On the lacking visibility of management research from non-Western countries: The influence of Indian researchers’ social identity on their publication strategy

Nida ul Habib Bajwa

Cornelius König

Universität des Saarlandes

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Nida ul Habib Bajwa, Universität des Saarlandes, AE Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie, Campus A1 3, D-66123 Saarbrücken, Germany, n.bajwa@mx.uni-saarland.de, Tel: +49-681-302-4760
Abstract

For a long time, researchers across the world have called for more generalizable frameworks in management research, which can be used to better understand local contexts and to extend established theories in Western countries. However, research from non-Western countries is barely visible in high-impact management journals. Whereas most researchers have tried to understand this lacking visibility from a more technological perspective, we analyzed the extent to which group psychological processes influence the selection of international publication strategies by non-Western researchers in this study. Hypotheses were based on social identity theory. Using a sample of 169 management researchers from India, we were able to confirm that higher identification with non-Western researchers is negatively related to the intention to publish internationally. Our findings suggest that current approaches to increasing the low visibility of non-Western research require a general revision.

Keywords: center-periphery debate, social identity theory, researchers' identity, international publication strategy, visibility of non-US research, Indian management research
A global view on management research is the key for both developing and industrial nations, as in the age of globalization, organizational issues are extending beyond national cultures and borders (Kraut and Mondo, 2009; Lau, 2002). Such a global perspective is valuable for researchers and practitioners alike, as they ponder the question of whether management theories developed in the West can be applied with the same ease across the world (Bruton and Lau, 2008; Meyer, 2006; Srinivas, 2008; Tsui, 2004; Varma and Budhwar, 2012). Hence, finding new and innovative approaches to global organizational issues is important to management researchers and in order to do that it is necessary to see research from across the world.

However, there are huge discrepancies between the visibility of research from the US and the rest of the world: Whereas research conducted by US researchers can make up to 90% of the content of some high-impact management journals, the “visibility” of research from developing countries in high-ranking management journals is very low. While from a historic perspective this discrepancy might seem comprehensible, the situation of non-US researchers has increased dramatically in the past decades (Kirkman and Law, 2005; Lau, 2002). In the past, access to the latest scientific information (Davidson et al., 2008), the financial situation of institutions (Boshoff, 2010; Gantman, 2009), language difficulties (Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008; Uzuner, 2008), and the quality of research (Bajwa et al., 2016; Salager-Meyer, 2008; White, 2002) have received a great deal of attention as explaining factors for the limited visibility of peripheral research. However, although these factors are surely relevant, they likely do not tell the full story as they neglect psychological processes that influence the visibility of research from peripheral (i.e., non-Western) countries.

One way in which the visibility of research from peripheral countries might be impacted is the choice of peripheral researchers to send their manuscripts to local or international journals, i.e., their deliberate selection of a publication strategy. In this study, we try to understand how
such a selection of an international publication strategy, which is necessary to be “visible”, can be related to psychological identity processes. For this purpose, we use the well-established social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, 1986) as a model to analyze the influence of social identities on Indian management researchers’ publication strategies and seek to extend our understanding on how the deliberate choice of a publication strategy might impact the visibility of peripheral research in high-ranking management journals.

**Theoretical background**

**Peripheral Research**

The so-called center-periphery debate in research (Canagarajah, 2002) revolves around discrepancies in the representation of research in high-impact journals from outside of the USA. Although other industrial nations, such as Germany, are also comparatively underrepresented, the discrepancy is especially large for developing (peripheral) countries (Baruch, 2001; Cascio and Aguinis, 2008; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Tsui, 2007). Behavioral researchers from the center (i.e. Western countries), for example, are often criticized for assuming little variation across human beings and hence publish research that is, at best, confined to a very narrow part of the world (Henrich et al., 2010; Misra and Gergen, 1993; Shen et al., 2011). Within this debate, researchers try to counter this criticism of center-dominated views by raising awareness of this discrepancy and encouraging multiple perspectives as well as indigenous research from around the world (e.g., Cooke et al., 2014; Holtbrügge, 2013; Leung, 2012).

