

Received: 10 January 2021 Accepted: 24 March 2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33182/tmj.v9i2.1333>

## Quality Lists of Marketing Journals: A Critical Appraisal

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### Abstract

*Journal quality lists are becoming omnipresent and omnipotent. Using the Foucauldian concept of the panopticon, this study critically assesses the proclaimed impartiality and objectivity of three of these lists. It does so by: (a) identifying the seven marketing scholars that have contributed to the construction of these three lists; and (b) implementing an analysis that is rarely used in marketing; namely, a Curriculum Vitae (CV) analysis. The names of the identified seven scholars are kept concealed as the case is not to castigate/question a specific academic, but rather to rouse the debate on the usefulness(less) of these lists. The CV analysis ascertains that the three scrutinised lists are way less impartial and objective than they may seem. This study's results are in stark contrast with any argument advocating the impartiality and objectivity of these journal quality lists. Seen from a Foucauldian standpoint, these lists appear as panoptic power/knowledge tools.*

**Keywords:** *Journal quality lists; marketing; Foucault; scholars; Curriculum Vitae analysis*

### Introduction

Journal quality lists are increasing both in number and notoriety. According to Harzing (2020), there are currently no less than 12 such lists (developed in Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, the UK and the US, among others) that provide rankings of journals in accounting, business, finance, management, and marketing. Harzing (2020) keeps, of course, a continuously updated “list of the 12 lists”. The emergence of these lists has instigated a worldwide “wave of journal list fetishism” (Hussain, 2015: 119) in many disciplines, marketing included (Gruber, 2014; Tadajewski, 2016a, 2016b, 2018).

In a *Journal of Marketing Management* (henceforth *JMM*) editorial, Tadajewski (2016a: 2) took these lists to the task and wrote that: “they have had a presence on the scene for a while now, influencing where people send their work, what types of contributions they write, and how they value outlets and the people who write for them”. In a *JMM* commentary, he further fustigated these lists by stating that the “changes periodically wrought by journal ranking guides are just one of the *horrors* of the university system that formats our intellectual labour” (Tadajewski, 2016b:1, emphasis added).

This study focuses on three of these lists; namely, the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) Journal Quality List for 2019, the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) Academic Journal Guide version 2018, and the 2019 Categorisation of Journals by Section 37 of the French *Comité National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS).

These three journal quality lists are retained for analysis for the following four reasons:

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First, because promoters of these lists have continuously claimed that they are *helpful*. For instance, those behind CABS' Guide assert that their "motivation is to provide *guidance* to scholars working across the diverse fields that constitute Business and Management. The [Guide] is intended to give both emerging and established scholars *greater clarity* as to which journals to aim for, and where the best work in their field tends to be clustered" (CABS, 2018: 4; emphasis added);

Second, these journal quality lists are widely used not solely in Australia, the UK or France but also in many other parts of the world. For instance, CNRS' Categorisation of Journals is famous in former French colonies where PhD marketing students are still taught in French (Touzani et al., 2016). As the president of Section 37 states, CNRS' Categorisation of Journals is "an essential reference tool widely recognised both at national and international levels" (CNRS, 2019: ii);

Third, because, and to their credit, the compilers of these three lists are comparatively communicative about their creations; and

Fourth, advocates of these three lists diligently display a discourse that conveys an impression of impartiality and objectivity. As the producers of ABDC's Quality List indicate, each journal in the list "must have reached the necessary *quality threshold level*, as determined by the *Expert Panel* using globally *accepted*, externally *validated* journal ranking lists, journal citation *metrics* and expert *peer review*" (ABDC, 2019: 7; emphasis added).

Using the Foucauldian concept of the panopticon (Foucault, 1977), this study aims to assess critically the proclaimed impartial and objective nature of these three lists. It does so: (a) by identifying the marketing scholars that took part in the production of these lists; and (b) by implementing an analysis of these scholars' *résumés* (Cañibano and Bozeman, 2009; Bi et al., 2019; Youtie et al., 2013). The names of the identified seven scholars are kept concealed as the topic transcends the targeted academics and aspires to be of attention to the marketing discipline and its research community.

