

# Benchmarking Scholarship in Consumer Research: The $p$ -Index of Thought Leadership

MICHEL TUAN PHAM   
ALISA YINGHAO WU   
DANQI WANG

The assessment of consumer scholarship must move beyond a mere counting of the number of “A”s on a researcher’s CV to include at least some measure of impact. To facilitate a broader assessment of scholarship in consumer research, we provide detailed statistics on the productivity and citation impact of the field’s 340 main gatekeepers: the editors, associate editors, and editorial board members of the *Journal of Consumer Research* and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. In addition, we introduce a new metric, called the  $p$ -index, which can be interpreted as an indicator of a researcher’s propensity for thought leadership. Using this metric, we show that productivity and thought leadership do not necessarily go hand in hand in consumer research and that a combination of the two is a good predictor of the level of esteem that consumer scholars enjoy among their peers and of the receipt of major career awards. Our analyses provide greater transparency into how productivity, citation impact, and propensity for thought leadership are currently distributed among prominent consumer scholars. Furthermore, the detailed descriptive statistics reported can serve as useful benchmarks against which other consumer researchers’ records may be meaningfully compared.

**Keywords:** consumer research; scientometric; impact; relevance; thought leadership; scholarship; metascience

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Michel Tuan Pham (michel.pham@columbia.edu) is the Kravis Professor of Business in Marketing at Columbia Business School, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA. Alisa Yinghao Wu (yw3214@gsb.columbia.edu) is currently a doctoral candidate in marketing at Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA. In July 2024, she will be an assistant professor of marketing at the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah. Danqi Wang (dwang2689@outlook.com) is a Research Scientist at L’Oréal R&I, Shanghai, China. Please address correspondence to Michel Tuan Pham. The research is a follow-up to the first author’s previous work on increasing the impact and relevance of consumer research (Pham 2013). Preliminary analyses were performed by Danqi Wang as part of a master’s thesis completed at Columbia University under the first author’s supervision. Alisa Wu was primarily responsible for assembling the updated dataset and performing most of the tabulations and basic analyses. The authors thank the *JCR* review team for their helpful feedback. They appreciate the input of Asim Ansari regarding some of the analyses. [Supplementary materials](#) and links to the datasets are included in the [web appendix](#) accompanying the online version of this article.

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As the *Journal of Consumer Research (JCR)* celebrates its 50th anniversary, it is useful to reflect on how scholarship is assessed within the field. By far, the most common metric for gauging scholarship in consumer research (and in marketing as a whole) is the number of “A-level” articles that researchers have published. The pervasive use of this metric as a primary yardstick by which scholars are evaluated within our field is understandable: It is an objective measure of research productivity; and to the extent that publication in top-level journals is highly selective, it is also a reasonable indicator of the quality of the researcher’s work. Moreover, it is simple and transparent and can easily be compared across researchers through a brief review of the CVs.

Yet, a simple count of the number of A’s is clearly a reductionist way of judging a record of scholarship. The fact that a given article is published by a major journal, while suggestive of a certain level of “quality,” as determined by the journal’s review team, does not guarantee that this paper is actually “good” based on general epistemic criteria such as generalizability, relevance, and insight (see Pham 2023, for a list of epistemic criteria). Nor does a publication in a major journal guarantee that the paper has

a significant “impact,” regardless of how impact is defined. Another concern is that overemphasis on the number of A’s as the primary metric of researcher evaluation encourages the pursuit of research that is methodologically tight but substantively and theoretically narrow, because this type of research has a better chance of surviving the rigor of the review process at our top journals (Pham 2013).

The purpose of this article is to promote a broader assessment of scholarship in consumer research: one that is less narrowly fixated on a mere counting of the number of A’s and more sensitive to evidence of scholarly impact, using citations as a basic measure of impact. To this end, we perform a scientometric study of the publication records of a large and important sample of consumer scholars: the current editors, associate editors (AEs), and editorial review board (ERB) members of *JCR* and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (*JCP*), who are the primary gatekeepers of the field. These scholars’ records are examined across a broad range of standard productivity and citation metrics such as the number of A’s, the total number of citations, and the *h*-index (HI). In addition, we propose a new citation metric, called the *p*-index, which can be seen as an indicator of a researcher’s propensity for thought leadership. We show that this measure has desirable properties and has significant predictive validity as a complementary indicator of overall scholarship.

Our findings paint a more complete picture of the distribution of scholarship among a distinguished set of consumer scholars. This picture makes two kinds of contributions. From a “lay-of-the-land” perspective, our results provide a more balanced appreciation of these consumer scholars’ respective contributions to knowledge, one that is less dominated by sheer productivity in terms of number of A’s. For example, we recognize scholars whose citation impact has been outstanding, even though they may not have published as many A-level articles as other researchers. Conversely, we show that consumer researchers can assemble impressive resumés with publications that consistently fail to attract significant attention, thereby documenting the importance of going beyond the simple counting of A’s when evaluating consumer scholars. Through the *p*-index, we identify scholars with a sustained ability to attract other scholars’ interest in their work, which is an indicator of thought leadership.

From a forward-looking perspective, the detailed descriptive statistics and the new index presented in this article serve as useful benchmarks against which other consumer researchers’ records may be meaningfully compared. For example, an HI of less than 8 would place a researcher’s record below the 25th percentile of the editorial board members of *JCR* and *JCP*, whereas an HI of more than 20 would place a researcher’s record above the 75th percentile. Similarly, a *p*-index of less than 42% would place a researcher’s record below the 25th percentile of the editorial board members of *JCR* and *JCP*, whereas a *p*-index above 69% would place a researcher’s record above the 90th percentile. Such benchmarks should

facilitate the evaluation of scholarship in the field at a high level (a more precise evaluation would, of course, require a careful reading of the work). More generally, we hope that by sensitizing the field to a more multidimensional view of consumer scholarship that explicitly recognizes some dimensions of impact and thought leadership, this article will encourage consumer scholars, present and future, to care more about the impact potential of their research than the mere publishability of their papers in major journals.

## A SCIENTOMETRIC STUDY OF CONSUMER SCHOLARS

Our analysis focuses on an objective sample of 340 consumer scholars of high relevance to the field: the current (as of January 2022) editors, AEs, and ERB members of *JCR* and *JCP* (hereafter, the “*JCR/JCP* editorial boards”). This sample encompasses a broad range of active consumer researchers of different levels of seniority (see [web appendix \[app. A\]](#) for descriptive statistics). While this selective sample is clearly not representative of all consumer researchers, it nonetheless offers useful benchmarks for assessing any consumer researcher’s record. Moreover, as the primary gatekeepers of the field’s major publication outlets, this set of researchers is a population worthy of study in itself.

We compiled these scholars’ research records by cross-referencing their publicly available CVs with the Web of Science’s Social Science Citation Index database. This database was preferred over Google Scholar because it is generally considered to be a more reliable source of bibliometric data (Martín-Martín et al. 2018). In early 2022, we assembled a comprehensive dataset of all journal articles published by this group of researchers in outlets indexed by WoS. Publications not indexed by WoS were excluded from the analyses. We further excluded conference proceedings papers, book chapters, short editorial notes, tutorials, rejoinders, and corrections/errata. This resulted in a dataset of 8,539 relevant articles across the 340 researchers ( $M = 25.11$  articles per researcher). For each article, we recorded (a) the journal in which it was published; (b) whether the journal is a “top four” marketing journal (*JCR*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Marketing Science*) or *JCP*, which we included as a top publication, given our focus on consumer research (hereafter, we refer to this set of five journals as “top marketing publications”); (c) the year of publication; (d) the number of authors and the researcher’s position on the author list; (e) the total number of WoS citations to date (as of January–March 2022); and (f) the rank of the article in terms of citations compared to other articles published by the same journal that year. These data were used to compute multiple measures of productivity and citation-based impact for each researcher, as detailed in subsequent sections.

