The Role of Scholar Status in the Academic Publication Process

Laura Casey Amo
SUNY Buffalo,
Buffalo, NY, USA
lccasey@buffalo.edu

Serkan Ada
K.Maras Sutcu Imam University
K.Maras, TURKEY
ada13126@gmail.com

Raj Sharman
SUNY Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, USA
rsharman@buffalo.edu

Abstract

With journal impact factors becoming increasingly visible aspects of academia and doctoral education, it is important for researchers to understand the process of becoming published in a high-impact journal so that faculty members are able to prepare doctoral students for successful publication. Using a sample of empirical manuscripts published on a common topic (the business value of information technology or BVIT), this study explored the extent to which a scholar's status and quality of respective manuscript explained journal quality and examined how scholar status affected the relationship between manuscript quality and journal quality. Differences over time were also explored, and models from two different time periods (pre- and post-2000) were compared. Findings emerged that have implications for doctoral research and education. First, scholars with higher status were published in journals with higher impact factors, even if the manuscript was not of superior quality. Second, in post-2000 years, the contribution of scholar status in predicting journal quality became significant. The productivity gap between scholars from top-tier institutions and scholars associated with all other institutions has increased in this particular domain in recent years and/or that scholar status is exerting greater impact on journal outlet over time. Findings are discussed in context of management schools' doctoral education programs.

Keywords: manuscript quality, scholar status, journal quality, publication process

Introduction

Research activity is a driving force in doctoral education and has implications for students, faculty members, and academic departments. Success in academia hinges on publication outcomes, making it crucial to learn more about the publication processes of academic journals within certain domains such as management (Koh, 2003). Most of the research on publication success in management fields has examined citation measures or publication count(s) as outcomes (see Bergh, Perry, & Hanke, 2006; Judge, Cable, Colbert, & Rynes, 2007; Long, Bowers, Barnett, & White,

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1998; Newman & Cooper, 1993; Palvia & Pinjani, 2007; Stremersch, Verniers, & Verhoef, 2007). Herein, the focus is shifted onto a journal's quality, measured by its impact factor. While there are additional indices of journal quality including eigenfactor scores, article influence scores, and *h*-index (Straub & Anderson, 2010), this paper uses journal impact factor, specifically the journal impact factor provided by Institute for Scientific Information [ISI] (2010), in an attempt to focus the discussion. The impact factor associated with a journal provides a gauge of the journal's distinction within a particular field (Garfield, 2003) and is based on the number of average citations received by the manuscripts published in the respective journal over a specified period of time (ISI, 2010). As such, journal impact factors can serve as important points of consideration for doctoral students preparing manuscripts for publication. While publication of a manuscript in a top-tier journal does not guarantee that the manuscript will be cited more frequently, it arguably sets the stage for the manuscript's future visibility.

Over the past two decades, achieving top-tier publications has become more difficult for management scholars to accomplish; progressively more authors are entering the publication arena and the period of time that it takes for a business scholar to establish a publication record in top-tier journals has increased substantially over the past twenty years (Certo, Sirmon, & Brymer, 2010). With scholars in management experiencing increasing competition for top-tier publication, it is important to evaluate the overall fairness of this competitive process and explore how the process has changed over time. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which scholar status and manuscript quality affected the quality of journal and to examine how relationships between these variables have changed over the last two decades.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by existing research on publication outcomes in management journals. Within this body of literature, researchers have used universalistic and particularistic perspectives of publication (Merton, 1968) to predict citation outcomes associated with a manuscript (e.g., Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007; Stremersch et al., 2007). Universalistic views of science uphold that publication is based solely on manuscript characteristics (e.g., writing quality, topic, perceived contribution to the field) while particularistic views assert that publication is also influenced by factors external to the manuscript (e.g., author's publication history, editorial membership, or prestige of doctoral education). Findings from existing studies confirm that both universalistic (or manuscript-related) and particularistic (or scholar-related) factors separately impact citation counts of manuscripts published in management journals (Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007; Long et al., 1998; Stremersch et al., 2007); however, the extent to which these constructs directly and indirectly affect where a manuscript is published has yet to be explored.

