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How international are the top academic journals? The case of marketing

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to assess the level of international involvement in the editorial boards and content of the leading journals of the marketing discipline to investigate a reported bias against non-US material.

Design/methodology/approach – The research employed two approaches: editorial board and content analysis of ten leading marketing journals, and interviews with an expert panel of senior marketing academics.

Findings – The top journals of the marketing journal were found to have low levels of international involvement, with high proportions of both US authors and data, and US membership of editorial boards. The editorial board analysis also revealed institutional links with journal boards, and a network of overlapping membership between the editorial boards. The expert panel provided divergent views on reasons for the USA dominance, but the board analysis seemed to best fit with the suggestion of networks of scholars who are naturally inclined to favor research that fits their world view.

Practical implications – To improve publishing success under the current status quo, scholars can emulate the favored (US) research approach and writing style; network with the “right” people; or raise a new research paradigm to dominance. Journal editors can increase the diversity in editorial boards to encourage international involvement in their publications.

Originality/value – The research combines traditional empirical investigation with qualitative input via an expert panel to provide new insight into barriers to global dissemination of scholarly research.

Keywords Publishing, Marketing, Serials, Academic staff

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Within the academic world, there has long been an emphasis on published research outputs commonly expressed by the phrase “publish or perish” (Roach *et al.*, 1994; Rotfeld, 1997a, b; Twedt, 1977). Scholarly journals, like the *European Business Review*, are the primary medium for the dissemination of knowledge for most academic disciplines, including marketing (AMA Task Force, 1988; Baumgartner and Pieters, 2003; Coe and Weinstock, 1983; Jensen *et al.*, 1995; Pecotich and Everett, 1989).

There is evidence that nationality and/or geography have some influence on what is published in the top academic journals in many business disciplines. For example, Lukka and Kasanen (1996, p. 763) found in their investigation of the top accounting journals that “The U.S. journals are very much centered on publishing U.S. authors’ works” while non-US journals showed far lower levels of “local” authorship. They concluded that their discipline is “U.S. driven, spatially narrow and certainly far from global” (Lukka and Kasanen, 1996, p. 763). A similar bias towards local authors is evident in Newell *et al.*’s (2002) study of real estate journals which revealed that the



proportion of foreign authorship in US-based journals was lower than that in journals published elsewhere. In the international human resource management literature, Ozbilgin (2004, pp. 217-8) goes as far as to suggest a North American and Western European “domination” due to the top journals in the field having “geographically limited” editorial boards and content.

In marketing literature, the origin of the author has also been suggested as an influence on manuscript acceptance. Walters (2001) suggests that being located outside North America or Europe is a barrier to publication in the top journals because of the limited geographical coverage in the editorial board memberships of prestigious journals. He suggests that research from outside those regions will be examined less knowledgeably and less sympathetically. Czinkota (2000, pp. 1306-7) states that “in order to get published in U.S. journals, the author needs to move to the U.S. or work in the U.S. for some time”. Homburg (2003, p. 349) suggests that some reviewers see articles that come from outside the US as being of a lower quality, and that “many German colleagues ... view leading U.S.-based marketing journals as somehow predisposed against manuscripts from outside the United States”. Svensson (2005, p. 429) suggests that some top marketing journals “have become a forum for an inter-connected group of American scholars”. Easton and Easton (2003, p. 16) describe the cause of the problem thus: “non-U.S. authors cannot compete on an equal basis since they face implicit and explicit barriers” based on distance from the formal and informal institutions that surround the top US-based journals.

Czinkota (2000) investigated international contributions to marketing journals and found that in the US-based journals only 8.9 percent of articles published over an 18-year period were written by non-US affiliated authors. Looking at the *Journal of Marketing* (JM) as an example, in Czinkota’s study only 4.7 percent of JM articles had no US authors. Cheng *et al.* (2003) were also concerned with the nationality of authors in leading marketing journals, but in this case the focus was on authors from the Asia-Pacific region. They analyzed 20 key marketing journals over a ten year period and found that Asia-Pacific universities contributed only 3.8 percent of the content of the journals.

