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Globalizing Political and Economic Elites in National Fields of Power

*Christian Schneickert**

Abstract: »Die Globalisierung politischer und wirtschaftlicher Eliten in nationalen Feldern der Macht«. The article contributes to the discussions about global elites from a field-theoretical and empirical perspective. The examination of comparative biographical data on political and economic elites in two countries from the Global North (Germany and the US) and the Global South (Brazil and India) shows that elites in all four countries are globalizing. However, this process is strongly embedded in specific historic and socio-cultural structures of national fields of power. Emerging powers from the "Global South" seem to establish their own "schools of power" for the educational reproduction of their national elites. Therefore, speaking of a homogenous global elite is misleading and obscures the multiple conflicts between elite factions in national fields of power, as well as between national elites from different countries and world regions. Consequently, field-theoretical research on elites must be embedded in a comprehensive analysis of power, conflict, and class-relations on the national as well as on the global level of the capitalist world system.

Keywords: Elites, field of power, Bourdieu, globalization, global elite.

1. Introduction

In the context of the economic crisis of the last ten years, capitalist globalization has been a key driver of the changing relationship between political and economic fields. Economic practices and economists as intersectional field-agents between such fields consequently gained academic attention (Lebaron 2001; Maesse 2015; Schmidt-Wellenburg 2017, 2018). This article argues that a field-theoretical perspective on economic practices still falls short of providing a full understanding of the heterogeneous effects of globalization on the relation of political and economic fields within fields of power and on different analytical levels (e.g., local, national, transnational, or global). An exploratory analysis of such field relations has to start with the top positions in fields – the field-elites.

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Globalization is not a uniform, homogenous, or consistent process. Although neoliberal economic practices are a main driver, globalization in fact relies on various non-capitalist and even non-economic structures (Sklair 2002). Moreover, agents other than elites should be part of a comprehensive analysis of the global field of power (Schmitz, Witte and Gengnagel 2017). Instead of universal conditions for all nations, the dynamics of globalization have rather different effects on states and national societies as well as their local contexts (Heredia 2018; Klüger 2018, in this issue). Robertson termed this dialectic character of globalization and localization “glocalisation” (Robertson 1990, 1992; Robertson and White 2003). Nederveen Pieterse made a similar argument emphasizing the hybridity of the local and the global against the backdrop of an essentialism of identity, ethnicity, and nation (Nederveen Pieterse 2004, 65, 71). Surprisingly those discussions from globalization theory are almost not connected to elite research yet.

As actors operating at the intersection of political, economic, and scientific fields, economists are highly relevant in fields of power on the national and transnational level. Nevertheless, the analysis of political and economic field-elites itself enhances our understanding of the relation of the central subfields within national fields of power. It is only from this specific configuration that economic practices and economists unfold their relational relevance. Therefore, although I recognize the importance of economists in the field of power I would like to argue that we do not focus enough on the political and economic fields in themselves as well as their relation to the field of power. Moreover, what we still lack from a field-theoretical perspective is a full understanding of the relation between (at least) the political, economic, and scientific field in the field of power.

A field-theoretical approach facilitates solutions for some structural issues in elite research (Schneickert 2015). First, it tackles elite researchers’ methodological nationalism that assumes nation-states to be the single most important unit of analysis. Second, it criticizes elite researchers’ Eurocentrism, their concentration on theories developed in the context of European societies of the 19th century and their empirical disinterest in non-Western elites. The latter precludes a full understanding of the role of elites and inequality in the post-colonial and multicentric configuration of global capitalism in the 21st century. Third, it overcomes the assumed antagonism between structure and agency as well as, fourth, the assumed antagonism between the global and the local.

Scholars agree on the fact that the analysis of transnational class formation should start with elites since these social groups accumulated greater amounts of different forms of capital than lower social strata, facilitating their transnationalization (Mau and Büttner 2010). In *Towards a global ruling class* Robinson and Harris (2000) argued that the capitalist upper strata from all world regions would crystallize into a transnational capitalist class. However, as this article shows, the formation of transnational classes is not the only process

taking place in a globalized world. In the last 20 years elite research has shown that the top position holders are still tied to national contexts in various regards and that there are competing forms of elite configuration and of neoliberal globalization as well as conflicting configurations on the level of the world-system. Altogether, this constitutes a superstructure that might be conceptualized as a global field of power.

This article contributes to this research agenda by exploring the political and economic fields within national fields of power from the narrow framework of elite research. Drawing on biographic data regarding top politicians and top executives in four countries, focusing on social structure and globalization, it will show that the impact of globalization is context-specific. Therefore, globalization has to be theoretically reframed as a macro-development that has to adapt to historic, cultural, and field-specific structures on the national level as well as the micro-level of actors. The paper first summarizes the current debate between the two contradicting positions on global and national elites. Subsequently, comparative data from the four countries are presented showing that there are indeed processes of convergence and standardization but also that local, cultural, historic, and field-specific structures still carry a lot of weight. Finally, the analysis of national field-structures is further elaborated and visualized using multiple correspondence analysis (MCA).

2. The Myth of the Global Elite

At first glance, the idea of a global elite in the making is intriguing, especially regarding the acceleration of capitalist globalization with the increasing concentration of wealth and power in ever fewer hands. In his work *The state nobility*, Bourdieu (1996) contends that the consolidation of the French national ruling class was historically based on a process of cultural standardization. Regarding globalization, it is an interesting question whether a similar process takes place on the transnational level today.

The globalization debate (cf. Waters 1995; Therborn 2000; Stiglitz 2002; Sklair 2006; Scholte 2000; Rehbein 2011; Robertson 1990, 1992; Robertson and White 2003) has inspired social theory and has redirected elite research away from the prior antagonism between functionalist and conflict-theoretical approaches to the discussion of the global power structure. In the last 20 years a new theoretical antagonism in this area of research emerged with the development of two ideal-typical positions.

On the one hand, scholars who advocate the global elite hypothesis argue that elites and upper classes are in the avant-garde of transnational class formation, transcending the borders of the nation state (Field 1972; Marceau 1989a, 1989b; Albrow 1996; Kanter 1997; Robinson and Harris 2000; Sklair 2001; Kentor and Jang 2004; Rothkopf 2008). It is further argued that this

detachment from local or national limitations can be transferred into power and influence. Regarding this power shift to the transnational level, national politics and the welfare state are increasingly under pressure.