Seen from a Foucauldian standpoint, these journal quality lists appear as panoptic power/knowledge tools (Foucault, 1977; Foucault, 1980). The here performed CV analysis evinces that these lists are far, far less impartial and less objective than they may seem. If truth be told, these lists are reflections of the intellectual identities of those who were involved in their implementation. Hence, they should never be interpreted independently from the aspirations of those academics who assembled them. These lists are the outcomes of a(n) (inter)subjective enterprise and should be employed and extolled like so.

### **Theoretical background: Journal quality lists as panopticon-like structures**

In his book, *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison*, Michel Foucault, the French sociologist and critic, describes a prison built based on the panopticon. According to Foucault (1977), the panopticon is the ideal solution for disciplining people and exercising power over them. In the centre of the facility, there is a watchtower surrounded by prison cells arranged on several floors. The guard can constantly watch every prisoner, but none of the prisoners can see the guard and they do not know whether he is at the tower at any given time. Because of



this continued uncertainty, the prisoner starts to behave like the guard, constantly controlling himself according to prison rules and applying sanctions to himself.

In Foucault's (1977) interpretation, the aim of a disciplinary process is to produce docile subjects that the disciplining institutions can observe, segregate, normalise, and control. For Foucault (1977: 141), "Discipline sometimes requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself. It is the protected space of disciplinary monotony".

Foucault has alluded to the nexus of power/knowledge throughout all of his writings, but perhaps most prominently he took up this theme in *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison*.

Knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of 'the truth' but has the power to make itself true. All knowledge, once applied in the real world, has effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true'. Knowledge, once used to regulate the conduct of others, entails constraint, regulation and the disciplining of practice. Thus, there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations (Foucault, 1977: 27).

Journal quality lists, like those produced by the ABDC, the CABS and Section 37 of the CNRS, have been created and applied as tools for assessment, regulation and control. As the first compilers of CABS' Guide admit, it "originated from a list of all journals from which three or more articles were submitted to the business and management panel at [Research Assessment Exercise] 2001" (Morris et al., 2009: 1447). Section 37 (entitled Economics and Management) of the French CNRS formed in 2001 a "journals commission" (*une commission revues*) whose objective was "to produce a ranking for internal use only, for the evaluation of recruits and research units" (Pontille and Torny, 2010: 6). In 2007, in Australia, the ABDC decided to establish a journal quality list "to guide the evaluation of research output in business disciplines" (Moosa, 2016: 1-2).

Thus, these journal quality lists can be seen as panopticon-like structures (Prasad, 2015; Sage, 2017; Tourish and Willmott, 2015). As Prasad (2015: 109) indicates, "these structures serve stringently to demarcate between that scholarship which qualifies as being 'worthy' (and thus meriting recognition and rewards) and that scholarship which does not".

Charreaux and Gervais (2007: 5) have raised several questions on the actual purpose of Section 37's Categorisation of Journals: why the other sections of the CNRS have not issued their lists? Is it because economics and management are seen as immature scientific fields and hence require greater regulation?

For Tourish and Willmott (2015: 39), CABS' Guide "calls to mind Foucault's (1977) description of the panopticon". They further opined that it "has become a means of panoptic control [...] Publications in outlets lacking the Guide's seal of approval can result in disapproval and sanction" (Tourish and Willmott, 2015: 39).

Keeping with Foucault's (1977) description of panoptic power, Sage (2017: 4) wrote:

What is striking here is that in a rather remarkable turn of events, the panoptic power of the [C]ABS list was uncritically, almost automatically, extended by rank-and-file

academics, not business school Deans. These academics were not simply being disciplined as they internalized its managerial gaze, they were opting to extend its gaze further in space and time.

Thanks to rank-and-file academics, CABS' guide was converted "into a PDF file, emailed, distributed on forums, hosted on institutional and personal websites, saved on PCs, printed and left in desk drawers for the next submission decision" (Sage, 2017: 4).

Hence, many academics have become self-disciplining "docile bodies" (Foucault, 1977). As Foucault shows, docile bodies do not, by definition, have psychic freedom (Foucault, 1977). It follows, therefore, that if and when academics accept such panopticon-like structures, they cannot exercise academic freedom and the course of their disciplines will deviate.

