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Comparing perceptions of the impact of journal rankings between fields

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ABSTRACT

While the purpose of academic research is to obtain new knowledge and understanding, there is an increasing concern that many scholars value work based upon where it is published rather than on its intrinsic quality. We argue that the degree to which journal ranking lists affect research has an important field-specific component. Using a large-scale survey of UK business academics and underpinned with a conceptual framework inspired by Bourdieu, we examine the attitudes towards journal ranking lists of individuals working within 22 'fields' operating under the umbrella of business and management in the Academic Journal Guide (AJG). We show that scholars in economics and finance at one end of the spectrum, and in organisational studies at the other, systematically differ from accounting scholars in how they relate to the list. While the empirical evidence suggests that finance and economics are more insular than other fields, members of these two fields are the ones who are significantly less likely to consider that journal lists create a 'research monoculture', foster 'technically well-executed but boring research', or 'encourage work that is not of interest to practitioners/policy makers'. On the other hand, scholars in organisational studies show the highest agreement with these concerns about journal ranking lists. Our findings have important implications for the evolution of accounting as a field that spans both a critical, interpretive paradigm with a strong focus on organisational context as well as a positivist, financial and capital markets-based research paradigm. If accounting scholars of these two approaches attach different authority to journal ranking lists and the value of publications in highly ranked journals, these perception differences could lead to tensions within the field and could have distortive effects on resource allocations and the career prospects of accounting scholars working in the respective sub-fields.

1. Introduction

Ultimately, the aim of academic research is to derive new knowledge and understanding. However, there is on-going concern that many scholars, and the field they identify with, value work based upon where it is published rather than on its intrinsic quality (Becher, 1989; Hussain, 2015; Tourish & Willmott, 2015; Willmott, 2011). The marked increase in the use of metrics such as journal ranking lists to assess research has been argued to have had substantive effects on individual academics and their communities as it may influence hiring, recruitment, promotion, positions in international and national rankings, and research funding allocations (e.g., Morris & Lancaster, 2006; Walker et al., 2019a). There are strongly held views that such constructs are leading researchers to derive

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their sense of identity, their marketability, and their scholarly self-esteem from the journals they publish in (Humphrey & Gendron, 2015; Willmott, 2011) instead of the subject matter they focus on or what they write. A series of studies has also argued that the journal ranking lists have direct and indirect biases (e.g., Bryce, Dowling, & Lucey, 2020; Findlay & Sparks, 2010; Hoepner & Unerman, 2012; Hussain, 2011, Morris, Harvey, Kelly, & Rowlinson, 2011; Stewart, 2005), suggesting that the lists may have differential impacts across fields depending on whether a given list under- or over-rates the journal relative to its 'true worth'. Picard, Durocher, and Gendron (2019) interview a range of scholars involved with constructing or affected by journal rankings and find that such lists generate a 'desingularisation' of the journals, which makes them more homogeneous as they increasingly focus on the same objectives and 'ideal types' of research. This process damages both the research environment and the abilities of researchers to form their own, independent judgements of research 'quality'.

While concerns about the impacts at an aggregate business school level have been widely articulated (recently, for example, in the editorial by Andrew, Cooper, & Gendron, 2020), less understood is how these effects function across distinct fields of scholarly enquiry and on the actors operating within them. Understanding how subject areas are shaped is in itself of interest, particularly where they make or could make substantive contributions to the wider ecosystem, given, as field theorists highlight, that one field can have a major influence on others (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). Fields are socially constructed domains, shaped by agents who compete for success while having varying resource endowments (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Fligstein, 2013; Lee & Dunlap, 2014; Martin, 2003).

There has been no work, as far as the authors are aware, that examines differences in the perceptions of the effects of journal ranking lists across the fields in which individuals operate in business schools, nor how these views relate to actual differences in the behaviour of scholars in those subject areas, and their consequences both for those fields and for wider scholarship.[1] For instance, do scholars in accounting perceive the positive and negative consequences of using journal ranking lists differently to scholars specialising in other fields? In this study, we employ a rich dataset that combines a large-scale survey, web information, results from the UK national research assessment, individual publications records and information from the Academic Journal Guide (AJG) rankings to address this question.[2] We develop a conceptual framework in the spirit of Bourdieu to underpin our hypotheses development and to discuss the results of our survey.

Why is it relevant if fields share the same views about journal ranking lists and their effects on scholarly research and their field? If scholars operating in different fields have the same attitudes towards these lists and attach similar authority to them in decision-making processes, then even potential negative consequences of lists are arguably less severe as they could, to some extent, be addressed within business school processes through shared awareness. However, where these perceptions differ between fields, or even within sub-groups of the same field, there is a greater danger of distortive resource allocations which can disadvantage fields that attach less authority to journal ranking lists. For instance, in a context where university managers rely on journal ranking lists to evaluate and compare individuals' and fields' research outputs and allocate resources accordingly, fields that have a less critical attitude to journal lists and that actively try to place their research into highly ranked journals will likely receive more resources than fields that are highly critical of journal lists and do not primarily consider them when choosing the best outlet for their research. Thus, the consequences of such actions have wider ramifications than merely to the individual and field they operate in by perversely reducing resources for the development of new knowledge in certain domains, which either have fewer opportunities to publish in highly ranked journals or do not aim to optimise the journal ranking of their outputs.

There is also the risk that the push for ascendency in flagship outlets can lead to negative tendencies such as not engaging in meaningful debates or exacerbating a 'research monoculture' where research types or topics lack diversity (e.g., Mingers & Willmott, 2013; Willmott, 2011). Such a scenario is particularly problematic if research relevance as considered by academic fields to be worth investigating does not align with the interpretation of relevance adopted by practitioners or governments, such as producing 'impactful' work of practical use that can affect the economy, society, behaviour, government policies or regulations (Bourdieu, 1997). It may also deepen the divide and inequality within institutions, exacerbating trends toward structures where faculty are bifurcated between research active and non-research active designations, and widening gulfs in resources between institutions; fields with more 'success' according to the lists, and departments or schools which specialise in those fields, grow their research activity while others are consigned to the status of income-producing teaching-only units.

Fields, by their nature, are focused areas of study on largely cognate subject matter, but there is concern that, even within fields, scholars' research purviews are becoming increasingly constricted with deleterious consequences. Alvesson and Sandberg (2014) argue that excessive specialisation in a narrow area of intellectual focus, while a rational choice for individuals to enhance their career development, led to stagnation in the body of knowledge in organisational studies. They term research generated in this fashion as 'boxed-in', leading to scholars with a 'narrow worldview, an inclination to take too much for granted, and often being oblivious about what is going on outside one's specialised field' (p.968). Alvesson and Sandberg argue that specialisation and incrementalism diminish the scope to make ground-breaking contributions as well as its relevance to policy and practice. In essence, the 'tribal' belonging associated with field labels becomes a barrier to furthering knowledge and solving important problems. Furthermore, the increasing pervasiveness of the 'list mentality' may further strengthen tribalism.

[1] The only partially related study is by Bryce et al. (2020). In an online appendix, the authors provide suggestive evidence that these field-specific quality perception differences exist, and they find 'narrower perception gaps for the disciplines of accounting, entrepreneurship, and finance, which tentatively suggests greater agreement with, and stickiness towards, current rankings in these disciplines' (Bryce et al., 2020: 8).

[2] The AJG is widely known as the "ABS list", but its name was formally changed in 2015. The list is discussed in further detail in Section 2 of this paper.

In a related paper, Alvesson and Sandberg (2013) argue that a 'gap-spotting' approach to research agenda setting is leading to a lack of significant contributions in management research since it encourages researchers to remain well within existing schools of thought and to reinforce them rather than questioning their very foundations. It can be argued that journal rankings have contributed to this 'gap-spotting' mentality as researchers aim to align their work to the research that is being published in highly ranked journals, instead of pursuing novel research topics that go beyond the traditional research streams or that use novel methodologies. The situation is compounded by excessively and increasingly tight 'boundary gatekeeping', where a central 'core' of journals specify a prescribed research agenda and a set of methods to study it, leaving the 'peripheral' journals increasingly marginalised and seemingly less legitimate, and yet work at the periphery is often argued to be the most ground-breaking (Gendron & Rodrigue, 2021). This results in a protectionist environment where new ideas are squeezed out, resulting in 'research conformity and superficiality' (Englund & Gerdin, 2020). Williams and Rodgers (1995) relatedly showing that the editorial boards of the Accounting Review have been drawn from a narrow range of 'elite' universities from the journal's inception through to their time of writing, potentially to the detriment of knowledge production diversity in accounting.

Not only are journal editors and senior academics such gatekeepers, but junior staff reinforce these structures by aligning their own research agendas to the core topics of the discipline, and thus engaging in less risky and potentially less innovative inquiry. In particular, and somewhat paradoxically, researchers in both critical accounting and those using positivist approaches are affected by boundary gatekeeping (Michelon, 2021). While institutional and incentive structures encourage narrowness and insularity, what is actually required is 'academic empathy', where researchers take the perspective of other disciplines to question their own, since the great societal challenges that we face require a stronger commitment to interdisciplinarity (Michelon, *op cit.*).

Accounting, as one of the core scholarly disciplines in business schools, is of particular interest in this regard. As a field, it spans a wide variety of research foci from critical and interpretive accounting with a focus on the role of accounting processes and practices in their societal and organisational contexts (e.g., Laughlin, 1999; Lukka & Kasanen, 1996) to financial and capital markets-based accounting that overlaps with the topics explored in corporate finance and financial economics and draws on the same positivist, quantitative techniques as the latter. As such, accounting shares similarities in research paradigms and methodologies with a diverse range of other fields. While a diversity of approaches and paradigms would generally be regarded as beneficial to the field and its stakeholders, it can create tensions where the attitudes and views between sub-fields differ and where the resources that are associated with prestige and recognition in a field are not proportionally allocated between sub-fields.

In the case of accounting, prior research by Bonner, Hesford, Van der Stede, and Young (2006) has shown subject area specialisms in the 'top' accounting journals that are not in line with the relative proportions of scholars working in the respective areas. Their study provides evidence that articles on financial accounting are relatively over-represented in all journals but Accounting, Organizations and Society (AOS) when compared with the number of individuals working in this field, while management accounting articles are relatively under-represented with the exception of AOS. In a similar vein, Williams, Jenkins, and Ingraham (2006) document a demise in the occurrence and prominence of behavioural accounting research published in the three leading US-based accounting journals, which are dominated by economics-based positivist research approaches. It has also long-since been the case that doctoral students of accounting at 'elite' institutions are only familiar with the highest rated journals to the exclusion of all others (Schwartz, Williams, & Williams, 2005). There are signs that accounting is travelling along the same path that finance and economics have forged, where 'elite' journal publications are the only currency and contributions to practice are not valued (see McCarthy, 2012, for accounting; and Brooks, Fenton, Schopohl, & Walker, 2019, for finance; Heckman & Moktan, 2020, for economics).[3] Hence, if accounting scholars, and university managers, do not adopt a reflective approach towards the use of ranking lists taking into account the relative representation of particular fields in the highest ranked journals, there is a danger of skewed resource allocation to the detriment of fields with less prominent outlets (see also Rowlinson, Harvey, Kelly, Morris, & Todeva, 2015).

Despite the controversies around the use of journal ranking lists and their potentially serious consequences, thus far there has been sparse research exploring attitudes to the use of evaluation tools by academics and their fields. To our knowledge, no existing research has examined differences in perspectives among scholars across fields regarding the effects of journal ranking lists. Instead, other than recent work highlighting 'fetishism' as being the norm in business and management (Aguinis, Cummings, Ramanii, & Cummings, 2020), a voluminous body of work has typically been focused upon assessing the 'value' of academic research and the effects of lists within particular individual fields in isolation.[4] Recent studies have noted the increasing pervasiveness of journal lists across universities in Asia, Europe, North America, and South America (Ryazanova, McNamara, & Aguinis, 2017). The work that does exist examining opinions regarding rankings and lists has predominantly focused upon the views of senior managers (see Hazelcorn, 2007, 2008, 2009) rather than the producers of research who are making the publication outlet choices. However, a more recent study looking at individual academics suggests that across management research as a whole, lists are used more extensively by scholars with strong positive or, counterintuitively, strong *negative* views about them than by those who are ambivalent (Walker et al., 2019a). In addition, Walker et al. (2019b) investigate how changes in rankings impact on individual perceptions of journal lists while Bryce et al. (2020) analyse the agreement or disagreement by business and management scholars regarding the AJG rankings of journals, finding that scholars who show a more positive sentiment towards the list are more likely to accept the AJG rankings of the journals

[3] Note that we are not suggesting here that there is necessarily a link between quantitative study and the lack of practical applicability of the research. Indeed, interpretive research, for instance, is typically not associated with an explicit policy or industrial agenda (Power & Gendron, 2015).

[4] These studies include Adler & Harzing, 2009 (international business); Butler & Spoelstra, 2014 (organisational studies); Deegan, 2016; Hussain, 2011 (accounting); Heckman & Moktan, 2020 (economics); Polonsky & Ringer, 2009; Tadajewski, 2016 (marketing); Brooks et al., 2019 (finance).

individually and specifically included on the list, while those with a more negative sentiment exhibit more disagreement with the rankings of the individual journals and a greater quality perception gap.