On the other hand, scholars have shown in a number of empirical studies that the concrete agents of those macro developments remain national in important aspects of their biographies, first and foremost regarding socio-cultural aspects and educational as well as career paths (Hartmann 2000, 2007b; Beaverstock 2002; Beaverstock, Hubbard and Short 2004; Carroll 2010). Such empirical studies often focus on the micro-level of actors and tend to leave the macro-level and the intersection of (field) structures and (habitual) agencies aside. However, the empirical findings generally refer to the importance of national differences and basic structures of the national social spaces for the constitution of individual and class habitus. In this context Schwengel argued that the exclusiveness of national upper class habitus is – in contrast to the 18th century European ruling class – rather an obstacle to transnational class formation (Schwengel 2004). The debate became more moderate, objective, and well founded in empirical research in recent years (cf. Carroll 2010; Hartmann 2015; Schneickert 2015). Obviously, globalization decisively shapes the 21st century, national welfare states and borders are under pressure and transnational corporations and their executives share a common interest in the functioning of a globally operating capitalist world economy. However, common interests and network structures do not necessarily imply formation of similar (globalized) habitus (Schneickert 2013) or transnational lifestyles (Sklair 2001, 20).

The idea of a highly globalized elite on the one hand and a demobilized and increasingly marginalized part of the population on the other hand is a populist fiction. At the beginning of the 21st century, Huntington (2004) predicted that the cleavage between the cosmopolitan liberal elite and the nationalism of the American population would become the major political division in the US. Castells (1998, 415) coined the phrase: “elites are cosmopolitan, people are local.” The election of Donald Trump has further sparked this debate and the discussion on nationalism worldwide established this theme in discourses regarding political fields. However, this idea obscures an important part of the empirical reality. Not only are working and middle classes not per se excluded from transnational practices and mobility (e.g., regarding migration, tourism, studying abroad, etc., cf. Weiß 2005) they might even profit from transnational practices, although the distribution of transnational capital obviously has a social gradient (Gerhards and Hans 2013; Delhey, Deutschmann and Cirlanaru 2015). Moreover, what we usually refer to as globalization is in fact an increase in the mobility of capital and global production as well as the mobility of people between certain places, like global cities (Sassen 1991; Carroll 2010, 68-75) or within world-regions (Delhey et al. 2014; Deutschmann 2016). At the same time, even transnational networks of elites rely on strong national bases (Carroll and Fennema 2002, 2004; Carroll 2010).

Furthermore, the strong focus on social structural divides and on economic globalization partly ignores the complex relation between differentiation and globalization. From a field-theoretical perspective, there are distinctions between how field-elites (the political elite, the economic elite, the artistic elite, the scientific elite, etc.) adapt to globalization according to their relational position in national fields of power. This was a central point in Marxist approaches to globalization, prominently in Wallerstein's world-system-theory (1979) but was largely neglected by (functionalist) differentiation theory in elite research.

Integrating power, conflict, inequality, and differentiation is a key feature of Bourdieusian field-theory but similar attempts can be found in the works on transnational class formation as well (Sklair 2001; Carroll 2010). Theoretically, this leads to the relation of micro- and macrostructures. While the integration of agents and structures is constitutive for Bourdieusian field-theory, it is often regarded as mutually exclusive in elite research and research on globalization. For example, globalization theory usually focuses on macro processes while sociology of transnationalism emphasizes the role of agents. I have argued elsewhere (Schneickert 2015) that both research traditions would benefit from a field-theoretical perspective, integrating the dialectics of habitus and field. Regarding globalization, the structural and organizational levels (e.g., markets, financial flows, discourses, etc.) obviously globalize faster than the individual and biographic levels of socialization as well as educational and career patterns. But even this is only part of the globalization story. Of course, capitalist corporations follow an instrumental rationality and therefore share an interest in maximizing profits in global markets. But when it comes to everyday practices or ownership structures, the recruitment of top position-holders and transnational networks, national patterns are still very important (Carroll and Fennema 2002, 415; Carroll 2010, 18).

A major theoretical and empirical flaw in the debate about global elites is its strong focus on either (globalized) structures or (national) actors and their biographies. Furthermore, the multiple conflicts and heterogeneities between national elites from different world regions are usually ignored. Quite the contrary, a field theoretical approach to globalization highlights exactly the multidimensionality and field-specific differentiation of globalization processes. That is, the globalization hypothesis is not falsified because the trajectories of elites are predominantly national. On the other hand, the existence of a global elite is not verified just because there are global financial flows, global markets, and interests in an operating capitalist world economy. Empirically we find globalized elites in national fields of power and vice versa national trajectories in transnational or globalized fields. Therefore, a field-theoretical approach to globalization urges to be much more cautious with actor-centered indicators on the one hand, but also not to define globalization as mere macro-development without concrete agents on the other hand.

Although empirical elite research from its beginning in the 1960s (cf. Edinger and Searing 1967) showed that national differences are important, comparative elite research on the international and transnational level is not institutionalized academically yet (Hoffmann-Lange 2007, 920). Table 1 compares findings from four international comparative studies on the globalization of economic elites, covering data from 1995 to 2015.

Table 1: Globalization of Economic Elites (in Percent)

	Hartmann 1999			Hartmann 2009		Pohlmann 2009			Hartmann 2015	
	I	II	III	I	II+III	I	II	III	I	II+III
Germany	2	15	14	9	36.3	-	22.1	27.6	14.7	47.1
France	2	13	6	2	18.1	-	-	-	4.0	26.0
UK	7	12	14	18	18.9	-	-	-	33.0	23.9
USA	3	2	7	5	9.5	-	-	-	6.9	17.0
Japan	-	-	-	1	-	2	21.8	40.0	1.0	-
China	-	-	-	0	-	0	7.1	9.1	0.0	-
South Korea	-	-	-	-	-	2	30.0	43.3	-	-

I=Foreign CEOs; II=Studying abroad; III=Working abroad. Own Calculations according to Hartmann 1999, 118; 2009a, 289; 2015, 40-1; Pohlmann 2009, 520; see Schneickert 2015, 103.

The data indicate a clear trend towards globalization over time but this process is overall much slower and more moderate than is usually assumed in the literature. Furthermore, strong national differences can be found, with German and British economic elites significantly more globalized than elites in France, the US, or China. As the table further indicates, most available data are on North-American and European elites, although there is a growing interest in Asian and Latin American countries but unfortunately almost no systematic data on African Elites.

The analysis of biographical data is predominant in elite research with a special focus on educational reproduction and career patterns (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot 1999; Mayer and Whittington 1999; Hartmann 2007a; Davoine and Ravasi 2013). If structural data are analyzed at all, the analysis usually focuses on attendance at elite schools and universities.

In summary, the main findings of international comparative elite research have enhanced the understanding of differences between national configurations according to national social structures (e.g., class structures and social spaces). Although all elites are socially exclusive and recruit themselves mostly from the upper strata of the (national) social spaces, countries can be differentiated according to the organization of this reproduction function. While some countries rely on institutionalized cultural capital with decisive educational elite institutions (e.g., France, the UK, the US, or Japan), others do not have well-known institutions such as the *Grandes Écoles*, the Ivy League Universities, or “Oxbridge” and rely mostly on incorporated cultural capital and habitus as the

dominant mode of reproduction (e.g., Germany, Italy, Austria) (cf. Hartmann 2007a).

