

Using a Citation Study to Gain New Insights into Agricultural & Resource Economics

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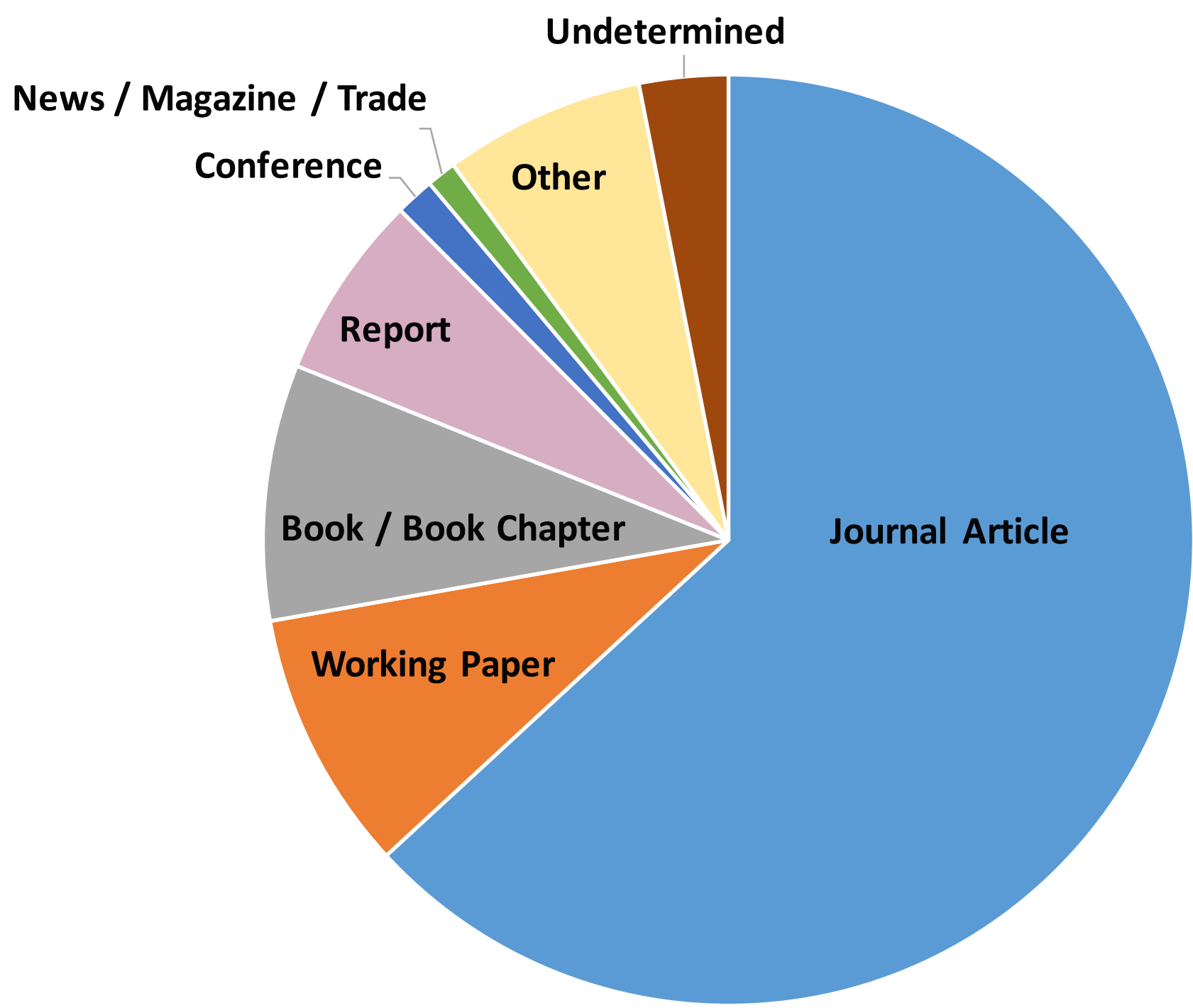
Methods

- The study looked at PhD dissertations dated 2008-2015 from UC Berkeley’s department of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ARE) using data from the ProQuest Digital Dissertations database.*
- Citation elements were parsed into fields by ProQuest’s proprietary algorithms.
- File contained a total of 8474 (messy) citations from 96 dissertations.**
- Step 1: Data Cleaning –
 - Standardized journal names
 - Checked and corrected reference types (for most citations)
 - Removed duplicate records (for most reference types)
- Step 2: Data analysis of resulting ~8300 citations

*6% of dissertations conferred during this time period were not included in the database due to embargos.