In this study, indicators associated with scholar status and manuscript quality were examined in relation to publication in higher quality management journals. This allowed insight into measurement indicators that best explained scholar status and manuscript quality, as well as information on how these larger structural components related to each other and to journal quality. These associations, shown in Figure 1, are described in greater detail in the following sections. The review of literature uses research from the field of management to gain insight into management journal review processes, however the theoretical constructs transcend across other academic domains.

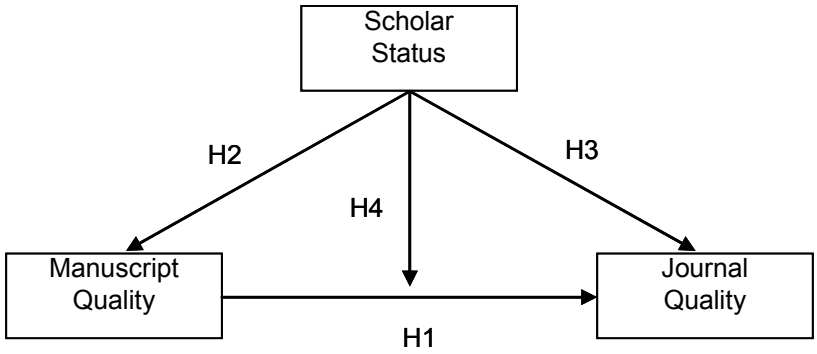

Figure 1: Theoretical model

Manuscript Quality – Journal Quality

Becoming published in top-tier journals depends on different factors. Ideally a manuscript's quality and its contributions should principally determine where it will become published. Accordingly, journal editors and reviewers are expected to consider aspects related only to the manuscript when making acceptance and rejection decisions. This kind of universalistic publication system would ensure that each manuscript is evaluated in the same way and that acceptance or rejection from a management journal is based solely on manuscript quality and contribution.

Manuscript quality has been conceptualized differently across studies on publication outcomes in management research. Researchers have shown that a manuscript's topic (Judge et al., 2007; Stremersch et al., 2007), empiricism (Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007), use of theory (Aguinis, Dalton, Bosco, Pierce, & Dalton, 2009; Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007; Judge et al., 2007), length (Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007), number of references (Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007), and research contributions (Judge et al., 2007; Newman & Cooper, 1993) affect citation outcomes. Germane to the present investigation into the factors that affect journal quality, Judge et al. (2007) concluded that a manuscript's methodological rigor, clarity, and coherence predicted journal prestige and journal citation rate. Similarly, Tams and Grover argued (2010) that article structure and quality significantly influenced its impact.

The first hypothesis related to *manuscript quality* is presented as hypothesis one in Figure 1. The first hypothesis of this study is that manuscript quality predicts journal quality or, more specifically, that higher quality manuscripts are published in journals with higher impact factors.

Hypothesis 1: Manuscript quality is positively related to journal quality.

Scholar Status – Manuscript Quality

The quality of a manuscript is attributed to the scholar(s) responsible for writing the manuscript. Characteristics related to the scholar therefore impact manuscript quality. Characteristics such as a scholar's education and doctoral training can be understood in terms of *scholar status*. Status is defined in Merriam Webster's dictionary as "a position or rank in relation to others; the relative rank in a hierarchy of prestige" (Merriam-Webster, 2010), which adequately describes its meaning in this model. Scholars of higher "status" will inferably produce manuscripts of higher quality, affecting where the manuscript will become published. The term *scholar status*, as used in this study, was referent to a business scholar's rank in a hierarchical academic system. In existing research on publication in management journals, indicators related to scholar status have been examined in relation to citation outcomes (Bergh et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2007) and career outcomes (Bedeian, Cavazos, Hunt, & Jauch, 2010). In existing research, constructs related to *scholar status* include a scholar's citation count (Bergh et al., 2006; Stremersch et al., 2007), the pres-

tige or rank of a scholar's doctoral granting institutions (Bedeian et al., 2010; Bergh et al., 2006; Long et al., 1998), the prestige of a scholar's current institution (Bedeian et al., 2010; Long et al., 1998), and editorial board membership (Bedeian et al., 2010; Stremersch et al., 2007). Relationships between a scholar's citation count and publication outcomes are well established. Researchers have shown that manuscripts authored by scholars with more established research records were cited more often than manuscripts authored by less well-known scholars. Likewise, scholars that have served as editors have been shown to receive greater citations (Stremersch et al., 2007).

