



Article

# The Role of International Research Collaboration and Faculty Related Factors in Publication Citations: Evidence from Lebanon

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**Abstract:** The importance of international collaboration in the research field is well-documented, but its impact on the number of citations received by research publications is not fully understood. This paper aims to fill this gap by examining the relationship between international collaboration and other factors and the number of citations for research publications. Using data from the Lebanese American University, the authors employ ordinary least squares estimation to analyze the impact of international collaboration on the number of citations while controlling for various publications, authorship, university, and socioeconomic factors. The results show that international collaboration has a statistically significant positive effect on the number of citations. Based on these findings, we recommend that institutions and researchers seeking to increase the number of citations for their publications should focus on building and maintaining strong international collaborations and publishing in high-quality journals. This paper provides evidence of the importance of international collaboration for researchers seeking to increase the reach and impact of their publications. It also provides insights into the relevance of other factors, such as the number of publications, age, and journal rank.

**Keywords:** international research collaboration; publication citations; Lebanon



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## 1. Introduction

There has been an increasing trend toward international collaboration in academic research. Many research projects are now too large and complex for any researcher or research team to complete independently. By collaborating with other researchers worldwide, researchers can pool their resources and expertise to make quicker progress on these projects. Citations play an important role in international collaboration, as they give researchers credit to each other for their work. Citations also help ensure that the academic community has access to and is adequately informed about all contributors' work. The increasing trend toward international collaboration in academic research has positively impacted the quality and quantity of research papers produced.

Many scholarly articles are cited, but a sizable portion is not. Remler (2014) focuses on journals from Web of Science journals over five years. The findings report that 12 percent of medicine articles are not cited compared to 27 percent of natural sciences articles. In addition, 32 percent of articles in social sciences are not cited. Surprisingly, in humanities, the percentage of uncited work reaches 82 percent. Each author aims to support their name during the academic writing process by adding knowledge to the academic literature. One unique method used by academic authors to measure the reach of their work is to check their papers' citations.

The number of citations is considered a vital research evaluation instrument that reflects quality (Harnad 2007; Mingers and Xu 2010). One of the criteria used by multiple university ranking publications, such as QS World University Ranking and Times Higher

Education universities' ranking, is the number of citations of academic researchers. Although observing the number of citations on its own might lead to bias due to issues such as self-citation and nation-oriented citation bias (Pasterkamp et al. 2007; Tahamtan et al. 2016), it at least reflects the global impact on the academic community (Van Raan 1996). Moreover, some studies provide evidence that the number of citations is not representative of research quality (Padial et al. 2010; Tahamtan et al. 2016). Citations impact the rank of universities and academic institutions. However, since some studies believe it is a biased measure of research quality, it is essential to understand what drives citations to understand their value.

The most common method in the literature is to analyze publications of certain journals in a specific field and their citations. However, studies focusing on the drivers of citations in multiple fields are limited. Furthermore, to our knowledge, the drivers of citations of studies published by scholars in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region do not exist. Building on the work of Assaker and Shahin (2022), this paper aims to uncover the drivers of citations by analyzing scholars' publications at the Lebanese American University (LAU), one of the top universities in the MENA region and one of the top two universities in Lebanon. This paper offers new insights into the importance of international collaboration for academic researchers looking to broaden the audience and effect of their papers. It also sheds light on the significance of other variables, such as the number of publications, age, and journal rank, using the case of a developing country. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we present the literature; in Section 3, we present the data and explain the research methodology; and in Section 4, we present and discuss the results. Finally, Section 5 includes the conclusion.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. International Collaboration

Collaboration is the co-occurrence of two or more addresses on a publication (Frenken et al. 2010). Most of the literature on drivers of citations shows a positive relationship between international collaboration and the number of citations. One empirical study that analyzed all academic publications in Norway over 19 years, excluding humanities and social sciences, found a positive correlation between international collaboration and the number of citations (Aksnes 2003). Moreover, international collaboration impacts citations based on the authors' countries. Collaboration with some Western countries, such as the United States, leads to more citations (Tahamtan et al. 2016).

Furthermore, some papers focus on studies based on multiple disciplines published by scholars from a specified university. Gazni and Didegah (2011) focused on publications at Harvard university under multiple fields; Paphawasit and Wudhikarn (2022) focused on publications at Chiang Mai University under various fields. Both papers reflect the existence of a positive correlation between international collaboration and citations.

