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Journal Lists: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the use of formal rankings of journals for personnel decision purposes by agricultural economics departments with agribusiness programs. It was hypothesized that the probability of using a list of formal rankings is related to a set of characteristics of the department. This suggests lists may reduce the level of uncertainty regarding the assessment of research quality by providing explicit targets in the department but may also induce faculty members to develop institution-specific human capital, thereby reducing faculty mobility and impeding career development. Whether lists are used, how they are compiled, and the extent to which they are relied upon when making personnel decisions should be viewed in the context of developments and trends in higher education; e.g., the presence of multi-disciplinary departments and the use of clinical and other non-tenure track faculty. Further, the difficulty of revising lists once they have been agreed upon should also be considered, especially when journal quality declines or where changes in personnel evaluations and in bylaws and similar documents are lengthy and arduous processes.

Keywords: journal list, personnel decision, ranking, bylaws, tenure track

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Introduction

Lists of journals have become more common in recent years as academic departments strive to increase their perceived prestige. Developing such a list may be an arduous and potentially contentious task, particularly if the list is formulated solely by internal, subjective processes. These difficulties are particularly exacerbated in agribusiness, a subfield of agricultural economics, since a subfield relies on paradigms and knowledge from other disciplines. Agribusiness faculty sometimes have diverse backgrounds and eclectic research interests (Axarloglou and Theoharakis 2002). Although dominated by agricultural economists, agribusiness programs may have faculty from other agriculture areas, science, or business disciplines. This diversity complicates the identification and evaluation of journals in which faculty publish (Barrett, Olia, and Bailey 2000).

There are studies of the impact (Laband and Piette 1994) and published rankings of economics and agricultural economics journals and departments (Herrmann, Berg, Dabbert, Pöchtrager, and Salhofer 2011; Ritzberger 2008; Kalaitzidakis, Mamuneas, and Stengos 2003; Huettner and Clank 1997; Kinnucan and Traxlet 1994; Burton and Phimister 1996; Laband and Peitte 1994; Enomoto and Ghosh 1993); but rather than use them, some departments have developed their own journal lists. Lists seem to be relatively common in some fields, e.g. management (Mingeres and Harzing 2007), operations management (Saladin 1985), and marketing (Baumgartner and Pieters 2003). While lists also seem to be emerging in agricultural economics (Hilmer and Hilmer 2005; Beilock and Polopolus 1988; Beilock, Polopolus, and Correal 1986), a recent study suggests that few departments have such lists (Detre, Gunderson, Peake and Dooley 2011).

Lists such as these are designed to reduce difficulties in evaluating quality and to help faculty members identify target journals. However, they can lead to a moral hazard associated with the agency problem (Gomez-Mejia and Balkin 1992). Because of that agency problem, work in economics journals (Detre, Gunderson, Peake, and Dooley 2011; Ng, and Siebert 2009; Ritzberger 2008; Hilmer and Hilmer 2005; Axarloglou and Theoharakis 2003; Barrett, Olia, and Bailey 2000; Kalaitzidakis, Mamuneas, and Stengos 2003) was used as a starting point for this study which replicates one conducted in the field of management (Van Fleet, McWilliams, and Siegel 2000). That study provided the following cost/benefit analysis of such lists and was used to develop a set of hypotheses, which were then tested based on a survey of departments with agribusiness programs (see also Cahn and Glass 2016, Elbeck and Baruca 2015, Adler and Harzing 2009).

The Costs/Benefits of Lists

Table 1 is based solely on those authors' judgment and informal feedback provided by senior colleagues at institutions that actually generated lists. A list provides an explicit indicator of what research outlets a department values and establishes explicit target publications. A list provides useful information on journal quality to faculty members outside of their area(s) of interest. If the list contains several “levels,” it could be especially useful for faculty members who are targeting journals that may not necessarily be considered “top-tier” by all their peers. A list could also provide guidance to those whose work has been rejected at a premier journal and who want to maximize the impact (at least internally) of his or her work.