The relationship between doctoral education and citation outcomes is more complex, and findings have been mixed. In two studies examining the relationship between scholar status and citation outcomes, the prestige of the scholar's doctoral granting institution did not affect a scholar's citations (Bergh et al., 2006; Long et al., 1998). Bedeian et al. (2010), however, described a complex relationship between doctoral education and perceived quality of academic contribution contingent on career stage; these researchers observed that "doctoral origin prestige interacted with perceived quality of publications such that, early in their careers, graduates of more prestigious doctoral programs obtained greater job placement benefits (in terms of more prestigious initial academic appointments) from the perceived quality of the their publications than did graduates of less prestigious doctoral programs" (p 11).

In the present study, *scholar status* is defined in terms of a scholar's publication history, doctoral education, and current institutional affiliation. This hypothesis is captured in the model as hypothesis two. The second hypothesis is that scholar status positively affected manuscript quality.

Hypothesis 2: Scholar status is positively related to manuscript quality.

Scholar Status – Journal Quality

Beyond having an indirect impact on where a manuscript becomes published through manuscript quality, the status of a scholar might also directly affect where a manuscript is published. Merton (1968) described this phenomenon as the "Matthew effect," referring to when well-known scientists are afforded greater recognition than scientists who are less recognized, even if the quality of work is similar. This was extended by Hunt & Blair (1987), who described a "generalized Matthew effect" to explain the effect that doctoral department prestige had on perceptions of a scholar's ability.

According to Merton's (1968) cumulative advantage perspective, a scholar's doctoral training, institutional location, and access to resources contribute to successive increments of advantage in academic environments (see Judge et al., 2007). For example, a scholar who has a doctoral degree from a more prestigious university has likely enjoyed more opportunities for peripheral participation in more fruitful scholarly activities than a scholar from a less prestigious university; the scholar from an institution that has a higher status has had more opportunities to build relationships with reputable faculty members and fellow researchers and to engage in more rigorous developmental research and career activities (e.g., journal review and editorial boards, conference presentation, research apprenticeships). The effects from these relationships and opportunities, according to Merton (1968), build and multiply over time, perpetuating a stratified higher education system where power is shared among a small number of high status people in each academic field. Thus, from the cumulative advantage and stratification perspective, higher status scholars (mainly through their doctoral education and experiences) will systematically have greater access and stronger connections to editors and reviewers who are associated with higher quality journals.

This phenomenon is captured in Figure 1 as hypothesis three. The third hypothesis in this study is that scholars with higher status are associated with higher quality journals, even after accounting for the effect that manuscript quality has on journal quality.

Hypothesis 3: Scholar status is positively related to journal quality.

The Moderating Impact of Scholar Status

Scholar status might affect the relationship between manuscript quality and journal quality in different ways throughout the publication process. One way is at the front end of the publication process, particularly when a scholar is determining where to send a manuscript for publication consideration. Status might inherently affect a scholar's decision about where to send a manuscript. For example, scholars with lower status may not target journals with higher impact factors simply because these scholars may not be confident in going under competitive review. Despite producing manuscripts of high quality, low status scholars might not consider sending manuscripts out for review in journals with higher impact factors as readily as would a higher status scholar.

Another interpretation of how scholar status might affect the relationship between manuscript quality and journal quality is during the journal review process. It may be that a scholars' status may influence journal reviewers' perceptions about a manuscript and affect decisions about whether to accept or reject a manuscript from a journal. In this sense, status would affect the relationship between manuscript quality and journal quality in later stages of the publication process.

With regard to Figure 1, the fourth hypothesis is that the association between manuscript quality and journal quality will depend on scholar status; in other words, the manuscript quality-journal quality slope will differ between high status scholars and low status scholars.

Hypothesis 4: Scholar status positively moderates manuscript quality – journal quality association.

Methods

In order to test these hypotheses, the data extracted from the individual research studies and data related to the primary author was used. The manuscripts were identified and then coded for information relating to the scholar, the manuscript, and the publication outlet. The data captured in this process were then analyzed statistically using a partial least squares (PLS) regression method, based on the theoretical model outlined above.

