

Accounting Editorial Board Membership And Research Output

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this article is to examine whether the university affiliation of faculty members on the editorial boards of three top academic accounting journals is related to the university affiliation of the faculty that publish in these journals. The journals selected – The Accounting Review (AR); The Journal of Accounting Research (JAR); and, Accounting, Organizations and Society (AOS), were identified by Chan, et al. (2009) as the top three accounting research journals. The board members (as of January 1, 2007) of these three journals were categorized by university affiliation (both current employer and doctoral-degree granting), and cross referenced with the authors (including co-authors) of all main articles published in these three journals during the calendar years of 2007-2009. The results indicate that the majority of the authors at JAR and AOS had academic affiliations different from the editorial board members. In the AR, however, over 60% of the authors had the same academic affiliations as the 101 members of the AR editorial review board. Secondary results provide that a small handful of university affiliations dominate the U.S.-based journal boards, however this connection was not as strong in the non-U.S. AOS. Overall, less than 11% of AACSB accredited business programs are represented on these collective boards, although AACSB accounting specific accreditation does increase this ratio to a 14% representation.

Keywords: Research; Editorial Boards; Accounting; Universities

INTRODUCTION

Academics are expected to conduct research and publish the results of their research in academic journals. The top researchers are identified as those who regularly publish in high quality journals. Therefore, the quality of the published research is defined by the quality of the journal in which it appears, and not necessarily by the quality of the research itself. Journals can be rated by subjective and/or objective means. A subjective measure of journal quality is to ask researchers, along with department chairs, deans, and perhaps, practitioners to rank the journals in their field. An objective measure would be to use citations or faculty editorial board membership as a measure of quality. The more often a journal is cited or the greater the number of faculty board members from highly-rated accounting programs, the higher would be journal's rating.

Faculty members' annual evaluations are based, in part, in their publications in highly-rated journals. Promotion and tenure decisions are also partially based on publications in these journals. Salary increases, teaching loads, research funding, summer support and research awards are also based on publications in top journals (Swanson, 2004). The editors of the *Journal of Accounting and Economics* have calculated that an article published in their journal was worth \$30,000 in lifetime income to the author (Jönsson, 2006). Departments, colleges and universities are also ranked by the number of publications by their faculty in top-rated journals. Publication in the top research journals is extremely difficult since the acceptance rate hovers around 10% (Moizer, 2009, p. 286).

Moizer (2009) states that journal publication is a game that is played by four parties; the author, the reviewers, the editor and bureaucrats that argue that quality researchers publish in quality journals. The primary

purpose of this descriptive article is to examine the university affiliations of the reviewers in the publication game process. The members of the editorial review board of three top-rated accounting journals were identified at the beginning of 2007 along with their home universities and their doctoral-degree granting universities. The authors and co-authors of all main articles published in the three journals during 2007, 2008 and 2009 were identified along with their home universities. The relationship between the editorial board members' university affiliations and the affiliations of the authors were examined and discussed.

BACKGROUND

There is a paucity of published research on editorial boards of U.S. accounting journals. Mittermaier (1991) examined the editorial boards of 13 accounting journals and determined that a small number of schools dominated the editorial boards. She also found that the higher rated the journal, the fewer number of schools dominated the editorial review board. Lee (1997) studied the editorial boards of six accounting journals and found that a relatively small number of universities dominated the boards of *The Accounting Review*, *Journal of Accounting Research* and *Journal of Accounting and Economics*. He also found that *Accounting, Organizations and Society* was not dominated by a select group of universities.

