



# Preferences for evaluation criteria as a matter of scholars' characteristics

Michael Ochsner & Sven E. Hug

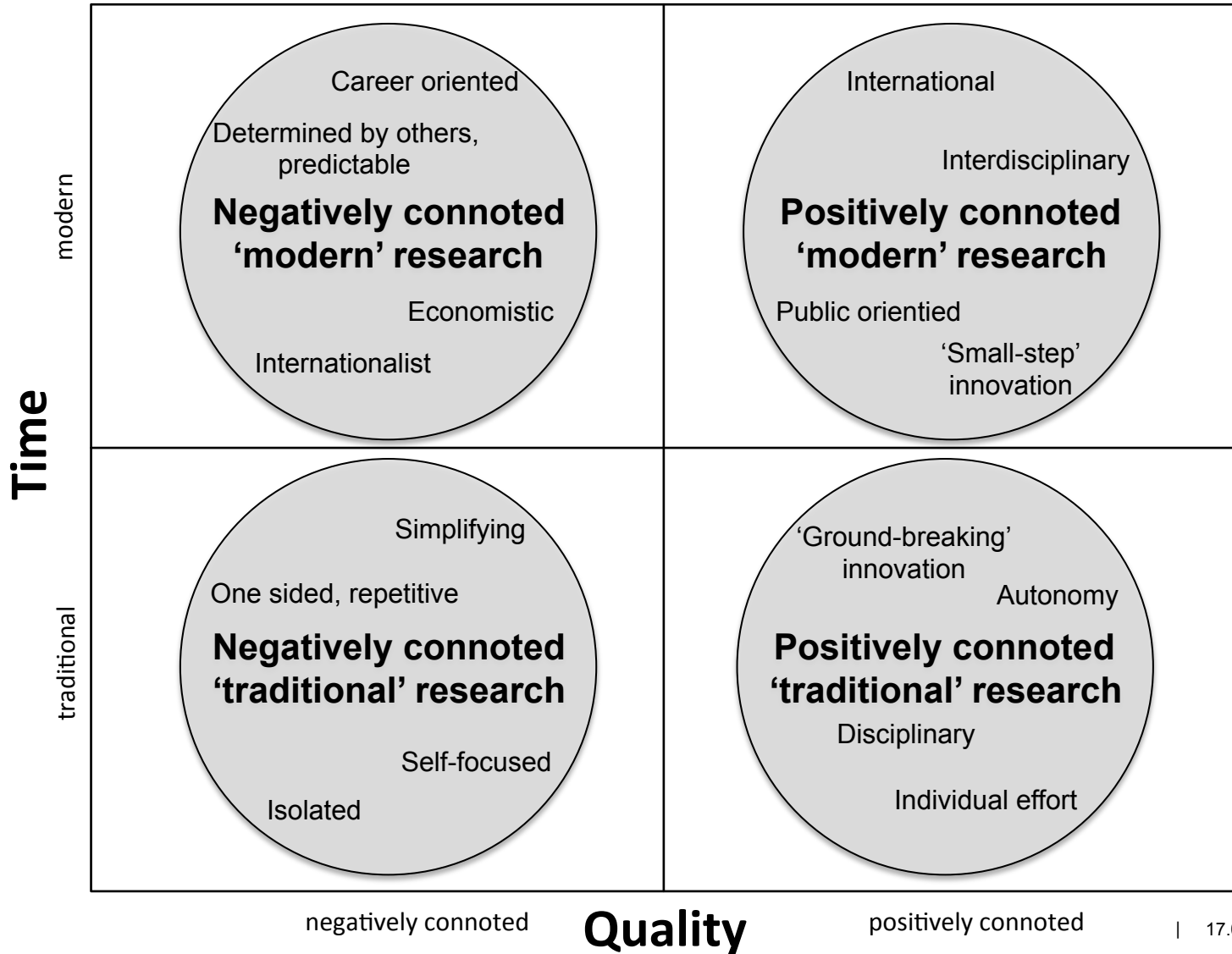
# Point of departure

- Modern vs. traditional conception of research
  - Often commented: well, the modern conception will finally prevail and the traditional will die out
  - Our argument: Both are important also in the future. There is no relation to “real” time
- Focus so far: Research
  - quality criteria must reflect the whole range of humanities’ research
- Other focus: Scholars’ characteristics
  - Quality criteria must reflect the whole range of humanities scholars
  - Selection of criteria: If related to discipline, approach or personal characteristics, this leads to discrimination of some scholars

# Research Question

- Modern vs. Traditional: Temporality or simultaneity?
  - Are the **scholars putting forward** aspects typical to the **traditional** conception of research **distinct** from the scholars preferring aspects typical to the **modern** conception of research?
- Are scholars' characteristics defining notions of quality?
  - Are differences in the preferences for quality criteria influenced by the scholars' personal characteristics?

