттік жүйені басқару бағытындағы жүргізілген реформалардың қазіргі жай күйі мен болашақ даму бағыттарын анықтап, библиометриялық талдау жүргізу зерттеуіміздің басты мақсаты.

Мақаламызда ерекше стратегия қолдану арқылы 1991 – 2023 жылдары зерттеу бағытымыз бойынша 151 мақала таңдалды. Библиометриялық желілерді құрып, визуализация жасауда VOSviewer бағдарламалық құралы таңдалды. Мемлекеттік әкімшілік жүйені басқару бағытындағы зерттеулерде Scopus академиялық дерекқорына талдау жүргізілді. Жинақталған деректерге тұжырымдар жасау арқылы зерттеуіміздің даму бағытын түсіндік.

Зерттеу нәтижелері мемлекеттік жүйені басқару бағытындағы зерттеулердің даму қарқыны туралы толық және сенімді ақпарат берді. Біздің зерттеуіміз мемлекеттік басқару бағытындағы ең жақсы мақалаларды, басылымдарды, ең көп сілтеме жасалған авторлар мен ұйымдардың

зерттеулерін анықтап, қазіргі жай күйін сипаттау арқылы ғылыми әдебиеттерге үлес қосады.

Мемлекеттің әкімшілік басқару жүйесінде жүргізілген реформалар электронды үкіметтің ашықтығы мен тиімділік элементтерін анықтады. Бұдан басқа зерттеуімізде үздік әлемнің басылымдарының даму тенденциясын картаға түсіру арқылы анықтадық. Мемлекеттік жүйені басқару бойынша жүргізілген реформаларда АҚШ, Ұлыбритания елдерінің даму тәжірибесі 2010 жылдан бастау алса, ал Қазақстан 2020 жылы белсенді қарқын алған.

**Түйін сөздер:** Қазақстан, мемлекеттік басқару реформалары, VOSviewer, библиометриялық талдау, әдебиеттерге шолу, ғылыми картаға түсіру, бірлескен сөздерді талдау.

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### Библиометрический анализ исследований по реформированию системы государственного управления

Наше исследование является первым библиометрическим анализом проведенных реформ в области управления государственной системой. Библиометрический анализ актуален при обработке и анализе больших объемов данных. Целью исследования является проведение библиометрического анализа с целью определения состояния исследований в направлении реформирования государственного управления, определение и картирование будущих направлений исследований.

При проведении исследования через специальную стратегию были выбраны 151 статья, направленная на реформирование государственного управления в период 1991-2023 годов. С помощью программного обеспечения Vosviewer были созданы и визуализированы библиометрические сети.

Библиометрический анализ исследования был проведен на основе академической базы данных Scopus в области реформирования государственного управления. На основании данных исследований были сделаны выводы, отражающие в данной статье и дает возможность для дальнейшего понимания систематического развития исследования.

Результаты исследования предоставили полную и достоверную информацию о темпах развития исследований в области государственного управления. Были выявлены лучшие статьи, публикации, исследования наиболее цитируемых авторов и организаций в области государственного управления и вносит свой вклад в научную литературу, описывая ее текущее состояние. В исследованиях с использованием библиометрического анализа были определены элементы прозрачности и производительности, которые могут быть использованы в реформах государственного управления и электронного правительства. Кроме того, исследование продемонстрировало опыт и тенденции развития реформирования государственного управления в рецензируемых изданиях по всему миру. В Казахстане данные исследования интенсивно стали проводиться начиная с 2020 года, в то время в таких развитых странах как США, Великобритания наблюдается высокий темп использования уже с 2010 года.

**Ключевые слова:** Казахстан, реформы государственного управления, VOSviewer, библиометрический анализ, обзор литературы, научное картографирование, анализ совместных слов.