In addition, most of the previous literature focuses on articles published in specific journals in a specified field. Moreover, Ni and An (2018) discuss the impact of international collaboration on citations in studies that focus on public, environmental, and organizational health. Their findings also reflect a positive correlation between international collaboration and citations, especially papers published by more than three countries. Ni and An (2018) also reflect that international collaboration among high-income countries has the highest percentage of citations. However, the findings that suggest a positive correlation between the two variables cannot be generalized to all fields. Didegah and Thelwall (2013) report that having international authors does not impact the number of citations in the fields of nanoscience and nanotechnology.

## 2.2. Socioeconomic Characteristics

Regarding gender, most of the literature provides evidence of gender differences in citations, yet not all of them. [Knobloch-Westerwick and Glynn \(2013\)](#) report that male authors obtain more citations than female authors. In addition, [Chatterjee and Werner \(2021\)](#) constructed a cross-sectional study based on 5554 articles to observe gender disparity in citations. Their findings report that papers with women as primary and senior authors have around half the citations as papers with men as primary and senior authors. Furthermore, based on data obtained from ACL Anthology and Google Scholar, 71 percent of the first and 75 percent of the last authors are men ([Mohammad 2020](#)).

Interestingly, when controlling for experience and area of research, the first authors that are women are cited less than the first authors that are men ([Mohammad 2020](#)). Another study finds that the percentage of women as the first and last authors increased between 1999 and 2018 ([Benjamins et al. 2020](#)). However, the same study stratifies publications into citation groups, and it reports that papers with less than ten citations, and those with more than 200 citations, witnessed a decline in female author participation over the years (1999–2018). Moreover, the gender difference in citation differs based on academic fields. [Sebo and Clair \(2022\)](#) use the Web of Science to obtain general medical academic publications from 14 journals with a high impact between 2015 and 2019. They report that the median number of citations per year is 6.8 for men and 5 for women. Furthermore, articles that have women as the first authors constitute 40 percent of the publications, while articles that have women as the last authors constitute 29 percent of the publications ([Sebo and Clair 2022](#)).

On the other hand, [Borsuk et al. \(2009\)](#) provide evidence that there is no noticeable difference in gender-based citations. Another study also reflects that future citations cannot be predicted based on gender ([Walters 2006](#)). [Bosquet and Combes \(2013\)](#) provide additional evidence that there is no gender-based difference in citations when co-author patterns are considered. Their supporting data come from economics citation indexes of French academics.

Concerning the impact of the age of author(s) on the number of citations, [Ayles and Vars \(2000\)](#) focus their study on publications in Harvard Law Review, Stanford Law Review, and Yale Law Journal between 1980 and 1995. Their findings reflect that younger authors receive additional citations. Specifically, authors below the age of 36 receive more citations, and the number of citations declines after 41. According to a more recent study by [Bosquet and Combes \(2013\)](#), the number of citations based on the work of French academic economists is not connected with age.

## 2.3. Quality

It is difficult to quantify quality as a variable and comparing studies across different disciplines in terms of quality can be misleading. Hence, most of the methodology adopted in the literature of “drivers of citations” usually focuses on a specified field where the authors observe top-ranking journals, and the literature reflects opposite results. Other than top-ranking journals, multiple publications focus on the influence of the academics involved, the design of the methodology, the complexity of reaching the results, and the study’s originality as a reflection of a high-quality paper.

According to [Bornmann and Daniel \(2007\)](#), the influence of distinguished authors alone does not drive citations. In addition, the same study reports that variations in methodology design and complexity of reaching the results are perceived as a representation of a high-quality paper that would drive citations. However, other non-scientific factors (such as self-citations) are included. Thus, the relationship between citations and this proxy of quality is weakened.

Furthermore, studies that control against bias results in the methodology received higher citations than their counterparts in the field of orthopedics ([Bhandari et al. 2007](#)). Another study focusing on top journals of urological studies found that a higher quality methodology correlates with a higher number of citations ([Willis et al. 2011](#)). Lastly, [Mingus](#)

and Xu (2010) suggest that the journal's quality is the most vital citation driver in scientific management journals. Other essential factors are also found, such as the length of the paper, the status of the first author's institution, and the number of references used.

#### 2.4. Professors' Academic Position

Concerning professors' academic positions, a case study conducted at Ariel University shows that an increase in the position of a professor (tenured or associate) positively affects the number of citations (Eckhaus and Davidovitch 2021). Furthermore, Madison and Sundell (2022) focus on citations of publications of six disciplines related to health knowledge in Sweden. Their results show that the academic rank of a full-time professor has 50 percent more citations per publication than an associate professor. Several studies focus on the relationship between academic rank and the number of citations in a specific field and report similar results. Pagel and Hudetz (2011) show that the number of citations positively correlates with academic ranking in anesthetics. On the other hand, in the field of sustainability, there is no significant correlation between academic rank and the number of citations (Jabbour et al. 2013).

