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Competence for Rural Innovation and Transformation

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Developments in the Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension

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EDITORIAL

Developments in the *Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension*

The *Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* (JAEE) made an important step in the direction of inclusion in the Social Science Citation Index. The JAEE is one of the three development journals of Taylor & Francis which were accepted into the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) for 2016 (<http://explore.tandfonline.com/page/bes/esci-development-studies>). Congratulations and many thanks to all who have actively contributed to the further development of the journal! At the brink of my retirement this is another achievement of which we can all be very proud. The ESCI was launched by Thomson Reuters' Web of Science in 2015. To celebrate the good news, Taylor & Francis has made a collection of recent and noteworthy articles from the JAEE free for a limited time. As an effect, we see an increased and more diverse number of manuscripts coming in. We appreciate that. The variation may also be a result of the subtitle of the journal, which is in place now for a couple of issues. The subtitle 'Competence for Rural Innovation & Transformation' should indeed have appeal to a broader variety of authors. The changed composition of the Editorial Committee may also contribute to the increased diversity of the copy influx. Below I will say a bit more about this Committee.

Let's first look at the development of the journal according to the Scopus Journal Metrics data (as I have shared before, Scopus is a product of Elsevier; see <https://www.journalmetrics.com/>). If you enter 'Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension' in the journal search space (do not use 'The' in front of the journal name), you will find two journal names, the older name 'European Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension', and the current name 'Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension', although the official name of the journal as printed on the cover is 'The Journal of Agricultural Education & Extension'. For the JAEE, data are available for the years 2012–2014. The source normalized impact score (SNIP) for 2012, 2013 and 2014 is 1.34, 0.842 and 0.954 respectively. The SNIP is the weighted citation score in a given subject field. It dropped from 2012 to 2013, but it is up again. The Impact per Publication (IPP) for the years 2012–2014 is 0.431, 0.885 and 0.901, respectively. The IPP for a journal is the number of citations in a given year to scholarly papers in the journal in the three preceding years divided by the total number of scholarly papers in the same three years. So suppose the number of citations in 2015 to scholarly articles in the JAEE in 2012, 2013 and 2014 is 75, and the number of scholarly papers in the JAEE in 2012, 2013, and 2014 is also 75, then the IPP is $75/75=1.0$. The IPP in Scopus resembles the Impact Factor in the Web of Science. The SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) values for 2012, 2013 and 2014 are 0.336, 0.406 and 0.51. The SJR accounts for the differences in field, quality and reputation of publications that cite a journal. So as can be seen, the SNIP is up from 2013 to 2014, and the IPP and SJR are up from 2012 to 2014.

Coming back to the composition of the Editorial Committee, in the process of improving the quality of the JAEE you may have noticed the changes in this respect. We have thanked and said farewell to a number of colleagues who had to de-prioritize the journal because of other commitments, retirement, new positions, etc. We welcomed new members of the Editorial Committee and Editorial Advisory Board. These are mainly colleagues in the field of educational sciences. Harry Boone from West Virginia University joined the Editorial Committee

as Editor of the *Journal of Agricultural Education (JAE)*; his term as *JAE* Editor ends at the end of 2018. Julie Ingram of the University of Gloucestershire entered the Editorial Committee as two times winner of the *JAEE* Best Paper Award. Christian Harteis joined the Editorial Committee as an expert in the field of vocational and professional learning. Christian is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Vocations & Learning* and co-editor of the *International Handbook of Research in Professional and Practice-based Learning*, published by Springer. Lorenz Lassnigg, from the Institute for Advanced Studies in Austria joined as researcher and author in the field of vocational education. Ruth Nettle joined as a leader of the Rural Innovation Research Group at the University of Melbourne. Jan Elen, who is a specialist in Instructional Psychology and Technology at the University of Leuven in Belgium, joined the group to strengthen the educational profile of the *JAEE* as well. Jan is editor of the journal *Instructional Science*. Johanna Lasonen joined as professor in the field of adult, career and higher education. Johanna also has a strong profile in vocational education. She is currently working at the University of South Florida. Robert Strong, of Texas A&M University, and Executive Editor of our sister *Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education (JIAEE)* joined because of the arrangement that both editors in chief of the *JAEE* and *JIAEE* play a role in both journals.

