

## **A Brief Inventory of Marketing Scholarship: A Review of Articles from *Journal of Marketing* (2010-2014)**

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At the heart of scientific inquiry lies theory. Indeed, scholars converge on their agreement that theory is a necessary component for advancing and understanding phenomena (Kuhn, 1962; Lakatos, 1978; Popper, 1978; Hunt, 1991). Despite the importance of theory, marketing scholarship has been accused of exhibiting gaps in the use of theoretical foundations to reinforce research. As such, over the last decade, there has been an increase in articles calling for theory development within marketing (Kohli, 2009; MacInnis, 2004).

Scholars have periodically reviewed bodies of marketing literature to ascertain the use and instance of theory (Yadav, 2010). Such works have typically reviewed many years of work, often spanning decades, and offer much to scholars seeking to develop marketing theory. However, frequent, short-term examinations of marketing literature can also facilitate theory development. Such examinations ensure that the study highlights the most recent theoretical developments in the discipline. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to offer an inventory of marketing theory from *Journal of Marketing (JM)* during the 2010-2014 publishing period, picking up from the year at which Yadav (2010) left off.

*JM* is recognized as a leading academic journal by reputable sources (Financial Times, 2015; Hult *et al.*, 1997). As such, scholars look to *JM* for guidance pertaining to the foremost theories in the marketing discipline, and theory development has been named as a significant editorial goal (Kohli, 2009; Frazier, 2011). Although published articles tend to show solid grounding in individual theories, a review of *JM* during the 2010-2014 time period shows that an inventory of theory articles is lacking. Due to this deficiency in the literature, scholars must search through journals and online databases to discover the applications, types, and frequencies of theories and other elements of scholarship (i.e., topics, methods, and analytical tools) referenced and used. Understandably, this pursuit is a tedious and inefficient process, reducing the productivity of researchers and hampering the collective furtherance of theory in the discipline. As such, this investigation into the use of theory over the 2010-2014 time period contributes toward the alleviation of this problem.

The primary literature upon which this manuscript bases its purpose and defense of importance is the body of work calling for theory development (Frazier, 2011; Hunt, 1991; Kuhn, 1962; Lakatos, 1978; MacInnis, 2004; Popper, 1978). Inspiration and methodological approach were drawn from the work of Defee *et al.* (2010), who built an inventory of theories used in the logistics and supply chain management literature streams. Following the tradition of Defee *et al.* (2010), the authors seek to address the following two research questions in the marketing discipline:

1. To what extent is theory used in marketing?
2. What are the prevalent theories found in marketing?

This paper contributes to the discipline in the following ways. First, the analysis of instances of theory in *JM* during 2010-2014 provides scholars with a representative snapshot of the current state of marketing scholarship. As such, this inventory gives researchers a “road map” for current, theory-based research. Second, data is provided on currently popular research topics and opportunities are highlighted within these topics. Third, the paper

demonstrates that the use of mixed methods is becoming increasingly popular, highlighting the usefulness of such an approach to comprehensively study research problems. Fourth, the paper points out the need for collaboration in outstanding marketing scholarship, evidenced by the prevalence of multi-authored works.

## METHOD

### Sample

Articles published in *JM* from 2010 through 2014 composed the sample. To ensure sample homogeneity of length and to support logical conclusions concerning the use of theories, methods, etc., the authors removed any works that were not research articles (letters to the editor, synopses, short reviews, etc.). The result was 240 articles published across the five-year time period. Following Defee *et al.* (2010), the units of analysis for this study are the incidence of theory, primary article topic, methods (by article), and analytical tools (by article).