Table 1. Costs/Benefits of List Formulation

Costs	Benefits
▪ Development can be arduous and time-consuming. ▪ May be damaging to interpersonal relations. ▪ Compromises may lead to rewards for mediocre work. ▪ May induce rigidity in research standards. ▪ Could discourage faculty from reading colleagues' work. ▪ Focus on inputs (articles) rather than on outputs (impact of contribution to the field). ▪ Subject to biases and political processes. ▪ May hinder career development if standards are too institutionally specific. ▪ Could overestimate actual productivity. ▪ Could disadvantage those who do specialized work, especially if they publish in newer journals. ▪ Could add to power of editors and review boards.	▪ Provides an explicit measure of the value of research output. ▪ Establishes explicit publication targets. ▪ Reduces uncertainty in planning and evaluation. ▪ Provides guidance in publication strategies. ▪ Provides useful information on journal quality. ▪ Reduces time and effort in evaluations ▪ Provides defensible information in grievance situations. ▪ Useful in benchmarking/baselining.

Source. Van Fleet, McWilliams, and Siegel. 2000.

A ranked list could also reduce the time and effort required to evaluate research quality by both the faculty member and the promotion and tenure committee. It could provide a defense in grievance situations when an individual is denied tenure or promotion. An agreed upon measure of research productivity clearly would be beneficial even if the objectivity of the ranking could be questioned.

But there are clearly costs incurred in formulating a ranking. Unfortunately, some faculty members, wishing to minimize time spent in evaluations, will rely solely on the ranking and thus will not actually read their colleagues' work to assess its quality independent of the outlet. Other costs are associated with the fact that such lists are generally subjective rather than objective in nature. As different parties seek to put forth their own particular interests, the effort to reach a consensus (which must occur for a subjective ranking to be adopted) may prove overly time consuming and damaging to interpersonal relations. Formulating a list may also involve agency costs (problems) so that potential rigidity in research standards may result. This induced rigidity may hurt, especially if the ranking is not updated regularly to reflect changes in the performance of various outlets. And as noted above, a ranking could discourage faculty from actually reading the manuscripts of their colleagues. They would all be familiar with the work of their colleagues, its true quality, and/or its potential impact. The use of the journal, rather than the article, as the unit of performance measurement, is problematic despite any savings in time.

Because lists are subjective and subject to the biases and political processes of those who develop them, journals rated highly at one institution may be rated lower at another. This could lead to institution-specific human capital, reducing mobility and impeding career development.

In addition, individuals who do highly specialized work could be disadvantaged by lists. In some instances, specialized work may be published only in a narrow set of specialized journals near the top in their field but not likely to be considered at the top of the broad field identified by such lists. This shortcoming exists precisely because the impact from limited audiences is likely to be small. If the number of top tier journals on a list is relatively small, a highly diverse department would have difficulty recognizing the best journals in multiple sub-fields. The existence of lists based on perceptual judgments restricts emerging journals from rapid recognition as top quality outlets. While procedurally levels of rigor can be accomplished quickly, assessing impact takes time, perhaps considerable time.

Hypotheses

As noted by Van Fleet, McWilliams, and Siegel (2000), there is no specific theory underlying the development of journal lists. However, social science and business concepts can help to understand the use of journal rankings. Institutional pressures [to improve quality, to guide career development] and expected efficiency gains [less time spent in evaluation, less contentious evaluation processes] are likely underlying reasons why departments develop lists (Barringer and Milkovich 1998). The performance appraisal literature recommends objective techniques that involve those being evaluated (Campbell, Campbell, and Chia 1998). Departmental agreement on a list represents both a form of involvement and some objectivity. Having a formal list would also inform individuals prior to the appraisal period about the criteria, which is also important for effective evaluations (Latham and Wexley 1981).

These concepts, however, do not distinguish between departments that develop formal lists from one that would not. The above discussion of costs and benefits along with the work of Garfield (1972) suggests several hypotheses concerning formal rankings of journals for personnel purposes. The arguments of Van Fleet, McWilliams, and Siegel (2000) and their hypotheses are summarized to supply an additional hypothesis.

There is evidence that smaller organizations find structured, formal performance appraisal systems impractical (London and Smither 1999), relying instead on informal methods (Jackson, Schuler, and Rivero 1989). Although reaching a consensus may be difficult, the time needed to actually read colleagues' work might (to some) warrant the use of proxies (journal rankings) to assess the quality of an individual's work. Hence, economies of scale might increase the likelihood of developing a list. Thus, the first hypothesis is:

H_1: A positive correlation exists between the department size and the probability of adopting a list.

