

Towards an Identification of Core Sources in Organizational Development Using Doctoral Dissertations

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Researchers in organization development have used practitioner opinions in determining core sources in the field, which take a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach. Library and information science has a history of identifying core sources through citation analysis. This study has borrowed that methodology to develop a core list of sources utilized by researchers in the field. In this study, citations from 118 theses from three doctoral programs in organization development and behavior were analyzed to determine these core sources. The result of this investigation produced a quantitatively derived list of core sources as a starting point for further research.

BACKGROUND

Several authors in organizational development and related fields have undertaken efforts to identify key or core sources. Many researchers have compiled bibliographies of sources based on personal expertise and accepted textbooks in the field. Other researchers have done so through expert panels; relying solely on their rankings or utilizing a combination of opinions and statistical evaluation methods (Pate, 1976; Varney, 1990). All rely on qualitative methods as the source of base data to be analyzed.

Citation analysis has been used in management and organizational development as a quantitative measure to identify and evaluate themes in the literature. Head, Gavin and Sorensen (Head, Gavin, & Sorensen, 1991) identified key trends using an annotated bibliography of sources. Piotrowski and Armstrong (Piotrowski & Armstrong, 2004; Piotrowski & Armstrong, 2005) individually analyzed citations in two major research databases to identify emerging and declining areas of research in the field. Additionally, Johnson and Podsakoff measured the influence of journals in management, and Blackburn traces scholarly communication in and out of the field (Blackburn, 1990; Johnson & Podsakoff, 1994). Though these methods have been well employed, none have used citation analysis to identify core organizational development sources.

Researchers in library and information science have utilized citation analysis since Gross and Gross' landmark article in 1927, which determined the value of journal titles to specific disciplines (Gross & Gross, 1927). Additional applications have developed since then, including user studies, historical studies, communication patterns, collection development measures, and descriptive literature studies (Smith, 2003). Doctoral dissertations are often studied in library science due to the comprehensive literature reviews in their given discipline, the high use of library resources by graduate students and easy access to dissertations from online databases and library collections (Zipp, 1996). Many recent researchers conducted citation analyses into dissertations with the primary purpose of assessing the use and cost-

effectiveness of library collections (Peritz & Sor, 1990; Smith, 2003; Walcott, 1991). A useful result of this research is core lists of sources within the disciplines studied.

It is arguable that citations from doctoral dissertations may not hold the same weight as that of an experienced professional. However, there are several reasons why dissertations are a credible source. Doctoral research requires thorough academic investigation of an area of a field including core theoretical texts and current literature. This research is guided and evaluated by faculty advisors and dissertation committees who are themselves experts in their fields. There is also an established connection between the citations of graduate students and those of their faculty counterparts. Louise Zipp (Zipp, 1996) found that seventy percent of titles cited in faculty publications matched those used in graduate students' dissertations. Therefore, it can be inferred that doctoral dissertations are valid sources for identifying core resources in a field. This paper will examine this hypothesis through the study of three doctoral program's dissertations and provide a methodology for further research.

METHODOLOGY

In order to have both a significant and defined set of citations for this study, the doctoral dissertations from three doctoral programs were examined: Benedictine University's PhD in Organizational Development, Case Western Reserve University's PhD in Organizational Behavior, and Pepperdine University's EdD in Organizational Leadership and Organization Change. These programs are of similar size and number of degrees awarded (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007), and each have known scholars in the field of OD in residence. Benedictine University was also partially chosen due to convenience, as the researcher is completing degree work there.

Due to the large number of dissertations in most university library collections, other studies have examined a random sample of dissertations instead of whole collections (Edwards, 1999; Smith, 2003). The size of the three selected universities program provided a fairly manageable number of dissertations, so all the OD dissertations from the history of the program were examined. This approach also provides a more comprehensive set of data from which to identify core sources.

Bibliographies from 118 dissertations submitted from 1999 to 2005 were printed from the online full-text in Dissertation Abstracts or photocopied from the library collections when an online version was not available. The lack of granular indexing in Dissertation Abstracts and the multi-disciplinary focus of some departments required that dissertations from Case Western and Pepperdine be selected by the researcher based on graduation lists and major advisor. This may have resulted in some relevant results being excluded.

Abbreviated citations covering first author, publication year, and source title were entered into an Access database and associated with the year the dissertation was submitted. Citations were coded according to the format of the material, utilizing Erin Smith's framework: monograph, periodical, conference proceeding or paper, newspaper or magazine, thesis or dissertation, web site or other (Smith, 2003). The category of "other" represents any sources that do not fall into a specific category, and included videos, class notes, lectures and personal correspondence.