Sample

A comprehensive search of ISI Web of Science database was performed, using several keywords central to a specific domain (Business Value of Information Technology or BVIT) in management research. These keywords include but are not limited to *information technology, information systems, IT capital, IT investment, IT expenditure, IT spending, investment, expenditure, business value, firm performance, organizational performance, payoff, productivity, performance*. An ancestral search was also conducted by examining the bibliographies of several BVIT qualitative and quantitative review studies (Brynjolfsson & Yang, 1996; Chan, 2000; Grover, Jeong, & Segars, 1996; Kohli & Devaraj, 2003; Lim, 2006; Melville, Kraemer, & Gurbaxani, 2004; Sircar, Turnbow, & Bordoloi, 1998). In order for a paper to be included in the sample, it needed to meet the following criteria: (1) be empirical and/or quantitative in nature, (2) have content relevant to BVIT, and (3) be published in a journal that was included in Thomson's ISI Web of Science database (ISI, 2010). Research studies that were published in a journal not indexed in Web of Science were excluded.

The initial search process yielded 126 empirical research papers. Twenty-five research papers were dropped from the sample during coding procedure due to missing or insufficient data. The final sample included 101 research papers, covering a period between 1986 and 2008 (1986: 1;

1990: 3; 1991: 2; 1992: 1; 1993: 1; 1994: 1; 1995: 4; 1996: 5; 1997: 9; 1998: 5; 1999: 4; 2000: 10; 2001: 5; 2002: 3; 2003: 8; 2004: 7; 2005: 5; 2006: 12; 2007: 13; 2008: 2). Approximately 56% of the sample papers (n = 57 papers) were published in the journals having relatively higher impact factors (e.g., Information & Management, Journal of Management Information Systems, Information Systems Research, MIS Quarterly, Management Science, International Journal of Management Science, and Decision Support Systems). The remaining portion of the sample was composed of papers published in journals with relatively lower impact factors (e.g., Journal of Strategic Information Systems, European Journal of Information Systems, IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management, International Journal of Information Management, Industrial Management & Data Systems).

The set of papers in the sample were content-analyzed by two independent coders. A coding sheet was developed for evaluating the manuscripts in the sample. Two graduate students were hired and trained based on the coding sheet and independently coded the entire sample of 126 manuscripts on all measurement items for each construct shown in Table 1. Initial results from the coders were compared; estimates of inter-rater reliability were computed using percent of agreement (Berk, 1979; McDermott, 1988) due to its computational simplicity and easy interpretation (Baer, 1977). An initial agreement of 94.5% between coders was computed based on the computation. Disagreements were resolved by discussion among coders of each disagreed code and complete agreement (100%) was achieved at the end of the coding process. Using data from the content analysis, variables related to manuscript quality and scholar status were examined in relation to journal quality.

Variables

There are three constructs used in this study: manuscript quality, scholar status, and journal quality. *Manuscript quality* is a composite variable and is measured using three items: the number of pages in the manuscript, the number of references in the manuscript, and overall quality. The number of pages and references were directly recorded. Overall quality is a composite variable based on existing research (Judge et al., 2007; Newman & Cooper, 1993) and is measured as the sum of five dummy coded variables (0 = no, 1 = yes) indicating whether a manuscript (1) explicated objectives or research questions, (2) used a theoretical framework, (3) supported an exploration research plot, (4) defined variables, and (5) discussed limitations and/or implications.

Information on *scholar status* is drawn from the primary scholar associated with the manuscript. Included in this construct are the scholar's average citation count (according to ISI Web of Science as of December 2010), prestige of doctoral education, and prestige of current affiliated institution. Institutional prestige was coded "1" if the doctoral-granting institution ranked in the top 100 institutions, according to Webometrics' rating of 8,000 colleges and universities across the world (Webometrics, 2010).

Journal quality is measured using one indicator, the journal's 2009 ISI impact factor. This impact factor represented the number of times articles published in 2006 and 2007 were cited during 2008 divided by the total number of "citable items" published by that journal in 2006 and 2007. The JIF therefore represents the average number of citations received over a recent two-year period per manuscript published (ISI, 2010).