Anticipating that many departments outside of the United States are relatively small leads to another hypothesis:

H_2: A positive correlation exists between a department's global location (in the United States or not) and the probability of adopting a list.

In departments with faculty using non-tenure track faculty a list might prove useful to guide their work. However, reaching a consensus in such departments may be more difficult and may also be related to size (Jackson, Schuler, and Rivero 1989). The third hypothesis is, then:

H_3: A positive correlation exists between the use of non-tenure track faculty (clinical, instructors, post-docs, etc.) within a department and the probability of adopting a list.

As noted earlier, developing and using a list is a form of peer evaluation. However, because individual faculty members may be reluctant to evaluate one another, peer evaluations may not be used. Low performers also are likely to reject the use of peer appraisals (Long, Long, and Dobbins 1998). On the other hand, experience can substitute for peer information, rendering a list unnecessary (Maurer and Tarulli 1996). Therefore, experience is an important variable to consider (Ferris, Judge, Rowland, and Fitzgibbons 1994, 105). Experience and the quality of a department may pull in different directions regarding the use of a list. Higher quality departments (Zapata 2009; Palacios-Huerta and Volii 2004) have less of a need for a list because faculty are already socialized, mentored, and rewarded to publish in only those journals that are regarded as top-tier. Furthermore, those departments will strive to hire graduates of top rated institutions (Hilmer and Hilmer 2007; Hilmer and Hilmer 2005; Miranowski 2002; Connor, 1996), where graduate students are counseled to target top tier journals. Two hypotheses emerge from quality and experience considerations.

H_4: An inverse relation exists between the quality of a department and the probability of adopting a list.

H_5: Departments with faculty who have low levels of experience will be more likely to adopt a ranking.

Jackson, Schuler, and Rivero (1989) noted that industries differ in their human resource practices. Longenecker and Nykodym (1996) noted differences in public versus private sector organizations. Departments in public colleges or universities may have more bureaucratic environments and be subject to more grievance cases than private institutions. If so, the benefits of developing a list would outweigh the costs, leading to our next hypothesis.

H_6: The probability of adopting a list will be greater in public institutions than in private institutions.

Similarly, if the college or university has an overall research focus, a list may be seen as unnecessary, leading to this hypothesis.

H_7: The probability of adopting a list will be lower in research focused institutions than in those without such a focus.

Method

In an effort to identify formal lists of agribusiness journals, a survey was conducted of departments identified on the Internet as offering agribusiness programs (see Table 2). There were sixty-four US and thirty-six Non-US institutions identified and contacted. While such departments vary in the breadth of subjects covered, this procedure provides a replicable

convenience sample for exploratory purposes. An email was sent to the department chair and one other randomly chosen member of each department, asking if the department had a "formal ranking" of journals used for personnel purposes – faculty development, performance appraisal, and/or tenure and promotion recommendations. If the department chair failed to respond another random selection was made to assure two responses for each department. Copies of any formal list and informal lists that might be available were requested. An important point to note is that the survey was not about perceptions of journals or journal quality. It was simply an effort to collect formal lists used by departments for personnel purposes. In an effort to obtain as large a sample as possible, follow-up letters were sent to those individuals and finally a third set of emails was sent to other members of the faculties involved when there had been no response from the earlier emails.

Table 2. List of Respondents

US Respondents		
Alabama A&M University	Oklahoma State University	University of Florida
Arizona State University	Olds College	University of Hawaii at Hilo
Auburn University	Oregon State University	University of Idaho
Cal. Poly- San Luis Obispo	Penn State University	University of Illinois
California State University-Fresno	Purdue University	University of Kentucky
Clemson University	Sam Houston State University	University of Maine
Colorado State University	Santa Clara University	University of Massachusetts
Cornell University	SUNY Cobleskill	University of Missouri
Iowa State University	Texas A&M University	University of Tennessee
Louisiana State University	Texas Tech University	University of Wyoming
Montana State University	University of California-Berkeley	Utah State University
North Carolina State University	University of California- Davis	Virginia Tech
North Dakota State University	University of Arizona	Washington State University
Ohio State University	University of Arkansas	
Non-US Respondents		
Botswana College of Agriculture (BW)	Sokoine Univ. of Agriculture(TZ)	University of Guelph (CA)
Dalhousie University (CA)	Stellenbosch University (SA)	University of Kent (UK)
Egerton University (KE)	Technical Univ. of Munich (DE)	Univ. of Manitoba (CA)
ESSEC Business School (FR)	University of La Salle (CO)	University of Pretoria (SA)
Humboldt University Berlin (DE)	Univ. of British Columbia (CA)	Univ. of Queensland (AU)
Indian Institute of Management (IN)	Univ. of Nat. Res. and Life Sc. (AT)	University of Rwanda (RW)
Martin Luther Univ. Halle-Wittenberg (DE)	University of Adelaide (AU)	Univ. of Saskatchewan (CA)
Moi Universty-Kenya (KE)	University of Alberta (CA)	University of Rostock (DE)
Newcastle University (UK)	University of Bonn (DE)	
Royal Agricultural University (UK)	University of Goettingen (DE)	