A possible response to concerns about such statistics, is that it is natural for US-based journals to offer material primarily from US academics. However, quite aside from epistemological grounds for objecting to geographical biases, the journals themselves often claim to be international publications: for example, the *Journal of Marketing* (2004) has described itself as: “... positioned as the premier, broad-based, scholarly journal of the marketing discipline ... It is read internationally by marketers ...” (emphases added). While *Marketing Science* has claimed to enable readers to “Discover the latest findings in the global marketplace” (*Marketing Science Journal Homepage*, 2004). The editorial policies of the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* have also purported a strong emphasis on an international focus, for example, “The *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* is an *international* journal for the study and improvement of marketing” and “comprehensively covers” areas including “*international marketing*” (*Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 2004). These, and other US-based journals, also certainly have a high international standing as shall be seen later.

Given the US dominance of the literature evident in previous studies, the authors have conducted a two part study to investigate how international the leading journals

of the marketing discipline are. The first part of the research involved an empirical investigation of the editorial boards and content of ten top marketing journals. Data were gathered on the incidence of US authors and US data sources in the journals, and the levels of international representation on the editorial boards. The involvement of the top ten journal editorial board members as authors within those ten journals was also investigated. Interviews were then conducted with senior marketing academics to provide some qualitative insights to further understanding of the results of the journal analysis.

Methodology

Journal analysis

Ten journals were selected for analysis based on being highly ranked by studies employing a variety of methodologies over a number of years (Browne and Becker, 1991; Coe and Weinstock, 1983; Easton and Easton, 2003; Heischmidt and Gordon, 1993; Hult *et al.*, 1997; Jobber and Simpson, 1988; Koojarenprasit *et al.*, 1998; Luke and Doke, 1987; Mort *et al.*, 2004; Pecotich and Everett, 1989; Theoharakis and Hirst, 2002):

- (1) *Journal of Marketing (JM)*;
- (2) *Journal of Consumer Research (JCR)*;
- (3) *Journal of Marketing Research (JMR)*;
- (4) *Marketing Science (MS)*;
- (5) *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (JAMS)*;
- (6) *Journal of Retailing (JR)*;
- (7) *International Journal of Research in Marketing (IJRM)*;
- (8) *Journal of Business Research (JBR)*;
- (9) *Journal of Advertising (JA)*; and
- (10) *Journal of Advertising Research (JAR)*.

A snap shot of editorial review board membership was taken from the lists provided on the journal home pages. Content analysis was then carried out on the journals to investigate the origin of authors and data sources in the articles within selected issues. As a current rather than historical account was sought, analysis was based on two recent years of material.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with an expert panel of senior marketing academics based in Australasia. The panel members were selected to provide expert opinion on publishing in international peer-reviewed journals. Potential panel members' publishing experience was assessed in terms of both authorship, and reviewing and editorial experience related to international journals.

Some panel members requested anonymity so to ensure that identities cannot be deduced, biographical information is only presented in aggregate form and quotations are identified with letter code names for each panel member.

The final panel comprised nine full professors, seven associate professors, and eight senior lecturers. The number of years panel members had been in academia ranged from 7 to 37 years with a mean of 19 years.

The panel members had varying numbers of articles published in international peer-reviewed journals due to the wide range of years in the academic world. The number of such articles published ranged from 5 to 70, with an average of 28 per panel member. Most panel members also had great experience in reviewing and/or editing of, on average, seven different international scholarly journals each.

The choice of panel members from only one continent could be viewed as a limitation of the study. However, Australasia being both English speaking and geographically remote from the US potentially enhances the relevance of the perspectives offered. Furthermore, the panel had broad international experience with 20 of the panel members having held academic posts outside Australasia: 11 panel members had worked in the UK/Europe, nine had held academic posts in the USA and small numbers of panelists had also held posts in academic institutions in Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Canada.

Top academic
journals

425

Results of journal analysis (Table I)

US-based authors in the top ten marketing journals

The US dominance identified in studies like Czinkota's (2000) was corroborated by the current study's analysis of the geographic origin of authors in the top journals. For example, in Czinkota's study, 4.7 percent of *JM* articles had no US authors, a result consistent with the proportion (4.3 percent) found in *JM* in this study.

JM had the highest proportion of US-authored articles with 95.7 percent of articles that included at least one US-based author, and a high proportion of articles (78.3 percent) containing no authors from outside the USA. *JCR*, *JMR*, *MS*, *JAMS*, *JA* and *JAR* all also had high proportions of articles with at least one US author (83.1-93.0 percent). There were only two journals where the proportion of articles with input from a US author fell under 70 percent: *IJRM*, the only journal in the study published outside the USA, had 65.9 percent of articles with at least one US author, and *JBR*, the only multi-disciplinary title in the list, had the lowest proportion of US authored articles with 58.4 percent.