Data Analysis

This study employed partial least squares (PLS) regression methods for the data analysis. PLS is similar to a principal components regression analysis, with the objective of maximizing variance explained. The PLS approach makes no assumptions about data distribution and uses non-parametric techniques (e.g., bootstrapping or jackknifing) in order to test statistical significance

of estimations. The PLS technique places minimal restrictions on sample size and residual distributions (see Chin, 1998), allowing for the data analysis with small samples, making it a reasonable choice for our analysis. While sometimes considered a structural equation modeling approach, PLS differs from covariance-based methods (see Noonan & Wold, 1982); covariance-based SEM methods are used in programs such LISREL and AMOS, and, unlike these approaches, PLS analyses do not provide goodness-of-fit indices.

The coefficients reported in the results represent standardized beta coefficients obtained from using SmartPLS 2.0 software, a package that employs the PLS approach (see Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005). This software allows for simultaneous assessment of measurement and structural models. In order to evaluate how the relationships have changed over time, standardized beta coefficients were compared across models in a post-hoc analysis (Chin, 1998).

Results

Results from the Measurement Model

The measurement model was evaluated. Convergent and discriminant validity were established for both latent predictor constructs, manuscript quality and scholar status (see Table 1). Upholding convergent validity, all of the factors loaded more strongly and significantly on the respective constructs. Guidelines provided by Nunnally (1978) suggest a threshold value of 0.70 for the factor loadings; however, considering the exploratory nature of the study, items that had loadings greater than 0.65 in the factor analysis were retained. Discriminant validity for the model was supported as well; the diagonal elements in the construct inter-correlations matrix (square roots of the average variance extracted values) were greater than off-diagonal elements in corresponding row and column in all cases.

Results from the Structural Model

The values in the structural models are standardized beta coefficients. Path coefficients leading to journal quality represent the strength of the respective predictor on journal quality, controlling for all other predictors in the model (see Figure 2).

Table 1: Results of the measurement model

	Construct Cross Loadings		
Items	MQ	SS	JQ
Number of pages	**0.83**	0.40	0.40
Number of references	**0.72**	0.24	0.27
Overall quality	**0.66**	0.26	0.34
Scholar's citation count	0.36	**0.81**	0.40
Scholar's doctoral prestige	0.35	**0.74**	0.36
Scholar's current prestige	0.19	**0.65**	0.28
Journal impact factor	0.46	0.48	**1.00**
Construct Inter-correlations			
MQ	**0.74**		
SS	0.43	**0.73**	
JQ	0.46	0.48	**1.00**

Note: N =101; MQ: Manuscript quality; SS: Scholar status; JQ: Journal quality

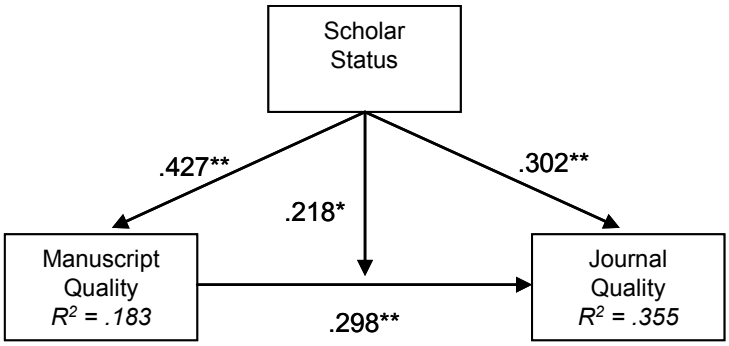

Figure 2: Results from the Structural Model
*Note: N =101; ** p < .001; * p < .05*

As expected, manuscript quality significantly predicted journal quality (β = .298, p < .001). Manuscripts that were longer, that had more references, and those that were coded as higher quality were published in journals with higher impact factors. This effect was significant, even after all predictors in the model were accounted for. In other words, the quality of a scholar's manuscript still affected where it was published even after the effects of scholar status had been considered. The first hypothesis was therefore accepted.

The second hypothesis was also accepted; scholar status predicted quality of the manuscript (β = .427, p < .001) and explained 18% of the variance in quality across the 101 manuscripts in the full sample. Scholars that had more citations from previous publications, held doctoral degrees from prestigious universities, and/or were currently positioned at prestigious universities produced manuscripts that were of higher quality.