Furthermore, the specific relation of field-elites, the degree of horizontal differentiation, and the autonomy of fields differ between countries. It appears that the configuration of field-elites is associated with the specific socio-cultural style of differentiation in a society. To systematically analyze such configurations from a comparative perspective, this paper focuses on the top positions of society in two fields that are considered central to the power structure of most contemporary societies (Bühlmann, David and Mach 2012a): the economic and the political field.

3. Comparative Analysis of Elites in Four Countries

The following analyses are based on biographical data of top politicians and top executives in Brazil, Germany, India, and the US (N=336), collected in 2013. The country sample contrasts elites from two leading countries from the Global North (G8) and the Global South (BRICS) that are as heterogeneous as possible regarding the globalization of their elites. Therefore, the US and Brazil were chosen to cover the most national type of elite configuration, whereas India and Germany were expected to provide more globalized fields of political and economic elites.

Field specific positions were selected according to the positional approach [Table 2].

Table 2: Positional Sampling

	Economic Elites (N=207)	Political Elites (N=129)
Brazil (N=60)	Chairmen or Chief Executive Officers (CEO)	President · Vice-President · President of Câmara dos Deputados · President Senate · President Supremo Tribunal Federal · Chefe da Casa Civil · Ministers (24)
Germany (N=81)	Chief Executive Officers (CEO)	President · Chancellor · Ministers (15) · Parliament (Bundestag: President · Leaders of Fractions and Parties)
India (N=91)	Chairmen or Managing Directors (MD) or Chief Executive Officers (CEO)	President · Prime Minister · Vice President · Lok Sabha (Speaker, Deputy Speaker, People Leader, Leader of Opposition) · Ministers (32)
USA (N=104)	Chairman or President or Chief Executive Officers (CEO)	President · Vice-President · Ministers (22) · Senate (President, Majority Leader, Minority Leader) · House of Representatives (Speaker, Majority Leader, Minority Leader)

Regarding the economic (corporate) elite, positions were selected according to the Forbes Global 2000 ranking (2013), choosing the largest corporations from

the four countries in this list. The Forbes ranking is the best ranking available on a global level, although it certainly has its flaws from a strictly methodological perspective. The list is based predominantly on four indicators (sales, profits, assets, and market value) and is restricted to the largest public companies. For a reconstruction of the economic field in general, the Forbes list would certainly be insufficient as it focuses heavily on the top layer of corporations, which makes it adequate for the purpose of this paper. Nonetheless, national rankings were counter-checked to rule out the possibility of not taking into account important national corporations. However, all national corporations were already included in the Global 2000 sample. US companies were strongly overrepresented in the list, and therefore the number of US corporations was restricted to 75. For the other countries, all Global 2000 corporations were included: 55 from India, 49 from Germany, and 31 from Brazil. The combination of a national sample based on the Global 2000 ranking with a restriction of US-corporations is consistent with the considerations of Carroll and Fennema (2004) regarding the dominance of US corporations in the capitalist world system. This argument was criticized by Kentor und Jang (2004, 358) regarding research designs focusing on global elites and the global power structure. Therefore, researchers have to focus either on the North-South-divide or on global elites in the global power structure. However, for the international comparative aim of the paper at hand the chosen approach is appropriate as no conclusions will be drawn from this dataset on the (existing or non-existing) global elite.

Regarding political elites, the determination of the most relevant positions is well founded in the literature on political systems in Brazil (e.g., Fontaine and Stehnen 2014), Germany (e.g., Rudzio 2011), India (e.g., Jayal and Mehta 2010) and the US (e.g., Edwards, Wattenberg and Lineberry 2010).

All data were collected in August 2013, predominantly from published sources (e.g., forbes.com; reuters.com; bloomberg.com; governmental and personal websites, etc.). Since information on managers from India and Brazil from published sources was insufficient, a survey of CEOs and chairpersons of 81 identified corporations in the two countries was conducted in fall 2013 to add additional information to the dataset (see Schneickert 2015 for more information).

The sampling procedure is not neutral, especially regarding elite positions (Bourdieu 1996, 234). For example, the sample size cannot be increased without having a loss of exclusivity in the sample. Therefore, elite research usually suffers from small sample sizes. Moreover, information on elites is sometimes difficult to gather and therefore missing values are another big issue. On the other hand, missing values in elite research are not only a matter of data quality, rather they can indicate power differences and specific field rules (for example, usually more personal information on top politicians is available than on corporate managers). This seriously restricts the possibilities for advanced multivariate

analysis. In this context, MCA provides explorative and descriptive analytical power for field-theoretical elite research. However, focusing only the top position-holders of the political and economic subfields of national fields of power brings other restrictions. A comprehensive analysis of the field of power would certainly include other positions, structures, and discourses. Some of the large-scale elite studies went in this direction, covering different sectors of societies and assuming the power elite in a moderate sized nation state to include some 1,000 to 4,000 individuals (for the case of Germany see Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997; WZB 2013). Therefore, the following comparative analysis of fields of political and economic elites can be understood as explorative analysis of national fields of power.

Four indicators are frequently used to operationalize the transnationalization of elites [see Table 3]: Number of non-citizens (binary, multiple citizenship is coded as 'non-citizen'), migration background (binary, born and/or raised in another country), studied abroad and worked abroad (binary, >3 month). Beside standard sociodemographic information, parent's occupation was coded into a five-class-scheme (lower class, lower middle class, upper middle class, upper class, and elite, see Table 14 in the appendix). Academization is a binary variable measuring if the person holds at least an undergraduate degree. Overall the elites are highly 'overeducated,' as we find over 100 different higher education degrees for the 336 biographies analyzed. The disciplines of law, economics and engineering as well as the degrees Master of Business Administration (MBA) and PhD are most relevant for the field elites under research. Therefore binary variables for those disciplines were coded as well. The variables in-house career, branch career, and field career measure the degree to which individuals changed position during their career. While in-house career and branch career applies to the economic elites only, field career measures if a person changed the macro-field of occupation in general (e.g., from science to politics, from politics to the economy, etc.). These variables are binary coded as well.