Overall, across all ten journals the average proportion of articles with at least one US author was 84.4 percent – less than 16 percent of all articles published in the

Journal	All articles		Empirical articles				Data source unclear (percent)
	<i>N</i>	≥ 1 US authors (percent)	All US authors (percent)	<i>n</i>	Includes US data (percent)	No US data (percent)	
<i>JM</i>	69	95.7	78.3	57	86.0	12.3	1.8
<i>JCR</i>	100	87.0	74.0	88	80.7	15.9	3.4
<i>JMR</i>	78	91.0	70.5	71	77.5	14.1	8.5
<i>MS</i>	57	93.0	70.2	39	74.4	25.6	0.0
<i>JAMS</i>	72	86.1	76.4	46	76.1	17.4	6.5
<i>JR</i>	43	83.7	69.8	43	74.4	16.3	9.3
<i>IJRM</i>	44	65.9	34.1	32	37.5	59.4	3.1
<i>JBR</i>	257	58.4	44.0	208	52.9	45.7	1.4
<i>JA</i>	56	82.1	73.2	52	73.1	25.0	1.9
<i>JAR</i>	96	81.3	72.9	75	66.7	26.7	6.7

Table I.
Results of journal content analysis

top ten marketing journals in the years studied were written without the involvement of an author based in the USA.

Location of empirical data sources in the top ten marketing journals

The next stage of the content analysis was a review of location of data sources used in the empirical articles within the ten selected journals. Articles that did not include real world data were first eliminated from the analysis.

Though not relevant to the current study it was interesting to find that a clear description of the source of the data for many of the articles was not provided. Overall, the data source was unclear for close to 4 percent of all empirical articles from the top journals, ranging from 0 percent for *MS* to 9.3 percent in *JR*. These are widely held to be the premier journals in the discipline and their submission guidelines extol the importance of detailed methodology and quality data sources.

Given the high levels of involvement from US-based authors revealed in the first stage of the analysis, a look at the location of data sources used in research may have been considered redundant. However, recalling the journals' positioning statements described earlier, it was relevant to establish whether the material in the journals had more of a global flavor than would be revealed through authorship alone.

JM was once again revealed to have the lowest incidence of non-US content with only 12.3 percent of empirical articles not specifically including data from the USA, with *JMR* (14.1 percent) have the second lowest level of non-US data sources. *JR*, *JAMS*, and *JCR* revealed comparable proportions of articles without US-based data, with levels ranging from 15.9 to 17.4 percent, followed by *JA* (25.0 percent), *MS* (25.6 percent) and *JAR* (26.7 percent).

Once again, *JBR* (45.7 percent) and *IJRM* (59.4 percent) stood out from the rest of the top ten journals by having a higher proportion of empirical articles that did not specifically include data from the USA. This was not surprising given the lower proportion of US authors in these journals uncovered in the previous analysis.

The analysis of authorship and data within the top journals provides evidence to support the views on a US dominance suggested in the marketing literature. The results are also in line with the findings from studies carried out in other business disciplines (Lukka and Kasanen, 1996; Newell *et al.*, 2002; Ozbilgin, 2004). The data show that the top journals contain a far greater proportion of articles with US authors and data sources than from the rest of the world combined.

Clearly this high proportion of US articles published in the top journals does not necessarily corroborate the suggestions of Czinkota (2000), Easton and Easton (2003), Homburg (2003) and Svensson (2005) that there are biases against authors from outside of the USA. The nature of the relationship between the origin of the author and their success in being published is not clear and cannot be established from the simple analyses carried out on the ten journals.

Editorial board membership of the top ten marketing journals

To explore whether the formal and informal institutions that surround journals are responsible for this US dominance (as posited by Easton and Easton, 2003), an analysis was conducted into the membership of the editorial review boards for the top ten journals.

The editorial boards of the ten top marketing journals created a database of 668 people with 966 editorial board memberships between them. The size of the editorial boards varied from 59 for *JA* to 175 for *JBR*, with an average of 97. *JBR*'s large board size is likely to be due to it being a multi-disciplinary journal. The broad scope and consequently large editorial board may also explain the anomalous results for this US-based title described in previous sections.