The next step to improve the quality of the *JAEE* is that we are going to evaluate the manuscript review process. As Jan Elen in our recent Editorial Committee meeting said: 'the quality of a journal is in the quality of the reviews'. I cannot agree more. In the past we were working with a score sheet and did not require much narratives to justify decisions on manuscripts. This practice is already past history, as we currently suggest reviewers to write a review in which they constructively but critically evaluate manuscripts. However, this may still be too open. We see a lot of differences in the quality of reviews. So we need to be more critical regarding reviews.

Although it is difficult to get good reviews (all journals struggle with that issue), we think it is essential to work with a team of very committed colleagues who produce excellent reviews, and who ask the maximum quality of the authors. We will therefore adjust the working process regarding reviews. The quality of the reviews will be monitored as of publication year 2017. If a review does not comply with the standard we would like to see, we will invite the reviewer to produce a better review and allow for a two-week period to upgrade the review. If the reviewer cannot deliver an upgraded review, we will inform him or her that we will not take the review into account. I understand this is a bit strict, but it seems to me to be an effective way of energizing the journal further, and to realize that last step: to get the *JAEE* listed in the Social Science Citation Index. To acknowledge the quality of the best reviewers we are thinking to install a new Award: the Best Reviewer Award. We are thinking of taking the year 2017 as first year over which the winner of this Award will be announced. The announcement will be made public on the website of the journal and in issue 1 of 2018.

The last issue I would like to share with you is my upcoming retirement as Professor of Education and Competence Studies from Wageningen University. My retirement will start on 1 January 2017. I celebrated my farewell already, by organizing the international conference on Competence Theory, Research and Practice (www.competence2016.nl) at the Campus of Wageningen University & Research, giving my farewell address in the Auditorium of Wageningen University (check the farewell address on video: <http://wurtv.wur.nl/p2gplayer/Player.aspx?id=b74jSq>), and having my farewell party with the chair group Education and Competence Studies. I have a warm feeling about all these events. It was good to see that there were quite a few colleagues from the agricultural education and extension field present: Glen Shinn, Jimmy Lindner, Kirby Barrick, Grady Roberts, Amy Harder and Murari Suvedi and others.

There was a lot of response on the call – with over 200 submissions. We accepted around 125 of them. The call was distributed by many organizations, associations and journals. We are very grateful for that, especially because we worked without any kind of sponsoring. Upfront we invited selected colleagues to prepare symposium proposals and to submit these. That worked pretty well, although during the process some of these had to step out. Finally we had a core of active symposium organizers, who together formed the Scientific Programme Committee and are acknowledged as such on the website and in the programme. Half of the presentations were in symposia, half in paper sessions. There were over 160 registrations, from 27 countries and from all continents. Jimmy Lindner provided a joke by asking the question where the participant from Antarctica was ... So indeed, there were participants from five continents.


Based on the symposia and papers sessions, we were able to draw up a programme of about 35 sessions of two, three or four presentations. The programme was divided in the following tracks: Competence management and development, Competence-based education systems, Competence assessment, Competence domains, Boundary crossing competence and Sustainability competence.

We were also glad that the book ‘Competence-based Vocational and Professional Education. Bridging the Worlds of Work and Education’, published by Springer, was out (<http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783319417110>). The 1100 pages book has publication year 2017, but it is already available. It comprises 50 chapters by over 80 (co)authors, and is about the theories of competence, national approaches of implementing competence-based education, structural aspects of competence-based education systems, and developments in emerging competence domains. The book has an extensive introduction and conclusions chapter in which key questions regarding competence-based education are raised and answered. The book proposes to distinguish three kinds of competencies: those for specific skills, for known jobs and for the unknown future. The final chapter suggests that most competence frameworks are aimed at the first two varieties of competence, and that more attention is needed for so-called competence 3.0 for the unknown future.

Coming back to my retirement and the future of the *JAEE*. I have decided to stay on as Editor-in-Chief until there is a successor for me for the chair group. The Executive Board will open the vacancy very soon. It is important to know what my successor will have in mind regarding the journal. Harm Biemans and I have discussed the future of the *JAEE* with Cees Leeuwis from the chair group Knowledge, Technology and Innovation, and we have stated that we want to maintain supporting the journal, and to develop it further. I have also spoken about my succession with the publisher. I expect that finding my successor may take one to two years. If that will be the case we are not really in a hurry to find the next Editor-in-Chief. But to start thinking about a successor for the journal should be timely as it will need decision making in 2017 or 2018.

For now, I wish you well, and happy reading of this issue of the *JAEE*.

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