Williams and Rodgers (1995) looked solely at the editorial board of *The Accounting Review*. Their results indicated that substantial power is held by graduates of 15 doctoral-granting universities. They concluded that selection to the editorial review board is not unbiased. Moizer (2009) examined all four parties in the publication game. With regards to reviewers, he initially questioned their motivation since reviewing is usually unpaid and can be very time-consuming. He stated a possible reason for volunteering as a reviewer was the positive reputation and network gained from being a reviewer. He finally argued reviewers may gain an economic benefit citing Hamermesh (1994) who concluded, nearly one-third of the reviewers had recently published in the journal and others had articles under review or forthcoming. Brinn and Jones (2007) examined the perceptions of editorial review board members of accounting journals. A questionnaire was sent to 700 randomly selected review board members of 56 accounting journals - 159 responses were received, a response rate of 22.7%. Some of their major findings were board members believed appointments to boards should be made on the basis of publication records and research reputation. They also found a belief that reviewers should be unbiased, but it was acceptable to know the identity of the manuscript's author. Finally, they found board members disapproved of institutional or group dominance of journal review board membership and had mixed views regarding the forced engineering of board membership to include women or racial minorities.

The editorial boards of journals in non-accounting disciplines have been examined in various ways. Hardin, et al. (2008) examined the research productivity of board members of the top five academic finance journals and concluded; "Selection to any of the five journals' editorial board requires substantial research achievement" (2008, p.238). Chan, Fung and Lai (2004) used four-year data to rank international business programs based on membership on editorial boards of 30 international business journals. Based on these criteria, Michigan State University, New York University and Columbia University were the top rated international business programs. Weinrach, et al. (2006) examined the research productivity of the editorial board members of three American counseling and counseling psychology journals. They found the research productivity of the board members varied substantially at the three journals. They conjectured this because of the different missions and clientele of the three journals. Nisonger (2002) reported on three measures of international composition of board members of 153 business, political science, and genetics journals. He found the international board composition was much higher in genetics than in business or political science.

METHODOLOGY

The first issue of each of the three journals in 2007 was selected as the base for determining the members of the editorial review board. The January 2007 issue of *The Accounting Review (AR)* was used to determine the 101 editorial review board members; the March 2007 issue of the *Journal of Accounting Research (JAR)* was used to determine its 36 board members and the January/February 2007 issue of *Accounting, Organizations and Society (AOS)* was used to determine its 47 editorial review board members. The university affiliation and the doctoral-degree-granting information were determined by examining the appropriate issue of the journal, Hasselback's

Accounting *Directory* (2007) or, if necessary, conducting a Google search. The university information for all 184 editorial review board members was obtained in this manner.

The 101 editorial review board members of *AR* were affiliated with 49 different universities and were from 37 different doctoral-granting universities. The members of the *JAR*'s editorial review board were affiliated with 24 different home universities and possessed doctoral degrees from 17 different universities. *AOS*'s members were affiliated with 34 different universities and had doctoral degrees from 30 different universities. The authors and co-authors of all main articles in all issues of the three journals for 2007 through 2009 were determined.

RESULTS

AR published 17 issues and 164 articles by 375 authors and co-authors during the period. The *JAR* published 15 issues with 105 articles by 154 authors and co-authors. *AOS* published 16 issues and 128 main articles by 244 authors and co-authors. The data is summarized in Table I

Table 1						
Summary Data						
January 1, 2007 - December 31, 2009						
	The Accounting Review	The Journal of Accounting Research	Accounting, Organizations and Society	Total		
Number of Editorial Review Board Members	101	36	47	184		
Number of Different Home Universities of Review Board Members	49	24	34	79		
Number of Universities with 2 or more Review Board Members	29	7	12	48		
Number of Different Doctoral-Granting Universities of Review Board Members	37	17	30	59		
Number of Doctoral-Granting Universities with 2 or more Review Board-Members	20	7	12	39		
Number of Issues Published	17	15	16	48		
Number of Main Articles Published	164	105	128	397		
Number of Authors or Co-authors	375	154	244	773		
Number of Articles published by Review Board Members (Percent of Total Main Articles)	47 29%	29 28%	29 23%	105 26%		