As shown in Table II, 85.3 percent of the 668 board members were based in the USA. Only *IJRM* had more than 20 percent of board members located outside the US, while at the other extreme, *JCR*, *JR*, *JAMS*, *JA*, and *JAR* all had greater than 90 percent of board members based in the USA.

The total number of people involved (668) on the editorial boards was less than the number of board member entries in the database because close to a third (209 or 31.3 percent) of the individuals were involved in more than one journal board. Membership of multiple boards varied from 140 individuals who were on two boards, through to one academic who appeared on boards for six of the top ten journals.

Figure 1 shows the overlaps between memberships of the editorial boards. The strongest overlap between journal boards was that between *JMR* and *MS*, with 37 people serving on both boards – this equates to half of the total *JMR* board membership. *JM* serves as a hub in the network, showing the strongest overlaps with other boards: *JCR* (21 people in common with *JM*), *JMR*(20), *MS*(29), *JAMS*(20), *JR*(20) and *IJRM*(19).

Institutional links of the top ten marketing journals' editorial boards

Links between editorial board members was also evident from an investigation of the institutions at which they were based. A closer look at the 642 academics on the editorial boards revealed that they came from only 218 universities. A total of 54 universities provided four or more board members, with nine institutions providing more than ten board members each: University of Pennsylvania (19 board members); New York University (14); France's INSEAD Fontainebleau (13); Northwestern University (13); University of Michigan (13); University of Southern California (12); Columbia University (11); Duke University (11); and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (11). The universities that supply editorial board members appear to be among the top business schools (for example, see the *BusinessWeek Online* rankings).

The concentration of editorial board members within particular institutions is not surprising as other studies of marketing literature have shown a concentration of well published authors within a limited number of institutions. Bakir *et al.* (2000) analyzed the authors of all articles published between 1991 and 1998 in six leading marketing journals and found that the top institutions accounted for a disproportionately large number of articles published. Cheng *et al.* (2003) found a similar pattern in their study of authorship of 20 marketing journals, with the top five institutions (of the 1,472 identified) accounting for 33 percent of the material published between 1991 and 2000. Across all disciplines there is evidence that academics from a small number of institutions tend to control the boards of journals (McNamee and Willis, 1994).

Editorial board members as authors in the top ten marketing journals

The database of editorial board members was also explored in combination with the content analysis of issues from the top ten journals. Editorial board members featured prominently as authors in the material in the top ten journals over the last two years.

Table II.
Results of journal
editorial board analysis

Journal	Editorial board members	USA (percent)	Canada (percent)	Europe (percent)	Location of board members Australasia (percent)	Asia (percent)	Middle East (percent)	South America (percent)
<i>JM</i>	115	88.7	0.0	7.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
<i>JCR</i>	143	90.2	1.4	5.6	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0
<i>JMR</i>	73	84.9	1.4	8.2	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0
<i>MS</i>	99	87.9	4.0	5.1	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
<i>JAMS</i>	93	91.4	7.5	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>JR</i>	66	95.5	1.5	0.0	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0
<i>IJRM</i>	83	49.4	0.0	34.9	4.8	4.8	0.0	0.0
<i>JBR</i>	175	82.9	6.3	7.4	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.0
<i>JA</i>	59	96.6	1.7	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>JAR</i>	60	91.7	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Overall ^a		85.3	3.3	7.0	3.3	1.3	1.3	0.3

Note: ^aOverall figures relate to the 668 individuals on the boards and vary from figures for the journals due to the people who serve on multiple boards

