

**ARE WE REFERENCES TO OUR SELVES?  
TAKING STOCK OF ACADEMY OF MARKETING CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS  
AND THEIR ROLE IN ACADEMIC EDUCATION IN MARKETING**

**Francisco Giovanni David Vieira**

Doutor em Ciências Sociais pela Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo – PUC/SP  
Professor da Universidade Estadual de Maringá – UEM  
E-mail: [fgdvieira@uem.br](mailto:fgdvieira@uem.br) (Brasil)

**Josiane Silva de Oliveira - [oliveira.josianesilva@gmail.com](mailto:oliveira.josianesilva@gmail.com)**

Mestre em Administração pela Universidade Estadual de Maringá – UEM  
E-mail: [oliveira.josianesilva@gmail.com](mailto:oliveira.josianesilva@gmail.com) (Brasil)

**André Torres Urdan**

Doutor em Administração pela Universidade de São Paulo – USP  
Professor da Fundação Getulio Vargas – FGV  
E-mail: [andre.urdan@fgv.br](mailto:andre.urdan@fgv.br) (Brasil)

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***ABSTRACT***

This paper approaches academic education in the field of marketing through academic production within the field itself. It presupposes that marketing publications are the main starting point for education in marketing, and analyzes whether the academic production of marketing scholars becomes a reference to the research developed by these scholars themselves. The empirical reference adopted for the investigation was the Academy of Marketing Conference proceedings, involving a longitudinal study covering a three-year period from 2007 to 2009. The main results reveal that academic marketing research published through the Academy of Marketing Conference proceedings have not been an important reference for the scholars who publish papers in the proceedings. This puts into perspective the role played by the Academy of Marketing Conference proceedings as a reference for marketing scholars as well as a reference for education in marketing and transformational marketing in itself. Final remarks concerning theoretical and educational implications are provided at the end.

**Keywords:** Academic Production, Publication, Academy of Marketing, Marketing, Marketing Scholars

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This paper discusses academic education in the field of marketing through the production of academic marketing research. It seems that academic events, and the production resulting from these events, play a central role for both education and research in marketing. It is our belief that marketing research and the teaching of marketing need to be understood as inseparable, because the educational process in marketing is directly related to the results of its academic and scientific production. This means that what is produced through research confirms or refutes pre-existing knowledge, and promotes advancements in the reliability and validity of theories, constructs and assumptions in marketing.

Research is often disclosed or published at academic events. It is understood that the Academy of Marketing Conference (AMC) is the main forum for the presentation, albeit as work in progress, of the results of marketing research developed, in particular, in the United Kingdom, but also in other geographical areas of the world, and this has important implications for education in marketing. The British Academy, at various times, has been understood as an eclectic and plural space (Faria, 2006), with a more critical and balanced perspective than other academies (Harley 2002), and this is a good reason for analyzing whether the research results published at its main marketing conference are important and how they serve as feedback for the educational processes within the field.

The presupposition to this scenario is that the studies published at the conference will serve as a reference for the conference itself. Although they are not taken as concluded studies, they can be taken as a reference, or even as a starting point, for stimulating or feeding new studies. One way to observe this is to study the incidence or frequency of citations of papers that are presented and published in the proceedings of the conferences. In other words, can the conference itself be seen through its proceedings? Is the conference important for itself? Answering these questions and relating them to education in marketing is the objective of this paper.

## **2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Several studies have been carried out on academic research in marketing (Myers, Massy and Greyser, 1980; Burke and James, 2005). These studies generally address the productivity of academics (Diamantopoulos, 1996) and of academic institutions (Niemi Jr, 1986, Danaher and Starr, 1998). Other studies have focused on the journals that publish the articles produced by these

academics (Malhotra, 1996; Roseintreich and Wooliscroft, 2006) and editorial aspects related to them (Gilmore, Carson and Perry, 2006).

As a rule, the debate is focused on academic productivity and the quality of the papers (Babin, 2008). The difficulty of publishing in certain journals has also been taken into account. There is a tendency for scholars to prefer journals that have a lower rate of acceptance (Powers, Swan, Bos and Patton, 1998). Often, however, the journal that has the lowest rate of acceptance is not the one whose articles receive the most citations by marketing scholars. It is therefore logical that the journals that are most referenced, or whose articles are most notable, may be valued the most (Powers, Swan, Bos and Patton, 1998). In this way, in the academic world, a journal is considered important if it receives many citations. Difficulty of publication, quality and relevance of the published article are therefore apparently related, even though there are many controversies surrounding the issue (Marland, 2003).