#### 2.5. Number of Publications and Faculty Size

Costas et al. (2015) use the precision-recall method to reveal the impact of the number of publications of a scholar on the number of citations of an academic paper. Their results reflect a weak positive correlation between the number of publications and citations. In addition, members of an academic faculty are either pressured or self-motivated to increase research production (Budd 2017). Tahamtan et al. (2016) reveal that increasing a department's faculty members increases citations. Even in interdisciplinary research, one study revealed that the institution's size positively affects citations (Elleby and Ingwersen 2010).

### 3. Setting the Context

We must explain our decision to center our investigation on the Lebanese American University. It is a suitable choice for several reasons, but the absence of any Ph.D. programs at LAU serves as the central premise of our justification. In light of this, faculty members are accountable for the university's research output. LAU is a medium-sized academic institution, so faculty specialties rarely cross over based on their Ph.D. theses. Furthermore, LAU is a preeminent non-sectarian institution of higher learning with a distinct goal and a sense of accomplishment founded on sound principles. Furthermore, Assaker and Shahin (2022) used this case study and the dataset to publish in a respected journal, demonstrating the validity of both the dataset and our justification.

LAU, founded under the Ottoman Empire in 1924, was the first college for women. As educational demands rose in Lebanon, LAU grew continuously over the last decades. Examining the university in the fall of 2021, it had 1140 faculty members, 750 staff, and 8012 students, spanning two campuses in Beirut and Byblos, both in Lebanon. The university relies on seven schools: the Adnan Kassar School of Business, the School of Architecture and Design, the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Engineering, the School of Pharmacy, the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing, and the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine to offer 60 different significant fields distributed over 65 distinct programs.

LAU's research output has been improving in recent years. According to the QS World University Rankings 2023 and the Times Higher Education world university ranking, LAU is ranked #601–650 and #501–600, respectively. In addition, the Times Higher Education Subject Rankings placed the School of Business as the top business school in the country. The dataset analyzed reveals that the mean value of papers published in Q4 journals is 0.473 compared to 10.014 for papers published in Q1 journals. This indicates that LAU conducts quality research as evident from the papers displayed in Appendix A. The mean of Q2 publications is 5.348 and 1.908 for Q3. These results confirm that LAU is dedicated to maintaining a high reputation and asserting its global ranking.

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1. Data and Variables

In this study, we look into the factors that affect citations in Lebanon using a database from LAU containing a collection of relevant variables on faculty members for 2022. The LAU database accounted for 1996 publications between fall 2021 and fall 2022. We gathered the data by utilizing LAU's internal documentation system, a routine practice implemented by academic institutions and the SciVal database by Scopus to allocate several variables such as the journal ranking by using Scimago's journal rankings. This process resulted in accurate, trustworthy, and well-structured data suitable for an academic study (Sivertsen 2010). We ensured that all publications met national standards and regulations throughout the process. Additionally, as LAU continuously logs all publication outcomes, missing publications did not impact our analysis.

Moreover, the dataset was expanded with new information from a database that tracks socioeconomic data on faculty members and their respective ranks, department size, and the total number of publications they published in the fall of 2021. LAU's Department of Institutional Research and Assessment (DIRA) collected the new data upon our request. After conducting data cleansing and preprocessing to suit our objective, 207 faculty members remained for analysis. We display the summary statistics of relevant variables in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Summary statistics.

	Mean	Std. dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Number of Citations	375.691	874.588	0.000	8906.000
International Collaboration	10.329	22.890	0.000	230.000
Female	0.372	0.485	0.000	1.000
Age	48.150	9.915	31.270	70.180
Full Professor	0.155	0.362	0.000	1.000
Associate Professor	0.454	0.499	0.000	1.000
Assistant Professor	0.391	0.489	0.000	1.000
Single Author	0.164	0.371	0.000	1.000
Number of Publications	21.976	31.294	1.000	272.000
Q1	10.014	15.789	0.000	154.000
Q2	5.348	9.147	0.000	78.000
Q3	1.908	3.383	0.000	29.000
Q4	0.473	0.923	0.000	6.000
Faculty Size	36.928	34.565	5.000	90.000
Article Field Weighted Citation (FWCI)	1.059	0.949	0.000	6.080
Number of observations	207			

Investigating the determinants of citations in Lebanon, we resort to a continuous variable that tracks the number of citations as our dependent variable. Regarding our explanatory variables, the study highlights one key independent variable, a continuous variable capturing the total number of international collaborations, defined as the number of publications with at least one international author. We also include international collaboration squared as an independent variable, a transformation of our key independent variable to further highlight the impact of international collaboration on the total number of citations. The other independent variables included age, a continuous variable, gender (0 for male and 1 for female), and rank (assistant professorship as a reference group, with associate and full professorship as dummy variables).