**Thanks to UCB librarian Susan Edwards for providing me the data.

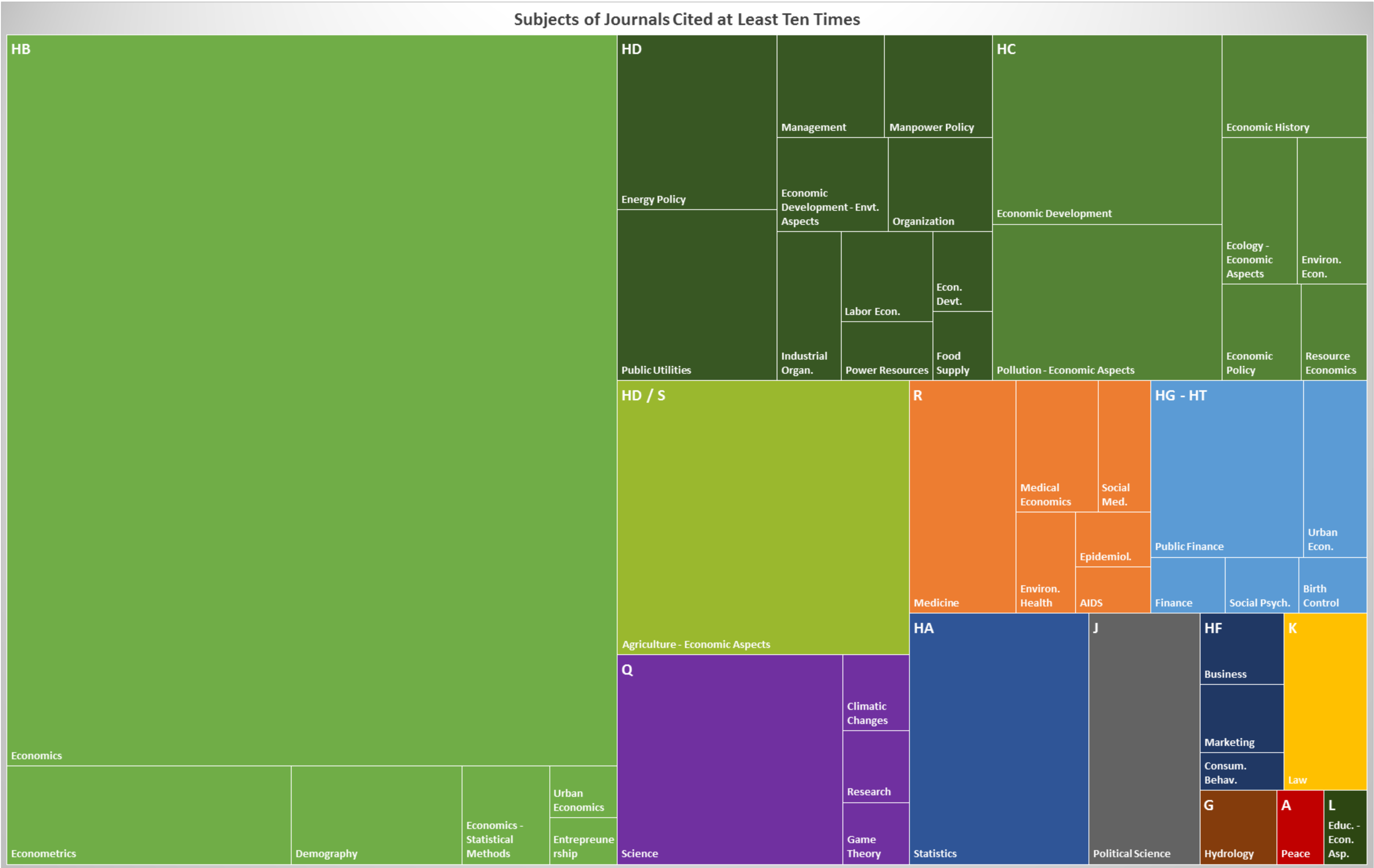
Types of References Cited in Dissertations