Scholar status also directly predicted journal quality (β = .302, p < .001), and the third hypothesis was also accepted. Controlling for the effects of manuscript quality, scholars of higher status were published in journals of higher quality. According to these findings, scholar status affected where a manuscript was published, even after accounting for the effect of manuscript quality; a high status scholar was better positioned for publication in a top-tier journal than was a low status scholar, even if the lower status scholars' manuscripts were of reasonable quality.

The interaction between scholar status and manuscript quality (Figure 2) revealed a significant moderating effect (β = .218, p < .05). In fact, the structural model containing the interaction term explained an additional 5% of the variance in journal quality when compared with the structural model without the interaction term. Thus, the fourth hypothesis was also accepted.

Post-Hoc Analysis

In order to evaluate how the management publication system has evolved over time, the total sample of 101 manuscripts was divided into two sub-samples: manuscripts published before 2000 (N = 36) and manuscripts published in 2000 and thereafter (N = 65). This time point was chosen since the year 2000 represented a shift in technology, which is relevant to the topic of the manuscripts used in the sample (i.e., BVIT) and this may have affected the results. Results from these post-hoc analyses are provided in Figure 3.

Among manuscripts published prior to 2000 (n = 36), all of the measurement items loaded significantly on the respective constructs; however, none of the path coefficients were significant (see upper part of Figure 3). In this sample of manuscripts, neither scholar status nor manuscript quality predicted journal impact factor, after the effects of the other constructs had been accounted for. In the sample of manuscripts published in 2000 and thereafter, the measurement model established in the overall sample was also upheld. All path coefficients in the structural

model were significant. In this sample of manuscripts, the status of the scholar significantly predicted manuscript quality (β = .501, p< .001), and manuscript quality predicted journal quality (β = .313, p< .001). Scholar status also directly related to journal quality (β = .294, p< .001). In other words, among manuscripts published in and after the year 2000, there was evidence that scholars with higher status had greater access to high quality journals. There was also evidence of a significant interaction effect (β = .386, p< .05). The relationship between manuscript quality and journal quality differed according to scholar status.

Comparing standardized beta coefficients from the two sub-sample analyses, it appears that the influence of scholar status on manuscript quality and journal quality has increased significantly in the post-2000 era. Further, the direct impact of scholar status on journal impact factor and the moderating impact of scholar status on the manuscript quality-journal quality relationship seem to have grown more profound after 2000.