In addition to these article-level measures, we collected several researcher-level measures such as (a) the year of PhD (to account for seniority effects); (b) the current university affiliation; and (c) the current professional rank (e.g., associate professor, chaired professor). The measures included the result of a brief survey conducted in March 2020 in which members of the *JCR* and *JCP* editorial boards were asked to identify “five scholars (excluding yourself) from the broader pool of consumer researchers who are still active . . . whose scholarly work you most admire . . . independent of their seniority and your personal affinity with them.” Of the 289 editorial board members contacted, 157 (54.3%) provided usable responses to this question. The number of times that a researcher was mentioned in response to this question was used as a measure of peer esteem that served as an independent criterion for testing the predictive validity of the various productivity and impact metrics.

We next report an analysis of the sampled scholars’ productivity and impact along standard citation metrics and identify some limitations of these metrics. We then introduce the *p*-index and test its reliability and validity as an additional indicator of scholarship and impact, before assessing our sample of scholars on this new metric. We conclude with thoughts and recommendations on the future assessment of consumer scholarship.

## THE PRODUCTIVITY OF CONSUMER SCHOLARS

### Productivity Measures

We computed three basic measures of productivity for each researcher: (a) the total number of publications in WoS-indexed outlets (QT, for “quantity total”); (b) the number of top marketing publications (QM5, for “quantity top-5 marketing”); and (c) the number of *JCR* publications (QJCR, for “quantity JCR”). Two versions of each productivity measure were tabulated. The first was the raw, *unadjusted* productivity score (QT, QM5, or QJCR) in which authors are given full credit for every article they published, regardless of the number of co-authors and their authorship position. In a second version of the measures, authors received only fractional credit for any co-authored publication. Given that it is customary in consumer research to list authors in decreasing order of their respective contributions to the article, each co-authored publication was credited to researchers using the following formula (Abbas 2011):  $W = \frac{2(n-a+1)}{n(n+1)}$ , where *n* is the total number of co-authors on the article and *a* is the researcher’s authorship rank. For instance, a solo-author article would be weighed 1, whereas a four-author article in which the researcher is the third author would receive a weight of 0.20. These authorship-adjusted scores are denoted OWQT, OWQM5, and OWQJCR (OW, for “order-weighted”). (An alternative approach would be to

assume equal authorship for all co-authored articles and credit each publication by a fraction equal to  $1/n$ . This approach would be more suitable in fields like economics where the order of authorship is purely alphabetical.)

### Productivity Results

Table 1 presents summary statistics for our sample on each version of the productivity metrics. In addition to the mean and standard deviation, the table provides the minimum and maximum values, as well as the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th percentiles, thereby giving a comprehensive picture of the distribution of the metrics across the full set of 340 *JCR/JCP* editorial board members. Percentile information is especially useful, given the strong positive skewness of the productivity metrics (app. C). The table also identifies the top 34 scorers (i.e., the top 10%) for each metric. Similar tables organized by seniority level are provided in app. B.

As of early 2022, the editorial board members of *JCR* and *JCP* had published an average of 25.1 articles (QT; Mdn = 19), 11.6 of which appeared in the top five marketing journals (QM5; Mdn = 9), and 5.6 are *JCR* articles (QJCR; Mdn = 4). Adjusted for co-authorship, the weighted average number of publications per researcher drops to 9.9, assuming unequal contribution aligned with the order of authorship (OWQT; Mdn = 7.6). Therefore, on average, *JCR/JCP* editorial board members have published the equivalent of about 10 solo-authored articles, of which about 5 appeared in the top marketing journals (OWQM5; Mdn = 3.9), and 2.5 were *JCR* articles (OWQJCR; Mdn = 2). Across statistics, the ratio between each unadjusted publication metric (QT, QM5, QJCR) and its authorship-adjusted counterpart (OWQT, OWQM5, OWQJCR) typically ranges between 2.2 and 2.5. Therefore, a rule of thumb when evaluating the productivity of consumer researchers is to treat each solo-authored publication as equivalent to 2.2–2.5 co-authored publications.

The list of top scholars across productivity metrics is self-explanatory. In terms of total productivity across all journals (QT, OWQT), prominent social psychologists dominate the ranking, whereas in terms of productivity in top marketing journals only (QM5, OWQM5) or in *JCR* (QJCR, OWQJCR), more “mainstream” senior consumer/marketing scholars dominate. The more useful statistics may be the percentile ranges provided for each metric, which can serve as a reference for evaluating the productivity of other consumer researchers, present or future. For example, a researcher with less than five publications in the top five marketing journals (QM5) would be in the bottom quartile relative to *JCR/JCP* editorial board members, whereas a researcher who has published two solo-authored *JCR* articles (OWQJCR) would be comparable to the median *JCR/JCP* editorial board member.

**TABLE 1**  
JCR/JCP ERB MEMBERS' PRODUCTIVITY METRICS (N= 340)

Statistics	Total number of publications (QT)	Authorship-adjusted number of publications (OWQT)	Number of top marketing publications (QM5)	Authorship-adjusted number of top marketing publications (OWQM5)	Number of JCR publications (QJCR)	Authorship-adjusted number of JCR publications (OWQJCR)
Mean	25.11	9.93	11.58	4.98	5.59	2.53
SD	23.57	8.35	9.08	3.87	4.54	2.18
Skewness	4.32	3.26	2.04	1.93	2.30	2.65
Max	230.00	68.00	56.00	23.83	35.00	16.83
0.90	47.90	18.91	24.00	9.53	11.00	4.80
0.75	31.00	12.10	15.00	6.40	7.00	3.33
0.50	19.00	7.63	9.00	3.87	4.00	2.00
0.25	12.00	5.01	5.00	2.30	3.00	1.08
0.10	8.00	3.33	3.00	1.30	1.00	0.61
Min	1.00	0.33	1.00	0.33	1.00	0.10