In addition, we include faculty size as a continuous variable, defined as the total number of faculty members in a department, while the total number of publications is a continuous variable that captures the total number of publications to date. We control for the quality of publications using four continuous variables, Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 that capture the number of publications in journals ranked Q1, Q2, Q3, or Q4. Additionally, we include single author, a dummy variable capturing the lack of international collaboration (0 for the

existence of international collaboration and 1 for having no international collaborations). Finally, we add FWCI, a continuous variable that reflects the article field weighted citation.

It is crucial to test for the presence of correlation among the explanatory variables, as such correlation would increase the variance of the regression coefficients, resulting in an inaccurate statistical significance assessment for our results. Suspecting the correlation among our explanatory variables, we run a standard diagnostics test known as the variance inflation factor (VIF). The variance inflation factor, which calculates how much a regression coefficient's variance has been inflated due to multicollinearity in the model, is used to identify multicollinearity in regression analysis. According to [Hair et al. \(1995\)](#), a VIF value of 10 or greater is deemed problematic. However, our analysis reveals that the mean VIF value is 4.17 (as presented in Table 2), suggesting the absence of any multicollinearity issue among the independent variables.

**Table 2.** Collinearity diagnostics.

	VIF	SQRT VIF	Tolerance	R-Squared
International Collaboration	8.88	2.98	0.1126	0.8874
Female	1.10	1.05	0.9098	0.0902
Age	1.65	1.28	0.6058	0.3942
Full Professor	2.17	1.47	0.4614	0.5386
Associate Professor	1.92	1.38	0.5221	0.4779
Single Author	1.19	1.09	0.8412	0.1588
Number of Publications	11.43	3.38	0.0875	0.9125
Q1	10.36	3.22	0.0965	0.9035
Q2	6.07	2.46	0.1648	0.8352
Q3	4.52	2.13	0.2211	0.7789
Q4	2.23	1.49	0.4481	0.5519
Faculty Size	1.46	1.21	0.6840	0.3160
Article Field Weighted Citation (FWCI)	1.25	1.12	0.8017	0.1983
Mean VIF	4.17			

#### 4.2. Econometric Model

To examine the implication of international collaboration for the number of citations, we rely on ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation while controlling for a set of publication, authorship, university, and socioeconomic factors. The OLS model in question can be represented as follows:

$$Citations_i = \alpha + \beta_1 International\ Collaboration_i + \beta_2 International\ Collaboration_i^2 + \delta X_i + u_i$$

where  $Citations_i$  is the dependent variable and measures the total number of citations for observation  $i$  ( $i = 1, \dots, I$ ). The explanatory variables are represented by  $International\ Collaboration_i$  (key variable), and  $X_i$  is a vector of other independent variables as identified in the previous section, all for observation  $i$  ( $i = 1, \dots, I$ ).  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ , and  $\delta$  is a vector of parameters to be estimated. Finally,  $u_i$  is defined as the error term.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Benchmark Results

Table 3 presents the estimated coefficients of the independent variables on the number of citations. The first column only includes our primary independent variable, international collaboration, and the second column adds the international collaboration squared variable. Additionally, the third column integrates the socioeconomic factors (age and gender) and faculty members' position dummies. Regarding the fourth column, we add the number of publications and the journal rank variables. Finally, the last column further includes faculty size and FWCI.