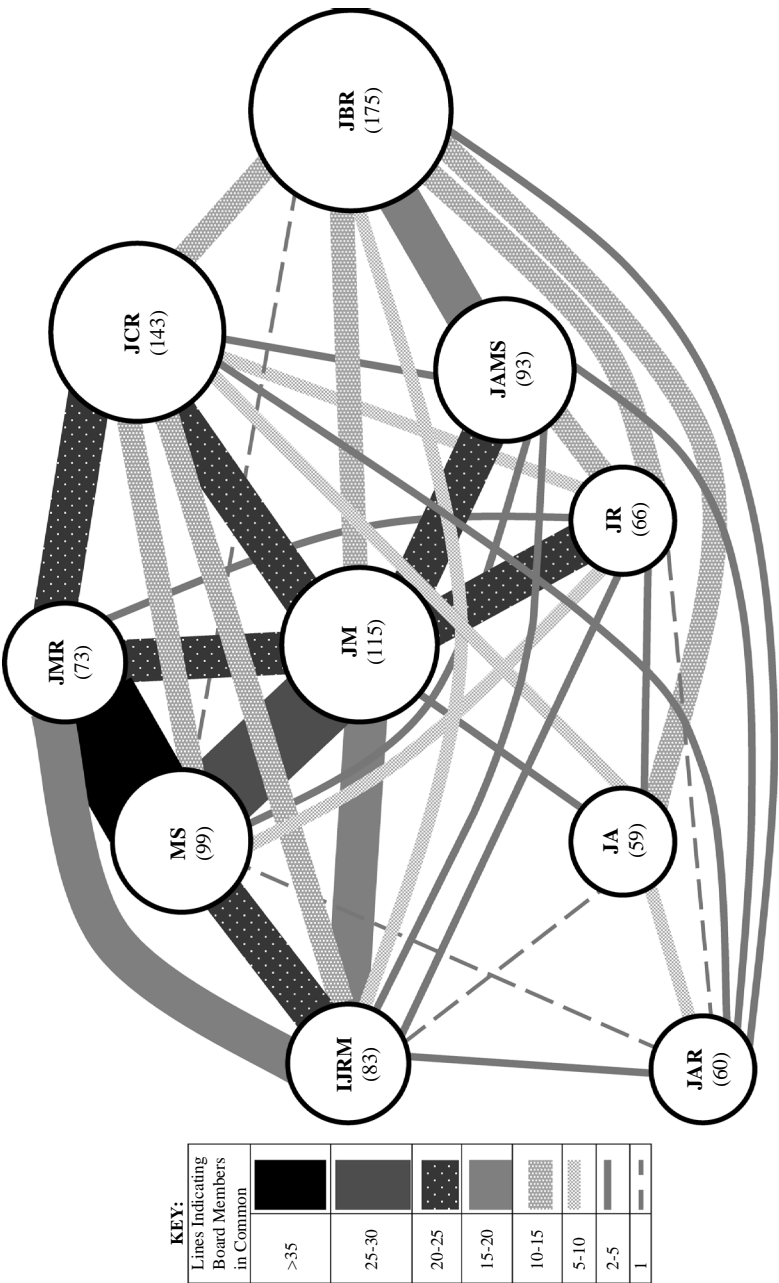


Figure 1.
Overlaps between
memberships of the top
ten journal editorial
boards

For the top ten journals overall, 48.6 percent of articles in these ten journals involved an author who served on at least one of the ten editorial boards. The levels of top-ten editorial board members as authors varied from a high of 75.4 percent of articles for *JM* and *MS* to far lower levels for *JBR* (27.2 percent), and *JA* (28.6 percent). Three journals had proportions in the middle of the range: *JR* (53.5 percent), *IJRM* (50.0 percent), and *JA* (42.7 percent).

Results were surprisingly consistent across the top five journals, with four results within one percent of each other: *JM* (75.4 percent), *JMR* (75.6 percent), *MS* (75.4 percent), *JAMS* (73.6 percent), and *JCR* (69.0 percent) close behind. Across the top five journals overall, 75.1 percent of all articles published over the two years included a top ten journal editorial board member among the authors. Looking at this data from another perspective, only a quarter of all articles published in the top five highly ranked marketing journals did NOT include a top ten journal editorial board member among their authors.

Results of interview analysis

International authors in the top marketing journals

The interviews with senior Australasian marketing academics revealed divergent views of whether international material faces barrier to publication in the top journals. Panel members with US qualifications tended to argue that no such barriers existed. For example:

Well some people talk about issues like if you try to publish in a U.S. journal with New Zealand data stuff like that – they get all hung up about that. I've published with New Zealand data many times in top journals – it's never been a problem. So, if other people comment on that, I think that they're making excuses for themselves (Panel member N).

