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Assessing External Impact: Comparing Sport, and Arts Management Citations

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In emerging academic disciplines, as in established ones, concepts are attributed to one researcher and cited by another who tests, extends or refines that research work. This process acknowledges the historical linkage of the development of research thought (Bornmann & Daniel, 2008; Xiao & Smith, 2007). Refereed journals have consistently played a key role in the dissemination of academic information. This is as true in sport and arts management research as it is in other disciplines. Both sport and arts management have emerged in recent years as discrete areas with dedicated programs in universities throughout the world, professional associations, and significantly, given the growing research in both domains, dedicated journals through which such research can be disseminated (Shilbury & Rentschler; 2007, Rentschler & Shilbury, 2008).

Both sport and arts management possess similar properties in that they are both leisure pursuits, traverse a wide range of communities interested in professional sport and cultural production, to community based sport clubs and local arts societies typically run by volunteers. Moreover, both fields have been subject to increasing accountability as a result of increased government funding, philanthropy, sponsorships and a general commercialisation and professionalisation of the sectors (Auld, 1997; Evrard & Colbert, 2000; Smith & Stewart, 2010). Consequently, heightened interest in management and marketing practice in both fields has been matched by an increased scholarly interest in the theoretical dimensions of managing both sport and arts organisations. This is evident in the number of scholarly journals germane to each field.

This study explores ten top tier management and ten top tier marketing journals over a 22-year period to identify the most frequently cited core sport and arts management journals. The purpose of this study was to compare and contrast the number of sport and arts manuscripts published in these 20 generic top tier journals and the number of citations to core sport and arts journals from these manuscripts. The study period for this investigation commenced in 1987, the date when the Journal of Sport Management was first established and concluded at the end of 2008. Although some arts management journals were established well before 1987, this year was used as the common start date so as to ensure consistency of analysis when assessing and comparing the impact of sport and arts management journals based on work published in the top tier generic journals.

External impact was measured by examining the reference lists of relevant sport and arts management and marketing manuscripts published in the top tier generic journals and identifying citations to seven core sport management journals (e.g., Journal of Sport Management, Sport Marketing Quarterly, Sport Management Review) and nine core arts management journals (e.g., International Journal of Arts Management, Journal of Cultural Economics). The research question therefore was—has the research published in sport and arts management journals since 1987 influenced research published on sport and arts in mainstream management and marketing journals?

The top ten generic management and marketing journals were chosen using the Australian Business Dean's Council rankings list of academic journals. Ten of the leading journals in management (e.g., Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly) and marketing (e.g., Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research) were identified using that journal ranking list. Given the number and diverse nature of top tier generic management journals, those journals with a focus on organisational studies were included in this study.

In undertaking the current study, we defined the term “arts management/ marketing” from a broad cultural perspective. Its scope included both for-profit and not-for-profit industries and organizations, including fine arts, jazz, cinema, TV / radio / media, heritage and other entertainment and cultural industries.

Results showed some interesting trends. In both the generic management and marketing journals the number of
arts-related management and marketing manuscripts published was considerably more than was the case for sport management. Ninety-nine arts-related articles were published in the generic management journals compared to 27 in sport management. In the generic marketing journals, 118 arts-related manuscripts were identified compared to 53 sport marketing related articles. Significantly, from the 118 arts management manuscripts, 41 citations were to the nine core arts management journals and of the 99 arts marketing related manuscripts, 25 citations were identified. By comparison, 14 citations to the seven core sport management journals were identified from the 27 published manuscripts in the generic management journals, and 102 citations were identified from the sport marketing related manuscripts identified in the generic marketing journals.

This presentation examines these results and seeks to address why arts management related manuscripts were found to be more prevalent in the generic literature when compared to sport management. It will also examine why the proportion of citations from the arts management and marketing manuscripts to the core arts management journals was much lower than that recorded by sport management, with this difference more acutely obvious when comparing the citations from the marketing journals to the arts and sport management journals. Results and implications are discussed in the context of comparing two related leisure fields with a similar history of scholarly development.