Top-10% scholars

QT	OWQT	QM5	OWQM5	QJCR	OWQJCR
Petty, R. 230	Schwarz, N. 68.0	Lehmann, D. R. 56	Krishna, A. 23.8	Janiszewski, C. 35	Belk, R. W. 16.8
Schwarz, N. 208	Petty, R. 65.1	Dahl, D. W. 56	Janiszewski, C. 21.4	Belk, R. W. 29	Janiszewski, C. 15.0
Vohs, K. 137	Belk, R. W. 54.74	Krishna, A. 52	Simonson, I. 21.2	Lynch, J. 22	Thompson, C. 12.3
Lehmann, D. R. 121	Hill, R. 50.4	Janiszewski, C. 51	Chernev, A. 20.5	Bettman, J. R. 21	Chernev, A. 12.2
Belk, R. W. 109	Lehmann, D. R. 41.5	Dhar, R. 47	Bettman, J. R. 19.6	Thompson, C. 21	Bettman, J. R. 10.0
Hill, R. 99	Vohs, K. 37.5	Bettman, J. R. 44	Lehmann, D. R. 19.4	Dahl, D. W. 19	Lynch, J. 9.5
Rucker, D. D. 87	Krishna, A. 33.1	Simonson, I. 44	Belk, R. W. 18.8	Krishna, A. 18	Richins, M. 9.0
Dahl, D. W. 78	Bettman, J. R. 32.5	Inman, J. J. 38	Dhar, R. 17.4	Berger, J. 18	Berger, J. 8.0
Bettman, J. R. 74	Arnould, E. J. 32.4	Lynch, J. 34	Dahl, D. W. 16.1	Kahn, B. 17	Pham, M. T. 7.7
Krishna, A. 74	Rucker, D. D. 28.0	Berger, J. 33	Berger, J. 14.9	Shiv, B. 17	Krishna, A. 7.2
Netemeyer, R. G. 72	Simonson, I. 27.7	Roedder John, D. 33	Inman, J. J. 14.5	Dhar, R. 16	Kahn, B. 7.2
Tormala, Z. 66	Berger, J. 24.4	Alba, J. W. 32	Alba, J. W. 14.3	Pham, M. T. 16	Simonson, I. 7.2
Kardes, F. R. 64	Russell, C. 24.4	Belk, R. W. 31	Lynch, J. 14.1	Johar, G. V. 16	Mick, D. G. 6.8
Dhar, R. 61	Janiszewski, C. 24.1	Kahn, B. 31	Thompson, C. 13.8	Lehmann, D. R. 15	Roedder John, D. 6.8
Huber, J. 60	Iacobucci, D. 24.0	Morwitz, V. G. 30	Roedder John, D. 13.7	Roedder John, D. 15	Peracchio, L. 6.6
Hoyer, W. D. 59	Dahl, D. W. 24.0	Kardes, F. R. 29	Pham, M. T. 13.5	Sengupta, J. 15	Shiv, B. 6.4
Janiszewski, C. 59	Tormala, Z. 23.5	Haws, K. L. 28	Kahn, B. 13.3	Argo, J. J. 15	Alba, J. W. 6.3
Haws, K. L. 58	Raghubir, P. 23.1	Johar, G. V. 27	Huber, J. 12.5	Maheswaran, D. 15	Argo, J. J. 6.2
Russell, C. 58	Huber, J. 22.9	Hoyer, W. D. 27	Richins, M. 11.7	Chernev, A. 14	Sengupta, J. 5.7
Simonson, I. 58	Chernev, A. 22.7	Shiv, B. 27	Kardes, F. R. 11.6	Alba, J. W. 14	Johar, G. V. 5.6
Arnould, E. J. 57	Dhar, R. 22.5	Maheswaran, D. 27	Johar, G. V. 11.5	Peracchio, L. 14	Etkin, J. 5.5
Morewedge, C. K. 55	Netemeyer, R. G. 21.8	Schwarz, N. 26	Lamberton, C. 11.3	Morwitz, V. G. 13	Dahl, D. W. 5.5
Pandelaere, M. 55	Baumgartner, H. 21.7	Chernev, A. 26	White, K. 11.0	Nowlis, S. M. 13	Maheswaran, D. 5.5
Baumgartner, H. 54	Lynch, J. 21.3	Pham, M. T. 26	Meyer, R. J. 10.7	Simonson, I. 12	Dhar, R. 5.5
Inman, J. J. 54	Shrum, L. J. 21.1	Argo, J. J. 26	Sengupta, J. 10.7	Arnould, E. J. 12	Kozinets, R. V. 5.5
Newman, G. 54	Newman, G. 21.0	Sengupta, J. 26	Schlosser, A. 10.6	Mick, D. G. 12	Ahluwalia, R. 5.4
Berger, J. 52	Thompson, C. 20.5	Rucker, D. D. 25	Baumgartner, H. 10.4	Ahluwalia, R. 12	Yan, D. 5.2
Iacobucci, D. 52	Morewedge, C. K. 20.4	Huber, J. 25	Shiv, B. 10.4	Inman, J. J. 11	Huber, J. 5.0
Lynch, J. 51	Estes, Z. 20.3	Baumgartner, H. 25	Schwarz, N. 10.3	Huber, J. 11	Kardes, F. R. 4.9
Verlegh, P. 51	Pham, M. T. 20.2	Meyer, R. J. 25	Morwitz, V. G. 10.2	Kardes, F. R. 11	Arnould, E. J. 4.8
Alba, J. W. 49	Alba, J. W. 20.1	Nowlis, S. M. 25	Argo, J. J. 9.9	van Osselaer, S. M. J. 11	Inman, J. J. 4.8
Kahn, B. 49	Kahn, B. 20.0	White, K. 24	Raghubir, P. 9.8	Bolton, L. E. 11	Lehmann, D. R. 4.8
Smidts, A. 48	Schmitt, B. H. 19.9	Lamberton, C. 24	Peracchio, L. 9.5	Price, L. 11	Gershoff, A. D. 4.7
Winer, R. 48	Winer, R. 18.9	van Osselaer, S. M. J. 24	Haws, K. L. 9.5	McGill, A. L. 11	Aggarwal, P. J. 4.7

**THE CITATION IMPACT OF CONSUMER SCHOLARS**

Citation-Impact Measures

We tabulated the total number of WoS citations garnered by each researcher across their entire set of articles (CT,

for "citation total"), which is the most common measure of impact. As a second measure of citation impact, more focused on marketing and consumer research, we tabulated the total number of WoS citations received by each researcher's top marketing publications (CM5, for "citations marketing top 5"). As we did for the measures of productivity, we computed two versions of each citation



measure. The first was the unadjusted version (CT and CM5), wherein authors are given full credit for the citations of every article they published, regardless of the authorship structure. In a second version of the measures, denoted OWCT and OWCM5, authors were credited with a fraction of the citations received by each article proportional to  $\frac{2(n-a+1)}{n(n+1)}$ , as suggested by Abbas (2011), under the assumption that authors are typically listed in order of their relative contributions.

A major limitation of total-number-of-citation metrics, such as CT or CM5, is that such measures may be overly dependent on a single publication that receives an unusually high number of citations and may not be representative of the researcher's overall body of work. As an additional measure of impact that partly addresses this issue, we computed each researcher's HI based on the list of publications recorded in our dataset. A scientist has an index of  $h$  if  $h$  of his or her papers have received at least  $h$  citations (Hirsch 2005). The HI has a number of desirable qualities, including its simplicity, objectivity, and insensitivity to a small number of unusually highly cited papers. One drawback of this index is its sensitivity to researchers' sheer productivity. Everything else being equal, researchers who publish many articles will tend to have higher HIs compared to researchers who publish fewer articles. For example, a researcher who published 20 articles with 20 citations each (400 citations in total) will have a higher HI (HI = 20) than a researcher who published 10 articles with 100 citations each (HI = 10 with 1,000 citations in total). In addition, the HI may obscure material differences between researchers' citations. For instance, a researcher whose five publications have 0, 1, 3, 4, and 4 citations, respectively, would have the same HI (3) as a researcher whose five publications have 2, 2, 3, 20, and 40 citations. Moreover, the HI does not correct for co-authorship, thereby exaggerating the impact of frequent minor contributors to multiple-author papers. Additional issues with the HI and total citation measures are identified below.

## Citation-Impact Results

Table 2 presents the editorial board members' statistics in terms of the above-described citation metrics and identifies the top 10% of scholars for each metric. Similar tables broken down by seniority are provided in app. D. Like the productivity metrics summarized in table 1, the citation-impact metrics summarized in table 2 all have strongly skewed distributions (app. E), again underscoring the value of comprehensive quantile statistics for assessing consumer scholarship.

