

## IMPACT ON AND OF THE JOURNAL OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, DISSATISFACTION, AND COMPLAINING BEHAVIOR: A 30-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

On the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first publication, this article focuses on the people and practices that have shaped the Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior. It also focuses on the influence that the journal has had on our understanding of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The article suggests that the journal has not only developed knowledge about how consumer satisfaction is created, dissatisfaction avoided; it has also applied that understanding to enhance the value of the journal itself.

### INTRODUCTION

In this volume of the *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior* (JCSDCB), the journal celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> year of publication. Over the years, several retrospective and prospective articles have commented on the history or future direction of the JCSDCB and the research contained therein (e.g., Dahl and Peltier 2015; Davidow 2012; Hunt 1993; Perkins 2012a and 2012b; Swan and Trawick 1993; Woodruff 1993). While the reviews of past research and future directions have been very helpful, these articles have not focused primarily on the figures who have shaped the JCSDCB or on the impact of the JCSDCB on the marketing discipline. This article focuses on those two themes, first briefly recalling the figures who have most shaped the journal, then at somewhat more length, tracking how the journal has influenced consumer research. This article

also examines changes made by the JCSDCB to increase consumer satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction.

### INFLUENCES ON THE JCSDCB

A journal tends to be influenced by four main groups: editors, reviewers, authors, and audience. Interactions between these four groups will typically determine the character of a research journal. In general, the single biggest influence on a journal at any given time is the editor. In addition to making final calls on what articles will be published, editors usually heavily shape the review process by selecting the reviewers to whom each manuscript is sent for review.

What is true in general about the importance of editors is still more true of H. Keith Hunt of Brigham Young University who, with Ralph L Day of Indiana University, played a pivotal role in founding the JCSDCB. As the Executive Secretary for the Association for Consumer Research and, in effect, the publisher of *Advances in Consumer Research*, Hunt had deep experience in organizing conferences and supervising the publication of academic work. He was thus exceptionally well qualified to organize this new, recurring conference focused on the study of consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior and to carry out the work incident to publishing a new academic journal, the JCSDCB.

The antecedent of the journal was a biennial conference, organized by Hunt and Day, which focused on consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The conference began in 1977. The first volume of the

JCSDCB was published in 1988, with Hunt and Day as co-editors and Hunt as the managing editor. Hunt and Day were listed as co-editors of the journal for its first twelve volumes. Hunt then edited the next five volumes, 13 – 17, by himself. Hunt has been listed on all subsequent volumes of the journal as editor emeritus.

Hunt was notable for conscientiousness, good humor, and the encouragement he gave to young scholars entering the discipline. The authors of this article personally witnessed his generous encouragement, having been invited by Hunt while still graduate students to submit an article to the conference. Because of their unduly narrow conception of the scope of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, the authors had not planned to submit their article to the conference and the JCSDCB. But with Hunt's encouragement, they did. The article was accepted, published in the JCSDCB, and became their first professional publication. It is included below on the Table 5 list of most cited JCSDCB articles. Upon assuming sole responsibility for editing the JCSDCB in 2000, Hunt made changes in editorial practice that significantly enhanced product quality and, presumably, consumer satisfaction. Those changes are discussed below.

For Volume 18 published in 2005, Steven A. Goodwin of Illinois State University assumed editorship of the journal. Goodwin had served on the editorial review board for seven years prior to becoming editor. Goodwin recruited two associate editors, Steven A. Taylor, also of Illinois State University, and Kevin G. Celuch, of the University of Southern Indiana. Taylor and Celuch had each served on the editorial review board for eight years prior to becoming associate editors, so the new editorial team had considerable experience with the JCSDCB review process.

Starting with Volume 27, published in 2014, Gillian S. Naylor of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, became editor of the JCSDCB. Steven A. Taylor continued in his role as associate editor and was joined in that role by Moshe Davidow of Technion, the Israel Institute of Technology. Naylor had nine years of experience as a member of the editorial board when she became editor. Taylor had served for fifteen years as a member of the editorial review board or as associate editor. Davidow had eight years of experience on the review board when he became associate editor. Both Hunt and Goodwin are now listed on each volume as emeritus editors.

