MASTERARBEIT | MASTER'S THESIS

Titel | Title

Elite Journals, Elite Authors? Investigating the Relationship Between Journal Prestige and Author Affiliations in the field of Strategic Management.

verfasst von | submitted by

Jessica Beer BSc

angestrebter akademischer Grad | in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science (MSc)

Wien | Vienna, 2025

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt | Degree programme code as it appears on the student record sheet:	UA 066 915
Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt | Degree programme as it appears on the student record sheet:	Masterstudium Betriebswirtschaft
Betreut von | Supervisor:	Assoz. Prof. Steffen Keck PhD

Table of Contents

Abstract - Deutsch

Prestige spielt eine zentrale Rolle bei der Entwicklung akademischer Karrieren sowie beim Zugang zu Ressourcen und der Verbreitung wissenschaftlicher Ideen. In den Bereichen Strategisches Management und Organisationsforschung zählen das Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), das Strategic Management Journal (SMJ) und Organization Science (OS) zu den elitären Fachzeitschriften, die Forschungsstandards definieren. Bis jetzt ist noch unklar, ob diese Journals ihren Elite-Status nur hinsichtlich des wahrgenommenen Prestiges erlangt haben oder ob sie auch durch ihre Elite-Autor*innen bestehen. Diese Studie untersucht, inwieweit Elite-Autor*innen in renommierten Fachzeitschriften publizieren. Sie konzentriert sich dabei auf zwei sich ergänzende Indikatoren für die akademische Elite: (i) den individuellen wissenschaftlichen Einfluss, der hier anhand des h-Index gemessen wird, und (ii) das institutionelle Prestige, das anhand der Zugehörigkeit der Autor*innen zu Eliteuniversitäten über Rankings ermittelt wird. Bei den Rankings handelt es sich um das Times Higher Education (THE) und das QS World University Ranking (QS) 2024 im Bereich Wirtschaft und Management.

Ein umfassender Datensatz auf Autor*innenebene mit 632 Wissenschaftler*innen, die 2020 im AMJ, SMJ oder OS veröffentlicht haben, sowie eine erweiterte Teilstichprobe von 107 Autor*innen für tiefergehende Analysen. Die Studie testet zwei Hypothesen: dass (H1) Elite-Zeitschriften überproportional viele Autor*innen aus Spitzenuniversitäten veröffentlichen und dass (H2) Autor*innen mit höherem individuellem wissenschaftlichem Einfluss eher in diesen Zeitschriften erscheinen. Die deskriptive Analyse und das Ranking-Matching-Verfahren deuten hierbei auf eine erhöhte Konzentration von Elite-Institutionen sowie auf eine ungleiche globale Vertretung hin. Mehr als ein Drittel der Autor*innen konnten mit Universitäten in Verbindung gesetzt werden, die in den THE- und QS-Rankings für Wirtschaft und Management unter den Top 100 rangieren, wobei AMJ den höchsten Anteil an Elite-Affiliationen aufweist. Die Vereinigten Staaten dominierten hierbei sowohl die Analyse der Publikationszugehörigkeiten (Universitäten, mit denen die Autor*innen im Jahr 2020 in einem der drei Journals publiziert haben) als auch die Analyse der Universitäten, bei denen die Autor*innen ihre Doktorgrade erworben haben. Zeitgleich waren die Vereinigten Staaten in der

Stichprobe stark überrepräsentiert, was die anhaltende zentrale Bedeutung nordamerikanischer Institutionen weiter unterstreicht. Die H-Index-Verteilungen spiegeln ebenfalls eine starke Heterogenität wider. Während die meisten Autor*innen als Forscher*innen offenbar eher in der Mitte ihrer Karriere (11–20 Jahre Erfahrung seit der Promotion) mit moderater Zitierhäufigkeit gruppiert sind, weist jede Zeitschrift auch eine kleine Anzahl vielzitierter Wissenschaftler*innen auf, deren H-Index den Gesamtdurchschnitt nach oben verschiebt. Die erweiterte PhD-Teilstichprobe zeigt eine noch stärkere Konzentration der Elite, bei der die Mehrheit der Autor*innen ihren Doktortitel an Spitzenuniversitäten erworben hat. Zusammengenommen deuten diese deskriptiven Muster auf ein strukturell verzerrtes Feld hin, in dem die Elite-Institutionen weiterhin die Autor*innenschaft in elitären Fachzeitschriften prägen.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit tragen zum Verständnis der Prestigedynamik im Bereich des strategischen Managements bei, indem sie verdeutlichen, wie der Status einer Zeitschrift, die institutionelle Zugehörigkeit von Autor*innen sowie deren individueller Status miteinander verbunden sind. Während die deskriptiven Ergebnisse auf eine starke Konzentration an Eliteeinrichtungen hindeuten, zeigen die Regressionsanalysen ein differenzierteres Muster. Weder das Prestige der Doktoratsinstitution der Autor*innen noch das Prestige der Institution, mit der die Autor*innen im Jahr 2020 in einem der drei Journals publiziert haben (gemessen durch die beiden Rankings THE und QS), können den H-Index der Autor*innen signifikant voraussagen. Dahingegen geht die Anzahl der Jahre seit dem Erwerb des Doktortitels als einziger robuster Prädiktor für den wissenschaftlichen Einfluss hervor. Darüber hinaus zeigt sich der einzige signifikante Effekt des institutionellen Rangs im erweiterten Modell. Überraschenderweise gehen diese Erkenntnisse in die entgegengesetzte Richtung, wobei niedriger eingestufte Institutionen teilweise mit höheren H-Index-Werten assoziiert sind. Diese Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass elitäre Fachjournale zwar meist Autor*innen von renommierten Universitäten anziehen, ein messbarer Forschungsimpact jedoch nicht strukturell an das Prestige der Institution gebunden ist. Dies unterstreicht, dass es teilweise eine Diskrepanz zwischen der Selektivität von Journals und dem wissenschaftlichen Einfluss geben könnte.

Abstract - English

Prestige plays a central role in the development of academic careers as well as access to resources and the distribution of scientific ideas. In strategic management and organization studies, the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), Strategic Management Journal (SMJ), and Organization Science (OS) operate as elite journals that define research standards and signal scientific excellence. Yet it remains unclear whether these outlets are characterized not only by elite status in terms of perceived prestige but also by elite authorship. This study investigates the extent to which prestigious journals feature elite authors. It focuses on two complementary indicators of academic eliteness: (i) individual scientific impact, which is measured via the h-index, and (ii) institutional prestige, which is captured through the authors' primary affiliations and their PhD-granting institutions benchmarked against the two rankings. The two rankings in question are the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) and QS World University Ranking (QS) in Business & Management.

A comprehensive author-level dataset of 632 scholars who published in AMJ, SMJ, or OS in 2020 was used taken from the Scopus database, as well as an extended subsample of 107 authors for in depth analyses, the study tests two hypotheses: that (H1) elite journals disproportionately feature authors affiliated with top-ranked universities, and (H2) authors with higher individual scientific impact are more likely to appear in these journals. The Descriptive analysis and ranking-matching procedures point towards an extended concentration of elite institutional affiliations and an uneven global representation. More than one-third of authors were affiliated with universities ranked in the top 100 of the THE and QS Business & Management rankings, with AMJ showing the highest share of elite affiliations. The United States seemingly dominated both the publication affiliations and the PhD origins analysis while also being largely overrepresented in the sample, further emphasizing the persistent centrality of North American institutions. H-index distributions further reflect strong heterogeneity. While most authors seem to be clustered as mid-career researchers (11-20 years of experience since PHD) with moderate citation impact, each journal also features a small number of highly cited scholars whose H-index shifts the overall average upward. The extended PhD subsample shows an even stronger elite concentration, where a majority of authors have earned doctorates from top-ranked institutions. When combining these findings, these descriptive patterns tend to point to a

structurally skewed field in which elite institutional pipelines and established regional centers continue to shape authorship in premium journals.

The findings contribute to the understanding of prestige dynamics in strategic management by clarifying how journal status, institutional affiliation, and individual impact are all linked together. While the descriptive results suggest a strong elite institutional concentration, the regression analyses reveal a more nuanced pattern. Neither PhD-institution prestige nor publishing-institution prestige significantly predicts authors' H-index, whereas the number of years since the PhD is held emerges as the only robust predictor of scientific impact. Moreover, the only significant effect of institutional rank appears in the extended model. Unexpectedly, these points go in the opposite direction, with lower-ranked institutions sometimes associated with higher H-index values. These results indicate that although elite journals mostly seem to attract authors from prestigious universities, a measurable research impact is not structurally tied to institutional prestige. This highlights that there might be a partial misalignment between journal selectivity and scholarly influence.

List of abbreviations

AMJ	Academy of Management Journal
INFORMS	Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences
JIF	Journal Impact Factor
OS	Organization Science
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
RBV	Research-Based View
SMJ	Strategic Management Journal
SMS	Strategic Management Society
THE	Times Higher Education

Introduction

Academic publishing is deeply intertwined with prestige. Within management and organization studies, a small group of journals is widely recognized as "elite." When an author is able to publish in one of these journals, it is often considered the highest mark of academic achievement. In some cases, this might even lead to shaping a career, influencing research agendas, and reinforcing the reputation of both the author and their institution. However, while the elite status of these journals is well established, a fundamental question remains: are the authors publishing within these journals equally elite? This study investigates whether elite journals in strategic management and organization studies are also characterized by elite authorship. Specifically, it asks whether scholars publishing in the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), Organization Science (OS), and Strategic Management Journal (SMJ) hold attributes typically associated with academic eliteness, which is measured through two complementary dimensions: (i) individual research impact (authors' H-index values) and (ii) institutional prestige (affiliations and doctoral origins matched with the Times Higher Education [THE] and QS World University Rankings [QS] 2024 within the subject of Business & Management). By integrating these indicators, the study offers a systematic evaluation of how elite authorship materializes within the field's leading journals. The central research question guiding this study, therefore, is: "To what extent do prestigious academic journals in the field of strategic management feature elite authors?" This question leads to several sub-objectives. The first one is to operationalize "elite" status across journal, institutional, and author levels using established global rankings and bibliometric indicators as described. The second one assesses the impact of different variables, including the distribution of elite institutional affiliations among authors publishing in AMJ, SMJ, and OS. Other dimensions include gender and regional variations in elite representation, as well as evaluating whether patterns differ by career stage, suggesting persistence or attenuation of prestige advantage over time. The study will describe in detail how the dataset was collected and analyzed.

Literature Review

This chapter synthesizes research on prestige in academic publishing with a focus on how journal status and author affiliations co-produce visibility and career rewards in strategic management. Within this thesis, (i) prestige (which is understood as "eliteness") is examined at both the institutional and individual levels; (ii) the benefits and known distortions associated with publishing in elite journals are reviewed; (iii) key theoretical lenses explaining the concentration of prestige in academia are summarized; and (iv) the empirical evidence and limitations concerning diversity and inclusion within elite authorship are assessed. This framing motivates our analysis of whether and how author prestige predicts placement in elite journals, while distinguishing selection mechanisms from venue "value-added" effects.

The Lasting Importance of Prestige in Academic Careers

In this thesis, prestige refers to widely recognized status signals that are observable at the levels of institutions and individual scholars that shape attention, evaluation, and resource allocation. Elite is used to denote entities in the upper tail of these signals (e.g., top-tier journals; highly ranked universities; scholars with high citation/award profiles). Indeed, institutional prestige shapes early academic trajectories, especially in the first years after a PhD has been granted. Evidence shows that graduates from higher-status departments are disproportionately placed in research-intensive institutions, reflecting a combination of human capital (training quality, access to resources), social capital (advisor and departmental networks), and cumulative advantage mechanisms (institutional reputation used as a proxy for individual quality). Classic placement studies document mobility along a prestige continuum (Debackere & Rappa, 1995), while more recent work similarly finds that department status predicts early-career outcomes (Kim & Kim, 2015). Country-specific cases illustrate these dynamics. In South Korea, for example, graduates of "SKY" universities (Seoul National, Korea, and Yonsei) benefit from dense alumni networks and strong placement records, reinforcing stratification in academic hiring. Importantly, for this thesis linking author affiliations to elite journal placement, prestige operates beyond jobs: authors trained in or employed by elite institutions may

enjoy advantages in collaboration opportunities, topic visibility, and reputational spillovers, which increase both the probability of being published in high-status outlets and the downstream citation impact of those publications. While reputational self-presentation (e.g., departmental webpages, professional societies, and selective use of social media) can amplify visibility, these channels should be treated as complements, not substitutes, for institutional signals, and their effects are likely heterogeneous across fields and career stages.

Professional Advantages of Elite Journals

Publishing in elite journals confers several interlocking advantages for authors: visibility, status signaling, and career rewards (Chapman et al., 2019; Gruber, 2014). Elite outlets are read by larger, field-defining audiences and are disproportionately monitored by hiring, tenure, and funding committees. Consequently, publication in these venues functions as a strong signal of author quality in environments where underlying performance is noisy and hard to observe. These signals can translate into downstream benefits, such as invitations to collaborate, keynote opportunities, and access to resources, creating cumulative advantage (Katz & Matter, 2019, 2020; Demeter, 2019).

Elite journals are widely perceived as the "gold standard" in many management subfields because they curate research that the community considers innovative or impactful. Yet this prestige equilibrium has ambivalent consequences. On the positive side, top journals aggregate attention and can accelerate the diffusion of credible findings; on the negative side, status-driven incentives can distort behavior, for example, encouraging strategic authorship, metric chasing, and venue-first decision-making. A phenomenon documented in work on how Journal Impact Factors (JIFs) and h-indices shape academic conduct and evaluation (Kumaran & Ha, 2017; Bornmann & Williams, 2017; Liu, Liu, Zuo, & Zhu, 2017).

Because citation distributions are highly skewed and field norms vary, the JIF is an imprecise indicator of any single article's quality, is not comparable across disciplines, and is also susceptible to reputation and popularity effects (Thelwall et al., 2022). Consequently, venue prestige is a noisy proxy for the merit of any single article, even if it remains consequential for careers.

Finally, venue prestige intersects with global inequalities in knowledge production. A small set of core, English-language journals dominates visibility in the social sciences, while scholars at the periphery face higher barriers to entry and recognition. For these researchers, publication in elite outlets can be especially career-transformative, but the concentration of attention in a few venues may simultaneously constrain epistemic diversity (Demeter, 2019).

Because elite-journal publication both reflects and amplifies author status, we expect observable links between affiliation prestige (training or employment at highly ranked institutions) and placement in elite journals. Distinguishing selection (higher-resource teams produce higher-quality work) from treatment (publishing in a top venue attracts additional attention beyond quality) is essential; our empirical strategy therefore conditions on proxies for author productivity and network position where possible and compares outcomes across journals of differing prestige.