## Introduction

Kazakhstan has moved to reform the entire system of public administration since gaining independence. The state construction coincided with the formation of new structures and the change in power. The transition to a market economy completely changed the structure and functions of state administration. As a result of large-scale reforms, a state management system was formed that was adapted to the market economy. Currently, effec-

tive state management systems are being implemented throughout the country. This policy is aimed at creating a system of professional public administration based on the business qualities of civil servants (Monobayeva et al., 2015). The disintegration of the Soviet Union faced serious problems related to reforming governing institutions, which contributed to economic growth and the creation of all conditions for the population of member states, including Kazakhstan. The main problem of developing states was to improve the

social situation of the population and reduce corruption risks (Baimenov et al., 2019).

Over the 30-year history of the country, the goal of Administrative Reforms has been associated with the economic crisis, rapid social changes, and development trends, so changing the existing traditional model of Public Administration through public administration institutions is a requirement of time (Bespalov, 2016).

Kazakhstan is introducing foreign practices of public administration reform. We see the experience of such a complex reform in the achievements of the USA, Great Britain, China, Sweden, and Singapore, which have developed competitive political systems. Since the day of independence, our country has gone through five stages of public administration reform. Although the development of each stage was characterized by its characteristics, the goal was the same. In the initial period, in 1991-1997, the state management system was institutionalized, and in 1997-2007, the creation of a "Professional State" was aimed at creating an optimal management structure for modern public service and market economy. Further reform of the public administration system falls on 2007-2017, based on the meritocracy and professional position of a civil servant. The administrative development of the state in 2017-2020 was associated with economic problems in the country. For this purpose, we aimed to optimize the functions of the state apparatus and increase its responsibility through the reduction of state intervention in the economy. In the current period, a new model of the state aimed at solving social and economic tasks was developed (Bhuiyan, 2011). However, it is necessary to intensify scientific research in this area. Post-Soviet countries that have gained independence are striving for democratic governance of the country and the construction of economic systems, given the speed of change in the world. Currently, in the vast majority of post-Soviet republics, efforts to reform state management and public service have met the goals specified in the stage of sustainable development. These goals included equal access to the potential within democratic development, transparency, trust management, and the formation of fair and accountable institutions (Baimenov et al., 2022).

For the study of bibliometric data, we conducted a bibliometric analysis of our research area. In this regard, we used the VOSviewer software to visualize the search. During the study, we used the cluster analysis method to study the research of scientists and experts. This study affects research in the field of Public Administration System Management. This

approach allows future researchers to identify successful literary readings on the above topics.

This paper provides insight into the interaction of intellectual research findings among researchers and highlights the value of keywords in identifying research topics and promoting interdisciplinary communication. Since 2007, interest in this direction of research has increased. The study was a study of the state of related research on reforms in our industry and the most influential related publications in the Scopus database. To determine the success of Public Administration reform, we will try to answer the original question (RQ1): What is the level of public administration reform research? Our next question (RQ2): What are the latest trends in public administration reform? Our final research question (RQ3): What are the studies in the direction of the reform of the management of the administrative system of the state?

### Literature review

Although Kazakhstan has achieved some success in reforming the state administration system, the majority of related studies have focused on reconstruction since independence. Public administration reforms are the main problem of the government today and the main task. In most cases, public administration reforms fail. There are principles of reform implementation programs for the government and its supporters based on a review of existing literature. Although the understanding of the effective implementation of Public Administration Reforms has been formed, there are shortcomings in practice (Repucci, 2014). Correcting these shortcomings requires a systematic approach that takes into account various factors, such as development in the public sector and other sectors (Repucci, 2014). There is a lack of critical assessments by scientists and researchers worldwide on how to reconstruct Kazakhstan. Such a situation prevents understanding the logic of the successful implementation of state reforms. The direction of development of the sphere of public administration has a special character in terms of socioeconomic, political, and administrative management. Carrying out the reform of civil services is connected with the changes in the world that created the need for the implementation of the construction of public administration and the development of national administration institutions. The success of such PAs depends on the proper management of the administrative political system (Lapuente et al., 2020).

We distinguish between the works of domestic and foreign scientists who considered effective ways to solve the problems of this field. Based on the findings of Baimenov et al. (2019), Bokayev et al. (2023), Buribayev et al. (2015), and Smagulova et al. (2019), these methods can be used. For example, Smagulova (2019) found that Kazakhstan can optimize the number of civil servants by reforming public administration. This is believed to be the basis for reducing bureaucracy and corruption by digitizing and outsourcing several functions to a competitive environment.