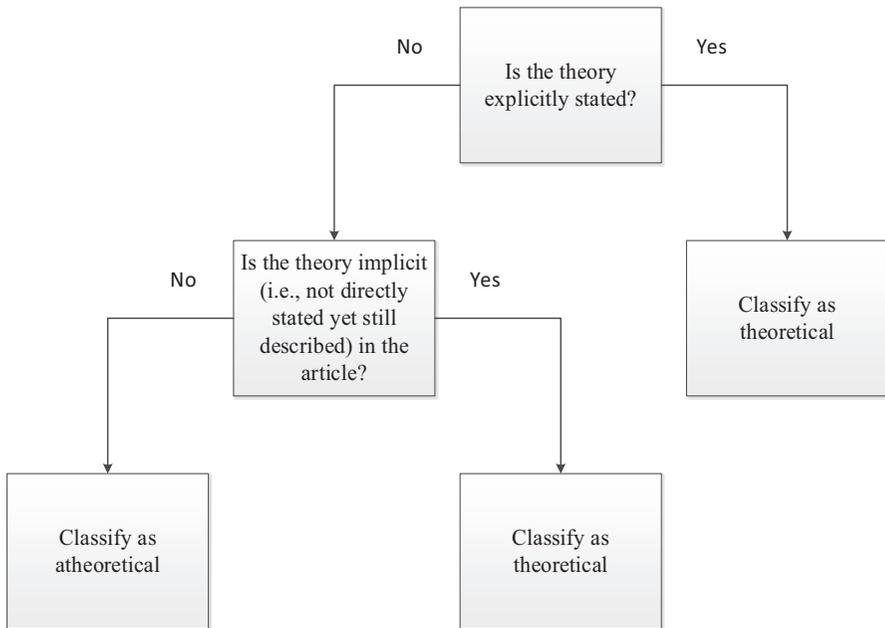
### Procedure

To assess theories, topics, methods, and analytical tools used in the 2010-2014 time period, the researchers reviewed each *JM* article, specifically focusing on these four elements in addition to authorships and authors' countries of residence at time of publication. The classification procedure is outlined in Figure I.

Prior to theory coding, the articles were subjected to an initial screening process to determine the presence of theory (Defee *et al.*, 2010). First, each article was reviewed for explicit statements of theory (i.e., "building upon agency theory, the authors examine...") as the foundations or "lenses" of the research. If theories were not directly acknowledged, the articles were examined for implicit use – that is, the implied use of theory based upon descriptions and delineations of conceptual backgrounds. Articles using this implicit approach were classified as "theoretical." Any article lacking both explicit and implicit use of theory was coded as "atheoretical."

Theories were recorded on a first-order level (i.e., agency theory) and were then, with the consensus of all authors, categorized on a second-order level (i.e., organizational). Since psychology is a broad category with related theories occurring in just over half of the articles, psychological theories were subcategorized based on the appropriate psychological sub-field (cognitive, social, personality, etc.). Identified theories were categorized into 12 groups in addition to an "other" category.

**Figure I**  
**Classification Process Derived from Defee *et al.* (2010)**



Topics and analytical tools were subjected to a similar first-order/second-order categorization process. Topics were assigned to second-order categorizations based upon the broad marketing area (consumer behavior, strategy, channels, etc.), while analytical tools were categorized based upon the overall family (i.e., ANOVA and ANCOVA are both mean comparison tests). Additionally, methods (survey, experiment, etc.) were recorded for each article and did not require second-order categorization due to their straightforward nature. In the event that an article included multiple methods or analytical tools, the article was categorized as “mixed methods.”

To prevent possible biases in coding, the authors reviewed theories, topics, methods, and analytical tools together and made decisions regarding the most appropriate second-order category for each. The authors ensured that each coding had a solid basis, and in the event of uncertainty or ambiguity, the authors consulted the article in question and reached consensus through careful deliberation.

## RESULTS

### Theory

A total of 352 instances of theory were recorded from the 240 sampled articles. Of the 240 articles, 49 (20.4%) had no discernable theoretical foundation. The top eleven individual theories used composed 14.8% of the instances of theory among the articles classified as theoretical. Table 1a displays instance counts for each subcategory of psychology, and Table 1b lists instance counts for each theory category.

