

Marketing Journal and Paper Impact: Some Additional Evidence

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Abstract

The present study updated Soutar and Murphy's (2009) study of the citation characteristics of a larger number of marketing journals and found there was considerable overall stability, although some journals had moved in the rank order. The study also examined the most highly cited papers in each of the A* and A journals in the ABDC marketing list, which supported the prior results about the journals, but also allowed an examination of the best papers themselves. Very few of these papers obtained more than 100 citations a year and most were produced by American academics, suggesting the marketing discipline is likely to be American-focused for some time yet.

Introduction

Research article impact can be measured in a variety of ways, including peer assessment and the nature of the articles themselves (Ortinou, 2011). A common approach is to count the number of citations articles obtain. Indeed, this approach is often also used to assess journal impact (Shilbury, 2011; Moussa & Touzani, 2010; Soutar & Murphy, 2009). A version of this approach was used in the Australian Government's 2012 ERA program to assess research quality in the physical and biological sciences, although not in economics or business (marketing) related areas, which used a peer review process. In the present study, the citation approach was used to extend Soutar and Murphy's (2009) journal quality assessment and to examine a set of what might be termed "high impact" marketing articles. The approach taken, the results obtained and their implications are discussed in subsequent sections.

The Present Study

Google Scholar was used to obtain the needed data for each of the journals listed included in the study, as it "generally results in a more comprehensive coverage in the area of management (including marketing)" (Harzing and van der Wal, 2008, p. 72) and was the data source used by Soutar and Murphy (2009). Two data sources were used to assess journal quality. Following Soutar and Murphy (2009), the h-index and g-index was computed for each journal, using all of the articles published from 2001 to 2012 obtained from Harzing's (2007) Publish or Perish software, updating the data reported in their 2009 paper, which included data from 2001 and 2007. If a journal has an h-index of 20 that journal has published 20 papers that have at least 20 citations. As this index does not account for very highly cited papers, Egghe (2006) suggested the g-index. An index of g suggests a journal's g top-cited articles summed to g^2 . For example, if the top articles were cited a cumulative 400 times, the g-index would be 20. Moussa and Touzani (2010, p. 109) have suggested each journals' hg-index should also be computed, as it reduces the "influence that a very successful article can introduce in the g-index." Consequently, this was also computed to see if the new index added further insights.

In recent years Google has provided an additional data source in its Google Scholar Metrics (http://scholar.google.com.au/citations?view_op=top_venues&hl=en), which includes an h-index for many journals for the last five full years (2007 to 2011 at the time this study was

undertaken). Rather than a g-index, Google Scholar Metrics provides the median number of citations for the articles included in the computation of the h-index, which also allows very highly cited papers to have some impact. Consequently, both scores were included in the present study. Where a Google Scholar Metric scores was not provided for a journal, scores were computed through the Publish or Perish software.

By using the updated Soutar and Murphy (2009) scores and the Google Scholar Metrics scores, it was possible to assess longer-term impacts, as well as more immediate impacts and to see whether there had been any changes in journal rankings since 2007. With the exception of the *Journal of Direct Marketing*, which is now known as the *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, the 44 journals included in Soutar and Murphy's (2009) paper were included here to enable comparisons to be made with the earlier paper. However, the 117 journals in the ABDC 1505 Field of Research (Marketing) were included when comparisons with the earlier paper were not undertaken. These data are available from the author.

In order to better understand the indexes, bivariate correlations were initially computed. The correlations between the 2001 to 2012 h-index, g-index and hg-index were all above 0.99, while the correlation between the Google Scholar Metrics h-index and the Google Scholar Metrics median citations score was 0.97, suggesting there was little value in using anything other than the h-indexes in the subsequent discussion. What is clear is that some of the leading journals' 2001 h-indexes have increased considerably since the 2009 paper was published. For example, the *Journal of Marketing's* h-index has risen from 62 to 104 (the only journal above 100) and the *Journal of Consumer Research's* h-index has risen from 46 to 80. Some of the journals with relatively low h-indexes in 2009 have seen big increases as well. For example, the *International Journal of Bank Marketing's* h-index increased from 11 to 34 and *Marketing Intelligence and Planning's* h-index increased from 12 to 34. However, some of the journal's h-indexes have barely moved (e.g. the *Journal of Marketing Education* and the *Journal of Global Marketing*). There may have been some movement in the rankings of the 44 journals that were common to both studies as a result of the additional 5 years of data. However, Spearman's rank correlation between the two h-indexes (i.e. the 2009 scores and 2013 scores) was 0.90, suggesting there had been little overall change and that the additional data from all the articles published since 2001 had not changed the journals' overall rank ordering very much, suggesting there was stability, at least from this perspective.