In the works of domestic researchers in the direction of public administration reforms, important factors in solving problems were identified. Russian researcher I.V. Vyakina reported her experience reforming state control and supervision activities, which showed the importance of state control and supervision of the security of the business environment. According to A.G. Barabashev's research, Weber's and new state management practices cannot exclude the necessary tools and procedures for addressing administrative crises (Barabashev, 2016).

Goldfinch et al. (2013), a researcher from the University of Nottingham, UK, among foreign scholars, believe that although low-income, weak countries pay financial attention to public administration reform, there are many obstacles to solving these problems. Haruna. (2001), a scientist from the Texas National University of the USA suggested that taking into account the limitations of past reforms, it is necessary to eliminate these gaps by creating a relationship with a broader concept of public administration. However, although there is an understanding of how to develop civil service reform, in practice, the topic becomes more complex (Repucci, 2014). The main thing is to focus on reforming, creating an environment of honest competition for the benefit of society, creating a business, and managing the industry with the help of education and skills (Bastikov et al., 2023).

Our study takes into account the concepts of researchers related to public administration reforms and shows the development directions of this field.

## Methodology

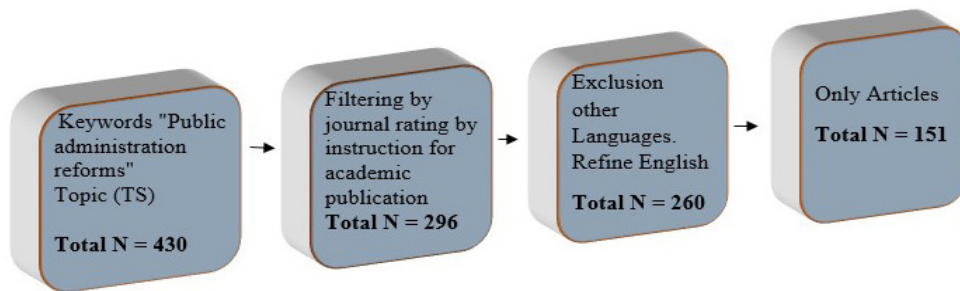
The article includes a bibliometric analysis to map the study of reforms in the management of the administrative system of the state, which has been carried out since 1991. The study used the contri-

butions of scientists to publication indicators and keywords. In addition, scientific mapping was carried out to analyze the best publications, successful countries in the scientific field, top citations, and keywords. VoSviewer software from Scopus helps to identify relevant documents, sources, authors, and organizations in scientific publications and to graphically visualize relationships Donthu et al. (2021). In our bibliometric research, we consider the possibility of working with software integration and large databases. We studied the contribution of researchers to public administration and the characteristics and interdisciplinary features of the members of the editorial board through bibliometric analysis (Ni et al., 2017).

The study successfully informs about the state of research and practice in general reform and reform of the system of government of the state of Kazakhstan and is the initial step for future research. The discussion of the results of our research included four parts. In the first part, we defined our research strategy and presented the information. In the second part, we explained the obtained results. In the third section, we define directions for future research. This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive overview of our research area and determines the direction of future research. Our study emphasizes the importance of institutional factors in the study of Kazakhstan's public administration practice, and it is assumed that our study will be useful for application in the academic environment and practice.