RESULTS

A total of 16,057 citations from 118 dissertations were examined. The smallest number of citations in a dissertation was 35, the greatest was 454, with a median of 100. The most frequent format of materials cited was monographs at 7753 citations, followed closely by periodicals at 7267. The large number of periodicals cited is somewhat surprising, given that the social sciences in general utilize monographs more in their research (Devin & Kellogg, 1990). Periodicals were used more at Benedictine than at Pepperdine and Case Western, where monographs had a clear majority. Theses, proceedings, newspapers and other sources were cited in approximately similar amounts across programs.

**TABLE 1
NUMBER OF CITATIONS PER DISSERTATION**

School	Small	Median	Large	Mean
Benedictine	44	135	359	148
Pepperdine	35	100	454	109
Case Western	45	150	267	142
Average	41.3	128.3	360.0	133.0

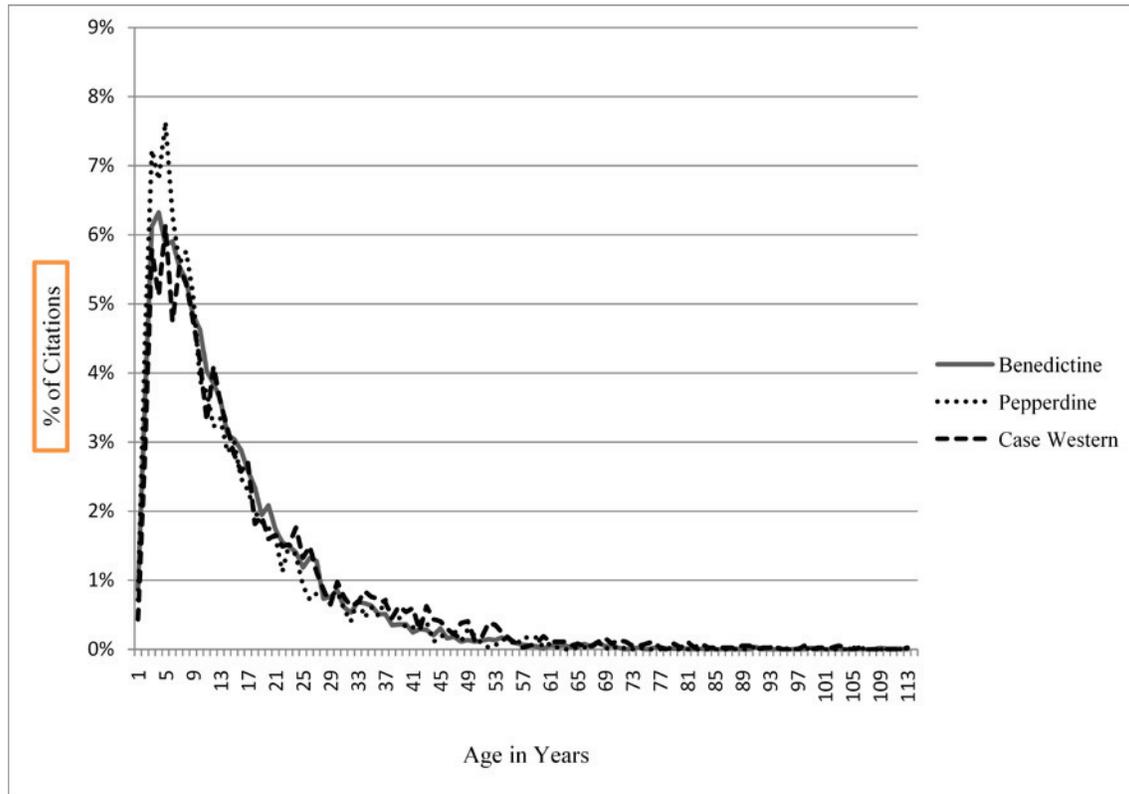
**TABLE 2
MATERIAL TYPE TOTALS**

School	Total Citations	Conference Proceeding/ Paper	Monograph	Newspaper/ Magazine	Other	Periodical	Thesis/ Dissertation	Website
Benedictine	8875	79	3875	7	138	4513	192	71
Pepperdine	3478	36	1824	31	77	1362	63	85
Case Western	3704	32	2054	11	82	1392	109	24
Total	16057	147	7753	49	297	7267	364	180

Due to the differences in the number of citations and dissertations studied between institutions percentages, instead of whole numbers, were used to accurately compare trends across schools. The number of dissertations closely match the IPEDS data for the number of graduates, though each institution did not have comparable graduation numbers to make a whole number comparison accurate.