<u>University</u>	<u>Home University of Editorial Review Board Members</u>	<u>Doctoral-Granting University of Editorial Review Board Members</u>	<u>Home University of Authors</u>
University of Arizona	3	6	0
Arizona State University	1	2	3
University of California, Berkeley	3	1	5
University of California, Irvine	1	0	5
Carnegie Mellon University	2	1	1
University of Chicago	3	7	8
Columbia University	3	2	3
University of Connecticut	0	1	3
Cornell University	4	3	3
Dartmouth College	1	0	0
Duke University	4	0	4
Emory University	3	0	1
University of Florida	0	1	6
Florida International University	1	0	4
University of Georgia	1	0	1
Georgia State University	1	0	3
JW Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main	0	1	1
Harvard University	3	4	5
University of Houston	2	0	1
University of Illinois	3	4	5
Indian School of Business	1	0	1
Indiana University	2	2	10
University of Iowa	3	9	8
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2	2	5
University of Michigan	4	14	8
Michigan State University	2	1	10
University of Minnesota	1	4	4
University of Missouri	2	0	5
Nanyang Technology University	1	0	1
University of New England, Australia	0	1	0
New York University	2	2	5
University of North Carolina	1	1	6
Northwestern University	0	2	4
University of Notre Dame	2	0	2
Ohio State University	2	3	2
University of Oklahoma	1	0	4
University of Oregon	0	1	1
University of Pennsylvania	5	3	9
Pennsylvania State University	4	1	4
University of Pittsburgh	1	2	7
Purdue University	1	0	0
Rice University	2	0	3
University of Rochester	0	4	2
University of Southern California	3	0	13
Southern Methodist University	1	0	3
Stanford University	0	1	10
Stockholm School of Economics	0	1	0
University of Texas, Dallas	2	0	3
University of Texas, Austin	5	1	4
Texas A & M University	1	0	7
University of Toronto	1	1	4
Tulane University	1	1	0
University of Utah	3	0	4
University of Vienna	0	1	0
University of Washington	3	5	6
Washington University of St. Louis	1	1	1
University of Waterloo	1	0	1
University of Wisconsin	2	4	5
Other	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>151</u>
Total	102	101	375

The Accounting Review

The results for *AR* are shown in Table 2. Of the 375 authors or co-authors, 224 or nearly 60% were at universities that had an affiliation with an editorial board member. As shown in Table 1, 47 articles were authored or coauthored by members of the Editorial Review Board. This is 29 percent of the total articles published. As previously shown by Mittermaier (1991), a small number of universities dominated the author list. Thirteen universities accounted for 29 percent of the authors. There appears to be a strong relationship between the university affiliation of the editorial review board members and authorship in the journal. It is also of interest to note that U.S. universities dominate the editorial review board affiliation. Only four of the 101 board members were at foreign universities and five board members received their doctorates at foreign universities.

<u>University</u>	<u>Home University of Editorial Review Board Members</u>	<u>Doctoral-Granting University of Editorial Review Board Members</u>	<u>Home University of Authors</u>
Boston College	1	0	2
University of California, Berkeley	0	1	1
Carnegie Mellon University	0	2	2
University of Chicago	3	4	13
Cornell University	1	1	5
Duke University	1	0	9
Emory University	1	0	2
INSEAD	1	0	3
JW Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main	0	1	0
University of Kansas	0	1	0
London Business School	1	0	8
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2	0	9
University of Melbourne	1	0	0
University of Michigan	2	6	3
University of Minnesota	2	3	5
University of North Carolina	2	1	4
Northwestern University	1	0	8
University of Notre Dame	1	0	3
Ohio State University	1	0	2
Odense University, Denmark	0	1	0
Oxford University	0	1	0
University of Pennsylvania	5	3	10
Pennsylvania State University	0	1	4
Princeton University	1	0	1
Rice University	1	0	0
Rochester University	0	2	0
University of Southern California	1	0	4
Stanford University	3	6	7
Temple University	1	0	1
University of Utah	1	0	0
Vanderbilt University	0	1	2
University of Washington	1	1	4
University of Waterloo	1	0	1
Other	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>78</u>
Totals	36	36	154