As was mentioned earlier, more recent impact (from 2007) was assessed through the journals' Google Scholar Metrics scores. Spearman's rank correlation was initially computed between the Soutar and Murphy h-index (up to 2007) and the Google Scholar Metrics h-index (since 2007). In this case, the correlation was 0.86, suggesting there had been some change across the two time periods, although the journal ordering initially obtained in 2009 was largely retained. The Pearson correlation between the updated h-index and the Google Scholar Metrics h-index was 0.91, suggesting Google Scholar Metrics scores can safely be used in any subsequent analysis of marketing journal impact; significantly reducing the effort required for such assessments. Despite this overall stability, there were some big changes in the ranks of some of the journals, as *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, the *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing* and the *International Journal of Bank Marketing* jumped 10 places, while the *Journal of Advertising Research* and the *Journal of Marketing Education* dropped more than ten places. Such changes suggest, despite overall stability, a specific journal's impact is not a given and that changes can occur relatively quickly, depending on the papers chosen, making the journal editor's job even more difficult.

This suggests it is important to look at the papers themselves and the second part of this study did this. Google Scholar was again used in this part of the study. In order to make the task manageable, it was decided to restrict the papers to the top twenty papers from 2001 that had been published in each of the 22 A* and A marketing journals included in the Australian Business Deans' Council's journal list, making a total of 440 papers. It was felt these papers would provide insights into the papers that had the greatest impact and enabled an evaluation of the countries that had made a contribution to marketing's impact in this century. In this case, total citations and citations per year were computed to look at overall impact this century and impact when recency of the publication was taken into account. The maximum, minimum, median and mean citations for these journals' top twenty papers can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Citations for Top Twenty Papers 2001 to 2012 (ordered by median cites pa)

Journal	Highest Cite	Lowest Cite	Median Cites	Median Cites per year	Mean Cites	Mean Cites per year
Journal of Marketing	3964	497	764	89	1046	109
Journal of Consumer Research	2192	366	466	51	665	74
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	1173	339	414	51	557	65
Journal of Retailing	1418	243	442	45	541	52
Journal of Marketing Research	2097	277	451	44	626	60
Journal of Business Research	759	177	329	41	371	42
Industrial Marketing Management	776	248	323	34	363	37
European Journal of Marketing	547	221	250	32	325	31
Journal of Service Research	1069	204	261	30	383	43
Marketing Science	868	211	277	29	372	50
Journal of Consumer Psychology	489	154	228	26	253	29
Psychology & Marketing	773	143	200	26	273	28
International Journal of Research in Marketing	1078	154	198	24	310	33
Journal of Advertising	518	135	171	22	219	23
International Marketing Review	277	110	129	17	151	17
Journal of Advertising Research	329	128	146	15	167	16
Journal of Consumer Affairs	611	85	113	13	192	20
Journal of Public Policy & Marketing	293	73	105	13	134	15
Marketing Letters	617	79	118	12	157	16
Journal of International Marketing	384	98	116	12	144	15
Journal of Marketing Management	190	72	102	10	108	12
Journal of Strategic Marketing	215	52	65	7	85	9

Overall there were some big differences between the journals' top papers' impact. Clearly, the *Journal of Marketing's* top papers had greater impact than the other 21 journals, while the top papers in some journals, notably the *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, had less impact. Given the skewed nature of the data, it was decided to undertake a nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test to see if the differences between the citations of the various journal's top twenty citations were significant. The Kruskal-Wallis statistics (293 for cites and 285 for cites per year) were significant well beyond the 1% level, suggesting the differences were real and

that, even when only the top papers and the “top” journals were considered, marketing journals had a real impact order, although the top few journals and the bottom few journals were most responsible for this result.

So what were the papers that had the greatest impact? The top ten papers in terms of total citations are shown in Table 2. The top paper overall is surely not a surprise. Vargo and Lusch’s (2004) *Journal of Marketing* paper (“Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing”) had obtained 3964 citations when the data were collected, making a total of more than 400 citations a year, which was almost double the next most cited per year paper, which received 229 cites per year and was also written by Vargo and Lusch (“Service-dominant logic: Continuing the evolution”), which was published in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing* in 2008 and these were two of only three papers with more than 200 cites per year.