Regardless of the categories used by a list, ("A, B, C" system, a numerical system "4, 3, 2, 1,", "tiers," or just labels such as "target journals and additional outlets" or "premier" or "highest quality"), for comparability the highest ranking reported for each institution was assigned a value of "4," the next a "3," and so on. Similarly, if ratings were used, in order to arrive at categories that could be combined with others, the ratings were standardized and first differences among the standardized values were visually examined by what is essentially a series of scree tests (Zoski and Jurs 1996; Zoski and Jurs 1990; Race and Planek 1992; Cattell 1966).

From the survey variables are Research Focus (1=yes or 2=no from the survey), Size is the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty, Other is the number of "other faculty" (non-tenured or tenure-track) faculty (clinical, instructors, post-docs, etc.), Experience is "years on average" of tenured/tenure-track faculty, AGBUS was either 1 (yes) or 2 (no); Quality-1 is RePEc Scores (low best[1]), and Quality-2 is Best Global Scores (high best;[2]). The study was IRB approved. The survey was provided online using Qualtrics. The full survey instrument is available from the authors upon request.

Results

This project dealt with formal lists of journals used for personnel purposes although informal uses and perceptions of journal quality were reported by some respondents. Despite how commonly faculty categorize journals, surprisingly few institutions reported using formal lists. Similar to the results of Detrea, Gunderson, Peak and Dooley (2011), only five US departments (12.2% of those responding) indicated that they used formal lists although several indicated that they used lists in an informal way of guiding research (Table 3). Interestingly, more Non-US departments used formal lists (15 or 53.57%).

Table 3. Use of Formal Lists by Respondents (Percent)

	Total	**US**	**Non-US**
Total	69	41	28
Use Formal List	20 (28.99%)	5 (12.20%)	15 (53.57%)
Do Not Use	49 (71.01%)	36 (87.80%)	13 (46.43%)

As shown in Appendix Table A1, among the variables for US departments, size is significantly correlated with Research Focus (yes or no from the survey) and Quality-1 (RePEc Scores; see Appendix Table A1 note), and Quality-1 is correlated with Others [Quality-2 is Best Global Scores' see Appendix Table A1) note). For the Non-US departments, size is significantly correlated with Others T-tests for US vs Non-US variables show all but Quality-1 and Control as significant. These results, then, suggest clear differences between US and Non-US respondents so they are next examined separately.

Appendix Table A2 reports the results for US respondents. The number of US responses with lists is too small for meaningful analysis. For those with lists, Size is clearly important, negatively related to Research Focus and positively related to Others (the use of non-tenure track faculty). Results from a t-test indicate that Size and Others differentiate whether or not US respondents

[1] https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.agecon.html
[2] http://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/agricultural-sciences

indicated the presence or absence of a list. H1 is confirmed but H3 is not, and there is no clear pattern in regards to H2.

Appendix Table A3 reports the results for Non-US respondents. These results indicate that for departments with lists there is a significant correlation between Size and Others but for those without lists, Size is significantly negatively correlated with Quality-1.The t-tests found no significant relationships.

While there appears to be some support for H4, there are no data supporting either H5 or H6. Because small sample sizes for some of these groupings led to mixed statistical significance to investigate further and to specifically address H7, a probit analysis was conducted.

