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Exploring physics education research: Popular topics in prestigious international journals in the period of 2009-2019

N. Nurazmi;

Hartono Bancong

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Knowing the history of research conducted by the researchers in the past will help in shaping current and future exploration in the field. This study aims to find out which research topics that were popular in 2009-2019 in well-respected international journals. Employing a descriptive method, this research collected the data from 3 major ranking journals about science/physics education, namely the International Journal of Science Education (IJSE), Research in Science Education (RISE), and Science Education (SE). The data collection was carried out from April to September 2020 by extracting journals from the Clarivate Analytics WoS online database system. The most popular topicsphysics researchers in IJSE, RISE and SE journals in the period of 2009-2019 are science learning: contexts, characteristics and interactions (13.50%), science learning: development of student understanding (9.35%), and curriculum and assessment (8.47%), while thetopics of religious beliefs, methodological issues, textbook analysis (2.76%) and pre-service science teacher education (3.89%) gained the least attention. In addition, USA was the country that contributed the most articles in IJSE, RISE, and SE journals is USA with the percentage of 35.30% or about five times higher than the UK and Australia which ranked second and third with the percentage of 7.21% and 6.46%, respectively.

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