Defining "Elite" in Academia: Metrics and Criticisms

In this thesis, “elite” is treated as a multi-level construct spanning (i) journals, (ii) institutions, and (iii) individual scholars. This operationalization aligns with how prestige signals circulate and reinforce one another in academic labor markets and evaluation systems (Gruber, 2014; Katz & Matter, 2019, 2020).

Elite Journals | Journal Prestige Metrics: Journal Impact Factor and Expert Ratings

The existing journal prestige metrics, like the Journal Impact Factor (JIF), and other expert-based judgments, are in widespread use for measuring the quality and impact of peer-reviewed scholarly journals. The JIF, developed by Irving H. Sher and Eugene Garfield, is defined as the measure of a journal's prestige and impact over the mean citation rate based on the number of citations during the previous two years or the average number of citations per paper published in a journal during the preceding two years (Kumaran & Ha, 2017). Many journals have cited the JIF, and it is widely discussed and referenced in research and researcher-related evaluation. However, the JIF is riddled with limitations (Bornmann & Williams, 2017). The JIF, for example, applies the arithmetic mean (or average) of a highly skewed distribution of citations, which will lead to biased and misleading

conclusions. There is no guaranteed connection between the JIF and a journal's quality because a few journal papers may be highly cited, leading to an inflated JIF (Liu, Liu, Zuo, & Zhu, 2017). Therefore, the JIF is not comparable across disciplines, as citation rates vary widely across fields (Kumaran & Ha, 2017). In contrast, expert ratings are another way of assessing journal prestige. However, these expert ratings are subjective and can be influenced by journal reputation, prestige, and popularity, as opposed to the quality of the articles published in the journal (Thelwall et al., 2023).

Elite institutions | Institutional Prestige Metrics: Global Rankings

Times Higher Education (THE), QS World University Ranking (QS), U.S. News, and others have produced quality world university rankings spanning several years and thousands of organizations. Each of these rankings is used to assess the relative prestige of institutions when making comparisons and draws metrics based on definitions of prestige gleaned from existing sources, based on several factors, such as research output measures, student selectivity, and resources under management in the form of endowments, which present notable controversy. These include the use of endowments in regard to a measure of resources available to an institution, to ensure hiring the best faculty, creating opportunities for scholarships, or creating investment in hosting an advanced research infrastructure, which, again, can put institutions, with presumed lesser prestige, at a disadvantage (Michael, 2005). Furthermore, a study reported that the more considerable the amount of endowment at an institution, the more likely that a university might perceive itself established as a world institution at the top of all universities (Lynch, 2014). Ultimately, an endowment creates a process of disadvantage for institutions with comparatively low endowments, causing a downward pressure on prestige that can be propagated through value formation.

This study operationalizes institutional prestige using subject-specific rankings from QS and THE, because these systems are widely consulted and provide multi-year coverage across hundreds of universities. QS's Business & Management subject ranking combines Academic Reputation (50%), Employer Reputation (30%), Citations per paper (10%), and H-index citations (10%), yielding an overall score that is strongly reputation-weighted and therefore sensitive to brand perceptions. By contrast, THE's framework is broader and more measurement-heavy: 18 indicators roll up into five

pillars, namely Research Quality (30%), Research Environment (29%), Teaching (29.5%), International Outlook (7.5%), and Industry (4%), trading simplicity for wider construct coverage. Using both allows us to triangulate "prestige" as perceived reputation (QS) and multidimensional performance (THE).

Elite scholars | Individual Scholar Prestige: Awards and Affiliations

At the author level, prestige is proxied with bibliometrics (notably the h-index) and formal recognition. The h-index combines productivity and citation impact (Hirsch, 2005), but favors senior scholars and ignores excess citations beyond the h-index; variants such as the g-index adjust some limitations (Egghe, 2006). The use of the h-index is informative but imperfect, and it should be interpreted alongside venue and network context (Chapman et al., 2019).

Faculty awards function as formal markers of academic merit, publicly acknowledging the achievement of particular scholarly excellence and, by extension, enhancing institutional prestige. These awards can be disciplinary, national, or international, but they also come with potentially subjective influence and bias from the processes involved in determining the recipients. The overlap of the prestige of individual academics, journals, and institutions creates a confluence of signals that shape perspectives on "elite" status in the academic world. In all likelihood, actual elite scholars already have elite status. Once someone has achieved what might be considered elite status, they are then likely also to achieve award status for any academic output thereafter.

Theoretical Lenses on Academic Prestige

A variety of theoretical approaches help to explain the concentration and perpetuation of prestige in academic publishing, particularly with respect to academic journal prestige and author affiliation in strategic management. Below, complementary lenses explain how these signals are produced, circulated, and amplified, especially in the relationship between elite journals and author affiliations in strategic management.

Social Network Theory

Social Network Theory (SNT) serves as a framework to understand academic prestige in social networks. In terms of social networks, prestige is measured by a number of high-status individuals, including personal relations, with whom a person is linked, along with the strength and frequency of relationships with these individuals. SNT provides a great opportunity to investigate, understand, and characterize structural connectivity using relevant network measurements (Forsman, Moll, & Linder, 2014). In an academic context, SNT can be used to examine the social networks of students, faculty, and researchers (Forsman et al., 2014). SNT has been used to examine the hiring networks of academic job seekers, investigating how different social class groups used their social networks to find academic work (Chiappa, 2020).

Resource-Based View

Resource-Based View (RBV) is one of the prominent theories in strategic management that explains firm performance and competitive advantage, based on internal resources and capabilities (Miller, 2019). According to Madhani (2010) and Miller (2019), firms are heterogeneous bundles of resources and capabilities that are not easily imitated or transferred between organizations. The RBV emphasizes an 'inside-out' perspective, focusing on exploiting superior internal organizational capabilities to achieve differentiation in competitive markets (Chaston, 2015; Madhani, 2010). Key assumptions of the RBV include resource heterogeneity and immobility across firms (Miller, 2019; Madhani, 2010). The theory has influenced various management disciplines, including human resource management, marketing, and operations research. Major extensions of the RBV include the knowledge-based view, dynamic capabilities, and the relational view, which recognizes inter-firm capability development through alliances (Miller, 2019).

The Interplay of Author Affiliation and Journal Prestige

A large body of work suggests that journal prestige and author affiliation are entangled in a mutually reinforcing system of status, resources, and visibility. The mechanisms cut across training pipelines, professional networks, resource endowments, and reputational signals, and they help explain why

authors from elite institutions are disproportionately visible in elite outlets, even as some countervailing trends toward diversification slowly emerge.

Dominance of Elite Institutions: Networks, Prestige, and Education

Elite institutions sit at the center of the academic status system and shape who participates in and benefits from the highest-impact parts of the scholarly conversation. Their dominance operates through three tightly coupled channels: (i) network position and access, (ii) fame/prestige dynamics that amplify recognition, and (iii) educational pipelines that socialize scholars into the field's epistemic and stylistic norms. Together, these channels generate cumulative advantage and reproduce the concentration of authorship and agenda-setting power in elite journals (Merton, 1968; Starbuck, 2005).

i) Networks: centrality, sponsorship, and gatekeeping. Elite departments occupy structurally central positions in collaboration and advisory networks. They host prolific scholars, control prestigious seminar series, and organize workshops where early ideas are vetted. Centrality lowers search costs for collaborators, increases exposure to new methods and datasets, and raises the probability that promising drafts receive targeted feedback before submission (Li et al., 2019). Because editors and reviewers are disproportionately affiliated with or trained at these institutions, authors connected to these networks face fewer "translation costs" when framing contributions and signaling fit. Network mechanisms also operate intergenerationally: doctoral advisors and coauthors sponsor junior scholars into visible projects and special issues, seeding future editorial boards with alumni who share methodological and stylistic templates (Li et al., 2019).

ii) Fame/Prestige: status signals and cumulative advantage. Prestige acts as a heuristic under uncertainty. Institutional names and prior elite placements serve as signals of expected rigor and contribution, subtly shaping desk decisions and reviewer priors (Merton, 1968). After publication, venue effects further amplify attention: articles placed in high-status journals receive more citations than comparable work published elsewhere, reflecting greater visibility, distribution, and credibility, i.e., "journal value added" (Starbuck, 2005; Traag, 2021). These attention premiums create a feedback

loop: elite affiliations make elite placement more likely; elite venues boost citations; elevated citation profiles, in turn, reinforce the perceived excellence of the authors and their home institutions (Merton, 1968; Frachtenberg & McConville, 2022).

Prestige dynamics also diffuse through rankings and awards. University and program rankings convert historical reputation and networked recognition into salient, widely consumed indicators, further entrenching incumbents and shaping hiring, funding, and doctoral applications (Starbuck, 2005). While reforms caution against overreliance on journal-level metrics, these measures still function as currency in many evaluation systems, sustaining cumulative advantage even when intrinsic quality differences are modest (DORA, 2013; Starbuck, 2005).

iii) Education: pipelines, socialization, and resources. Elite institutions operate training pipelines that combine rigorous methods of instruction, early immersion in canonical debates, and hands-on apprenticeship in paper crafting. This "hidden curriculum" teaches how to identify problems legible to elite journals, which designs meet rising causal standards, and how to write to genre conventions (Meyer, 2006; Tsui, 2004). Resource endowments (internal funding, data access, research assistants, stats consultants, and writing support) reduce friction in executing complex projects and revising quickly, advantages that translate directly into higher acceptance probabilities (Sine, Shane & Di Gregorio, 2003). Because many future editors and area editors are trained in these programs, their epistemic preferences become institutionalized in review criteria, reinforcing isomorphism in methods and narratives.

Contradictory Evidence and Diversity Challenges

While the evidence of elite dominance is compelling, there are credible signals of slow diversification in authorship. Systematic audits of authorship and publishing practices note a gradual broadening of participation over the past two decades (Marušić et al., 2011), and recent bibliometric work documents increased geographic representation, even though from a very low base and with persistent Anglocentric dominance (Brück et al., 2023). These trends suggest movement toward inclusivity, but

the pace of change remains modest, and the cumulative advantages enjoyed by elite, often Western, institutions continue to structure visibility and uptake. (Marušić et al., 2011; Brück et al., 2023).

Against this backdrop, non-Western institutions, despite constituting the majority of research organizations globally, remain underrepresented in elite journals and on their editorial boards, a pattern linked to domestic-preference biases, network centrality, and language barriers (Amano et al., 2016; Amano et al., 2023; Dada et al., 2022). Evidence further indicates that editorial-board diversity correlates with greater geographic diversity in published articles, implying that upstream gatekeeping structures can either widen or narrow the aperture of representation (Amano et al., 2016; Amano et al., 2023; Dada et al., 2022; Goyanes & Demeter, 2020).

In strategic management specifically, the dominant Western positioning of theories, settings, and problem framings continues to limit representation, both geographically and conceptually. Classic and contemporary commentaries have underscored the need for indigenous, context-sensitive research and for non-Western phenomena and theories to shape the field's core conversations (Tsui, 2004; Meyer, 2006). The result is a pattern where the absolute number of non-Western authors may be rising, but their rate of appearance in elite outlets and the influence of non-Western theoretical lenses remains disproportionately small relative to their global presence (Wickert et al., 2024).

Collectively, the literature points to incremental diversification without structural parity: participation by non-Western scholars is growing, but publication and agenda-setting power in elite journals still concentrates in Western networks, languages, and institutions. Closing this gap will likely require coordinated changes in editorial composition, review norms, and the valorization of context-originating theory, not merely higher submission volumes from outside the Anglophone core (Brück et al., 2023; Goyanes & Demeter, 2020; Wickert et al., 2024).

Limitations in Existing Research

The existing studies on journal prestige and author affiliation have drawbacks that should be explicitly referenced and highlight possibilities for future considerations:

i) Geographic and language skew. The majority of sampling strategies have a Western, North American, and European orientation. While this setup is often relevant to the institutions and journals

in which the research is being pursued, it does not deliver the entire global picture, nor does it discuss the constraints experienced by scholars situated in specific geopolitical contexts. The focus on a specific geographic context can lead to incomplete global representations of academic hierarchies. Beyond that, English-language dominance systematically hides non-English research and imposes participation costs on non-native speakers (Amano et al., 2016).

ii) Citation cartels are rarely modeled. The systems of perception and the involvement of citation cartel practices, where groups of authors colluded to create a pattern of citation amongst themselves (Wilhite & Fong, 2012; Fister Jr. et al., 2016) and the subjective aspect of university rankings through excessive focus on the prestige of an outlet sometimes renders prestige metrics meaningless because we do not know whether the perceived influence and quality have been artificially created.

iii) Under-specified participation mechanisms (e.g., gender). Many studies document outcome disparities but omit upstream data on submissions, desk rejections, reviewer assignments, and resubmission behavior that would separate who submits from who succeeds. Large-scale evidence shows gendered differences in submission propensities and in visibility/dissemination (Squazzoni et al., 2021; Lerchenmueller et al., 2019), implying that prestige patterns may be mediated by participation rather than affiliation alone. Even in a community engaged with explicit discussions concerning gender differences in elite publishing, actively considering the methodological gaps in the reviewed work is often not even discussed.

Other Contributions to Understanding Prestige Dynamics

Other studies sharpen our understanding of how journal prestige and author affiliation interact in strategic management and adjacent fields. First, there is growing evidence that institutional affiliation shapes both placement and subsequent visibility, even after accounting for observable author- and team-level characteristics. Analyses that control for team size, team tenure, prior output, and coauthor impact generally find that authors from higher-status institutions are more likely to place in elite outlets, and that such outlets convey an independent, venue "value-added" effect on later citations ("journal effect"), thereby reinforcing institutional prestige through cumulative advantage (Merton, 1968; Starbuck, 2005; Traag, 2021). This dynamic is consistent with a halo/status bias mechanism

whereby prestigious signals at the author and venue levels elevate attention and uptake beyond article-intrinsic quality (Frachtenberg & McConville, 2022).

Second, quasi-causal and panel designs indicate that publication venues augment citations over and above selection on quality. For example, matched or model-based approaches show that articles accepted in higher-impact journals accrue substantially more citations than comparable work published elsewhere, suggesting a pathway from venue prestige to impact (Larivière & Gingras, 2010; Callaham et al., 2002; Wohlrabe, 2021; Traag, 2021). While some fields report a weakening correlation between journal impact factor and article citations in the digital era, the average venue effect remains sizable and policy-relevant for evaluation and hiring.

Third, networked advantages propagate prestige. Early collaboration with highly cited "star" scientists predicts long-run citation advantages and career success for junior researchers. This captures how coauthor prestige and network centrality transmit benefits that interact with institutional status (Li et al., 2019). At the article level, larger and more diverse teams are typically associated with higher citability, underscoring why rigorous studies control for team size and composition when estimating affiliation effects (Abramo et al., 2018).