However, panel members with less US connections suggested that the geographic origin of the author does have an influence on whether an article is published, for example, Panel member K described his own experience with one of the top journals:

I've had papers rejected from *JR* because they didn't have American data. So they didn't think it was of interest to Americans. Maybe they should change it to the "Journal of American Retailing" ... The comments were basically exactly on those lines: "Replicate this with American data and ... it will be published" (Panel member K).

Some panel members described the cause of the perceived US-dominance as being due to a bias such as "patriotism" (Panel member F). The notion of "patriotism" was evident at a recent international US-based conference where preliminary results from this study were presented. An academic from the US explained the US-dominance of the journals by stating that the best marketing academics choose to live in the USA and therefore the journals are full of US-based authors. A comparison was made to the US "World" Series of baseball, and National Basketball Association competitions as US-based events that were claimed to be international because top players chose to live in the USA. The supposition that the academic environment and/or general quality of life in the USA is irresistible to top marketing academics is interesting, and does appear to be widely held by US academics – those present at the conference certainly appeared to share this view.

Some academics explained the influence of nationality on publishing success as being due to the style of research conducted in various countries:

Classic example of that was at the EMAC conference this year – 70% of the Dutch papers got accepted and only 20% of the Scandinavian papers got accepted. And that can't only be explained by quality – it can also be explained by different styles of research. It can also be explained by who the reviewers were and a lot of the Northern Europeans were somewhat reluctant to be involved in reviewing processes, so their perspectives and values in terms of type of research wasn't perhaps represented as clearly (Panel member M).

Top academic
journals

431

This latter explanation for the bias towards content from particular nations is a plausible one. The US-dominance in the top journals may be due to reviewers perceiving the quality of work produced in the USA as superior to that produced elsewhere. This is a logical explanation given the composition of the editorial boards: the boards comprise mostly US academics so the manuscripts submitted are judged by people immersed in the US style of research and writing. Studies carried out on both consumer goods and services suggest that country-of-origin does influence assessments of quality – Al-Sulaiti and Baker (1998, p. 173), in a comprehensive review of the literature on country-of-origin effects, confirm the existence of a general “home-country selection bias”. Data sources and writing style make country-of-origin obvious to a reviewer so if editorial board members have a subconscious preference for material from their own country, they may well rationalize it via an assessment that the style of research in material submitted from overseas is inferior.

Editorial board overlaps and influence in the top marketing journals

Another major finding from the analysis of the editorial boards of the top journals was the overlaps between boards and the board members' involvement in authoring a large proportion of the articles published in the top journals.

Some of the senior academics interviewed provided explanation for these results by suggesting that if an academic is well known or knows influential people (such as, editors and reviewers) it increases the likelihood of being published.

... if you're networking with more senior academics who have been successful in a particular field, then yes it does improve your chances of being published (Panel member G).

... building relationships with editors is really a good way of getting published (Panel member I).

I think that what gets you published is following the formula. And unfortunately the formula is laid down in most of this discipline by a very narrow clique of largely American academics. And I think that has done a great deal of damage.... In the leading American journals I think there's no doubt it's a matter of who you know rather than what you know (Panel member A).

However, a contrary viewpoint was also evident:

... there are a very small number of people who can really do top level research. And you see their names over and over again in the top journals – it's not because they have some automatic pathway to the editor, sure they're probably more known to the editor, but that's because they keep getting stuff in those journals (Panel member N).

Once again, the two opposing views tended to be associated with different backgrounds. Those who had been successful at being published in leading US-based journals were more likely to explain that such success was due to the quality of research alone. The suggestion that activities such as schmoozing have an influence on

publishing success in the top US-based journals was made by panel members who published more in journals from the UK and Europe.

Discussion

The study investigated the editorial boards and content of ten leading marketing journals, finding evidence of US dominance both in terms of authorship and editorial board membership. A network between the editorial boards of the ten journals was also evident with overlapping memberships. Furthermore, editorial board members featured prominently as authors of material published in the marketing journals. The senior academics interviewed presented opposing opinions on the significance and basis of these trends. Panel members with stronger US connections appeared to see the trends as being a natural consequence of a limited number of top quality researchers, most of whom happened to reside in the USA. Other panel members suggested that the US dominance and narrow range of published authors were a result of social influences such as schmoozing and politics within the discipline.