Table 3 presents descriptive results, indicating national and field specific differences, but also some similarities between structures of national elite configurations. Overall, the male domination of elite positions is striking, but a closer look reveals strong differences between the fields, with the lowest number of women in the German economic elite. The elites are usually married (with the Brazilian elite being a slight dissenter in this regard) and recruit themselves from the upper strata of the national social spaces. Regarding social background, national and field-specific differences appear with elites in Brazil and India being more exclusive and the German political elite with the highest number of individuals from lower and middle classes.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

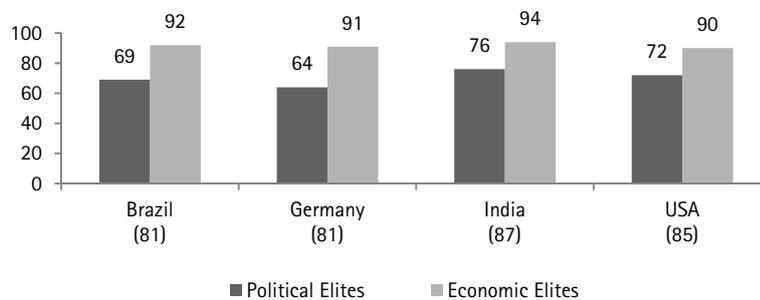
	Brazil (N=60)		Germany (N=81)		India (N=91)		USA (N=104)	
	PE	EE	PE	EE	PE	EE	PE	EE
Female	13%		12%		9%		14%	
	20%	7%	28%	2%	11%	7%	30%	8%
Age (mean)	58 (sd=10.5)		55 (sd=7.3)		61 (sd=8.7)		59 (sd=7.7)	
	61	55	55	55	67	57	59	59
Married	84%		92%		98%		99%	
	82%	88%	81%	100%	97%	100%	97%	100%
Children (mean)	2.5 (sd=1)		2.2 (sd=1.5)		2.4 (sd=1.3)		2.6 (sd=1.1)	
	2.7	2.2	1.8	2.6	2.5	1.9	2.5	2.8
Upper Class & Elite Origin	83%		48%		76%		55%	
	83%	83%	29%	65%	79%	72%	55%	56%
Academization	93%		93%		99%		99%	
	93%	93%	88%	96%	97%	100%	100%	97%
Law	19%		34%		27%		20%	
	39%	0%	50%	24%	52%	10%	45%	10%
Economics	48%		31%		55%		55%	
	23%	73%	25%	35%	27%	73%	24%	68%
MBA	21%		8%		21%		28%	
	0%	42%	4%	11%	6%	31%	10%	35%
Engineering	27%		22%		22%		20%	
	8%	46%	0%	35%	6%	33%	10%	25%
PhD	18%		47%		6%		9%	
	33%	2%	41%	51%	11%	2%	10%	8%
In-house Career	-	30%	-	21%	-	41%	-	39%
Branch Career	-	80%	-	63%	-	93%	-	78%
Inter-Field Career	19%		14%		10%		14%	
	24%	14%	25%	6%	14%	7%	50%	0%
Studied Abroad	27%		25%		26%		11%	
	19%	35%	9%	35%	19%	31%	10%	11%
Worked Abroad	19%		30%		18%		15%	
	14%	23%	3%	48%	26%	13%	10%	18%
Migration	5%		13%		2%		11%	
	3%	8%	6%	17%	0%	5%	7%	14%
Non-Citizens	5%		11%		1%		10%	
	3%	7%	0%	19%	0%	2%	10%	10%

PE=Political Elite; EE=Economic Elite.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the relevance of cultural capital for the legitimation of elite positions is most relevant. Field specific institutions for elite-recruitment are decisive for the analysis of the field of power. Although in Bourdieu's work the concept is peculiarly fuzzy and largely restricted to the national frame, it can certainly be modified and expanded beyond the nation state (Buchholz 2016; Schmitz, Witte and Gengnagel 2017). Nevertheless, the focus on elite schools like the French *Grandes Écoles* and the top executives is

certainly not by accident (Bourdieu 1996). The nexus of meritocratic legitimation by cultural capital, elite positions, and power structures is historically a very European configuration. In this context, Table 3 surprisingly indicates no significant differences between the four countries regarding academization. Furthermore, the dominance of only a few academic disciplines, especially the trio of law, economics, and engineering for elite recruitment is well known, following the hierarchical structure of the faculties in the academic field (Bourdieu 1988 [1984]). The relevance of those disciplines can be found in the present data as well, as Figure 1 indicates. Obviously, the dominance of lawyers, economists, and engineers in the elite is not specific to elite configurations in Europe or the Global North and neither is the overrepresentation of lawyers in the political elites and economists and engineers in the economic elites [Table 3].

Figure 1: Degrees in Either Engineering, Economics, or Law (EEL) (in Percent, N=306)



Regarding cultural capital, the data suggest the expansion of a certain way of legitimizing executive power in the context of capitalist globalization. It is important that this process of convergence concerns meritocracy only as a social construction. It says little about the quality or qualifications of top position-holders (Davoine and Ravasi 2013, 156-7) – especially in an international or historical comparison – and almost nothing about their democratic legitimation.

From a field-theoretical perspective one has to be aware that field-specific educational and career patterns play an important role for field-socialization and therefore for the autonomy of fields. This differentiation-theoretical aspect might be a reason for the persistence of the national character of such patterns.

However, Table 4 shows no strong accumulation of schools of power comparable to the French *Grandes Écoles* analyzed by Bourdieu. In all four countries studied, the data do not suggest a significant concentration on certain elite institutions. Just the combination of Ivy League universities (supplemented by Stanford and MIT) reaches significant numbers, hosting almost half of the US-elites in the present sample. Beside this combination, only Harvard as single institution stands out. Apparently, the representation of educational institutions

is not fully congruent with national educational rankings. For example, in the case of the US, other non-Ivy League schools besides Stanford and MIT consistently rank among the top 20 and Princeton competed with Harvard for the number one position in the last years.

The weak concentration of German educational institutions is rather unsurprising as the university system traditionally consists of federal public institutions with no elite institutions standing out. However, with the universities of Göttingen, Munich, Münster, and Freiburg being the once most frequently mentioned, at least some of the oldest and most prestigious institutions from South-West-Germany appear. The Technical University in Munich certainly has some relevance for the technological fraction of the economic elite. However, as the current German elites were predominantly born between 1945 and 1965 and received their education in the 1970s and 1980s, recent government program to establish German elite universities (the ‘*Exzellenzinitiative*’) did not play a considerable role until now.

Although no schools of power in the sense of the *Grandes Écoles* can be detected, a much denser concentration of institutions appears in Brazil. The *Fundação Getúlio Vargas* is a prestigious higher education institution, also well-known as public and private management think tank. The *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP) is the largest public university and the most prestigious and internationally best known higher education institution in Brazil. For the Brazilian economic elite, especially the engineering school (*Escola Politécnica*) is of relevance, but USP is also the alma mater of 12 Brazilian presidents. The private pontifical universities in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo play an overall minor role but they are nonetheless important for the political elite and elites of the civil society with a disciplinary focus on law, social sciences, and philosophy. Similarly, the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ) as the largest public federal university in Brazil is known as the center of the intellectual elite (see also Klüger 2018).