**Table 1a**  
**Categories of Theories**

Theory Category	Number of Instances	Percentage of Total
Psychology	206	51.4%
Economic	53	13.2%
Atheoretical	49	12.2%
Organizational	33	8.2%
Finance	11	2.7%
Systems	10	2.5%
Sociology/Anthropology	9	2.2%
Method	8	2.0%
Resource	7	1.7%
Other	5	1.2%
Innovation	4	1.0%
Competitive	4	1.0%
Branding	2	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The category “Psychology” captured a majority of theories used in the sample. Due to the large representation in the psychology category, a subcategory was assigned to each psychology theory: social, cognitive, consumer, organizational, personality, behavioral, or developmental. Table 1b indicates the number of occurrences each subcategory has within the psychology theory category. For the purposes of this subcategory coding, the authors used the following definitions for each subcategory of psychology, adapted from commonly-accepted sub-categories (i.e., Cascio and Aguinis, 2008) of the psychology discipline:

- **Social**—deals with social interactions, including their origins and their effects on the individual;
- **Cognitive**—the study of mind and mental function, including learning, memory, attention, perception, reasoning, language, conceptual development, and decision making;
- **Consumer**—concerned with the market behavior of consumers;
- **Organizational**—the study of human behavior in the workplace;
- **Personality**—the study of personality and its variation among individuals;
- **Behavioral**—the study of observable behavior of humans rather than the internal workings of the mind; and
- **Developmental**—the study of changes that occur in humans over the course of their lives.

**Table 1b**  
**Subcategories of Psychological Theories**

Subcategory	Number of Instances
Social	100
Cognitive	76
Consumer	10
Organizational	8
Personality	6
Behavioral	3
Developmental	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>

## Topics

The coding and classification of topics yielded 18 broad marketing topics (see Table 2). Of the 240 sampled articles, the top five topics comprise 59.2% of all articles and are as follows: 20.4% consumer behavior, 12.1% strategy, 10.4% branding, 8.8% sales, and 7.5% business-to-business (B2B). The complete article counts for each topic are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Article Counts by Marketing Topic**

Topic	Number of Articles
Consumer Behavior	49
Strategy	29
Branding	25
Sales	21
B2B	18
Advertising/WOM	17
Retailing/E-Commerce	15
Pricing/Promotion	13
International/Cross-Cultural Marketing	8
Co-Creation	7
CSR	7
Channels	6
NPD	6
Food Marketing	5
Services	4
Relationship Marketing	4
Organizational	3
Innovation	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>240</b>

Consumer behavior accounts for slightly more than 25% of all topics. This finding appears to be consistent with the marketing concept, which is premised upon the process of creating and delivering superior value to customers (Piercy and Morgan, 1993; Wind, 1978). While value can be defined in various ways, the consumer assigns the worth of an offering. In order to deliver superior value, paramount is an understanding of how consumers think, behave, act, feel, etc. This holds true across both B2B and B2C markets. Under this line of reasoning, it is not surprising that consumer behavior ranks as the number one topic.

Innovation only accounts for 1% of all topics in *JM* during the surveyed time period. Innovation is a prevalent construct within marketing and its importance is well documented (ex., Han *et al.*, 1998; Hurley and Hult, 1998; Sethi *et al.*, 2001). Most notably, innovation is cited as an important driver of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage (Porter, 1980). Therefore, the lack of innovation papers in *JM* highlights an area for further research.

There is a scarcity of articles pertaining to corporate social responsibility (CSR). While CSR was once considered as a way to differentiate oneself from competitors, it is now a generally accepted practice among many firms (Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006). Following this reasoning, it is less surprising that the topic of CSR only counts for a small percentage (3%) of topics within *JM*. Meanwhile, co-creation is gaining scholarly attention (3%). As service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) continues to increase in popularity, one would expect co-creation to gain wider acceptance among scholars. While the construct is still in its youth, *JM* is focusing attention on an important marketing topic.

### Topic-Theory Cross-Sectional Analysis

Psychology ranks as the number one theory across all topics and appears most often within consumer behavior (20%), sales (14%), and branding (13%). Following psychology, economic theories are popular within B2B (17%), strategy (17%), and pricing/promotion (11%). Next, organizational theories appear most often within B2B (21%) and sales (18%). Atheoretical articles appear most within the topics of CB (24%), strategy (14%), and retailing/e-commerce (12%).