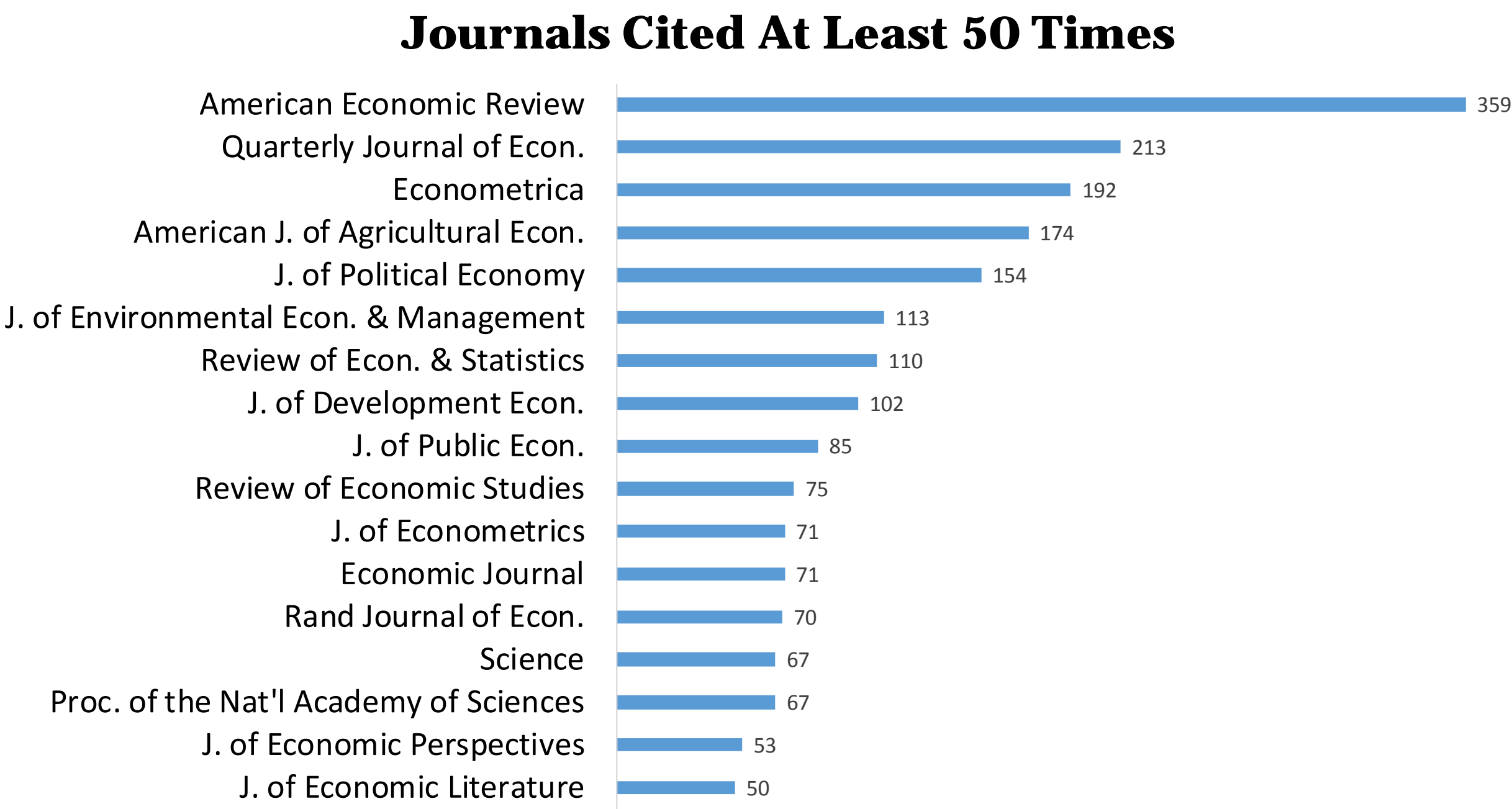
- The largest category of cited references was journal articles (63%), followed by identifiable working papers (9%), books or book chapters (9%), and identifiable reports (6%; government and non-government).
- The “other” category (7%) includes a myriad of reference types including websites, dissertations, data, pre-pubs, case law, legislation, public documents, personal communications, and other unpublished documents like mimeos.
- Citations that were incomplete, not in English, or otherwise not identifiable as a particular reference type were designated “undetermined.”

Subjects

- Citations came from 960 different journals.
- 93 journals were cited at least 10 times, representing 67% of the journal citations (3554 citations).
- The Library of Congress was used as a source for LC classes and subject headings for each of the 93 “top” journals.
- As shown in the tree map, most citations from top journals were from Economics journals (green), particularly class HB but also HC and HD.
- Other H classes (blue) were also well represented; 85% of citations from the top 93 journals fell under Social Sciences, while only 11% fell under Science or Medicine.
- “Agriculture – Economic Aspects” was a subject heading for 7 of the top 93 journals (classed HD or S), but no other top journals were classed under S.



Top Journals



Top Publishers

| Journals (those cited ≥ 10 times) publisher - # of journals | Books & Book Chapters publisher - # of book / chapter cites |
|--|--|
| Wiley - 16 | Cambridge Univ. Press - 77 |
| Elsevier - 15 | Elsevier - 53 |
| Oxford - 13 | MIT Press - 38 |
| Springer - 6 | Oxford Univ. Press - 29 |
| Univ. of Chicago Press - 5 | Princeton Univ. Press - 28 |
| Academic Press - 4 | Springer - 26 |
| American Economic Association - 4 | Univ. of Chicago Press - 24 |
| Cambridge - 4 | Harvard Univ. Press - 22 |
| Pergamon Press - 4 | North Holland - 21 |

Conclusions

- Working with the citation data showed me the diversity of research topics and interests in the ARE department at UC Berkeley.
- ARE graduate students are primarily citing other economists, and ARE at UCB does not have a strong agricultural focus.
- ARE grad students are referencing a wide variety of sources, though journal articles are still dominant. This is consistent with other citation studies in the area of agricultural economics.*

* For example, Zhang, L. (2007). Discovering Information Use in Agricultural Economics: A Citation Study. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 33(3), 403–413.