A similar division of labor in the field of power is observable for the Indian elites. Especially the loose network of the National Institutes of Technology (NIT) and the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) as autonomous public “institution of national importance” plays some role for the recruitment of the technological fraction of the Indian economic elite. On the other hand political elites most likely graduate in law at Delhi University, while the financial fractions focus on degrees from Mumbai University or the Indian Institute for Banking and Finance (IIBF). While IIBF predominantly offers graduate courses in professional education, Mumbai University is one of the largest educational institutions in the world with over 500,000 students. Regarding these numbers, however, there is obviously a stark difference between these institutions and the French schools of power described by Bourdieu.

Table 4: Educational Institutions

Brazil	
Fundação Getúlio Vargas (Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo)	22%
Universidade de São Paulo (USP)	18%
Pontifícia Universidade Católica (RJ and São Paulo)	16%
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)	9%
Germany	
University of Göttingen	11%
University of Munich	9%
University of Münster	9%
University of Freiburg	8%
India	
NIT / IIT (different locations)	13%
University of Delhi	13%
International Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF)	13%
University of Mumbai	10%
USA	
Harvard	24%
Columbia	7%
Stanford	6%
Ivy League + MIT + Stanford	46%

Overall, it is striking that educational institutions in Brazil and India appear to provide a stronger concentration of national elite education in only a few institutions (on an overall low level though). Quite to the contrary, the case of the US elite institutions clearly also refers to the level of the global field of power. Harvard is a national school of power but it is also a global institution. Therefore, studying in such an institution cannot simply be taken as indicator for the nationalization of elites. This leads to the central claim of this paper that will be developed in the following section. Elite configurations do not only differ according to historical, socio-cultural, or field-specific structures but also regarding the position of the nation state in the world-system (Wallerstein 1979). For an international comparative elite study, I suggest operationalizing the political and economic fields and their elites as central indicators of national fields of power.

4. National Fields of Power and Globalizing Elites

Bourdieu's conception of a field of power was further elaborated in elite research in recent years (cf. Hjellbrekke et al. 2007; Bühlmann, David and Mach 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Schneickert 2015; Beri and Schneickert 2016; Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet and Thine 2018; Naudet, Allorant and Ferry 2018). The

concept of social fields has the potential to overcome the antagonism between (functionalist) differentiation theory and (Marxist) conflict theory in elite research. This theoretical antagonism has prevented an integrative analysis of political and economic field-elites, situated in their specific social fields respectively. Bühlmann et al. developed this approach with their groundbreaking work on the fields of the political and economic elites of Switzerland (Bühlmann, David and Mach 2012a) with a special focus on the globalization of the Swiss elites (Bühlmann, David and Mach 2013). Field-theoretical elite research integrates those different theoretical schools with a special focus on conflicts, inequalities, and power structures. In the following, the article uses a similar approach to conceptualize fields of the economic and political elite from a comparative perspective and a special focus on differentiation, education, career patterns, and globalization of both field-elites. Methodologically, field theory is a comparative approach. It focuses on specific cases but allows to conceptualize general patterns. In the following, a MCA for each of the four countries is presented.

Regarding globalization, actor-centered indicators dominate for the empirical operationalization. In the present data, the four indicators of globalization correlate moderately, with the strongest association between number of non-citizens and migration background [see Table 5 in the appendix]. For the MCA, using only those variables unsurprisingly results in a one-dimensional solution for all four countries.

In *The state nobility*, Bourdieu (1996, 351) used MCA to explore the “properties” of top executives and the homology of the field of *Grandes Écoles* and the field of power. However, the present paper uses the possibility in MCA to distinguish between active and passive variables for theoretical reasons but also for reasons regarding the structure of the data (e.g., field specific missing values). The trajectories of the agents will serve as active variables, while sociodemographic and field specific data will be included as passive (illustrative) variables. This allows to integrate political and economic elites within a field of power. Moreover, since it is theoretically argued that educational and career patterns are most relevant for the globalization of elites, such variables – together with the indicators of globalization – will serve as active variables, constructing these fields. Variables containing social structural information (e.g., gender, class, marital status, children, regional origin) and field-specific information (e.g., the sampling variable, party affiliation, Forbes Global 2000 corporation rank, corporation headquarter, branch) are integrated as illustrative (passive) variables in the analysis. Field specific variables therefore are coded 0 for the other field elite, respectively, instead of missing. Since those variables are included as passives, they do not construct the space and therefore avoid a differentiation bias. The same procedure was used to include a (binary) sampling variable that helps to illustrate the relative position of the political and economic field-elites in the MCAs. Regarding the socio-demographic varia-

bles, missing values are a serious issue (in this case especially regarding class background, of course). Furthermore, the missing information is obviously not randomly distributed (for example, less information is available on the economic elite). Since MCA is highly sensitive to outliers and missing values, the missing values were integrated as own category and the variables are only included as passives. The structure of the data is far from perfect in this regard, but otherwise some of the socio-demographic information could not have been integrated at all. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the position of those passive variables should be done with great caution.

Figure 2 illustrates the field of political and economic elites in Germany. Educational and career patterns as well as globalization shape the first (horizontal) dimension of the field. Studying law, the University of Göttingen, and inter-field careers are clustered at the pole of the political elite on the left side of the space, while working abroad as well as non-citizens and field careers concentrate at the pole of the economic elite on the right side of the plane.

The second axis largely represents the internal differentiation of the economic elite with engineers in the upper section and economists in the lower section of the field. All globalization variables contribute to the horizontal axis; therefore, the differentiation of the field-elites is associated to a differentiation between the national and the globalized pole in the field. Studying abroad contributes to both axes equally, tending towards the economist and financial fraction of the German economic elite. On the right side of the plane, the globalized pole of the economic elite is internally differentiated. While the German economic elite is highly globalized in total and especially compared to the political elite, the economist fraction is slightly more globalized than the technological fraction.

Interestingly, a PhD slightly tends to the pole of the economic elite and reflects the high number of German executives with a doctorate. Overall, the German case shows a clear differentiation of the field-elites that is associated with a differentiation according to globalization. The political elite builds a concentrated cluster at the national pole located on the left side of the space, while the economic elite is internally differentiated between engineers and economists and is located at the globalized pole at the right side of the space.