With journal quality lists, the writing of articles became disciplined, in Foucault's (1977) sense of discipline. Acting as docile bodies, "researchers are prepared to twist and contort their work into an appropriate format for [top] rated journals, even if they do not believe that this may be the best way to present the research, while research deans view such publications as a powerful indicator for assessing promotions, tenure and remuneration" (Hussain, 2015: 120-121).

Concerns regarding the potentially damaging consequences of using journal quality lists have been raised by many business/management-related academics in recent years (Hussain, 2015; Moosa, 2016; Prasad, 2015; Sage, 2017; Tourish and Willmott, 2015). These concerns range from the stifling of new journals and research fields to the domination of powerful cliques among editorships of well-established journals who act as gatekeepers and whose power is further enhanced by these journal quality lists.

## **Research setting: The three journal quality lists and the seven marketing scholars**

### **CABS' Academic Journal Guide**

The first version of this Guide was published by Bristol Business School in June 2004, while the second one appeared in 2005 under the name of the Harvey-Morris Business Journals List (Morris et al., 2009). The second edition of the Harvey-Morris Business Journals List was converted to the Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Guide and was published in March 2008 (Harzing, 2020). During the following years, the Guide gathered support, especially amongst university managers. In effect, it has replaced the use of other lists and "is now widely embraced as the *'de facto'* standard" (Willmott, 2011: 432).

The latest edition (i.e., the sixth edition) of CABS' Guide was released in March 2018. That edition includes 70 marketing journals ranked on an ordinal scale ranging from "4\*" for a "World elite journal" down to "1" for a "Recognised journal" (see Table 1). For the CABS (2018), the Guide "reflects the outcomes of consultation carried out by the Scientific Committee of subject experts with expert peers and scholarly associations as to the relative standing of journals in each subject area. As a consequence, there is no mechanistic metrics-based formula that will capture the published ratings".

The two marketing experts that served as members of the Scientific Committee of the 2018 edition of CABS' Guide are G.L. and A.L.



## CNRS' Categorisation of Journals

Section 37 of the French CNRS, continuing an unfinished job during the 1997-2000 mandate term, formed in 2001 under the leadership of its new president a “journals commission”. Late April 2003, a draft categorisation was released but was keenly contested. A refined and final version of that categorisation appeared the next year, in July 2004 (see, Pontille and Torny, 2010: 5-11).

The version of CNRS' Categorisation of Journals (version 5.06) under examination was released in November 2019 by Section 37. It includes 48 marketing journals categorised on an ordinal scale ranging from “1g” for a “Prominent journal” to “4” for a “Respectable journal”. The marketing academic that contributed to that version is B.P.

## ABDC's Journal Quality List

In 2007, in Australia, the ABDC “decided to establish a journal quality list for the purpose of evaluating research output” (Moosa, 2016: 2). The motivation for that list was “shortcomings in the available international lists, including regional biases, insufficient coverage of Australian journals, too heavy an emphasis on some criteria that worked against specific disciplines, and lack of consensus of a definitive list” (Moosa, 2016: 2). The inaugural version of the ABDC's List was released in 2008 but was put on the back burner when the Australian Research Council list took the central stage. In 2013, ABDC's List came back to the forefront. A major review was conducted by appointing chairs for each panel linked to the primary field of research (FoR) codes as well as three to six members on each panel. A revised list was produced and put up for the public in early September 2013 (Moosa, 2018).

The most recent version (i.e., fourth version) of ABDC's List was published in December 2019. It includes 154 marketing journals ranked on an ordinal scale ranging from “A\*” for “The best or leading journal in its field” to “C” for a “Recognised journal”. The panel for marketing (FoR code 1505) and tourism (FoR code 1506) was chaired by S.D., with G.S., J.K., and M.S. as the panel members.