As the recruitment of all editors and associate editors since Hunt and Day indicates, the editorial review board has been a very important source of demonstrated editing talent. And, of course, the review board plays its own independent role in determining what articles are published in the journal. During the first 29 years of the JCSDCB, 112 scholars served as members of the review board. The number of review board members varied dramatically across volumes during that time. For the first three volumes, there were just three review board members: Marsha Richins, John E. Swan, and Robert A Westbrook. Richins retired from the board after the publication of Volume 6. Swan continued on the board through the publication of Volume 13. Westbrook served on the editorial review board for 26 years. As Table 1 indicates, his tenure on the board and affiliation with the journal exceeds that of all other scholars by a wide margin.

The average term of service on the board has been 6.3 years. At its largest in 1999, the editorial review board had 52 members. The average number of review board members during the 29 years of the journal's existence has been 24.3. The

standard deviation for members of the board has been 17.4. In the early years and again, recently, the board has been much smaller than it was between 1997 (when it was increased from 6 to 50 members) and 2014 when it had 21 members. The board dropped to 9 and 10 members for the most recent two volumes.

While the influence of the review board as a whole has been more or less constant across time, the influence of individual board members has fluctuated greatly. During the JCSDCB's first two years when it had only three board members and published 18 articles per year, each board member would have reviewed an average of 12 published articles per year, assuming two reviewers per article. During the JCSDCB's first nine years, board members reviewed an average of 9.21

published articles per year. When the editorial review board was greatly expanded in 1997 for Volume 10, the number of published articles reviewed by each reviewer dramatically declined. Articles reviewed per board member bottomed out in Volume 13. That year, the review board had expanded to 51 members and the journal published only six articles, so each board member would have reviewed on average only .24 published articles. During the past three years, the number of published articles reviewed per board member has again increased to 1.3 published articles per year. Of course, board members provide an important service when they review articles that are not published in the journal. That work is not reflected in this summary.

Board members with 10 or more years of service are listed in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**

<b>Editorial Review Board Years of Service</b>			
Robert A. Westbrook	26	Doug Grisaffe	12
Kevin G Celuch	18	Diane M. Halstead	12
Dennis E. Garrett	18	Anand Kumar	12
Steve Taylor	18	Dong Hwan Lee	12
Jeff Blodgett	16	Pratibha A. Dabholkar	11
Douglas Hausknecht	16	Moshe Davidow	11
Newell D. Wright	15	Robert East	11
Marianne Bickle	14	Chickery J. Kasouf	11
James H. Drew	14	Richard Spreng	11
Sally K. Francis	14	Gary Hunter	10
David Aron	13	Mark Slama	10
Barry Babin	13	Terrell G. Williams	10
John E. Swan	13		

**TABLE 2**

<b>Author and Articles</b>			
ND Wright	11	LW Johnson	6
KG Celuch	10	G Naylor	6
HK Hunt	10	RB Woodruff	6
RA Spreng	10	JG Blodgett	5
DS Perkins	9	J Bloemer	5
SA Taylor	9	CC Caughey	5
SK Francis	8	J Kolodinsky	5
DE Garrett	7	BL Parry	5
V Larsen	7	CR Payne	5
RW Olshavsky	7	M Davidow	4
JE Swan	7	D Grisaffe	4
D Aron	6	D Hausknecht	4
D Halstead	6	JM Hogarth	4
J Huefner	6	SS Tax	4

Another key group which influences the character of a journal is the authors who publish in it. If we focus on how authors affect the journal (as opposed to how they affect the discipline), the key indicator of their influence is the number of articles each author has published in the journal. As of volume 29, the JCSDCB has published 413 articles. The authors listed in Table 2 have 191 authorships among them. There are, of course, a number of co-authorships, so the table does not indicate authorship of 191 of the 413 articles. But it does indicate that these authors have had a very substantial influence on the character of the journal.