Two probit analyses were conducted to investigate factors that influence the decision to adopt lists. The first focuses on the whole sample and the second focuses solely on those that actually have a journal list implemented. The following model specification was used (*i* denotes the *i*th department):

Prob(L*i*)=f(USA*i*, PUBLIC*i*, RESEARCH*i*, SIZE*i*, OTHERS*i*, EXPERIENCE*i*, AGBUS*i*)
Where L is a dummy variable denoting whether the department has a list;

USA is a dummy variable denoting whether the department was in the US;
PUBLIC is a dummy variable denoting whether the institution is public;
RESEARCH is a dummy variable denoting whether the institution has a research focus;
SIZE is the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty;
OTHERS is the number of non-tenured/tenure-track faculty;
EXPERIENCE is the average number of years since receipt of degree of the faculty; and
AGBUS is a dummy variable denoting whether the institution has a separate agribusiness program.

Results are displayed in Table 4. The Adopts column shows the results for the total sample while the Uses column shows the results only for departments that actually already use a journal list. The results support H2 and suggest that Non-US institutions are more likely to have lists than are US institutions.

Table 4. Determinants of the probability that a department adopts or uses a list (probit estimates)

	Dependent Variable			
Variable	**Adopts**		**Uses**	
Intercept	1.528	(1.156)	1.000	(1.581)
USA	-1.297***	(0.494)	-1.203	(0.841)
PUBLIC	-0.420	(0.556)	-0.948	(0.799)
RESEARCH	-0.424	(0.808)	-1.449	(0.946)
SIZE	-0.089	(0.133)	0.073	(0.203)
OTHERS	0.022	(0.102)	-0.059	(0.140)
EXPERIENCE	-0.024	(0.139)	0.140	(0.165)
AGBUS	-0.237	(0.370)	-0.313	(0.347)
LOG LIKELIHOOD	-32.0985***		-16.829*	

Note. Standard errors in parenthesis
* p≤.10; ** p≤.05; *** p≤.01

Discussion

Only one formal list was provided and it consisted of only ten journals. However, that respondent noted that "other high quality journals important to the discipline and/or an individual faculty member's specific research program will also be considered and are encouraged."

Among those who did not use lists, different views were expressed. One respondent noted, "We know the recognized journals in our field and in general. A promotion candidate would be evaluated on the overall quality and quantity of publications, teaching achievement, and extramural funding." Another indicated that they had "no formal or informal list. However, we look at publication numbers in 'tier 1' journals, each person defining 'tier 1' in their own way. We are all economists/ag economists from 4 Ph.D. institutions, and a consensus is not difficult to reach." A third simply said "We have used lists only informally." Another referring to a list used informally said "The list is not used in any formal way, but is used informally to make judgments about journal quality in promotion and tenure cases. The list was first assembled more than 10 years ago – and there is considerable dissatisfaction with it. There is a widespread view that it is in serious need of updating – but no one really relishes the prospect of that kind of undertaking, fearing that it would be plagued by individuals' strategizing to make their own portfolios look as strong as possible."

More meaningfully to our study, one respondent noted that existing lists are either economics lists with few or no agricultural economics journals or, even more to the point, agricultural economics lists with no agribusiness journals in them. With that in mind, then, the lists, articles with lists, and websites with lists that were provided by eight respondents whose departments used them only informally were examined. Those lists identified 335 journals, many of which had broad, inter-or multidisciplinary scopes or specifically mention and emphasize marketing, business, entrepreneurship, consumers, organizational structure or management or strategy, labor, or other business-related terms with no specific reference to agribusiness or agricultural economics. That set was reduced by selecting only those journals appearing on two or more lists and that were relevant to agribusiness or agricultural economics in terms of their aims, scope, purpose, and other information. This then resulted in the set of thirty-four journals in Table 5 along with their Impact Factors.

