

Boring research in marketing: What can we learn from articles that do not gain attention?

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Abstract

Some articles published in top-tier marketing journals fail to attract citations despite meeting established quality standards. Drawing on literature on research impact and interestingness, this study investigates themes that characterise these under-cited yet ostensibly high-quality articles. As the first qualitative phase of a mixed-methods research, this study analyses the titles and abstracts of 158 least-cited articles published in JM, JAMS and JMR in 1995–2018. The findings suggest that while the conceptualisations of research impact and interestingness provide a functional overarching framework, four more specific themes, (1) theoretical anchoring, (2) articulation of contributions and implications, (3) description of context, and (4) clarity of communication emerge as salient features of low-citation articles. These themes are discussed as an initial step toward developing a framework for understanding how academic work may inadvertently become unengaging and how researchers might avoid the pitfalls of producing “boring” research.

Track: Marketing Strategy & Theory