Looking at the evidence around perceptions of journal lists among accounting scholars, a survey of British accounting academics by Lowe and Locke (2005) finds that those specialised in capital markets and financial accounting perceive the 'quality' of journals differently to their colleagues in all other accounting areas. Accounting scholars with a finance and capital markets focus score journals with an interpretive and critical approach (AOS, Critical Perspectives on Accounting (CPA), Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal (AAAJ)) significantly lower, whereas they score journals which are predominantly associated with financial accounting and market-based research (The Accounting Review (TAR), Journal of Accounting and Economics (JAE)) more highly. Moreover, Hussain (2010) shows that, among the six UK business schools that provided expert opinions for the ranking of accounting journals in the then ABS list, schools that are more closely associated with critical accounting paradigms provided more optimistic views of their field's journals, while schools with a stronger finance and capital markets focus in their accounting department tend to view accounting journals more pessimistically. These issues are also emphasised in recent work suggesting that the dichotomy between positivist and critical/interpretive accounting is growing over time and is being reinforced by journal rankings (Hussain, Liu, & Miller, 2020). Taken together, these findings imply that scholars' perceptions of the relative 'quality' of individual outlets depends on the research area and paradigm with which they associate themselves.

This study expands this related body of literature by examining differences in the perceptions of the effects of journal ranking lists across the fields in which individuals operate in business schools and their consequences both for those fields and for wider scholarship. Using a combination of extensive survey evidence across UK business and management scholars combined with publication records and personal and institutional characteristics, we find that relative to accounting scholars, economists and finance scholars are less critical of journal ranking lists and harbour stronger beliefs that journal rankings are not leading to a narrowing of research or to a reduced focus on work that has practitioner or policy relevance. In contrast, researchers specialising in organisational studies exhibit the most critical attitudes towards journal ranking lists and the highest degree of agreement with the potentially negative consequences of using these lists. We examine the implications of our findings in the context of recent work highlighting the narrowness of journal outlets in finance and economics and discuss the implications for accounting as a field that shares similarities with both organisational studies as well as finance and economics in its sub-field specialisms.

Our predominantly quantitative study fits within an emerging, but as yet small (Richardson, 2015, p. 69), stream of such critical accounting research published in this journal. For instance, Endenich and Trapp (2018) are able to shed light on the role of the editorial board members at all levels in influencing the kinds of research published in 'leading' accounting journals, where epistemological narrowness within the research interests of the editorial team is reflected back in the nature of the articles that their journals publish. Also using a statistical approach, Ben-Amar, Bujaki, McConomy, and McIlkenny (2021) employ critical discourse analysis to examine how companies in Canada effectively ossify board member selection processes to the detriment of women in spite of pushes to increase board diversity. Everett, Neu, Rahaman, and Maharaj (2015) emphasise the value of statistically-based studies in addressing issues in accounting and finance from a different perspective than purely qualitative analyses, and a quantitative approach is highly pertinent to examine the factors that influence field-specific differences in preferences for journal ranking lists as we do in this study.

The remainder of this study is organised as follows. In Section 2, we first discuss the context of research production and evaluation in UK business schools, which provides important background and motivation for the rest of the study. We then, in Section 3, develop a conceptual framework in the spirit of Bourdieu that allows us to explain how and why the impact of journal ranking lists may differ across fields. Section 4 outlines the methods used, including a discussion of the data sources and variable construction, with the results being presented and analysed in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 offers some further discussion of our findings based on qualitative evidence, and Section 7 concludes.

2. Evaluating research in business and management in the UK

Business and management is an umbrella of some 22 fields (according to the AJG classification) that operate in a well-defined institutional framework. The UK context is an ideal setting for analysing perceptions of journal rankings as it has a well-established system of research evaluation through the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and more recently the Research Excellence Framework (REF), and a fairly uniform structure with the majority of higher education institutions being publicly owned and offering a comparable range of subject areas (Collini, 2008; Hicks, 2012). The size of business schools in terms of the number of faculty they employ as well as the amount of revenue they generate relative to other departments has made them strategically important and put them under the spotlight for careful scrutiny by the universities to which they belong (Piercy, 2000).

Business schools are subject to numerous different rankings; some of these are mainly based on teaching metrics but many also embody an element of research, including those published by national newspapers such as the Guardian University Guide and the Times Good University Guide. When it comes to evaluating the research of individual scholars or individual outputs, one ranking, previously known as 'the ABS list' but more recently renamed as the Academic Journal Guide (AJG), is dominant, with survey work finding that more than 89 per cent of UK business school academics state they use this list (Walker et al., 2019a). In addition, Bryce et al. (2020) document the pervasiveness of the AJG list in annual appraisals as well as hiring and recruitment decisions, with 84% and 87%, respectively, of the UK business and management community stating that their schools use it for these purposes. Use of the AJG is also gaining traction outside the UK with the US being the second largest user (Walker et al., 2019a).

While the complexity of business and management, reflected in the number of fields and journals operating within it, provides a partial explanation for the list's extensive use, its historiography, and the evaluation structure of UK universities, also offer some justification for the widespread role it plays. As to the historiography, the list, by explicitly subsuming existing UK institution-specific

journal rankings such as the 'Aston 2008 list', made the latter largely irrelevant.

UK business schools believe the AJG to be encompassing since it was derived using a combination of both metrics such as impact factors and the 'expert opinion' of scholars representing each field within business and management, as outlined by the list editors (Morris et al., 2011). The list was developed by the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS), which is the subject area's representative body. An important facet of the AJG has been that it aligns to and periodically consults with a broad set of sub-disciplines, often linked to field-specific academic associations and learned societies. The AJG has also altered the number and configuration of fields through time (ABS, 2015). As a result of this feature, while there is wide variation in how the list is perceived, it has managed to encompass the wide set of subject areas operating under the business and management umbrella. The 2015 version of the list, which is the iteration employed in this study, comprises more than 1,400 journals. This represents a 40% increase between the 2010 and 2015 incarnations (Walker et al., 2019a) and it grades journals on a five-point scale where 'Journals of Distinction' (JoD) or 'World Elite Journals' (sometimes also referred to as 4* journals) are considered of the highest ranking, with the AJG also classifying other journals in declining order of prestige as 4-, 3-, 2-, or 1-ranked.

Further driving growth in the use of the AJG is the research 'quality' evaluation structure in UK universities, in the form of the RAE (Research Assessment Exercise) and more recently REF (Research Excellence Framework), which are conducted as a series of 'research selectivity exercises' on an approximately six-yearly basis. Ironically, the RAE and REF have enabled a greater role for journal lists. Although evaluations of output 'quality' in the REF are made through peer review assessment and not via reference to journal ranking lists, as categorically stated by the review panel,[5] once it has done its work the panel does not provide the individual assessment scores at the output level. Therefore, the 'quality' of individual papers must be judged by some other means, and the choice of work to be submitted to the REF is frequently perceived by scholars to be evaluated and chosen[6] via ranking lists, according to the journals in which they are published (Pidd & Broadbent, 2015), even if the actual evaluation of that work once submitted is by peer review. As Chair and Deputy Chair of the REF panel respectively, Michael Pidd and Jane Broadbent were able to access some of the REF assessment scores. They illustrated that around half of a sample of 1,000 outputs received the same score from REF2014 as the rating (1–4) of the journal in which the work was published from the AJG guide, although one in seven had a REF score that was two ratings away from the AJG score.

This study exploits the pervasive use of the AJG list in one way or another across a broad array of universities in the UK and beyond. In the past decade or so, the AJG list has become well engrained in the academic life of business schools, engendering a self-reinforcing cycle of use and attention by both researchers and university administrators (Bryce et al., 2020). The tight institutional context and the use of comparable metrics which operate across a substantial number of subject areas provide a research context *par excellence* to examine field differences.

3. Conceptualising fields and hypotheses development

Our research explores how agency is embedded at the field level within a well-defined context. To conceptualise our findings, we draw upon a Bourdieusian framework to examine the contexts and incentive structures that have led to the observed characteristics of scholarly disciplines and to shed further light on divergences between different disciplines (or sub-disciplines) where different fields appear to be established and sustained in different ways. In particular we draw upon Bourdieu's concepts of 'fields', 'habitus', 'distinction' and of types of 'capital'.

The most relevant aspect of Bourdieu's work for our study is the notion that each actor (*agent*) has a special disposition (*habitus*) and that the characteristics of the field have a profound effect on any actions that take place either within or between fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Swedberg, 2011). In our context, scholars are the agents who create the fields, which are social constructs only in existence through them. Individuals in each field are surrounded by different types of capital that lead to different predispositions, resulting in different observable characteristics and different concepts of capital and worth. We can thus define a 'field' as a 'structure of social spaces where habitus is formed, capitals are distributed, and their values are determined' (Lee & Dunlap, 2014, p. 317). Researchers gain their sense of identity and their sense of worth from their within-field peers while caring less about the opinions or quality evaluations of researchers in other fields. Producing research within a specific area alongside familiar names in the field builds a sense of a shared identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and the strength of this bond is likely to be strongest within a discipline rather than between disciplines (Henkel, 2005). Harvey, Yang, Mueller, and Maclean (2020) apply Bourdieu to the development of strategy as a field and emphasise the importance of coalitions of individuals from 'different life-worlds' in allowing them to enhance their symbolic capital.

Scholars compete for recognition and academic distinction, which is structured by economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital. Examining the forms of capital at the field level in business schools, these include financial capital (e.g., large fee income from students enables 'market supplements' for certain subject areas such as accounting or finance), cultural capital (e.g., given legitimacy by other fields and supra-field bodies such as the UK RAE and REF research evaluation panels, industry partners, government agencies and

[5] The sub-panel for our subject area, 'Unit of Assessment 17, Business and Management' has stated that for the forthcoming REF in 2021, it will not make any use of metrics or journal ratings in assessing outputs but will rely exclusively on peer review as it did in 2014 – see the document, 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods' January 2019 available at: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1084/ref-2019_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf.

[6] Individuals were required to submit four outputs unless they were able to provide evidence that some special circumstances applied (e.g., maternity or a prolonged period of significant illness), during the evaluation window for the REF2014 research selectivity exercise.

policy organisations), and symbolic capital (e.g., honour, prestige or recognition for the 'quality' and 'importance' of a scholar's research – Bourdieu, 1997). Symbolic capital arises through an agent's skill in manipulating symbolic resources including language and narrative (Everett & Jamal, 2004). In academic research, written contributions, and whether they are published in symbolically recognised vehicles, play a crucial role to acquire symbolic capital. We can therefore think of journal ranking lists as signals of research 'quality' and thus as sources of symbolic capital.[7]

Social or 'collectively owned' capital relates to the benefits one obtains from belonging to a group, embodying the value of networks of relationships that permit agents to further their interests by being members of that group. Membership of the field group provides 'credentials' to the individual. The existence of this form of capital indicates that agents will form social relationships (networks) based on mutual recognition with individuals who can be useful to them, and this social capital can be used by agents to increase their levels of economic and cultural capital. For example, junior colleagues often attend numerous conferences to 'build their network', focusing their interactions particularly on established, senior scholars with 'power' such as journal editors and heads of schools, in order to enhance their social capital as quickly and efficiently as possible. Social connections initially established during doctoral studies and enhanced thereafter can have a profound effect on the development of fields through choices of research topics, investigative methods and publication outlets. Through manipulation of symbolic capital and by selecting particular types of candidates, the 'elites' within fields are able to ensure that their disciplines continue in the same vein (Fogarty & Zimmerman, 2019).

The *habitus*, the system of *values*, and the resources (*capital* in Bourdieu's parlance) that are distributed to scholars, are field-specific (Lee & Dunlap, 2014). The types of capital most prized, e.g., cultural capital via impact on government policy or symbolic capital via publications in 'top' journals, vary by field, likely depending on discipline origins and historical conventions. For instance, while accounting has long-rooted traditions as an independent academic field with close ties to the accounting profession, finance only emerged as an identifiable academic sub-discipline, distinct from economics, in the early 1900s (Sweetser & Petry, 1981), and is argued to have less strong industry and professional links than accounting (Brooks et al., 2019). Yet, even accounting as a scholarly discipline has gradually strayed further from the profession, according to Lee (1995), who, like us, adopts a Bourdieusian perspective. In addition, depending on field-specific origins and conventions, there is likely to be a self-reinforcing cycle where the types of capital most prized are the ones that have benefitted the specific field most strongly, which in turn, leads to a self-perpetuating cycle of specialisation in certain kinds of activities at the field level. Doctoral study also involves socialisation in the favour of particular methods over others which limits scholars' 'freedom and innovation' from an early stage (Fox, 2018). Of course, resistance to and deviation from the order of things in a given field are possible, although dissenters may find it difficult to destabilise institutionalised thinking and structures, such as journal rankings and the particular mentality they promote (see Adler & Harzing, 2009).

Symbolic capital is an important source of influence and represents the ultimate basis of power through which scholars impose their vision for their field on others (Meisenhelder, 1997). In effect, by supporting their field, scholars support the complicity of the tribe itself over other potentially competing 'interests' in a form of symbolic violence which perpetuates the power of the elite and ensures that those 'lower down the pecking order' of scholarly publication continue to play the game. Those who dominate the field are often not cognisant that they may marginalise others through the application of 'quality thresholds' that move in time and space. Journal ranking lists and the focus on 'world elite' journals become an *illusio* in Bourdieu's wording – a reality which is separate not only from the 'real world' problems to which academics could contribute solutions, but even from the process of producing the scholarly research that the journals contain. Individuals are socialised into their specific habitus through a long process of indoctrination which will lead them to favour those activities and performance metrics that are considered the most valued by the field. Extending these concepts to explain why different fields might show different attitudes toward journal ranking lists, we argue that field-specific pre-dispositions through training and socialisation as well as differences in the relative weight attached to symbolic capital obtained via publications in highly ranked journals is driving different attitudes towards journal ranking lists between fields.