Fourth, a line of work explicitly documents prestige/halo mechanisms in dissemination and evaluation, from peer-review experiments to meta-research on bias. These studies show that status cues (country/institution/journal) can shape reviewer judgments and post-publication attention, reinforcing an "attention premium" for already-prestigious authors and venues (Frachtenberg & McConville, 2022). Literature in technology transfer demonstrates a related halo: institutional prestige accelerates licensing and adoption of university inventions, suggesting that prestige effects extend beyond publishing into knowledge diffusion (Sine, Shane, & Di Gregorio, 2003).

Material & Methods

Featured Journals

The study analyzes authors who published in three elite journals in the field of strategy and organization studies: Strategic Management Journal (SMJ), Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), and Organization Science (OS). These journals are widely regarded as top-tier venues in the field and collectively cover the core empirical and theoretical conversations in strategic management and organizational research. While all three are management/organization journals, they attract somewhat different academic communities and highlight partially different contributions (e.g., strategy-focused work in SMJ; empirically grounded theory-advancing studies in AMJ; and organizational theory, routines, and analytical/behavioral inquiry in OS).

Sampling frame (2020): the dataset was constructed from all eligible authors appearing in the calendar year 2020 (1 January–31 December 2020) across either SMJ, AMJ, and OS and taken from the Scopus database. In addition, H-index and gender were included for all authors. The variable gender is based on a first-name analysis. If a name could not be clearly assigned, it was labeled as “NA”. It is acknowledged that there are more than two genders; however, due to the method chosen for categorization, only a binary system was used. To gain a better understanding of the elite status of the authors, a subsample was formed where the PhD university of the authors, the related country, and the year of the diploma, and all following institutions of their professional careers were included. Next, the universities of the authors were compared to the THE and QS rankings to check if they are classified as “elite”. In order to do this, standardized strings were mapped to a canonical institution name, and sub-units (e.g., “Wharton School”) were mapped to their parent university (e.g., “University of Pennsylvania”). Mapping leads to a clean, comparable sample of elite-journal publications for 2020 and an author-level universe suitable for testing the relationship between affiliation prestige and placement in elite outlets. The data was then analyzed using descriptive and statistical analysis, including correlation (Spearman, Pearson), as well as an OLS regression.

Academy of Management Journal (AMJ)

The first journal is the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), which is a flagship publication of the Academy of Management (AOM), the foremost global association for management and organization scholars. Founded in 1936, the AOM has grown into a vibrant community of nearly 18.000 members across more than 120 countries, consisting of professors, PhD students, academics from related fields, and practitioners who value the creation and application of knowledge in management and organizations. (Academy of Management, n.d.-a) The AMJ serves as a critical platform for the dissemination of high-quality research that advances the field of management. Its mission aligns with the broader goals of the AOM, which include building a "vibrant and supportive community of scholars by markedly expanding opportunities to connect and explore ideas". (Academy of Management, n.d.-a) AMJ states that "The mission of the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ) is to publish empirical research that tests, extends, or builds management theory and contributes to management practice. All empirical methods including, but not limited to, qualitative, quantitative, field, laboratory, meta-analytic, and mixed methods are welcome" (Academy of Management, n.d., para. 1). By publishing innovative research, the AMJ contributes to the AOM's vision of "inspire(ing) and enable(ing) a better world through (our) scholarship and teaching about management and organizations". (Academy of Management, n.d.-a) The journal is instrumental in fulfilling the AOM's strategic direction of advancing the impact of management and organization science on business and society globally. (Academy of Management, n.d.-a)

In line with the Academy's history of fostering scholarly activity and the exchange of ideas, the AMJ continues to be a cornerstone of academic discourse in management, ensuring that the field remains relevant and impactful for a diverse set of stakeholders around the world. (Academy of Management, n.d.-b). The journal is published bimonthly.

Strategic Management Journal (SMJ)

The second journal featured in the dataset is the Strategic Management Journal (SMJ), which was founded in 1980 and is published on a monthly basis (Strategic Management Society, n.d. -a). The journal is published by the Strategic Management Society (SMS) as one of its three leading academic journals. The SMS is a global organization that plays a crucial role in advancing strategic management research and practice. With over 3.000 members from more than 1.100 institutions across 70 countries, SMS connects academic scientists and practitioners, fostering a collaborative environment for the exchange of ideas and insights. As mentioned, as a leading authority in the field, SMS publishes three renowned academic journals: the Strategic Management Journal, the Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, and the Global Strategy Journal. Founded in 1981, SMS is a non-profit organization and governed by a Board of Directors. SMS remains dedicated to nurturing rigorous, practice-oriented research and building an inclusive scholarly community to address economic challenges and enhance strategic management practices worldwide (Strategic Management Society, n.d.-b). Aligning with the values of SMS, the SMJ serves as a platform for discussing and advancing knowledge in strategic management, covering a wide range of subjects related to the effectiveness and success of both businesses and non-profit organizations (Strategic Management Society, n.d.-a). The papers published in the SMJ "develop and/or test theory, replicate prior studies, explore interesting phenomena, review and synthesize existing research as well as evaluate the methodologies used in the field" (Strategic Management Society, n.d. -a).

Organization Science (OS)

The third journal mentioned is Organization Science (OS), which is published biweekly by the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) and was founded in 1990 (INFORMS, n.d.-a). INFORMS has a diverse membership of almost 12.000 people and, as they quote themselves, "is the leading international association for professionals in operations research, analytics, management science, economics, behavioral science, statistics, artificial intelligence, data science, applied mathematics, and other relevant fields". (INFORMS, n.d.-b)

OS is also a leading academic journal that publishes rigorous research on various aspects of organizations, including their structures, processes, technologies, identities, and human components. Drawing from diverse fields such as organizational behavior, psychology, sociology, economics, political science, strategic management, and cognitive science, the journal encourages contributions that enhance and refine theoretical understanding. (INFORMS, n.d.-b) Research published in OS covers multiple levels of analysis, from individual behavior to teams, networks, and entire organizations. The journal values a wide array of methodological approaches, emphasizing overall contribution and methodological transparency rather than requiring theoretical novelty. It particularly welcomes studies that address understudied populations, emerging markets, and critical organizational challenges in areas such as technology, environment, and public health. The journal also occasionally features "Perspectives" papers that offer conceptual insights on emerging phenomena. Committed to a fair and efficient review process, Organization Science strives to provide authors with clear guidance and consistent criteria throughout the publication process.

Comparing the Journals

Although AMJ, SMJ, and OS all publish work at the intersection of management, organizational theory, and strategy, they emphasize different slices of that domain. AMJ is the broadest generalist outlet: it prioritizes empirical studies that develop or test theory across leadership, HRM, organizational design, entrepreneurship, and strategy, often integrating strategy with other management subfields. SMJ is field-defining for strategic management: it concentrates on firm-level strategy, competitive advantage, industry dynamics, and strategic decision processes, frequently with micro–macro linkages grounded in economics and applied theory. OS centers on organizational processes and behavior, foregrounding mechanisms and dynamics inside and between organizations and drawing heavily on psychology, sociology, and economics for its theoretical scaffolding.

These complementary emphases justify analyzing the three journals together: they jointly cover the core terrain of strategic management and organization studies while offering distinct editorial priorities that could shape which affiliations are most represented in 2020 publications.

Impact Factor and Academic Influence

To contextualize the journals in the 2020 sample, we report JIF (Journal Impact Factor) values for the same year as the publications. Interpreting JIF descriptively (not as a quality threshold), the three journals occupy the expected hierarchy within management and organization studies:

- Academy of Management Journal (AMJ) ranks typically the highest among the three in 2020 (JIF 7,571), reflecting its broad mainstream reach and theory-development remit. (Clarivate Analytics, 2020)
- Strategic Management Journal (SMJ) has a strong and stable influence in the strategy domain (JIF 5,471 in 2020). (Clarivate Analytics, 2020)
- Organization Science (OS) has a strong influence within organizational theory and processes (JIF 2,79 in 2019, as not listed in 2020 data). (Clarivate Analytics, 2019)

The Dataset

Variables

The original dataset consists of all authors who published at least one article in one of the three target journals in 2020, which comes to a total number of 632 individuals listed, including information in the following columns:

1. Surname: Represents the family name of the individual
2. Givenname: Indicates the individual's first name
3. Author_ID: A unique identifier assigned to each author
4. ORCID: A unique identifier assigned to the author by ORCID, providing a persistent digital identity for tracking their research contributions and affiliations
5. AF_ID: A unique identifier associated with the author
6. Article_ID: A unique identifier assigned to each article
7. Journal: Name of the Journal in which the article was published
8. Paper_number: A unique identifier assigned to each paper or publication
9. University Name: Of the Institution that is associated with the publication
10. City: In which the Institution is based
11. Country: In which the Institution is based

Leveraging Digital Resources

Because the original dataset did not include PhD-granting institutions or post-PhD career history that would allow an extended analysis, additional data collection was required. Therefore, the dataset was extended by the following columns before further research took place:

1. Number: Primary key listing from 1 to 632 to help keep track of the individuals
2. Gender: Gender of the individual, categorized as either Female or Male. Other gender options are acknowledged, but for simplicity and clarity, a binary classification is used in this dataset.
3. H-index: Author-level citation metric
4. PhD Institution: Institution awarding the PhD

5. PhD Institution Country: Country of the PhD-granting institution
6. PhD Year: Year in which the individual was awarded their PhD degree
7. Link to personal profile: URL to the individual's personal or professional profile from where the data was sourced
8. Link Date: Date the information was accessed
9. Post-PhD positions: to capture career trajectories, up to ten positions per individual were recorded using a repeated four-field block:
10. Institution [Number]: Employer/host institution
11. Rank Institution [Number]: Academic rank or role (e.g., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Research Fellow)
12. Starting year Institution [Number]: Year the position began
13. Final year Institution [Number]: Year the position ended; “current” denotes ongoing roles

Missing affiliation metadata for record 553 (city, country) was completed based on source verification, coverage and sampling. The complete author database comprises 632 individuals (all authors with ≥1 article in the three target journals in 2020). Detailed augmentation (the variables above) was collected for a systematic random sample: every fifth individual, selected starting from the bottom of the roster. Data were compiled from publicly available online sources (e.g., university profiles, LinkedIn, and general web search). Exact source URLs were recorded in the column “Link to Personal Profile”.

Ranking Universities

To assess whether the sampled authors attended an elite institution, universities were benchmarked against two widely used, methodologically independent systems: the QS and THE rankings. Using both rankings in combination mitigates single-source bias and captures complementary dimensions of prestige, namely global reputation and employability emphasis (QS), alongside research intensity and scholarly impact (THE).

QS World University Ranking

The QS Ranking compares over 1,500 universities and 15,700 academic programs spanning 104 locations. According to the Organization, they are the only ranking to spotlight employability and sustainability, reflecting the growing demand for visible, real-world impact. (Quacquarelli Symonds 1, n.d.) As the original sample contained individuals who published in Journals that are related to the Business and Management Subject, the "QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024: Business & Management Studies" (Source: Quacquarelli Symonds 2, n.d.) was further analyzed and used. The ranking contains a number of 626 universities from over 69 countries. The universities were scored on the factors "Academic reputation" weighing 50%, "Employer reputation" weighing 30%, "Citations per paper" weighing 10%, "H-index citations" weighing 10% and a resulting "Overall score". (Quacquarelli Symonds 2, n.d.) In order to pick "elite Universities", two groups will be allocated: the top 10, top 30, top 5,0, and the top 100 Universities of this rankings will be considered for the analysis. Although the QS World University Ranking is a highly renowned ranking, it does have some limitations. One to name would be QS's heavy reliance on reputation surveys. As stated in their mythology, 50% of the overall score is made up by "Academic reputation". This might introduce bias, as these surveys may reflect brand perception rather than actual quality, resulting in skewing the results toward older, more established institutions. However, the strong emphasis on academic and employer reputation might be helpful when evaluating the perceived prestige of a university among academics and employers.

THE World University Ranking

THE Ranking is a prominent global ranking system that evaluates university performance across key areas, including research, teaching, knowledge transfer, and international outlook. Established in 2004, the rankings employ a robust methodology developed through consultation with leading global universities. This methodology includes 18 performance indicators designed to provide a comprehensive assessment of what makes a university world-class. (Times Higher Education 1, n.d.) These performance indicators influence the following groups: "Research quality" weighing 30%, "Industry" weighing 4%, "International outlook" weighing 7,5%, "Research environment" weighing

29%, and “Teaching” weighing 29,5% which cumulate in an “Overall” score (Times Higher Education, 2023). The rankings draw on extensive data, including over 134 million citations from 16.5 million academic publications and insights from a global academic reputation survey of over 68,000 scholars (Times Higher Education 1, n.d.). Even though the ranking has a robust methodology, it yields a more research-intensive composite.

Furthermore, Institutions with a strong research output might rank high even if their undergraduate teaching or student satisfaction is not as strong, which indicates a potential overemphasis on research. However, research quality and its impact can also be a key indicator of an institution's prestige and influence in academia. For this research paper again, the top 10, top 30, top 50, and the top 100 Universities of the THE World University Rankings 2024 by subject: business and economics will be used, ensuring comparability and “elite” status of the Universities (Times Higher Education 2, n.d.).

In summary, QS offers a more reputation- and employability-focused lens that aligns with perceptions of prestige in management disciplines. At the same time, THE provides a research-impact-centric view grounded in granular bibliometrics. Using both rankings provide a holistic and cross-validated classification of elite institutions for authors in strategic management.

Analysis

After all data needed for evaluation had been collected, the data was processed by firstly, structuring it in the following sheets, as the data was collected in Excel:

1. "Data collection" holds all data as described in paragraph "leveraging digital resources".
2. "THE World Uni Rank 2024 business" Dataset provided by Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2024 by subject filtered to business and management. (https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2024/subject-ranking/business-and-economics#!/length/100/subjects/3096/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/scores)
3. "2024 QS World University Ranking Subject Business" dataset provided by QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024: Business & Management Studies (https://www.topuniversities.com/university-subject-rankings/business-management-studies?tab=indicators&sort_by=rank&order_by=asc)

To be able to compare the different universities of the dataset with the rankings, the datasheet was duplicated and reworked once to match the universities for the THE ranking and a second time to match the universities for the QS ranking. Afterward, descriptive statistics (frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion, and cross-tabulations) were computed to characterise the distribution of authors, institutions, and to provide an initial overview of how scholarly impact and institutional prestige are distributed across the sample. To explore the bivariate associations between key variables, correlation analyses were performed prior to regression modelling. Two types of correlation coefficients were used, depending on measurement level and distributional properties:

i) Pearson product–moment correlations were computed for associations between approximately continuous or interval-level variables (e.g., h-index, continuous ranking scores where available).

ii) Spearman's rank-order correlations were used for variables that were ordinal or strongly non-normally distributed (e.g., continents).