The underrepresentation of peripheral research also affects peripheral researchers themselves. Investigating interesting topics and discussing them with like-minded researchers is a major motivation for researchers (Baruch, 2001). A wide readership ensures that the research community sees and values contributions of individuals, resulting in greater prestige for the researcher (see Judge et al., 2007). Such prestige is helpful to the career as a researcher and
increases the likelihood to get a tenured position at a management faculty as well as acquiring continued funding for research projects (see Adler and Harzing, 2009).

Presently, there are outlets such as the International Journal of Human Resource Management, the Management International Review or the Asia Pacific Journal of Management that routinely publish a high frequency of non-Western management research, enjoy a fairly remarkable reputation, and thus have had a positive impact on diversifying the knowledge in management research. However, these journals are fairly specialized in that they cater to an audience that is interested in cross-cultural issues and thus have a comparatively smaller number of readers (see Segalla, 2008; White, 2002).

In contrast, the top journals in the field of management, which focus on extending the conceptual understanding of phenomena and are rather generalist in nature, show a very different picture: The number of articles that can be affiliated to a US-based author is as high as 91% for some high-impact journals (see Baruch, 2001; Cascio and Aguinis, 2008) and simultaneously these journals have an overwhelmingly large proportion of editors from the USA (Harzing and Metz, 2013). This raises generalizability and diversity concerns as studies indicate that the content of these journals is influenced by the editors institutional affiliation and own research areas of interest (Martinko et al., 2000).

Over the last four decades, there has been a small but positive trend towards a higher number of manuscripts being published from non-US based authors and a geographical diversification of editorial board members of management journals (Harzing and Metz, 2013). Yet, most of the work that is published in high-ranking journals ties in with theories and models developed in the USA rather than being different (see Buckley et al., 2014; Varma and Budhwar, 2012). This might indicate that peripheral researchers who have had some contact with or even completed an academic degree in the center and/or collaborate with center researchers have an
increased chance of visibility in the center (Garfield, 1983; Gaughan and Ponomariov, 2008; Ou et al., 2012; Sonnenwald, 2007).

As the reasons for the lacking visibility of peripheral researchers have changed over time, the face of the debate has also changed. A few decades ago, access to current literature (Arunachalam, 2005; Velho, 1986), publication language (Canagarajah, 2002; Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008; Uzuner, 2008), and the financial situation of institutions (Arunachalam, 2002; Boshoff, 2010) were central issues for peripheral researchers. Most of these issues were addressed by technological advancements: Internet connections, for example, made access and submissions to high-ranking journals possible without any delay (Davidson et al., 2008). Some developing countries like India or China have experienced tremendous economic developments, resulting in a stronger emphasis on research activities and larger financial contributions from the governments (e.g., Lau, 2002; Wagner and Wong, 2012).

Although various issues related to the limited visibility of peripheral researchers have been addressed through these advancements, high-impact management journals are still dominated by research findings from the center (e.g., Baruch, 2001). Instead of taking the perspective of editors and reviewers of top journals, some researchers have tried to understand the lacking visibility of peripheral researchers from their own perspective. For example, Hanafi (2011) found that there are differing groups of researchers in the United Arab Emirates who, due to organizational structures, incentivization, or language issues, either publish locally or globally. Similarly, Gantman and Rodríguez (2016) reported evidence showing distinctively different groups of researchers in Spanish-speaking countries that either decide to publish locally or globally, mainly due to their personal abilities or environmental factors.

However, in other areas of the world such as India or Hong Kong, it is likely that environmental factors or language skills can only account for a part of the explanation for the lacking visibility of research, as English is the de facto lingua franca there (see Medgyes, 1992).
Therefore, in this study, we want to address this gap in research by investigating psychological factors that might influence peripheral researchers’ individual decision to submit their manuscripts to high-impact international journals, thereby limiting their visibility. In the following section, we will briefly explain social identity theory, which is a theoretical framework that is widely used to understand and analyze such group psychological processes, and apply it to the context of peripheral management research.