A relatively small number of academics have in fact been producing the bulk of the published research outputs within the marketing discipline for some time. Robinson and Adler's (1981) study of the publishing output of 1,656 North American marketing academics found that just under 11 percent of scholars accounted for 80 percent of the citations in business journals over a four year period in the 1970s. In a more recent study the same trend was evident: Bakir *et al.* (2000) analyzed the authors of all articles published between 1991 and 1998 in six leading marketing journals and found that the top scholars were responsible for a disproportionate number of the articles. The same type of distribution is found within sub-areas of marketing also: for example, Morlacchi *et al.* (2005) found the pattern within research in the field of business-to-business marketing.

The pattern of a minority of people controlling or producing the majority of outputs is referred to as a power law distribution. The phenomenon is widespread and has been evident within academic research since the 17th century (McNamee and Willis, 1994). A power law distribution in authorship of academic research has been demonstrated empirically across a wide range of disciplines:

It is far from being a new fact that research output or scientific productivity generally follows a very asymmetric distribution. This proposition holds on the individual level, where a few scientists contribute the majority of publications, as well as on the institutional level, where high concentrations of the institutional affiliation of authors can be detected (Sutter and Kocher, 2001, p. 405).

The power law distribution for authorship of scholarly articles is closely linked to another finding from the exploration of the editorial boards. The ten top journals were shown to have a network of overlapping editorial boards, with a core of people who are involved with several journals. McNamee and Willis (1994, p. 398) suggest that the power law distribution in published research is a result of the "small network of scholars within a discipline".

Having a (relatively) small contingent of successful academics linking the editorial boards of the top marketing journals could be seen as a natural phenomenon. Looking at the network of the editorial boards (as shown in Figure 1), clusters or hubs where specific boards have strong connections to several others are evident, and all boards are interconnected, sometimes via intermediary boards. A non-random network

pattern of this kind, featuring high clustering and short path lengths between actors, is referred to as a “small world network” (Watts and Strogatz, 1998). The pervasiveness of such network patterns was first made famous in the 1998 *Nature* article where Watts and Strogatz (1998) illustrated the pattern amongst film actors, an electrical power grid and the neural network of a worm. Small world networks are evident in many aspects of human endeavor and throughout the natural world.

The work of Kuhn (1970) and others offers explanation for why patterns such as the power law distribution and small world networks are common in marketing and throughout science: described science as involving communities of scientists who subscribe to a particular paradigm, and these communities reject material that does not fit their worldview. A paradigm encompasses not only theory but also favored methodologies, and preferences as to important areas to study (Lodahl, 1972). Foucault’s writing on legitimation has been interpreted in a similar vein, with groups of experts controlling the production of knowledge through academic journals (Weiner, 1998). McNamee and Willis (1994, p. 397) assert that there is “considerable evidence” that an invisible college of academics “control, or influence significantly” the core journals of a discipline. Kuhn’s view can explain the overlapping network of editorial board memberships and the concentration of articles with editorial board members as authors: academics with the same world view will be drawn together and they will support (consciously or subconsciously) academics and manuscripts that support their world view.

The fact that patterns such as power law distributions and small world networks are common and naturally occurring, does not disprove the possibility that individuals involved in the editorial board network of the top marketing journals are limiting the type of material that is published within the discipline. The data in this study provide some support for this notion: a network between editorial boards of the top journals is demonstrated, and members of that network were found to be published regularly in the top journals.

Conclusions

Scholars from outside the US were found to be poorly represented both as editorial board members and as authors within the top ten marketing journals. Furthermore, a network between editorial boards of the top journals is demonstrated, and members of that network are found to be publishing regularly in the top journals.

The implication of these findings for the marketing discipline is that for academics from outside the USA to make a bigger splash in the top marketing journals, they need to:

- identify and emulate the research approaches and writing styles favored by the review boards of the journals;
- become part of the “invisible colleges” of the marketing discipline by making connections with existing board members; and/or
- stage a Kuhnian scientific revolution raising an alternate paradigm that favors a different manuscript style to the fore.

The monocultural nature of academic disciplines is unfortunately sustained by these strategies of imitation, schmoozing, or substitution of one clique for another. However, the editors of academic journals have the power to initiate real improvement in the

international content of leading journals. Editors of leading US-based journals can better achieve their missions of global content if they increase the diversity in their editorial board membership, and, equally importantly, encourage their board members' participation in promoting international contributions. This can only enhance the advancement of scholarly knowledge in business disciplines.

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