Within fields, individuals maximise their resources contingent upon capital. For instance, a scholar in a field where impact on industry practice and policy is highly valued will probably dedicate more time and resources for engagement with policy makers and industry stakeholders, compared to a scholar operating in a field where high 'quality' academic publications are most appreciated. An agent's degree of success or failure will depend on his or her 'strengths', sometimes known as 'strategic market assets', to acquire the sources of capital most valued in their field. This degree of specialisation will lead some fields to be more focused on the status associated with top journal publication, as signalled by the ranking of its outlet in a journal list, while others are more engaged with practitioner work or influencing government policy.

Existing research suggests different fields show diverse attitudes to and rely differently on journal rankings in deriving symbolic capital. For instance, looking at the content and citation behaviour in finance and comparing this to other areas of business and management, Brooks and Schopohl (2018) show that citations in finance are disproportionately focused on 'top' journals to a much greater extent than for other fields, as the highest ranked outlets receive almost twice as many citations as the lower ranked journals. Brooks and Schopohl further find that research published in the 'top' journals is highly concentrated in 'elite' US institutions. Hence, publication in 'top' journals carries a higher symbolic 'premium'. On the other hand, Gendron and Smith-Lacroix (2015) highlight the relatively low importance of cultural capital in the finance discipline, arguing that finance is not providing society with the rewards that it could in view of its lack of adaptation in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, rooted in paradigmatic narrowness.

[7] There is evidence presented by Drivas and Kremmydas (2020) that scholars use journal lists as a 'quality' signal of their research. The authors show that the significant increase in citations to publications in journals upgraded from 3 to 4 on the AJG is to a large extent linked to a signalling effect, i.e., researchers cite articles in these upgraded journals to signal their own paper's research excellence as belonging to the same 'quality category'.

Another factor that could drive attitudes to journal ranking lists and the potential negative effects of these rankings in terms of promoting narrowness and lack of wider societal relevance may relate to the narrowness of the field itself, where fields investigating a more narrow set of research questions using a less diverse range of research methods might have less negative views towards the effects of journal ranking lists than fields with a more critical research paradigm relying on a broader set of research methods. This can in particular be the case where the dominant research paradigm among researchers aligns with the type of research more widely published in the highest ranked journals. The argument here is that in fields that are themselves narrower in the methods that they use and where the habitus of its researchers is more homogenous, there is a less critical attitude towards the performative effects of journal ranking lists regarding the type of research they promote.

Applying these arguments to explain potential drivers of between-field attitudes to journal ranking lists, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Insular, mono-epistemological fields that attach higher symbolic capital to publications in 'top' journals will have less negative preferences for journal ranking lists than fields with the opposite characteristics.

The acquisition of different forms of capital often requires engagement in different forms of activities. For instance, while publications in specialised field-specific journals require the scholar to obtain an in-depth knowledge and familiarity with the discussions in those outlets, their accepted methodology and style, policy- or industry-focused academic outreach often involves approaches to problem-solving that span multiple disciplines. In the latter case, we might anticipate that such interdisciplinarity or multidisciplinarity would weaken tribal allegiances to a particular field. At the same time, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary research might encourage negative sentiment towards journal lists where those engaged in such research sometimes consider that their work 'falls between field stools' and is therefore undervalued in both disciplines as it does not fit neatly into the discourse or format of either of the areas it spans (Raffles, Leydesdorff, O'Hare, Nightingale, & Stirling, 2012). This leads to the hypothesis that:

H2: Scholars whose work spans more than one field will be more negative about journal ranking lists.

The ability to publish in 'top' journals – as signalled via their ranking in journal lists – plays an important role for individual scholars in acquiring symbolic capital. Gaining such symbolic capital enables a scholar to join the 'elite' grouping within the field. Dominant elites hold significant power to shape and control the work conducted and published in their field, but this does not necessarily allow advantage to be translated into other fields (see generally Bourdieu, 1997). Journal ranking lists enable scholars from unrelated fields, however, to judge the quality of someone else's research via the ranking of the journals they have published in without being a subject area expert, which can in turn reinforce scholars' standing and power outside of narrow field boundaries. Hence, within business schools, we would expect to see a pecking order where those who are most successful in placing their research in highly ranked journals and thus benefit most from the instrument bestowing capital are most enthusiastic about journal ranking lists. In this case, the esteem associated with having publications in the highest ranked journals will not be evenly distributed. The distribution of capital would be expected to be reduced the further individuals are from the source of symbolic power. This leads to the hypothesis:

H3: Irrespective of their field, scholars with more publications in 'leading' journals will be less negative about journal ranking lists.

It is worth noting that the AJG list is a relatively recent phenomenon, starting initially as a collection of all the journals from which at least three outputs were submitted in the UK RAE in 2001 and then subsuming a number of institution-specific lists (Walker et al., 2019a). A significant proportion of current researchers were not in the academy in the pre-list era and so their socialisation into how we might evaluate research 'quality' has been shaped almost exclusively by journal ranking lists. Hence, it is not unreasonable to assume that for this generation of researchers, reading a piece of work to gauge its 'quality' is regarded as secondary to referring to the ranking of the journal in which it is published. We might anticipate that more recent recruits to the academy would be less inclined to view ranking lists as a negative force simply because they have 'grown up' with them, never experiencing an environment where they did not exist. Pelger and Grottke (2015) examine how a change in the nature of PhD accounting education in Germany towards the 'US model' which is also increasingly common in the UK (including graduate schools and focusing on publications in highly ranked journals) encouraged doctoral students to "focus on a common, narrow notion of knowledge leading to short-term tangible outcomes (e.g., a 'hit' in a 'top' journal)". The stronger disposition for ranking lists among junior colleagues may arise despite that lists may have a more damaging effect upon such scholars by quickly forcing them into academic politics (Malsch & Tessier, 2015). In addition, Jacobs and Winslow (2004) suggest that researchers are encouraged to focus on journal publications in the earlier parts of their careers as a way to demonstrate to their heads of department that they are meeting expectations, while later in their careers they will have more flexibility to devote time and energy to other parts of their roles.

H4: Scholars who received their PhD more recently will be less negative about journal ranking lists.

In many disciplines and their associated journal outlets, editorial boards are dominated by US-based scholars, especially with regard to the most highly ranked journals (Burgess & Shaw, 2010). Hence, it could be expected that scholars who trained in the US would have a more positive attitude towards lists that highly rank the journals on which they or their colleagues sit. In addition, the US academic system has a long tradition of a tenure system where permanent academic positions are awarded based on candidates proving their worth, mainly through a track record of 'high quality' research outputs produced over a set time period (e.g., Aguinis et al., 2020). While, unlike the UK, US business schools do not have an overall journal list that is consistently used across all institutions, there are clear distinctions between journals of different 'qualities', often called A-journals or B-journals etc., where A-journals are the highest ranked category of journals.[8] Thus, it is plausible that individuals who were recruited from the US will have

[8] It is the case that US departments do not provide their lists publicly. Picard et al. (2019, p.755) provide interview evidence of the outlets that are often considered 'A'-journals in accounting.

been socialised towards, and have a preference for, lists that legitimise such outlets.

H5: Scholars with a PhD from a US institution will be less negative about journal ranking lists.

4. Methods

4.1. Data sources and sample

This study is based primarily upon a survey of academics working in business and management schools in the UK, which ran in 2015, combined with scholars' publication records and the characteristics of their affiliated institution.[9] An initial draft of the survey was piloted with more than 20 business and management scholars, the majority of whom were based outside the UK but had recently worked at UK universities. Based upon feedback on the pilot study, we redrafted the text of the questions and then ran a second pilot with a smaller group of academics. A list of all the university faculty employed in the UK in the field of business and management was created, compiled by accessing the websites of all such schools in the UK. These schools were identified as the institutions that made submissions to either the business and management or accounting and finance sub-panels (or both) of the 2008 RAE. We also add University College London, whose management school was formed in 2014 and was thus not entered for the RAE, but it is included since we wish to capture the research activity across the UK. Institutional websites were used to collect the email address, rank (lecturer/assistant professor; senior lecturer/reader/associate professor; full professor) and sex for all scholars. Respondents' academic ranks were verified and faculty who were potentially not research active or not mainly affiliated to the institution (e.g., visiting/honorary/emeritus professors or teaching fellows/associates) were excluded from the sample.

These procedures allowed a database comprising 8,002 research active individuals affiliated to 90 business schools in the UK to be generated. The survey, which covered a range of questions to explore academics' views of rankings and their attitudes towards top-ranked journals and citations, was administrated online. To maximise participation, the survey was sent just over two months following release of the AJG 2015 on 25th February 2015, and it was thus highly newsworthy and topical for business and management academics at that time. It ran from 5th May to 7th June 2015 with non-respondents being further asked to participate on three occasions. Nearly one in four of the academics who were approached via email accepted the invitation to take part in the survey. In total, 1,945 completed surveys were received, representing a 24% response rate. This large sample size enables us to undertake analyses of field-specific differences, as it ensures sufficient coverage and responses of all 22 fields in business and management.

In order to enable responses to be linked to the scholars' publication records and institutional characteristics, survey respondents were asked to provide their name and institutional details. A several-stage protocol was implemented to ensure de-identification of individuals in the final dataset, and respondents were informed about the procedure on the project website. This pseudonymisation protocol involved the replacement of personal names and institutional affiliations with randomly assigned token numbers, both in the survey dataset and the publication records and institutional characteristics dataset, before these two datasets were merged via the sets of tokens. The final linked dataset was then stored in a separate file that contained no personal identifiable information. For added security and data protection, all datasets were also password protected and the individual files that contained identifying information were stored on secure servers.

The publication portfolio of the surveyed individuals was downloaded using Elsevier SCOPUS, a large database of peer-reviewed publications. Finally, institution information, such as their ranking in the UK's 2014 REF from business schools' websites and the REF census, was collated. We undertook a number of tests of the response sample to check for its reliability relative to the entire pool from which it was drawn. First, we compared the academic rank of those completing the survey against the rank of those who were included in the overall relevant population. Second, we analysed whether there was any difference in the respondents' institutions' REF ranking using their overall Grade Point Average (GPA) compared to the rest of the sample and found no significant difference. Finally, we tested whether there were differences in respondent sex and rank comparing respondents who were sent reminders with those who submitted responses without them but found no significant differences.

After cleaning and matching the data (e.g., removing surveys that had not been fully completed), a sample of 1,303 usable questionnaires was obtained. To assess the representativeness of this sample, it was compared with the identified population of 8,002 academics. Specifically, numbers of faculty in each sample stratified according to their academic rank, primary field of expertise based on AJG subject classifications (accounting, marketing, organisational studies, etc.) and the REF ranking of their institutions, was considered. *t*-tests indicate that, on average, the characteristics of faculty members in the final sample do not vary significantly from those of their peers in the wider population.

[9] For transparency, we note that the survey data have thus far been used and validated in earlier work: one examining the relationship between academic impact and publications, published in *Research Policy* in 2017; a second descriptive paper examining the use of journal lists published in the *British Journal of Management* in 2018; and a paper in *Research Evaluation* in 2019 that examines the determinants of changes in individual views towards journal lists. The present submission is distinct from these works in a number of respects. First, we focus on how field-specific attitudes towards lists differ. Second, we drill down to examine the particular means through which lists impact upon scholarship and research agenda setting in different fields. Third, unlike earlier work, the present study also draws a wider set of publication data. Finally, the work is methodologically distinct in employing a multidisciplinary approach that draws upon qualitative as well as quantitative information to analyse field-specific perceptions of the impact of journal rankings.

4.2. Variables

4.2.1. Dependent variables

The core question we wish to address is the extent to which scholars' perceptions of journal ranking lists and their effects on scholarship differ depending on the field that the scholar operates in. Although the survey contained questions covering positive and negative perspectives on the effects of journal rankings lists and we report the results on both, we focus our discussion on the latter since the potentially distortive effects of journal ranking lists on individual scholars and the growth of different fields have been subject to heated debate among business and management scholars, while the potentially positive effects of using journal ranking lists have sparked less controversy and divergence of opinions.

Specifically, respondents were invited to state the extent to which they agreed [using a five-point Likert scale from 'Strongly Disagree', through 'Disagree', 'Sometimes', 'Agree', to 'Strongly Agree'] with a set of ten statements (six negative and four positive) about journal ranking lists as a method of evaluating research 'quality' and the impact that the increasing use of such lists could have on the profession in the longer term.

The ten survey items were derived from a systematic review of the literature relating to the degree to which the list supports the profession according to some scholars while it narrows the contribution of research and distorts its focus according to others (see the literature cited in the Introduction Section). Given the interests of the study, we focus primarily on a series of questions that enable us to explore the degree to which individuals from different fields consider that the list narrows the debate (see Hussain, 2011, 2015; Hoepner & Unerman, 2012; Morris et al., 2011; Findlay & Sparks, 2010; Stewart, 2005, and the references below) and the degree to which 'journal list fetishism' may be distracting and incentivising scholars to produce research without practical impact. Hence, in the survey, we ask respondents to what extent they agree or disagree with the following ten statements:[10]

1. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list shifts research efforts away from debates that researchers would like to contribute to' (Clarke, Knights, & Jarvis, 2012).
2. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list fosters a 'research monoculture'' (Mingers & Willmott, 2013; Tourish & Willmott, 2015; Willmott, 2011).
3. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list promotes 'low risk' research' (Adler & Harzing, 2009).
4. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list leads to technically well-executed but boring research' (Macdonald & Kam, 2007).
5. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list rewards journals that strive to 'imitate a US-oriented model of scholarship'' (Willmott, 2011).
6. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list encourages researchers to focus on issues that are only of interest to other academics rather than practitioners/policy-makers' (Brooks et al., 2019; Tourish & Willmott, 2015; Wilkinson & Durden, 2015).
7. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list helps researchers to make judgements about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher in their field' (Morris et al., 2011).
8. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list helps researchers to make judgements about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher outside their field' (Morris et al., 2011).
9. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list motivates academics to try to achieve higher research quality' (Baden-Fuller, Ravazzolo, & Schweizer, 2000).
10. 'The Academic Journal Guide/ABS list helps research efforts to get recognised' (Baden-Fuller et al., 2000).