The topics that draw upon the most theories include strategy (85%), branding (69%), B2B (54%), CB (54%), international/cross cultural marketing (54%), and sales (54%). Among the least diverse topic areas are CSR (15%), channels (23%), services (23%), food (31%), innovation (31%), organizational (31%), and pricing (31%).

### Methods Used

The authors identified the method(s) used in each of the articles and classified those methods into eight categories. Table 3 represents the frequency of methodological procedures used in *JM* during 2010-2014. The table shows that survey research and mixed methods are common procedures of choice, followed by experiments.

Psychology theory-based articles use all eight categories of method reported in this study, but mixed methods (30.1%), surveys (28.6%), and experiments (25.7%) are the most common methods used. The next most popular is secondary data (9.2%). Survey data, the most common method used, is most popular in psychology (28.6%), economic (14.8%), organizational (12.3%), and atheoretical (11.5%) theory-based articles.

**Table 3**  
**Method Categories**

Methodological Procedure	Number of Instances	Percentage of Instances
Survey	63	26.3%
Mixed Methods	63	26.3%
Experiment	54	22.5%
Secondary Data	31	12.9%
Qualitative	17	7.1%
Conceptual/Literature Review	5	2.1%
Meta-Analysis	4	1.6%
Panel Data	3	1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Analytical Tools Used

As shown by Table 4, the classification of analyses used in the sampled articles showed that mixed methods (36.3%) appear most often. Regression (23.3%) is the second most common analytical tool used. Following regression, mathematical modeling (12.1%) and means comparison (11.7%) are the next most common methods used. The use of mixed analytical tools supports the commonalities of psychological theory and mixed methods, as reported previously.

**Table 4**  
**Analytical Tools Used**

Analytical Tool	Number of Instances	Percentage of Total
Mixed Methods	87	36.3%
Regression	56	23.3%
Mathematical Modeling	29	12.1%
Means Comparison	28	11.7%
Structural Equation Modeling	20	8.3%
Qualitative	14	5.8%
Conceptual	4	1.7%
Meta-Analytical	2	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

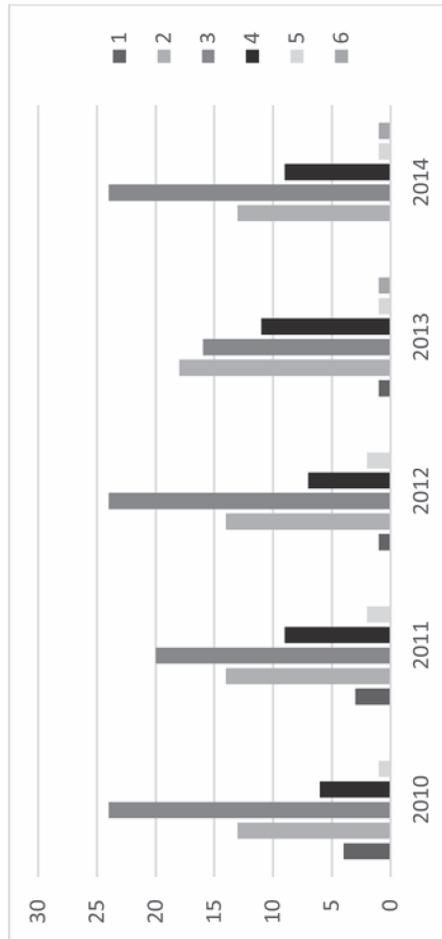
### Number of Authors on Articles

As shown by Table 5, there are 692 author listings associated with the 240 articles published in *JM* between 2010 and 2014, resulting in an average of two to three authors per article. This finding highlights the need for collaboration among researchers to publish in the top marketing publications. Figure II displays the author counts by article both at a total level and by year. The results reveal that almost half (45%) of the articles in *JM* are credited to three authors, and about one-third (30%) are authored by two scholars. Thus, three-fourths (75%) of articles in *JM* over the 2010-2014 time period are authored by two or three individuals. Single-authored papers are rare, as are papers with five or six authors; together, these three categories represent 7.5% of total articles. Papers with four authors are relatively uncommon at 17.5%. No notable trends in number of authors occur over the five-year period, but the chart does highlight the commonality of two- and three-author papers across all five years.