**Social Identity Theory**

The basic assumption of social identity theory is that the perception of being part of a social group exerts a significant influence on thought processes, attitudes and behavior towards another group (Tajfel, 1974; Turner, 1982). This perception or knowledge of group membership is only a cognitive assumption of individuals, which provides the scope to experience positive self-esteem and higher levels of prestige. If this cognitive group membership provides positive distinctiveness from another group (Turner, 1975), meaning that it bears positive emotional value for the self, it is defined as a social identity.

The key to understanding the concept of social identities is that they originate from inter- or intragroup comparisons. Tajfel and Turner (1979; 1986) assume that people need a reference point for social comparisons, which is why social identities are experienced relative to another group. The comparison dimensions are mostly chosen in such a way that people experience a positive social identity, but in some cases, the comparison has to be made on a dimension upon which an out-group actually has a higher status (e.g., the dimension of wealth). Tajfel and Turner (1979; 1986) described this as a negative social identity.
Such unpleasant experiences of negative social identities are not usually accepted as the final outcome, as people tend to cognitively identify themselves with a “winning group” (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). People can, for example, change their in-group (i.e., the group to which they feel they belong) and perceive themselves as being part of the higher-status group or change the comparison dimension. These so-called identity management strategies aim at improving the status of the in-group.

There is a plethora of identity management strategies from which to choose when experiencing negative social identities (see Blanz et al., 1998). Within social identity theory, the selection of a specific strategy depends mainly on the following three socio-structural variables (Ellemers, 1993): the permeability of group boundaries, the stability of group status, and the legitimacy of group status.

*Permeability of group boundaries* describes the perception that changing one’s own group affiliation to a higher-status group is possible. Permeability thus means that the identification with one’s in-group is not very strong, and if permeability is perceived as being high, changing one’s own in-group status to the higher-status group is seen as a reasonable option to cope with negative social identity (Lalonde and Silverman, 1994).

*Stability of group status* describes the perception that an alternative and higher group status is not achievable for one’s own group, and therefore a comparison on such a dimension is definitive. In this case, managing one’s identity by moving oneself to the higher status seems unlikely. People can tackle such a situation by undermining the importance of a comparison dimension that resulted in a negative social identity, and providing an alternative dimension for comparison (Festinger, 1957).

Finally, with regard to the *legitimacy of group status*, Ellemers (1993) stresses that a drive to use an identity management strategy in order to improve one’s status is only possible if there is a belief that the situation can be changed. Ellemers, Wilke and Van Knippenberg (1993)
found that if differences in-group status are perceived as legitimate by the lower-status group, no further action is taken by those who are part of this group. Only if illegitimacy and instability of group status differences are perceived do identity management strategies seem to be used: People appear to discriminate against the higher-status group by denouncing the value of the status on the particular dimension.

Most of the research surrounding social identity theory has been conducted using the so-called minimal group paradigm, which uses artificial group settings in the laboratory (Tajfel et al., 1971). However, efforts have been undertaken to apply social identity theory to natural contexts as well (e.g., Mummendey, Klink, et al. 1999). Although this can be difficult because real social groups can have an endless number of dimensions that can be used for comparison (Schiffmann and Wicklund, 1992), it does appear to be feasible in our context, as we outline now.

**Applying Social Identity Theory to Peripheral Management Researchers**

The situation of peripheral management researchers can be viewed through the lens of social identity theory: For peripheral management researchers (in-group), getting their research published in high-impact international management journals is a difficult task. Even if the peripheral researchers (the in-group) adhere to the same standards as researchers from the center (the out-group), their research output is not as visible for various reasons (e.g., Tijssen et al. 2006). As research training and socialization as well as relationships to peers in a particular society should contribute to the sense of identity for a researcher (see Sweitzer, 2008), social identity theory would suggest that there is status inequality between center and peripheral management researchers, thus resulting in negative social identity for peripheral management researchers. Of course, the perception of such a status inequality would only apply to those peripheral researchers who are able and/or willing to publish their research in English (Gantman, 2015; Hanafi, 2011). To cope with this unpleasant condition, peripheral management researchers
can use identity management strategies to improve their status. It seems plausible that one key aspect of improving one’s status in research is to act upon the principle of “publish or perish”, making the publication strategy (i.e., the extent to which researchers try to publish internationally or locally) the ideal way to manage researchers’ social identity. According to social identity theory, this publication strategy should then be influenced by four factors: identification, permeability, stability, and legitimacy (see Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1 HERE**