# Notions of Quality



# Modern vs. Traditional Conception of Research: Simultaneity of the non-contemporaneous?

- Multilevel analysis:
  - Level 1: ratings of the aspects
  - Level 2: scholars
- Design: separate models for (1) all aspects, (2) only modern aspects, (3) only traditional aspects
- Results
  - No relation of modern vs. traditional conception with personal characteristics
    - Traditional aspects get significantly better ratings
    - GLS prefer more the aspects of the trad. conception than ELS and AH
    - Being involved as a reviewer in evaluation: slightly stronger preference for aspects of the traditional conception
  - Simultaneity of modern and traditional conception of research

Ratings of aspects	Full	Modern Aspects	Traditional Aspects	Ratings of aspects	Full	Modern Aspects	Traditional Aspects
Female	0.136* (0.0727)	0.108 (0.0899)	0.116 (0.0781)	Conception (Base: Modern)			
Age	0.0223*** (0.00690)	0.0253*** (0.00854)	0.0154** (0.00742)	Traditional	0.362*** (0.0308)		
Year of promotion	-0.00846 (0.00683)	-0.0133 (0.00844)	-0.00631 (0.00734)	Neutral	0.0268 (0.0257)		
Tenure	0.0135 (0.0782)	0.0107 (0.0967)	-0.0133 (0.0840)	Constant	3.543*** (0.284)	3.452*** (0.350)	4.200*** (0.304)
Discipline (Base GLS)				ln(2lev sd)	-0.811*** (0.0559)	-0.715*** (0.0708)	-0.848*** (0.0698)
ELS	-0.105 (0.0956)	0.0405 (0.118)	-0.181* (0.103)	ln(1lev sd)	0.140*** (0.00614)	0.126*** (0.0142)	0.000223 (0.0136)
AH	-0.0829	0.0322	-0.198**	Observations	13,440	2,688	2,880
Approach (Base: Cult)	(0.0857)	(0.106)	(0.0922)	Number of groups	192	192	192
Text-oriented	-0.112 (0.130)	-0.229 (0.161)	0.0467 (0.140)	LL	-21187	-4275	-4214
Mixed: Cult/Text	0.0362 (0.0939)	0.000633 (0.116)	0.0931 (0.101)	LL_com	-21887	-4381	-4329
Other	-0.221 (0.168)	-0.264 (0.208)	-0.0950 (0.181)	df_mod	12	10	10
eval	0.101 (0.0730)	0.127 (0.0904)	0.158** (0.0785)	df_com	1	1	1
				p>com	0	0	0
				Chi2	234.7	22.95	24.09

# Preferences for evaluation criteria as a matter of scholars' characteristics (1/3)

Method: Analysing difference in ratings for each criterion

Results:

- Age: The older the more positive rating. 26 aspects are rated more positive
- Gender: Women rate aspects more positively. 15 aspects rated more positive:
  - Reflexivity (self-critical, deconstructing “truth”), Passion, Social Competency. And: continuous productivity. More the traditional concept with some exceptions but NOT systematically.

# Preferences for evaluation criteria as a matter of scholars' characteristics (2/3)

- Experience as Expert in Research Evaluation:
  - More positive ratings. Both modern and traditional (more traditional aspects): Openness, risky, self-reflective, diversity, passion, autonomy
  - But: Most highly rated aspect: scientific honesty: less positively rated.
- Years since promotion
  - Less positive: Research is part of teaching, research is influenced by teaching
- Tenure
  - Less positive: intrinsic motivation, reputation in the community
  - More positive: openness to persons, make research understandable

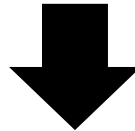


# Preferences for evaluation criteria as a matter of scholars' characteristics (3/3)

- Approach: Crossing disciplines!
  - Text-oriented approach:
    - clearly disfavours: societal impact, self-critical, create new paradigm/school/debate
    - Clearly favours: Knowledge on materials, proof sources, clear language, re-connect to lost discussion/topic.
  - Cultural studies:
    - Clearly favours (relative to others) societal orientation (not impact)
    - Less positive towards re-connecting to lost discussion/topic
  - Mixed (Text-oriented and cultural studies):
    - More positive towards: connecting to current and lost discussion, close gaps, document the past/archives
  - Other approach(es)
    - Disfavour Societal orientation, taking risks, and intersubjectivity

## Summary

- Simultaneity of modern and traditional conception of research
  - Researcher do both, however, traditional is favoured
- Preferences for quality criteria depend on scholars' characteristics



Selection of criteria might discriminate certain scholars:

- Women
- Approach
- (Tenured/not tenured, experts in research evaluations to a lesser extent)

# Conclusion

- Evaluation using peer review:
  - Quality criteria are used either explicitly or implicitly
  - Preferences for criteria differ between disciplines but also between approaches, gender, experience
  - Thus, important to make criteria explicit in order to be comparable
    - Different scholars use different criteria if they use their gut feeling
  - Use a broad range of criteria to ensure that there are criteria for all types of research and scholars

- Project publications:
  - <http://www.psh.ethz.ch/crus/publications>
- Colloquium:
  - <http://www.psh.ethz.ch/crus/kolloquium>
- Publication data base:
  - Data base for Literature on Arts & Humanities and Assessment (+/- 1000 Entries)  
„Arts & Humanities Research Assessment Bibliography“ (AHRABi)  
<http://www.psh.ethz.ch/crus/bibliography>