**Table 5**  
**Number of Authors per Articles**

<b>Number of Authors per Article</b>	<b>Number of Articles with Author Count</b>	<b>Percent to Total</b>
One author	9	3.8
Two authors	72	30.0%
Three authors	108	45.0%
Four authors	42	17.5%
Five authors	7	2.9%
Six authors	2	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure II  
Number of Authors on Articles by Year



### Author Countries of Residence

A review of authors' countries of residence shows that roughly three-fifths of the 692 author listings are from the United States, with about 11% from Germany, 5.5% from Canada, 5.1% from the Netherlands, and 4.0% from China. When these are combined with author listings from Australia (15), Switzerland (10), and the United Kingdom (12), these eight countries contributed 91% of all articles in *JM* during the time period. Two author listings were for multinational institutions or firms, with no specific country mentioned.

Table 6 shows that while the United States still leads global marketing scholarship as represented by *JM*, other countries (especially several in Europe) represent about 40% of the sampled publications. This finding highlights the global nature of scholarship, especially given the multinational partnerships represented on many articles.

**Table 6**  
**Author Countries of Residence**

Country	Number of Authors	Percentage of Total Authors
USA	416	60.1%
Germany	76	11.0%
Canada	38	5.5%
Netherlands	35	5.1%
China	28	4.0%
Australia	15	2.2%
UK	12	1.7%
Switzerland	10	1.4%
Israel	9	1.3%
France	6	0.9%
Norway	6	0.9%
Turkey	5	0.7%
Belgium	5	0.7%
Italy	5	0.7%
Finland	3	0.4%
Austria	3	0.4%
New Zealand	3	0.4%
Singapore	3	0.4%
Denmark	2	0.3%
Greece	2	0.3%
Spain	2	0.3%
Not Specified	2	0.3%
South Korea	2	0.3%
Taiwan	1	0.1%
Germany	1	0.1%
Portugal	1	0.1%
Sweden	1	0.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

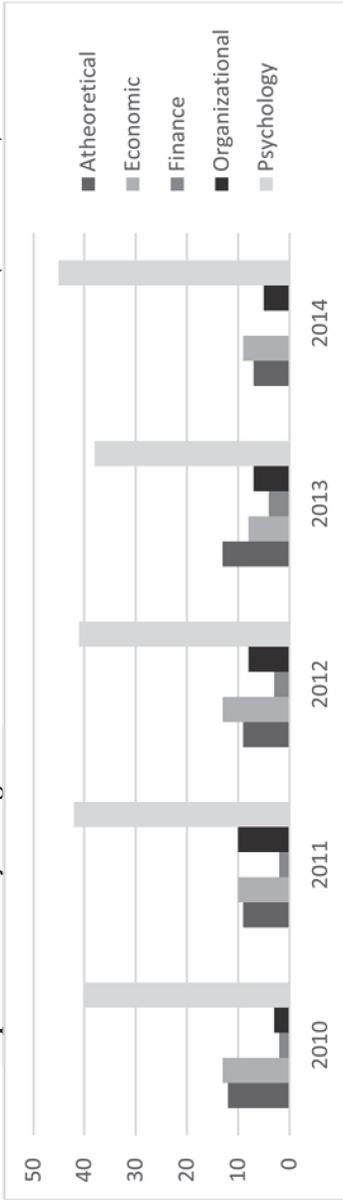
## Trends

Figures III, IV, and V show the trends in the use of theory, article topics, and methods. As can be seen in Figure III, the category of theory use varies from year to year. From 2010-2014, articles with theories pertaining to finance steadily climbed in frequency. Economic, organizational, and atheoretically based articles fluctuated in usage from one year to the next, resulting in no clear direction in the literature for these areas. In contrast, psychology-based theory has relatively equal use during the span from 2010-2014. This stability of psychology-based theories results in this category leading all theory instances as previously discussed.

