Analysis of Sport Marketing Researchers in Google Scholar

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to analyze the researchers' situations in the field of sport marketing based on data available in Google Scholar.

Methods: This research was a descriptive and quantitative content analysis. The study population was all 229 researchers in Google Scholar who introduced themselves on the subject of Sport Marketing studies in March 2021. The data collection tool was a coding sheet and its instruction which was used after confirming its validity and reliability. The collected data was analyzed by descriptive statistics.

Results: Findings showed from among 229 sport marketing researchers in the Google Scholar database, 84 were (about 37%) from the United States. After the United States, Iran ranks second with 60 people (about 26% of the research population). This frequency is significantly reduced in other countries. For example, Canada with 9 people, Japan and South Korea with 6 people, Greece with 5 people, Australia, Portugal and Turkey with 4 people, France, Spain and Taiwan with 3 people are in the next ranks. The other countries are in the next category with 2 or 1 representatives.

Conclusion: It is noteworthy that only 37 countries had a research representative called Sport Marketing in the Google Scholar database.

Keyword: Content Analysis, Scientific production, Google Scholar, Sport Marketing, Citations.

Introduction

Nowadays information is one of the key elements for all social, economic, political, cultural, educational, and biological studies. In fact information is a great asset for any researcher, research organization, and country (Sedghi, Mousakhani, & Talachi, 2016). The concept of knowledge management is based on information management and its proper use for decision making (Ghasemi, Farahani, and Mashatan, 2012). Scientific research helps develop the knowledge. For this reason, the results of scientific studies are also called scientific production. Communication literacy is needed to publish scientific results and their applications in everyday life. This means that the researchers can provide the results of their works to a variety of potential users with appropriate methods and tools (Ghasemi and Rasekh, 2020). Scientific production is known as one of the most important and main indicators of the activity of higher education centers. This is an important principle considered by policy makers and planners in the academic fields at the national and international levels. Many decisions in the field of research and scientific development are made based on the scientific products of countries (Norouzi Chakali, Nourmohammadi, Vaziri, and Etemadi Fard, 2007). Scientific capacity and scientific production of any country is one of the criteria for its development. The scientific production means the results of research which increase the knowledge and add a new point to knowledge. Sciences are the results of researchers' work and scientist's activities in every field of science. Among scientific and research centers, universities are one of the centers that produce important scientific information in various economic, social, cultural, agricultural, sport and similar components. Therefore, studying these research findings and identifying the conditions for their quantitative and qualitative improvement is essential (Sajadi, Ashouri, Besharati, and rezvanfar, 2015). Information and communication technologies have helped researchers to process the vast data and information available in various fields in the fastest time and with the greatest accuracy, and to help make less risky decisions (Ghasemi, Farahani, and Mashatan, 2012). Methods for evaluating the scientific progress and development of any country are based on the production of scientific products and the active cooperation of researchers in the field of science production (Morovati,and Fooladvand, 2017). Scientometrics is the field of study which concerns itself with measuring and analyzing scholarly literature. Scientometrics is a sub-field of bibliometrics which include the measurement of the impact of research papers and academic journals, the understanding of scientific citations, and the use of such measurements in policy and management contexts. Examining the status of scientific productions with scientometric method is a way to study scientific productions and dissemination of knowledge and technology (Hicks, and Melkers, 2013; Franceschini, and Maisano, 2011). Therefore, with main indicators such as researcher, scientific publisher and citation, we can examine the scientific dimensions of various issues (Norouzi Chakali et al., 2007). Scientometric indicators play an important role in evaluating and ranking research organizations and universities, their priorities and characteristics, and based on them, they provide important tests for the results and effects of research programs for managers and planners (Van Raan, 2005). Survey results alone are not very valid in evaluating research products related to any field, and the main criterion for it is to provide accurate and documented statistics indexed in national and international scientific databases (Khasseh, Fakhar, Soosaraei, and Sadeghi, 2011). Scientific databases such as Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar

are among the indexes of scientific products. Indexing in these databases provides an opportunity to be seen internationally while creating credibility (Yazdani, Nejat, Rahimi-Movaghar, Ghalichee, and Khalili, 2015). Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.com) provides a new method of locating potentially relevant articles on a given subject by identifying subsequent articles that cite a previously published article. An important feature of Google Scholar is that researchers can use it to trace interconnections among authors citing articles on the same topic and to determine the frequency with which others cite a specific article, as it has a 'cited by' feature. Google Scholar provides a free alternative or complement to other citation indexes (Noruzi, 2005). The h-index is an author-level metric that measures both the productivity and citation impact of the publications of a scientist or scholar. The h-index correlates with obvious success indicators such as being accepted for research fellowships and holding positions at top universities (Bornmann, and Daniel, 2007). The h-index is based on the set of the scientist's most cited papers and the number of citations that they have received in other publications.

Sport sciences is one of the most important fields in human knowledge. This field is related to broad dimensions such as 'health, recreation, championship, education and industry' (Ghasemi, Keshkar, Rasekh, and Izadparast, 2020). Physical education and sport sciences should be considered in the scientific production of this field as a new and important field. Growth and development of sport sciences led to many science productions. The position of research in sport sciences due to its wide range of topics and various trends and its close relationship with human health and quality of life is significant (Fahimifar, Gholam Pour, and Gholam Pour, 2018). With the development of sport sciences and its scientific productions, new disciplines such as 'sport management, sport physiology, sport psychology, sport biomechanics, motor behavior, sport sociology and the like were formed (Ghasemi and et al., 2020). In the field of sport management, trends such as "marketing", "events", "media", "planning", and "entertainment" were formed. One of these popular trends is sport marketing. As with any discipline, sport management has challenges ahead that enable discussion, feedback, and regular assessment of scientific and educational approaches and orientations to pave the way for the growth of existing disciplines (López-Muñoz, Alamo, Rubio, García-García, Martín-Agueda, and Cuenca, 2003). Because the field of sport management does not have much history, the content of scientific and library products in this field should be carefully studied, analyzed and evaluated in order for it to lead to its development in the country (Taperashi, Haghighi, and Abdolvahab, 2013; Asgari, Eydi, Ghasemi, and Aedipoor, 2014). Various researches have been done in the sport sciences of scientometrics, but very few researches have been done in the field of sport management. Some of the scientometrics in sport sciences were Fahimifar et al. (2015), Sajjadi et al. (2015), Yaminfirooz, Yaminifirouz, and Adabi (2016), and Rezaee, Farahani, Asadi, Khaase, and Ramezani, (2011). They have studied and analyzed the issue of scientific productions in sport sciences and sport management. It has not found findings about the situation of researchers and scientific productions in the field of sport marketing. Sport marketing refers to understanding the sport market and attracting customers to a variety of products. These products include a variety of sport goods or services that are marketed with an emphasis on the needs, tastes, and demands of potential customers. The marketing mix includes product, price, promotion and place. Various researches have been done on

various components of marketing in different markets (Keshkar, Ghasemi, and Tojari, 2011).

Therefore, due to the research gap and ambiguity in the field of sport marketing scientific products, this study is an attempt to addresses the question of what the situation of researchers and scientific products is in the field of sport marketing based on the data available in Google Scholar.

Materials and Methods

This research was a descriptive and quantitative content analysis. The study population was all of 229 researchers in Google Scholar who introduced themselves on the subject of Sport Marketing studies in March 2021. The data collection tool was a coding sheet and its instruction which was used after confirming its validity and reliability. The collected data was analyzed by descriptive statistics. The analysis units of collection tools included 'citation', 'h-index', 'academic degree', 'gender', and countries. To ensure the validity of the analysis units and data collection tools, 10 experts in the field of sport marketing approved them. The objectivity of the data collection tool was performed by Kendall agreement coefficient test and was confirmed with the result of 0.86.