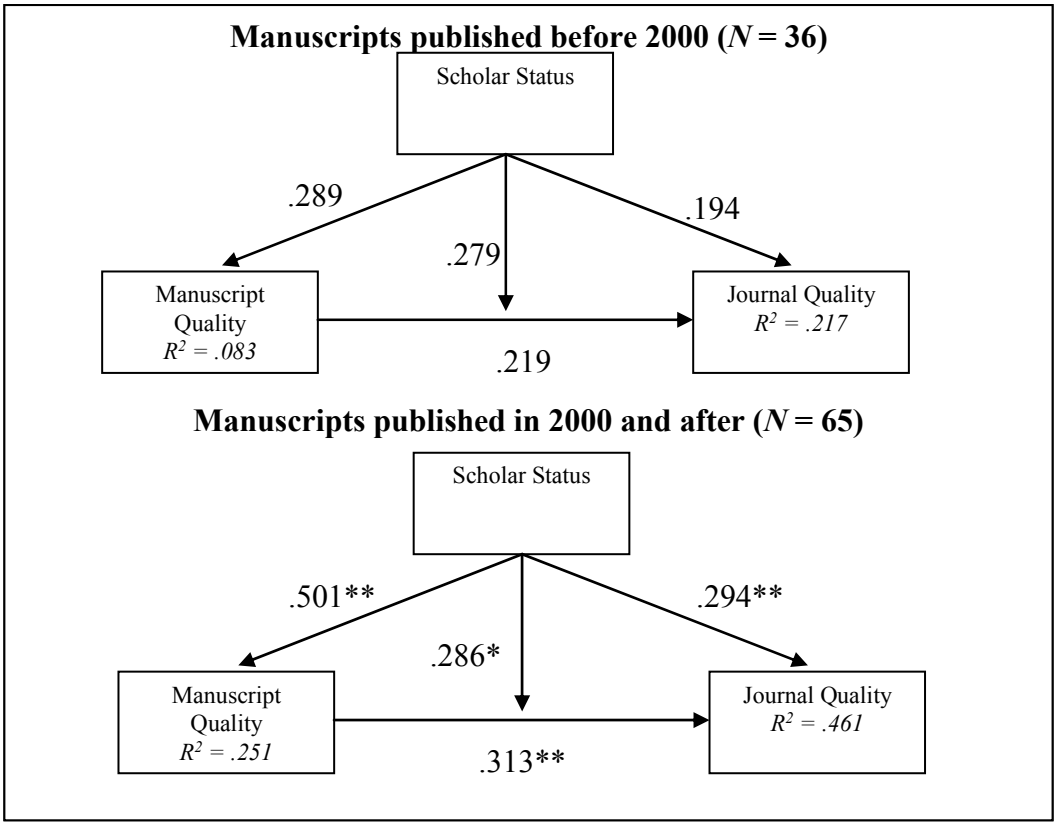

Figure 3: Comparing Models across Time
** $p < .001$ * $p < .05$

Discussion

Results from this study confirm that the relationships among scholar status, manuscript quality, and journal quality are complex. Overall, the notion that higher status scholars are better trained and are therefore able to develop and deliver better research is upheld; however, manuscript quality may only partly explain where a manuscript will be published. Consistent with existing research on publication outcomes in management fields, findings from this study confirm that particularistic forces, in this case a scholar's status, can impact publication in higher quality management journals. Scholar status plays a central role in the publication process. Beyond having an

impact on manuscript quality, status in the form of publication history, doctoral training, and current institutional affiliation may directly influence where a manuscript is published. Supporting Merton's (1968) theory of cumulative advantage and stratification in academic systems, it appears that higher status scholars have greater access to higher quality journals, inferably, due to having greater and stronger connections to powerful editors, reviewers, and networks. It may be that higher status scholars receive support from influential scholars and networks while developing a manuscript which can be invaluable as these experts can provide crucial feedback and help shape contributions (Stoilescu & McDougall, 2010). Higher status scholars are also likely to have more support in terms of research funds, which may allow for access to data and support for research related activities (e.g., data entry, data collection). A scholar with lower status, who tends not to be associated with top-tier institutions, is typically disadvantaged in these respects, and lower status puts the scholar at a systematic disadvantage with regard to accessing top-tier management journals.

In addition to affecting access to top-tier publications, a scholar's status also affects how a manuscript is perceived in the overall publication system. Findings from this study suggest that when two scholars submit manuscripts identical in quality and contribution into the publication system, the manuscript submitted by the higher status scholar will be published in a journal with a higher impact factor. This bias could possibly be operating at two distinct junctures in the publication process, namely during submission of the manuscript and during review of the manuscript. For example, it may be that lower status scholars are not submitting to high quality journals and their manuscripts are, therefore, only able to become published in lower quality journals, even if their manuscript is of high quality. Another interpretation of this effect is that scholar status actually affects how scholars are evaluated in what is, ideally, supposed to be a completely blinded review system.

Findings from this study also suggest that relationships among scholar status, manuscript quality, and journal quality appear to have changed over time, at least in this particular topic area and domain. While this finding could be attributed to age of article and growing importance of journal impact factor, if the impact of scholar status on manuscript quality and journal quality has grown stronger over time, this is obviously a concern for scholars not affiliated with top-tier institutions and/or for scholars with lower citation records.

Implications for Research on Doctoral Education

Findings from this study provide insight into ways that management schools can support doctoral students in being more productive and successful in the publication arena. First, there are implications for management schools' overall research training. According to findings from the post-hoc analysis, the contributions of scholar status on journal quality have grown more profound in the post-2000 years; if gaps between affiliates of top-tier institutions and other scholars have truly increased in the recent decade, this is an important issue to address. Universities that are not highly ranked should make concerted efforts to train doctoral students and faculty in rigorous methodologies of research so that these scholars have the capacity to produce relevant manuscripts that are conceptually and methodologically sound and well-constructed.

Beyond developing doctoral students' research skills, doctoral students also need to be encouraged to target high quality academic journals. If a scholar produces a high quality manuscript, it should be sent for review in a highly-ranked academic journal, regardless of the scholar's status. This might help eliminate bias operating at the front-end of the publication process, where doctoral students are making decisions regarding manuscript submission.