**Table 1.** Rating Scales of the Three Journal Quality Lists

ABDC's Journal Quality List	CABS' Academic Journal Guide	CNRS' Categorization of Journals
A* (Best or leading journal in its field)	4* (World elite journal)	1g (Prominent journal)
A (Highly regarded journal)	4 (Top journal)	1 (Noteworthy journal)
B (Well regarded journal)	3 (Highly regarded journal)	2 (Highly selective/exigent journal)
C (Recognised journal)	2 (Well regarded journal)	3 (Selective/exigent journal)
—	1 (Recognised journal)	4 (Respectable journal)

## Methodology: A *résumé* speaks loud in any analysis

Once the seven marketing scholars that were members of the scientific committees that established the three journal quality lists under scrutiny have been identified, the author assembled and analysed their *résumés*.

For academic researchers, a CV (Cañibano and Bozeman, 2009: 86):

[R]epresents, all at the same time, a record of scientific accomplishment, a brief history of the professional life course, an obligation to administrative superiors, and

a job search resource. Because of its multiple functions, but especially because it serves as a personal services advertisement, researchers have a strong incentive to provide timely, accurate data and to make the CV readily available. In short, it is one of the few scientific artefacts nearly universal in its availability and nearly standard in its meaning.

For a study with some critical contours, these characteristics make the CV an attractive data resource. Surprisingly, while CV analyses are extensively employed in scientometrics and research assessment (see, e.g., Bi et al., 2019; Youtie et al., 2013), they were never used in marketing.

Coding a CV for a subsequent data analysis involves enormous work. To avoid unnecessary coding, it is primordial to have crystal-clear research goals and well-written research questions that determine the nature of the variables needed. The main research question behind this analysis is the following: have the intellectual identities—as gauged in terms of editorship and authorship history as well as research interests—of these seven scholars influenced the ratings obtained by some marketing journals?

Building on Franke and Mazanec (2006) and Svensson et al. (2008), this study advances the idea according to which the intellectual (or scientific) identity of a given marketing scholar is reflected by the journals that he/she had published in and/or for which he/she serves as an editorial/review board member. It is very probable that “marketing scientists”, as labelled by Franke and Mazanec (2006: 647), tend to publish in *Marketing Science* or other journals that emulate it (e.g., *Marketing Letters* or *Quantitative Marketing and Economics [QME]*). In contrast, articles written by a “marketing philosopher” (for a description, see Franke & Mazanec, 2006: 647) are often published in *Marketing Theory*, *JMM*, or other critical marketing journals. Furthermore, it is commonly known that an author who has published multiple times in a given journal is likely to become a member of that journal’s editorial and/or review board(s) (Touzani and Moussa, 2010).

As the research question indicates, only data related to three variables were needed:

Editorship history (i.e., the scholar is an earlier/ongoing editor-in-chief, associate editor, or an editorial board member of a given journal);

Authorship history (i.e., as gauged by the three marketing journals in which the scholar published the most); and

The scholar’s research interests.

Table 2 shows that two of the seven scrutinised résumés have a PDF format. All résumés are recent. They were consulted on 7 April 2020.

**Table 2.** Features of the Examined Curricula Vitae

Journal quality list	Scholar initials	CV type	Last update	Number of pages	Consulted on
ABDC 2019	S.D. (Panel chair)	Online	2019	—	April 7, 2020
	G.S.	Online	2020	—	April 7, 2020
	J.K.	Online	March 31, 2020	—	April 7, 2020
	M.S.	Online	2020	—	April 7, 2020
CABS 2018	G.L.	PDF	2019	6	April 7, 2020
	A.L.	Online	2020	—	April 7, 2020
CNRS 2019	B.P.	PDF	February 2020	11	April 7, 2020





An issue that is common to CV analyses is CV incompleteness (Cañibano and Bozeman, 2009). This issue emerged for only one scholar (i.e., G.L.) as his CV provides a selective list of articles. Though the author views in selecting some articles to put in a CV a kind of knowledge hierarchisation, a Google Scholar bibliometric search was performed to overcome this problem (Sandström, 2009). Findings from the CV analysis are summarised in Table 3.

## Findings

As Table 3 indicates, these scholars' résumés revealed a few fascinating findings once analysed.