Results

The status of sport marketing researchers' citations in Google Scholar database are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sport Management researchers' citations in Google Scholar Database

Citations	Iranian		All Countries	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
20001-37000	0	0	1	.43
10001-20000	0	0	2	.87
5001-10000	0	0	2	.87
1001-5000	0	0	25	10.92
501-1000	3	1.31	23	10.04
251-500	1	.43	24	10.48
101-250	7	3.06	33	14.41
11-100	30	13.1	69	30.13
Under 10	12	5.24	35	15.28
No Citations	7	3.06	15	6.55
Total	60	26.2	229	100

The highest citations was 36,018, the second citation was 14,371 and the third citation was 12,464. The status of sport marketing researchers' h-index in Google Scholar is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Sport Marketing Researchers' h-index in Google Scholar Database

h-index	Iranian		All Countries	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
61-90	0	0	2	087
41-60	0	0	2	087
31-40	0	0	2	087
21-30	0	0	10	4.37
11-20	2	.87	34	14.85
6-10	9	3.93	49	21.4
3-5	22	9.6	66	28.82
1-2	25	10.9	57	24.9
0	2	.87	7	3.05
Total	60	26.2	229	100

The highest h-index of sport marketing researchers was 90, the second was 65, and third was 53. The status of academic degree among sport marketing researchers in Google Scholar database are described in Table 3.

Table 3. Sport Marketing Researchers' Academic Degree in Google Scholar Database

academic degree	Iranian		Other Countries	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Full professor	4	1.7	33	14.41
Associate Professor	7	3.05	21	9.16
Assistant Professor	24	10.48	49	21.40
Lecture	7	3.05	5	2.19
Non degree	18	7.87	121	52.84
Total	60	26.20	229	100

The most sport marketing researchers (52.84%) in Google Scholar database did not hold academic degrees. Among the researchers who had academic degree, assistant professors with 21.40% were more than others. The Status of sport marketing researchers' gender is described in Table 4.

Table 4. Sport Marketing Researchers' Genders in Google Scholar Database

academic degree	Iranian		Other Countries	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Male	46	20.08	156	68.12
Female	14	6.12	54	23.58
N/A	-	-	19	8.3
Total	60	26.2	229	100

The status of sport marketing researchers' countries (by universities) in Google Scholar database are described in Table 5.

Table 5. Sport Marketing Researchers' Countries in Google Scholar Database

Country	Frequency	Percent
USA	84	36.68
Iran	60	26.20
Canada	9	3.93
Japan	6	2.62
South Korea	6	2.62
Greece	5	2.18
Australia	4	1.75
Portugal	4	1.75
Turkey	4	1.75
France	3	1.31
Spain	3	1.31
Taiwan	3	1.31
Others	38	16.59
Total	229	100

Countries like UK, Germany, Nederland, Romani and Indonesia had two researchers. Other countries as Norway, Hong Kong, Slovakia, Croatia, Malaysia, Hungry, Brazil, Pakistan, Cyprus, Ecuador, Switzerland, South Africa, Qatar, Indonesia, India, Russia, Ukraine, Peru, and Seri Lanka had one researcher and 10 researchers' countries could not be identified.

Discussion

Google Scholar is a scientific database in which you can review the conditions of researchers in various specialized fields. Sport sciences researchers have focused on specialties in sport studies. One of the most popular fields in the field of sport management is sport marketing. 229 researchers have reported their specialized identities in the Google Scholar database on sport marketing. A study of sport marketing researchers in the Google Scholar database showed that the highest citations rate was 36,018 by an associate professor in sport management. This citations was significantly higher than the rest; it is more than twice the citations of the second person with 14,371 citations. The title of her best nine resources citations were not related to sport marketing and sport management. This result makes it difficult to identify sport marketing researcher with the highest citations level of research about sport marketing. Because in reviewing cases with references from other researchers, several examples of research unrelated to sport marketing can be seen. However, it can be concluded that 229 people in the Google Scholar database introduced their field of study as sport marketing.

