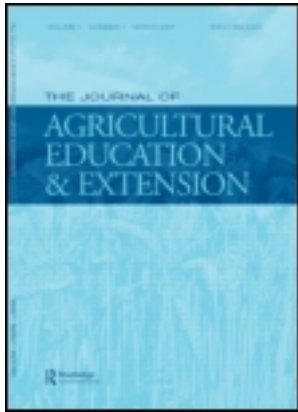


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Editorial

Martin Mulder

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Editorial

Dear reader,

To follow up on my Editorial in issue 19.1 of the *JAEE*, I would like to reiterate that the *JAEE* is open for short syntheses of research, tutorials about conducting special research methods or reflections in the field of agricultural education and extension that are likely to invite many reactions. I gave a couple of examples of such short pieces in Volume 18 of the journal, so if you have such contributions to share please do not hesitate to submit them as we are keen to publish them next to the regular articles and reviews in the *JAEE*. We expect that these articles will receive more than average attention and citations. And next to excellent manuscripts, which we get a lot of, we need active use of the publication, and citations in other journals, in order to increase our impact in science and society.

As I have mentioned in the previous issue of the *JAEE*, content-wise we are well on track. The *JAEE* is able to publish current research and development studies in the field of agricultural education and extension, a field that can also be rephrased as competence development and communication for integrated rural innovation and development, or rather as human resources development for sustainable global rural development. With conflicts all over the world and the resulting massive migration of populations, land use or even land grabbing for energy production for high gross domestic product (GDP) countries instead of food production for the developing world, an increasing world population, exploding food prices, with the resulting pressure on food security, the field that the *JAEE* covers has never been so current. While knowledge in agricultural sciences is advancing further and further, so are the human and societal factors which determine whether the implementation of this scientific knowledge is being used to improve the living and working conditions of rural populations, and also whether food chains and networks will be secure or not. For if they are not, not only hunger and poverty throughout the world will not be relieved, but food provision for the high-income countries may also be jeopardized.

There are various initiatives which are encouraging in this respect. First of all I would like to mention GFRAS (<http://www.g-fras.org/en/>), which is the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services. GFRAS wants to contribute to the development of rural advisory services and outreach programs to effectively and sustainably contribute to hunger and poverty reduction. Based in Switzerland and still a young organization, it maintains a global network on 'new' extension. GFRAS is welcoming all rural advisory service organizations for further exchange of experience and possible cooperation. Until now GFRAS has organized three international conferences, one in Chile in 2012, one in Kenya in 2011 and one in the Philippines in 2012. We see GFRAS as one of the current initiatives that signify the revival of extension, as a kind of extension.2, by which old-fashioned models and strategies of knowledge transfer and dissemination are being transcended to cooperative models of regional knowledge co-construction and integrated ways of competence

development and social learning. This is all embedded in a mission of transformative leadership for sustainability and supported by modern technology, including web2 tools. Interesting examples of the latter are information sharing by text messages, consultations by email based on digital pictures of plant diseases made in the field and free access courses on production technology on the internet.

Another quite recent example of the revival of extension is the symposium 'Rural Advisory Services—Modes of Sustainable Delivery', held in Bonn, Germany in 2012. Many interesting speakers contributed to this conference, such as Albert Engel, head of the division 'Rural Development and Agriculture' of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Dr Stefan Schmitz, head of the division 'Rural Development: Food Security' of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr Kristin Davis, executive secretary of GFRAS mentioned above, Max Baumann and Kai Schütz, planning officers of the GIZ, Prof. Dr Volker Hoffmann, managing director of the Institute of Social Sciences in Agriculture of the University of Hohenheim (and respected and valued book review editor of the *JAEE*) and Stefan Kachelriess-Matthess. There was a panel discussion with interesting speakers as well, amongst who were Marita Wiggerthale, Agricultural Expert of Oxfam, and Magdalena Blum, Extension Systems Officer at FAO.

It is encouraging to see the field of agricultural extension revive and flourish under labels like rural advisory services, outreach, knowledge brokerage, innovation facilitation and competence development. The aim of the *JAEE* is to feed the field with new insights from theory and research and to contribute to the development of evidence-based practice. In that respect, we are offering researchers the opportunity to share their cutting edge and ground-breaking work in the *JAEE*, as one of their premier outlets. Work that is based on current theoretical developments and sound research in educational sciences, the learning sciences, communication sciences, human resource development science, development sociology, development economy and agricultural and health sciences.