University	Home University of Editorial Review Board Members	Doctoral-Granting University of Editorial Review Board Members	Home University of Authors
University of Alberta	1	0	8
University of California, Berkeley	0	1	0
Cardiff University	2	0	11
Case Western Reserve University	1	0	2
Columbia University	0	1	0
Copenhagen Business School	2	1	4
Cornell University	2	2	0
University of Edinburgh	1	2	4
Gothenburg University	1	0	0
Harvard University	1	2	0
IESE Business School	1	0	1
University of Illinois	1	1	3
Indiana University	2	0	3
University of Iowa	0	1	0
University of Kansas	0	1	0
University of Lancaster	1	0	2
La Trobe University	0	1	0
London School of Economics	1	2	9
Maastricht University	1	0	0
University of Manchester	2	5	6
University of Melbourne	1	0	0
University of Michigan	0	4	1
Michigan State University	1	0	1
University of Minnesota	0	1	0
Monash University	1	1	4
Nanyang Technological University	1	0	0
Newcastle University	0	2	1
University of New Mexico	1	0	1
University of New South Wales	2	1	4
Nottingham University	1	0	2
Ohio State University	0	2	0
University of Pennsylvania	2	0	0
Pennsylvania State University	1	1	0
University of Pittsburgh	2	2	3
Preston Polytechnic	0	1	0
Queens University	0	1	5
Rice University	1	0	2
Rutgers University	1	0	0
University of St. Andrews	1	0	0
University of Sheffield	0	1	0
Stanford University	2	1	1
University of Southern California	3	0	1
University of Texas – Austin	0	1	1
Turku School of Economics	1	2	1
University of Warwick	2	2	5
University of Wisconsin – Madison	0	2	0
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee	1	0	1
Yale University	0	1	0
York University	2	0	5
No Doctoral Degree	0	1	0
Other	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>152</u>
Totals	47	47	244

Journal of Accounting Research

The results for the *JAR* are shown in Table 3. The authors' relationship with the editorial board members was less than with *The Accounting Review*. Less than 50% of the authors were at universities that had an affiliation with the members of the editorial review board. As shown in Table 1, 29 articles were authored by editorial review board members. This is 28% of the total number of articles published. Authors were even more concentrated at selected universities than was the case at *The Accounting Review*. Nine universities accounted for over 48% of the total authors and coauthors. U.S. universities dominated the editorial board membership, with only four members being at foreign universities and three members possessing doctorates from foreign universities.

Accounting Organizations and Society

The results for *AOS* are shown in Table 4. The authors' affiliation with the editorial review board was less than at the other two journals. Only 38% of the authors were at universities with affiliations with the board members. Fewer articles were published by editorial review board members than at the other two journals. Twenty-nine articles or 23% of the articles published were published by board members during the three year period. The university concentration of authors was similar to *AR*. Eleven universities accounted for nearly 27% of the total authors. Since it's published in Great Britain, it would be expected the editorial board membership would be more international, and that was the case. Of the 47 board members, 25 members represented foreign universities and 22 were housed at U.S. Twenty-one board members possessed doctoral degrees from foreign universities.

CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this article was to compare the university affiliations of the editorial review board members of three top accounting research journals and the university affiliations of the authors in these journals. As illustrated in the tables, over 50% of the authorship could be linked to universities where the board members had an affiliation. Secondly it was also determined a small handful of universities dominated the membership of the review boards of *AR* and *JAR*. The *AOS* board tended to be more diverse with no university having more than three members on the board (University of Southern California) and only one U. S. university being the doctoral-degree granting university of more than two members (University of Michigan with four).

The journal editorial board membership of the two U.S. journals (*AR* & *JAR*) was dominated by three universities; the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania. These three universities accounted for 12 of the 101 members of the editorial review board of *AR* and 10 of the 36 members of the review board of *JAR*. This concentration is troubling given there are 596 AACSB accredited business programs (474 U.S. and 122 foreign) and 173 programs with specialized accounting accreditation (167 U.S. and 6 foreign) (AACSB International, 2010).

The 184 board members of the top three accounting research journals are represented by 65 of the 596 accredited business programs (51 U.S. and 14 foreign). Less than 11% of the accredited business programs were represented on the boards of these three journals. Of the 173 programs with specialized accounting accreditation, only 24, or less than 14%, were represented on the review boards of the *AR*, *JAR* and *AOS*. Given the large number of qualified business and accounting programs, there is an opportunity for editors to diversify this important task.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

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