Whereas the average total number of citations (QT) of the sample is 2,069 (SD = 3,261), the median total number of citations is much lower at 1,014. This is because the distribution of the total number of citations is very positively skewed (skewness = 4.41), with some extraordinarily high

scorers with more than 15,000 WoS citations each. It is interesting to note that the top three scorers in terms of total number of citations (Petty, Schwarz, and Vohs) are also the top three scorers in terms of total number of publications (table 1). Indeed, as shown in table 3, there is a very strong correlation ( $r = 0.87$ ) between researchers' total number of citations (CT) and their total number of publications (QT). This correlation remains strong even after controlling for differences in seniority (partial  $r = 0.82$ ; app. G). Therefore, even though the total number of citations is generally believed to provide added information over and above a researcher's sheer number of publications, empirically the information provided by the total number of citations is largely redundant with the level of productivity. When total citations are adjusted for authorship (OWCT), the relative position of more "mainstream" consumer researchers (e.g., R. Belk, M. Richins, J. Bettman) improves. With respect to the rest of the distribution, a consumer researcher with 1,000 total citations would be comparable to the median *JCR/JCP* editorial board member, whereas it would take more than 2,300 total citations to be in the top quartile of the distribution and about 400 total citations to reach the 25th percentile.

A possibly more pertinent measure of citations is the total number of citations received by articles published in top marketing journals (CM5). Among *JCR/JCP* editorial board members, the median number of such citations is 539, the 25th percentile is 204, and the 75th percentile is 1,456. Based on this metric, none of the social psychologists identified earlier appears among the top 10% of scholars, indicating that these researchers' very high levels of citations are mostly associated with publications outside consumer research. The most cited consumer scholars based on their top marketing publications (CM5) include R. Belk, J. Lynch, and D. Lehmann. The ranking changes somewhat if the citations are adjusted for co-authorship, rewarding researchers who tend to occupy more senior authorship positions on highly cited papers (e.g., M. Richins, C. Thompson) relative to researchers who tend to occupy more junior authorship positions (e.g., D. Lehmann, Netemeyer). These ordered-authorship-weighted measures of citation (OWCT and OWCM5) may provide a fairer and more accurate representation of the relative citation impact of consumer researchers than the unadjusted measure typically used in our field (CT). Moreover, the authorship-weighted measures of citations are somewhat less correlated with the sheer number of corresponding publications ( $r_{OWCT, QT} = 0.79$ ;  $r_{OWCM5, QM5} = 0.63$ ) than are the unadjusted measures of citations ( $r_{CT, QT} = 0.87$ ;  $r_{CM5, QM5} = 0.73$ ), thereby providing information that is less redundant.

Finally, the median HI of *JCR/JCP* editorial board members is 12, the 25th percentile is 8, and the 75th percentile is 20. The top 10% of scorers have HIs of 27 and above. A majority of them, 62.2%, have received one or more of the

**TABLE 2**  
JCR/JCPE RB MEMBERS' CITATION-BASED METRICS (N= 340)

Statistics	Total number of citations (CT)	Authorship-adjusted total number of citations (OWCT)	Number of citations of top marketing citations (CM5)	Authorship-adjusted number of citations of top marketing citations (OWCM5)	<i>h</i> -index
Mean	2069	898	1241	589	15.09
SD	3261	1421	1739	934	10.31
Skewness	4.41	4.33	2.61	4.18	2.18
Max	29786	12604	11964	9615	81.00
0.90	4837	2292	3580	1700	27.00
0.75	2383	935	1456	687	20.00
0.50	1014	430	539	241	12.00
0.25	389	177	204	94	8.00
0.10	186	79	88	39	5.00
Min	7	2	7	2	1.00

Top-10% scholars									
CT	OWCT	CM5	OWCM5	<i>h</i> -index					
Petty, R.	29786	Belk, R. W.	12604	Belk, R. W.	11964	Belk, R. W.	9615	Petty, R.	81
Schwarz, N.	26156	Petty, R.	10580	Lynch, J.	9961	Richins, M.	5308	Schwarz, N.	70
Vohs, K.	18923	Schwarz, N.	10505	Lehmann, D. R.	9014	Simonson, I.	4128	Vohs, K.	62
Belk, R. W.	16241	Vohs, K.	5886	Bettman, J. R.	7572	Thompson, C.	3824	Lehmann, D. R.	53
Lynch, J.	12725	Richins, M.	5622	Arnould, E. J.	7511	Lynch, J.	3748	Bettman, J. R.	45
Rucker, D. D.	12461	Bettman, J. R.	5201	Simonson, I.	7074	Bettman, J. R.	3617	Netemeyer, R. G.	44
Lehmann, D. R.	12014	Simonson, I.	5126	Alba, J. W.	6654	Arnould, E. J.	3395	Belk, R. W.	43
Netemeyer, R. G.	11804	Bhattacharya, C. B.	5094	Hoyer, W. D.	6481	Kozinets, R. V.	3325	Simonson, I.	41
Bhattacharya, C.	11803	Lynch, J.	4767	Baumgartner, H.	6465	Alba, J. W.	3143	Hoyer, W. D.	41
Bettman, J. R.	11735	Arnould, E. J.	4278	Bhattacharya, C. B.	6313	Dhar, R.	2891	Dahl, D. W.	40
Sen, S.	9997	Thompson, C.	4028	Richins, M.	6238	Berger, J.	2837	Dhar, R.	38
Simonson, I.	9515	Netemeyer, R. G.	3891	Thompson, C.	5932	Escalas, J. E.	2762	Rucker, D. D.	38
Arnould, E. J.	9274	Alba, J. W.	3799	Dhar, R.	5799	Bhattacharya, C. B.	2712	Krishna, A.	37
Hoyer, W. D.	8787	Kozinets, R. V.	3769	Netemeyer, R. G.	5238	Hoffman, D.	2598	Lynch, J.	36
Baumgartner, H.	8195	Rucker, D. D.	3733	Price, L.	5067	Lehmann, D. R.	2593	Arnould, E. J.	36
Alba, J. W.	8026	Sen, S.	3684	Hoffman, D.	4995	Baumgartner, H.	2410	Baumgartner, H.	36
Novak, T.	7067	Berger, J.	3493	Batra, R.	4942	Iacobucci, D.	2313	Inman, J. J.	36
Dhar, R.	6874	Lehmann, D. R.	3489	Novak, T. P.	4886	Sen, S.	2289	Janiszewski, C.	34
Richins, M.	6763	Dhar, R.	3387	Kozinets, R. V.	4869	Rindfleisch, A.	2224	Alba, J. W.	33
Batra, R.	6582	Hoffman, D.	3377	Rindfleisch, A.	4864	Roedder John, D.	2212	Huber, J.	33
Hoffman, D.	6526	Escalas, J. E.	3145	Dahl, D. W.	4748	Fisher, R. J.	2154	Pauwels, K.	32
Thompson, C.	6356	Baumgartner, H.	3010	Sen, S.	4681	Rao, A.	2073	Kardes, F. R.	31
Price, L.	6223	Fisher, R. J.	2789	Lutz, R. J.	4620	Mick, D. G.	2072	Hill, R.	31
Kardes, F. R.	6050	Iacobucci, D.	2672	Berger, J.	4591	Batra, R.	2062	Tormala, Z.	31
Kozinets, R. V.	5870	Batra, R.	2648	Janiszewski, C.	4347	Price, L.	1998	Schmitt, B. H.	30
Dahl, D. W.	5635	Hoyer, W. D.	2598	Rao, A.	4237	Novak, T. P.	1944	Price, L.	29
Kahn, B.	5617	Novak, T. P.	2597	Roedder John, D.	4178	Krishna, A.	1931	Pham, M. T.	29
Berger, J.	5599	Lee, A. Y.	2403	Iacobucci, D.	3995	Janiszewski, C.	1919	Shiv, B.	29
Lee, A. Y.	5454	Kahn, B.	2381	Escalas, J. E.	3805	Hoyer, W. D.	1916	Raghubir, P.	29
Rindfleisch, A.	5342	Rindfleisch, A.	2347	Inman, J. J.	3789	Kirman, A.	1862	Shrum, L. J.	29
Iacobucci, D.	5083	Pham, M. T.	2341	Maheswaran, D.	3622	Chernev, A.	1827	Berger, J.	28
Lutz, R. J.	5081	Price, L.	2339	Mick, D. G.	3620	Huber, J.	1739	Newman, G.	28
Maheswaran, D.	4913	Mick, D. G.	2336	Kahn, B.	3580	Maheswaran, D.	1711	Thompson, C.	27
Pauwels, K.	4837	Maheswaran, D.	2294	Kardes, F. R.	3580	Netemeyer, R. G.	1700	Baumgartner, H.	27
								Roedder John,	
								D. Maheswaran,	
								D. Morwitz, V. G.	