Figure 2: The Field of Political and Economic Elites in Germany (2013, MCA)



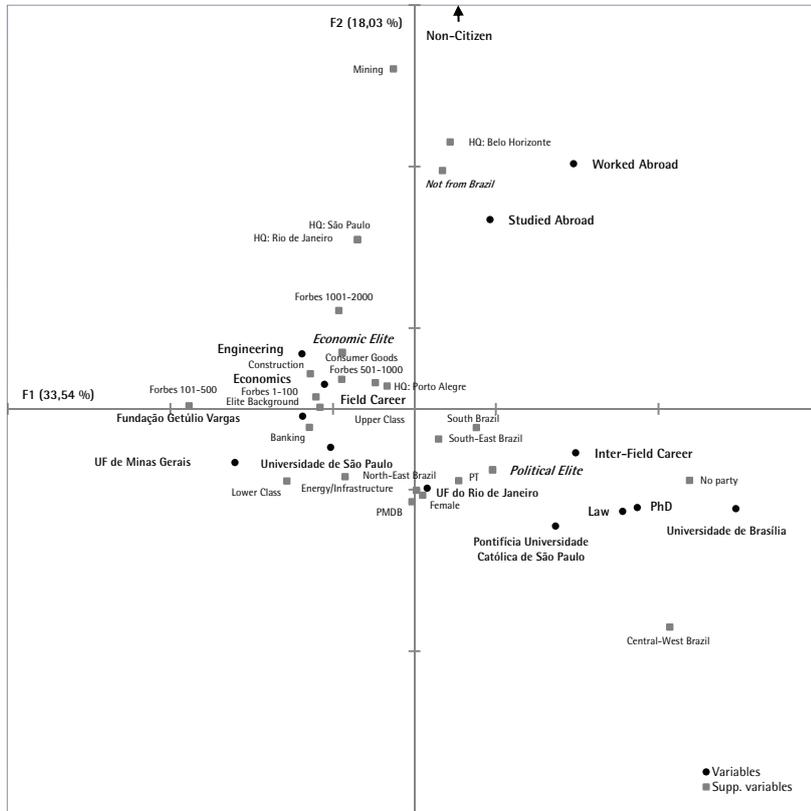
N=79. Explained variance on F1 and F2: **59.8%** (based on the modified rates of the Eigenvalues). See Table 6 and Table 7 in the appendix for information on Eigenvalues, modified rates, and contributions of active variables. Bold=Contribution above average on F1, F2.

Active variables (all binary): law, engineering, economics, PhD, universities (>5%), field career, work abroad, study abroad, non-citizen.

Passive variables: party, Forbes Global 2000 corporation rank, branch (>5%), headquarter of corporation (>5%), field, female, age (>50, 50-59, 60+), marital status, children (none, 1-2, 3+), class background (lower, lower middle, upper middle, upper, elite), regional origin (North Germany, West Germany, East Germany, South Germany, not from Germany).

Figure 3 illustrates the same variables for the Brazilian elites. The structure of the field is less clear-cut than is the case in Germany, with the indicators of globalization exclusively determining the second (vertical) axis [Table 5]. The first axis distinguishes between engineers, economists, and field careers on the left side and lawyers, PhD-holders, and the University of Brasilia on the right side. However, the differentiation of political and economic elites contributes to both dimensions and is therefore not clearly associated with globalization.

Figure 3: The Field of Political and Economic Elites in Brazil (2013, MCA)



N=50. Explained variance on F1 and F2: **51.6%** (based on the modified rates of the Eigenvalues). See Table 8 and Table 9 in the appendix for information on Eigenvalues, modified rates, and contributions of active variables. Bold=Contribution above average on F1, F2.

Active variables (all binary): law, engineering, economics, PhD, universities (>5%), field career, work abroad, study abroad, non-citizen.

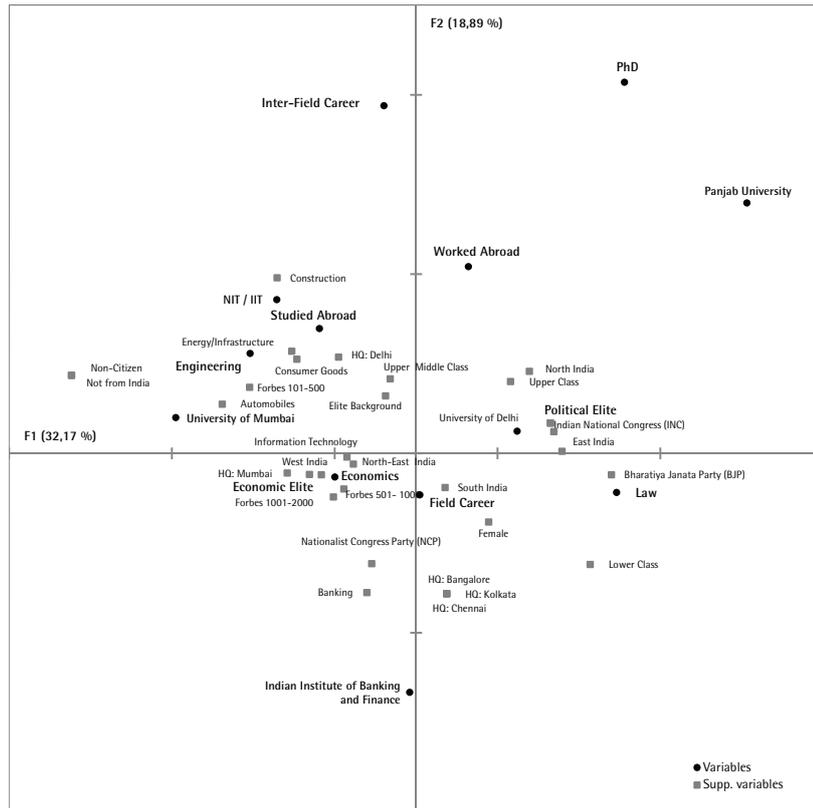
Passive variables: party, Forbes Global 2000 corporation rank, branch (>5%), headquarter of corporation (>5%), field, female, age (>50, 50-59, 60+), marital status, children (none, 1-2, 3+), class background (lower, lower middle, upper middle, upper, elite), regional origin (Central-West, North-East, South, South-East, not from Brazil).

The spatial structure indicates again a neighborhood of the political elite and lawyers as well as inter-field careers. The economic elite seems to be quite integrated, as the dense cluster on the central left side shows, indicating a proximity of the banking sector, *Fundação Getúlio Vargas* (FGV), and *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP) education. Notably this financial cluster of the economic field elite is not located at the globalized pole of the field. The diffuse character of the fields manifests in the fact that engineers and most of the

universities contribute to different degrees to the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth dimension (not displayed) as well, but those patterns cannot be interpreted in a meaningful way.

Taken together, the Brazilian field is more integrated with the political and the economic elite being separated only slightly by academic education (law versus economics and engineering) and the autonomy of field careers. However, this separation is not as clearly affected by globalization as it is in the German case.

Figure 4: The Field of Political and Economic Elites in India (2013, MCA)



N=75. Explained variance on F1 and F2: **51%** (based on the modified rates of the Eigenvalues). See Table 10 and Table 11 in the appendix for information on Eigenvalues, modified rates, and contributions of active variables. Bold=Contribution above average on F1, F2, F3.

Active variables (all binary): law, engineering, economics, PhD, universities (>5%), field career, work abroad, study abroad.

Passive variables: non-citizen, party, Forbes Global 2000 corporation rank, branch (>5%), headquarter of corporation (>5%), field, female, age (>50, 50-59, 60+), marital status, children (none, 1-2, 3+), class background (lower, lower middle, upper middle, upper, elite), regional origin (East, North, North-East, South, West, not from India).