## Results and discussion

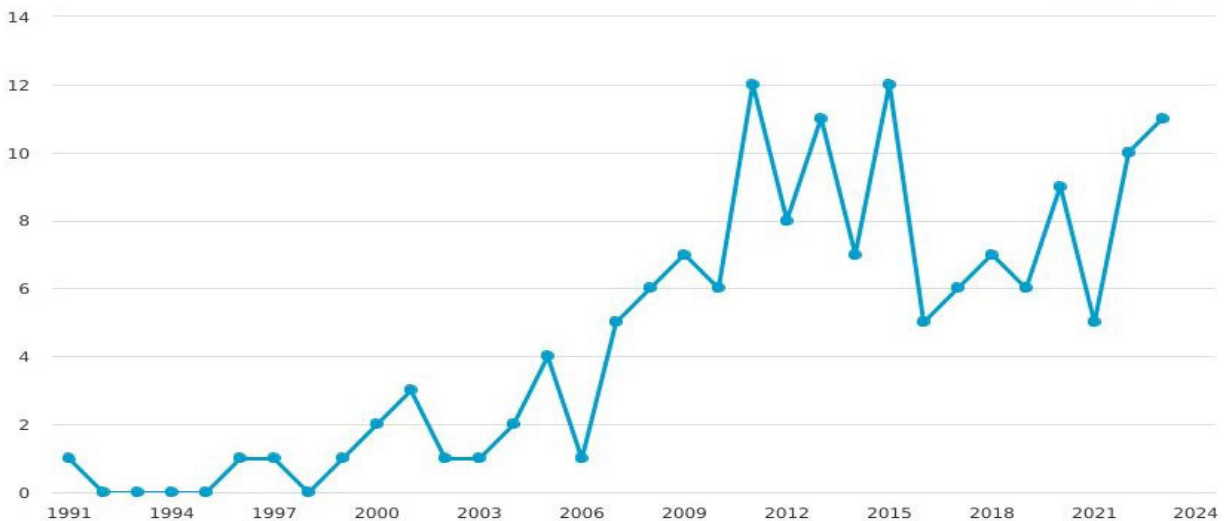
*Our research strategy* covered the years 1991 to 2023 in Scopus (peer-reviewed scientific literature database). The year 2024 was omitted due to incomplete data. Figure 1 shows the filtering of data by topic and keyword. Articles in languages other than English were excluded. Here, review articles were excluded, and only original studies were considered. In Figure 1, our research strategy started with keyword selection, and as a result, 430 publications were identified. Then, 296 publications were selected by filtering out licensed academic journals, 260 articles, and conference proceedings were selected as the main strategy for our research on publications in English, and the remaining 151 were ultimately selected as a result of the selection of articles only. The publication was analyzed.



**Figure 1** – Keyword search on Scopus  
Note – Compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

*Results obtained.* Our study analyzed 151 articles from 71 academic journals published between 1991 and 2023. The results of the analysis show an increase in research. The majority of studies were in social sciences 59.6%, humanities 4.8%, economics and finance 9.7%, and business, management and accounting 25.9%. However, the results of the studies are published in local publications that are not indexed internationally. Figure 2 shows a slight increase in the number of articles as a result of research from 2000 to 2009, and after 2011, the growth rate increased. The peak of the research occurred in 2011 and 2015. This has led to an increase in public administration challenges and researchers’ interest in understanding this area.

We created Table 1 according to the top rating of the academic journals. As shown in Table 1, the main sources of reform on the management of the state system were the original three international publications. Our study identified 11 publications; they were the first in terms of ranking and number of articles in 71 academic journals. The three most cited publications on the topic of public administration reform were identified and were cited in the “Australian Journal Of Public Administration” magazine, with 207 citations. It was followed by “International Review Of Administrative Sciences” with 176 citations and “Public Administration And Development” with 106 citations.



**Figure 2** – Number of articles published on public administration reforms for 1991-2023  
Note – Compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

**Table 1** – The best cited publications on public administration reform

№	Sources	Documents	Quotes
1	International Journal Of Public Administration	18	86
2	Transylvanian Review Of Administrative Sciences	13	73
3	Public Administration And Development	8	106
4	International Review Of Administrative Sciences	6	176
5	Mediterranean Journal Of Social Sciences	5	23
6	Administrative Si Management Public	4	24
7	Administration And Society	4	18
8	Australian Journal Of Public Administration	4	207
9	Central European Public Administration Review	4	11
10	Croatian And Comparative Public Administration	4	1
11	Public Policy And Administration	3	10

Note – Compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

To clarify the direction of the work, four publications were taken as objects of study, which are among the best in the field of management of the state administrative system. This was determined by the Scimago Journal Rankings (SJR), an analytical platform that publishes high rankings and

citation statistics. Table 2 shows the top International Review of Administrative Sciences journal in 2022 in terms of the SJR platform, average citation score of recently published articles (Cite Score), and article citation rate based on publications (SNIP).