following major career awards: ACR Fellow, SCP Fellow, and SCP Distinguished Scientific Contributions. This supports the predictive value of the HI as an indicator of overall stature in the field, although the prediction is far from perfect. An important caveat about the HI is that it is strongly correlated with the sheer productivity of the

researcher. In our sample, there was a 0.93 correlation between researchers' HI and their total number of publications (QT; table 3). There was also a strong correlation of 0.68 between the HI and the number of years since the PhD was obtained. The HI should therefore be interpreted with caution when comparing researchers of different seniority.

**TABLE 3**  
SIMPLE CORRELATIONS AMONG PRIMARY METRICS (UNADJUSTED FOR AUTHORSHIP)

	QT	QM5	QJCR	CT	CM5	PI	MPI	PIM5	MPIM5	h-index	Peer esteem	Seniority
Total number of publications (QT)	1	0.594***	0.476***	0.874***	0.539***	.107*	.125*	0.063	0.092 <sup>†</sup>	0.929***	0.411***	0.546***
Total number of top-5 marketing publications (QM5)		1	0.830***	0.533***	0.728***	0.044	0.07	-0.024	0.002	0.735***	0.625***	0.599***
Total number of JCR publications (QJCR)			1	0.464***	0.672***	0.062	0.077	-0.001	0.017	0.615***	0.675***	0.531***
Total number of citations (CT)				1	0.739***	0.285***	0.308***	0.207***	0.244***	0.877***	0.476***	0.591***
Total number of top-5 marketing citations (CM5)					1	0.310***	0.336***	0.240***	0.276***	0.699***	0.618***	0.704***
p-index (PI)						1	0.951***	0.882***	0.851***	0.196***	0.104 <sup>†</sup>	0.088
p-index median (MPI)							1	0.821***	0.833***	0.223***	0.122*	0.126*
p-index of top-5 marketing publications (PIM5)								1	0.954***	0.118*	0.081	0.015
p-index median of top-5 marketing publications (MPIM5)									1	0.154**	0.105 <sup>†</sup>	0.049
h-index										1	0.495***	0.682***
Peer esteem											1	0.353***
Seniority												1

<sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$ .  
\*  $p < .05$ .  
\*\*  $p < .01$ .  
\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Finally, there was a strong correlation of 0.88 between the HI and the total number of citations (CT), which is expected given that both measures are indicators of the cumulative impact of a researcher. Therefore, in practice, the two measures provide very similar information as impact metrics.

### THE PROPENSITY FOR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP: THE *p*-INDEX

The fact that the two most common measures of impact used in our field—the total number of citations and the HI—are both highly correlated with the number of publications, which is mostly a measure of productivity, underlines the need for an alternative measure of scholarship that would be less impacted by the researcher’s sheer productivity. Ideally, such a measure would have the following properties: (a) it would be objective, transparent, and easy to compute; (b) it would provide information that is not redundant with the list of publications and measures of productivity; (c) it would not be easy to “game”; (d) it would not be overly dependent on a single publication; (e) it would allow comparisons of scholars of different seniority; and (f) it would accommodate the fact that consumer researchers tend to publish across a broad variety of journals with distinct patterns of citations. As such a measure, we propose the *p*-index.

#### The *p*-Index

The *p*-index is the average citation percentile rank of a researcher’s published articles relative to other articles published the same year by the same journals. For instance, suppose that one of researcher A’s articles was published in journal X in 2015, receiving a total of 50 citations to date. If in 2015 journal X published a total of 65 articles, of which 42 have fewer than 50 citations to date, the percentile rank of that article in that journal that year ( $PR_j$ ) would be  $42/65 = 64.6\%$ . Similar  $PR_j$  are computed for each of the researcher’s publications, and the mean of the researcher’s  $PR_j$  across all his or her publications is the researcher’s *p*-index. (An alternative would be to define the *p*-index as the median  $PR_j$ . However, as discussed in [app. N](#), additional analyses indicate that the mean  $PR_j$  provides a more stable summary statistic than the median  $PR_j$ .) The *p*-index, hereafter denoted PI, thus reflects the tendency of a researcher’s articles to relatively outperform, in terms of citations, other articles published in the same journals as those where this researcher published his or her work, controlling for year of publication and thereby for the effects of seniority. A researcher whose PI is substantially above 0.5 has publications that, on average, tend to be more cited relative to comparable publications, independent of where and when these articles were published. Conversely, a researcher whose PI is substantially below 0.5 has

publications that, on average, tend to be less cited than comparable publications. Therefore, this measure can be regarded as an indicator of the relative interestingness of a researcher's body of work to other researchers, or the researcher's propensity for thought leadership as revealed by peer citations. As a variant of the  $p$ -index that is more tailored to consumer researchers, we also propose the PIM5, which is the average  $PR_j$  of the researcher's top five marketing publications only.

Although admittedly simple, the  $p$ -index, whether in its basic PI form or its PIM5 variant, possesses many of the properties that one would want from a scholarship metric: It is simple, transparent, objective, easy to calculate, not easy to game, not overly sensitive to a single article, and comparable across scholars of different seniority who publish across a wide variety of journals. In addition, as shall be shown, the  $p$ -index has a well-behaved, symmetric, quasi-normal distribution (app. K), and it is largely orthogonal to the researcher's sheer productivity, total number of citations, and HI, thus conveying information over and above these previously discussed metrics. As will be shown below, provided that the researcher has a sufficient record of publications, the  $p$ -index is internally consistent and has good predictive validity as an indicator of scholarship. However, the metric may not be as informative when the number of publications is low, in which case focusing on individual article-level  $PR_j$ 's may be preferable.

### Internal Consistency and Reliability of the $p$ -Index

To verify that the  $p$ -index indeed captures a stable characteristic of researchers and is not merely an aggregation of mostly chance effects, we examined the extent to which random sets of each researcher's articles have  $PR_j$  that are internally consistent. For every researcher with at least  $X$  publications published prior to 2020 (to focus on more stable citation data), we drew 5,000 random sets of  $X$  articles and computed the internal consistency of these publications'  $PR_j$  using Cronbach's  $\alpha$ . The size of these random sets ( $X$ ) was varied from 5 to 20 for sensitivity analysis. As summarized in app. H, the results confirm that there is substantial internal consistency in the relative citation rank ( $PR_j$ ) of consumer researchers' articles. As would be expected, the internal consistency increases with the number of articles sampled: With as few as 5 articles, the average Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.33; with 10 articles, the average  $\alpha$  is 0.50; with 15 articles, the average  $\alpha$  is 0.61; and with 20 articles, the average  $\alpha$  reaches a plateau of 0.68. Therefore, if a researcher has a sufficient number of publications (say, 15 articles), one can be reasonably confident that his or her PI reflects something stable and systematic about the nature of his or her work. A researcher whose articles tend to rank relatively high (or low) in terms of citations in one journal is likely to have other articles that

rank relatively high (or low) in other journals—at least among editorial board members of *JCR* and *JCP*. (As detailed in app. N, we also observed substantial—but lower—internal consistency with 50 other consumer researchers who were randomly selected.)