The first finding is that one of these seven scholars is involved in not one or two but three journal quality listing projects. G.L. has been a member of the two committees in charge of the CABS' Guides for 2015 and 2018, FNEGE journal lists (for 2013, 2016, and 2019) and HCÉRES' journal ranking (since 2015). Listing journals is probably G.L.'s preferred pecuniary pastime (or perhaps mania!). This scholar's schedule is also apparently awfully overbooked: He is an ongoing associate editor of the French marketing journal *Recherche et Application en Marketing* (since 2014); a policy board member of *Marketing Letters* (since 1997); and since 2015, a review board member of *Journal of Marketing Behavior*, the new publications outlet launched by the European Marketing Academy (EMAC). Add to the latter the fact that G.L. is an ex-editor-in-chief (1987-1989) of *International Journal of Research in Marketing (IJRM)*, the flagship journal of the EMAC and, *voilà*, there you have an excellent explanation for why *IJRM* was upgraded in the 2015 CABS' guide from "3" to "4" and still got the "4" rating in the 2018 CABS' guide. A scholar involved in so many journal-listing projects and implicated with so many journals is likely to live a luxurious lifestyle. Luxury consumption for elderly people is indeed one of G.L.'s investigation interests.

Nationalism attains its climax in CNRS' Categorisation of Journals. A French marketing scholar (i.e., B.P.) who is a member of the French Section 37 and also an ongoing member of the editorial review boards of *Recherche et Application en Marketing* (2015-now) and *Décision Marketing* (2018-now) will overtly overestimate the value of these two particular French publication outlets. CNRS' Categorisation of Journals puts, in fact, these two French marketing journals ahead of, none other than, the *European Journal of Marketing* and *Marketing Theory*.

Regionalism is also avowedly apparent in ABDC's List. According to that list, the *Australasian Marketing Journal* is an "A" journal just like the *Journal of International Marketing* and the *Journal of Interactive Marketing*. An additional contributory cause to that ranking resides in the fact that two of the four panellists are associate editor (i.e., J.K.) and editorial advisory/review board member (i.e., G.S.) of the *Australasian Marketing Journal*.

After examining the research interests of its panellists, it becomes palpable why ABDC's List is tilted toward tourism marketing journals (both *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* and *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management* have an "A") and not toward, say, social marketing journals (both *Journal of Social Marketing* and *Social Marketing Quarterly* got a "B"). ABDC's List also favours services marketing journals. For instance, the *Journal of Service Theory & Practice* is granted an "A", just like the *Journal of Macromarketing*. An evident elucidation for this could be found in the CV of one panellist of ABDC's List: M.S. is the ongoing co-editor of that service journal (2018-now).

**Table 3.** Findings from the CV Analysis

Journal quality list	Scholar initials	Previous and/or present editorial membership	Research interests	The three marketing journals in which the scholar published the most
ABDC 2019	S.D. (panel chair)	Co-editor of <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i> (2018-now)	Market segmentation methodology, Improving measurement in the social sciences, Developing better tools for tourism marketing, Improving brand image measures.	<i>AMJ</i> (6 articles), <i>JT&amp;TM</i> (5 articles), <i>ML</i> (3 articles)
	G.S.	Ongoing editorial advisory / review board member of the <i>Australasian Marketing Journal</i>	Consumer behavior, Cross-cultural consumer decision making, Consumption value, Tourism marketing, The marketing and management of international education.	<i>AMJ</i> (4 articles), <i>EJM</i> (4 articles), <i>IMM</i> (2 articles)
	J.K.	Associate editor of the <i>Australasian Marketing Journal</i> (2013-now)	Marketing, Tourism marketing, Decision making, Business ethics	<i>AMJ</i> (5 articles), <i>ML</i> (5 articles), <i>JMR</i> (1 article)
	M.S.	Co-editor of the <i>Journal of Service Theory &amp; Practice</i> (2018-now)	Tourism, Marketing, Commercial services, Business and management, Tourism and services	<i>JST&amp;P</i> (18 articles), <i>JCM</i> (7 articles), <i>JT&amp;TM</i> (4 articles)
CABS 2018	G.L.	Ex-editor-in- chief of the <i>International Journal of Research in Marketing</i> (1987-1989), member of the policy board of <i>Marketing Letters</i> (1997-now), associate editor of <i>Journal of Business Research</i> (2016-now), associate editor of <i>Recherche et Applications en Marketing</i> (2014-now), and review board member of <i>Journal of Marketing Behavior</i> (2015-now).	Older consumers, Luxury from the consumer side, Consumer processing of retail prices.	<i>ML</i> (6 articles), <i>IJRM</i> (4 articles), <i>RAM</i> (4 articles)
	A.L.	Co-editor of <i>Industrial Marketing Management</i> (2015-now)	Corporate social responsibility, Relationship marketing	<i>JB &amp; IM</i> (26 articles), <i>IMM</i> (24 articles), <i>QMR</i> (10 articles)
CNRS 2019	B.P.	Member of the editorial review boards of <i>Recherche et Applications en Marketing</i> (2015-now) and <i>Décisions Marketing</i> (2018-now)	Sales promotion, Sustainability, Methods, Luxury and fashion	<i>DM</i> (6 articles), <i>RAM</i> (3 articles), <i>IJRM</i> (2 articles)