Interestingly, there is almost no mention of the fact that research and publishing in marketing are directly related to the teaching of marketing (Pearson, 2002). Moreover, there is little or no attention paid to why academic events are important venues for the publication of original research in marketing and, in particular, that the publication of such research constitutes an important element of education in marketing (Stewart, 2008).

The main reason for publishing is to assist the advancement of knowledge (Myers, Massy and Greysier, 1980). This can be done by both academics and practitioners (Gibson and Klocker, 2004). The central point of this process is education. It is impossible to think about transformational marketing, for instance, if it does not occur through education in marketing (Faria, 2006).

To whom do we speak when we publish results of our research in marketing? Who do we address when we present research results at marketing conferences? Are our papers read and referenced by ourselves? It seems that marketing scholars have not concerned themselves with this question, particularly with regard to conferences. The focus of the debate on academic research in marketing is always linked to journals, not to the conferences. This reinforces the initial question of this paper and puts into perspective a better analysis of what happens at the conferences (McKenzie, Wright, Ball and Baron, 2002).

### 3 METHOD

A longitudinal study was carried out over a period of three years (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). The data had a secondary nature (Baker, 2003), and was collected from the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (AMCP) published in 2007, 2008 and 2009 (AMCP 2007, AMCP 2008, AMCP 2009).

The following variables were studied: (i) number of published papers in the AMCP; (ii) number of authors of papers; (iii) authors with the largest number of published papers; (iv) number of educational institutions (universities and business schools) participating in the AMC; (v) institutions which have the largest number of published papers; (vi) total number of references in published papers; (vii) total number of journal references in published papers; (viii) total number of marketing journal references in published papers; (ix) most referenced marketing journals; (x) total number of proceedings references in published papers; (xi) most referenced conference proceedings.

The above-mentioned variables were chosen due to their ability to reveal if, and how, research published through the AMCP has been a reference for the marketing scholars who publish papers in these proceedings.

### 4 MAJOR FINDINGS

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of articles published through the conference has grown year by year. The same is true for the number of authors and participating institutions. Of these three variables, the one which has had the highest growth is the number of participating institutions. In a certain way, this reveals that the conference has shown more academic diversity and, at the same time, has attracted more attention in the area of marketing, not just in the United Kingdom, but also throughout the world.

**Table 1** – Numbers of published papers, authors of papers and participating institutions in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Aspect of the Publication	Academy of Marketing Conference		
	Number by Year of Proceedings		
	2007	2008	2009
Published papers	275	312	376
Authors of papers	484	517	647
Participating institutions	211	249	314

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009).

The authors who have published the largest number of articles through the conference can be seen in Table 2. Curiously, some authors have more than three published papers in a single year, even though three papers is the limit in the conference proceedings, according to the conference guidelines for submission of papers. The only author that appears in the list for more than one year is T.C. Melewar, a professor of marketing and strategy at Brunel University, West London.

**Table 2** – Authors with the largest number of published papers in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, by number of published papers, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Academy of Marketing Conference					
Year of Publication of the Proceedings					
2007		2008		2009	
Author's Name	(n)	Author's Name	(n)	Author's Name	(n)
Cid Gonçalves Filho	4	Christine Ennew	5	Prathap Oburai	5
Gustavo Quiroga Souki	4	Leyland Pitt	5	Paul Harrigan	4
Jaywant Singh	4	Maree Thyne	5	Paulo Rita	4
Debra Harker	3	Robin N. Shaw	5	Sally Dibb	4
Douglas Brownlie	3	T. C. Melewar	5	T. C. Melewar	4
George J. Siomkos	3				
Gillian Sullivan Mort	3				

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009)

The institutions that have the largest number of published papers in the AMCP are: Leeds Metropolitan University, Coventry University, Deakin University and Macquarie University (Table 3). They are among the institutions with the most published papers for at least two consecutive years. Leeds Metropolitan University and Coventry University are British institutions, and Macquarie University and Deakin University are Australian. This reveals the international character of the AMC.

**Table 3** – Institutions with the largest number of published papers in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, by the number of published papers, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Academy of Marketing Conference					
Year of Publication of the Proceedings					
2007		2008		2009	
Institution's Name	(n)	Institution's Name	(n)	Institution's Name	(n)
Macquarie University	9	Nottingham University Business School	15	Leeds Metropolitan University	17
University of Strathclyde	8	Leeds Metropolitan University	10	Coventry University	10
Kingston University	7	Athens University of Economics & Business	9	Nottingham Trent University	8
University of Surrey	6	Deakin University, Melbourne	7	London Metropolitan University	7
Athens University of Economics and Business	5	Coventry University	6	Fundação Getúlio Vargas – Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo	6
Brunel University	5	Macquarie University	6		
De Montfort University	5	University of Otago	6		
Deakin University	5				

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009)

Table 4 shows the total number of references used in the set of all published papers in the AMCP during the years 2007, 2008 and 2009. The main kind of references, as expected, are journal references as, after all, they communicate the most recent advances in marketing knowledge. Journal references account for about 62% of the total, and marketing journal references account for about 54% of the journal references. In turn, the number of proceedings references is rather small in comparison to the number of journal references, accounting for about only 2%.