Table 5. Agribusiness Journals

Journal	5-Year Impact Factor[a]	Impact Factor[b]
Food Policy	2.949	3.092
Agriculture and Human Values	2.534	0.579
J Agricultural Economics	2.037	6.685
European Review of Agricultural Economics	1.828	4.229
American J Agricultural Economics	1.828	4.628
Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems	1.734	NA
British Food Journal	1.208	NA
Canadian J Agricultural Economics	1.113	1.532
Agricultural Economics	1.701	6.781
Review Agricultural Economics	NA	NA
J of Agricultural and Resource Economics	0.868	5.285
Agribusiness: An International Journal	0.949	2.288
Outlook On Agriculture	0.581	NA
International Food and Agribusiness Management Review	0.647	1.094
Agrekon: Quarterly J on Agricultural Economics	0.311	0.872
Australian J Agricultural and Resource Economics	1.516	4.676
J of Agricultural and Food Industrial Organization	NA	3.109
African J of Agricultural and Resource Economics	NA	2.165
Agricultural Economics Review	NA	1.162
J of Agribusiness	NA	1.003
International J of Agricultural Res., Governance and Ecology	NA	0.693
J of International Agricultural Trade and Development	NA	0.541
Indian J of Agricultural Economics	NA	0.249
Quarterly J of International Agriculture	NA	NA
International Journal of Food and Agricultural Economics	NA	NA
Agricultural and Resource Economics Review	NA	2.820
Food Economics (formerly Acta Agri Scandinavica – Sec C)	NA	NA
International Agricultural Economics and Management	NA	NA
J Agrarian Change	NA	NA
J Agricultural and Food Economics	NA	NA
J Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology	NA	NA
J of Agricultural Education and Extension	NA	NA
J of Agricultural History and Rural Sociology	NA	NA
Yearbook of the Austrian Society for Agricultural Economics	NA	NA

Note. na = not available
a = 5-year Impact Factor from Journal Citation Reports. (accessed 8/22/2016).
b = Impact Factors from IDEAS/RePEc Simple Impact Factors for Journals. ideas.repec.org/top/top.journals.simple.html#top. Accessed 8/22/2016.

It should be noted that the journal quality measures merely enable one to assess the perceived quality of the average article that appears in a given journal. For example, the average article that appears in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (AJAE) is perceived as higher in quality than the average article that appears in, say, the *International Food and Agribusiness Review* (IFAMR). However, that does not mean that any particular article in the AJAE is "better" than any particular article in IFAMR, and it certainly does not mean that every article in AJAE is better than every article in IFAMR. The salient point is that this approach does not in any way preclude a more micro analysis of the quality or impact of an individual article. Further, as Johnson and Podsakoff (1995) demonstrate and a perusal of relevant articles in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* suggests, journal reputations change over time. Hence, any such "rankings" need to be periodically updated. Rankings also need to be kept current to reflect the current state of higher education as mission statements change and new initiatives, such as multi-disciplinary research, are pursued. The presence of multi-disciplinary departments, for example, might provide an agribusiness faculty member with opportunities to collaborate on research projects. The dilemma? The resulting publication may appear in a "quality" journal that has yet to be added to the agribusiness list. As a result of another trend, the increased use of non-tenure track faculty, research-active faculty members may find themselves short of colleague-collaborators. When faculty members with similar research interests or with similar motivations to conduct research are not in close proximity, the notion of serendipity in developing research and publication ideas can be reduced considerably.

Faculty salaries depend perhaps to a great extent on publication records and how those records are evaluated (Detre, Gunderson, Peake, & Dooley 2011; Hilmer & Hilmer 2005). Involving those being evaluated in the development of standards for evaluation is advocated by scholars in the field of performance appraisal (Campbell, Campbell, and Chia 1998; Daley 1993). But as noted earlier involvement may lead to agency problems (Gomez-Mejia and Balkin 1992). The solution, of course, would be to agree upon an objective metric, but attaining such an agreement might also involve agency problems. Nevertheless, continually examining individual contributions and the outlets in which those appear is necessary to assure fairness and equity in evaluations. That process will help establish a metric that can be agreed upon and more clearly define the field of agribusiness (Ng & Siebert 2009; Harling 1995).

Summary

Few departments have formal rankings of journals. Only 12% of responding institutions in the US had formal lists but 54% of Non-US did. This suggests that the formal use of journal lists is not as common as might be thought based on the number of published journal rankings. Apparently the costs generally outweigh the benefits of having a formal list. Based on our results, a tremendous amount of variation exists among such lists.

What seems to be needed is an objective measure of journal quality and/or influence independent of any particular faculty. One such measure, citation analysis, is frequently used (Blackburn and Mitchell 1981; Garfield 1972). Most of the strengths and weaknesses (Todorov and Glanzel 1988) of citation analysis are from its use in macro-analytic frameworks rather than more micro uses. Despite criticisms (MacRoberts and MacRoberts 1996), efforts to improve it have been made (Trenchard 1992; Garfield and Welljams-Dorof 1992; Liu 1993). Thus citation analysis

seems to be the basis for a measure that would be easy to keep up-to-date and acceptable to scholars in the field (Garfield 1996 and 1972; Tahai and Meyer 1999).