Note. For journal acronyms, see Table 4.





CABS' Guide is also twisted towards industrial marketing journals. While specialised journals like *Industrial Marketing Management* and the *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing* are rated “3” and “2”, respectively, a mainstream publications outlet such as *JMM* got “2”. This is probably because A.L. is the co-editor of *Industrial Marketing Management* (2015-now) and the record holder author of articles in the *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*.

If there is one thing that is common to four of the seven identified scholars, it is the fact that *Marketing Letters* (*ML*) and *IJRM* are among the three marketing journals in which they have published the most (see Table 3). *ML* and *IJRM*, it must be mentioned, emerged for a segment of *Marketing Science* (*MS*) and *Journal of Marketing Research* (*JMR*) authors/readers, respectively (Lehmann, 2005; Touzani & Moussa, 2010). *ML* and *IJRM* are positivists, quantitative, and managerial in ethos (Fuat Firat, 2010; Li et al., 2015; Moussa, 2019; Tadjewski, 2016a). This leads us to the following conclusion: the positivist, quantitative, and managerial agenda is overrepresented in the membership of the scientific committees/panels behind these journal quality lists. It is little wonder, then, that *JMR* and *MS* have been given the record-breaking ratings while interpretative (e.g., *Journal of Consumer Culture*), qualitative (e.g., *Qualitative Market Research*), and/or critical marketing journals (e.g., *Marketing Theory*) have had the lower scores if listed at all (see Table 4).

If to adopt Franke and Mazanec's (2006) typology of marketing researchers, it could be safely stated that “marketing scientists” are in a position of power within these committees/panels. Readers are assuredly aware that the notions of power and knowledge are intimately interrelated, if not inseparable. As Foucault (1980: 52) famously wrote: “The exercise of power creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power”. Foucault also uses the term “legitimation” to show the power of certain groups (i.e., “experts”) to configure and confirm the construction of certain kinds of knowledge. Thus, an academic community of experts exerts power by the control and legitimation of knowledge in publication. By such power-knowledge configurations, “outsider” or “unofficial” knowledge may be disqualified and dismissed as non-rigorous, undisciplined, and unprofessional. To put it in Tourish and Willmott (2015: 44) own words, these three lists are panoptic power-knowledge tools that “shoehorn academic aspirations and incentivise work that is geared to North American journals or other journals that emulate their subject matter, analytic approach, writing style (generally clear but dull, impersonal, and po-faced) – and their restricted theoretical frameworks”.

### **Discussion: Does one size fit all?**

This study's concerns complement several other objections levelled against some of these journal quality lists, which range from issues about the intricacies of their creation (Easton and Easton, 2003), through criticisms of their downgrading of a given marketing publications outlet (e.g., Tadjewski, 2016a; Tadjewski, 2016b), to their exclusion of “research that matters” (e.g., Gruber, 2014). The focus here, in contrast, has been upon the marketing scholars involved in the production of these journal quality lists. As the CV analysis has revealed, the three journal quality lists under scrutiny are subject to several ideologies including egocentrism, favouritism, careerism, nationalism, and regionalism. As such, they only fit the intellectual identities of those who instituted them. This study's results fly in the face of anyone who provides arguments advocating these journal quality lists' impartial and objective nature. Paraphrasing Hoepner and Unerman (2012: 14), these quality lists of marketing

journals are wholly subjective, decided upon by an unrepresentative small elite, which simply claims to rely on objective inputs to provide a smokescreen of objectivity to highly political and biased rankings.