Beyond these implications, our findings also raise questions surrounding practices of academic inbreeding, or the tendency for educational institutions to hire from within even if to the detri-

ment of research productivity (Horta, Velosa, and Grediaga, 2010). Findings from this study are aligned with similar practices (i.e. scholar status acts as a protective factor surrounding lower quality manuscripts) and support the notion that academic inbreeding may extend beyond institutional walls and into publication arenas. As such, doctoral students should be encouraged to explore institutions other than their own when undertaking research and when exploring career options. Doctoral students and faculty should also be encouraged to engage in inter-institutional research activities, to ensure against academic inbreeding and against social stratification in institutes of higher education.

Future Research

More research is needed in the area of publication process bias in management journals. Different from the methods used in existing research on publication, this study employed a within-domain approach to studying publication bias by investigating one topic in one domain over an extended period of time. This approach provided a more practical approach, as publication success is really specific to domain and topic area; the evaluation of one topic over time is a more intuitive way to study publication outcomes and was a more focused and intensive investigation of scholar-based biases manifesting within management publication processes. Future studies might use this type of approach to see if publication bias exists in other areas in management or across other academic domains.

Future studies on publication outcomes might explore how other variables such as group and individual decision-making processes affect publication decisions. Also, variables such as the year in which a scholar received a PhD or scholar gender might be considered in future analyses. Ideally, studies of experimental or quasi-experimental design (where manuscript quality or scholar status are somehow "manipulated") would be executed to determine the extent to which scholar status may be biasing review decisions in management publication system; however, access to editorial processes and information across different journal boards would be difficult to obtain. Overall, more research is needed in this area in order to determine how scholars of relatively lower status may be experiencing systematic disadvantage with regard to access and review by higher quality journals.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First, information on the outcome variable was limited to the measurement of impact factor provided by ISI (2010). This means that the theoretical model presented herein may not predict impact factors that are computed by other scientific agencies. In other words, these findings may not generalize to journals that are not indexed by ISI, and stratification based on scholar status, as discussed herein, may pertain only to journals indexed by ISI. Future research should examine the extent to which journal quality (as indexed by other impact factors) is predicted by scholar status and manuscript quality. In recent years, Google Scholar has become a very comprehensive source that tracks all journals and journal citations. It also provides authors' personal indices of citation of their works for far more authors than those in ISI's list. Therefore, future studies should consider indices using Google Scholar as well.

A second limitation was that information on scholar status was recorded in 2010, and therefore was not reflective of status of the scholar at the time of respective publication. Of similar concern, since journal impact factor is a relatively "new" measure, time of manuscript publication may have affected the results. Post-hoc analysis that examined specific time periods may somewhat address this limitation. Another limitation is that the variables used in this study can be defined and measured in a number of different ways, as other researchers might not agree with indices used to define these variables. Measurement models were used in this study to help address this concern.

Lastly, the articles examined in this study were limited to one specific management domain, the business value of information technology, and it is not necessarily applicable to other fields. Therefore, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution. Future studies might examine how scholar status and manuscript quality predict and interact to affect publication across other topics/domains in management, as well as in research areas outside of management.

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Biographies

Laura Amo is a PhD candidate in the Educational Psychology program through the Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology department at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She received her BA in Psychology from Canisius College and her MA in Educational Psychology from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Her research interests include accountability of teachers and principals, educational leadership, and learning outcomes assessment.

Serkan Ada is currently an Assistant Professor in School of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Kahramanmaras Sutcu Imam University, Turkey. He received BS degree in Business Administration from Celal Bayar University-Turkey in 2003, MBA degree from State University of New York at Oswego in 2007, and PhD degree from State University of New York at Buffalo in 2011. His research interests include business value of information technology, health-care information systems, extreme events, and online social networks.

Raj Sharman is an Associate Professor in the Management Science and Systems Department at SUNY, Buffalo, NY. He received his B. Tech and M. Tech degree from IIT Bombay, India and his M.S degree in Industrial Engineering and PhD in Computer Science from Louisiana State University. His research streams include Information Assurance, and Disaster Response Management, Business Value of IT, Decision Support Systems, Conceptual Modeling and Distributed Computing. His papers have been published in a number of national and international journals. He is also the recipient of several grants from the university as well as external agencies.