Fads and Trends in Business and Information Systems Engineering and Information Systems Research – A Comparative Literature Analysis

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Abstract

The business and information systems engineering (BISE) discipline, dominating in the German-speaking countries, where it is called "Wirtschaftsinformatik", is currently undergoing a phase of increasing internationalization and the U.S.-based Information Systems (IS) discipline is often considered an ideal. Studies show that BISE has often dealt with fads in the past – for IS there are no findings reporting on the diffusion of fads. The objective of the paper is to close this research gap. The authors conducted a literature analysis to investigate the development of topics and terms in BISE and IS from 1994 to 2007. Titles, abstracts and keywords of 2,564 articles in three BISE journals and 5,647 articles in five IS journals were analyzed. The results show that BISE is topically more diverse and concrete than IS. In addition, the rate of fads is higher in BISE than IS. Being engaged in fads is not necessarily negative – rather, it may considerably contribute to the relevance of research. However, it has to be considered that an overly intense orientation on fads may negatively influence a cumulative research progress. Hence, the authors conclude that for BISE and IS, which both have a theoretical and pragmatic mission, a balanced ratio of short- and long-term topics seems appropriate.

Keywords

Fads – Trends – Topical diversity – Terminology – Information Systems – Literature analysis

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