Measuring the quality and influence of journals in general and of an individual article in particular are essential to academic careers. Journal rankings could be useful tools if derived without political influence. Such rankings can reduce uncertainty regarding research quality and provide explicit targets to researchers. However, rankings also have problems. Rankings developed at any one institution could reduce career mobility and impede career development since journals rated high at one institution may not be similarly rated at another. The results presented here indicate considerable variability. Rather than inferring micro quality from macro quality, faculties should be willing to evaluate the quality and influence of individual articles rather than relying solely on its outlet. This suggests the need for a more objective ranking of journals, depending less upon local opinions and more on the impact or contribution to the field.

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Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive statistics, correlations, and t-tests: US and Non-US (number of cases in correlation matrix)

US

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	18.0122	6.1393	41	1.0000	0.1769 (41)	0.2413 (41)	-0.3620* (24)	-0.1790 (14)	-0.0694 (41)	-0.5006*** (41)
2	Others	7.4756	2.6825	41		1.0000	0.0569 (41)	-0.2574* (24)	0.1449 (14)	0.4640 (41)	-0.1022 (41)
3	Experience	14.3048	3.1193	41			1.0000	-0.2360 (24)	0.4445 (14)	0.1028 (41)	-0.1227 (41)
4	Quality-1	28.2100	16.7505	24				1.0000	-0.2589 (14)	-0.2937 (24)	nm
5	Quality-2	75.4428	10.2901	14					1.0000	-0.0470 (14)	0.1054 (14)
6	Control 87.8% public (1) 12.2% private (2)	1.0487	0.2154	41						1.0000	-0.0745 (41)
7	Research Focus 90.24% yes (1) 9.75% no (2)	1.0975	0.2967	41							1.0000

Non-US

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	12.3571	7.2960	28	1.0000	0.4122** (28)	0.0599 (28)	-0.7141 (4)	-0.1031 (9)	-0.2990 (28)	nm
2	Others	12.5535	6.9715	28		1.0000	0.1993 (28)	0.5408 (4)	-0.1845 (9)	-0.2221 (28)	nm
3	Experience	8.6964	8.8788	28			1.0000	0.1251 (4)	0.1814 (9)	-0.2494 (28)	nm
4	Quality-1	32.1875	7.5822	4				1.0000	1.0000 (9)	nm	nm
5	Quality-2	68.2556	6.1077	9					1.0000	nm	nm
6	Control 92.85% public (1) 7.14% private (2)	1.0714	0.2575	28						1.0000	nm
7	Research Focus 100% yes (1) 0% no (2)	1.0000	0.0000	28							1.0000

nm = not meaningful; * p ≤ .10; p ≤ .05; p ≤ .01

t-tests

Variable	t	Variable	t	Variable	t
1 Size	3.4793***	2 Others	4.2384***	3 Experience	3.7318***
4 Quality-1	0.4614	5 Quality-2	1.8836*		
6 Control	0.3969	7 Research Focus	1.7348*		

Note. Size = Number of tenured/tenure-track faculty
Experience = Average years since degree
Others = Number of other (non-tenure track) faculty
Quality-1 = RePEc Scores (low best); https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.agecon.html
Quality-2 = Best Global Scores (high best)[3]

[3] http://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/agricultural-sciences

Table A2. Descriptive statistics, correlations, and t-tests: US departments with and without lists (number of cases in correlation matrix)

With

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	13.4166	2.5601	5	1.0000	0.0000 (5)	-0.2308 (5)	-1.0000*** (2)	nm	nm	-0.1961 (5)
2	Others	5.4166	1.2113	5		1.0000	0.2193 (5)	1.0000*** (2)	nm	nm	-0.5590 (5)
3	Experience	14.0933	3.8852	5			1.0000	1.0000*** (2)	nm	nm	0.6864* (5)
4	Quality-1	25.8900	23.7400	2				1.0000	nm	nm	nm
5	Quality-2	na	na	0					1.0000	nm	nm
6	Control 100% public (1) 0% private (2)	1.0000	0.0000	5						1.0000	nm
7	Research Focus 80% yes (1) 20% no (2)	1.2000	0.40000	5							1.0000