The age of citations utilized spanned from pre-publication to a handful of works over 100 years old. The age of citations trended the same in all three institutions, the only notable difference being that 1-2% more Pepperdine citations were from publications dating up to ten years before the dissertation compared to other programs. The age of citations studied match those from other fields, with approximately 30% of citations published five years from completion, 50% of the citations covered by ten years, and 80% covered by twenty (Smith, 2003). This holds true for dissertations submitted across the range of dates, thus a rolling twenty-year currency of research can be inferred.

GRAPH 1
CITATION AGE BY SCHOOL



To formulate a core list of resources, sources were counted each time they appeared in a bibliography. Since monographs and periodicals had close to an equal total number of citations, each group was studied to determine a core list in each area. Monographs tended to be used much less per title, with the highest number of monograph appearances being 62 (0.8% of citations) versus 436 for periodicals (6.1% of citations). Because periodicals and monographs cover the field differently, e.g. covering an entire area of study versus covering one area narrowly, they were analyzed separately to develop unique but equally important core lists.

Sources listed were the main work from which a citation was derived; i.e. the journal or book title, not the chapter or article title. The highest number of appearances for periodicals was 436, or 6.1% of all citations, and the lowest once (0.0141%). The highest number of appearances for monographs was 62 (0.8% of citations), and the lowest once (0.013%). The mean of unique values was calculated, coming up with an appearance value of 1.0176% for periodicals and 0.2487% for monographs. Inclusion on the core list of sources required an appearance value equal to or greater than the mean for that category.

Means were also calculated for each set of program's citations individually to compare the core sources of each program against the compiled core list. Highlighted titles on Figures 5 and 7 represent titles that were not at or above mean in a program's collection of citations, but were at or above mean in the list of all citations.

**TABLE 3
LIST OF CORE PERIODICALS FOR EACH PROGRAM**

Periodical Title	Program Cited
Academy Of Management Journal	Benedictine, Case W., Pepperdine
Academy Of Management Review	Benedictine, Case W., Pepperdine
Administrative Science Quarterly	Benedictine, Case W., Pepperdine
American Psychologist	Case W.
Harvard Business Review	Benedictine, Pepperdine
Human Relations	Benedictine, Case W.
Journal Of Applied Behavioral Science.	Benedictine
Journal Of Applied Psychology	Benedictine, Case W., Pepperdine
Journal Of Business Venturing	Pepperdine
Journal Of Management	Benedictine
Journal Of Management Studies	Benedictine
Journal Of Personality & Social Psychology	Benedictine
Organization Science	Benedictine, Pepperdine
Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes	Benedictine, Case W.
Organizational Dynamics	Benedictine
Personality And Social Psychology	Case W.
Personnel Psychology	Pepperdine
Psychological Bulletin	Case W.
Strategic Management Journal	Benedictine, Pepperdine

**TABLE 4
LIST OF CORE PERIODICALS FOR ALL CITATIONS**

Periodical Title
Academy of Management Executive
Academy of Management Journal
Academy of Management Review
Administrative Science Quarterly
American Psychologist
Harvard Business Review
Human Relations
Journal of Applied Behavioral Science
Journal of Applied Psychology
Journal of Management
Journal of Personality & Social Psychology
Organization Science
Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes
Organizational Dynamics
Psychological Bulletin
Strategic Management Journal

TABLE 5
LIST OF CORE MONOGRAPHS FOR EACH PROGRAM

Monograph Title	Program Cited
Appreciative Inquiry	Case W.
Appreciative Management And Leadership	Case W.
Basics Of Qualitative Research: Techniques And Procedures For Developing Grounded Theory	Benedictine, Case W.
Bass And Stogdill's Handbook Of Leadership	Pepperdine
Discovery Of Grounded Theory: Strategies For Qualitative Research	Benedictine, Case W.
Fifth Discipline	Case W., Pepperdine
Groups That Work And Those That Don't	Case W.
Handbook Of Action Research: Participative Inquiry And Practice	Benedictine
Handbook Of Creativity	Case W.
Handbook Of Qualitative Research	Benedictine
Handbook Of Research On Educational Administrators	Case W.
Human Side Of Enterprise	Pepperdine
Innovation In Professional Education	Case W.
Leader Of The Future	Pepperdine
Leaders	Pepperdine
Leadership (Burns, J.M)	Pepperdine
Leadership (Northouse, P.G.)	Pepperdine
Leadership And The New Science	Pepperdine
Leadership Challenge	Pepperdine
Leadership Skills For Project Managers	Pepperdine
Learning Style Inventory	Case W.
Management Organizational Behavior	Pepperdine
Managerial Grid	Pepperdine
Organization Development & Change	Benedictine
Organizational Culture And Leadership: A Dynamic View	Benedictine
Participant Observation: A Methodology For Human Studies	Benedictine
Participation In Human Inquiry	Case W.
Qualitative Inquiry And Research Design	Pepperdine
Research Design	Pepperdine
Research In Education	Pepperdine
Research In Organizational Behavior	Benedictine
Research In Organizational Change And Development	Benedictine
Transformational Leadership	Pepperdine
Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis And Code Development	Case W.