**Identification.** The internalization of a group identity to one’s personal identity has been shown to affect attitudes, intentions, and behavior (Madrigal, 2001; Postmes et al., 2005). The more people see themselves as part of a specific in-group, the more their behavior should be affected by the norms and values of that particular group (Cornelissen et al., 2007). Many researchers have talked about a neglect of peripheral management research in high-impact journals (e.g., Alcadipani et al., 2012), however there are likely also peripheral researchers who build their social capital by exchanging ideas with colleagues in the same region (see Gaughan and Ponomariov, 2008). From the perspective of social identity theory, such processes influence the identity of individuals; hence, it seems reasonable to assume that researchers who identify themselves more with the group of peripheral management researchers should prefer to share their knowledge with that in-group, resulting in a higher likelihood of publishing in a peripheral journal.

*H1: Peripheral management researchers who identify themselves with the group of peripheral management researchers are less likely to choose an international publication strategy.*

**Permeability.** Permeability between the periphery and the center can be the result of collaborations with center researchers or a prolonged research stay (e.g., to pursue a university degree or conduct post-doctoral research), as intergroup contact seems to modify group
boundaries and increase the permeability thereof (Brewer and Miller, 1984; Brown and Hewstone, 2005). Research has, for example, shown that peripheral researchers who have acquired a university degree in the center are more likely to publish their research globally (Gantman and Rodríguez, 2016). In accordance with social identity theory, if permeability between the periphery and center is perceived to be high, peripheral management researchers will change their own social identity towards the center and will thus be more likely to publish in international journals.

**H2:** Peripheral management researchers who perceive higher permeability between center and peripheral management researchers are more likely to choose an international publication strategy.

**Stability.** Peripheral researchers who perceive that their topics of interest and mutual knowledge on topics significantly differs from those of center researchers might perceive that status differences exist for a reason and are insurmountable, which means that they are considered as stable (see George, 2012). In contrast, peripheral researchers who perceive such differences in topics of interest as an opportunity rather than a limitation for them might perceive status differences as unstable and temporary. A good command over the English language could also further benefit peripheral researchers’ perception of (un-)stable status differences (see Alcadipani et al., 2012; Saracino, 2004). Striving for a positive self-concept, the higher status of international journals drives peripheral researchers to aim for publication in these journals (cf. Aguinis et al., 2012; Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991). Therefore, we hypothesize that the perception of unstable status differences increases the likelihood of peripheral researchers choosing an international publication strategy.

**H3:** Peripheral management researchers who perceive low stability of status differences between center and peripheral management researchers are more likely to choose an international publication strategy.
**Legitimacy.** The illegitimacy of group status can only influence the publication strategy if, at the same time, the relation between the center and periphery is perceived as unstable. Peripheral researchers should choose the publication strategy based on “the (im)possibilities for actual change in the social structure” (Ellemers, 1993, p. 51). This could, for example, mean that peripheral researchers have to perceive rejections to submissions of their papers to international journals as illegitimate and unfair. At the same time, in order to be able to act upon this perception of illegitimacy, it is necessary that they perceive a scope for success in the long run. If past failures are perceived as illegitimate and status differences are simultaneously perceived as temporary or alterable, peripheral researchers should be more likely to choose an international publication strategy.