The correlation analysis served three purposes:

i) Substantive exploration to assess how strongly author-level impact (h-index) is associated with journal prestige and university prestige (e.g., whether authors with higher h-indices are more likely to be affiliated with top-ranked institutions).

ii) Consistency between ranking systems to examine the degree of convergence between QS and THE rankings (both overall and subject-specific) and to check whether "elite" status is robust across ranking providers.

iii) Model diagnostics to identify potential multicollinearity among independent variables before including them in regression models. Highly correlated predictors were not entered simultaneously into the same regression model, or were used in separate model specifications, to avoid unstable estimates.

All statistical analyses were performed using Python (using the module statsmodels.api) after initial cleaning and preparation in Microsoft Excel. Significance tests were based on two-tailed p-values with an alpha level of 0.05.

To examine whether author-level elite status is associated with journal, institutional, and geographical characteristics within the set of elite outlets, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models with authors' h-index as a continuous dependent variable and institutional rank (THE), and continent of affiliation as predictors, controlling for gender and additional author-level characteristics, were estimated.

Results and discussion

Geographic distribution in the original dataset

Within the original dataset, the 632 listed individuals are affiliated with 294 different Universities from 189 different cities, within 28 different countries, in one of the three journals (For original dataset -> universities the authors have published with). The United States accounts for 51,2% of records, while most other countries contribute between 0,2% - 3,5%. Notable exceptions are Canada (5,9%) and the United Kingdom (7,1%). Although all three high-share countries are English-speaking, other Anglophone systems are comparatively small (e.g., Australia (1,1%) (See Table 1). This concentration is broadly consistent with the centrality of English as the lingua franca of scholarly publishing, which can amplify the visibility and output of Anglophone systems in international journals (O'Neil, 2018; Suzina, 2021).

Geographic distribution in the PhD-granting institutions (subsample)

In the augmented PhD subsample, the United States again dominates with 67,3%, followed by the United Kingdom (8,4%) and Canada (3,7%) (See Table 2). When taking a look at the countries with the lowest percentage of coverage, Lebanon, Macao, Portugal, and India score lowest with only 0,2%, followed by Ireland, Japan, Finland, and Taiwan with 0,3%. Overall, the PhD-institution list spans 15 countries, fewer than the 28 represented in the original affiliations, which is expected given that (i) PhD metadata were collected only for a systematic subsample and (ii) doctoral training is more geographically concentrated than publication affiliations.

Table 1 - Country Distribution Original Dataset

Country	∑	**%**
Australia	7	1,11%
Austria	6	0,95%
Belgium	5	0,79%
Canada	37	5,85%

China	20	3,16%
Denmark	12	1,90%
Finland	3	0,47%
France	22	3,48%
Germany	20	3,16%
Hong Kong	12	1,90%
India	1	0,16%
Ireland	2	0,32%
Israel	5	0,79%
Italy	17	2,69%
Japan	2	0,32%
Lebanon	1	0,16%
Macao	1	0,16%
Netherlands	21	3,32%
New Zealand	4	0,63%
Portugal	1	0,16%
Singapore	17	2,69%
South Korea	8	1,27%
Spain	22	3,48%
Sweden	4	0,63%
Switzerland	11	1,74%
Taiwan	2	0,32%
United Kingdom	45	7,12%
United States	324	51,27%
Overall	**632**	

Table 2 Country Distribution PhD Institutions

Country	∑	**%**
Australia	1	0,90%
Belgium	2	1,90%
Canada	4	3,70%
Finland	2	1,90%
France	3	2,80%
Germany	2	1,90%

Israel	1	0,90%
Italy	2	1,90%
Netherlands	3	2,80%
South Korea	1	0,90%
Spain	2	1,90%
Sweden	2	1,90%
Switzerland	1	0,90%
United Kingdom	9	8,40%
United States	72	67,30%

Journal Coverage Balance

Coverage by the three target journals is close, but not perfectly balanced: AMJ accounts for 30.6% (n = 194), SMJ for 38.1% (n = 241), and OS for 31.2% (n = 197). Together, these sum to 632 records, indicating a slight overrepresentation of SMJ and a corresponding underrepresentation of AMJ and OS relative to an even split (33.3% each).

Determining author prestige

To operationalize author prestige, two complementary indicators were used: (i) the author's h-index and (ii) whether the author obtained a PhD from an elite university (as defined in the ranking-based framework described earlier).

H-Index

The h-index, introduced by Hirsch (2005), captures both productivity and citation impact in a single number. An author has h = *h* if *h* of their publications have each received at least *h* citations. For example, five papers cited ≥5 times yield h = 5. This single-scale property makes the h-index more informative than raw counts of publications or average citations alone (Bihari, Tripathi, & Deepak, 2023).

Advantages of the h-index

The h-index has several advantages. It combines productivity and citation impact into a single measure, is relatively simple to calculate, and is not overly influenced by outliers, making it a useful tool for evaluating researchers (Shah & Jawaid, 2023).

Another reason the h-index is popular and commonly used is the restrictions of granting agencies regarding biographic record submissions, as most granting agencies have limitations regarding the length of CVs (Chapman et al., 2019). “This encourages the use of summary metrics, such as the h-index, as there is no other way to convey an extensive research career.” (Chapman et al., 2019)

Disadvantages of the h-index

When looking at the disadvantages, there are some factors that must also be named. To start with, the h-index tends to favor established researchers, as over time they have had more papers published and therefore a higher chance of being cited, leading to a higher h-index. This automatically means that researchers in their early career face a disadvantage as they tend to have a lower h-index as they have not published as many papers due to the time they have contributed to the field (Mondal, Deepak, Gupta, & Kumar, 2023).

Another point that can be viewed negatively is that additional citations of highly cited papers do not increase the index of a researcher any further. This, in combination with being a researcher early in your career, can hinder from quickly increasing your h-index and further benefit established researchers. There are other indexes, such as the m-index or g-index, that can be used to work against the bias towards young researchers; however, those also come with their own (dis-)advantages, which must be considered when using. (Chapman et al., 2019) (Egghe, 2006)

H-index within this dataset

The H-index was included in this dataset by using the author ID (via: Clarivate, n.d.). All 632 authors could be matched. The highest H-index within this dataset counts 91, belonging to Dean A. Shepherd, a highly cited researcher with 227 publications, while the lowest H-index included in the dataset

stands at one and is held by a total of eleven individuals. The mean H-index within the overall dataset lies at 16,09. This suggests that the typical researcher only has a moderate publication impact. The Median lies at 12 with the standard deviation being at 13,6, indicating a wide spread within the data. Which makes sense as the difference between the highest and lowest H-index is 90 points. The Quartiles are at 7 for 25%, 12 for 50% and 22 for 75% hinting towards a right-skewed distribution. This would indicate that many early-/mid-career scholars with $H \leq 20$, and a few highly cited scholars ($H > 60$), are pulling the average up. (See table 48: Count of individuals per H-index in overall dataset)

When looking at the distribution between male and female authors, it is to be noted that the median of male authors lies above the overall average and that of female authors, with a difference of 14,8 (female) to 17,1 (male). A similar distribution can be monitored when looking into these metrics per journal.

Table 3 Gender distribution within the dataset

	Female	**Male**
Academy of Management Journal	16,1%	19,4%
Organization Science	12,7%	15,6%
Strategic Management Journal	15,1%	16,7%
Overall	**14,8%**	**17,1%**

There are also some differences when looking into the H-index distribution of the authors linked to the different journals.

Table 4 H-index distribution

Journal	Count	Mean H	Median	Std. Dev.	Min	75%	Max
Academy of Management Journal	194	17,40	13	14,00	1	24	91
Strategic Management Journal	241	15,90	12	14	1	20	80
Organization Science	197	15,10	10	13	1	19	69

When looking at Table 4, it shows that the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ) has the highest mean H-index with 17,4 and the top maximum of 91. The Strategic Management Journal (SMJ) follows closely with a mean H-index of 15,9 and a maximum H-index of 80. Organization Science (OS) has a slightly lower mean H-index of 15,1 and a maximum H-index of 69. The median H-indexes (10–13) are modest across journals, reinforcing that most authors are not at the extremely high end.

When looking at the extreme outliers, the following List of authors comes up:

Table 5 Authors with highest H-index

surname	**givenname**	**author_id**	**journal**	**H-index**
Shepherd	Dean	7201684101	Academy of Management Journal	91
Ketchen	David J.	7003588673	Strategic Management Journal	80
Hambrick	Donald C.	7004434392	Organization Science	69
Foss	Nicolai J.	7005282199	Strategic Management Journal	67
De Massis	Alfredo	22834266400	Strategic Management Journal	67
Ashforth	Blake E.	7003448781	Organization Science	64
Ashforth	Blake E.	7003448781	Academy of Management Journal	64
Teece	David J.	6701775408	Strategic Management Journal	63
George	Gerard	57201570526	Academy of Management Journal	62
Johnson	Russell E.	12647656600	Academy of Management Journal	59

Table 5 shows a list of the top 10 authors ranked by H-index. It can be noted that all three journals are represented among the very top scholars. The Academy of Management Journal appears four times in this list, as well as the Strategic Management Journal. The Organizational Science Journal only appears twice in this list. However, this indicates again that all three journals are closely connected to top researchers in their field.

If split by country, the Mean H-index of Belgium (31) stands out significantly, with an average nearly twice the global mean, indicating potentially high-impact researchers. However, the rather small sample size of 5 does introduce a bias here. Lebanon's (22) high value reflects a single, but very strong contributor. Therefore, Belgium's and Lebanon's high average h-indices have very small sample sizes, indicating that their high values could reflect a handful of high-impact authors, rather than a general national trend. Singapore, Australia, and Canada also perform strongly, possibly reflecting well-funded

research environments or inclusion of leading universities as sample sizes; while not large, they are still bigger for these countries. China, India, and Japan, with many contributors, have lower averages, suggesting broader inclusion of early-career researchers or larger internal variation.

Table 6 Average H-index per country

Country	**Average H-index**
Australia	19,5714286
Austria	9,16666667
Belgium	31
Canada	23
China	9,85
Denmark	18,8333333
Finland	10,3333333
France	11,3181818
Germany	14,7
Hong Kong	12,75
India	7
Ireland	12
Israel	7
Italy	16,2352941
Japan	7,5
Lebanon	22
Macao	8
Netherlands	15,4761905
New Zealand	16,5
Portugal	12
Singapore	20,6470588
South Korea	7,625
Spain	10,3181818
Sweden	16,75
Switzerland	17,7272727
Taiwan	12
United Kingdom	18,3333333
United States	16,3055556
Overall	**16,0933544**

Ranking of the Universities

To operationalize "elite" institutional status, the two previously described rankings, THE and QS, were used for 2024. These sources were chosen to align with the journals' disciplinary focus and to capture complementary dimensions of prestige (THE's research- and teaching-weighted indicators vs. QS's reputation-weighted indicators). As described above, a table was created to match the universities. After mapping the university names, the analysis was conducted in four steps. A significant portion of institutions could not be matched to the THE Business ranking. Reasons for this may include that the authors have attended non-business schools (e.g., engineering, policy, or economics faculties) as well as non-university affiliations (e.g., corporate research centers or independent scholars) or non-ranked universities. Hence, the true representation of elite institutions might be even higher if cross-disciplinary contributors from elite non-business departments had been considered. Within the first step, only the universities that the authors attended while publishing in one of the three journals were considered; second, the universities at which the authors gained their PhD. Third, all institutions the authors have attended, and lastly, an overall analysis was conducted. In all of these steps, the top 10, top 30, top 50, top 100 rated universities per ranking were looked into.

THE Business University Ranking

Universities that the authors attended while publishing

When only considering the universities that the authors attended while publishing in one of the three target journals in the year 2020, by mapping the universities to the THE ranking, 456 out of the 632 universities could be matched (about 72,15%) to one of the universities within the ranking. The 176 unmatched universities were split between the journals the following way: AMJ (22,16%), OS (35,03%), and SMJ (26,56%).

Table 7 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per journal

THE Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	13	12	9	34
Top 30	32	34	38	104
Top 50	45	44	46	135
Top 100	74	71	87	232
Rest	77	57	90	224
not matched	43	69	64	176
Overall	194	197	241	632

Table 8 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per journal in %

THE Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	6,70%	6,09%	3,73%	5,38%
Top 30	16,49%	17,26%	15,77%	16,46%
Top 50	23,20%	22,34%	19,09%	21,36%
Top 100	38,14%	36,04%	36,10%	36,71%
Rest	39,69%	28,93%	37,34%	35,44%
not matched	22,16%	35,03%	26,56%	27,85%

When checking the top 10 universities of the ranking, only 34 of the authors have attended these (5,38%). The AMJ has the highest number of authors attending one of the top 10 universities with 6,70% closely followed by OS with 6,09%. The SMJ only has nine authors within this list, making up 3,73%. Looking at this split for the top 30 leads to all three journals being very close with an overall percentage of 16,46%. AMJ (16,49%) and OS (17,26%) swap places while SMJ still ranks last with only 15,77% of authors publishing with a university within the top 30. A similar ranking as in the top 10 occurs for the top 50, with AMJ landing 23,20%, OS 22,34% and SMJ 19,09% of the authors within this range. Across all three journals, roughly 36,71% of authors are affiliated with universities ranked in the top 100 of the THE Business & Management list. This implies that more than one-third of the contributing authors are located at institutions recognized as globally leading in the business research area. The Academy of Management Journal again shows the highest concentration of authors from top-ranked institutions. Landing over 38,14% of authors within the top 100 ranking. Organization Science has a similar share of authors ranking in the top 100 (36,04%) but a notably higher unmatched

rate at 35,03%, suggesting that more of its contributing institutions are outside the formal THE ranking. Lastly, the Strategic Management Journal shows a very similar top 100 affiliations of 36,10% to Organization Science. When only considering matched universities, which make up 72,15% of the total, the share of authors from top 100 universities increases substantially. Calculating the adjusted top 100 shares by dividing 36,71 by 72,15 leads to an overall share of 50,88% of authors ranked in the top 100. Therefore, over half of all matched affiliations are from top 100 business schools, reinforcing the idea that elite journals tend to be dominated by scholars at elite institutions.

Taking a look into the gender distribution within this data, it can be stated that even though there are fewer women in the dataset in absolute numbers, the percentage of female authors (4,43%), outnumbering the male (4,16%). Within the group that could not be matched to male or female, the percentage is even greater (15,38%). It is acknowledged that there are more than two genders; however, for simplicity reasons, a binary system was used.