TABLE 6
LIST OF CORE MONOGRAPHS FOR ALL CITATIONS

Monograph Titles
Basics Of Qualitative Research: Techniques And Procedures For Developing Grounded Theory
Bass And Stogdill's Handbook Of Leadership: Theory, Research, And Managerial Applications
Discovery Of Society
Field Theory In Social Science
Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies And Tools For Building A Large Organization.
Handbook Of Action Research: Participative Inquiry And Practice
Handbook Of Qualitative Research
Organization Development
Organizational Culture And Leadership: A Dynamic View
Participation In Human Inquiry
Qualitative Methodology
Research in Organizational Behavior
Research in Organizational Change and Development
Social psychology of organizing

DISCUSSION

From the data gathered, some clear trends emerge in both the general nature and specific resources in use in the field of organization development. Monographs and periodicals are by far the most used sources, with other types of materials trailing far behind. The reach of the literature is also quite broad, with 1348 unique periodical titles and 4186 unique monograph titles cited in the dissertations of the three programs. While compiling the citations, it was obvious that the field touches on multiple disciplines, types of organizations, and types of issues from technology to sense of self. Dissertations routinely contained resources specific to the area being studied as well as familiar OD/OB and management titles. This shows a broad applicability of organization behavior and development while hinting at the existence of a core literature.

The core lists themselves illuminate these core sources, removing the majority of infrequently cited sources and focusing on sources that contain often-used titles. There was a great deal of agreement on the list of periodicals from the combined sources versus those that were significant from each program. Nineteen periodicals encompassed the list from the programs, half of which were cited above the mean by more than one program. Sixteen titles made up the combined list, with only one title on the list that was not on the list from the programs. This kind of agreement validates the strength of both lists, and provides a list of periodicals where the bulk of new and breaking research in the field can be found. It is worthy to note that these lists contain a mix of psychology, management, and organizational development titles, clearly highlighting the roots of the field that lie in those areas.

There was less agreement between programs and between the program and combined lists in the monograph citations. Given the much higher number of unique titles, that is not surprising, but the list should be viewed with this disagreement in mind. Thirty-six monographs were on the programs list, with only three cited above the mean by more than one program. Fourteen titles were on the combined list, with five that were not above mean on the program list. Considering the narrow scope and breadth of topics that books cover, there are many more to consider when creating a core list. The lists presented here provide a good view of what monographic resources are being frequently utilized by researchers.

Most are handbooks or core texts on the field itself or in research methodology. Some cover a specific topic, notably appreciative inquiry, transformational leadership, learning organizations, and teams. These topics encompass areas both traditionally covered by the field, and new areas of research that have impacted the profession in the last ten years.

CONCLUSIONS

Researchers in organization development have mostly used expert panels and practitioner opinions in determining core sources in the field. These methods rely on the qualitative opinions of experts rather than taking a quantitative approach. The field has used citation analysis to determine other key factors in the field, most notably to identify key research themes. Library and information science has a long history of identifying core sources through citation analysis, a methodology easily applied to organization development. This study has borrowed that methodology successfully to develop a core list of sources utilized by researchers in the field.

The result of the study of the 118 dissertations are validated lists of journals and books, compiled by student-practitioners and faculty experts. The multidisciplinary nature of the journals matches that of the field itself, and the most cited sources are known as key sources in the field or represent new areas of study that have emerged over the last several years.

While the outcomes of this study are promising, additional work can be done to verify the results. Studying a similar number of dissertations from the same time period but different academic institutions would provide for verification of sources and mitigate any subject-area bias that the studied programs may have. Citation patterns from the top identified sources could also be investigated to provide a contrasting data set based solely on scholar/expert publications. Finally, the student citation/faculty citation correlations could be tested using faculty publications in the academic institutions studied so that the methodology itself could be verified. Overall, the result of this investigation provides a less subjective, quantitatively derived list of core sources in the field to be used as a starting point for further research.

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