**Table 3.** Benchmark results of the OLS model.

	1	2	3	4	5
International Collaboration	34.818 *** (2.079)	23.888 *** (3.632)	21.133 *** (3.958)	−3.907 (6.132)	−4.664 (5.715)
International Collaboration Squared		0.062 *** (0.017)	0.073 *** (0.018)	0.094 *** (0.020)	0.095 *** (0.018)
Female			23.325 (59.373)	20.376 (34.881)	31.786 (33.677)
Age			−1.828 (1.835)	4.012 ** (1.631)	4.218 ** (1.687)
Full Professor			233.765 * (131.442)	−105.184 (67.802)	−41.182 (67.540)
Associate Professor			71.662 * (38.695)	−13.776 (35.031)	22.364 (36.908)
Single Author				−41.825 (26.982)	−11.841 (30.869)
Number of Publications				12.991 * (6.747)	13.019 ** (6.360)
Q1				19.143 ** (7.920)	17.290 ** (7.663)
Q2				−6.791 (6.065)	−6.730 (5.803)
Q3				−5.680 (12.580)	−0.633 (12.341)
Q4				−87.348 ** (42.371)	−91.689 ** (40.828)
Faculty Size					0.351 (0.488)
Article Field Weighted Citation (FWCI)					86.123 *** (24.327)
Constant	16.078 (26.079)	89.941 *** (23.520)	122.410 (99.989)	−202.752 ** (85.485)	−335.452 *** (92.194)
Number of observations	207	207	207	207	207
Adjusted R-squared	0.830	0.845	0.848	0.927	0.934
Log-likelihood	−1511.755	−1501.514	−1497.464	−1417.603	−1406.403

Robust standard errors are in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.10$ .

The results of model 1 show that the key independent variable, international collaboration, is positive and statistically significant at the 1% significance level. This indicates that as international collaboration increases, the number of citations increases. When adding the international collaboration squared in the second model, the findings reveal that the coefficients of both international collaboration and the international collaboration squared are positive and statistically significant. This implies that a nonlinear relationship exists between international collaboration and the number of citations. This result is also statistically significant in the third model. However, international collaboration has lost significance in the last two models, with international collaboration squared remaining statistically significant. This finding aligns with [Gazni and Didegah's \(2011\)](#) findings, which suggest that international collaboration is associated with more citations. It is argued that collaborating with international researchers enhances visibility and connections, thus increasing the likelihood of the paper being cited ([Chinchilla-Rodríguez et al. 2012](#)).

Moving to the first socioeconomic factor, gender, we find that gender does not significantly affect the number of citations in all the models. This finding is consistent with [Borsuk et al. \(2009\)](#), who reveal no statistically significant relationship between gender and the number of citations. However, our result contradicts [Knobloch-Westerwick and Glynn \(2013\)](#), [Mohammad \(2020\)](#), and [Chatterjee and Werner \(2021\)](#), who find that males achieve higher citations than females. Regarding age, the findings show that the older the professor becomes, the higher the likelihood of having more citations. The result is

statistically significant in models 4 and 5, contradicting the findings of [Bosquet and Combes \(2013\)](#), who argue that there is no significant relationship between the age of the authors and the number of citations. The intuition behind our result could be that research articles are becoming less and less obsolete since the 1960s as citing older papers is increasing more and more.<sup>1</sup> Another explanation is that more senior researchers are more likely to self-cite, which could affect their citation rates. It is probably because older researchers have, on average, more articles to cite ([Maflahi and Thelwall 2021](#)).

When it comes to the professors' positions, it is shown that both full professors and associate professors are more likely to have their papers cited compared to assistant professors, our reference group. This result is only statistically significant in our third model, supporting the suggestion of [Eckhaus and Davidovitch \(2021\)](#) that as the position of the professors increases, the number of citations increases. Furthermore, the results indicate that no significant relationship exists between not collaborating with international professors and the number of citations. Regarding the number of publications, the findings suggest that one more publication leads to an increase in citations of nearly 13. The result is statistically significant in both models 4 and 5. [Costas et al. \(2015\)](#) reached the same conclusion of a positive correlation between the number of publications and the number of citations.

Regarding our journal ranks variable, we achieved the expected results. We find that there is a higher likelihood that a faculty member will receive more citations if he/she publishes in top journals (Q1) and a lower likelihood of earning citations if he/she publishes in low-ranked journals (Q4). These results are statistically significant across the last two models. However, the results reveal that neither publishing in Q2 nor Q3 significantly impacts the number of citations received. That could be explained by the fact that when a paper is published in a high-ranking journal, it will be perceived as "quality work" encouraging researchers to use it as a reference for their research project.

Moreover, the results indicate that faculty size does not significantly affect the number of citations. This result is inconsistent with the findings of [Tahamtan et al. \(2016\)](#), who discovered that increasing the number of faculty members within a department improves citations. Finally, we observe that the number of citations received increases if the value of the indicator, FWCI, increases.

## 5.2. Results by Gender

Table 4 presents the regression subsampled by gender. Starting with our key independent variable, we reached similar results to the benchmark results. The international collaboration variable is statistically insignificant, while the international collaboration squared is positive and statistically significant at a 1% significance level variable for both males and females. Regarding age, citation rates are higher for older male faculty members, aligning with the benchmark results. Nonetheless, the coefficient of age has lost significance for females. In addition, the findings indicate that being a full or associate professor, regardless of gender, has no statistically significant impact on citations. Similar to the benchmark results, it is found that there is no correlation between the number of citations and the absence of any international professor collaboration for both male and female faculty members. Interestingly, the number of publications is positive and statistically significant at a 1% significance level for female faculty members, which is consistent with the benchmark results. However, for male professors, the result for the number of publications is statistically insignificant.



