

Reputation indicators and research performance

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- 1. Reputation indicators in rankings
- 2. What is reputation?
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Before there were rankings, there was only reputation.

- Now, reputation still is an important indicator in many rankings.

1. Reputation indicators in rankings (-E



| Ranking | Share in total score |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| THES World Rankings | 50 % |
| Perspektivy (Poland) | 50 % |
| US News | 25 % |
| Asia Week | 25 % |
| Macleans | 16 % |
| CHE | available |

2. What is reputation?



- the social ascription of capability, high performance or quality by particular social groups/stakeholders
- hierachies in reputation are a social reality (e.g. if employers consider it in employing people, in the selection of peer reviewers)
- can be conceived as "cultural capital", i.e. as a social ressource of HEIs
- by "experts" (THES), employers, professionals (US News), academic community/professors (CHE): multiple reputations?

The social contextuality of reputation



- reputation of universities may differ between different social groups, e.g. employers vs. professors
- may differ for different subjects
- may be different according to national and regional aspects

The social contextuality of reputation II: Reputation among different groups



Example: German rankings of business studies

- 1. "Karriere" ("Career")
 - reputation among employers
- 2. CHE-ranking
 - reputation among professors
- high correspondence on state universities
- employers ascribe high reputation to small, private business schools
- that have no reputation among professors, as they think of research

The social contextuality of reputation I: Disciplines/Academic Communities



The reputation of universities varies between different disciplines

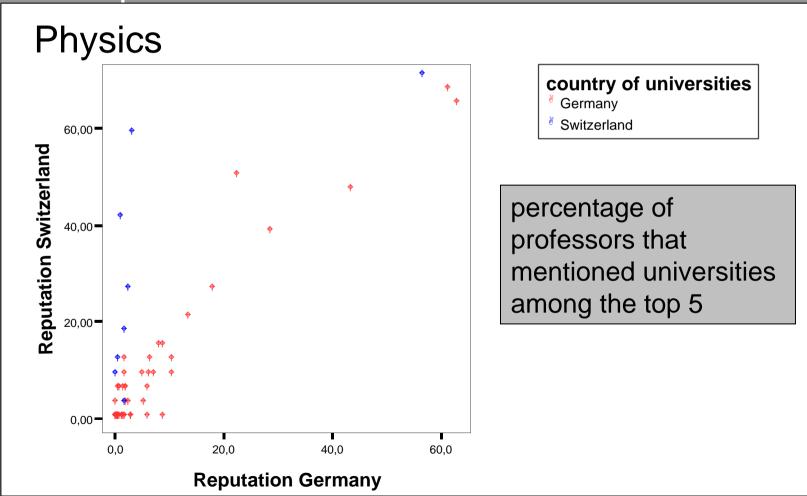
Example: Humboldt University, Reputation in research

| University | Discipline | Mentioned by | |
|------------|-------------|---------------------|--|
| | | % of all professors | |
| HU Berlin | Biology | 6,2 | |
| HU Berlin | Chemistry | 4,4 | |
| HU Berlin | Dentistry | 16,3 | |
| HU Berlin | Geography | 18,9 | |
| HU Berlin | Informatics | 2,8 | |
| HU Berlin | Mathematics | 17,2 | |
| HU Berlin | Medicine | 31,2 | |
| HU Berlin | Physics | 7,4 | |

The social contextuality of reputation III: National context



Example: Reputation among German and Swiss professors



Conclusion 1





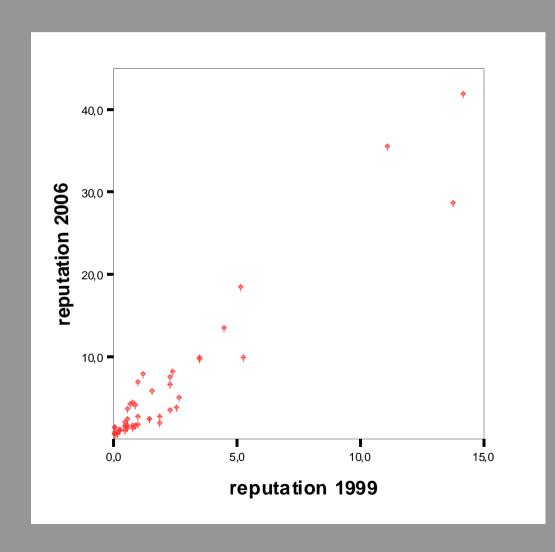
As it measures social ascription reputation is highly dependant from the kind/structure of the sample: there is only reputation "among .."