**Table 2** – Rating of publications according to the Scopus database for 2022 on state system management

№	Source	SJR	Cite Score	SNIP	Number of citations	References not cited
1	International Review Of Administrative Sciences	0.993	5.4	1.649	2761	11.76%
2	International Journal Of Public Administration	0.691	4.4	1.186	3229	26.72%
3	Public Administration And Development	0.535	3	0.912	1381	20%
4	Transylvanian Review Of Administrative Sciences	0.279	1.5	0.487	400	41.18%

Note – compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

More or less articles were published in the direction of public administration and reform, most of them focused on regional research. In Table 3, Romania, the United States, the Czech Republic, and

Italy are the leaders in our field of research. The high productivity of the work of researchers was influenced by citations. In addition, we have established close international cooperation in our research.

**Table 3** – Countries with high efficiency citations on government system management

№	Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
1	Romania	18	73	6
2	USA	18	188	12
3	Czech Republic	10	79	5
4	Italy	10	90	8

Continuation of the table

№	Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
5	United Kingdom	8	314	13
6	Australia	7	167	9
7	Serbia	6	6	2
8	Canada	5	108	9
9	China	5	54	5
10	Kazakhstan	5	36	2

Note – compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

Keywords are important in the full study of a particular topic in the direction of research. As a result of individual analysis of the articles, articles containing references were identified. Table 4 lists the most cited papers by Torres. (2004) and other authors. In his studies on the trajectories of government system management reforms in European countries, he received the most (97) citations.

Featherstone. (2015), the study of the reform of the management of the state administrative system before and during the debt crisis in Greece ranked second with 89 citations. Meyer-Sahling. (2009) He received a critical review of his research in East Central Europe and received 77 citations. The top 10 articles cited overall covered two main themes in public administration and reform.

**Table 4** – The 10 most cited articles of reforms in the direction of managing the administrative system of the state

№	Author/Year	Title	Quote	Citations
1	Lourdes Torres (2004)	Trajectories in public administration reforms in European Continental countries	97	64
2	Kevin Featherstone (2015)	External conditionality and the debt crisis: the ‘Troika’ and public administration reform in Greece	89	51
3	Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling (2009)	Varieties of legacies: A critical review of legacy explanations of public administration reform in East Central Europe	77	64
4	Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling (2011)	Differential legacy effects: Three propositions on the impact of administrative traditions on public administration reform in Europe east and west	66	45
5	Chris Eichbaum et al. (2007)	Ministerial advisers and the politics of policy-making: Bureaucratic permanence and popular control	58	36
6	Grigore Pop-Eleches (2007)	Between historical legacies and the promise of western integration: Democratic conditionality after communism	57	25
7	Amandine Crespy et al. (2019)	What “Brussels” means by structural reforms: empty signifier or constructive ambiguity?	55	53
8	Mary Lee Rhodes et al. (2012)	Current state of public sector performance management in seven selected countries	52	107
9	Eran Vigoda-Gadot et al. (2005)	Managerial and public sector innovation: promises and realities in globalized public administration	46	73
10	Maria Katsonis et al. (2015)	Digital Government: A Primer and Professional Perspectives	45	46

Note – compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

In our search, 9 authors with at least two articles and two citations and references were identified. Table 5 contains the five authors who have carried out the most related studies in our

research area. David Spacek, a researcher at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic, was the most influential author, with 48 citations and 107 citations with six articles, followed by Jan-Hinrik

Meyer-Sahling, with 184 citations with three articles; and Mark Turner, with 49 citations and 149 citations with three articles. In our analysis, the researcher of the Academy of Public Administration Bokaev Bauyrzhan, took ninth place on the

list, with two articles on the reform of the public service system. In one of his works, Kazakh researcher Bokayev et al, (2023) revealed the prospects of public service reform for the creation of New Kazakhstan.