Table 9 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per gender

THE Rank	Female	Male	NA	Overall
Top 10	7	17	10	34
Top 30	27	62	15	104
Top 50	29	84	22	135
Top 100	54	151	27	232
Rest	66	135	23	224
not matched	38	123	15	176
Overall	158	409	65	632

Table 10 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per gender in %

THE Rank	Female	Male	NA	Overall
Top 10	4,43%	4,16%	15,38%	5,38%
Top 30	17,09%	15,16%	23,08%	16,46%
Top 50	18,35%	20,54%	33,85%	21,36%
Top 100	34,18%	36,92%	41,54%	36,71%
Rest	41,77%	33,01%	35,38%	35,44%
not matched	24,05%	30,07%	23,08%	27,85%

When looking into the top 100 ranking, female authors score 34,18% within this range, while their male colleagues reach 36,92% and the non-categorized group reaches 41,54%. Overall, this suggests a similar distribution among all genders in the ranked groups.

To further analyze the country distribution per university, these were clustered into continents: Oceania, Europe, North America, and Asia.

Table 11 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per continent

THE RANK	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0	10	18	6	34
Top 30	0	34	60	10	104
Top 50	2	45	68	20	135
Top 100	7	69	133	23	232
Rest	4	51	145	24	224
not matched	0	71	83	22	176
Overall	**11**	**191**	**361**	**69**	**632**

Table 12 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with THE per continent in %

THE Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0,00%	5,24%	4,99%	8,70%	5,38%
Top 30	0,00%	17,80%	16,62%	14,49%	16,46%
Top 50	18,18%	23,56%	18,84%	28,99%	21,36%
Top 100	63,64%	36,13%	36,84%	33,33%	36,71%
Rest	36,36%	26,70%	40,17%	34,78%	35,44%
not matched	0,00%	37,17%	22,99%	31,88%	27,85%

North America contains most of the authors, covering 57,12% of the dataset. This explains why it ranks very similar to the overall average. North America's dominance in volume reflects its central role in management research publishing. Yet, publication activity is spread across both elite and mid-ranked universities, showing a broad ecosystem rather than a purely elite core. This hints that research access to elite journals in North America is wider than in other regions, even though the very top schools remain overrepresented. Europe and Asia, as well, rank close to the overall average; however, they only contain 30,22% (Europe) and 10,92% (Asia). The relatively high share of top-50 ranked institutions in Asia reflects the growing influence of universities in Hong Kong, Singapore, and

Mainland China in business research. However, the overall participation remains modest, indicating that elite Asian universities punch above their weight, but the regional footprint is still limited. Oceania stands out by having almost double the percentage of universities that the authors attended, while publishing ranked in the top 100 (63,64%), even though only a very small sample (1,74%) of the matched universities are located there. However, none of the authors rank in the top 10 or 30 within this sample. This was to be expected, as only universities located in the UK, the US, and China rank among the top 10 Universities. As with the PhD data, Oceania shows an elite-only entry pattern where authors affiliated with this region almost exclusively come from top-ranked universities, reflecting a strong institutional concentration.

PhD institutions of the authors

In comparison to the dataset of the universities the authors attended while publishing the dataset of the PhD Universities of the authors is much smaller, as this data was only sourced for 16,93% of the dataset (107 universities in total). This might have an influence on the overall outcome of the data in question. However, the number of authors attending a highly ranked university for their PhD seems much higher in comparison to the universities the authors attended while publishing (14,02% vs. 5,38%).

Table 13 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per journal

THE Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	4	6	5	15
Top 30	6	9	12	27
Top 50	8	13	13	34
Top 100	20	24	22	66
Rest	11	6	15	34
not matched	4	2	5	11
Overall	35	31	41	107

Table 14 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per journal in %

THE Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	11,43%	19,35%	12,20%	14,02%
Top 30	17,14%	29,03%	29,27%	25,23%
Top 50	22,86%	41,94%	31,71%	31,78%
Top 100	57,14%	77,42%	53,66%	61,68%
Rest	31,43%	19,35%	36,59%	31,78%
not matched	11,43%	6,45%	12,20%	10,28%

Surprisingly, within the PhD institutions data, the AMJ has the lowest percentage of authors attending top-ranked universities within the top 10 (11,43%), top 30 (17,14%), and top 50 (22,86%) rating; however, it comes in second place in the top 100 ranking with 57,14%. OS has by far the highest percentage of authors attending top-ranked universities in each category. Compared to the lowest ranking Journal, it surpasses by almost 10% in the top 10 (19,35%), top 30 (29,03%), top 50 (41,94%), and top 100 (77,42%). The Strategic Management Journal also has strong overall numbers ranking second place in the top 10 (12,20%), top 30 (29,27%), and top 50 (31,71%), only being surpassed in the top 100 ranking with 53,66%. The percentage of universities that were not matched with any of the universities in the Times Higher Education Ranking was also lower compared to the dataset of the universities the authors attended while publishing (10,28% vs. 27,85% overall). The reasons for not being able to match the universities are the same as mentioned above. These outcomes again strongly emphasize that a large number of authors who conducted their PhD at a University that is highly ranked have published in the three journals, reinforcing the idea again that elite journals tend to be dominated by scholars at elite institutions.

When breaking down the ranking by gender, all of the authors within the PhD University dataset could be categorised. Again, acknowledging that there are more than two genders, however, for simplicity reasons, a binary system was used.

Table 15 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per gender

THE Rank	Female	Male	Overall
Top 10	5	10	15
Top 30	8	19	27
Top 50	9	25	34
Top 100	18	48	66
Rest	8	23	34
not matched	2	9	11
Overall	28	79	107

Table 16 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per gender in %

THE Rank	Female	Male	Overall
Top 10	17,86%	12,66%	14,02%
Top 30	28,57%	24,05%	25,23%
Top 50	32,14%	31,65%	31,78%
Top 100	64,29%	60,76%	61,68%
Rest	28,57%	29,11%	31,78%
not matched	7,14%	11,39%	10,28%

Within this data group of individuals matched to their PhD institution, 28 individuals were categorized as female and 79 as male. Overall, the female colleagues within the dataset appear more likely to hold elite PhDs, as 17,86% of the authors place in the top 10, while only 12,66% of the males reach this level, and 64,29% PhD universities of the female authors ' PhD universities rank in the top 100, versus 60,76% of the males.

Within the dataset, the PhD institutions can be mapped to 15 different countries from 4 continents.

Table 17 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per continent

THE Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0	3	12	0	15
Top 30	0	7	20	0	27
Top 50	0	7	27	0	34
Top 100	1	12	53	0	66
Rest	0	9	19	2	30
not matched	0	7	4	0	11
Overall	**1**	**28**	**76**	**2**	**107**

Table 18 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per country in %

THE Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0,00%	10,71%	15,79%	0,00%	14,02%
Top 30	0,00%	25,00%	26,32%	0,00%	25,23%
Top 50	0,00%	25,00%	35,53%	0,00%	31,78%
Top 100	100,00%	42,86%	69,74%	0,00%	61,68%
Rest	0,00%	32,14%	25,00%	100,00%	28,04%
not matched	0,00%	25,00%	5,26%	0,00%	10,28%

The dataset is not equally distributed between the continents, as North America covers 71,03%, Europe 26,17% leaving 1,87% for Asia and 0,93% for Oceania. However, it is notable that 100,00% of authors in Oceania have received their PhD from a top 100 university. This leads to the assumption that, even though underrepresented in the dataset, the individuals listed are mostly elite authors. Europe falls slightly behind the overall author percentage of 61,68% with 42,86% of Europe's authors falling into the top 100 category, leading to the assumption that only slightly more than half of the authors have received their PhD from an elite institution. North America falls closest to the overall average with 69,74% of authors falling into the top 100 rating, which is not surprising as the US makes up the majority of the sample alone with 76 out of 107 datasets. This indicates a strong concentration of elite PhD training in North America which is consistent with the global prestige and influence of U.S. business schools (e.g., Harvard, Stanford, MIT) all ranking highly in the THE ranking as well. For Asia surprisingly none of the PhD positions of the authors within Asia rank in the top 100.

Another interesting component is the year in which the author has received their PhD as a conscious assumption on the age of a person can be made. According to a study in 2020 the median age of new doctorate recipients is 31,5 years (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, n.d.). Therefore the assumption, that the longer a person holds their PhD, the older they are on average. To have a better overview on numbers the years since the PhD is held were calculated (2024 - year of PhD).

Table 19 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per year since PhD received grouped

THE Rank	0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	30+ years	Overall
Top 10	5	3	5	2	15
Top 30	8	8	7	4	27
Top 50	11	11	8	4	34
Top 100	19	24	17	6	66
Rest	12	13	4	1	30
not matched	4	6	1	0	11
Overall	**35**	**43**	**22**	**7**	**107**

Table 20 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with THE per year since PhD received grouped in%

THE Rank	0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31+ years	Overall
Top 10	14,29%	6,98%	22,73%	28,57%	14,02%
Top 30	22,86%	18,60%	31,82%	57,14%	25,23%
Top 50	31,43%	25,58%	36,36%	57,14%	31,78%
Top 100	54,29%	55,81%	77,27%	85,71%	61,68%
Rest	34,29%	30,23%	18,18%	14,29%	28,04%
not matched	11,43%	13,95%	4,55%	0,00%	10,28%

When looking into the data the first thing that springs to attention is that the “oldest” PhD age group (31+ years of holding the PhD) seems to be the one most likely to have received their diploma from an elite university as 85,71% of authors attended a university ranked in the top 100. This lies far above the average of 61,68% overall. The PhD age group between 21-30 years follows closely with 77,27%. The groups of 10 and younger, as well as the group 11-20 years, significantly fall behind with 54,29% (0-10 years) and 55,81% (11-20 years), indicating that the importance of attending an elite university might have dropped over the years. It has to be noted, however, that the dataset is not equally distributed among the groups. The group of authors holding their PhD for 31+ years is significantly smaller, only making up 6,54% of the overall dataset. Indicating a few highly elite individuals within this group. A person, on average, in 1994 (30 years ago) was 34,1 years old when receiving a PhD (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, n.d.). When calculating their average age, they would be 64+ years old and more likely to retire from their profession. The group receiving their PhD in the last ten years seems to match the overall median the closest, even though they do not hold the largest group, with 32,71% of authors falling into this category.

Other institutions visited by the authors

Other visited institutions, as described, include up to 10 additional institutions that the authors have worked at in their professional careers. The data was collected for a total of 107 individuals. To be able to work with the data, the highest-ranked other institution within the THE Ranking was considered. The categories, therefore, include "placed in top x at least once", where x equals either 10, 30, 5,0 or 10,0 as well as "rest" and "not matched". Rest equals all universities ranking below the top 100 universities according to the THE ranking. Not matched includes institutions not included in the THE ranking. The aim is to add a career mobility dimension and capture whether the authors have had additional experiences (e.g., visiting positions, postdocs, or prior employment) at elite institutions ranked by THE and effectively map the entire spectrum of elite exposure throughout their academic trajectories.

Table 21 Other Institutions ranked with THE per journal

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	3	4	6	13
placed in top 30 at least once	12	15	15	42
placed in top 50 at least once	18	17	18	53
placed in top 100 at least once	24	26	30	80
rest	8	3	10	21
not matched	4	1	1	6
Overall	36	30	41	107

Table 22 Other Institutions ranked with THE per journal in %

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	8,33%	13,33%	14,63%	12,15%
placed in top 30 at least once	33,33%	50,00%	36,59%	39,25%
placed in top 50 at least once	50,00%	56,67%	43,90%	49,53%
placed in top 100 at least once	66,67%	86,67%	73,17%	74,77%
rest	22,22%	10,00%	24,39%	19,63%
not matched	11,11%	3,33%	2,44%	5,61%
Overall	33,64%	28,04%	38,32%	100,00%

When split by journal, the data shows an extremely high elite exposure where roughly three-quarters (74,77%) of authors have worked or studied at least once at a THE Top 100 university. Nearly half (49,53%) have been at a Top 50 institution, 39,25% in a top 30, and 12,15% in a top 10 university. This is the highest concentration of elite exposure seen in any of the analyzed datasets. OS authors appear to have the strongest links to elite research environments, as 86,67% of OS authors have had experience at a Top 100 THE-ranked university, and half (50,00%) have been at a Top 30 institution, and 13,33% even at a Top 10. AMJ and SMJ show slightly more diversity,y with SMJ reaching 73,17% and AMJ 66,67% in the top 100 ranked universities by THE. Within the top 10, SMJ has the highest stake reaching 14,63% and AMJ holds the lowest with 8,33%. The percentage of authors who have never visited at least a top 100-ranked institution lies at 19,63%. The unmatched rate at 5,61%.

The gender composition is roughly one-quarter female (25,23%) and three-quarters male (74,77%), which is consistent with the earlier samples.

Table 23 Other Institutions ranked with THE per gender

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	2	11	13
placed in top 30 at least once	10	32	42
placed in top 50 at least once	12	41	53
placed in top 100 at least once	19	61	80
rest	6	15	21
not matched	2	4	6
Overall	27	80	107

Table 24 Other Institutions ranked with THE per gender in %

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	7,41%	13,75%	12,15%
placed in top 30 at least once	37,04%	40,00%	39,25%
placed in top 50 at least once	44,44%	51,25%	49,53%
placed in top 100 at least once	70,37%	76,25%	74,77%
rest	22,22%	18,75%	19,63%
not matched	7,41%	5,00%	5,61%
Overall	25,23%	74,77%	100,00%

Elite institutional exposure is almost universal across genders with 70,37% of women and 76,25% of men having held at least one position ranked in the THE Top 100. Only the top 10 seem to differ more between the sexes as female authors only cover 7,41% while male authors cover 13,75%. Overall the differences between men and women range from +6,34 percentage points at the Top 10 to +5,88 points at the Top 100 level. Leading to the assumption, that THE's broader coverage of universities the authors have visited in their careers increases measured elite representation for both genders.

QS World University Ranking Subject Business

After analyzing the different institutions for the Times Higher Education "THE World Uni Rank 2024 Business", the same dataset will be analyzed for the "2024 QS World University Ranking Subj. Business".

Universities that the authors attended while publishing

Starting again with the institutions that authors have visited when publishing in one of the three journals, the first thing to notice is that the unmatched rate of universities has dropped nearly in half to 14,08%.