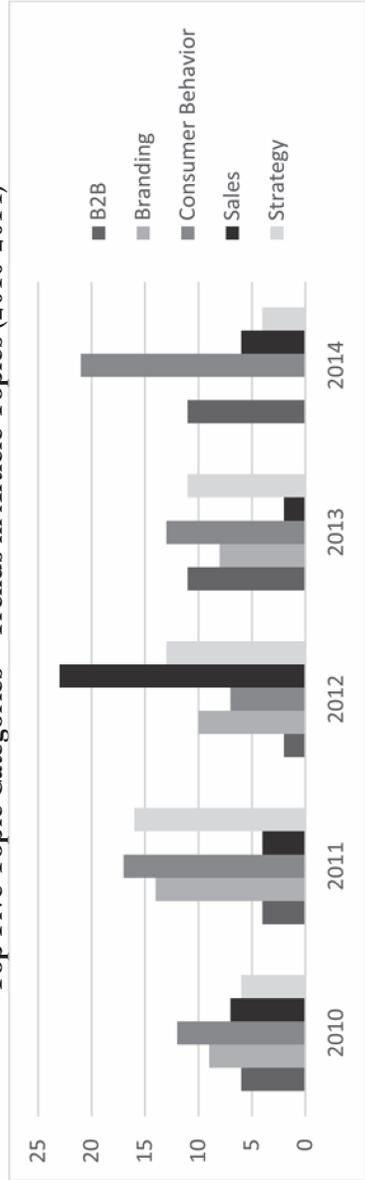
Figure IV reflects the trends in the top five categories of article topics. Similar to the theory categories, several of the topic categories are not representing any real trends. When examining the sales categories, a peak occurred in 2012, while the remaining years hovered around 10% of the annual articles. Strategy and branding categories exhibit a decline since 2011, when both categories represented more than a combined 60% of the articles published in *JM*. In 2014, strategy represented fewer than 10% of the articles, and no branding articles were published. B2B articles had an increase in 2013 to 30% of all articles, and this trend was steady in 2014. Consumer behavior articles have increased since 2012, when the topic represented 10% of all *JM* articles published. In 2014, that number increased to over 30%.

Figure V displays the trends in method in the *JM* sample frame. Survey methods have been declining since 2012 but still has more instances than any other method due in part to high levels of occurrences in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Mixed methods approaches were in decline during 2011-2013. However, this category reported an increase from 2013-2014. Usage of experiments was steady during the sample frame, except for an increase in 2013. Secondary data, qualitative, conceptual, meta-analysis, and panel data approaches all had slight fluctuations during the sample period.

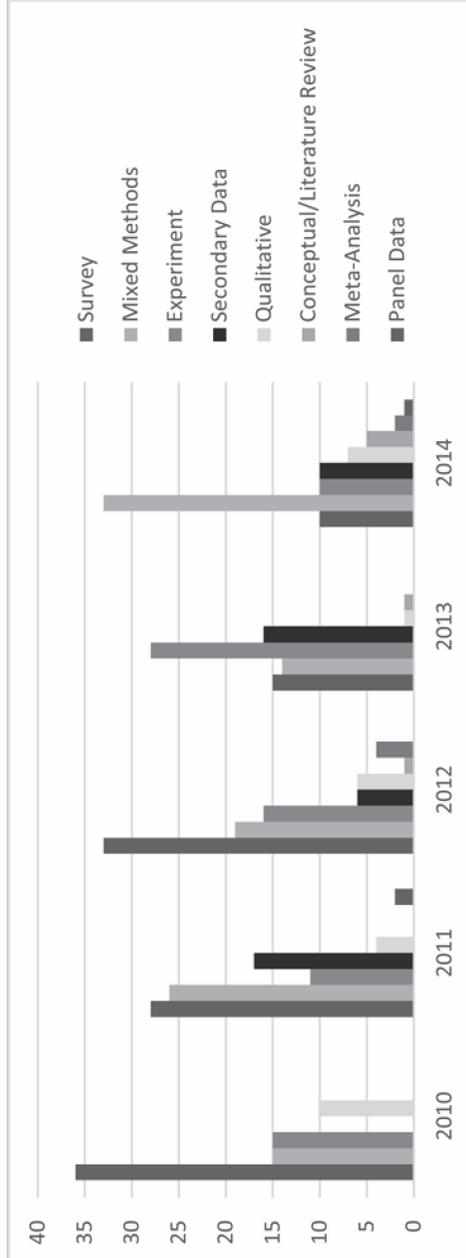
**Figure III**  
**Top Five Theory Categories – Trends in Theoretical Incidences (2010-2014)**