**Table 4.** A Selection of Marketing Journals

Journal title	Date first published	ABDC 2019	CABS 2018	CNRS 2019
Journal of Retailing	1925	A*	4	2
Journal of Marketing	1936	A*	4*	1g
Journal of Marketing Research (JMR)	1964	A*	4*	1
<b>European Journal of Marketing (EJM)</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>A*</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Industrial Marketing Management (IMM)</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>A*</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Journal of Marketing Education	1979	B	2	NL
Marketing Science	1982	A*	4*	1
<b>Journal of Consumer Marketing (JCM)</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
International Journal of Research in Marketing (IJRM)	1984	A*	4	2
<b>Journal of Marketing Management</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Recherche et Applications en Marketing (RAM)	1986	NL	NL	2
Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing (JB&IM)	1986	A	2	3
<b>Journal of Marketing for Higher Education</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>NL</b>
Marketing Letters (ML)	1989	A	3	2
Marketing Education Review	1990	C	1	NL
<b>Journal of Service Theory &amp; Practice (JST&amp;P)</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NL</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>NL</b>
<b>Journal of Travel &amp; Tourism Marketing (JT&amp;TM)</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NL</b>	<b>4</b>
Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management	1992	A	NL	NL
Décisions Marketing (DM)	1993	NL	NL	3
Social Marketing Quarterly	1994	B	1	NL
Qualitative Market Research (QMR)	1998	B	2	4
<b>Marketing Theory</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Journal of Consumer Culture (JCC)	2001	NL	NL	3
Quantitative Marketing and Economics	2003	A	3	3
Transnational Marketing Journal	2013	NL	NL	NL

*Notes.* NL stands for not listed. A boldfaced journal title indicates that the journal obtained inconsistent rankings across the three lists.

Where do we go from here? There have been quite a few calls to abandon or ignore these journal quality lists in such disciplines as accounting (McGuigan, 2015; Tourish and Willmott, 2015), management (Rasheed and Priem, 2020), and business (Parker, 2017). For Tourish and Willmott (2015: 37), CABS' Guide "offers a one size fits all formula for estimating the quality of journal articles and journals". They also added that CABS' Guide is a "woeful source of distraction" and that "this deleterious effect provides a further compelling reason for abandoning or withdrawing it" (Tourish and Willmott, 2015: 38). Criticising ABDC's List, McGuigan (2015: 187) wrote that it "should be abandoned in order to encourage creativity and innovation in business research that assists in solving business problems today and well into the future". CNRS' Categorisation of Journals, Pontille and Torny (2010) said, is illegitimate and that "it is the 'CNRS' logo that legitimises its scientific nature" (Pontille and Torny, 2010: 24).



## Concluding comments

Whether it is part of the “commodification and corporatisation of academia” (Tourish and Willmott, 2015) or not, it is highly unlikely that these journal ranking lists are going to be abandoned or ignored overnight. To cope with the continued existence of these lists, the author suggests the five following recommendations:

First, the creators of these lists should be much more transparent and open by clearly mentioning: who is “the expert” that performs the evaluation? What is his/her editorship history? In which journals he/she has published the most? What are the academic associations he/she is affiliated with? What are his/her research interests? Providing a biography for each “expert” that offers answers to these questions is a convenient and conceivable action. The author will not go, at least for the moment, as far as to suggest that journal ranking “meetings and decisions should be filmed and released on YouTube” (Tadajewski, 2018: 2).

Second, the compilers of these lists should strive to select “experts” that represent diverse intellectual identities and investigation interests.

Third, as students, scholars, or members of tenure of promotion committees, we have to read each paper closely to evaluate its quality rather than assuming quality (or lack thereof) based merely on the ratings or scores (i.e., A\* or 4\*) of the journal in which it was published.