Table 25 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per journal

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	16	23	31	70
Top 30	38	47	59	144
Top 50	52	63	71	186
Top 100	82	89	104	275
Rest	78	82	108	268
not matched	34	26	29	89
Overall	194	197	241	632

Table 26 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per journal in %

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	8,25%	11,68%	12,86%	11,08%
Top 30	19,59%	23,86%	24,48%	22,78%
Top 50	26,80%	31,98%	29,46%	29,43%
Top 100	42,27%	45,18%	43,15%	43,51%
Rest	40,21%	41,62%	44,81%	42,41%
not matched	17,53%	13,20%	12,03%	14,08%

Overall, the Academy of Management Journal performs slightly worse (42,27% in top 100 ranking) than the other two journals, with Organization Science performing the best (45,18% in top 100ranking). However, all three journals are very close together with only minor differences and therefore match the overall performance closely. Overall, roughly 29,43% of affiliations come from the top 50 universities and 22,78% from the top 30 ranked universities. This leads to the assumption that publication in elite management journals is disproportionately concentrated among globally ranked institutions.

In comparison with the Times Higher Education rating, 43,51% of all author-affiliated universities for QS fall within the top 100, compared to 36,71% under THE. This might indicate that QS captures a slightly wider or more inclusive elite segment, or that its classification aligns more closely with the institutional profiles of business schools publishing in these journals.

When looking into a split by gender, it is again acknowledged that there are more than two genders. However, in this dataset, a binary system was used for simplicity reasons.

Table 27 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per gender

QS Rank	Female	Male	NA	Gesamtsumme
Top 10	18	43	9	70
Top 30	31	98	15	144
Top 50	41	123	22	186
Top 100	62	183	30	275
Rest	69	174	25	268
not matched	27	52	10	89
Overall	158	409	65	632

Table 28 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per gender in %

QS Rank	Female	Male	NA	Gesamtsumme
Top 10	11,39%	10,51%	13,85%	11,08%
Top 30	19,62%	23,96%	23,08%	22,78%
Top 50	25,95%	30,07%	33,85%	29,43%
Top 100	39,24%	44,74%	46,15%	43,51%
Rest	43,67%	42,54%	38,46%	42,41%
not matched	17,09%	12,71%	15,38%	14,08%

Interestingly, when comparing the genders, they perform very similarly. Among the top 100 ranked universities, 39,24% are linked to female authors and 44,74% to male authors. The ~6 percentage point difference is modest, suggesting that both genders have a similar probability of having published with an elite institution. However, it is to be noted that male authors overall make up almost more than double the number of female authors within the dataset. These findings suggest that, among those who succeed in publishing in top journals, institutional prestige is nearly gender-neutral. However, given that women account for only one quarter of total authorships, the results highlight a continued structural underrepresentation of female scholars, even as those who publish tend to originate from equally prestigious institutional contexts. Additionally the unmatched rate for female authors is higher than the one for male (17,09% vs. 12,71%). One reason for this could be that women's academic footprint may be more institutionally diverse and include newer or interdisciplinary universities that QS doesn't rank prominently. However, within the group of authors matched in the top ranking

universities, women are slightly more likely to attend a top 10 university. This pattern echoes the earlier analysis conducted with the THE ranking, where women were also slightly more likely to hold very elite credentials.

Next, looking into the geographical distribution, the 28 countries were grouped to 4 continents.

Table 29 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per continent

QS Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0	36	27	7	70
Top 30	0	77	51	16	144
Top 50	2	81	73	30	186
Top 100	7	107	121	40	275
Rest	4	61	180	23	268
not matched	0	23	60	6	89
Overall	11	191	361	69	632

Table 30 Universities that the authors attended while publishing ranked with QS per continent in %

QS Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0,00%	18,85%	7,48%	10,14%	11,08%
Top 30	0,00%	40,31%	14,13%	23,19%	22,78%
Top 50	18,18%	42,41%	20,22%	43,48%	29,43%
Top 100	63,64%	56,02%	33,52%	57,97%	43,51%
Rest	36,36%	31,94%	49,86%	33,33%	42,41%
not matched	0,00%	12,04%	16,62%	8,70%	14,08%

Within the dataset, North America remains dominant in volume covering 57,12% of all affiliations, while Europe follows with 30,22%, Asia contributes 10,92% and Oceania only covers 1,74%. This again mirrors the THE dataset structure. The QS ranking, however, seems to lead to higher elite concentration across all regions. Even though a large percentage of universities ranking in the elite section are located in North America, and a large percentage of the authors within the dataset have published with a university based in North America, the percentage of authors linked to an elite university within the dataset falls surprisingly short in comparison with the other continents, only covering 33,52% in the top 100. When looking at Europe, its share within the top 100 QS ranking jumps to 56,02% in comparison with 36,13% under THE. Europe manages to rank 40,31% of authors

within the top 30, which is the highest of any continent. It also dominates the Top 10 category with 18,85%, largely due to schools such as LBS, INSEAD, and HEC Paris, which are all highly visible in the QS ranking. This effect might be because QS places greater weight on global reputation and employer perceptions, where European business schools seem to excel, which THE's more research-heavy methodology seems to underrate. Asia's elite footprint also seems to expand significantly in the QS ranking compared to the THE ranking. It ranks 57,97% in the top 100, similar to Europe. Asia also has a low unmatched rate at 8,7% showing good representation within QS's ranking system, which heavily includes Asian universities. Oceania, while having the smallest sample, proportionally outnumbers the other continents, placing 63,64% of authors within the top 100 ranking of QS. Further feeding into the narrative, authors from this region typically come from its most prestigious institutions. Overall, the QS dataset seems to balance global reputation more evenly across regions.

PhD institutions of the authors

After checking the dataset of the institutions the authors attended while publishing in one of the three journals, the QS ranking was applied to the dataset of universities where the authors received their PhD. Pointing out that the dataset is smaller, with 107 entries compared to 632 entries.

Table 31 PhD Universities ranked with QS per journal

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	6	5	7	18
Top 30	10	7	12	29
Top 50	10	9	14	33
Top 100	18	16	18	52
Rest	14	15	19	48
not matched	3		4	7
Overall	35	31	41	107

Table 32 PhD Universities ranked with QS per journal in %

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
Top 10	17,14%	16,13%	17,07%	16,82%
Top 30	28,57%	22,58%	29,27%	27,10%
Top 50	28,57%	29,03%	34,15%	30,84%
Top 100	51,43%	51,61%	43,90%	48,60%
Rest	40,00%	48,39%	46,34%	44,86%
not matched	8,57%	0,00%	9,76%	6,54%

Looking into the data, it shows the trend of the majority of authors publishing in top management journals earning their PhDs at institutions with strong global reputations (48,60% overall in the top 100). The QS-based results largely follow the findings from the THE ranking. However, indicating a slightly lower top-100 concentration (48,6% vs. 61,68% under THE). The results still outperform those of the universities that the authors attended while publishing, when tested with the QS ranking. When looking into the distribution between the three journals, all three perform very similarly. This similarity between the journals might indicate that elite doctoral training is a field-wide feature and not journal-specific. Interestingly, Organization Science ranks lowest when looking into the top 10 (16,13%) but highest when looking at the top 100 (51,61%). Also, AMJ and OS have nearly identical elite PhD distributions within the top 10, while AMJ only slightly outranks OS in the top 10 with 17,14%. SMJ authors show slightly broader training backgrounds with fewer from the top 100 (43,90%) but more from top 50 institutions (34,15%), being consistent with the journal's broader scope. Worth mentioning is that only 6,54% of PhD institutions couldn't be matched to the QS rankings. This suggests that nearly all institutions where the authors within the dataset earned their doctorates are recognized by QS as business- or management-relevant. This leads to the assumption that the higher unmatched rate in the THE data (10,28%) hints that QS has broader coverage of international business schools.

When looking into the gender split, it is acknowledged that there are more than two genders; however, within the dataset, a binary system will be used. All authors within the PhD dataset could be matched into the binary system. The split between the genders within the dataset is disproportionate, containing

26,17% female (28) and 73,83% male (79) authors.

Table 33 PhD Universities ranked with QS per gender

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
Top 10	4	14	18
Top 30	7	22	29
Top 50	8	25	33
Top 100	11	41	52
Rest	16	32	48
not matched	1	6	7
Overall	28	79	107

Table 34 PhD Universities ranked with QS per gender in %

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
Top 10	17,86%	12,66%	14,02%
Top 30	28,57%	24,05%	25,23%
Top 50	32,14%	31,65%	31,78%
Top 100	64,29%	60,76%	61,68%
Rest	28,57%	29,11%	31,78%
not matched	7,14%	11,39%	10,28%

The overall elite PhD distribution across genders seems to be very similar, with 64,29% of female and 60,76% of male authors receiving their PhDs from QS Top 100 universities. Within the top 10 women again outperform their male colleagues with 17,86% vs. 12,66%. Aligning with the earlier findings from both THE and QS datasets for gender, women who succeed in elite publishing are slightly more likely to hold very elite credentials. The unmatched rates for the PhD institutions compared to QS ranking indicate female PhD origins are slightly more concentrated in ranked business schools (7,14% unmatched rate), while male PhD origins are slightly more interdisciplinary or geographically diffuse (11,39% unmatched rate).

Further conducting the analysis, the 15 countries of the universities were again grouped into the four continents: Oceania, Europe, North America, and Asia. The dominance in numbers in favor of Europe, and especially North America, continues to be strong, as Europe accounts for 26,17% and North America even covers 71,03% of the dataset.

Table 35 PhD Universities ranked with QS per continent

QS Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0	8	10	0	18
Top 30	0	12	17	0	29
Top 50	0	13	20	0	33
Top 100	1	15	35	1	52
Rest	0	9	38	1	48
not matched		4	3	0	7
Overall	1	28	76	2	107

Table 36 PhD Universities ranked with QS per continent in %

QS Rank	Oceania	Europe	North America	Asia	Overall
Top 10	0,00%	28,57%	13,16%	0,00%	16,82%
Top 30	0,00%	42,86%	22,37%	0,00%	27,10%
Top 50	0,00%	46,43%	26,32%	0,00%	30,84%
Top 100	100,00%	53,57%	46,05%	50,00%	48,60%
Rest	0,00%	32,14%	50,00%	50,00%	44,86%
not matched	0,00%	14,29%	3,95%	0,00%	6,54%

Within the continent of North America, 46,05% were obtained from QS top 100 universities, marking the lowest rate when compared to the other continents. A further 13,16% are ranked in the top 10, yet half (50%) of North American PhDs come from universities outside the top 100 of the QS ranking. Outstandingly, Europe ranks 28,57% of its authors within the top 10, which is the highest score overall, including all analyzed datasets and rankings. Also, only 32,14% of European institutions fall below the top 100 ranking within QS. Hinting again at a very elite-dense distribution. Asia only includes two authors within the dataset, while Oceania counts only one. Oceania places exclusively within the top 10 and Asia ranks one author within the top 10 while the other places lower. As the sample is so small, hardly any findings can be taken into account. However, they do match the findings of the larger sample within the dataset of universities the authors attended while publishing in one of the three target journals.

Again, looking into the years an individual has held their PhD (2024-year of PhD), the dataset was clustered into four categories: 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years, and 31+ years.

Table 37 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with QS per year since PhD received

QS Rank	0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31+ years	Overall
Top 10	6	3	6	3	18
Top 30	9	8	8	4	29
Top 50	11	9	9	4	33
Top 100	17	19	12	4	52
Rest	18	20	8	2	48
not matched	0	4	2	1	7
Overall	35	43	22	7	107

Table 38 PhD Universities of the authors ranked with QS per year since PhD received in %

QS Rank	0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31+ years	Overall
Top 10	17,14%	6,98%	27,27%	42,86%	16,82%
Top 30	25,71%	18,60%	36,36%	57,14%	27,10%
Top 50	31,43%	20,93%	40,91%	57,14%	30,84%
Top 100	48,57%	44,19%	54,55%	57,14%	48,60%
Rest	51,43%	46,51%	36,36%	28,57%	44,86%
not matched	0,00%	9,30%	9,09%	14,29%	6,54%

When analyzing it is to say that 32,71% of authors are probably in their early career (0-10 years since PhD), 40,19% tend to be mid-career (11-20 years since PhD), 20,56% in their later-career (21-30 years since PhD), and 6,54% in their very late career (31+ years since PhD). Among the most senior group (31+ years since PhD), 57,14% of authors attended a university ranked in the top 100 for their PhD, and 42,86% from the top 10. The slightly less senior group (21-30 years since PhD) scores second-highest in this ranking, with 27,27% in the top 10 and 54,55% in the top 100. Authors who have held their degrees the longest and remain active in elite journals are disproportionately more likely to be graduates of top-ranked programs, especially those from the most elite (Top 10–30) universities. This indicates that there might be a prestige persistence at the senior level where elite-trained scholars sustain visibility and publication influence over decades. In comparison, the most junior authors (0-10 years since PhD) interestingly place third with 17,14% placing in the top 10 and 48,57% in the top 100. This leaves mid-career authors ranking with the highest diversity of PhD backgrounds, only including 6,98% in the top 10 and 44,19 in the top 100, indicating that newer generations entering elite publishing come from a broader range of institutions. Even though the trend of authors who hold their PhD the longest being more likely to have had their training in an elite

institution is a little weaker in the QS ranking compared to the THE ranking, this trend still remains. The QS ranking overall indicates a little broader background as top 100 scores are not as high as in THE ranking (48,60% vs. 61,68%).

Other institutions visited by the authors

Equal to the THE analysis of "other" institutions, the institutions include up to 10 additional stops in the professional careers of the authors. This data was collected for a total of 107 individuals. The method of ranking is identical to the THE analysis, where the highest ranking institution within this dataset was taken into account again, with the intent to capture a career mobility dimension.

Table 39 Other Institutions ranked with QS per journal

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	5	10	8	23
placed in top 30 at least once	11	13	11	35
placed in top 50 at least once	17	14	15	46
placed in top 100 at least once	22	22	27	71
rest	13	6	9	28
not matched	1	2	5	8
Overall	36	30	41	107

Table 40 Other Institutions ranked with QS per journal in %

QS Rank	Academy of Management Journal	Organization Science	Strategic Management Journal	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	13,89%	33,33%	19,51%	21,50%
placed in top 30 at least once	30,56%	43,33%	26,83%	32,71%
placed in top 50 at least once	47,22%	46,67%	36,59%	42,99%
placed in top 100 at least once	61,11%	73,33%	65,85%	66,36%
rest	36,11%	20,00%	21,95%	26,17%
not matched	2,78%	6,67%	12,20%	7,48%
Overall	33,64%	28,04%	38,32%	100,00%

When looking into the data, elite institutional exposure seems to be widespread. Across all journals, 21,50% of authors have worked or studied at least once at a Top 10 university. Taken together, over

half (66,36%) of all authors have had some exposure to an elite university during their career. OS authors again show the highest elite exposure overall (33,33% top 10, 73,33% top 100). SMJ follows closely, with strong elite exposure (19,51% top 10, 65,85% top 100). The AMJ shows a slightly lower elite concentration (13,89% top 10, 61,11% top 100) and a higher representation of lower-ranked institutions (36,11%). Institutions visited by the authors in their career and ranked below the top 100 universities make up for 26,17% of the dataset, while institutions that could not be matched to a university ranked by QS represent 7,48%. These findings are similar to the rest of the analysis and further feed the narrative that a majority of authors publishing in elite journals can be considered as elite. However, in comparison with the THE ranking, QS presents lower percentages overall but similar relative structure across journals.