*H4: Peripheral management researchers who perceive the relationship between the center and peripheral management researchers to be illegitimate and at the same time as unstable are more likely to choose an international publication strategy.*

**Method**

**Sample**

India was chosen as a representation of the periphery for one main reason: Although the lacking international visibility of peripheral researchers is often partly attributed to language difficulties for non-native speakers (Flowerdew, 2001), the strict division of native vs. non-native English speakers does not apply to Indians, who have sometimes even grown up with English as their first language (Medgyes, 1992). With 22 officially recognized languages in India (Bakshi and Kashyap, 2011), English has established itself as the lingua franca for research communication within India (Seidlhofer, 2001), resulting in Indian management journals being published almost exclusively in English. This should reduce the influence of a lack of command
of English on the selection of a publication strategy, which was found to be a crucial factor for the decision to publish locally or globally (e.g., Gantman and Rodríguez, 2016; Hanafi, 2011).

As we wanted to get a representative and diverse sample of Indian management researchers, we recruited participants via two approaches: (a) We searched for management faculties by working through a comprehensive list of Indian universities. In order to ensure that only those universities were included in our sample that have an emphasis on research we selected institutions that offered a research oriented Ph.D. program and collected email addresses of researchers from their respective websites; (b) We collected email addresses from authors of articles in Indian management journals (e.g., Indian Journal of Industrial Relations). In total, we sent out 471 emails inviting management researchers to fill out our online survey, and 259 people participated. We removed participants who were not management researchers (e.g., consultants) and, following the recommendations of Meade and Craig (2012), those who had aborted the questionnaire, skipped large parts of it (i.e., more than 40%), or rushed through it (the mean time it took to fill out our survey was $M = 8.04$ minutes ($SD = 2.71$ minutes), which is why we removed everybody who finished the questionnaire below 2.62 minutes). Finally, we removed participants who were identified as outliers by the Mahalanobis distance. Furthermore, as two participants left out one item, we used the two-way imputation procedure (Bernaards and Sijtsma, 2000) to fill these gaps. Of the total of $N = 169$ participants who remained for further analysis, 83.4% had the academic rank of a professor, 14.1% were Ph.D. scholars, and 2.5% held faculty positions (e.g., dean, lecturer); 71% were male, 28% female, and 1% did not indicate their gender. The mean age was 43.2 years ($SD = 10.3$) and the mean length of time for which participants had been conducting research was 12.0 years ($SD = 8.6$).

Measures

The following scales were all assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Studies using social identity theory as a framework (e.g.,
Verkuyten and Reijerse 2008) usually adapt items from previous studies to measure relevant variables, and we followed this practice by adjusting the content of the items to our context.

**Identity.** To measure identity, we adapted items from Mummendey, Kessler, Klink and Mielke (1999). The three items were: “I identify myself with Indian management researchers,” “I see myself as belonging to the Indian management researchers’ community,” and “I feel strong ties with the Indian management researchers’ community.” We achieved a satisfactory Cronbach’s $\alpha = .92$.

**Permeability.** Items were again adapted from Mummendey et al. (1999). The three items were: “No matter what effort is made, an Indian management researcher will never acquire the same status as a management researcher from an industrial nation,” “In principle, it is not difficult for an Indian management researcher to be considered equivalent to a management researcher from an industrial nation,” and “For an Indian management researcher, it is nearly impossible to be regarded as equivalent to a management researcher from an industrial nation.” After removing the second item from the permeability scale in our study, we achieved a reliability of $\alpha = .78$.

**Stability.** We used one item adapted from Mummendey et al. (1999) to assess stability (“I think the contribution of Indian management research to global management research will remain stable for the next years”).

**Legitimacy.** Items were adapted from Weber, Mummendey and Waldzus (2002). The items used were: “I think it is justified that management researchers from industrial nations have better chances of getting their research published in international journals than Indian management researchers,” “It is justified that Indian management researchers have a lower visibility in international journals than management researchers from industrial nations,” “It is unfair that management researchers from industrial nations are better off in international journals than Indian management researchers,” and “Indian management researchers are entitled to the
same visibility in international journals as management researchers from industrial nations.” In accordance with other social identity studies conducted in a natural context (e.g., Mummendey et al., 1999), we achieved $\alpha = .62$ after removing the third item.