**Table 4** – Total number of references, number of journal references, number of marketing journal references, and number of proceedings references in papers published in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Type of Reference	Academy of Marketing Conference		
	Number by Year of Publication of the Proceedings		
	2007	2008	2009
Total references	9,327	8,897	11,361
Journal references	5,846	5,361	7,210
Marketing journal references	3,095	3,078	3,765
Proceedings references	169	214	217

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009)

The Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing Research and European Journal of Marketing, were the most referenced marketing journals in the papers published in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (Table 5). The first three journals are American and the last one is a European journal. In a certain way, this reveals the strong influence that American scholars, as well as the American editorial industry, have in terms of academic marketing publication. Despite having a very large number of journals both in the United Kingdom and in Europe, it seems that the authors who published in the AMCP prefer to use references from American journals. As a future research project, it would be interesting to analyze the different reasons for this choice, but this is not the aim of the current paper.

**Table 5** – Most referenced marketing journals in papers published in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, by number of references, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Academy of Marketing Conference					
Year of Publication of the Proceedings					
2007		2008		2009	
Journal Name	(n)	Journal Name	(n)	Journal Name	(n)
Journal of Marketing	532	Journal of Marketing	434	Journal of Marketing	586
Journal of Marketing Research	258	Journal of Consumer Research	301	Journal of Consumer Research	316
European Journal of Marketing	229	Journal of Marketing Research	227	Journal of Marketing Research	256
Journal of Consumer Research	221	European Journal of Marketing	207	European Journal of Marketing	251
Journal of Marketing Management	166	Journal of Marketing Management	199	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	163

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009)

Last and most important for the purposes of this paper, Table 6 reveals the most-referenced conference proceedings in papers published in the AMCP. It can be seen that the AMCP has the privilege of being the most referenced proceedings.

However, what draws attention is the extremely low number of references obtained by the AMCP. In 2008, for instance, the number of references to the AMCP is very close to that of the Conference of European Marketing Academy (CEMAC). It seems that the authors who submit articles to the conference do not take into account the publications of the conference itself, even allowing for the fact that they are not always finished pieces of research, maybe because the main goal of the Conference is to debate the papers and their educational value rather than to present the papers as complete and finalized research.

**Table 6** – Most referenced conference proceedings in papers published in the Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings, by number of references, in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

Academy of Marketing Conference					
Year of Publication of the Proceedings					
2007		2008		2009	
Conference Name	(n)	Conference Name	(n)	Conference Name	(n)
Academy of Marketing Conference	20	Academy of Marketing Conference	34	Academy of Marketing Conference	29
Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference	13	Conference of European Marketing Academy	32	American Marketing Association	13
American Marketing Association	12	Australia and New Zealand Marketing Educators Conference	16	Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference	9
Conference of European Marketing Academy	9	Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference	11	Conference of European Marketing Academy	7
Brazilian Academy of Management Meeting	8	American Marketing Association	10	International Conference on Corporate and Marketing Communications	6

Source: Academy of Marketing Conference Proceedings (2007, 2008, 2009)

### FINAL REMARKS

This study was concerned with academic education in marketing by means of academic marketing production. The main results reveal that academic marketing research published through the AMCP have not been an important reference for the marketing scholars who publish papers in these proceedings. This puts into perspective the role played by the AMCP as reference to marketing scholars as well as to education in marketing and transformational marketing in itself.

It would seem that there are not many reasons for not using our papers as references for our studies, otherwise what would be the point of submitting them to and publishing them at the conference and its proceedings? We can understand that the conference is a venue for reflection and the sharing of ideas and that there are reasons for presenting a paper besides its publication or its possibility of becoming a reference. Nevertheless, its proceedings should be a very good starting point for gaining knowledge about what has been developed in academic marketing research. It could even be a source of inspiration for graduate students and their academic advisors, since the proceedings show the cutting edge academic research in marketing, not only in the United Kingdom, but also in various other countries around the world, from which scholars have been participating in the AMC.

When discussing transformational marketing, it must be considered, first of all, what we are doing in terms of research and education in marketing. It is hard to imagine that we can transform or promote changes in organizations, society or the environment, if we do not start in our own Academy and in the way that we build our knowledge in the field of marketing.

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