**Table 4.** Results by gender.

	Male	Female
International Collaboration	4.990 (3.358)	−10.255 (7.466)
International Collaboration Squared	0.059 *** (0.013)	0.188 ** (0.075)
Age	4.131 * (2.325)	−0.787 (3.198)
Full Professor	−9.317 (71.481)	−145.133 (111.704)
Associate Professor	0.287 (52.631)	84.672 (60.034)
Single Author	−27.738 (53.037)	16.508 (78.647)
Number of Publications	−4.643 (3.094)	22.570 *** (2.039)
Q1	34.528 *** (4.132)	5.501 (7.351)
Q2	2.502 (4.470)	−17.996 ** (8.130)
Q3	16.397 (11.647)	10.700 (15.983)
Q4	2.103 (30.984)	−103.748 ** (40.108)
Faculty Size	−0.636 (0.641)	1.883 ** (0.824)
Article Field Weighted Citation (FWCI)	51.818 ** (20.378)	109.794 *** (34.132)
Constant	−236.923 ** (112.346)	−189.349 (142.305)
Number of observations	130	77
Adjusted R-squared	0.959	0.877
Log-likelihood	−870.2767	−503.3221

Robust standard errors are in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.10$ .

Observing the impact of journal ranking on citations for males, we find that publishing in Q1 ranked journals has a positive and statistically significant impact on the number of citations, while it is statistically insignificant for Q2, Q3, and Q4 journals. Regarding the effect of journal rankings on citations for females, we observe that publishing in Q1 and Q3 journals is statistically insignificant. However, it is negative and statistically significant at the 5% level for Q2 and Q4 ranked journals. This indicates a possibility for gender differences. However, other unobserved characteristics (i.e., field of study) might explain this difference. Moreover, the coefficient of the faculty size variable is only positive and statistically significant for female professors, suggesting that female faculty members benefit from larger faculty sizes, which is irrelevant for male faculty members. Finally, the outcome of the indicator FWCI is positive and statistically significant for both genders.

### 5.3. Results by Quartile of Journals Rank

Table 5 presents the results when subsampled by journals ranked Q1 or Q2. The key independent variable, international collaboration, is not statistically significant for Q1 or Q2 ranked journals. However, international collaboration squared is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level, indicating that international collaboration is a vital factor influencing the number of citations. Concerning gender, the results suggest that being a female faculty member has no statistically significant effect on the number of citations published in Q1 or Q2, indicating no gender discrimination.

**Table 5.** Results by top journal quartile.

	Q1	Q2
International Collaboration	−4.484 (3.234)	−4.366 (3.388)
International Collaboration Squared	0.107 *** (0.012)	0.107 *** (0.013)
Female	50.144 (42.436)	57.868 (46.113)
Age	1.182 (2.571)	1.799 (2.824)
Full Professor	73.116 (79.818)	73.400 (85.580)
Associate Professor	30.929 (54.390)	26.375 (58.112)
Single Author	−17.593 (66.859)	−46.994 (80.703)
Number of Publications	15.570 *** (1.499)	15.404 *** (1.582)
Faculty Size	0.077 (0.699)	0.190 (0.755)
Article Field Weighted Citation (FWCI)	114.574 *** (23.158)	123.433 *** (25.241)
Constant	−213.339 * (122.870)	−250.960 * (136.180)
Number of observations	187	170
Adjusted R-squared	0.912	0.911
Log-likelihood	−1307.085	−1195.264

Robust standard errors are in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.10$ .

Additionally, we observe that age is not a statistically significant variable. Moreover, our findings for the variables full professors, associate professors, single author, and faculty size align with the benchmark results where an insignificant relationship exists between those variables and the number of citations. Furthermore, the number of publications exhibits a positive impact on the number of citations, which is statistically significant at the 1% level. Lastly, consistent with the benchmark results, we find a positive correlation between the indicator, FWCI, and the number of citations.

## 6. Conclusions

This study examines the variables influencing the number of citations in Lebanon. The data used for this study are from LAU, a top university in Lebanon. In line with the literature, the findings indicate that international collaboration significantly impacts the number of citations. Highlighting that a high number of citations is linked to international collaboration since international collaboration increases the visibility and connections of a paper. Moreover, it is worth noting that international collaboration entails the contribution of multiple individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds, resulting in more scrutinized and detailed research. The higher quality research attracts other stakeholders' attention and earns more citations.