**Figure IV**  
**Top Five Topic Categories – Trends in Article Topics (2010-2014)**



**Figure V**  
**Trends in Method Categories (2010-2014)**



## DISCUSSION

### Implications

This comprehensive review of all *Journal of Marketing (JM)* articles published during the 2010-2014 period reveals several important findings and benefits scholars in the following ways. First, this inventory details all theories that have been used in *JM* over the last five years, indicating which theories are popular and how these theories have either grown or declined in importance during the examined time period. This implication also applies to topics, methods, and analyses. The result is a research “road map” depicting where the top published articles of the discipline have been and where the trends of these research components are leading the field.

Second, the findings underscore the need for collaboration in marketing scholarship. Specifically, the data demonstrates that fewer than 10% of published articles in *JM* are single-authored works. Further, the trend toward three or more authors is increasing. Third, the review revealed that prior calls for more reliance on theory (MacInnis, 2004; Yadav, 2010; Defee *et al.*, 2010) have been answered as evidenced by the presence of theory in roughly 80% of published articles during this time period.

### Limitations and Future Research

This research contends with the following limitations. First, the review is limited to a five-year period. While previous studies have spanned longer time frames (Yadav, 2010), this study is intended to provide a snapshot of current marketing research trends. A second limitation is the review of articles of a single journal. However, *JM* is widely regarded as both the top scientific publication of the overall marketing discipline as occupying the forefront of current research in the field. Another limitation is the completion of analysis by three separate authors, which could potentially bias the results. To prevent such biases, the authors followed the procedure of Defee *et al.* (2010) to code the examined articles and cross-examined each coding.

One interesting avenue for future research in this vein is to examine the implications of author counts. For example, one could determine whether an association exists between number of authors on an article and the article's citation count. Such an examination would naturally need to be controlled with such covariates as age, popularity of topic, broadness of approach, etc.

The most vital future research direction is to continue the tradition of actively observing theory usage in the marketing discipline. Scholars must continuously evaluate the state of marketing research to assess trends in popularity of theories and topics as well as to stay current in methods and

analytical tools. Reviews such as this provide solid benchmarks against which marketing researchers can compare their work while contributing to the progress of marketing scholarship.

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## MAIN ARTICLES

*A Brief Inventory of Marketing Scholarship: A Review of  
Articles from Journal of Marketing (2010-2014)* ..... 244  
Kelly Naletelich, Seth Ketron, and Eric Kennedy

Scholars in the marketing discipline have emphasized the importance of theory. As such, scholars must maintain an awareness of theories currently popular in the discipline. To facilitate this awareness, reviews of the literature to assess the use of theory and other elements of scholarship (i.e., research topics, methods, and analytical tools) are warranted. This research seeks to address this need by reviewing all articles published in the *Journal of Marketing* during the 2010 to 2014 time period, examining theories, topics, methods, analytical tools, and author information. The results reveal that the use of theory is strong in marketing publications, with roughly 80% based on theoretical foundations. Highlighted findings include the prevalence of psychological theories (approximately 51%); the representation of a broad range of research topics; and the use of survey, experiment, and mixed methods in about 75% of reviewed articles. Implications, limitations, and the call for similar periodic reviews of scholarship are discussed.

*Self-Image Congruence: An Empirical Look at Consumer  
Behavior in Door-To-Door Sales!*..... 262  
John Ferguson

Direct sales is a rapidly growing sales channel that allows companies to increase revenues. In a door to door sales environment, consumers have to make decisions concerning the salesperson without the typical visual cues associated with a traditional retail setting. This research examines how consumers use salesperson appearance to make these decisions and the attitudes formed by the customer based on those

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