

Research Quality: Should France follow Australia, Germany or the Netherlands?

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Presentation Outline

- **Publications: Volume versus impact**
 - Discussion of a recent study I conducted on Australian publication patterns in Economics & Business
 - Full results published in "Australian Research Output in Economics & Business: High Volume, Low Impact?" *Australian Journal of Management*, December 2005
 - Comparison with French publication patterns
 - Position of INSEAD in France
- **Journal rankings**
- **Personal reflections on improving international recognition**

The context

- Academic journals are an important outlet for dissemination of academic research
- Other outlets are important too and more so than in the Sciences
- However, printed refereed journals were seen as essential by 97% of the academics in the Social Sciences
- Only in Arts and Humanities books are seen as more important than journals
- International (i.e. English/US) journals generally carry more prestige than local journals
- Most journals listed by ISI Thomson Scientific are North American/English journals
- This presentation is based on data from ISI [Web of Knowledge](#) (includes Web of Science and Essential Science Indicators)

Methodology

- Comparison of research quantity and quality across countries
- Quantity/volume: number of papers
- Quality/impact: number of citations/paper
 - not a perfect measure, but there is a strong correlation between journal impact scores and perceived journal quality
- Measures sourced from the ISI Web of Knowledge Essential Science Indicators January 1994-June 2004 (updated for this presentation to August 2006)
- Countries with < 500 papers excluded
- Full results published in "Australian Research Output in Economics & Business: High Volume, Low Impact?" *Australian Journal of Management*, December 2005

Country rankings ISI data August 2006: Citations per paper (rank by no of papers)*

1. USA	6.28 (1)	12. Norway	3.38 (18)
2. Israel	5.05 (14)	13. Singapore	3.19 (21)
3. Sweden	4.58 (12)	14. Italy	3.14 (9)
4. UK	4.35 (2)	15. New Zealand	3.11 (19)
5. Canada	4.30 (3)	16. Finland	2.94 (20)
6. Switzerland	4.28 (15)	17. Australia	2.90 (4-7)**
7. Belgium	4.23 (13)	18. Spain	2.87 (8)
8. Netherlands	4.06 (4-7)**	19. China	2.86 (11)
9. France	3.81 (4-7)**	20. Austria	2.85 (22)
10. South Korea	3.39 (17)	21. Germany	2.79 (4-7)**
11. Denmark	3.38 (16)	22. Japan	2.29 (10)

* Hong Kong is excluded because of inconsistent data treatment by ISI

** The Netherlands/France/Germany/Australia all have between 4300-4900 papers between 1996-2006 at some distance from both Canada (7200) and Spain (2850)

Universities in Economics & Business ranked by citations/paper (based on ESI data 1996-2006)*

1. University of Chicago 14.70	91. Hebrew University Jerusalem 5.94
2. Harvard University 12.61	97. University of Lancaster 5.25
3. National Bureau for Economic Research 12.59	105. Wageningen University 5.10
4. MIT 11.92	106. University of Munich 4.99
5. Carnegie Mellon 11.68	108. Tilburg University 4.91
6. University of Pennsylvania 11.52	112. University of London 4.80
7. Institute for Fiscal Studies 11.17	114. Catholic University Louvain 4.76
8. Stanford University 10.98	119. University of Essex 4.62
9. Federal Reserve Bank Minneapolis 10.90	120. University of York 4.61
10. Northwestern University 10.43	124. University of Warwick 4.54
23. INSEAD 9.06 (1st non-NA)	125. University of Amsterdam 4.49
27. University of Zurich 8.76	128. Erasmus University 4.31
29. London Business School 8.50	129. Catholic University Leuven 4.26
42. Universitat Pompeu Fabra 7.88	131. University of Strathclyde 4.18
47. University of Sussex 7.71	132. University of Groningen 4.12
50. University of Oxford 7.66	133. University of Nottingham 4.08
54. University College London 7.43	135. University of NSW 3.87
60. Stockholm School of Economics 7.27	136. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam 3.82
64. Stockholm University 7.02	137. University of Maastricht 3.78
65. Free University Brussels 7.02	138. University of Manchester 3.72
76. Tel Aviv University 6.57	139. National University of Singapore 3.56
78. University of Cambridge 6.45	140. University of Melbourne 3.23
84. London School of Economics 6.17	141. ANU 3.13