More than 75% of sport marketing researchers had an h-index of less than 10, and only two had an h-index of more than 60. The h-index is based on the set of the scientist's most cited papers and the number of citations that they have received in other publications. Although h-index is a more reliable indicator of citation rate, it can be more accurate by calculating specialized citations about the relevant field of study. For example, if this person is based on the number of citations to articles related to sport marketing, he can better help identify specialized researchers in this field.

About 48% of researchers had university degrees and 52% were freelance researchers, PhD students and people without a university degree. These results show that a large number of freelance researchers and PhD students seek to introduce their study and professional identity in the field of sport marketing. Most of the researchers had a university degree, 49 people had the rank of assistant professor and 33 people had the rank of full professor. There were 21 associate professors and the number of lecturers were 5 people. The phenomenon of sport marketing as a specialized field is relatively new. Therefore, these results showed that a large number of experienced university professors had chosen the trend of sport marketing. The large number of assistant professors also showed that young professors with less experience have also welcomed this trend.

Most sport marketing researchers in the Google Scholar database are male (about 68%). This issue can be influenced by the ratio of male and female professors and students and work patterns in research and activities in the field of sport marketing. The presence of women with high citation and h-index in this group showed that women had a high capacity to succeed in the field of sport marketing. These successes make the role of gender unacceptable for success in sport marketing.

From among the 229 sport marketing researchers in the Google Scholar database, 84 were (about 37 percent) from the United States. After the United States, Iran ranks second with 60 people and about 26% of the research population. This frequency is significantly reduced in other countries. For example, Canada with 9 people, Japan and South Korea with 6 people, Greece with 5 people, Australia, Portugal and Turkey with 4 people, France, Spain and Taiwan with 3 people are in the next ranks. The other countries are in the next category with 2 or 1 representative. It is noteworthy that only 37 countries had a research representative

called Sport Marketing in the Google Scholar database. It is difficult to judge if there are other researchers who do research in this field but are not in the Google Scholar database. But if we consider the available statistics as one of the valid and relatively generalizable indicators, the two countries, the United States and Iran, have significant researchers in the field of sport marketing. The United States is often recognized as a leading brand in the field of sport marketing. This is a good opportunity for Iran to introduce itself as one of the main scientific centers for sport marketing by improving the quality of scientific studies and products. Currently, only 3 Iranian researchers are in the category of citations between 501 and 1000, and none of them has the highest citation among 30 researchers. 49 Iranian sport marketing researchers have citations fewer than 100, and only 11 people have more than 100 citations, which is the highest citations at 648 and 42nd on this list. Two Iranian researchers have an h-index between 11 and 20 and the rest of them have an h-index lower than 10. Among these researchers, 4 were full professors, 7 were associate professors, 24 were assistant professors, 7 were instructors and 18 were without university degrees; 46 were male and 14 were female. These relatively favorable frequencies for Iran, make it a prominent scientific base in Asia. In case of improving the quality of studies and increasing the number of citations and h-indexes, the Iranian brand will be strengthened in the field of sport marketing studies. One of the main problems of Iranian researchers is to produce most of their content in Persian. Limited knowledge of Persian language causes a smaller population around the world to be familiar with their studies and results. One of the key opportunities for researchers and universities active in the field of sport marketing is to hold international conferences and international journals on the subject of sport marketing.

One of the limitations of this study was the study of articles by researchers introduced as sport marketing in the Google Scholar database. Therefore, it is suggested to other researchers to increase the accuracy of the research.

Conclusion

Researchers introduced to sport marketing at Google Scholar database were from 37 countries, and the United States and Iran have the highest frequency of researchers. In order to increase its accuracy, Google Scholar needs to calculate citations in the mentioned specialized field. Iran, with its high capacity of sport marketing researchers, can be one of the important scientific centers in the region and Asia.

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