This author table underscores the influence that the editors of the JCSDCB and members of the review board have had. Having founded the journal and edited 56% of the volumes published to date, by almost any measure Keith Hunt has more strongly influenced the JCSDCB than any other single person. Table 2 reveals another dimension of his influence: publication of 10

articles in the journal. Associate editor Celuch has likewise published 10 articles. Associate editor Taylor has published nine, editor Naylor six, and associate editor Davidow has published four articles. Among the other most prolific authors in the JCSDCB reported in Table 2, many also contributed as members of the editorial review board, serving for at least 10 years as reported in Table 1, e.g., ND Wright, RA Spreng, SK Francis, DE Garrett, JE Swan, D Aron, D Halstead, JG Blodgett, D Grisaffe, and D Hausknecht. Another index of the contribution of the editorial review board is the sixteen names that appear both in Table 1, reflecting 10 or more years of service on the editorial review board, and Table 4, the most cited authors who have published in the JCSDCB. Likewise, nine board members from Table 1 and two editors, Hunt and Goodwin, published an article listed in Table 5, the most cited articles published by the JCSDCB.

### *Influence on Consumer Research*

The influence of a journal on its discipline is most saliently reflected by how much it is cited by researchers in the field. In this section of the paper, we review citations of the JCSDCB to assess its influence. Our study addresses a deficit created by the failure of *Journal Citation Reports* to track JCSDCB citations. We also look at the influence of the journal, of individual volumes of the journal, individual authors, and particular articles.

### **METHODOLOGY**

We used Harzing's *Publish or Perish* (PoP) software (version 5) for this analysis. PoP software retrieves and analyzes academic citations generated by Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic Search. The software program has demonstrated longitudinal stability (Harzing 2013) and is particularly well suited for citation analyses in the various business disciplines (Harzing 2017) because most business journals are published in English and are indexed by Google Scholar. In addition to PoP, we made extensive use of our library of the 29 volumes of the JCSDCB that have been published to date to verify the data produced by PoP.

After running PoP on the journal title, we downloaded the raw data into spreadsheets for further analysis (on 20 January, 2017) to give us a snapshot of the impact of the journal up to that date. There were some errors in the data collated by Google Scholar and PoP (e.g., misspelled names, double-counted entries, truncated lists of authors). We corrected errors as we discovered them in the data. It is likely, however, that some errors remain. We report the data in various tables below.

### **RESULTS**

*Volumes.* Table 3 contains the citation history of the JCSDCB as measured by our methods. Table 3 reports the volume, year of publication, number of Articles, and number of citations. The last two columns, Vol/Cites/Year and Art/Cites/Year, are described below. Unsurprisingly, articles in volume 1, which have been available for 29 years, are more heavily cited (624 citations) than articles in volume 29, which had just been published when these data were collected (0 citations). It takes some time after publication for articles to be read and cited and for the articles that cite them to be reviewed and published.

To account, while assessing their influence, for the different lengths of time that volumes have been available, we calculated the average number of times a volume has been cited each year since its publication by dividing total citations per volume by years since publication. This value is reported as Volume Citations per Year (VCY). And since volumes differ dramatically in the number of articles they contain, from 5 to 28 per volume, we also calculated the article citations per year by dividing total citations by years since publication and by number of articles per volume. This Article Citations per Year (ACY) value reports the average number of times each article in that volume was cited each year since publication.

As noted above, unsurprisingly, there is a clear trend in the data such that older articles are cited more frequently than newer articles. Less predictably, the number of articles published in a volume had no significant effect on the VCY, i.e., publishing more articles did not significantly increase the number of times that a journal volume was cited. To evaluate this relationship, we calculated the correlation between number of articles and the VCY.