* After top-10 only non-NA universities are included

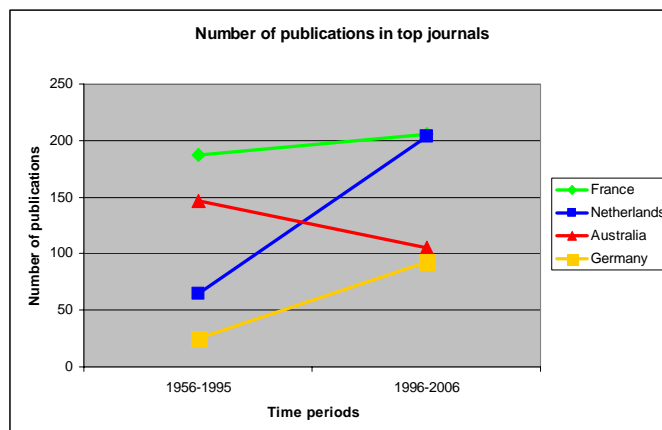
France in comparison (1)

- France is most comparable to (West) Germany in terms of the size of the population (+/- 60M) and the presence/importance of academic journals in the local language
 - impact: France seems to be doing better than both Germany and Australia; the latter is remarkable given Australia's natural English-language advantage
 - volume: Proportionally France is far behind the Netherlands & Australia, who have much smaller populations (20/16M)
- However France = INSEAD
 - Exclude INSEAD and the citations per paper for France drop from 3.81 to 3.10
 - This means drops from rank 9 to rank 15 and brings it close to Australia (2.90) and Germany (2.79) in terms of citations per paper
 - Is Insead a French school?
 - OB: only 5-6 out of 23 staff are French, Strategy: 4/27 French, only 20% French nationals
 - Many staff have PhDs from Harvard, MIT, Stanford, etc.
 - "The Business School for the World"; URL American (.edu, not .fr), no website in French
- 7 out of 14 Dutch universities are in the top universities list, the only ones missing are:
 - Eindhoven, Twente, Delft (technical universities; no business/economics faculty)
 - Nijmegen, Leiden, Utrecht (social sciences/humanities; no business/economics faculty)
 - Open University (no research mission)
 - This might reflect the Dutch academic landscape that has relatively few universities (compare with some 40 in Australia for a similar-sized population) and virtually no quality difference between universities

France in comparison (2)

- France strongest (weakest) disciplines in terms of the largest relative proportion of papers world-wide (French papers/total papers in this area)
 - strongest: Mathematics, Space Science, Geosciences
 - weakest: Economics & Business, Psychiatry/Psychology, Social Sciences/General
- Publications in top-20 journals in Business (5 journals with the highest impact factor in Finance & Accounting, Marketing, Management, Economics) in the last 50 (10) years
 - US: 18,987 (6813; 36% of last 50 years)
 - England: 978 (483; 49% of last 50 years)
 - France: 393 (206; 52% of last 50 years)
 - Netherlands: 269 (204; 76% of last 50 years)
 - Australia: 252 (105; 42% of last 50 years)
 - Germany: 118 (93; 79% of last 50 years)
- All non-US countries have improved their performance over the last 10 years, but the Netherlands and Germany much more so than the rest

Change in top publications over time



France & INSEAD

- 1956-1995: 187 publications in top journals (90 [48%] in Economics)
 1. INSEAD 53 (28%)
 2. ECOLE POLYTECH (Paris): 15 (8%) [*a handful of authors, only publications in Econometrica*]
 3. CEPREMAP: 12 (6.5%) [*a handful of authors, all but two publications in Econometrica*]
- 1996-2006: 206 publications in top journals (72 [35%] in Economics)
 1. INSEAD: 103 (50%)
 - 2/3. HEC: 12 (5.8%) [*8 Finance/Economics, 2 Marketing, 2 Management*]
 - 2/3. Toulouse 1: 12 (5.8%) [*1 Finance, 11 Economics*]