Fourth, as authors, we shall be less preoccupied with these lists. Given their irrefutable (inter)subjectivity, these lists provide ratings that are unstable and inconsistent. A “C” journal in one edition could be upgraded to a “B” journal in the next one (e.g., *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*), and inversely. A journal that is scored “1” (Recognised journal) in one list could be ranked “A” (Highly regarded journal) in another one (e.g., *Journal of Consumer Marketing*) (see Table 4).

Fifth and finally, as a critical commentator, one should stress that these three lists are fatally flawed and include some laughable anomalies. For instance, no marketing education journal is listed in CNRS’s Categorisation of Journals. Why the *Journal of Consumer Culture* (incepted in 2001) is not listed in CABS’ guide? Is it too new and untested? If the latter is true, why the Guide includes the younger *QME* (launched in 2003)? The *Canadian Journal of Marketing Research* which ceased to exist in the late 2000s is still listed as a “C” journal in ABDC’s List. Members of the panel for marketing (FoR code 1505) have to explain why a now-defunct journal is included in that list, while the active and Scopus-indexed *Transnational Marketing Journal* is not. They must also provide answers to the three following questions: why the *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*<sup>2</sup>— a journal published by Allied Business Academies which

<sup>2</sup> There are several problems concerning this journal: First, that journal’s editor-in-chief is simultaneously the editor-in-chief of the *Academy of Accounting and Financial Studies Journal* (which is also published by Allied Business Academies) and the coeditor-in-chief of the *Academy of Strategic Management Journal* (another journal published by Allied Business Academies); Second, that journal offers for prospective authors a “21 days rapid review process with international peer-review standards”; Third, its issues contain

is a subsidiary of the infamous predatory publisher OMICS International<sup>3</sup>— is ranked in ABDC's List? Why it is listed as being published by Jordan Whitney Enterprises Inc. and not by Allied Business Academies? Why that journal was upgraded from "C" to "B" in the 2019 version of ABDC's List?

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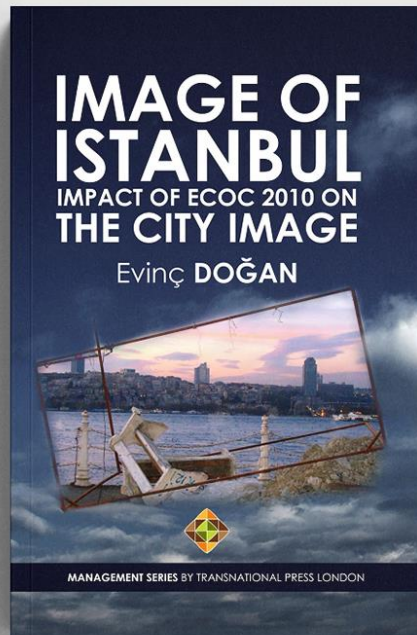
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over 20 articles (see, e.g., issues one and two of volume 24); Fourth, *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal* claims to have an acceptance rate of 30% (i.e., a rejection rate of 70%), yet an examination of the latest issue (i.e., the fourth issue of volume 24) of that journal indicates that it includes five articles (co)written by the same author. Fifth, articles published in that journal have no Digital Object Identifiers; Sixth, Allied Business Academies seems to share its headquarters (located on the lower ground floor in Bloomsbury way, London) with 42 companies, including a massage centre (see <https://www.abacademies.org/journals/academy-of-marketing-studies-journal-home.html> last accessed 6 January 2021); Seventh, Elsevier's Scopus has discontinued its coverage of the *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal* in 2016 due to "publication concerns" (see <https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/19700175175?origin=resultslist#tabs=2> last accessed 24 March 2021).

<sup>3</sup> In 2018, OMICS owner Srinubabu Gedela declared that he had informed the Nevada court that Allied Academies (now renamed Allied Business Academies) was a subsidiary of OMICS International (see <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/face-behind-biggest-of-all-40-countries-million-articles-fake-research-srinubabu-gedela-omics-5266830/> last accessed 6 January 2021).



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**Image of Istanbul: Impact of ECOC 2010 on the city image**

By Evinç Doğan

Published: 31 July 2016

