INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORSHIP FREQUENCY IN MISQ: IMPLICATIONS FOR INCOMING GRADUATE STUDENTS

DR. DEBASISH BANERJEE*; DR. N. LEROY KAUFFMAN**

*Associate Professor,
AFIE Department, College of Business, Western Carolina University Cullowhee, USA.
**Associate Professor,
AFIE Department, College of Business, Western Carolina University Cullowhee, USA.

Abstract. *Individuals considering entering a doctoral program and pursuing a career in academics know that one of the requirements for a successful career will be a sustained stream of published research. Depending on their desired institutional affiliation, the publication outlets for their research must meet certain criteria, often a bit unique to the chosen institution. Likewise, new doctoral graduates know that publishing from their dissertation and a continuing stream of published scholarly artifacts is critical to a successful career. This study examines the university affiliation of authors published in Management Information Systems Quarterly (MISQ) over a fifteen year period from 1991 to 2005. We examine the institutional affiliation of the authors and evaluate institutional affiliation concentration of published research. We conclude that authorship affiliation may be a relevant factor to the decision of where to attend graduate school or pursue that first post-graduate teaching position.*

Key words: Authorship, frequency, graduate school, institutional affiliation, teaching position.

INTRODUCTION

Successful careers in academia are predicated on generating a successful stream of research published in acceptable journals. "Acceptable journals" vary between institutions and the institutional ranking of journals likely reflects a varying range of criteria based on institutional preferences. Continued employment and earning tenure are goals of nearly all individuals pursuing a career in higher education. The "publish or perish" phenomenon has been around for many years with no sign of either going away or being diminished in its importance, at least informally. Knight and Steinbach (2008) citing work by von Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) note that articles from more „respected‟ institutions are more readily accepted by journals. Consequently, a person considering a career in higher education may give consideration to issues that may enhance, or not, the likelihood of their success as an academician, one of those issues being institutional affiliation of doctoral faculty members as well as the institution of first employment.

The aspiring career academic should perhaps consider author institutional affiliation when deciding where to pursue the doctoral degree and/or subsequently where to seek that first faculty

position upon completing the graduate degree. Many doctoral programs support, to some level, their doctoral students through research assistantships where the doctoral student works with a faculty member on the faculty member"s research projects and gains first-hand experience with the research and publication process. If the student is fortunate, they may complete their graduate degree with a publication or two complete and several working papers in progress. Grover (2001) suggests that one of the common mistakes doctoral students make is that they do not build an asset base. He states "doctoral students should use the time in their programs to build their personal value as a co-author (p. 13)." Their value as a co-author would tie directly to the faculty with whom they work as a doctoral student.

Likewise, when a doctoral student is nearing completion of their program of study and preparing to enter the job market, they know full well the importance of continuing the research stream that they have hopefully begun while in graduate school. As doctoral students consider where to focus their job search, they will obviously look for an institution where the existing faculty have research interests compatible with their own. The doctoral student may also be well advised to have some idea of the high quality outlets for their research stream and work to find institutions where the faculty have a history of publishing in the desired outlets. Harper (2006) suggests that authors should have a journal in mind before they begin writing a manuscript. We extend this line of reasoning a bit by suggesting that aspiring authors should have research outlets, in general, in mind when selecting a doctoral program and subsequently when seeking employment.

In this research study, we chose one particular research outlet for management information systems research, MISQ, and examined the institutional affiliation of articles published over a fifteen year period. We summarize the data and provide some suggested implications for our findings.

MISQ was selected as the research journal for this study because it is a highly respected journal in the information systems area. Several studies (e.g. Ranier and Miller (2005); Lawry, P.B., Romans, D., & Curtis, A. (2004); Katerattanakul, P., Han., B., & Hong, S. (2003); Peffers, K., & Ya., T. (2003); Mylonopoulos, N., & Theoharakis, V. (2001), etc.) have ranked information systems journals based on various criteria. MISQ has consistently turned out to be the highest ranked information systems journal. In spite of the fact that different criteria have been used by different studies, the results have consistently raked MISQ at the very top. The Association for Information Systems (AIS) provides MIS Journal Rankings "to provide information about evaluations concerning the quality of MIS journals" (http://ais.affiniscape.com/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=432) and again MISQ ranks at the top.

DATA, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data for this study were gathered by examining the institutional affiliation of all authors published in MISQ between the years from 1991 to 2005 (both inclusive). The article titles,

names of authors and their affiliation at the time of publication was recorded in an MS ACCESS database.

Over the period of 1991 to 2005, there were 387 articles with 836 authorships from 259 different institutions. Each author on co-authored papers was counted once, thus multiple authors resulted in multiple authorships. Likewise, the same authors were included multiple times in the database if they were published multiple times during the period of study. In the case of 1 author,

her/his affiliation at the time of publication could not be confirmed. To be fair to the co-authors of the article, the affiliation was substituted by her/his Ph.D. institution.

As can be seen from Table 1, the most frequent institution of authorship was University of Georgia-Athens with 26 authorships. One hundred thirty-one (131) institutions had only one (1) authorship represented over the period. Thirty-eight (38) institutions (i.e., 15 percent) accounted for fifty-two (52) percent of the authorships, while one hundred twenty-three (123) institutions, i.e., forty-seven (47) percent, accounted for seventy-two (72) percent of the total authorships. Thus, the remaining twenty eight (28) percent of authorships was spread over one hundred thirty- six (136) institutions. The majority of the authorships, fifty-two (52) percent, came from fifteen

(15) percent of the institutions and seventy-five (75) percent of the authorships came from forty- seven (47) percent of the institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

Since the institutional affiliation of authors for articles published in MISQ appears to be somewhat concentrated, it seems logical that, if an incoming doctoral student or new doctoral graduate desires to publish in MISQ, they should give consideration to the information in Table

Incoming students may wish to consider applying to doctoral program at one of the schools on the list as those faculty obviously have experience publishing in MISQ and, as a doctoral student, their chances of publishing, even as a co-author, may be enhanced if they are working with faculty members from an institution which has a history of publishing in MISQ. Doctoral students would be advised to heed the advice provided in Grover (2001) to build their asset base as a co-author while in graduate school.

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