A quite different picture emerges for the Indian elites [Figure 4]. Unlike for the other countries, the MCA facilitates a three dimensional solution in this case (F1: 32%, F2: 18%, F3: 14%). Figure 4 illustrates the first two axes, but the third dimension is interpreted as well [see Table 11 in the appendix]. The first (horizontal) axis indicates a difference between disciplines and educational institutions (University of Mumbai, engineering, and economics on the left and University of Delhi, Panjab University, and law on the right) according to the differentiation of the field-elites (with the political elite clearly located on the right side). Again studying law is associated with the political elite.

The second axis includes working abroad, studying abroad as well as inter-field career and PhD in the upper half, and the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF) and field careers in the lower half.

A third dimension captures the nexus of economics, engineering, and some universities (especially the NITs and IITs). It probably reflects the relevance of the technological fraction in the Indian economic elite. In Figure 4 this cluster is located on the upper left side, while on the lower left-hand side the financial pole appears.

Overall, the scattered distribution of the globalization variables is striking. Unlike in the other countries, the economic elite is not located clearly at a globalized pole. Studying abroad is fairly near to the political elite, but working abroad is even closer. Non-citizens and migration background tend to be associated more with the economic pole. However, due to the low number of non-citizens and almost no persons with migration background these two variables were set to passive to avoid outlier bias for the construction of the field. Caste affiliation was excluded from the analysis for similar methodological reasons (resulting from non-random missing information).

Taken together, the Indian case demonstrates the different impact of globalization in local fields. Whereas it is assumed that economic elites are usually more globalized, in this case we see an Indian political elite that is highly engaged in transnational activities. These results suggest that the political field in India (at least at this time, in 2013) rewarded the accumulation of transnational capital. In contrast to the political elites in Germany and the USA, engaging in such international institutions was beneficial for Indian politicians and could be transferred to national political capital and position.

Figure 5 presents a contrasting situation, illustrating the field of political and economic elites in the USA. Here, the first axis is largely determined by the globalization variables (with the globalized pole on the right side) and Columbia University on the left side. The second (vertical) axis illustrates a cluster containing Harvard, Yale, lawyers, holding a PhD, and inter-field careers in the upper section and another one in the lower section including economists, engineers, and a Wharton School education. The differentiation of the field-elites is tied to this dimension with the political elite on the upper left and the economic

vertical axis); rather, they determine a relatively separated horizontal dimension. In summary, the field analysis suggests that the field of the political and economic elite in the US reflects its position as the hegemon in the world-system. This regards especially the role of Harvard located at the national pole of the field as a national “school of power” but simultaneously constituting a global institution of elite recruitment. Within the US-field, however, globalization is not tied to specific elite fractions, educational, or career patterns.

Table 5: Aggregated Contributions of Groups of Variables

	Brazil		Germany		USA		India		
	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2	F3
EEL	30,7%	6,5%	36,9%	45,2%	9,4%	31,6%	53,3%	6,7%	39,2%
Universities	25,2%	5,5%	21,9%	40,3%	0,6%	3,0%	39,1%	45,4%	38,9%
PhD	18,3%	4,3%	2,8%	1,5%	6,1%	26,3%	5,8%	17,1%	0,1%
Field Career	12,3%	1,1%	8,3%	0,0%	0,8%	30,9%	0,2%	25,1%	11,7%
Globalization	13,4%	82,7%	32,8%	14,3%	83,1%	8,1%	7,4%	22,6%	10,3%

EEL=Economics, Engineering, Law.

Table 5 shows the aggregated contribution of groups of variables on the first two (in the case of India the first three) axes of the fields plotted in Figures 2-5. It shows that the trias of engineers, lawyers, and economists is most important in the field of elites in Germany, where it is most differentiated and contributes to both axes heavily (see the triangular distribution in Figure 2). The differentiation of universities seems to be most distinct in the field of Indian elites, while differences in the field careers are most profound in the field of US elites. As Table 3 indicates, a field change occurs frequently in the US but is restricted to the political elite only and is therefore a major differentiation line.

The contribution of the globalization variables confirms the assumption of the country sampling, that is, the fields of elites in Brazil and the US being more national. In this context, globalizing actors in those fields contribute strongly to the differentiation of the field. In Germany and India, the transnationalization of elites is more clearly embedded in the central field structures itself. That observation leads to the subject of some limitations of the approach presented here. Comparative analyses are useful methodological tools, but the level of the transnational or global environment is not instantly visible in the construction of national fields of power. This is obvious in the case of the US-field, as its national character results largely from the hegemonic position of the USA in the world system, while it affects all other national fields of power in the globalized world of the 21st century.

5. Conclusion

Using MCA, political and economic field elites from the Global North (Germany and the USA) and South (Brazil and India) were analyzed in national fields of power. MCA allows to analyze such fields from a comparative and explorative perspective using mainly categorical variables derived from the qualitative analysis of biographical information but also structural data (for example field-specific information like the structure of economies or political party affiliations).

On a conceptual level, a main finding from the comparative analysis is the necessity to differentiate between three processes regarding the globalization and transnationalization of fields: That is, researchers have to differentiate between 1) the degree of transnationalization of the field structure itself (“transnational fields”); 2) the degree of transnationalization of the actors and their biographical trajectories, and 3) how globalization as an “external” macro-development affects the relational structure of the field and the strategies of the agents (may it be external as an effect of the capitalist world-system or quasi-external as a multi-level effect of the global field of power). In this context the paper has argued that these processes may go in different directions. For example, in a very national field, the difference between national and globalized elites may shape the field structures heavily, while in a more globalized field, this differentiation is not so relevant any more. Furthermore, the paper argues that we find a quite similar development in the relation of the several layers of the global field of power.

Capitalist globalization facilitates the proliferation of the “meritocratic myth” as a global discourse of the legitimization of power. The top positions in very different countries and fields are largely legitimized through cultural capital today. Therefore, educational institutions of elite recruitment become ever more relevant. The increasing relevance of cultural capital can be described as a process of global convergence. However, below the surface of capitalist discourse specific configurations of local, differentiated, and historical socio-cultures persist (Rehbein 2011). The notion of homogenous global elite obscures the multiple conflicts within and between such national fields of power located within the superstructure of the capitalist world-system. Regarding the educational patterns of the elite from a comparative perspective, a central finding of this analysis is that elites in Brazil and India are not as globalized as would be expected from their semiperipheral position within the world system. Educational elite institutions, especially in the UK and the US certainly play a role, but national institutions are far more important than is usually assumed.

The importance of national configurations is not a paradox or even falsification of the globalization hypothesis. Integrating Bourdieusian field theory with world-systems theory, it is globalization that is causing a nationalization of elite reproduction in the emerging powers, while countries like Brazil and India

gain power on the structural level of the world system. Those relations are overseen systematically by a sociology of elites that is focused on actor-centered indicators and restricted to the nation state as the unit of analysis. However, this does not mean that the nation state is not important any more, especially for elites in national fields of power.