**International publication strategy.** Important factors that influence the deliberate selection of a publication strategy seem to be the merit of the publication (e.g., Park and Gordon, 1996), collaboration with center researchers (e.g., Garfield, 1983), as well as the reaction to rejections during the peer-reviewing process (see Weller, 2001). As, to our knowledge, no established scale existed to assess international publication strategy, we incorporated these factors into an eight-item scale in which we asked participants the following question: “Imagine you have written a research paper which you think has turned out to be excellent. To which of the following journals would you submit it?” The response options were “An Indian management journal” or “An international management journal”, and were coded dichotomously. The item directly following this asked: “If the first choice results in a rejection, where would you submit it then?”, with the response options “An (other) Indian management journal” or “An (other) international management journal”. The remaining items were constructed identically to those above, with the exception that the term *excellent* was replaced with either *fairly good, mediocre or in collaboration with other researchers*.

The scale had a good reliability of $\alpha = .82$. Furthermore, we ran a confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate the structure (using weighted least squares means and variance adjusted estimation procedure to accommodate the fact that the scale answers are dichotomous (Beauducel and Herzberg, 2006), and achieved a good fit to a single-factor model, $\chi^2 = (20, N = 143) = 85.95, p < .01; \text{CFI} = 0.98, \text{TLI} = 0.97, \text{RMSEA} = .15 [90\% \text{ CI} = .12, .19]$. In addition, we validated our newly developed international publication strategy scale against two additional variables. One the one hand, Gaughan and Ponomariov (2008) have shown that collaborations increase the likelihood of getting research published in renowned international journals. On the
other hand, Ou, Varriale and Tsui (2012) believe the attendance of international conferences to be characteristic for researchers who aim at sharing and discussing their research on an international platform. In accordance with these studies, we found that the publication strategy scale correlated significantly with the number of collaborations with researchers from industrial nations ($r = .19, p < .05$) as well as with the attendance of international conferences ($r = .28, p < .01$).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

To ensure that status differences between center and periphery researchers were salient to participants, we asked them to indicate on a 7-point scale how much they agreed with the following statement: “Regardless of being justified or not, management researchers from industrial nations enjoy a higher prestige than Indian management researchers.” Our data supported our theoretical assumptions about the perceived status differences ($Mdn = 6.0, M = 5.1, SD = 1.7$).

Test of Hypotheses

Table 1 here

We used hierarchical regression analysis to analyze hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 proposed that higher identification with the group of peripheral management researchers should be negatively related to the selection of an international publication strategy. As can be seen in Table 2, our regression results confirm our hypothesis 1 ($\beta = -.23, p < .05$), suggesting that social identity indeed plays a role in the selection of publication outlets.

In hypothesis 2, we proposed that perceiving higher permeability between researchers from industrial nations and India should be positively related to the selection of an international publication strategy. To our surprise, our data did not provide support for our hypothesis that
permeability is relevant for the selection of an international publication strategy; thus, hypothesis 2 had to be rejected.

In hypothesis 3, we predicted that the perception of unstable group relations between researchers from industrial nations and India should be related to the selection of an international publication strategy. Our data confirmed hypothesis 3 ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$).

In hypothesis 4, we proposed that an interactive effect of legitimacy and stability of group differences should influence the selection of a publication strategy. Although hypothesis 4 was not supported by our data, we did find that the perception of illegitimate status differences between researchers from industrial nations and India was significantly related to the selection of an international publication strategy ($\beta = -.23, p < .05$).

TABLE 2 HERE

**Discussion**

The aim of this study was to provide a new perspective on the lacking visibility of management research from peripheral countries. Our findings reveal that a strong identification with Indian management researchers (as one example of peripheral management researchers) is negatively related to the selection of an international publication strategy. Although the perception of permeability of group boundaries did not improve the prediction of international publication strategy in this study, we were able to show that stability and legitimacy of group status differences are significant predictors of international publication strategy.

