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Funding acknowledgements and citation stratification: The case of bibliometrics (2000–2024)

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Bibliometric indicators increasingly shape research evaluation, yet little is known about how funding, recognition, and visibility relate within bibliometrics itself. This work-in-progress examines field stratification through Merton's scientific reward system. It uses 7,337 Scopus-indexed publications (2000–2024) in *Scientometrics*, *Journal of Informetrics*, and *Quantitative Science Studies*, combining country co-authorship mapping, VOSviewer's average normalized citations, funder analysis, and publication-level logistic regression. Participation is concentrated: among mapped countries, the top five hold 45% of country-document attributions (Gini = 0.61). Funding acknowledgements are similarly concentrated among a few bodies, led by the National Natural Science Foundation of China, although frequencies also reflect improving metadata coverage and national or funder-specific reporting requirements. BRICS-5 (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) supply 24% of affiliation occurrences but only 14% of the most-cited decile, or 19% when the decile is defined within publication year, reflecting their more recent output. Normalized impact averages 0.90 for BRICS-5, 1.16 for the EU-27 (39% of attributions), and 1.02 for the United States. Nordic countries account for 4.5% of attributions with impact 1.15, and the Research Council of Norway is their most frequently acknowledged funder. Funded papers are not more visible: the apparent negative association between acknowledgements and top-decile status disappears once the decile is defined within year (OR = 0.96, 95% CI 0.82–1.13), whereas international collaboration remains positively associated (OR = 1.58, 1.34–1.85). Funder visibility is therefore distinct from citation advantage. These patterns matter for Nordic policy, where performance-based funding ties indicators to resources.

Keywords: Bibliometrics, Scholarly communication, Funding acknowledgements, Citation analysis