Based on these arguments and resting on the empirical analysis, this article features five central claims regarding field-theoretical elite research in the context of globalization:

- 1) National elite configurations differ regarding their historical and socio-cultural formation of cleavages and conflicts in national fields of power. The specific impact of globalization depends on these concrete field structures on the national level.
- 2) Power and influence are relational; that is, the valuation and devaluation of transnational capital depends on the structures of national fields of power. Instead of starting from the global elite, the analysis should conceptualize “globalizing elites” (Schneickert, Kroneder and Schwab 2015), since power and legitimacy still stems from national contexts in important regards.
- 3) The globalization of elites cannot be analyzed within the analytical antagonism between local reproduction and global practices. Quite the contrary, it is the dialectic of the national and the global that constitutes what may be conceptualized as global fields (Buchholz 2016) or even a global field of power (Schmitz, Witte and Gengnagel 2017).
- 4) Globalization is not limited to denationalization or transnationalization of actors; rather, it implies comprehensive and antagonistic processes, integrating micro and macro levels. A fully integrated field-theoretical approach should reach from the transnationalization of actors to macro-historical developments, including the possible return of a multicentric world-system (Nederveen Pieterse and Rehbein 2009).
- 5) This requires an integration of elites from the Global South (Pelfini 2011, 2014; Schneickert, Kroneder and Schwab 2015) overcoming the structural Eurocentrism of the social sciences that can especially be found in elite research. The myth of a global elite (Pelfini 2009; Hartmann 2016) stems from this Eurocentrism, underestimating the multiple conflicts and processes of differentiation that constitute a global field of power.

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Appendix

Table 6: Correlation of Globalization Indicators

	Non-Citizens	Migration	Studying Abroad	Working Abroad
Non-Citizens	1			
Migration	.60	1		
Studying Abroad	.28	.30	1	
Working Abroad	.29	.38	.32	1

Table 7: Eigenvalues and Modified Rates (MCA Germany)

Axis	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Eigenvalue	0.172	0.145	0.117	0.093	0.078	0.076
Modified rates (adj. inertia in %)	38.771	21.027	7.941	1.808	0.189	0.096

Table 8: Contributions of Active Variables (MCA Germany, in Percent)

Contributions	F1	F2
Law	18.2	0.0
Economics	6.5	25.7
Engineering	12.2	19.5
PhD	2.8	1.5
University Freiburg	4.6	1.0
University Göttingen	2.7	0.0
University Köln	0.5	10.7
University München	1.0	0.5
University Münster	0.1	16.6
TU München	10.2	10.0
Field Career	8.3	0.0
Worked Abroad	17.0	0.0
Studied Abroad	9.6	11.8
Non-Citizen	6.2	2.5
Total	100	100

MCA includes 14 active variables with 28 modalities. Contributions above average for variables (7.14%) in bold.

Table 9: Eigenvalues and Modified Rates (MCA Brazil)

Axis	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Eigenvalue	0.161	0.137	0.118	0.099	0.087	0.072
Modified rates (adj Inertia in %)	33.538	18.035	9.156	3.075	0.978	0.003

Table 10: Contributions of Active Variables (MCA Brazil, in Percent)

Contributions	F1	F2
Law	11.8	3.4
Economics	11.5	1.0
Engineering	7.4	2.1
PhD	18.3	4.3
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro	0.0	1.4
Universidade de São Paulo	2.2	0.6
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo	2.1	1.7
Universidade de Brasília	11.0	1.3
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais	4.7	0.5
Fundação Getúlio Vargas	5.2	0.0
Field Career	12.3	1.1
Worked Abroad	9.3	26.3
Studied Abroad	3.7	27.8
Non-Citizen	0.4	28.6
Total	100	100

MCA includes 14 active variables with 28 modalities. Contributions above average for variables (7.14%) in bold.

Table 11: Eigenvalues and Modified Rates (MCA India)

Axis	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Eigenvalue	0.169	0.149	0.141	0.096	0.094
Modified rates (adj. inertia in %)	32.172	18.893	14.921	0.744	0.479

Table 12: Contributions of Active Variables (MCA India, in Percent)

Contributions	F1	F2	F3
Law	25.4	0.9	0.0
Economics	14.0	1.1	21.5
Engineering	13.9	4.7	17.7
PhD	5.8	17.1	0.1
University of Delhi	3.3	0.1	2.8
Panjab University	14.6	7.8	0.2
Indian Institute of Banking and Finance	0.0	15.3	9.5
University of Mumbai	11.1	0.2	5.2
NIT/IIT	4.3	4.9	21.1
Field Career	0.2	25.1	11.7
Worked Abroad	1.1	12.7	4.4
Studied Abroad	6.3	9.9	5.9
Total	100	100	100

MCA includes 12 active variables with 24 modalities. Contributions above average for variables (8.33%) in bold.

Table 13: Eigenvalues and Modified Rates (MCA USA)

Axis	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Eigenvalue	0.178	0.139	0.119	0.100	0.083
Modified rates (adj. inertia in %)	42.458	16.273	7.442	2.135	0.161

Table 14: Contributions of Active Variables (MCA USA, in Percent)

Contributions	F1	F2
Law	6.1	17.6
Economics	1.5	7.1
Engineering	1.8	6.9
PhD	0.6	3.0
Stanford	0.4	0.1
Columbia	2.6	1.0
Harvard	1.8	17.6
Yale	1.3	2.5
Wharton School (UPenn)	0.0	5.1
Field Career	0.8	30.9
Worked Abroad	24.6	3.5
Studied Abroad	26.6	4.3
Non-Citizen	31.9	0.3
Total	100	100

MCA includes 13 active variables with 26 modalities. Contributions above average for variables (7.69%) in bold.

Table 15: Parental Occupation (Five-Class-Scheme)

Class	Brazil	Germany	India	USA
Lower		Truck driver	Landless Farmer, Worker	Miner, Worker, Bartender
Lower Middle	Bricklayer	Butcher, Electrician, Farmer, Factory Worker, Baker, Tram driver,		Post Officer
Upper Middle		Police Officer, Teacher, Technician,	Aruvedic Doctor, Soldier	Salesman, Farmer, Army officer
Upper	Lawyer, Landowner, Army General, Doctor, Entrepreneur, Industrialist	Dentist, Politician, Lawyer, Entrepreneur, Manager, Judge, Engineer	Higher Politician, Lawyer	Doctor, Stock Broker, Lawyer, Manager, Professor, Higher Politician
Elite	Entrepreneur and Founder, Industrialist	Business Elite	Top politician, Business Elite, Industrialist, Super-Rich, King	Top politician, Business Elite, Entrepreneur and Founder, Super-Rich

Table only includes occupations that appear in the current sample.

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