4.2.2. Independent variables

Field classification – This information was elicited from the survey where respondents were invited to indicate their primary field of focus using the AJG 2015 subject classifications, with the possibility of selecting 'other' if they deemed that their area was not covered. That the classifications align closely to participants' own views of their field membership is reflected in the very small number, 20 people (1.3% of the sample), choosing the 'other' category.

Multidisciplinary – To account for an individual's alignment to their field and the extent to which they felt a belonging to more than one area, we calculate a multidisciplinary measure using two approaches. First, we use information from the survey where individuals can state their second field of expertise. Second, we utilise the publication profiles of individuals as indicated in their Scopus record, and the AJG classifications in order to count the number of fields in which individuals publish.

Academic distinction – At the level of the individual, since academic distinction is a complex and varied concept, we construct three measures to consider different aspects of distinction. First, using Scopus we count the total number of citations that the individual had received across their publication portfolio (*Citations*). Second, we examine the *Number of publications in Journals of Distinction* in an individual's publication history, a measure that captures their ability to enter in these 'bastion' journals. Third, we capture the number of times an individual has published in an AJG 4-rated journals (*No. of publications in AJG 4-rated journals)*.[11]

Rank – we measure academic rank using a survey question, 'What is your current position?'. We then create three dichotomous variables *Lecturer (Assistant Professor), Associate Professor (including Reader and Senior Lecturer designations)*, and *(full) Professor*.

[10] We list the reference(s) to the underlying source linked to the statement in parentheses after it, but in the survey set up this academic source was not provided to respondents.

[11] AJG 4-rated journals are still viewed by most academics as highly prestigious, in particular since some fields have no JoD and even among those that do, a relatively low proportion of researchers publish in them as we document below.

Sex – Scholars' academic and career focus and hence their usage of a journal ranking list might differ depending on their sex, and sex-specific differences might exist in a scholar's sensitivity towards the effect of journal ranking lists on their own scholarship and scholarship in their field. In addition, female academics might be drawn to specific fields or research approaches which are linked with different attitudes towards journal lists. To account for such sex-specific differences, we include a dummy variable *Sex*, which takes the value of one if the respondent is male, and zero otherwise. We assigned values to this variable based on a web-based search of scholars' business school websites.

Non-academic work experience – Some business and management academics hold dual careers, having both academic and non-academic roles – either simultaneously or working in one environment before switching to the other (Clarysse, Tartari, & Salter, 2011; Lin & Bozeman, 2006). Scholars in universities often draw upon their professional experience gained working in commerce, the government or the 'third sector' to support their teaching delivery and/or research. They will probably have stronger contacts with external organisations and may be able to support colleagues in engaging more with external audiences. Such individuals may be more focused on teaching, leadership or impactful research and less focused on 'elite' journal publication. To take into account potential influences deriving from an individual's work experience separate from academia (e.g., their orientation to practice), we control for the number of years that the individual had worked outside academia, as indicated in the survey.

Years since obtained PhD – To take into account potential influences on individual preferences arising from a scholar's experience of working in academia, and in particular whether they received their research training in the 'pre-list era', we added a variable capturing the number of years since respondents had gained their PhDs. This variable was based on information provided by survey participants.

Obtained PhD in the US – The US has a dominance on the editorial boards of the majority of JoD and a tenure structure that, particularly at the higher end institutions, is tightly aligned to publication in such journals. Thus, it is plausible that individuals who were recruited from the US will have been socialised towards, and have a preference for, lists that legitimise such outlets. Thus, we create a dichotomous variable equal to one if the individual obtained his or her PhD from a US university, and zero otherwise. Information about the location of doctoral training was derived from a survey question.

Career motivations – Different scholars have different motivations for joining and reasons for remaining in the sector (Sauermann & Stephan, 2013), with existing research having pointed to behaviour differing across fields (Frey & Meier, 2003; Frank & Schulze, 2000; Sautter, Brown, Littvay, Sutter, & Bearnes, 2008). Some scholars prefer the 'pro-social' parts of their roles which allow them to contribute to the wider society through education and research (Salter, Salandra, & Walker, 2017; Sauermann & Cohen, 2010). We might term these 'intrinsic aspects' of scholars' jobs, which reflect the pleasure that academics obtain from the roles themselves (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000). On the other hand, some academics are more focused on the salary and non-pecuniary benefits associated with their role, such as structured opportunities for promotion, employment that is stable over time with low chances of redundancy and substantial pension benefits (Sauermann & Stephan, 2013), which are termed 'extrinsic aspects'.

In order to measure how these differing reasons for being an academic might influence field-specific preferences towards journal lists, we employ a question used by Sauermann and Cohen (2010), which asks 'When thinking about your job as an academic, how important is each of the following factors to you?', and provides various possible responses, which we subsequently categorise into two summary variables: *intrinsic* motivations, including: 'Contribution to society', 'Degree of independence' and 'Intellectual challenge'; and *extrinsic* motivations, comprising: 'Benefits (pension, holidays, etc.)', 'Job security', 'Level of responsibility', 'Opportunities for career advancement' and 'Salary'.

Institutional Research Intensity – At the level of the institution, we focus on the school's orientation towards research, proxied by the 'quality' of the research carried out in the individual's business school. To address this, we consider the rank of the submitting unit's Grade Point Average (GPA) obtained from the relevant REF2014 sub-panel for the subject area, Business and Management. In REF2014, each piece of research submitted by each school was rated as either 4 (internationally leading), 3 (international excellent), 2 (recognised internationally), 1 (nationally recognised) or 0 (does not meet the minimum standard or does not constitute scholarly research) in terms of originality, significance and rigour (the variable is termed *REF GPA*).

Size of the institution – We include the head count of each institution (the total number of academic staff) to control for any potential influence on individuals' preferences arising from different levels of resources available at their host institution (Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)[12]).

5. Findings

A breakdown of the sample by field, and summary statistics of the main independent variables, are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The columns of Table 1 headed '1' and '2' provide a breakdown of the primary fields of the 1,303 survey participants and the percentage of respondents in each category respectively using the subject classifications employed in the AJG 2015. Economics, econometrics and statistics is the largest field with 151 survey participants while 111 finance scholars and 90 academic accountants participated in the survey. A comparison of these values with those in column 3, which shows the percentage of people in each category for the REF, indicates a broad correspondence between the two, i.e., the proportion of outputs submitted to the REF for a given field is comparable to the proportion of people nominating that field as their primary area of expertise, but there are some significant differences. For example, only 2.8% of survey respondents identified general management, ethics and social responsibility as their primary area of expertise yet the field comprised 10.5% of all outputs submitted to the REF; on the other hand, 10.7% of those surveyed chose

[12] The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects, processes and publishes data about higher education (HE) in the UK.

Table 1
Field breakdowns for primary field of participants and further field- and output-specific variables.

Field	1 Number of participants	2 Primary Field (%)	3 Proportion of REF Outputs (%)	4 Number and percentage of Individuals who published in Journals of Distinction	5 Number and percentage of individuals who published in AJG 4-rated journals	6 Citations (mean)	7 Proportion with Secondary Field (%)	8 Number of Fields Published in
Accounting	90	6.9	7.4	9 (10.0)	36 (40.0)	151	94.0	2.1
Business History and Economic History	17	1.3	1.8	2 (11.8)	6 (35.3)	108	88.2	2.5
Economics, Econometrics and Statistics	151	11.6	10.7	15 (9.9)	74 (49.0)	194	80.9	2.5
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	50	3.8	3.3	9 (18.0)	27 (54.0)	221	90.7	4.1
Finance	111	8.5	8.6	16 (14.4)	43 (38.7)	145	85.2	2.3
General Management, Ethics and Social Responsibility	37	2.8	10.5	6 (16.2)	20 (54.1)	229	92.7	2.7
Human Resource Management and Employment Studies	127	9.7	8.1	8 (6.3)	95 (74.8)	192	87.1	2.9
Information Management	46	3.5	2.4	8 (17.4)	14 (30.4)	292	96.2	2.8
Innovation	38	2.9	3.1	3 (7.9)	16 (42.1)	211	97.4	3.4
International Business and Area Studies	45	3.5	2.6	8 (17.8)	22 (48.9)	227	93.5	3.2
Management Development and Education	14	1.1	1.6	0 (0.0)	5 (35.7)	96	100.0	2.7
Marketing	139	10.7	7.8	17 (12.2)	47 (33.8)	107	86.5	2.5
Operations and Technology	54	4.1	5.2	11 (20.4)	31 (57.4)	343	88.3	3.1
Operations Research and Management Science	55	4.2	5.1	10 (18.2)	35 (63.6)	436	80.7	2.7
Organisation Studies	98	7.5	6.4	21 (21.4)	67 (68.4)	315	95.1	4.1
Psychology (General)	18	1.4	0.9	1 (5.6)	11 (61.1)	597	89.5	2.9
Psychology (Organisational)	50	3.8	2.0	6 (12.0)	33 (66.0)	397	92.2	3.2
Public Sector and Health Care	23	1.8	2.2	2 (8.7)	13 (56.5)	235	92.0	2.6
Regional Studies, Planning and Environment	11	0.8	2.3	1 (9.1)	7 (63.6)	221	100.0	3.6
Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	26	2.0	2.8	0 (0.0)	12 (46.2)	127	85.7	1.7
Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	50	3.8	4.0	2 (4.0)	22 (44.0)	156	98.1	2.3
Strategy	53	4.1	1.1	10 (18.9)	22 (41.5)	205	96.2	3.0
Mean	1,303			7.5 (13.0)	30.0 (49.0)	232	0.89	2.86
Std Dev.				1.2	2.0	512.4	0.3	2.4

Notes: 'Number of participants' is the number of respondents identifying that particular field as their primary one. 'Proportion of REF outputs' refers to the proportions of the 11,665 journal outputs that were submitted to REF2014 that are captured by the Academic Journal Guide within each field classification. The 10,753 items captured by the Guide equate to 92% of REF journal outputs. Fields are reported by survey respondents with the classifications being drawn from those used in the Academic Journal Guide/ABS list 2015, with the percentages in column (2) being the number from column (1) divided by the total number of respondents, expressed as a percentage. Percentages for the 'Number and percentage of individuals who published in Journals of Distinction' and 'No. and percentage of individuals who published in AJG 4 journals' over their careers are provided in brackets. Citations (mean) refer to the average number of Scopus citations per person over all their outputs. 'Proportion with Secondary Field' refers to the percentage of respondents who identify with at least one additional field relative to their primary field. 'Number of fields published in' gives the average number of fields that respondents in each field state that they operate in.

marketing as their main area (making it the second most populous field) but it delivered only 7.8% of REF outputs.

The remaining columns of Table 1 provide summary information for the number of publications in JoDs (column 4), the number of publications in AJG 4-rated journals (column 5), the mean number of Scopus citations that each individual has in total across all their publications (column 6), the percentage of respondents in each category stating a second area of expertise (column 7), and the average number of fields that scholars in each given subject area publish in (column 8).

The vast majority, 87% of the sample, have never published in a JoD over their careers reflecting that publishing in JoD is difficult and only a select few can do it consistently (Baum, 2012).[13] UK academics have had more success in publishing in 4-rated journals than in JoD, however, with about half of the participants having at least one such publication through their careers so far.

There are also substantial variations across fields in the extent to which scholars' work spans more than one discipline. At one end of the spectrum, for management development and education and for regional studies, planning and environment, all of the (albeit small numbers of) respondents stated that they participated in more than one field, while for economics, econometrics and statistics, and for operations research and management science, only around 81% identified their work as being associated with more than one field. In comparison, the proportion of accounting academics identifying as belonging to more than one field is above average with 94% compared to an across-field average of 89%. Typically, accountants publish in around two fields.

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics of the respondents' individual characteristics and characteristics regarding their institutional affiliation, by field. Including these variables allows us to account for field-specific differences in the percentage of women academics, the number of years since the researcher obtained his or her PhD, and possible training effects. We also include two variables at the institutional level – the rank of the institution's outputs GPA and the number of faculty in Business and Management at each institution. We allow for these variables since the literature cited above indicates that these variables can affect preferences for or against journal ranking lists and we want to control for these to enable us to home in on the field-specific impacts.

Turning to the descriptive statistics relating to these variables reported in Table 2, it is worth noting that there are again some important differences between fields. Aligning to earlier work (Brooks, Fenton, & Walker, 2014), the proportion of women operating in economics, econometrics and statistics, and in finance is low at 22% and 20%, respectively; contrast this with accounting, marketing, organisational studies, and social sciences where in all four cases almost half of scholars are women. Accounting scholars also strongly differ from finance academics and economists in regard to their work experience outside of academia. While accounting scholars report an above average figure of 6.9 years of working outside of academia, economists and finance scholars have substantially less non-academic work experience with 2.0 and 2.9 years on average, respectively. The fields that are characterised by the highest degree of non-academic work experience are management development and education as well as public sector and healthcare where scholars work an average of 8.4 and 7.5 years, respectively, in non-academic positions.