The low visibility of peripheral management research has often been linked to quality, language or technical concerns, which in turn are assumed to give rise to reservations on the part of editors, researchers, and reviewers from the center towards peripheral research (e.g., Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008). However, these explanations implicitly assume a bottleneck: Peripheral management researchers are assumed to submit a comparatively large number of manuscripts, whereas central researchers only consider a disproportionately small number for actual
publication (see Canagarajah, 1996). Our approach differed in that we wondered if getting research published in international journals can even be considered one of the most important research communication methods for peripheral researchers. Therefore, we assessed group psychological factors that we believed could influence the intention to publish internationally.

Our study provides three main findings: First, our results show that group psychological processes do influence the intention to publish in an international journal. Such psychological processes (social identities) provide positive distinctiveness from an out-group and enhance self-esteem (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, 1986). Usually, for a positive self-concept to develop, the in-group (i.e. peripheral researchers) has to be perceived as having a higher status in comparison to the out-group (Turner, 1975). Interestingly, our data shows that Indian management researchers assign a higher status to central management researchers while at the same time identifying themselves more strongly with the lower-status group of peripheral management researchers. This means that management researchers who indicate a higher identification with local peripheral management researchers seem to give little consideration to submitting their research manuscripts to reputed international publication outlets in order to enhance their status. These researchers seem to draw their positive self-concept from local management researchers, which in turn leads them to share their insights with local management researchers in local publication outlets rather than to aim for an international publication.

Second, we found the perceived stability of group differences to be negatively related to international publication strategy in our data. Furthermore, peripheral (i.e. Indian) management researchers mostly perceived little prospect of a change in their own status compared to that of the center. This perception of a lower stable status increases the satisfaction with one’s own in-group according to social identity theory (Ellemers et al., 1990). Thus, peripheral management researchers might not often perceive a need to talk about their research on an international platform.
Third, we found a significant negative relationship between the legitimacy of group differences and international publication strategy. In other words, Indian management researchers who perceive status differences between the center and periphery to be illegitimate are more likely to enhance their personal status and self-esteem by publishing internationally. Management researchers who perceive these status differences to be legitimate are more likely to change the comparison dimension, as one form of identity management, and should be more likely to publish locally.

Although Indian management researchers do seem to perceive some permeability between the groups, this does not seem to affect the selection of an international publication strategy. This might be good news, as it could mean that peripheral management researchers who perceive considerable obstacles to publishing internationally nevertheless do not stop trying. Moreover, we were unable to confirm the interactive effects of legitimacy and stability on the selection of an international publication strategy. It might be possible that even though a management researcher considers the group relations to be legitimate and stable, the hurdles and the associated costs of submitting a manuscript are perceived as low. This could explain why some management researchers still try their luck and, against all psychological odds, submit manuscripts to international journals.

This study also contributes to the social identity research, as research on social identities in non-Western countries has been rare (see Wetherell, 1982; Yuki, 2003). Our study is one of the few to investigate the applicability of the social identity approach in a non-Western country (i.e., India), showing that basic assumptions of social identity theory seem to hold across in non-Western countries as well. Additionally, we were able to illustrate the power of social identity theory as an explanatory framework for real group phenomena, by using it in the context of management researchers. However, our study also revealed differences from previous findings
surrounding social identity research (e.g., Ellemers et al., 1993; Wright et al., 1990), which might be related to cultural influences and should be investigated in greater detail.

Like all studies, the current study has some limitations. First, our adapted legitimacy scale only achieved a low reliability and has room for improvement. This low reliability has also been found in other studies (e.g., Mummendey et al., 1999), which suggests that it might need a general revision. Second, generalizability concerns might be raised, as peripheral management researchers are not a homogenous group. As language difficulties have been found to be a major hurdle for peripheral researchers (e.g., Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008), we wanted to reduce the influence this might have on selecting an international publication strategy. Therefore, Indian management researchers seemed to be an ideal starting point, as their command of the English language, which is the lingua franca of international researchers, is often close or similar to that of a native speaker (Medgyes, 1992). At the same time, we acknowledge that our study should be replicated in other peripheral countries to ensure generalizability. Third, our newly developed publication strategy scale would benefit from further validation. Forth, although our focus on group psychological processes offers a new perspective on the limited visibility of peripheral research, such a perspective should ideally be studied in combination with other perspectives (e.g., a financial perspective, cf. Boshoff, 2010).

