Exploring Author and Journal Citation Frequency in Sport Management Journals

David Shilbury, Deakin University

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Few sport management journals are currently included in citation indices such as the Social Sciences Citations Index. There is therefore a need to undertake research that will lead to a deeper understanding of the journals and authors influencing research published in sport management journals. This research is related to journal quality as it reveals which journals are influencing the field, and in relation to authors, which authors, and areas of research are influencing the field. In emerging academic disciplines, as in established ones, concepts are attributed to one researcher and cited by another who tests, extends or refines that work (Peng & Zhou, 2006; Romano & Ratnutung 1997). This process acknowledges the incremental nature of the development of research thought. Influential research is cited often, and typically is published in higher quality journals. There is an established link between journal quality and citations with Judge, Cable, Colbert, and Rynes (2007) noting, “the single best predictor of citation is publication in a quality journal” (p. 500). This finding is reinforced by a number of other scholars (e.g., Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Bachrach, 2008; Stremersch, Verniers, & Verhoef, 2007) and if correct, this present study would expect to find citations from the Journal of Sport Management, as the only A* ranked journal in the field (Australian Business Deans Council, 2008), dominating the citation count amongst the sport management and marketing journals.

Citation studies are quantitative in nature as they examine references attached to published manuscripts. Refereed journals play a key role in the dissemination of academic information and this is as true in sport management research, as it is in other disciplines. Investigating citations and their source, is therefore an important barometer of journal quality. The purpose of this study was to identify the most frequently cited sport management and non sport management journals in four sport management journals between 1987 and 2007. As the Journal of Sport Management was the first sport management journal published in 1987 this was a logical starting point for this study. Since 1987, another six sport management and marketing journals have been established and four of these journals are examined to ascertain citations impact.

The study was completed by undertaking a bibliometric analysis of the reference lists of the Journal of Sport Management, Sport Marketing Quarterly, Sport Management Review and the European Sport Management Quarterly. Results revealed which sport management and non sport management journals and authors were the most frequently cited. Although the results provides a breakdown of the number of citations to sport management and non sport management journals published in the four journals, this presentation will focus on author citations identifying which authors have been most frequently cited. For example, the most frequently cited journal in Sport Marketing Quarterly was Sport Marketing Quarterly itself (587) followed by the Journal of Sport Management (223). The Journal of Consumer Research was the most frequently cited non sport management journal (163) followed by the Journal of Marketing (128). Four journal categories were identified from the top 20 journals cited in Sport Marketing Quarterly including marketing (10), sport/leisure related (7), psychology (1) and general business (2). Author citations analysis using a weighted index for authorship (i.e., 1st, 2nd or 3rd author) revealed Wann (285), Sutton (230.5) and Kahle (163) as the most frequently cited authors. Results will also include citation frequency after non journal sources are removed from the data and the manuscripts most frequently cited manuscripts for each of the top five cited authors for Sport Marketing Quarterly. Results for Journal of Sport Management, Sport Management Review and the European Sport Management Quarterly will also be presented and the implications of this research for journal quality and the field more broadly are discussed.