Around 5% of UK accounting academics that responded to the survey obtained their PhD in the US, which is around the same as the average of 4.7% across all disciplines and not considerably different to the figures for finance (7%). Interestingly, there seem to be strong field-specific divides regarding the presence of US-educated academics, with the fields of psychology and strategy showing a significant share of scholars with PhDs obtained from US institutions, while six fields have no respondent with a PhD obtained in the US.

Columns 5 and 6 illustrate that business and management, as an academic subject area, is more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated across all fields within business and management as is the case in other academic domains (Cohen, Sauermann, & Stephan, 2020). The last two columns of Table 2 report the average rank of each respondents' institution in the 2014 REF as well as the average size of their business school. Looking at the deviations of field-specific averages from the overall averages, we find that for most fields, a respondent's institutional affiliation is in line with the average REF ranking of 35 in the business and management unit of assessment and average institutional size of 4,444 scholars, although there are significant deviations for some fields which may be linked to lower numbers of responses for these fields (e.g., respondents from management development and education and psychology (general) have lower and higher REF rankings, respectively; respondents from regional studies, planning, environment and psychology (general) are affiliated to larger business schools).

Table 3 reports the participants' responses to our main survey questions of interest, i.e., their attitudes towards journal ranking lists and lists' effects on scholarship. The table summarises the differential responses across fields, providing the arithmetic mean responses to the 5-point scale with responses to the negative questions in Panel A and those to the positive questions in Panel B. Panel A shows that, on average, participants agree that the list had a narrowing ('monoculture-inducing' and 'US-orienting') effect on scholarship and reduced focus on impactful research with a mean across questions ranging from 3.4 to 4.1. Among the negative questions in Panel A, the suggestion that journal lists 'lead to well-executed but boring research' has the lowest average score of 3.4, indicating that overall respondents felt less strongly about this indicator than the others. But crucially for our study, the spread across fields for this item is comparable to that of the other questions.

Table 3 also illustrates that there are considerable discrepancies in views *across* fields with the insular and 'journal-focused' areas such as finance being the most pro-list while more pluralistic and outward-facing areas such as accounting are less favourable to lists, which provides initial suggestive support for hypothesis H1. Economics and Finance stand out as being the areas that most consistently disagree with the wide set of 'narrowness' measures as well as with respect to impact outside academia on practitioners and policy makers; they rank in the top three fields that show the lowest level of support for the six statements in five out of six cases. In other words, across a range of different potentially damaging aspects of journal rankings lists, economics and finance view them least

[13] It is important to note here that some fields do not have a dedicated JoD in their field based on the area classifications in the AJG, so the only way to publish in a JoD would be to place their research in a journal outside of their field.

Table 2
Field breakdowns for individual participants' characteristics and institution-specific variables.

Field	1 Sex (% Male)	2 Non-academic work experience (years)	3 Mean number of years since obtained PhD	4 Obtained PhD from North American institution (%)	5 Career Motivations (Intrinsic)	6 Career Motivations (Extrinsic)	7 Institutional Rank (Output)	8 Size of the institution (Number)
Accounting	58	6.9	11.0	5	4.55	3.99	36	4,462
Business History and Economic History	72	4.8	16.9	8	4.59	3.75	36	4,071
Economics, Econometrics and Statistics	78	2.0	14.1	9	4.42	3.78	36	4,556
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	61	6.6	11.7	4	4.46	3.86	39	3,582
Finance	80	2.9	11.3	7	4.47	3.81	30	4,549
General Management, Ethics and Social Responsibility	63	6.6	10.7	7	4.39	3.62	36	3,424
Human Resource Management and Employment Studies	56	5.7	13.6	4	4.58	3.85	38	4,026
Information Management	75	3.8	14.1	0	4.40	3.86	38	4,084
Innovation	62	3.6	11.8	0	4.63	3.81	31	6,273
International Business and Area Studies	61	5.1	11.5	2	4.37	3.78	40	4,331
Management Development and Education	60	8.4	12.3	0	4.53	3.79	48	3,315
Marketing	57	6.5	10.8	6	4.45	3.89	36	4,420
Operations and Technology	75	7.3	12.0	8	4.43	3.80	35	4,789
Operations Research and Management Science	79	5.4	14.9	2	4.23	3.74	38	4,563
Organisation Studies	53	6.1	14.8	4	4.57	3.77	35	4,757
Psychology (General)	74	3.7	14.3	11	4.56	3.73	21	5,394
Psychology (Organisational)	41	3.5	11.5	12	4.49	3.95	32	4,558
Public Sector and Health Care	68	7.5	13.4	0	4.47	3.61	31	5,997
Regional Studies, Planning and Environment	75	4.1	16.7	0	4.64	3.88	27	4,299
Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	54	5.2	9.2	0	4.63	3.89	57	3,489
Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	53	3.4	11.7	6	4.54	3.89	39	4,314
Strategy	81	6.5	12.5	9	4.45	3.73	30	4,512
Mean	65	5.3	12.8	4.7	4.5	3.8	35.8	4,444
Std Dev.	48	6.2	8.8	0.2	0.6	0.7	23.4	2447.0

Notes: 'Sex' represents the average percentage of respondents in a field that are male. 'Non-academic work experience' provides the average number of years that respondents in a field have worked outside of academia. 'Years since obtained PhD' provides the average number of years since respondents in a field have obtained their PhD. 'PhD obtained in the US' presents for each field the average percentage of respondents who obtained their PhD in the US. 'Career motivations' are measured using a question used by Sauermann and Cohen (2010) via a 5-point scale – the values reported the average response of respondents by field where a value of 0 indicates the lowest degree of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and a value of 5 indicates the highest degree of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation. Institutional ranks refer to the rank obtained in the Research Excellence Framework 2014. Size of the institution refers to the mean of head count of each institution, by field.

negatively. At the other end of the scale are organisational studies, business history and social sciences. Organisational studies is the second highest scoring field out of 22 on 'leads to technically well executed but boring research'. Accounting scholars also show strong and above average levels of agreement with the distortive effects of journal lists, in all but one of the six statements. Accounting academics seem to be particularly critical towards journal lists' potential to shift research efforts away from debates that researchers would like to contribute to (columns 7 and 8), to reward journals that strive to imitate a US-oriented model of scholarship (columns 5 and 6), and to reduce focus on practitioner and policy related research (columns 11 and 12), where the field shows the fourth highest level of agreement with these statements among all 22 fields.

Turning briefly to the responses to the positive questions about lists in Panel B, it is clear that as anticipated, these elicit less extreme opinions than those embodied in the negative questions and the scores on aggregate are lower, suggesting that scholars are less positive in their views of lists than they are negative. Mirroring the results in Panel A, among the fields of most interest to this study, finance scholars are the most appreciative of the purported benefits of journal lists across all four questions, followed by economics then accountants with organisational studies scholars the least positive. For example, when asked about the extent to which they agree with the statement that the list 'helps researchers make judgements about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher outside their field', the average score for finance was 3.23, while it was 2.98 for economics, 2.94 for accounting and 2.74 for organisational Studies.

While Table 3 already provides suggestive evidence of field-specific differences in attitudes towards journal lists, the summary statistics reported do not account for field-specific differences in scholars' characteristics and institutional affiliations, as reported in Tables 1 and 2, which might drive the differential attitudes shown in Table 3.

To account for these effects, Table 4 moves on to report our core results from using a set of Generalised Least Squares regressions and focuses on field and individual characteristics to explain differences in the responses to the six negative questions (Panel A) and the four positive questions (Panel B) about respondents' views of journal lists as dependent variables.[14] We provide full model specifications for each dependent variable that capture the impacts of the set of independent variables. Our main variables of interest are the field effect dummies. As we are interested in whether accounting scholars differ from other fields in their attitudes towards journal lists, we use accounting as the base category so that the coefficient estimates on all other field effect dummies can be interpreted as deviations from the extent of accounting scholars' agreements with the statements. To be able to interpret the coefficients as marginal effects, we use a logarithmic transformation of the dependent variable in each model.

A key finding of Table 4, Panel A, is that finance and economics stand out as being the least hostile fields towards journal ranking lists across all dimensions of 'narrowness' and significantly less likely to agree with the statements on the distortive effects of journal ranking lists than accounting scholars. Compared to accounting, finance and economics scholars are significantly less prone to consider that journal rankings promote a 'narrowing' of scholarship by - 'Shift[ing] research efforts away from debates that researchers would like to contribute to', 'Foster[ing] a 'research monoculture'', 'Lead[ing] to technically well-executed but boring research', 'Reward [ing] journals that strive to 'imitate a US-oriented model of scholarship''. Nor do either of these two fields consider that the list reduces the production of research that impacts on the wider society outside academia, i.e., that lists do not 'Encourage researchers to focus on issues that are only of interest to other academics rather than practitioners/policy-makers'. Considering that accounting is closely linked to finance as a scholarly field both in terms of the topics and methodological approaches, it is perhaps surprising to find that researchers in these two fields seem to significantly differ in their views on journal lists.

In contrast and at the opposite end of the viewpoint spectrum, scholars in organisational studies take an antithetical view and are significantly more critical towards journal lists and their negative effects relative to accounting scholars. It is also the case, albeit to a lesser extent, that scholars in management development and education are likely to consider the ranking to be narrower than their counterparts in accounting. Unlike organisational studies, where our sample includes over 100 participants, we are cautious in interpreting the findings that relate to management development and education as it represents an area where the sample size is relatively low (15 respondents).

The positive questions in Panel B of Table 4 also demonstrate significant field-specific differences in support for journal ranking lists, albeit they are not quite as strong as those reported in Panel A. In particular, finance scholars are the strongest believers among all fields that ranking lists are useful to 'judge one's own work', they are the second-strongest believers (with entrepreneurship and small business ranking first) that lists are useful to 'judge others' work'[15] and that they 'motivate academics to try to achieve higher research quality'. Again, accounting is the reference field in the model, and it is apparent that most other fields are less positive about lists than accounting, with organisational studies significantly less so on the use of lists to judge others' work.

Overall, the field-specific results are striking because they are so consistent across the range of ten questions spanning both support for and rejection of journal ranking lists and hence providing strong evidence for significantly different views and attitudes between accountants and scholars in the related fields of finance/economics and organisational studies, again in the direction suggested by H1.

It is interesting, but perhaps not surprising, that we find such strong commonality in the views of economists and finance academics. The two fields have a common intellectual core and an almost universally shared belief in a single framework – namely that of the neoclassical approach with utility maximising, rational, representative agents. Methodologically, finance has become inextricably linked with economics over the past two decades (Fourcade, Ollion, & Algan, 2015), with the tenets of financial economics also

[14] As advised by a referee, we examined a variety of alternative empirical specifications of the final models presented here, with the key findings being broadly consistent with those presented.

[15] Journal ranking lists are therefore seen to facilitate making a judgement on the quality of the research without reading it by using the rating of the journal that it is published in as a proxy.

Table 3
Perceptions of the ABS/AJG Guide (means of responses on a 5-point scale with ranks from lowest to highest)

	Panel A: Negative Questions											
Field	1 Leads to 'technically well-executed but boring research'	2 rank	3 Fosters a 'research monoculture'	4 rank	5 Rewards journals that strive to 'imitate a US-oriented model of scholarship'	6 rank	7 Shifts research efforts away from debates that researchers would like to contribute to	8 rank	9 Promotes 'low risk' research	10 rank	11 Encourages researchers to focus on issues that are only of interest to other academics rather than practitioners/ policy-makers	12 rank
Accounting	3.36	7	4.03	16	4.24	19	4.16	19	3.79	15	3.96	19
Business History and Economic History	3.53	15	4.24	20	4.35	20	4.24	20	4.00	21	4.24	22
Economics, Econometrics and Statistics	3.00	1=	3.61	1	3.56	3	3.68	3	3.46	5	3.24	2
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	3.54	16	3.85	9	3.67	1	3.48	1	3.35	2	3.62	6
Finance	3.11	3	3.62	2	3.78	2	3.64	2	3.45	4	3.44	3
General Management, Ethics and Social Responsibility	3.17	4	3.70	5	4.02	7	3.85	7	3.17	1	3.53	4
Human Resource Management and Employment Studies	3.47	14	3.82	7	4.12	10	3.98	10	3.68	12	3.71	9
Information Management	3.39	11	3.92	13	4.20	16	4.10	16	3.71	14	3.83	14
Innovation	3.67	20	3.92	14	4.05	13	4.03	13	3.59	9	3.92	17
International Business and Area Studies	3.54	17	3.83	8	3.98	9	3.93	9	3.48	6	3.78	12
Management Development and Education	4.13	22	4.60	22	4.87	22	4.47	22	4.00	22	3.93	18
Marketing	3.41	12	3.90	12	4.20	8	3.86	8	3.49	7	3.62	7
Operations and Technology	3.47	13	3.86	10	3.86	4	3.68	4	3.69	13	3.86	15
Operations Research and Management Science	3.37	9	4.02	15	4.04	12	4.02	12	3.84	17	3.67	8
Organisation Studies	3.83	21	4.16	18	4.48	15	4.04	15	3.86	18	3.78	13
Psychology (General)	3.00	1=	3.79	6	3.79	11	4.00	11	3.84	16	3.16	1
Psychology (Organisational)	3.38	10	3.88	11	3.82	14	4.04	14	3.68	11	3.76	10