**Table 5** – 9 Articles with the most links to public administration reform

№	Author	Documents	Quote	Citations
1	David Spacek	6	48	107
2	Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling	3	184	163
3	Mark Turner	3	49	149
4	Kristina Muhhina	3	35	228
5	Dan Sorin Sandor	3	23	61
6	Lourdes Torres	2	122	110
7	Juraj Nemeč	2	28	74
8	Tudorel Andrei	2	11	41
9	Baurzhan Bokayev	2	1	66

Note – compiled by authors based on VOSviewer

Five out of the 151 articles in our research direction were contributed by Kazakhstani researchers. As shown in Table 6, the conclusions of four Kazakhstani authors were related to the reform of the administrative system of the state. Two articles by Baurzhan Bokayev were published in the “Innovation Journal”. The first research of the author is that in the 30-year history of Kazakhstan development, despite the measures taken during the reform of the public service, it was not possible to achieve significant changes in the country. In particular, low qualifications and low salaries for government employees seem to be the main problems of the country. The second study by Bokayev et al. (2023) involved a comparative study of the application of reforms in the recruitment of highly qualified civil servants in the experience of Kazakhstan and Singapore. In addition, Baimenov et al. (2019) considered the implementation of reforms in the field of Human Resource Management and anti-corruption in developing countries.

The researcher’s article was published in *Public Administration Review*, one of the most highly cited and respected journals in Q1. Studying the third author, Buribayev et al. (2015) focused on the study of public administration reform in the social

sphere and the formation of recommendations for further improvement. Assel Beisenova, a researcher at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, devoted his article to the functional analysis of public administration reforms carried out in Kazakhstan. The works of Kazakhstani researchers are published in the best publications with 56 citations and 116 links.

In Figure 3, the frequency of association of keywords found in articles on public administration reform was mapped based on the VOSviewer program. The most frequent words are as follows: public administration reforms, new public administration, public service, and administrative reforms. This picture provided an opportunity to see the tendency toward the formation of words. The latest articles are highlighted in yellow, indicating that new research is devoted to the topics of Kazakhstan, transparency, citizen participation, and structural reforms. In this way, the articles published in recent years, as a result of the reform of public service in Kazakhstan, did not cover the transparency of local executive bodies and did not cover the obligation of local authorities to report on the participation of citizens in decision-making.









authors. In our search, Baurzhan Bokayev from Kazakhstan, who has at least two articles, entered the ninth list of the most cited authors whose research on the consequences of the reforms carried out in the creation of New Kazakhstan. Alihan Baimenov, a public figure in Kazakhstan, has published his work on reform in the world's most prestigious Q1 Public Administration Review. The Masaryk University of the Czech Republic is the institution that has published the most articles among researchers, and the Academy of Public Administration of the Republic of Kazakhstan is in ninth place. The number of articles in our research area, including the research of A. Baimenov, E. Buribayev, A. Beisenova, and B. Bokayev from Kazakhstan have added to the work of researchers in this field. However, the vast majority of articles in this area in our country are published in journals that are not indexed by international platforms. This alienates the relationship between public administration research and other disciplines. Most active institutions come from the US and UK, indicating their dominant position over others (Yu, 2022). Most imperial studies of Public Administration are conducted in Western countries, especially in English–American countries. Asian countries still point to a lack of studies exploring many pos-

sible models for public administration (Pradana et al., 2022).

The results of bibliometric analysis required the improvement of several areas of research. In particular, the development of English-language curricula in a number of educational institutions outside English-speaking countries. Require teachers to publish their research in high-level international journals where English is the printed language. Formation of strategies that strengthen joint authorial relations between scientists and students in the field of public administration. In most cases, since government data is kept secret, scientists are not part of the world of government agencies but receive little data. This limits the possibilities of research in the field of Public Administration. To this end, scientists can improve the results of the study by cooperating with government officials. The successful implementation of reforms for the growth and prosperity of our country requires the publication and analysis of Kazakh researchers in internationally indexed publications. This requires the support of the country's authorities. Although advanced methods for accessing developed countries for public administration are being introduced in our country, there is a lack of publications in scientific and international academic publications, so there is a need to address this issue.

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