Future research could analyze the way in which identity management strategies work in the context of academic publishing. In this study, we limited our analysis to international publication strategies with cross-sectional data; however, there are a variety of strategies to cope with negative social identity that could be relevant to peripheral researchers (cf. Hinkle and Brown, 1990): For example, it is possible that some peripheral management researchers perceive center management researchers as an irrelevant group for comparison and rather focus on qualitative differences within the group of peripheral management researchers (cf. Blanz et al., 1998). In such a case, national or regional publication strategies might be more relevant for the
development of positive social identities. Thus, using longitudinal data it might be fruitful to extend our approach to other identity management strategies that peripheral management researchers could be inclined to use.

A further avenue for future research could be to gain a better understanding of the research socialization processes in the periphery. Social identities are always developed in social contexts that trigger relevant norms, values and behavior (Turner, 1975). It might be possible that peripheral management researchers are acculturated to primarily share their knowledge with fellow peripheral management researchers (cf. Graham et al., 2009). As one central purpose of research communication is to exchange ideas with like-minded researchers with the same public goals (Canagarajah, 1996), it seems understandable that peripheral researchers with a strong local identity would wish to communicate on platforms which they consider to be most relevant for their research goals. Furthermore, previous social identity research has shown that high identification with a low-status in-group motivates group members to commit themselves even more to the group goals (Doosje et al., 2002). Therefore, an acculturation process might act as a social inhibitor, which could discourage individuals from publishing internationally, thus limiting the visibility of peripheral research.

Our results imply that in order to increase the visibility of management research from the periphery, approaches should be considered that reach beyond the enhancement of writing or language skills. If we are truly vested in achieving a global view on research, it is of the utmost importance that peripheral management researchers consider themselves part of an international community of management researchers and do not limit their sense of belonging to a local community. At the same time, center management researchers and journal editors have to play a role: Our study shows that it cannot be taken for granted that researchers from across the world seek to publish their research in international journals. Therefore, journals that claim to offer an
international perspective on management issues should consider supporting and soliciting more contributions from peripheral countries.

Furthermore, our results imply that peripheral management researchers would prefer to see their group status in general to be enhanced, and such a status enhancement for the whole group could be a more promising path to increase the visibility of peripheral management research than enabling individual peripheral researchers to gain access to the center, which has been the focus of the center-periphery debate until now (Salager-Meyer, 2008). Such collective status enhancement strategies could be supported, for example, by conducting high-profile management conferences in peripheral countries, where center and peripheral management researchers are awarded the equal opportunity to participate and share their knowledge and skills. The Academy of Management has started an annual conference in Africa as well as offers management societies from other countries affiliation opportunities (Academy of Management, 2013, 2014), which is a step in the right direction. However, such conferences should not be targeted at researchers from one continent only and affiliations should not only constitute of a unidirectional flow of information.

In conclusion, our study adds a new angle to the center-periphery debate by incorporating the influence of social identities on the selection of an international publication strategy. Most importantly, research socialization in the periphery seems to increase the likelihood of choosing local publication outlets rather than aiming for international publications. Therefore, it is necessary to implement strategies that aim at the psychological inclusion of peripheral researchers in order to increase their visibility in international journals and on international platforms.
References


Table 1

*Pearson Correlation Matrix*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Publication strategy</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Permeability</th>
<th>Stability</th>
<th>Legitimacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication strategy</td>
<td>- .19*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permeability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$M$</th>
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<td>5.42</td>
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<td>4.36</td>
<td>3.79</td>
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<table>
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<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.46</td>
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*Note. $N = 143$. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.***
Table 2

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Publication Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE(B)</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permeability</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legitimacy × stability</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
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Note. N = 143. *p < .05, **p < 0.01.
Figure 1

*Model depicting the proposed relationships*

![Diagram showing relationships between Legitimacy, Stability, Permeability, Identity, and International publication strategy.](image-url)