Furthermore, we investigate gender differences and find that gender does not significantly affect the number of citations in all models, demonstrating that there is no gender discrimination regarding the reach and impact of researchers, indicating that they possess an equal chance of success regardless of their genders and that their work is appreciated. This insight is significant in the MENA region, where gender inequality remains a serious problem. This study can support gender equality in academic publishing and encourage more women to seek careers in research by demonstrating that female researchers have equal possibilities to their male counterparts.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the higher the age of academic authors, the higher the likelihood of having more citations. Moreover, the higher the journal rank, the higher the likelihood of obtaining more citations. On the other hand, contrary to the literature, the increase in faculty size does not significantly affect the number of citations. This paper offers additional evidence to the literature concerning the number of citations from a university in the MENA region, and the results help understand the drivers of citations of papers from multiple journals and fields. In addition, the paper shows that focusing on good quality and collaborating with other authors increases the impact of the paper in the academic community.

The findings highlight the importance of international collaboration as a determinant of the number of citations, a significant insight for researchers and institutes seeking more citations or contemplating the value of collaborative programs. Representatives and researchers in research institutes can benefit from these findings to develop professional guidelines to aid young researchers in building and maintaining a portfolio of sufficiently cited papers. Academic administrators and policymakers can develop strategies for enhancing research impact by promoting opportunities for researchers to publish in high-impact journals. They may also initiate mentorship programs to encourage knowledge transfer between senior and junior researchers or develop specialized networking seminars and training programs for early and mid-career researchers to foster interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and cross-border collaborations. Finally, universities and research institutes can build on these findings to establish and expand collaboration programs with regional or international institutions within their organization. These collaborative programs would allow these institutions to benefit from operational synergies. Institutions can build on each other's expertise and resources, share data and facilities, and leverage their respective networks to increase the impact of their research. Pooling resources may be especially relevant for institutions within the MENA region as they have limited resources.

Finally, future research can be done by expanding this paper using a more extensive dataset that includes other universities in Lebanon or the MENA region to have regionally representative results. Moreover, a possible future direction is to broaden the dataset in terms of the available explanatory variables. Specifically, future studies can integrate more variables relevant to the performance of faculty members or the characteristics of the published papers.