Without

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	18.2777	5.7049	36	1.0000	0.1820 (36)	0.3278* (36)	-0.2391 (22)	-0.1791 (14)	-0.0865 (36)	-0.5512*** (36)
2	Others	7.6111	2.8010	36		1.0000	0.0609 (36)	-0.3213 (22)	0.1449(14)	0.4704*** (36)	-0.0504 (36)
3	Experience	13.9444	3.0963	36			1.0000	-0.3150 (22)	0.4446* (14)	0.1286 (36)	-0.2988 (36)
4	Quality-1	28.4209	15.9473	22				1.0000	-0.2589 (14)	-0.0357 (22)	nm
5	Quality-2	75.4428	10.2901	14					1.0000	-0.0470 (14)	0.1054 (14)
6	Control 94.44% public (1) 5.56% private (2)	1.0555	0.2290	36						1.0000	-0.0731 (36)
7	Research Focus 91.67% yes (1) 8.33% no (2)	1.0833	0.2763	36							1.0000

na = not applicable; nm = not meaningful; * $p \leq .10$; $p \leq .05$; $p \leq .01$

t-tests	Variable	t	Variable	t	Variable	t
	1 Size	1.8633*	2 Others	1.7146*	3 Experience	0.0979
	4 Quality-1	0.2092	5 Quality-2	nm		
	6 Control	0.5360	7 Research Focus	0.8391		

Note.
Size = Number of tenured/tenure-track faculty
Experience = Average years since degree
Others = Number of other (non-tenure track) faculty
Quality-1 = RePEc Scores (low best); https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.agecon.html
Quality-2 = Best Global Scores (high best)[4]

[4] http://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/agricultural-sciences

Table A3. Descriptive statistics, correlations, and t-tests: Non-US departments with and without lists (number of cases in correlation matrix)

With

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	12.1000	6.2209	15	1.0000	0.6039*** (15)	0.3674 (15)	nm	0.1141 (4)	-0.3564 (15)	nm
2	Others	9.9666	5.9403	15		1.0000	0.1791 (15)	nm	0.4271 (4)	-0.3669 (15)	nm
3	Experience	11.1333	5.4665	15			1.0000	nm	-0.6525 (4)	-0.2843 (15)	nm
4	Quality-1	30.6600	0.0000	1				1.0000	nm	nm	nm
5	Quality-2	67.6000	3.5601	4					1.0000	nm	nm
6	Control 100% public (1) 0% private (2)	1.1333	0.3399	15						1.0000	nm
7	Research Focus 80% yes (1) 20% no (2)	1.0000	0.0000	15							1.0000

Without

	Variable	Mean	SD	n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Size	12.6538	3.9001	13	1.0000	0.1485 (13)	-0.4392 (13)	-0.9991*** (3)	-0.2739 (5)	nm	nm
2	Others	7.2307	6.5703	13		1.0000	0.2722 (13)	0.5361 (3)	nm	nm	nm
3	Experience	14.1923	4.5541	13			1.0000	0.4630 (3)	0.3065 (5)	nm	nm
4	Quality-1	32.6966	8.6957	3				1.0000	1.0000 (3)	nm	nm
5	Quality-2	68.7800	7.5093	5					1.0000	nm	nm
6	Control 94.44% public (1) 5.56% private (2)	1.0000	0.0000	13						1.0000	nm
7	Research Focus 91.67% yes (1) 8.33% no (2)	1.0000	0.0000	13							1.0000

na = not applicable; nm = not meaningful; * $p \leq .10$; $p \leq .05$; $p \leq .01$

t-tests	Variable	t	Variable	t	Variable	t
	1 Size	0.2769	2 Others	1.1572	3 Experience	1.5935
	4 Quality-1	nm	5 Quality-2	0.2867		
	6 Control	1.4104	7 Research Focus	nm		

Note.
Size = Number of tenured/tenure-track faculty
Experience = Average years since degree
Others = Number of other (non-tenure track) faculty
Quality-1 = RePEc Scores (low best); https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.agecon.html
Quality-2 = Best Global Scores (high best)[5]

[5]http://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/agricultural-sciences