When looking into the gender split within this data, it is again acknowledged that there are more than two genders; however, moving forward, a binary system was used. The gender split in the dataset again shows a majority of male authors, accounting for 74,77% of the data. The unmatched rate between the two genders is nearly identical (7,41% female vs. 7,50% male).

Table 41 Other Institutions ranked with QS per gender

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	4	19	23
placed in top 30 at least once	6	29	35
placed in top 50 at least once	10	36	46
placed in top 100 at least once	16	55	71
rest	9	19	28
not matched	2	6	8
Overall	27	80	107

Table 42 Other Institutions ranked with QS per gender in %

QS Rank	Female	Male	Overall
placed in top 10 at least once	14,81%	23,75%	21,50%
placed in top 30 at least once	22,22%	36,25%	32,71%
placed in top 50 at least once	37,04%	45,00%	42,99%
placed in top 100 at least once	59,26%	68,75%	66,36%
rest	33,33%	23,75%	26,17%
not matched	7,41%	7,50%	7,48%
Overall	25,23%	74,77%	100,00%

Following the findings for THE, the male authors seem to be slightly more likely to be affiliated with an elite institution (68,75% top 100) compared to their female colleagues (59,26% top 100). The same trend also shows within the top 10, where male authors reach 23,75% of top 10 affiliations while female authors only reach 14,81%. This trend of male authors achieving higher scores follows what was seen so far within the other analysis regarding gender (except THE PhD universities) and especially closely mirrors the findings within the split between genders for other universities ranked by THE. In general, the gender gap seems to be smaller under THE than under QS, suggesting that THE's research-based ranking captures less gender disparity in career mobility.

Statistical Analysis

After analyzing the findings for H-index and the University rankings, it is necessary to put them into perspective and gain a unified look at the datasets. Starting off by noting the connection between H-index and years since PhD is one of the strongest predictors to be found (Pearson correlation). This is consistent with career duration effects, where, as expected, researchers who earned their PhDs longer ago tend to have higher H-indexes, reflecting accumulated publications and citations over time ($r=0,53$; $p=0,00$). The correlation between H-index and gender is very weak and statistically non-significant ($r=0,14$; $p=0,16$ - Spearman). Looking into the correlations between H-index and the ranked universities (PhD and Published), one must note that a negative correlation would indicate better-ranked universities (lower ranked numbers) are associated with a higher H-index. A positive correlation in this case indicates that worse-ranked universities (higher ranked numbers) are associated

with a higher H-index, which would be the opposite of what would be expected.

Table 43 Correlation to H-index for THE

THE	r	p value
published universities ranked	-0,12353	0,00827
PhD universities ranked	0,08026	0,43697
Other institutions ranked	-0,32178	0,00097

When analyzing the data for THE, it is notable that the rank of publishing institution shows a small but significant negative correlation (r = -0.12). This leads to the conclusion that researchers publishing with higher-ranked universities tend to have slightly higher H-index scores. The PhD institutions for THE show no significant relationships with the H-index, concluding that the prestige of PhD institutions doesn't appear to influence long-term research impact strongly. When looking into other institutions the authors have attended during their careers, a slightly different method is used (Spearman) as the dataset does not reflect a single continuous variable but rather a ranking (Top 10, 30, 50, 100, "not matched", and "rest" (=ranked below Top 100)). The results show a moderate and highly significant negative correlation (r = -0.32; p=0,00) leading to one of the strongest non-temporal predictors after years since PhD. Therefore, authors with experience at better-ranked universities (especially top 10–30) tend to have noticeably higher H-index values.

Table 44 Correlation to H-index for QS

QS	r	p value
published universities ranked	-0,04546	0,29033
PhD universities ranked	-0,11547	0,25261
Other institutions ranked	-0,15285	0,13095

Looking into the data for QS, none of the QS-based correlations reach statistical significance (p > 0,1). QS and THE institutional rankings are highly correlated in the sample (e.g., for PhD THE x QS: r=0,92; p<0,01), so they can be treated as interchangeable measures of institutional prestige. In the main models, therefore, only THE will be used to avoid multicollinearity. When running an OLS

regression, it can be viewed that the H-index is driven overwhelmingly by academic age, not by current or PhD institutional rankings, once age is controlled (Table 45). This finding is consistent with Hirsch (2005) and Chapman et al. (2019), where both studies indicate that the H-index is mechanically time-dependent and favors senior scholars. When "years since PhD" are excluded, the "THE" rank for universities that the authors have published is significant but only shows a small influence (Table 46). The variable continent is not significant when looking into the regression, but close (Table 47).

Table 45 OLS Regression - H-index/years since PHD/Rank PhD/THE

```
==================== Regression für Zielvariable: H-index ====================
                            OLS Regression Results
==============================================================================
Dep. Variable:                H-index   R-squared:                       0.290
Model:                            OLS   Adj. R-squared:                  0.274
Method:                 Least Squares   F-statistic:                     18.97
Date:                Wed, 19 Nov 2025   Prob (F-statistic):           1.23e-07
Time:                        20:56:30   Log-Likelihood:                -356.32
No. Observations:                  96   AIC:                             718.6
Df Residuals:                      93   BIC:                             726.3
Df Model:                           2
Covariance Type:            nonrobust
==============================================================================
                 coef    std err          t      P>|t|      [0.025      0.975]
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
const          3.7659      2.230      1.689      0.095      -0.662       8.193
Rank phd THE   0.0076      0.008      0.938      0.351      -0.008       0.024
years since PHD  0.6630      0.109      6.090      0.000       0.447       0.879
==============================================================================
Omnibus:                       12.434   Durbin-Watson:                   1.780
Prob(Omnibus):                  0.002   Jarque-Bera (JB):               15.706
Skew:                           0.655   Prob(JB):                     0.000389
Kurtosis:                       4.487   Cond. No.                         364.
==============================================================================

Notes:
[1] Standard Errors assume that the covariance matrix of the errors is correctly specified.
```

Table 46 OLS Regression - H-index/years since PHD/Rank Published/THE

```
==================== Regression für Zielvariable: H-index ====================
                            OLS Regression Results
==============================================================================
Dep. Variable:                H-index   R-squared:                       0.330
Model:                            OLS   Adj. R-squared:                  0.313
Method:                 Least Squares   F-statistic:                     18.99
Date:                Wed, 19 Nov 2025   Prob (F-statistic):           1.98e-07
Time:                        20:56:30   Log-Likelihood:                -288.47
No. Observations:                  80   AIC:                             582.9
Df Residuals:                      77   BIC:                             590.1
Df Model:                           2
Covariance Type:            nonrobust
==============================================================================
                     coef    std err          t      P>|t|      [0.025      0.975]
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
const              6.4463      2.399      2.687      0.009       1.670      11.223
rank published THE -0.0112      0.008     -1.476      0.144      -0.026       0.004
years since PHD    0.6357      0.111      5.750      0.000       0.416       0.856
==============================================================================
Omnibus:                        5.387   Durbin-Watson:                   2.048
Prob(Omnibus):                  0.068   Jarque-Bera (JB):                4.625
Skew:                           0.549   Prob(JB):                       0.0990
Kurtosis:                       3.429   Cond. No.                         489.
==============================================================================

Notes:
[1] Standard Errors assume that the covariance matrix of the errors is correctly specified.
```

Table 47 OLS Regression - H-index/gender/Rank Published/continent published//THE

```
==================== Regression für Zielvariable: H-index ====================
                            OLS Regression Results
==============================================================================
Dep. Variable:                H-index   R-squared:                       0.029
Model:                            OLS   Adj. R-squared:                  0.021
Method:                 Least Squares   F-statistic:                     3.932
Date:                Thu, 13 Nov 2025   Prob (F-statistic):            0.00872
Time:                        18:00:51   Log-Likelihood:                -1653.8
No. Observations:                 406   AIC:                             3316.
Df Residuals:                     402   BIC:                             3332.
Df Model:                           3
Covariance Type:            nonrobust
================================================================================
                               coef    std err          t      P>|t|      [0.025      0.975]
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------
const                       13.6951      2.690      5.091      0.000       8.407      18.983
gender number                1.8253      1.556      1.173      0.242      -1.234       4.885
rank published THE          -0.0131      0.005     -2.681      0.008      -0.023      -0.003
continent publishednumber    1.6948      0.906      1.870      0.062      -0.087       3.477
==============================================================================
Omnibus:                      137.609   Durbin-Watson:                   2.083
Prob(Omnibus):                  0.000   Jarque-Bera (JB):              375.288
Skew:                           1.639   Prob(JB):                     3.21e-82
Kurtosis:                       6.382   Cond. No.                         840.
==============================================================================

Notes:
[1] Standard Errors assume that the covariance matrix of the errors is correctly specified.
```

Limitations & Future Research Opportunities

Limitations

As with any study, this thesis also has its limitations. The first one is the sampling and data collection constraints. The advanced dataset was constructed from a systematic subsample (every fifth author). While efficient, this approach risks selection bias and may underrepresent certain institution types, geographic regions, or career stages. Manual data collection (e.g., LinkedIn or university websites) introduces inconsistencies and relies on publicly available information, which varies in quality.

A second limitation feeds into the cross-sectional design. This is due to the fact that the data captures a single publication year (2020) and provides only a snapshot of author mobility, institutional prestige, and research impact. Prestige dynamics, however, are cumulative and path-dependent. Without longitudinal data (e.g., across 10–20 years), it is impossible to observe career trajectories, temporal prestige accumulation, or the durability of elite-journal access over time. This was partially addressed by adding all institutions since the PhD for further analysis.

A third limitation might be the simplification of institutional prestige. Although using THE and QS rankings is consistent with existing literature, these rankings reflect different constructs (reputation vs. research intensity). They also tend to privilege English-speaking institutions, large research universities, and historically established academic systems. This may obscure other forms of prestige (e.g., regional, disciplinary, or network-based).

Lastly mentioned is the issue of unobserved author characteristics. Contributing factors like research funding, collaboration networks, access to elite doctoral advisors, language proficiency, and publication strategies were not included in the models. These unmeasured variables may influence both publication in elite journals and research impact, potentially confounding the findings made.

Future Research Opportunities

A possible further research topic could be a longitudinal career path analysis. Collecting multi-year or decade-long data for different authors that publish within the journals would allow the study of career

trajectories, mobility patterns, and how institutional prestige accumulates or dissipates over time. This would capture whether elite-journal access is persistent, temporary, or influenced by career shocks.

Another idea might be to look into a comparative journal study across disciplines. By replicating the study in adjacent fields (e.g., sociology, psychology, etc.) it could be determined whether strategic management is unique or representative in its prestige dynamics.

Conclusions

This thesis tests whether authors publishing in three elite management journals (AMJ, OS, and SMJ) can themselves be regarded as "elite." Author eliteness is operationalized by (a) individual research impact (h-index) and (b) affiliation with elite universities (THE and QS Rankings).

Evidence of Author Eliteness

When analyzing the H-index, it was found that the overall mean H-index of the dataset (N=632) was 16,09, indicating a moderate publication impact among the sampled authors. The high standard deviation (13.6) suggests a substantial variation in research impact, reflecting a mix of early-career and highly established scholars. All three journals attract authors with high research impact, aligning closely with the overall mean. Median values around 10–13 suggest comparable levels of seniority across all of the journals. The distribution is right-skewed, with many authors having $H \leq 20$ and a few top researchers ($H > 60$) significantly pulling up the mean. The highest H-index, which is 91 by Dean A. Shepherd, contrasts sharply with the lowest H-index of 1 (held by a handful of individuals), emphasizing the wide performance gap within the academic field. The top-cited scholars appear in all three journals, further confirming that all journals show a similar pattern when it comes to the author affiliation with prestige.

By combining author-level data from 2020 with institutional information from the THE and QS, an analysis was made, where authors in the three journals obtained their PhDs, where they were affiliated when publishing, and which other institutions they have visited within their professional career. Across both ranking systems (QS and THE), results show a strong connection between elite training and elite publication. On average, 57,72% of authors were placed in the top 100, and 10,51% placed in the top 10 for the THE ranking. The average for the QS ranking shows 52,82% in the top 100, which is slightly less compared to the THE ranking. However, QS reaches 16,47% of authors ranked in the top 10 on average, which is higher than the THE score. The scores are, however, not far apart from each other, leading to an overall average of 55,27% of all authors landing in the top 100. This leads to the

conclusion that there is a strong overrepresentation of affiliation with elite universities, which can be seen in the data, as over half of the sample are affiliated with a university that reaches a high rank in one of the rankings. This pattern underscores cumulative advantage, where top institutions train scholars who publish in elite journals, which in turn reinforces those programs' reputations and network centrality. Overall, 33,38% of authors are affiliated exclusively with institutions ranked outside the Top 100, which leads to the assumption that elite journals not only have authors from elite universities. This suggests some level of openness or diversity among institutions.

When comparing THE and QS rankings, it reveals consistent structural patterns but different emphases. THE's research-performance metrics yield higher absolute shares of top 100 affiliations, whereas QS's reputation-based weighting highlights brand-name elites (e.g., Harvard, LBS, INSEAD) and shows slightly wider variation across regions. THE suggests a more research-driven elite network, while QS showcases a more reputational one. In both cases, elite exposure increases when considering all institutions in an author's career (postdocs, visiting appointments, ...), indicating cumulative prestige mobility within the field. When checking the correlation between the H-index and the THE ranking, it can be observed that it may align more closely than QS rankings do. The differences could stem from methodological distinctions, as THE tends to weigh research performance more heavily, whereas QS emphasizes reputation and citations per faculty differently.

Regional Impact

Regional analysis confirms this concentration as roughly two-thirds of all PhD institutions are in North America, with Europe and Asia each contributing smaller but significant shares. Oceania is showing an elite-only entry pattern with few authors that are almost exclusively from top-ranked universities. When looking into the H-index of authors affiliated with Oceania, no overly high results are seen. The over-representation of Anglophone systems in both affiliations and PhD origins seems to align with longstanding evidence on language-driven and regional asymmetries in global science (e.g., English-language advantage; Global North concentration). This does not imply quality differences per se. However, it rather highlights structural features (language, networks, training pipelines) that shape

where strategic management scholars study and publish. However, some smaller countries (e.g., Belgium) exhibit disproportionately high average H-indices, reflecting strong research infrastructures and international collaboration.