(*continued on next page*)

Table 3 (*continued*)

Panel A: Negative Questions

Field	1 Leads to 'technically well-executed but boring research'	2 rank	3 Fosters a 'research monoculture'	4 rank	5 Rewards journals that strive to 'imitate a US-oriented model of scholarship'	6 rank	7 Shifts research efforts away from debates that researchers would like to contribute to	8 rank	9 Promotes 'low risk' research	10 rank	11 Encourages researchers to focus on issues that are only of interest to other academics rather than practitioners/ policy-makers	12 rank
Public Sector and Health Care	3.36	8	3.64	3	4.00	5	3.71	5	3.36	3	4.04	20
Regional Studies, Planning and Environment	3.25	5	4.25	21	4.00	21	4.42	21	3.67	10	4.08	21
Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	3.57	19	4.14	17	3.89	17	4.11	17	4.00	20	3.89	16
Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	3.57	18	4.19	19	4.34	18	4.13	18	3.96	19	3.58	5
Strategy	3.32	6	3.66	4	3.85	6	3.72	6	3.49	8	3.77	11
Mean	3.43		3.95		4.06		3.98		3.67		3.74	

Panel B: Positive Questions

Field	1 Helps researchers to make judgments about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher in their field	2 rank	3 Helps researchers to make judgments about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher outside their field	4 rank	5 Motivates academics to try to achieve higher research quality	6 rank	7 Helps research efforts to get recognized	8 rank
Accounting	3.17	13	2.94	12	2.94	13	3.79	15
Business History and Economic History	3.24	19	2.82	16	2.71	19	4.00	21
Economics, Econometrics and Statistics	3.20	12	2.98	10	2.95	12	3.46	5
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	3.58	3	3.54	1	3.40	3	3.35	2
Finance	3.44	4	3.23	5	3.28	4	3.45	4
General Management, Ethics and Social Responsibility	3.37	2	3.34	3	3.44	2	3.17	1
Human Resource Management and Employment Studies	3.07	15	2.87	15	2.89	15	3.68	12

(*continued on next page*)

Table 3 (*continued*)

Panel B: Positive Questions								
Field	1 Helps researchers to make judgments about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher in their field	2 rank	3 Helps researchers to make judgments about the quality of research being undertaken by a researcher outside their field	4 rank	5 Motivates academics to try to achieve higher research quality	6 rank	7 Helps research efforts to get recognized	8 rank
Information Management	3.08	9	3.15	6	3.06	9	3.71	14
Innovation	3.00	7	3.10	7	3.08	7	3.59	9
International Business and Area Studies	3.35	5	3.26	4	3.22	5	3.48	6
Management Development and Education	3.13	14	2.64	21	2.93	14	4.00	22
Marketing	3.20	10	3.05	8	3.01	10	3.49	7
Operations and Technology	3.07	17	2.67	19	2.77	17	3.84	17
Operations Research and Management Science	3.48	8	3.02	9	3.07	8	3.69	13
Organisation Studies	2.96	16	2.74	17	2.82	16	3.86	18
Psychology (General)	2.47	22	2.95	11	2.32	22	3.84	16
Psychology (Organisational)	3.02	11	2.92	13	3.00	11	3.68	11
Public Sector and Health Care	3.16	6	2.92	14	3.16	6	3.36	3
Regional Studies, Planning and Environment	2.58	21	2.67	20	2.58	21	3.67	10
Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	2.75	18	2.68	18	2.71	18	4.00	20
Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	2.74	20	2.62	22	2.63	20	3.96	19
Strategy	3.51	1	3.42	2	3.53	1	3.49	8
Mean	3.01		2.98		3.06		3.82	

Notes: Odd numbered columns present the average score across respondents in that field on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for each question. Even numbered columns provide the ranking of each field relative to the others with 1 denoting the highest ranked field and 22 the lowest.

Table 4
Field and Individual Determinants of Perceptions of the ABS/AJG Guide (N = 1,303).

		Panel A: Negative Questions																			
		Well exceuted but boring			Monoculture			Rewards 'US' Research			Shifts research efforts from debates			Rewards low risk			Encourages work that is not of interest to practioners/ policy makers				
Field	Business History and Economic History	−0.040		(0.31)	0.047		(0.50)	0.040		(0.65)	−0.003		(0.03)	0.075		(0.79)	0.065		(0.66)		
Ref Accounting	Economics, Econometrics and Statistics	−0.144	***	(2.95)	−0.107	***	(2.55)	−0.198	***	(4.12)	−0.140	***	(3.40)	−0.074		(1.42)	−0.204	***	(4.36)		
	Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	0.043		(0.74)	−0.047		(0.82)	−0.072		(0.75)	−0.011		(0.95)	−0.109		(1.55)	−0.089		(1.57)		
	Finance	−0.131	**	(2.34)	−0.111	**	(2.39)	−0.140	***	(2.65)	−0.158	***	(3.32)	−0.071		(1.30)	−0.156	***	(3.07)		
	General Management, Ethics and Social Responsibility	−0.090		(1.31)	−0.084		(1.28)	−0.098		(1.27)	−0.092		(1.42)	−0.020		(0.25)	−0.138	*	(1.87)		
	Human Resource Management and Employment Studies	0.038		(0.74)	−0.021		(0.47)	−0.045		(0.93)	−0.010		(0.26)	0.022		(0.42)	−0.079		(1.59)		
	Information Management	−0.040		(0.62)	−0.041		(0.74)	−0.021		(0.42)	−0.013		(0.27)	−0.004		(0.05)	−0.040		(0.67)		
	Innovation	0.089		(1.53)	−0.032		(0.55)	−0.050		(0.89)	−0.015		(0.26)	−0.012		(0.16)	−0.007		(0.10)		
	International Business and Area Studies	0.017		(0.26)	−0.055		(0.91)	−0.074		(1.15)	−0.045		(0.89)	−0.073		(1.02)	−0.068		(0.93)		
	Management Development and Education	0.156		(1.26)	0.133	***	(2.54)	0.116	***	(2.60)	0.069		(1.40)	0.101		(1.22)	−0.032		(0.31)		
	Marketing	−0.024		(0.51)	−0.048		(1.17)	−0.021		(0.49)	−0.010		(0.42)	−0.078		(1.46)	−0.035		(0.83)		
	Operations and Technology	−0.008		(0.13)	−0.034		(0.73)	−0.132	**	(2.09)	−0.013		(0.50)	0.001		(0.02)	−0.014		(0.27)		
	Operations Research and Management Science	−0.019		(0.31)	0.020		(0.41)	−0.061		(1.11)	−0.002		(0.04)	0.039		(0.57)	−0.084		(1.23)		
	Organisation Studies	0.163	***	(3.27)	0.104	***	(2.45)	0.096	***	(2.26)	0.032		(0.79)	0.102	*	(1.88)	−0.011		(0.22)		
	Psychology (General)	−0.202	*	(1.71)	−0.076		(0.81)	−0.142		(1.56)	−0.048		(0.51)	0.020		(0.20)	−0.025		(0.51)		
	Psychology (Organisational)	0.026		(0.40)	−0.020		(0.28)	−0.056	*	(1.85)	0.006		(0.11)	0.023		(0.32)	−0.022		(0.36)		
	Public Sector and Health Care	−0.036		(0.54)	−0.116	*	(1.71)	−0.102		(1.41)	−0.014	*	(1.77)	−0.122		(1.44)	0.011		(0.18)		
	Regional Studies, Planning and Environment	−0.032		(0.34)	0.102		(1.67)	−0.082		(1.11)	0.044		(2.16)	−0.006		(0.06)	0.081		(1.08)		
	Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	0.105		(1.58)	0.083		(1.62)	−0.080		(1.16)	0.033		(0.53)	0.137		(1.99)	0.028		(0.35)		

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Table 4 (*continued*)

Panel A: Negative Questions

		Well excecuted but boring		Monoculture		Rewards 'US' Research		Shifts research efforts from debates		Rewards low risk		Encourages work that is not of interest to practioners/ policy makers	
	Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	0.042 (0.65)		0.078 * (1.88)		0.056 (1.24)		0.001 (0.02)		0.095 (1.61)		−0.086 (1.45)	
	Strategy	−0.105 (1.34)		−0.040 (0.98)		−0.024 * (1.76)		−0.036 (0.25)		−0.121 (1.41)		−0.069 (1.07)	
Multidisciplinarity	Proportion with Secondary Field	0.036 (0.98)		0.012 (0.38)		0.040 (1.27)		0.036 (1.07)		0.118 ** (2.99)		0.002 (0.05)	
	Number of Fields Published in	0.007 (1.01)		0.008 (1.34)		0.008 (1.35)		0.010 (1.05)		0.002 (0.25)		0.000 (0.08)	
Academic distinction	Number of publications in Journals of Distinction	−0.035 *** (3.19)		−0.033 *** (3.88)		−0.040 *** (3.36)		−0.040 *** (3.72)		−0.053 *** (4.30)		−0.031 *** (3.02)	
	Number of publications in AJG 4 journals	−0.018 *** (4.48)		−0.017 *** (4.87)		−0.009 ** (2.43)		−0.016 *** (4.37)		−0.015 *** (3.74)		−0.010 *** (2.90)	
	Citations	0.008 *** (3.23)		0.007 *** (3.14)		0.006 *** (2.53)		0.004 ** (2.18)		0.003 (1.17)		0.001 (0.35)	
Academic rank	Associate Professor	0.023 (0.76)		0.004 (0.15)		0.061 ** (2.19)		−0.016 (0.59)		−0.036 (1.19)		−0.026 (0.91)	
(Ref. Professor)	Lecturer	0.045 (1.39)		0.059 ** (2.13)		0.068 ** (2.23)		0.028 (1.00)		−0.002 (0.05)		−0.033 (1.07)	
Sex	Sex (Male)	−0.004 *** (3.72)		0.000 (0.21)		−0.005 *** (3.08)		−0.003 (1.48)		0.000 (0.17)		0.000 (0.21)	
Non-academic work experience	Non-academic work experience (years)	0.005 *** (3.36)		0.004 *** (2.90)		0.005 *** (3.08)		0.002 (1.27)		0.005 *** (3.14)		0.006 *** (3.23)	
PhD	Year since obtained PhD	0.005 *** (3.26)		0.001 (1.16)		0.004 ** (2.92)		0.002 (1.56)		0.002 (1.47)		0.001 (0.84)	
	PhD from North American institution	−0.059 (1.17)		−0.116 *** (2.67)		−0.238 *** (4.45)		−0.070 (1.49)		−0.036 (0.71)		−0.118 ** (2.47)	
Career motivations	Career Motivations (Intrinsic)	0.073 *** (3.50)		0.060 *** (3.54)		0.058 *** (3.21)		0.069 *** (3.81)		0.044 ** (2.25)		0.029 (1.39)	
	Career Motivations (Extrinsic)	−0.015 (0.90)		0.007 (0.49)		−0.008 (0.56)		−0.001 (0.06)		−0.006 (0.39)		0.003 (0.17)	
Institutional	Rank of Institution (REF GPA)	0.000 (0.76)		0.000 (0.18)		0.000 (0.02)		0.000 (0.35)		0.000 (0.38)		0.000 (0.95)	
Environment	Size of the institution (Number of Staff)	0.000 (0.58)		0.000 (0.76)		0.000 (0.51)		0.000 (0.66)		0.000 (0.26)		0.000 * (1.85)	
	Constant	1.098 *** (19.69)		1.297 *** (28.11)		1.362 *** (27.70)		1.378 *** (31.08)		1.226 *** (21.96)		1.313 *** (26.19)	
R^2		0.087		0.080		0.128		0.108		0.099		0.085	

Panel B: Positive Questions

		Judge own work		Judge others work		Quality		Recognition	
Field	Business History & Economic History	−0.032	(0.32)	0.047	(0.46)	−0.089	(0.63)	0.141	(1.34)
Ref Accounting	Economics, Econometrics & Statistics	−0.027	(0.43)	−0.029	(0.47)	−0.050	(0.79)	0.079	(1.31)
	Entrepreneurship & Small Business Management	0.053	(1.14)	0.091	(1.23)	0.145 *	(1.95)	0.197 ***	(2.59)

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Table 4 (*continued*)