As a more substantive test of the reliability of the  $p$ -index, we additionally examined whether the  $p$ -index of a researcher's first few articles is predictive of the  $p$ -index of the next few articles. Among researchers with 10 or more articles, the  $p$ -index of the first five articles had a correlation of  $r = 0.43$  with the  $p$ -index of the next five articles, whereas among researchers with 20 or more articles, the  $p$ -index of the first 10 articles had a correlation of  $r = 0.55$  with the  $p$ -index of the next 10 articles (app. I). This finding is further evidence that the  $p$ -index is a reliable indicator of a trait-like characteristic of researchers. The  $p$ -index of a researcher's early record of publications is substantially predictive of the relative citation performance of his or her subsequent publications, which is valuable information for evaluating the likely trajectory of a researcher's impact (e.g., in promotion decisions). We additionally found that the  $p$ -index of researchers' top marketing publications (PIM5) is strongly correlated with the  $p$ -index of their publications outside of marketing (e.g., psychology or economics,  $r = 0.45$ ), which further supports the notion that the  $p$ -index reflects something fundamental about researchers' ability to generate interest in their work.

### Distribution of the $p$ -Index across Consumer Scholars

Table 4 provides the PI and PIM5 statistics for all 340 ERB members, based on publications prior to 2020 (as more recent publications may have unstable  $PR_j$ ). Similar tables broken down by seniority can be found in app. J. As with the other metrics, we also computed an authorship-adjusted version, weighing each article's  $PR_j$  by the authorship-credit weights discussed earlier ( $\frac{2(n-a+1)}{n(n+1)}$ ), then aggregating the weighted  $PR_j$  across the researcher's articles. The authorship-adjusted versions of the  $p$ -index are denoted OWPI and OWPIM5. As shown in app. K, unlike other scholarship metrics discussed so far,  $p$ -index scores have symmetric, normal-like distributions (skewness  $\approx 0$ ; Kolmogorov–Smirnov  $D = 0.05$  or less), which makes them easy to interpret. Moreover,  $p$ -index measures are only weakly correlated with productivity measures such as the total number of publications (QT) and the number of top marketing publications (QM5) (largest  $r = 0.11$ ; table 3 and app. F and G). Therefore, unlike total citation measures (e.g., CT, CM5) or the HI,  $p$ -index scores provide information that is not confounded with the sheer productivity of the researcher.

Based on the researchers' total set of publications, the median  $p$ -index was 51.1% when unadjusted for authorship (PI), and 50.3% when adjusted for authorship (OWPI).



TABLE 4

JCR/JCPERB MEMBERS' P-INDEX STATISTICS (N= 340) AND PEER ESTEEM SCORES (N= 157)

Statistics	<i>p</i> -index (PI)	Authorship-adjusted <i>p</i> -index (OWPI)	<i>p</i> -index of top marketing publications (PIM5)	Authorship-adjusted <i>p</i> -index of top marketing publications (OWPIM5)	Frequency of mentions in 2020 esteem survey
Mean	51.2	50.9	53.8	53.8	1.5
SD	13.9	14.7	17.0	17.8	4.0
Skewness	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	6.0
Max	97.0	97.0	98.6	98.6	46.0
0.90	69.1	70.6	76.8	77.3	4.0
0.75	60.4	61.1	65.9	66.6	1.0
0.50	51.1	50.3	52.9	53.4	0.0
0.25	42.0	40.3	43.2	42.1	0.0
0.10	33.1	31.9	32.1	30.9	0.0
Min	14.0	15.1	4.2	4.2	0.0

Top 15 of 191 scholars with 15+ total publications				Top 15 of 145 scholars with 10+ top marketing publications					
PI		OWPI		PIM5		OWPIM5		Esteem Survey Mentions	
Schreier, M.	81.4	Plassmann, H.	82.5	Richins, M.	83.2	Stephen, A. T.	84.0	Lynch, J.	46
Richins, M.	81.2	Schreier, M.	82.0	Stephen, A. T.	78.6	Richins, M.	83.7	Belk, R. W.	22
Plassmann, H.	80.6	Richins, M.	81.8	Thompson, C.	78.0	Batra, R.	80.3	Dahl, D. W.	22
Bhattacharya, C. B.	76.9	Kozinets, R. V.	75.5	Kozinets, R. V.	77.7	Kozinets, R. V.	79.1	Bettman, J. R.	21
Canniford, R.	74.5	Canniford, R.	74.4	Batra, R.	77.3	Rindfleisch, A.	78.9	Pham, M. T.	20
Kozinets, R. V.	74.3	Price, L.	74.2	Rindfleisch, A.	75.3	Thompson, C.	78.1	Berger, J.	16
Thompson, C.	73.5	Bhattacharya, C. B.	74.2	Price, L.	75.0	Price, L.	75.9	Janiszewski, C.	15
Batra, R.	71.5	Escalas, J. E.	73.4	Holmes, C. M.	73.5	Escalas, J. E.	75.5	Simonson, I.	13
Eckhardt, G. M.	71.5	Batra, R.	72.8	Kirmani, A.	72.4	Kirmani, A.	74.4	Rucker, D. D.	13
Arnould, E. J.	71.5	Rindfleisch, A.	72.1	Mandel, N.	72.0	Hoffman, D.	72.8	Inman, J. J.	12
Price, L.	71.0	Hoffman, D.	71.3	Peck, J.	70.7	Berger, J.	72.4	Alba, J. W.	11
Campbell, M. C.	71.0	Thompson, C.	71.2	Campbell, M. C.	70.3	Peck, J.	72.0	Lehmann, D. R.	10
Kirmani, A.	70.0	Campbell, M. C.	71.1	Escalas, J. E.	70.1	Rucker, D. D.	71.7	Thompson, C.	9
Wong, N.	69.9	Kirmani, A.	70.7	Hoffman, D.	70.0	Campbell, M. C.	70.6	Schwarz, N.	8
Landwehr, J.	68.5	Stephen, A. T.	69.0	Pauwels, K.	69.5	Holmes, C. M.	70.2	Kahn, B. Chandon, P.	8

Therefore, on average, across all journals where they publish, JCR/JCP board members do not consistently outperform or underperform other authors in terms of citations. However, when only articles published in top marketing journals are considered, JCR/JCP board members do tend to outperform other authors who publish in the same journals. The median PIM5 was 52.9% and the median OWPIM5 was 53.4%, both significantly greater than 50% at  $p < .001$ . This is not surprising given that these editorial board members were presumably selected based on their marketing and consumer research credentials.

More informative is the substantial variance that this selective sample of consumer researchers exhibits in terms of their *p*-index scores (SD varying between 13.9% and 17.8%). Across the entire sample, the top quartile of researchers has *p*-indexes of 60–66% and higher, depending on the measure, whereas the bottom quartile has *p*-indexes of 40–43% and lower.

Table 4 identifies the top 15 scorers for the various *p*-index measures. Given that a minimum number of articles is required for reliable *p*-index scores, the top scorers for the all-publication indexes (PI, OWPI) were

identified from researchers with at least 15 publications in total ( $N = 193$ ), whereas the top scorers for the top marketing-publication indexes (PIM5, OWPIM5) were identified from researchers with at least 10 top marketing publications ( $N = 145$ ). The top *p*-index scorers are associated with a broad variety of research traditions and substantive areas, including consumer measurement (M. Richins), corporate responsibility and sustainability (C.B. Bhattacharya), decision neuroscience (H. Plassmann), consumer culture theory (CCT) (E. Arnould, R. Kozinets, C. Thompson, L. Price), social media marketing (A. Stephen), marketplace technology (D. Hoffman), and sensory marketing (J. Peck), among others. The common trait shared by these high-*p*-index scholars appears to be a critical mass of publications with a distinct methodological or substantive emphasis that they have become strongly associated with.