TABLE 3

Volume	Year	Articles	Cites	Vol/Cites/Year	Art/Cites/Year
1	1988	18	624	21.52	1.195
2	1989	18	1213	43.32	2.407
3	1990	17	536	19.85	1.168
4	1991	23	469	18.04	0.784
5	1992	22	1354	54.16	2.462
6	1993	24	1116	46.50	1.938
7	1994	28	425	18.48	0.660
8	1995	25	280	12.73	0.509
9	1996	24	345	16.43	0.685
10	1997	16	270	13.50	0.844
11	1998	22	331	17.42	0.792
12	1999	19	323	17.94	0.944
13	2000	6	542	31.88	5.314
14	2001	13	1040	65.00	5.000
15	2002	11	899	59.93	5.448
16	2003	19	945	67.50	3.553
17	2004	13	481	37.00	2.846
18	2005	5	219	18.25	3.650
19	2006	9	291	26.45	2.939
20	2007	7	172	17.20	2.457
21	2008	8	109	12.11	1.514
22	2009	7	78	9.75	1.393
23	2010	8	69	9.86	1.232
24	2011	6	74	12.33	2.056
25	2012	13	72	14.40	1.108
26	2013	8	61	15.25	1.906
27	2014	10	20	6.67	0.667
28	2015	7	1	0.50	0.071
29	2016	7	0	0.00	0.000

The relationship was not significant ( $R = .18$ ,  $p = .369$ ). In doing this calculation, we excluded the two most recent volumes since, given the review and publication cycle for new articles, those articles have not had sufficient time to be read and cited by articles that are, in turn, reviewed and published.

While there was no relationship between number of articles and the overall average annual citations for that volume, there was a strong relationship between the number of articles in a volume and the average annual citations of each article. To

evaluate this relationship, we calculated the correlation between number of articles in a volume and the ACY. This relationship was significant ( $R = -.49$ ,  $p = .009$ ).

This correlation seems to reflect a move to quality in the journal's editorial policy. From the first volume of the journal in 1988 to the twelfth volume in 1999, the journal averaged 21.3 articles per volume. Clearly reflecting a change in editorial policy, the number of articles published dropped dramatically from 1999 (19) to 2000 (6). From 2000 to the present, the journal has averaged 9.2 articles per volume,

less than half the number that were published prior to 2000. This change in policy led to a significant increase in the number of citations per articles per year since publication (Vol 1-12  $\mu = 1.25$ , Vol 13-27  $\mu = 3.05$ ,  $t = 3.63$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Apparently, the contribution per article in the JCSDCB has dramatically increased since the turn of the century. This change in editorial policy has consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction implications that will be discussed below.

The most influential volumes of the JCSDCB vary depending on whether the influence of the volume is time weighted. If not time weighted, the top five most influential volumes are 5 (1992), 2 (1989), 6 (1993), 14 (2001), and 16 (2003). If weighted for time since publication, the top five most influential volumes are 16 (2003), 14 (2001), 15 (2002), 5 (1992), and 6 (1993).

#### *Authors*

Approximately 474 researchers have authored or co-authored research that has appeared in the JCSDCB since its inception. Articles from the JCSDCB have been cited a total of 12,359 times from 1988 to 2017, about 26 citations per published author. As is to be expected, not all researchers have had the same impact on satisfaction/dissatisfaction research. A number of researchers have appeared in the JCSDCB only one time, and yet their impact has been quite substantial as measured by the number of citations of their work. For example, the second most cited paper in the JCSDCB is Bei and Chiao's (2001) article that developed an integrated model of factors impacting customer loyalty. Neither author published in the JCSDCB before or since the publication of that article. Though he published just two articles in the JCSDCB, Richard L. Oliver is at the top of the citation list, with 957 citations. In Table

4, the influence of individual authors, judging from citations of their work, is reported, along with number of JCSDCB articles each author has published. The table includes only those authors who have been cited at least 100 times. The relationship between number of articles published and number of citations is not significant ( $R = .061$ ,  $p = .662$ ).