		Panel B: Positive Questions											
		Judge own work			Judge others work			Quality			Recognition		
	Finance	0.112	*	(1.78)	0.074		(1.16)	0.039		(0.59)	0.153	**	(2.40)
	General Management, Ethics & Social Responsibility	0.070		(1.30)	0.041		(0.49)	0.094		(1.15)	0.248	***	(3.23)
	Human Resource Management & Employment Studies	−0.036		(0.57)	−0.066		(1.03)	−0.101		(1.52)	0.041		(0.62)
	Information Management	0.071		(0.99)	−0.029		(0.37)	0.034		(0.41)	0.078		(0.94)
	Innovation	0.075		(0.91)	−0.093		(0.99)	−0.001		(0.01)	−0.047		(0.47)
	International Business & Area Studies	0.074		(0.86)	0.011		(0.13)	0.060		(0.68)	0.090	*	(1.93)
	Management Development & Education	0.056		(0.46)	−0.002		(0.01)	−0.124		(0.77)	0.042		(0.30)
	Marketing	0.008		(0.12)	−0.007		(0.11)	−0.021		(0.32)	0.012		(0.17)
	Operations and Technology	−0.001		(0.02)	0.061		(0.80)	−0.010		(0.12)	0.070		(0.91)
	Operations Research & Management Science	−0.141	*	(1.68)	−0.116		(1.27)	−0.173	***	(2.85)	−0.109		(1.19)
	Organisation Studies	−0.079		(1.08)	−0.132	*	(1.75)	−0.184	**	(2.42)	−0.052		(0.69)
	Psychology (General)	−0.341	**	(2.15)	−0.320	*	(1.90)	−0.122		(0.79)	−0.130		(0.95)
	Psychology (Organisational)	−0.068		(0.77)	−0.178	*	(1.93)	−0.162	*	(1.67)	−0.049		(0.51)
	Public Sector and Health Care	0.094		(0.91)	−0.013		(0.11)	−0.010	*	(0.09)	0.131		(1.40)
	Regional Studies, Planning & Environment	−0.148		(1.00)	−0.296		(1.71)	−0.149		(0.96)	−0.121		(0.80)
	Sector Studies (includes Leisure and Tourism)	−0.150		(1.48)	−0.224		(2.06)	−0.174		(1.61)	0.008		(0.08)
	Social Sciences (e.g. Sociology, Political Science, etc.)	−0.047		(1.16)	−0.235	***	(2.53)	−0.195	**	(2.13)	−0.084		(0.98)
	Strategy	0.002		(0.28)	0.045		(0.54)	0.083		(0.94)	0.113		(1.38)
Multidisciplinarity	Proportion with Secondary Field	−0.162	*	(1.80)	−0.024		(0.58)	−0.045		(1.04)	0.034		(0.87)
	Number of Fields Published in	0.016	*	(1.92)	0.011		(1.52)	0.007		(0.86)	0.003		(0.44)
Academic distinction	Number of publications in Journals of Distinction	0.024	*	(1.75)	0.029	**	(2.23)	0.033	***	(2.93)	0.027	***	(2.55)
	Number of publications in AJG 4 journals	0.010	***	(2.37)	0.009	**	(1.96)	0.013	***	(2.50)	0.010	**	(2.29)
	Citations	0.000		(0.90)	0.000		(1.20)	0.000		(0.26)	0.000		(0.76)
Academic rank	Associate Professor	−0.011		(0.29)	−0.016		(0.42)	−0.009		(0.22)	0.002		(0.07)
(Ref. Professor)	Lecturer	0.021		(0.50)	0.038		(0.86)	0.005		(0.10)	0.023		(0.53)
Sex	Sex (Male)	−0.003	***	(2.65)	−0.004	***	(3.03)	0.005	***	(4.43)	−0.001		(1.13)
Non-academic work experience	Non-academic work experience (years)	−0.001		(0.31)	−0.004	**	(1.97)	−0.003		(1.25)	0.002		(0.91)
PhD	Year since obtained PhD	−0.003	*	(1.83)	−0.004	**	(1.99)	−0.004	**	(2.05)	−0.004	**	(2.12)
	PhD from North American institution	−0.001		(0.01)	−0.016		(0.27)	−0.026		(0.42)	0.015		(0.28)
Career motivations	Career Motivations (Intrinsic)	−0.140	***	(6.52)	−0.114	***	(5.08)	−0.104	***	(4.10)	−0.088	***	(3.82)
	Career Motivations (Extrinsic)	0.077	***	(3.98)	0.066	***	(3.19)	0.034	*	(1.65)	0.049	**	(2.39)
Institutional	Rank of Institution (REF GPA)	0.000		(0.79)	0.000		(0.06)	0.000		(0.51)	0.000		(0.67)
Environment	Size of the institution (Number of Staff)	0.000		(0.73)	0.000		(0.02)	0.000		(1.80)	0.000		(0.95)
	Constant	1.363	***	(10.47)	1.390	***	(10.08)	1.350	***	(9.21)	1.156	***	(8.86)
R^2		0.081			0.086			0.074			0.098		

Notes: This table reports regression results from Generalised Least Squares regressions with the response to the questions regarding positive perceptions of the ABS list / AJG Guide as dependent variables and the field variables and individual scholars' and institutional characteristics as independent variables. Variable definitions are provided in the text and in Tables 1 and 2. z-statistics in parentheses. Asterisks denote the significance level: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.10.

increasingly supplanting accounting in areas such as financial management (as termed by accountants, and which finance specialists would term corporate finance). While finance is most commonly structured in the UK alongside accounting within departments, the former has much more in common with economics – both ideologically and methodologically – despite that economists are often located in separate departments or possibly even outside of business schools altogether. Furthermore, Brooks and Schopohl (2018) find a narrowness in the subject matter investigated by finance scholars and in the methodological techniques that they use. The vast majority of studies in finance employ methods from economics and mathematics, with almost no adoption of qualitative or multi-disciplinary approaches, such as case studies, interviews and surveys. Similarly, Fourcade et al. (2015) argue that economists see themselves as superior to other social scientists due to their predominant use of quantitative techniques. In addition, both economics and finance show low rates of cross-citation to other fields and their doctoral training programmes are very homogeneous (Hansen, 1991; Brooks et al., 2019), which supports the continuity of this linkage. Overall, these observations tie in with H1 suggesting that insular, mono-epistemological, journal-focused fields – such as finance and economics – are more likely to exhibit less negative views towards journal ranking lists. It also appears to be the case that disciplines with a propensity towards measurement and quantification might tend to have more positive views of journal ratings lists than those fields that typically adopt a more discursive approach, although we cannot test this conjecture directly.

Returning to Panel A of Table 4, we also examine a second pair of field variables related to the extent to which individuals who are more multidisciplinary differ in their attitudes towards journal lists. The first of these is reflected in their publication records as a count of the number of fields that they publish in, under the conjecture that individuals who publish across fields are more likely to consider that journals promote a 'narrowing' than those who publish only in one field. The second of these measures of whether academics align themselves to multiple fields is an indicator variable of whether they list a secondary field or not. Again, scholars who do may be more inclined to believe that lists have a narrowing effect. We do not find, however, that either measure of multidisciplinarity plays a significant empirical role in any of the regressions for the negative or positive questions (except a borderline significant result for the usefulness of the list to judge one's own work) and thus there is virtually no support for hypothesis H2, which positions that scholars whose work spans more than one field are more negative about journal ranking lists.

The results, reassuringly, suggest some commonalities of the effects of individual scholars' characteristics across the dependent variables. Looking at the multiple dimensions of academic standing, first we find that those who publish in JoDs are less likely to consider that the list promotes a 'narrowing' of research. We also find that people publishing in leading journals are significantly more positive about lists according to all four measures in Panel B of Table 4, irrespective of their field, which provides confirmatory evidence for hypothesis H3 that proposed an affirmative link between 'elite' publishing and a preference for lists. The same is the case for those who publish in AJG 4-rated journals, but the marginal impact is about half that of those who publish in 'elite' journals.

Examining the results with respect to academic rank, for four out of six of the measures of 'narrowness' (Panel A of Table 4), more junior faculty do not differ in their views about journal lists relative to professors and similarly there are no significant differences across ranks in support for journal ranking lists in Panel B. Hence, we do not find strong support for H4, which conjectures that scholars who received their PhD more recently will be less negative about journal rankings lists.

The only individual characteristic for which the effect on attitudes towards journal lists is less clear relates to scholars obtaining a PhD from a US institution. For three out of the six negative statements about journal lists, scholars with a PhD from a US university show less agreement and these statements comprise those suggesting that journal lists encourage a research monoculture, reward US-centric research, and foster work with little practitioner and policy relevance. However, having a PhD from the US does not have any significant impact on support for lists in Panel B. Hence, the support for H5, that scholars who received their PhD from the US will be less negative about journal ranking lists, is mixed and seems dependent on the specific distortive effect that is considered. It is worth noting that scholars with a PhD from a US institution who have subsequently left the US academic environment might significantly differ from their colleagues who pursued their academic career at a US institution. Hence, their responses might not be indicative of the 'typical' scholar socialised in the US regarding their attitudes towards journal ranking lists.

Comparing the individual-level characteristics and the field effects in Panel A of Table 4, it is the case that the marginal impacts of both the economics and finance fields are high – being between three and six and half times the magnitude of those who are capable of publishing in 'elite' outlets (as revealed by their having done so).

Looking at the other independent variables, there are also some consistent findings with views of the list being gendered with respect to two views of 'narrowness' (with women typically having more negative views of lists), while having experience of working outside the academy is a significant factor in three of the four 'narrowness' concepts as well, with more experience eliciting stronger negative views of lists.

Interestingly, we do not find that views differ between the more research-intensive institutions (defined as having higher REF2014 output scores) and others, or between smaller versus larger schools, suggesting that perceptions of the list are consistently held. Given the different demands placed on faculty across research-focused versus teaching-focused institutions, this is, on the face of it, quite surprising but suggestive that field effects dominate and transcend university type. Finally, we find, perhaps not surprisingly, that more intrinsically motivated individuals are more likely to believe that journal lists have negative effects, and they are significantly less appreciative of any positive perceptions of journal lists. However, being extrinsically motivated does not appear to be a significant determinant for the responses to the negative questions, although it is a positive and significant determinant for responses to the positive questions in Panel B.

We now restate our five hypotheses and summarise the evidence in each case. Hypothesis H1 proposed that fields which are introspective, focused on 'top' journal publishing, and with a narrow methodological focus, would be more positive and less negative about journal lists, and we find this to be supported, with finance and economics the most appreciative of lists overall, and organisational studies the least. Hypothesis H2 suggested that scholars working across multiple fields would feel their work to be under-

appreciated within journal ranking systems and so would be more negatively disposed to them. There was, however, no statistical support for this hypothesis from the data. Hypothesis H3 proposed that faculty publishing in the 'leading' journals in their fields would be less negative about journal ranking lists, and we found that indeed that was the case. Hypothesis H4 suggested that colleagues who obtained their PhDs more recently would be less negatively disposed to journal ranking lists. This received very limited support from the survey results, with most survey items not demonstrating a link. Finally, repeating this theme of examining the relevance of socialisation into scholarly publishing, Hypothesis H5 proposed that faculty who received their PhD from the US would be less negatively disposed to journal ranking lists. Again, the evidence regarding this hypothesis was mixed, with a link established statistically for three of the six negative items but none of the positive ones.

6. Qualitative evidence

In examining how fields view journal rankings, we find that, compared to accounting, economics and finance are more favourably disposed towards them while organisational studies is much less so. It is perhaps not surprising that academy members in the latter field consider, more than any other grouping, that journal rankings are damaging scholarship as members of that field have been most outspoken against them (e.g., Willmott, 2011); in addition, the more critical attitude aligns with their field-specific pre-dispositions and related habitus which is focused on questioning socially constructed concepts of 'quality'. However, that economics and finance scholars exhibit very different attitudes regarding journal lists compared to accounting scholars is interesting, considering that finance and accounting are believed to be closely related and are often grouped under the same umbrella department within business schools. These differences may potentially have important implications for these fields and for the business and management domain more generally that we now tease out by comparing the quantitative evidence in our main analysis to qualitative comments and statements on journal ranking lists provided by survey respondents.

In addition to the responses to the closed-end questions analysed in the main body of this paper, the survey also offered participants the opportunity to provide open-ended text responses, which offer richer and more multi-faceted qualitative information on scholars' attitudes toward journal lists and their effect on scholarship in their field. Although the findings presented so far suggest that scholars of finance and economics are less likely to consider lists to be 'narrowing' across multiple dimensions than those in accounting or organisational studies, some survey participants in these fields nonetheless provided detailed qualitative comments that contradict this general perspective, indicating a plurality of viewpoints within as well as across these fields. To get an idea of the extent to which participants are aware of the factors highlighted as relating to 'narrowness' by explicitly referring to them in their commentary, we review the comments by scholars belonging to economics and finance and contrast them with those from accounting academics.

A total of 157 comments were made in the three fields, of which roughly 40% were in economics, and 30% in each of accounting and finance. We should note at the outset that the comments originate only from those respondents with sufficiently strong views in either direction that they felt it was worth their time to add written comments. To gain an initial overview of the nature of the comments, we manually categorised each as being either 'positive', 'negative' or 'neutral' towards lists by analysing the sentiments expressed in the responses, with any ambiguous tone recorded as 'neutral'. The classification was initially conducted by one of the authors and then checked by another member of the authorship team to limit subjective judgement in the 'tone' of the messages. It became immediately clear that the vast majority of qualitative judgements were negative. 88% of the comments from economists were negative, compared with figures of 90% for finance and 93% for accounting and thus, whilst the differences between the three disciplines are not striking, it is clear again that accountants are more likely to hold negative views than the other two. Such negative views were nonetheless widely articulated in the comments boxes for all fields, with one respondent identifying as a finance scholar arguing that the list:

> '…is far too much bias towards American finance journals, which are controlled by the American academic establishment. The blind refereeing and review process does not directly or indirectly allow non-USA academics a fair chance to publish in those journals. The discrimination can occur simply because a wrong topic was chosen, the style of writing is not correct and we do not get knowledge of this being outside the US (sic.).'

An accounting academic spoke to the effect that the list may have in squeezing out certain topics and sub-fields, highlighting the important role that the allocation of symbolic capital via publications in highly rated journals has on setting research agendas and hence determining what topics are being researched:

> 'Certain areas are consistently under-rated by the ranking. Accounting history as a field has no journals above a 2 star, so it is almost impossible to remain researching in this area if you wish to advance in your career. Accounting education is another area (sic.).'