Gender Influence

Gender analyses reveal a paradox of equality and imbalance. Female authors are underrepresented numerically but are almost just as likely as men (in some cases, even more likely) to hold PhDs from elite universities, or have published in one of the three journals with a highly ranked university, or to have been associated with an elite university at some point in their career. This could indicate that publication success for women in top journals may be conditional on particularly strong academic backgrounds. Over the career course, however, there are some indications that men accumulate slightly more affiliations with elite universities. Still, within the population of publishing scholars, institutional prestige does not differ significantly by gender, refuting the notion that women's underrepresentation possibly results from weaker institutional access.

Career patterns

The career-stage analysis shows an indication that authors who earned their PhDs more recently are less likely to come from top-100 universities compared to authors who have had their PhDs for a long time (e.g., 30+ years). This suggests a modest democratization of entry pathways into elite publishing. The small number of senior authors (PhD > 30 years) remains the most elite segment, which is consistent with earlier eras of tighter institutional concentration.

Overall Assessment

Taken together, the evidence supports a qualified "yes" to the question of whether elite journals equal elite authors, as the overall evidence points out that a great extent of elite authors is featured in the elite journals. The authors publishing in AMJ, OS, and SMJ overwhelmingly come from highly ranked universities and exhibit substantial research impact, confirming that these journals serve as focal points of an international prestige system. However, the regression analyses provide an important

nuance to these descriptive patterns. The H-index regressions show that neither PhD-institution prestige nor the prestige of the institution at which authors were affiliated when publishing significantly predicts individual research impact. Instead, academic age, which is measured as years since the PhD was achieved, emerges as the only robust predictor of H-index across models, confirming the well-known time dependency of citation-based metrics. Moreover, when institutional prestige does show a significant effect (in the extended model), it unexpectedly points in the opposite direction, with lower-ranked institutions sometimes associated with higher H-index values. This suggests that high-impact scholars are distributed more widely across the institutional landscape than publication patterns alone would imply. At the same time, small but notable shifts (e.g., increasing participation from mid-ranked institutions and early-career scholars) suggest a gradual broadening of access. Overall, these results indicate that while elite journals predominantly feature authors from elite institutions, scholarly impact itself is not structurally tied to institutional prestige. Highlighting a subtle but important misalignment between journal selectivity, institutional status, and measurable research influence.

References

1. Abramo G., D'Angelo C.A. (2018). The relationship between the number of authors of a publication, its citations and the impact factor of the publishing journal: Evidence from Italy. *arXiv*. arXiv:1810.13339. https://arxiv.org/abs/1810.13339
2. Academy of Management. (n.d.-a). *About the Academy of Management*. https://aom.org/about-aom
3. Academy of Management. (n.d.-b). *The history of the Academy of Management*. https://aom.org/about-aom/history
4. Academy of Management. (n.d.). Academy of Management Journal. https://www.aom.org/research/journals/journal
5. Amano, T., González-Varo, J., Sutherland, J. (2016) Languages Are Still a Major Barrier to Global Science. *PLoS Biol*. 29;14(12):e2000933. https://doi: 10.1371/journal.pbio.2000933
6. Amano T., Nakagawa S., Gallo-Cajiao E., et al. (2023). The manifold costs of being a non-native English speaker in science. *PLoS Biology*. 21(5):e3002184. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3002184
7. American Academy of Arts and Sciences. (n.d.). *The age of new humanities Ph.D.'s*. https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators/higher-education/age-new-humanities-phds
8. Beyer, S. (2021). *The social construction of the US academic elite: A mixed methods study of two disciplines* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003099697
9. Bornmann, L., & Williams, R. (2017). Can the journal impact factor be used as a criterion for the selection of junior researchers? A large-scale empirical study based on ResearcherID data. *Journal of Informetrics, 11*(3), 788–799.
10. Brück O.E., Rähn T., Kuitunen I., et al. (2023). A bibliometric analysis of geographic disparities in the authorship of leading medical journals. *Communications Medicine*. 3:64. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43856-023-00418-2
11. Chapman, C. A., Milojevic, T., Trimmer, P. C., Gillies, C., & Balmford, A. (2019). Games academics play and their consequences: How authorship, h-index and journal impact factors

are shaping the future of academia. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences, 286*(1916), 20192047. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2019.2047

12. Chaston, I. (2015). Resource‐based view (RBV). *Wiley Encyclopedia of Management*, 1–3.
13. Chiappa, R. (2020). Seeking faculty jobs: Exploring the relationship between academic's social class of origin and hiring networks in Chilean universities. *Calidad en la Educación*, (52), 205–238.
14. Clarivate Analytics. (2019). Master Journal List 2019 – Journal Impact Factor (ISI) 2019‐2020 https://clarivate.com - Retrieved through: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334048283_Journal_citation_report_2019-2020_-_Clarivate_Analytics_-_Journal_Impact_Factor_ISI_2019_-_2020
15. Clarivate Analytics. (2020). *Journal Citation Reports 2020* https://clarivate.com Retrieved through: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342530078_2020-JCR-Report
16. Clarivate. (n.d.). *Web of Science: Author search*. https://www.webofscience.com/wos/author/author-search
17. Dada S., van Daalen K.R., Barrios-Ruiz A., et al. (2022). Challenging the “old boys club” in academia: Gender and geographic representation in editorial boards of journals publishing in environmental sciences and public health. *PLOS Global Public Health.* 2(6):e0000541. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0000541
18. Debackere, K., & Rappa, M. A. (1995). Scientists at major and minor universities: Mobility along the prestige continuum. *Research Policy, 24*(1), 137–150.
19. Demeter, M. (2019). The world-systemic dynamics of knowledge production: The distribution of transnational academic capital in the social sciences. *Journal of World-Systems Research, 25*(1), 111–144.
20. **DORA (2013).** *San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).* https://sfdora.org/read/
21. Egghe, L. (2006). Theory and practise of the g-index. Scientometrics, 69(1), 131–152. https://link-springer-com.uaccess.univie.ac.at/article/10.1007/s11192-006-0144-7

22. Goyanes M., Demeter M. (2020). How the geographic diversity of editorial boards affects what is published in JCR-ranked communication journals. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. 97(3):803–826. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699020904169
23. Hirsch, J. E. (2005). An Index to Quantify an Individual's Scientific Research Output. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences - PNAS, 102(46), 16569–16572. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0507655102
24. INFORMS. (n.d.-a). *Organization Science*. https://pubsonline.informs.org/journal/orsc
25. Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS). (n.d.-b). *About INFORMS*. https://www.informs.org/About-INFORMS
26. Fang, J., & Brown, G. T. (2024). Academic success at social costs: An exploratory study on social networks of Chinese students under academic streaming. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education, 14*(1), 164–180.
27. Fister Jr., I., et al. (2016). Toward the discovery of citation cartels in citation networks. Frontiers in Physics. https://doi.org/10.3389/fphy.2016.00049
28. Forsman, J., Moll, R., & Linder, C. (2014). Extending the theoretical framing for physics education research: An illustrative application of complexity science. *Physical Review Special Topics - Physics Education Research, 10*(2), 020122. https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevSTPER.10.020122
29. Frachtenberg E., McConville K. (2022). Metrics and methods in the evaluation of prestige bias in peer review: A case study in computer systems conferences. *PLoS One.* 25;17(2):e0264131. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0264131
30. Gruber, T. (2014). Academic sell-out: How an obsession with metrics and rankings is damaging academia. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 24*(2), 165–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2014.970248
31. Katz, Y., & Matter, U. (2019). Metrics of inequality: The concentration of resources in the U.S. biomedical elite. *Science as Culture, 29*(4), 475–502. https://doi.org/10.1080/09505431.2019.1694882

32. Kim, K., & Kim, J.-K. (2015). Trends in determinants of entry into the academic career: The case of South Korea, 1980–2010. *PLOS ONE*.

33. Kumaran, M., & Ha, C. (2017). Knowledge of journal impact factors among nursing faculty: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of the Medical Library Association, 105*(2), 140–144. https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2017.207

34. Kumaran, M., Kumar, P., & Koteswara Rao, B. (2017). Journal impact factor: A review. *Indian Journal of Medical Sciences, 69*(1), 1–4.

35. Lerchenmueller M., Sorenson O., Jena A. (2019). Gender differences in how scientists present the importance of their research: observational study. BMJ. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l6573.

36. Li W., Aste T., Caccioli F., Livan G. (2019). Early coauthorship with top scientists predicts success in academic careers. Nature Communications. 10:5170. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-019-13130-4

37. Liu, W., Liu, F., Zuo, C., & Zhu, J. (2017). The effect of publishing a highly cited paper on a journal's impact factor: A case study of the Review of Particle Physics. *Learned Publishing, 31*. https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:6191476

38. Lynch, K. (2014). New managerialism, neoliberalism and ranking. *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics, 13*, 141–153. https://doi.org/10.3354/esep00137

39. Madhani, P. M. (2010). Resource-based view (RBV) of competitive advantage: An overview. *Economics of Networks eJournal*.https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:167334042

40. Marušić, A., Katavić, V., & Jerončić, A. (2011). Regional and gender disparities in publishing in highly-cited scientific journals: The case of Croatia. *Croatian Medical Journal, 52*(1), 1–6.

41. Marušić A., Bošnjak L., Jerončić A. (2011). A systematic review of research on the meaning, ethics and practices of authorship across scholarly disciplines. *PLOS ONE*. 6(9):e23477. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0023477

42. Merton, K. (1968). The Matthew effect in science. *Science*. 159(3810):56–63. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.159.3810.56

43. Meyer K.E. (2006). Asian management research needs more self-confidence. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*. 23(2):119–137. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-006-7160-2

44. Michael, S. O. (2005). The cost of excellence: The financial implications of institutional rankings. *International Journal of Educational Management, 19*(5), 365–382. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540510607716

45. Miller, D. (2019, March 26). The resource-based view of the firm. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. Retrieved June 1, 2025, from https://oxfordre.com/business/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.001.0001/acrefore-9780190224851-e-4

46. Milojević, S. (2020). Nature, Science, and PNAS: Disciplinary profiles and impact. *Scientometrics, 123*, 1301–1315.

47. Mondal, H., Deepak, K. K., Gupta, M., & Kumar, R. (2023). The h-Index: Understanding its predictors, significance, and criticism. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, *12*(11), 2531–2537. https://doi.org/10.4103/jfmpc.jfmpc_1613_23

48. O'Neil, D. (2018). English as the lingua franca of international publishing. *World Englishes, 37*(2), 146–165. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12293

49. Quacquarelli Symonds 1. (n.d.). *About QS*. https://www.topuniversities.com/about-qs

50. Quacquarelli Symonds 2. (n.d.). *QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025: Business & Management Studies*. https://www.topuniversities.com/university-subject-rankings/business-management-studies?tab=indicators&sort_by=rank&order_by=asc

51. Rothblatt, S. (2008). Global branding and the celebrity university. *Liberal Education, 94*, 26–33. Retrieved from https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:152677650

52. Said, N. M. M., Wee, M., Razak, N. A., & Sadik, M. Z. b. (2023). Political skills towards personal reputation among academicians in Malaysia: A conceptual study. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*.

53. Shah, F. A., & Jawaid, S. A. (2023). The h-Index: An Indicator of Research and Publication Output. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences, 39*(2), 315-316. https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.39.2.7398

54. Sine W.D., Shane S., Di Gregorio D. (2003). The halo effect and technology licensing: The influence of institutional prestige on the licensing of university inventions. *Management Science*. 49(4):478–496. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.49.4.478.14416

55. Squazzoni, F., Bravo, G., Grimaldo, F., García-Costa, D., Farjam, M, Mehmani, B. (2021). Gender gap in journal submissions and peer review during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. A study on 2329 Elsevier journals. *PLoS ONE* 16(10): e0257919. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257919

56. Starbuck W.H. (2005). How much better are the most-prestigious journals? The statistics of academic publication. *Organization Science*. 16(2):180–200. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1040.0107

57. Strategic Management Society. (n.d.-a). *Strategic Management Journal*. https://www.strategicmanagement.net/publications-resources/sms-journals/strategic-management-journal/

58. Strategic Management Society. (n.d.-b) . *About us*. https://www.strategicmanagement.net/about-sms/

59. Suzina, A. C. (2020). English as lingua franca. Or the sterilisation of scientific work. *Media, Culture & Society, 43*(1), 171–179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720957906

60. Thelwall, M., Kousha, K., Makita, M., Abdoli, M., Stuart, E., Wilson, P., & Levitt, J. (2023). In which fields do higher impact journals publish higher quality articles? *Scientometrics, 128*(7), 3915–3933.

61. Times Higher Education 1. (n.d.). *About the Times Higher Education World University Rankings*. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/about-the-times-higher-education-world-university-rankings

62. Times Higher Education. (2023, September 20). *World University Rankings 2024: methodology*. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/world-university-rankings-2024-methodology
63. Times Higher Education 2. (n.d.). *World University Rankings 2024 by subject: business and economics*. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2024/subject-ranking/business-and-economics
64. Traag, V. (2021). Inferring the causal effect of journals on citations. *Quantitative Science Studies* 2 (2): 496–504. https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00128
65. Tsui A.S. (2004). Contributing to global management knowledge: A case for high-quality indigenous research. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management.* 21(4):491–513. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:APJM.0000048715.35108.a7
66. Walter, P., & Mullins, D. (2019). From symbiont to parasite: The evolution of for-profit science publishing. Molecular Biology of the Cell.
67. Wickert C., Potočnik K., Prashantham S., Shi W., Snihur Y. (2024). Embracing non-Western contexts in management scholarship. Journal of Management Studies. 61(8):e1–e24. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.13048
68. Wilhite, A., Fong, E. (2012). Coercive Citation in Academic Publishing. Science 335,542-543. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1212540.

Further tables:

Table 48 Count of individuals per H-index in overall dataset

H-index	Count of authors with X H-index
1	11
2	21
3	30
4	30
5	30
6	35
7	29

8	34
9	36
10	29
11	16
12	25
13	28
14	21
15	19
16	22
17	18
18	11
19	10
20	10
21	6
22	10
23	10
24	9
25	8
26	13
27	11
28	7
29	3
30	2
31	5
32	9
33	4
34	6
35	3
36	3
37	7
39	3
40	4
41	2
42	2
43	5
44	1
45	3
46	1
47	5
49	2
50	3
51	3
52	3
53	4
59	1
62	1
63	1
64	2
67	2
69	1
80	1
91	1
SUM	**632**