To encourage authors to share their best work in the *JAEE* we can report good news based on publication years 2011 and 2012. As I mentioned in the previous issue of the *JAEE*, a key issue in the further development of the journal is being indexed in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) of Thomson Reuters. Inclusion in this list will make it possible for authors around the world to be automatically credited for their publications in the journal in their respective countries and universities, which is not the case at the moment. The *JAEE* is currently indexed in SCOPUS, CABI, Agricultural Online Index (AGRICOLA), Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), which are all very well respected and used intensively. But not all education and research institutions find this sufficient for crediting the publications of their staff, which may change as, for instance, SCOPUS maintains a high level of quality control as well but is more inclusive.

As I wrote in the previous issue, we screened the bibliometric performance of the journal using the program Publish or Perish. The H-index of the *JAEE* has now risen to 28. Based on a comparison with the impact factors of journals listed in the SSCI, I stated that the *JAEE* would be positioned at the top of Q4, which is the fourth quartile of journals listed. However, in doing that I made a mistake and in fact compared the H-index with the impact factor, which are of course related, but not identical. On the other hand, further analysis by the bibliometricians of Wageningen

University showed that the estimated impact factor would be high enough for inclusion in the SSCI. They also noted that retrieval of *JAEE* data from SCOPUS was not completely right; this has now been sorted out and will be corrected in the annual round of SCOPUS updates in spring 2013. But the good news is that during our annual meeting with the publisher, the senior bibliometric expert of Taylor and Francis, James Hardcastle, informed us that the ‘mock’ impact factor of the *JAEE* in 2011 is 0.549 (excluding self-citation). This places the *JAEE* at rank 122 out of the 206 journals in the SSCI subject category Education and Educational Research, which is far higher than I expected. To be honest, ranking in the subject category Education, Scientific Disciplines would be lower (25/33) as would be the ranking in Planning and Development (44/54). Nevertheless, the *JAEE* is doing very well, and the conclusion I formulated in the last issue of the *JAEE* stays the same: I do not see a reason why the *JAEE* would not be included in the SSCI when it is reviewed again by Thomson Reuters. However, as Thomson Reuters have become quite strict again after a period of significantly enlarging the journal list to establish wider regional diversity, the publisher advised us to wait until the *JAEE* would rank as a Q2 journal, which may be possible within one year. So we anticipate submitting the *JAEE* for SSCI inclusion to Thomson Reuters by the end of 2013 or the beginning of 2014.

What is needed for inclusion:

- (1) More citations to *JAEE* articles in current SSCI journals.
- (2) If articles in the *JAEE* are based on funded research, inclusion of an acknowledgement of this in a footnote on the title page. Thomson Reuters appreciates articles based on funded research as it assumes a further quality control stage of the published research.
- (3) Enlargement and further internationalization of the editorial committee and editorial advisory board with scholars who are actively publishing authors and who contribute to journals with high impact factors.
- (4) Regular publishing.

Regarding the first issue, more citations, we, as a large *JAEE* community—the members of the editing team, the associate editors, the editorial committee, the editorial advisory board, the authors, the reviewers and of course the readers—should not forget to refer to the *JAEE* when we write or review for other SSCI or even SCI (Science Citation Index) journals. The difference between being rejected or accepted by the SSCI is dependent on the number of citations. So it is absolutely feasible to get there. We will follow this up by personal communication with our authors and reviewers. It would also help if authors and reviewers could add a link to the *JAEE* on their professional and personal websites.

As to the acknowledgement of the fact that manuscripts are based on funded research (if that is applicable), we will include a line in the manuscript submission form on that, so that authors think about this and will add the specific source of funding of the research on which the piece is based (again, if the research is funded).

Regarding the enlargement and further international scope of the editorial committee and the editorial advisory board, the editorial team will work on that.

Finally, regarding regularity of publishing, this is not a concern at all, since the *JAEE* pretty strictly complies with its planned publishing dates.

Further good news from the publisher is that the total amount of full text downloads of the *JAEE* in 2012 has risen by 30% compared to 2011, so the (very) positive line of internet-based use of the journal is continuing. Also, the distribution of the *JAEE* via various channels of subscriptions has further risen. Dissemination is global and increasing, so that is very rewarding. Access is supported by various schemes, including Research4Life (www.research4life.org), Access for Development and Innovation (aRDI; www.wipo.int/ardi/en/about.html), the Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (PERI; www.inasp.info/peri/countries.html), the Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (<http://www.teeal.org/>), the Association of Commonwealth Universities Low Cost Journal Scheme (<https://www.acu.ac.uk/membership/low-cost-journals/>), the Journal Donation Project, and Books for Sudan (www.booksforsudan.soasunion.org).

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MARTIN MULDER, Editor