The importance of the symbolic capital instilled and manifested by journal rankings is further underlined, by another finance respondent, who alluded to journal lists encouraging US-based scholarship and directing research focus away from other topics worthy of investigation:

> '(1) My Department now only considers US 4* journals for the purpose of tenure and promotion. (2) In fields such as my own, the chances of securing publication in a US 4* journal are much lower with European or non-US data. Several colleagues in the UK have been using US data in order to improve their chances. In the longer term, this has social costs: Topics and areas deserving of study will be neglected because of the race to the premium placed on US journals.'

Another response by a finance scholar highlighted the tensions between producing research that is suitable for publication in the 'top' journals and research that has relevance for policy makers and practitioners, or in Bourdieu's parlance, the tensions between

symbolic capital instilled by 'top' publications and cultural capital linked to research that reaches and impacts industry and policy decision-makers:

> 'Previously I would choose to publish in the best journal for disseminating my work. Now I aim to publish in the best-rated journal possible so the nature of my research is changing. I also try to achieve high impact with my work. There is clearly a significant tension here.'

An economics scholar makes a defence of the list in terms of its value to the academy in independently verifying the 'quality' of work:

> 'Despite its shortcomings the ABS list does a wonderful job as a yardstick for everyone out there. Colleagues or administrators who don't like you won't be able to say a word about the 'quality' of your work if you manage to publish in 3 or 4 star journals. It shuts them up at the spot. The ABS list creates an even playing field. Without something like the ABS the administrators and the powers that be on appointment committees have too much space for speculation (sic.).'

Overall, while finance and economics scholars are less likely than others to believe that the journal list 'encourages researchers to focus on issues that are only of interest to other academics rather than practitioners/policy-makers', these anecdotal statements highlight that individuals' position may be more subtly nuanced, with both positive and negative views of lists appearing across all fields.

In a way, the analysis of these qualitative comments in addition to the quantitative (and more binary) survey responses serves to highlight the importance and complementary nature of different research methodologies which enables us to tease out general tendencies in field-specific attitudes towards journal lists as well as the more nuanced and diverse positions by individual scholars which do not become apparent through our quantitative evidence presented in Tables 1–4. As such, the complementary nature of the quantitative and qualitative findings directly speaks to the necessity of and benefits to scholarly research of adopting a plurality of approaches. In addition, it can therefore be regarded as a direct consequence of our underpinning Bourdieusian framework as a means to elicit general field specific and socially constructed pre-dispositions towards journal ranking lists as well as the more nuanced attitudes and habitus of individual scholars within fields towards these lists.

7. Conclusions

The use of journal ranking lists in evaluating research 'quality' at arm's length, supporting hiring and promotion decisions and indirectly influencing resource allocations, is now ubiquitous in business schools across the UK and beyond (e.g., Bryce et al., 2020; Reinstein & Calderon, 2006). There is growing concern that the exclusive use of journal lists may limit the range of research and innovativeness of scholarship and undermine its reach within and outside academia. Concerns that an obsession with the number of 'hits' an individual has in the highest rated journals is leading to intellectual stagnation has been discussed at length in Humphrey and Gendron (2015). Recent work by Walker et al. (2019a) and Hussain (2015) has called for the conduct of further, detailed surveys of academics' attitudes to lists. Motivated by Bourdieu's framework of '*fields*', we begin a move beyond a nascent set of research focused upon individual attitudes to incorporate influences aligned to distinct academic fields that operate in a well-defined context. Not only does this field-focussed analysis of scholars' attitudes towards journal ranking lists serve to better understand the rise in popularity and application of these lists within some disciplines, it may also help us to reflect on the effects that an increased reliance on journal ranking lists in business schools can have on scholarship and the development of other fields.

In our study, we illustrate that, after allowing for a rich set of individual characteristics, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and mechanisms such as a proven capability to publish in 'elite' journals or being socialised toward lists, there is a well determined effect of '*field*' on individual preferences. In addition, it does not appear that, overall, perceptions differ significantly across ranks or institutions, implying that such views are pervasively held within these fields. In line with Bourdieu's focus on fields as 'structure[s]… where habitus is formed, capitals are distributed, and their values are determined' (Lee & Dunlap, 2014, p. 317), we find that field membership is one of the most important determinants in scholars' attitudes towards journal ranking lists – dominating and transcending the effects of university types (research vs. teaching intensive) and scholars' individual characteristics. This finding suggests that agents concerned about the negative effects of journal ranking lists on the future of business and management scholarship are encouraged to apply a field-specific lens that addresses the attitudes and perceptions prevalent in the specific field instead of purely adopting an overarching perspective.

Turning to our findings regarding specific field effects, compared to accounting scholars, finance and economics academics are less likely to consider that journal lists have a homogenising effect on a field's output, or that they create a 'research monoculture', lead to 'technically well-executed but boring research', or 'shift research from meaningful debates', and they are also less likely to consider that a focus on lists may lead to less impactful work. Organisational studies is the only other field whose views differed significantly from those of accounting scholars in a consistent way. In contrast to accounting (and finance and economics), organisational studies scholars are significantly more likely to agree with the view that journal lists have a homogenising effect on scholarship.[16]

These findings align with our expectations derived from Bourdieu's framework of *habitus*, *field* and different forms of *capital* suggesting that field-specific pre-dispositions through training and socialisation as well as field-specific differences in the relative weight attached to symbolic capital obtained via publications in highly ranked journals are driving attitudes towards journal ranking

[16] These findings suggest that while the 'regime of excellence' may be eroding the ethos of critical management scholars (Butler & Spoelstra, 2014), relative to their colleagues in other fields, they maintain their critical edge.

lists across fields. Those with training in the principles of economics – such as scholars in finance and economics – typically favour market-based approaches to dealing with social problems (Whaples, 2009) over alternatives such as tighter regulation or moral persuasion. Journal ranking lists are the very epitome of such a market-based approach to the sorting and ordering of research 'quality', where each output will 'find a home' at its appropriate level, which then acts as not only a signal of 'quality' but also as a signal of the priority that future researchers should assign to reading and citing the work published there (Drivas & Kremmydas, 2020). As such this field-specific habitus towards journal ranking lists can be regarded as a product of finance's and economics' underlying structures and historical context. Hence, applying Bourdieu's framework can help to explain the potentially surprising dissonance between the perceptions of individual researchers in economics and finance, who are predominantly 'pro-journal ranking lists', and scholars in other fields who argue that the structures and attitudes in economics and finance are the very epitome of the negative consequences of such lists.

However, when considering the implications of our findings for scholarship and resource allocations within business schools in the context of Bourdieu's framework of fields, it is important to point towards Bourdieu's thesis that habitus is not only a product of structures but also a reproducer of structures (Power, 1999). In other words, while finance and economics might have been pre-disposed to a more positive attitude towards journal ranking lists due to their positivist and market-based approaches, a broad application of journal ranking lists for research evaluation, resource allocations, hiring and promotion decisions across business school departments, may create the very habitus and structures that promote a stronger focus on publications in 'top' journals and a narrowing of fields' research agendas and methodological plurality among other fields in the future. As such, journal ranking lists have the potential to allow university managers and scholars from other fields to impose symbolic violence on scholars operating outside their own area of expertise and discipline and in this way affect the structures and habitus of scholars in other fields.

What is more, the field effects are also compounded given that individuals working in finance and economics are more likely to be male and to have less non-academic work experience than the vast majority of other fields, two characteristics typically associated with positive views of lists. It is noteworthy that this is not the case in the field that is, other than economics, most closely aligned to finance – accounting, where there is a higher proportion of women and colleagues entering the academy at a later stage in their careers. Accounting scholars have fairly neutral attitudes to lists overall, with their responses to both the positive and negative survey items being roughly in the middle of the distribution across fields. However, this overall neutral attitude for accounting scholars as a whole could also be a consequence of two opposing views towards lists cancelling each other out in aggregation. In particular, the results of our study would suggest that scholars in the sub-field of financial and capital markets-based accounting might show a more positive attitude towards lists due to their cognitive closeness to finance and economics, while critical accounting scholars are expected to be more negatively predisposed towards journal ranking lists. Examining such sub-field differences in attitudes towards journal ranking lists constitutes an interesting route for future research and an opportunity to examine to what extent Bourdieu's concept of field-specific habitus can be applied to investigate and explain the formation of sub-fields and sub-field specific habitus and attitudes.

As we have explored, the study has important implications. In line with Bourdieu's framework, our findings highlight the role of field-specific pre-dispositions and socialisation in shaping scholar's attitudes towards research practices and the instruments bestowing symbolic capital, such as journal ranking lists. Doctoral training and more informal mechanisms within business and management socialise researchers rapidly into an organisational culture where agents frame their sense of who they are not from 'organisational problems and a question that they want to understand and answer' but rather with reference to an 'existing stream of research' (Vermeulen, 2007, p. 754; Panozzo, 1997). This perspective can lead to field-specific objectives with publication in 'elite' journals becoming the main, or indeed only, relevant 'prize' in economics and finance and this will most commonly arise from remaining within the existing paradigms and 'advancing the literature' by pushing along, but staying inside, the existing track. Therefore, the effect that scholarly work may have on policy and practice is relegated to being very much a secondary consideration at best in economics and finance.

While accounting differs from these fields in the stronger connection of their scholars to the profession and industry practice, several authors have documented a shift over time towards a quantitative, positivist and mainly US-centric research focus in the leading accounting journals (Bonner et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2006), which resembles the characteristics observed for finance and economics journals. Hence, understanding field-specific differences in scholars' attitudes towards journal lists may offer important insights to a discipline such as accounting that spans different sub-fields, regarding potential future developments of the discipline as well as sources of tensions between scholars adopting different research paradigms. A reflection on the direction of accounting research would be timely given that Hussain et al. (2020) already document a shift in citation patterns in favour of ranked journals and away from those that are unranked while Gebreiter (2021) suggests that accounting at the entire field level has been marginalised in favour of other fields where elite publications and significant grant capture are more likely. Wilkinson and Durden (2015) argue that a 'resource shock' is required to arrest the decline in the professional relevance of scholarly accounting research.

Although we can only speculate about the implications that our findings related to finance and economics have for the development of accounting as a multi-faceted discipline, a shift in accounting scholarship towards financial accounting using quantitative, positivist approaches – given its prominence in the majority of 'top' accounting journals – could be a sign that accounting might move in a similar direction towards a narrower research focus and a potentially less critical approach towards journal lists, if finance and economics

serve as indicators of the direction of travel in this regard; Ravenscroft and Williams (2021) suggest is already happening. This trend will trouble many researchers in accounting who argue that its plurality of approaches should be nurtured and encouraged, particularly given its frequent coverage of issues relating to social and environmental issues (Gray & Milne, 2015), and there is already evidence that the incidence of cross-disciplinarity in accounting research between diverse disciplines is low (Dellaportas, Xu, & Yang, 2021).[17]

Our study has a number of limitations that give rise to a range of future research opportunities. First, our study is based on a survey of UK academics and thus our findings may not directly transpose to other academic systems. Although UK business and management schools are highly international, recruiting scholars from across the world, they are also subject to a wide range of specific regulations, including the national research assessment framework (see Pidd & Broadbent, 2015). Therefore, our results may reflect the particular biases and preferences inherent within the UK system, and certainly our findings relating to those trained in the US provide some indication that contextual differences may be non-trivial. Moreover, since the UK business and management system has strong affinities with the North American setup, our findings could overstate the degree of alignment in attitudes towards journal rankings for academics working in other academic systems or fields with greater intellectual and cultural distance from the North American model of scholarly production. Future research could seek to explore the balance of preferences for journal status across scholars working in different national contexts and in different scientific fields.

Second, research and policy-related initiatives such as the Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics (Hicks, Wouters, Waltman, de Rijcke, & Rafols, 2015) and others that have developed after it such as the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA),[18] are clear in the importance of peer-review in providing context to journal ranking lists (Wouters et al., 2019). While these initiatives apply to all scholarly fields, our findings suggest that in economics and finance, a broadening of their evaluatory purview is of greater importance given their tendency to more unquestioningly rely on journal lists than other fields.

Third, our investigative work could be built upon by digging more deeply into some of the findings that have emerged through a further survey of, or interviews with, the relevant scholars. In particular, it would be of value to focus specifically on accounting academics and to determine whether those employing a 'big data', positivist approach along the lines used in economics and finance had similar views on journal ranking lists to those latter fields while those adopting more interpretivist techniques were predominantly anti-list as is the case for scholars of organisational studies. Overall, our study has demonstrated that Bourdieu's concept of field-specific habitus serves as a fruitful framework to investigate and interpret the divergences in attitudes and research practices within distinct fields in the area of business and management scholarship. It would also be of interest to apply Bourdieu's concepts of fields, habitus and symbolic capital to explore related questions such as how and to what extent journal ranking lists affect the strength of tribal allegiances and researchers' senses of identity with their field; also worthy of investigation is the interaction between the development of a scholar's social capital and their choice of journal outlets in which to publish their work.

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[17] Related to this, it has been reported in the media that the University of Leicester has made threats of compulsory redundancies of a number of academic staff who were working in the area of critical management studies. This led the editors of *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* and *Organization* to draft open letters expressing their concern that this institution appears to be intending to cease critical research – see: https://www.journals.elsevier.com/critical-perspectives-on-accounting/announcements/open-letter.

[18] The Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics is a set of ten principles for the measurement of research performance aiming to address the 'mis-use' of metrics in research evaluation - see http://www.leidenmanifesto.org/ for further information. The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) is an initiative with the aim to advance practical and robust approaches to research assessment globally and across all scholarly disciplines and to caution the use of impact factors as sole measurement of research performance – see https://sfdora.org/about-dora/ for further information.

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