

Is This Research Relevant? The Role of Scholars; Practical Experience in Evaluating Managerial Relevance

Abstract

Marketing scholars routinely evaluate the managerial relevance of research during the publication process, yet little is known about how closely these evaluations align with practitioners' assessments. Because managerial relevance is defined from a practitioner perspective, such evaluations may be challenging when scholars' exposure to managerial contexts varies and is often limited. Using 987 paired evaluations (1,974 total reviews) of submissions to a European marketing transfer journal—each independently reviewed by one scholar and one practitioner—we document that alignment between scholars' and practitioners' managerial relevance ratings is generally weak. Moreover, alignment is substantially higher when scholarly reviewers have recent practical experience (≤ 4 years; interaction model) and declines as experience becomes more temporally distant, a pattern corroborated by LOESS smoothing of the absolute scholar–practitioner rating gap. Together, these findings contribute to research on the academia–practice gap by identifying scholars' recent practical experience as a key condition under which evaluations of managerial relevance more closely reflect practitioner assessments.