Other universities in top-10 places are mostly US universities (with one French co-author)
- INSEAD's dominance seems to increase over time
- None of the other five countries shows such a skewed institutional distribution; usually there are at least 3 top institutions
- Apart from a small presence of some institutions in Economics, virtually no French university seems to have a substantial presence in top international journals

Volume versus impact: Conclusions for Oz and France

- Australian academics in EcBus publish less in top journals than academics from the US, Canada, the UK and France
- This competitive disadvantage has only increased over the decades, especially since the second half of the nineties Australia lags further behind and is also overtaken by the Netherlands and matched by Germany
 - ┆ The start of this period coincides with the introduction of quantity-based research evaluation in Australia
 - ┆ The Netherlands and the UK have introduced research assessments that focused more on quality
- Of the 10 most highly cited articles with Australian authors in top-20 journals, 7 had a UK/US co-author, two had a UK author with a secondary Australian affiliation, only one article had only Australian authors (and even then the first author was born and trained outside Australia)
- France might do well to look towards the Netherlands (or Belgium or Sweden) for lessons rather than towards Australia

Journal rankings: why?

- Being refereed is not enough as quality control measure
 - ┆ SMJ/AMJ/ASQ, three reviewers, reviews each 2-5 pages long, three revisions taking several weeks each
 - ┆ Unnamed, 1 reviewer, 10-line review, one 3-hour revision OR
 - ┆ Unnamed, ? reviewer, editor accepts without changes
- Acceptance rates give some indication
 - ┆ Difficult to calculate and compare across journals
 - ┆ Lower-level journals generally get lower-level submissions, so their acceptance rate might still be low
- Two main measures
 - ┆ Impact ratings (average citation per article)
 - ┆ Peer evaluation through surveys
 - ┆ The two measures show reasonably strong correlations

Journal Quality List

- Originally developed in 2000 as response to ranking used by my then employer that ranked JIBS as "C" and MIR as "D/E"
- Continuously expanded and updated, now in its 22nd edition
- Contains 17 different rankings of 902 journals; SSCI impact scores excluded after warning from Thomson
 - Includes British, US, Dutch, French, Hong Kong and Australian rankings
- Is used all over the world
 - > 5,000 downloads every year (go to www.harzing.com to download)
 - Downloaded by academics at e.g.: McGill, Toronto, MIT, Harvard, Stanford, INSEAD, Copenhagen Business School, Stockholm School of Economics, IESE, IMD, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Erasmus, Cranfield, Strathclyde, Warwick and LSE
 - Has been cited in eight academic publications
 - Half of the people I meet at conferences know my JQL rather than my research :-)

Some personal reflections on building international recognition: publications

- Do not follow the Australian example:
 - previously a focus on quantity instead of quality of publications
 - now some top universities have a very restricted focus on mainly North American journals
- Consider looking towards developments in the Netherlands/Belgium; pick 1-3 benchmark universities
- Acknowledge that especially for areas such as HRM publishing in local journals is important for knowledge transfer to practice
- Celebrate diversity; do not engage in head-to-head competition with North American academics, we can only loose
- BUT: Do not be discouraged from submitting to NA journals
 - True, some bias still exists, but don't self-select
 - Do ensure your papers conform to the standard requirements and explain why your paper is relevant to a broader audience

Some personal reflections on building international recognition: conferences

- Presence at top conferences is very important
- Provide conference budget to research active staff (Melbourne \$5000/year)
- Best way to gain international recognition is to volunteer for PDWs, discussant, Chair, committees
- At the very least become a member of major professional associations
 - Academy of Management membership
 - UK 764, Australia 483, Netherlands 367, Germany 320, France 238
 - Only 3-5 ESC staff seem to be AoM members
 - European Academy of Management?

Some personal reflections on building international recognition: funding

- Provide support for funding applications to national research councils
 - Link in with other universities; funding is often given to those who already have strong records
- Implement a university/school research grant system
 - Even small amounts (e.g. up to € 3000) can provide an impetus for research
 - Research students (MRes, PhD) form excellent research assistants; an additional reason to build up a PhD programme
- Create a research culture
 - Invite (international) academic visitors
 - Get involved in (international) collaborations
 - Run seminar series, even if they are very informal