#### *Articles*

As noted above, between 1989 and 2016, a total of 413 articles were published in the JCSDCB. One measure of those articles' influence is the H-Index developed by Hirsch (2005). This index identifies the point at which the number of articles and the number of citations converge. For articles published in the JCSDCB, the H-Index score is 53. This means that there have been 53 articles published in the JCSDCB that have been cited at least 53 times. The 54<sup>th</sup> article in the list of most cited JCSDCB articles has fewer than 54 citations. Table 5 lists all articles that have at least 100 citations, as of 20 January, 2017.

In total, the 413 articles in the JCSDCB to date have been cited 12,520 times, an average of about 30 citations per article. Of that total, 21 articles have not been cited at all. Most of these uncited articles are from later volumes, Volume 25 (2012) onward. However, three non-cited articles were from 1996 and three were from 1998. Twenty-four articles (approximately 6%) were cited only once. In total, 125 articles (approximately 30%) were cited fewer than five times.

#### *Audience.*

Along with editors, review board members, and authors, the audience of a journal has an effect on the journal and its reputation. Since academic journals are typically purchased by university libraries and are read in the library or on its website, direct observation

of who has read the JCSDCB and other journals is not possible. We can, nevertheless, gain some idea about who reads the journal by looking at where and how often articles from the journal are cited in the JCSDCB and elsewhere. Almost half, 40.1%, of the citations of JCSDCB articles appear in the JCSDCB. So it is clear that an important part of the journal's audience is scholars who have a strong interest in consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior and who publish in the JCSDCB. But the journal has a wider

audience as well. Table 6 contains a list of other journals where JCSDCB articles have been cited six or more times. Citations in those journals represent the direct influence of the JCSDCB. Also reported in the table is the average number of times each article that cites the JCSDCB was itself cited. These numbers indicate the indirect influence of the JCSDCB. It is apparent in this table that the JCSDCB has had an especially large impact on the various branches of services marketing.

**TABLE 4**  
**TOP CITED AUTHORS WITH NUMBER OF ARTICLES**

Cites	Authors	Articles		Cites	Author	Articles
957	RL Oliver	2		212	DW Schumann	3
693	J Bloemer	5		206	PG Patterson	3
547	D Halstead	6		204	SS Tax	4
496	LT Bei	1		197	C Goodwin	2
496	YC Chiao	1		189	PA Dabholkar	2
436	RW Olshavsky	7		176	I Ross	1
432	HK Hunt	10		174	DS Clemons	2
398	TJ Page	2		173	ND Wright	11
383	C Leavitt	1		164	A Kumar	2
383	S Erevelles	1		164	V Larsen	7
367	RA Spreng	10		147	J Kolodinsky	5
360	J Huefner	6		144	M Chandrashekar	2
347	E Day	2		137	G Hunter	3
328	JG Blodgett	5		131	G Naylor	6
317	RB Woodruff	6		128	R Sanchez-Fernandez	1
294	ER Cadotte	1		127	AL Dixon	1
294	N Turgeon	1		120	BL Parry	5
290	SA Taylor	9		120	CR Payne	5
289	JW Overby	1		119	JE Swan	7
289	E Lee	1		117	AR Andreason	1
277	DR Hausknecht	4		117	J Manning	1
269	M Davidow	4		107	GJ Salegna	2
266	LW Johnson	6		105	KG Celuch	10
244	RA Westbrook	3		103	T Poiesz	1
239	SF Gardial	3		103	T Strandvik	1
237	MR Crask	1		103	V Liljander	1
213	DH Granbois	1				