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## Appendix A

**Table A1.** Published papers in the field of arts and humanities—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Assaf and Harrington (2022)	-	x	-	-
Awada (2022)	x	-	-	-
Beydoun (2020)	-	-	x	-
De Matteis (2019)	-	-	-	x
Deets and Skulte-Ouaiss (2021)	x	-	-	-
Diab and Awada (2022)	x	-	-	-
El G (2022)	x	-	-	-
El Hajj (2019)	-	x	-	-
El Khoury and Ardizzola (2021)	-	x	-	-
El-Hussari (2020)	x	-	-	-
Hamdan (2022)	-	x	-	-
Harakeh et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Kadri (2021a)	x	-	-	-
Kadri (2021b)	x	-	-	-
Khoury (2019)	-	-	-	x
Martin (2019)	-	x	-	-
Mazzetto (2018)	x	-	-	-
Mourad (2021)	x	-	-	-
Mumtaz et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Oueini et al. (2020)	x	-	-	-
Palm et al. (2018)	-	-	x	-
Sadaka (2019)	-	x	-	-
Sadaka (2022)	x	-	-	-
Sadaka and Panossian (2022)	-	x	-	-
Shahbaz et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A2.** Published papers in the field of social sciences—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Afolabi Ibikunle et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Alrashed et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Aouad (2022)	-	x	-	-
Awada (2021)	-	x	-	-
Awada and Diab (2018)	-	x	-	-
Christiansen and Al-Thawr (2019)	x	-	-	-
Desatnik et al. (2021)	-	x	-	-
Eluwole et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Haderer et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Halkort (2021)	x	-	-	-
Hammoud et al. (2022a)	-	x	-	-
Helou and Mollica (2022)	-	x	-	-
Jallad et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Kadri (2021c)	-	-	x	-
Kolawole et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Kozman and Cozma (2021)	x	-	-	-
Liu et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Nikolaidis et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Nilsson and Badran (2021)	x	-	-	-
Rayshouni and Wazne (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ren et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Sacca et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Tawil et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Usman et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Wang et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A3.** Published papers in the field of business and economics—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Abdallah and Abdallah (2019)	-	x	-	-
Abdallah et al. (2018)	-	x	-	-
Abdallah et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Abdul Baki and Marrouch (2022)	x	-	-	-
Abi Aad et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Ahmed et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Al Gharib and Marrouch (2022)	-	x	-	-
Abdallah et al. (2020)	-	x	-	-
Assaker and O'Connor (2022)	-	x	-	-
O'Connor and Assaker (2022)	-	x	-	-
Banerjee et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Bou Saada et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Cao et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Djoundourian et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Dugan et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
El Kallab and Terra (2020)	x	-	-	-
Eraslan et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Fares et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Itani et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Khalfaoui et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mahdi et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Mensi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
O'Connor and Assaker (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ozdamar et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Stefanidis et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Tóth et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A4.** Published papers in the field of computer science—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Acharya et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Abdellatif et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Abu-Khzam et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Ahmad et al. (2022a)	x	-	-	-
Al Sobbahi and Tekli (2022)	x	-	-	-
Chaudhary et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Dahiya et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Deng and Karam (2022)	x	-	-	-
El-Kurdi et al. (2020)	x	-	-	-
El-Zahr and Abou-Rjeily (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ewees et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Hakim et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Hammoud et al. (2022b)	x	-	-	-
Kadry et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Lteif (2022)	x	-	-	-
Malik et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mohammed et al. (2022a)	x	-	-	-
Mohammed et al. (2022b)	x	-	-	-
Mukherjee et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Rathi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Riyahi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Sharma et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Singamaneni et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ullah et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Zamzami et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A5.** Published papers in the fields of education and psychology—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Arayssi et al. (2020)	-	x	-	-
Bdeir et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Bitar et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Bou-Hamad et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Chahine et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
El Frenn et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
El Hajj (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ghaith and Awada (2022)	-	-	x	-
Greaves (2021)	x	-	-	-
Grey et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Habre (2021)	-	x	-	-
Haddad et al. (2021)	-	x	-	-
Haddad et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Hamdan (2019)	-	x	-	-
Karam (2022)	-	x	-	-
Kertechian et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Malaeb et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mattar et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
McCord et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Mutchler et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Nauffal (2019)	-	x	-	-
Nauffal and Nader (2022)	x	-	-	-
Raad et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Swami et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Tohme et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A6.** Published papers in the field of engineering and technology—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Adedoyin et al. (2022a)	x	-	-	-
Ahmad et al. (2022b)	x	-	-	-
Al-Betar et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Alkheir et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Alola et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Al-qaness et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Azzi et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Ch et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Elaziz et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Fakeeha et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Hassan et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Helwan et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Hu et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Issa (2022)	x	-	-	-
Jabbour et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Karam and Tabbara (2020)	-	x	-	-
Mershad (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mohammed et al. (2022c)	x	-	-	-
Nazeer et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Ringim et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Sawaya et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Siddiqui et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Singh et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Taki and Abou-Rjeily (2022)	-	x	-	-
Zahoor Raja et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A7.** Published papers in the field of life sciences and health—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Abboud et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Adedoyin et al. (2022b)	-	x	-	-
Akoury et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Al Khoury et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Almawi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Assi et al. (2022a)	-	x	-	-
Assi et al. (2022b)	x	-	-	-
Cheikh Ismail et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
El-Zakhem Naous et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Fayad et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Husein et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Karam et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Khaled et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Khalil et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Malaeb et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mansour et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Mansour et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Merhi et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Mussell et al. (2020)	-	x	-	-
Nicolas et al. (2021)	-	x	-	-
Saad et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Safi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Salvi et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Sayyed et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Serhan et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-

**Table A8.** Published papers in the field of physical sciences—2018–2022.

Articles	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Reinbold et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Abi Younes and El Khatib (2022)	x	-	-	-
Al-Alam et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Al-Alam et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Arnaout and Khoury (2022)	x	-	-	-
Atwi et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Bekun et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Bshouty et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Craveur et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Dayan et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
El Khatib et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Guirao et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Hashem and Marrouch (2022)	-	x	-	-
Jaafar et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Kanbar et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Khederlarian et al. (2021)	x	-	-	-
Lteif and Gerbi (2022)	x	-	-	-
Lteif and Khorbatly (2022)	-	x	-	-
Makki et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Omeiri et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Rani et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-
Sawaya et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Sheheitli and Touma (2018)	x	-	-	-
Yao et al. (2022)	x	-	-	-
Yassin et al. (2022)	-	x	-	-

## Note

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.science.org/content/article/older-papers-are-increasingly-remembered-and-cited> (accessed on 3 November 2022).

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