The regional distribution of the sample of stakeholders will heavily influence "reputation" in international rankings

Differences by disciplines show that a reputation indicator for whole universities may blur significant information on profiles

Reputation and change





CHE-Ranking: Physics

correlation: r = .91 **

Conclusion 2



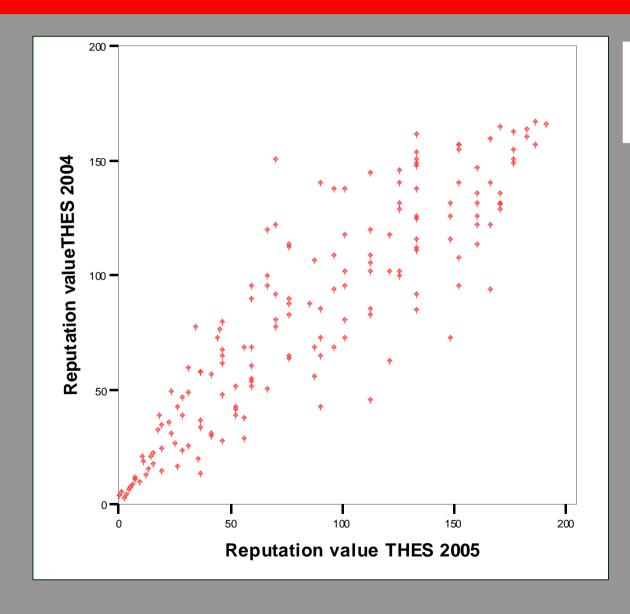


Reputation is a stable social ascription that changes only slowly over time

Short period changes of reputation indicators may hence be a sign of a deficit of realibility of measurement rather than of actual changes

3. The problem of league tables





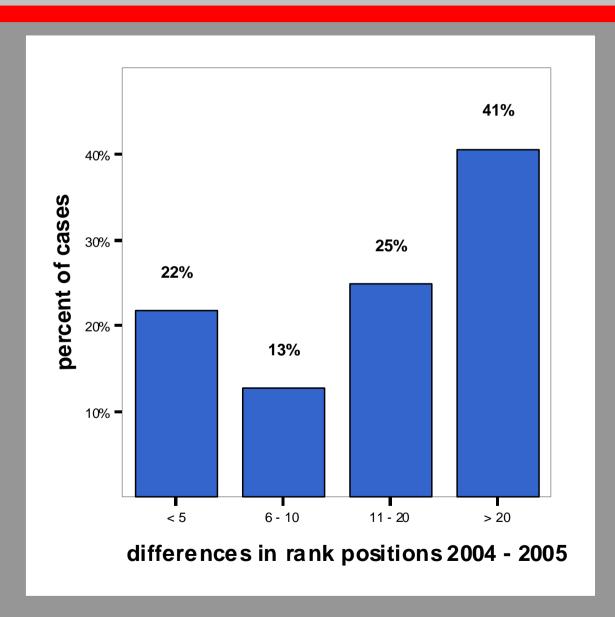
THES World Rankings

correlation: r = .93 **

but ...

3. The problem of league tables





Conclusion 3

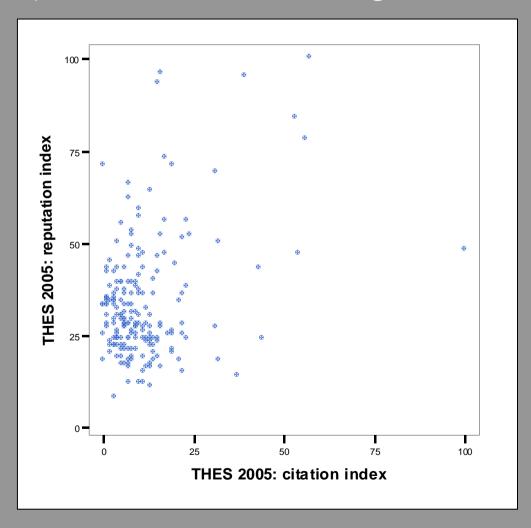




League tables tend to exaggerate differences between universities and the dynamics of changes in reputation



a) THES world rankings 2005

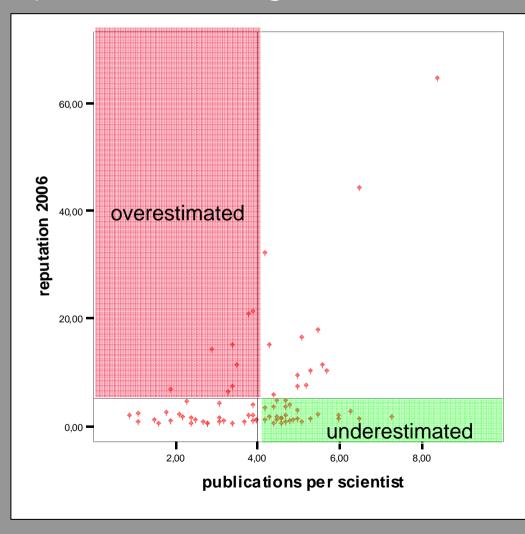


correlation:

$$r = .35 **$$



b) CHE-Ranking

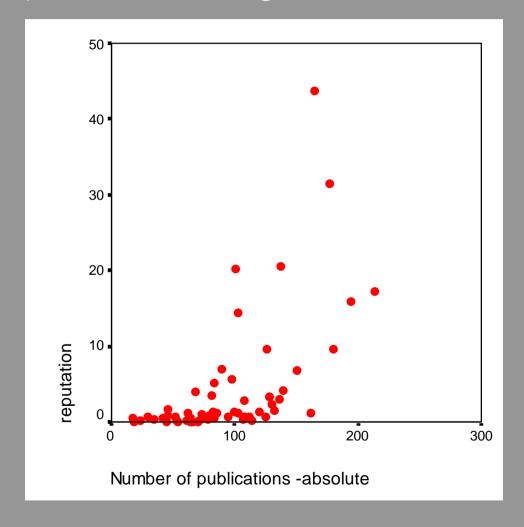


Mathematics: publications per capita

correlation: r = .39 **



b) CHE-Ranking

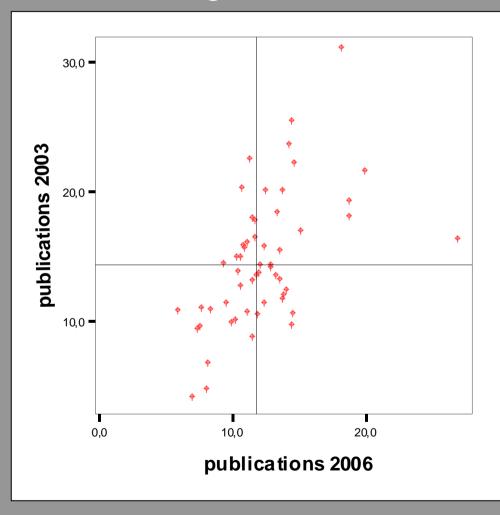


Mathematics: publications absolute

correlation: r = .59 **



b) CHE ranking



Mathematics: publications absolute

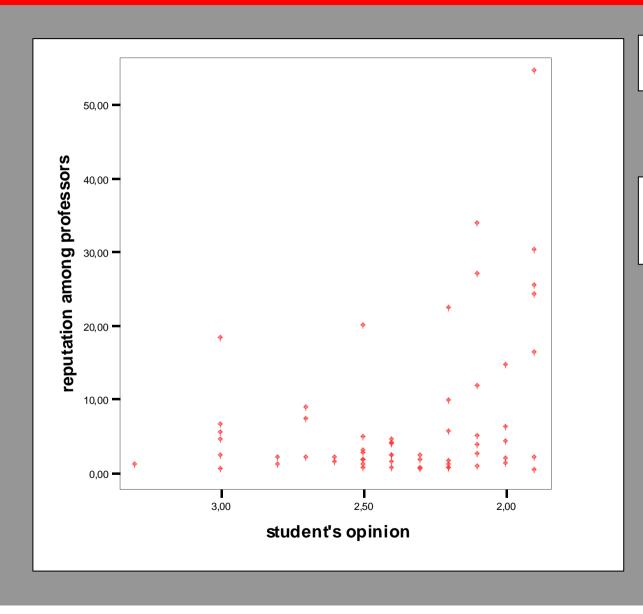
Correlations reputation – research indicators



| Discipline | research funds | publications per year | citations per publ. | number of PhDs |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| English studies | 0,63 | 0,66 | | 0,57 |
| Biology | 0,43 | 0,41 | 0,36 | 0,66 |
| Business Studies | 0,41 | 0,53 | | 0,65 |
| Chemistry | 0,66 | 0,44 | 0,24 | 0,64 |
| Eletrical Engineering | 0,79 | | | 0,87 |
| Education | 0,74 | 0,58 | | 0,51 |
| History | 0,75 | 0,69 | | 0,70 |
| Mechanical Engineering | 0,76 | 0,56 | 0,39 | 0,86 |
| Pharmacy | 0,57 | | | 0,61 |
| Physics | 0,56 | 0,58 | 0,46 | 0,70 |
| Psychology | 0,61 | 0,44 | 0,14 | 0,46 |
| Sociology | 0,56 | 0,61 | | 0,50 |
| Economics | 0,49 | 0,44 | | 0,32 |

Reputation and students' opinion





Biology:

correlation: r = .35 **

Conclusion 3





There are correlations between reputation and (research) performance

Correlations are higher with absolute than with per-capita values: size matters

But: there are underestimated as well as overestimated institutions

Reputation indicators should be seen as social ascription rather than performance indicators

5. Summary I





Repuation can be a useful information in rankings

... as it reflects existing reputation hierarchies that are a social fact

... and it is an information students want to know

... but only when the validity and reliability is guaranteed (among whom? time stability)

5. Summary II





BUT:

Due to its characteristics & limitations

→ it should <u>not</u> be used as an element of an weighted overall score

As normally differences in values are so small – in particular in the lower range –

→ it should <u>not</u> be transformed into league table positions

5. Summary II



Finally, we should be aware of the fact, that rankings themself contribute to the construction of reputation

But this should not be done by a score that just expresses reputation



Reputation indicators and research performance

Thank you for your attention!

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