**TABLE 5**  
**ARTICLES WITH AT LEAST 100 CITATIONS (AS OF 20 JANUARY 2017)**

Citations	Author(s)
744	Oliver 1989
496	Bei and Chiao 2001
492	Bloemer and Odekerken-Schröder 2002
383	Erevelles and Leavitt 1992
322	Halstead and Page 1992
294	Cadotte and Turgeon 1988
289	Lee and Overby 2004
237	Day and Crask 2000
215	Davidow 2003
213	Blodgett and Granbois 1992
208	Oliver and Westbrook 1993
206	Hausknecht 1990
196	Huefner and Hunt 2000
176	Goodwin and Ross 1989
169	Patterson and Johnson 1993
162	Woodruff et. al 1991
136	Taylor and Hunter 2003
130	Halstead 2002
128	Sánchez-Fernández and Ángeles-Bonillo 2006
127	Spreng, Dixon, and Olshavsky 1993
122	Kumar, Olshavsky, and King 2001
120	Wright and Larsen 1993
117	Andreasen and Manning 1990
110	Day 2002
103	Bloemer and Poiesz 1989
103	Liljander and Strandvik 1993

### DISCUSSION

Data presented above demonstrate that the JCSDCB has contributed in important ways to our understanding of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Reflecting that contribution, the popular Australian Business Dean's Council (ABDC) journal list ranks the JCSDCB as a B journal (ABDC 2017). B journals rank in the top 35 to 65% of all journals. The JCSDCB is one of only 42 B ranked journals. Most listed journals (and all unlisted) are ranked lower.

There are indications in this article of the strategy followed to position the JCSDCB as a quality B journal.

As this article indicates, the JCSDCB is the product of a research community with many interacting parts. From one point of view, the journal can be seen as a retailer of academic research. The consumers are the audience of people who read and cite research published in the journal.

Authors produce the product. Review board members assure quality. Editors manage the product assortment. The high degree of overlap between authors, review board members, editors, and those who read and cite the JCSDCB suggests that this is an institution/community that has well implemented service dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Lusch and Vargo, 2006), integrating effectively the production and consumption of knowledge about the focal aspects of consumer behavior addressed by this journal.

The data suggest, as well, that participants in this community have not only developed but have also applied insights on

how consumer satisfaction can be increased and dissatisfaction minimized. The most notable phenomenon apparent in the data is a change in strategy that was designed to, and did, increase the quality of the service provided to JCSDCB consumers. That change in strategy was implemented between volume 12 (1999) and volume 13 (2000). Production standards were elevated and article quality increased. The result was a significant improvement in the average benefit delivered to readers, a benefit increase that is manifest in the significantly higher per article citation rate that followed the change in editorial strategy and article assortment.

**TABLE 6**  
**DIRECT AND INDIRECT CITATIONS OF JCSDCB ARTICLES IN OTHER JOURNALS**

<b>Journal</b>	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>
Journal of Services Marketing	38	248
Journal of Service Research	26	360
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	22	981
International Journal of Hospitality Management	21	154
Advances in Consumer Research	18	115
International Journal of Bank Marketing	18	251
International Journal of Service Industry Management	18	438
Book chapter	17	875
Managing Service Quality: An International Journal	17	108
European journal of Marketing	15	469
Journal of Business Research	14	295
Journal of Retailing	14	968
Journal of Marketing	11	1501
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	10	167
Psychology & Marketing	10	267
Industrial Marketing Management	9	220
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	8	118
Tourism Management	8	188
Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing	7	80
Journal of Consumer Marketing	7	165
International Journal of Consumer Studies	6	97
Journal of Business Logistics	6	1071

### LIMITATIONS

This study did not directly measure consumer satisfaction with the JCSDCB. Citations are an important, but indirect measure of reader satisfaction. More significantly, the calculation of citations per year since publication was purely linear. No attempt was made to determine if there are variations in the lifetime value of articles as a function of time since publication. It is likely that articles not only require some time after publication to find their audience (we operationalized this nominally, and thus imprecisely, by excluding the most recent two years from statistical comparisons), but also that their influence declines over time such that the rate of new citations diminishes as some function of time passed since publication. Future researchers might identify the curvilinear rate of article obsolescence. Analyses such as this one could then be adjusted to more accurately weight the probable longitudinal influence of published articles.

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