### Predictive Validity of the *p*-Index

The *p*-index (and its variants) is not meant to be interpreted in isolation as an all-encompassing single measure of scholarship. Instead, the index is meant to provide useful

impact-related information that complements measures of productivity such as the number of A's. As a *complementary* indicator of scholarship beyond productivity, the *p*-index may be more useful than standard measures of impact such as the total number of citations or the HI, which are too highly correlated with the sheer number of publications. To test the relative informativeness of the *p*-index, we examined how well different combinations of the metrics reported in tables 1, 2, and 4 predict the frequency with which researchers were mentioned among those whose work is admired by other consumer scholars, which is a measure of peer esteem (last column of table 4). We performed a series of negative binomial regressions across all researchers ( $N = 340$ ), modeling peer esteem scores as a function of different pairs of predictors, controlling for seniority. Within each pair of predictors, one was a measure of productivity, QT or QM5, and the other was one of the measures of impact considered here (CT, CM5, HI, PI, PIM5). As summarized in app. L, the results show a better overall model fit (lower Bayesian information criterion [BIC] values) when the researcher's productivity is operationalized as the number of top marketing publications (QM5) rather than as the total number of publications (QT; models 1A–3A vs. models 1B–3B). More importantly, when combined with the number of top marketing publications (QM5), the *p*-index of the top marketing publications (PIM5;  $\chi^2 = 7.44$ ,  $p = .006$ ) is a somewhat stronger predictor than the total number of citations garnered by these publications (CM5;  $\chi^2 = 5.26$ ,  $p = .022$ ) or the researcher's HI (HI;  $\chi^2 = 4.37$ ,  $p = .037$ ; model 3B vs. models 1B and 2B). Furthermore, in regression models in which, in addition to QM5, PIM5 is entered in *conjunction* with CM5 (model 4) or with HI (model 5), PIM5 tends to be a more reliable predictor of the peer esteem scores. These results support the predictive validity of the *p*-index as a complementary measure of scholarship besides productivity, especially when focused on top marketing publications.

### Quadrant Analysis of Productivity versus Thought Leadership

The preceding results suggest that it is useful to evaluate consumer researchers along two complementary dimensions that are largely independent: (a) the researcher's productivity in terms of top marketing publications (the number of A's; here QM5) and (b) the *p*-index of these top marketing publications (PIM5). Figure 1 shows how the 251 JCR/JCP editorial board members with at least five top marketing publications before 2020 are distributed along these two complementary dimensions (see Baumgartner 2010, for a conceptually similar figure). (We use a cutoff of five top marketing publications to strike a balance between a comprehensive coverage of the sample and ensuring that the PIM5 scores are relatively stable. See

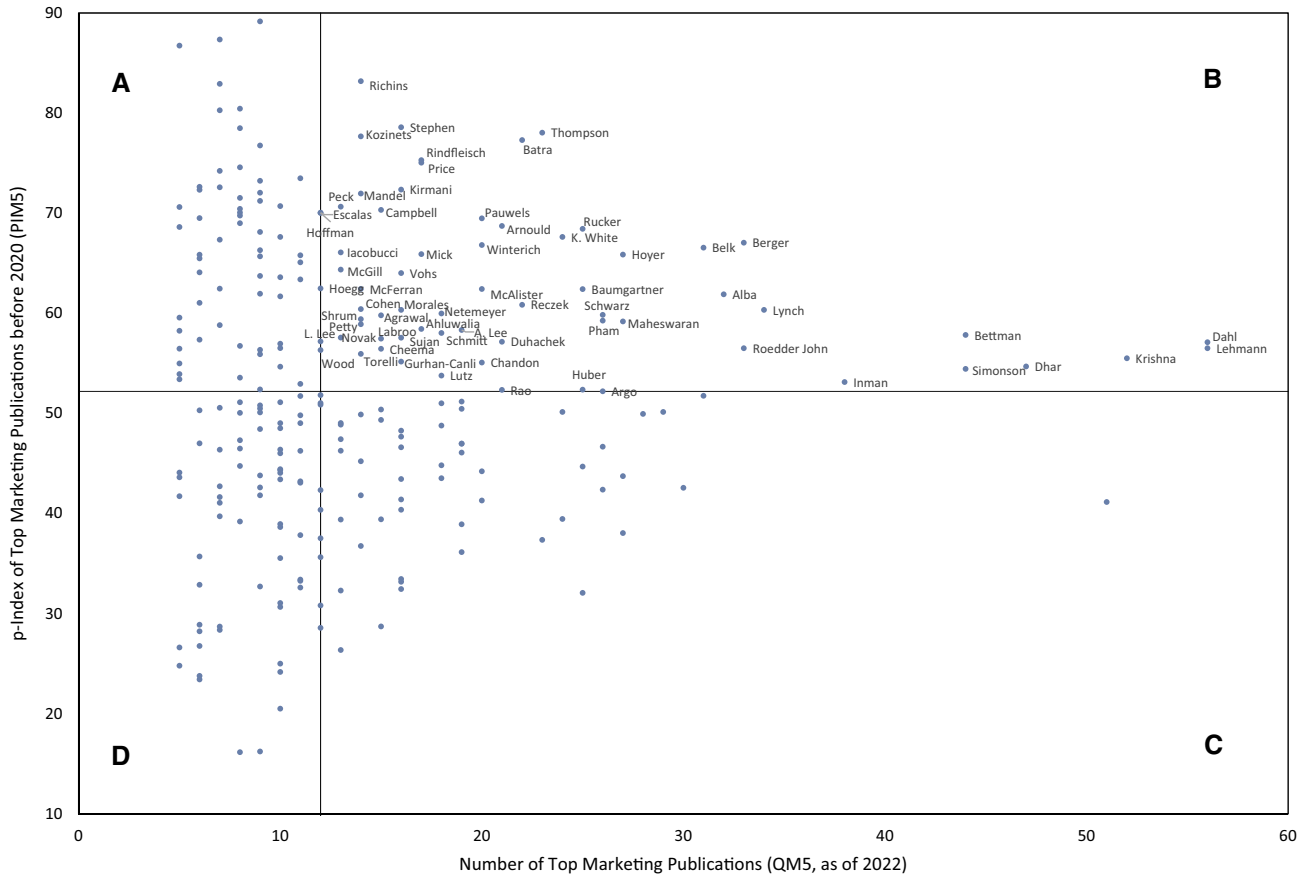
app. M for an equivalent chart with scores adjusted for authorship.) As one would expect, there is more variability in *p*-indexes among researchers with fewer publications than among those with more publications, as extreme averages become less likely when the number of observations increases. More importantly, the figure clearly shows that consumer researchers' ability to publish in top marketing journals is largely independent of their ability to consistently attract scholarly interest in these publications. In other words, research productivity and thought leadership do not necessarily go hand in hand in consumer research.