Table 2: The top ten papers and those with more than 100 cites per year

Authors	Title	Journal	Published	Cites	Cites per year
Vargo & Lusch	Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing	JM	2004	3964	440
Muniz & O’Guinn	Brand community	JCR	2001	2192	183
Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer	Index construction with formative indicators	JMR	2001	2097	175
Jarvis et al.	A critical review of construct indicators and measurement model misspecification	JCR	2003	2030	203
Chaudhuri & Holbrook	The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance	JM	2001	1877	149
Sirdeshmukh et al.	Consumer trust, value, and loyalty in relational exchanges	JM	2002	1659	151
Brady & Cronin	Some new thoughts on conceptualizing perceived service quality	JM	2001	1427	119
Sweeney & Soutar	Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale	JR	2001	1418	118
Sen & Bhattacharya	Does doing good always lead to doing better?	JMR	2001	1294	108
Vargo & Lusch	Service-dominant logic: Continuing the evolution	JAMS	2008	1143	229
Zeithaml et al.	Service quality delivery through web sites	JAMS	2002	1162	106
McAlexander et al.	Building brand community	JM	2002	1159	105
Parasuraman et al.	ES-QUAL: a multiple-item scale for assessing electronic service quality	JSR	2005	1069	134
Arnould & Thompson	Consumer Culture Theory(CCT): Twenty Years of Research	JCR	2005	1041	130
Rust et al.	Return on marketing: Using customer equity to focus marketing strategy	JM	2005	974	108
KL Keller, DR Lehmann	Brands and branding: Research findings and future priorities	MS	2008	857	171
D Godes, D Mayzlin	Using online conversations to study word-of-mouth communication	MS	2008	835	167
X Zhao, JG Lynch, Q Chen	Reconsidering Baron and Kenny: Myths and truths about mediation analysis	JCR	2010	428	143

It is clear the service-dominant logic debate has been a crucial part of marketing's evolution in the first part of the twenty first century. Five of the top ten papers were published in the *Journal of Marketing*, while the other five were published in other A* journals, again supporting the ordering evident in the other results. Interestingly, only four papers had more than 2000 citations, while an additional 10 papers had more than 1000 citations

As can be seen in Table 2, most of the highly cited papers were from the early part of the century, with six being published in 2001; the exception being Vargo and Lusch's 2008 *JAMS* paper. Other papers with more than 100 cites per year were added to Table 2 to see if the same pattern was evident, although only eight additional papers were found. Only one of these 18 was a non "A* paper" (Parasuraman et al.'s 2005 *JSR* paper), suggesting the same trend is evident, even when recency is taken into account. This result also suggests many important marketing papers have a "slow trajectory", continuing to obtain many citations for a number of years and, in some cases, obtaining increasing numbers in succeeding years.

The final issue of interest was to investigate the countries from which the top papers had originated. While a number of papers had authors from more than one country, most (78%) had authors from only one country, suggesting many marketing academics' research networks are national, rather than international. Interestingly, very few papers (1%) had authors from more than two countries, supporting this view. As would be expected, while authors came from a number of countries (25), most of the top papers (55%) were written by American academics alone, with American academics being involved in 58% of the papers, as some worked with academics from other countries. The United Kingdom provided the next largest number of top papers (9%), with the Netherlands providing 6% and Australia providing 4% of these papers and other countries having even smaller percentages (New Zealand 1%). Further evidence of this American impact can be seen in Table 2, as eight of the top ten papers were written by American academics, with one from the UK and one from Australia, while 16 of the 18 papers with more than 100 cites per year were written by American academics.

Conclusions

There was a great deal of overall stability between Soutar and Murphy's (2009) journal rankings and these updated results, although this did not prevent considerable movement at an individual journal level, highlighting the key roles reviewers and editors play in choosing good and influential papers, as this will have a significant impact on subsequent citations and journal prestige. It is also clear that the marketing discipline in the first part of the twenty first century remains a very American-focused discipline, as most of the major journals and even more of the influential papers originate from there. While there are pockets of influence elsewhere, including in Australia and New Zealand, it is likely the marketing discipline will continue to rely heavily on research undertaken in the United States for some time to come.

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