Markers for the medians on both dimensions are included, thus identifying four quadrants. Quadrant A contains researchers with a relatively limited number of top marketing publications thus far, but whose publications seem to generate a high level of interest (with the caveat that their *p*-indexes are based on a more limited number of articles). This set of researchers, which includes a high concentration of CCT researchers, could be seen as "potential thought leaders," if they are able to sustain a strong interest in their body of work as their number of top marketing publications increases. By contrast, quadrant C consists of researchers who have been very successful in terms of publishing in top marketing journals, but whose publications generally fail to attract significant interest. While researchers in this quadrant may have impressive resumé's in terms of number of A's, many of them have PIM5 scores in the bottom quartile of the 251 researchers compared in this analysis. With a high productivity but consistent inability to generate much interest in their publications, such researchers might be characterized as "productive incrementalists." An examination of these researchers' CVs reveals a high proportion of information-processing researchers with no well-defined substantive areas of interest and whose questions tend to be narrow and disconnected from important consumption phenomena.

Quadrant D encapsulates researchers whose limited number of top marketing publications thus far have gained relatively little traction. These researchers might be characterized as "likely incrementalists," unless their future publications show a dramatic improvement in citation impact. Researchers in quadrant B have the most compelling profile: their many top marketing publications tend to generate relatively strong scholarly interest. This select set of scholars is identified by name. They could be viewed as "established thought leaders." Of the 36 scholars represented in the figure who received a major career award in consumer research as of July 2023 (ACR Fellow, SCP Fellow, SCP Distinguished Scientific Contribution), 26 (73%) are in the "established thought leaders" quadrant, compared to eight (21.6%) in the "productive incrementalists" quadrant, none in the "potential leaders" quadrant, and two in the "likely incrementalists" quadrant ( $\chi^2(3) = 50.5$ ,  $\phi = 0.45$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). This result adds face

FIGURE 1

PRODUCTIVITY VERSUS *P*-INDEX OF *JCR/JCP* BOARD MEMBERS WITH 5+ TOP MARKETING PUBLICATIONS BEFORE 2020 ( $N = 251$ )



validity to this quadrant analysis and further supports the diagnosticity of the *p*-index.

### CONCLUSIONS

On the 50th anniversary of *JCR*'s founding, as we consider the future of consumer research, it is important to revisit how we evaluate scholarship in our growing field. Too much of our emphasis is on the mere counting of the number of A's on researchers' CV, thus tacitly encouraging sheer productivity, and not enough is on the recognition and promotion of actual impact. It is rather telling that, of the 340 scholars examined in our study, only 24 (7.1%) provided any indication of the level of citation received by their research in their publicly available CVs. Moving forward, there should be greater overall transparency as to how consumer scholars balance the sheer quantity of their publications with accepted indicators of scholarly impact. Our analyses contribute to this transparency by reporting detailed statistics on how an important sample of consumer

researchers, the primary gatekeepers of the field, is distributed along a variety of scholarship metrics. Unlike other bibliometric analyses, which often focus on "top performers" along particular metrics, our analyses' detailed descriptive statistics cover the *full* distribution of scholars in our broad sample. For this reason, the statistics offer objective benchmarks for evaluating not just the researchers in our sample but other researchers as well. For example, if a given researcher has total citations, or an HI, that would place him or her near the top quartile of the distribution of *JCR/JCP* editorial board members, this information would be useful for a faculty promotion committee. The benchmarks provided here may also be useful to academics putting together their promotion dossier, to editors assembling their editorial boards, to career award selection committees, and more generally, to any consumer researchers interested in assessing their own record of scholarship and that of others.

Besides offering extensive benchmarks for the evaluation of scholarship in consumer research, our findings

provide insights into how such benchmarks should be interpreted. Results suggest that the most common measures of impact—the total number of citations and the HI—may not provide that much incremental information over and above the sheer number of publications because these measures are highly correlated (i.e., confounded) with the sheer number of publications (i.e., productivity). This empirical finding demonstrates the value of an impact-related metric such as the *p*-index that is less sensitive to the sheer productivity of the researcher and hence genuinely provides complementary information over and above the number of A's that researchers have. Given a minimum number of publications, the *p*-index is (a) internally consistent, (b) predictive of the relative citation impact of subsequent publications, and (c) in our study, predictive of the degree of esteem that consumer scholars enjoy from their peers when combined with the number of top marketing publications. This index can be viewed as an indicator of a researcher's propensity for thought leadership.

Through the *p*-index, our findings reveal that productivity and thought leadership do not necessarily go hand in hand among consumer scholars. While some, who could be seen as established thought leaders, combine high productivity with a consistent ability to generate substantial interest in their work, others with impressive publication records produce research that routinely fails to generate much interest and could be regarded as more incremental. Such low *p*-indexes are more common among traditional information-processing researchers with no well-defined substantive areas of interest. It is the *combination* of high productivity in top marketing journals *with* thought leadership—not productivity alone—that seems to guide consumer scholars' esteem for other scholars and the likelihood that scholars will receive major career awards. If, as we hope, the *p*-index becomes widely accepted in the academic community, its predictive validity will further increase.

To avoid a pattern of incrementalism that characterizes much of the research published in our journals, consumer researchers are encouraged to focus on more important substantive issues and expand their theoretical toolkit beyond standard information processing theory. In addition, researchers and reviewers should beware of so-called “theories of studies,” which refer to technically competent but artificial demonstrations of psychological phenomena that are devoid of substantive relevance (Pham 2013). Such studies typically have very limited impact—justifiably so. As a caveat, one should keep in mind that the *p*-index also depends on the mixture of papers in a researcher's portfolio. A high proportion of review articles, methodological overviews, or CCT papers, all of which tend to be more highly cited, will naturally elevate a researcher's *p*-index.

While the *p*-index is computed across a researcher's entire set of publications, or across their top marketing publications, there are alternative ways of using the percentile rank scores (PR<sub>j</sub>) that are the basis of the index. One way is to focus on the PR<sub>j</sub> at the individual paper level. Indeed, compared to raw citation counts, PR<sub>j</sub> have several desirable properties: they have an intuitive scale between 0 and 1; and they can be compared across papers from different journals and of different ages. Focusing on individual PR<sub>j</sub>'s makes sense when evaluating individual articles or when a researcher's number of publications is limited. Another approach (suggested by a reviewer) is to record only the top five PR<sub>j</sub>'s that a researcher has for their A-level publications, based on the rationale that researchers' reputations are mostly driven by their best papers, not their entire set of publications. Such a metric would indeed provide useful information. However, as explained in app. N, it would be more akin to the HI and would tend to favor researchers who publish a lot (by virtue of a selection effect). Regardless, we hope that the present article will prompt a more widespread reporting and consideration of citation impact in evaluating consumer scholarship. Over time, this practice will encourage a more selective pursuit of research with greater potential for impact and greater substantive relevance—research that *JCR* and other major journals will happily publish, and more stakeholders would be likely to read.

## DATA COLLECTION STATEMENT

The data were collected online from the WoS between January and March 2022, with some additional data collected in January and February 2023. Most of the data were collected by Alisa Yin hao Wu (AYW), Danqi Wang (DW), and several research assistants working under AYW's supervision. The peer esteem survey data were collected in March 2020 by Michel Tuan Pham (MTP) as part of a survey on perceptions of the merits of preregistration. The supplemental non-ERB members ( $N = 50$ ) data and the citation data of the 200 *JCR* articles mentioned in web appendix N were collected by DW in July–August 2022. Many of the data analyses were performed by AYW under MTP's direction, with MTP performing additional analyses. Preliminary analyses were performed by DW based on an earlier dataset, as part of a master's thesis completed at Columbia University under MTP's direction. All three authors have access to all the data, which are stored in a shared Dropbox folder. The primary, scholar-level dataset is publicly available on OSF at <https://osf.io/96ayz/>, whereas the article-level dataset on which the scholar-level dataset is based is available upon request at <https://osf.io/98my4/>.



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