

**TITLE:** *Research trends in retailing: a comparative approach Spain-Europe-USA*

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# Research trends in retailing: A comparative approach: Spain-Europe-USA

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## **Abstract:**

*This paper describes the evolution of research in retailing comparing three different geographic regions: Spain, Europe and the United States.*

*Working on the basis of a bibliographic review of the academic research published between 1996 and 2000 together with a content analysis, the results of this study reveal a heterogeneous evolution in nine thematic areas related to the field of retailing. The differences are particularly noticeable when comparing those of Europe with those of the USA, and reveal different areas of interest over the last five years.*

**Keywords:** retailing, state-of-the art, research topics.

## **INTRODUCTION**

European retailing has undergone significant transformations over recent decades. Dawson (2000) notes that research in retailing has still some way to go before it provides an understanding of the processes and relationships in this sector. As Mulhern (1997: 120) states: “*academic researchers should work toward the development of new principles and methods to accompany the new skills and technologies used in retail marketing*”.

A variety of studies conducted in recent years concerning retailing research have analysed its evolution and the changes that have taken place in both the American (e.g. Hirschman, 1981; Hollander, 1986), the European (e.g. Filser and Jallais, 1988; Dawson, 2000) and even the Spanish context (e.g. Vallet and Mollá, 1995). However, in Spain, the greatest number of research proposals have been in the area of marketing in general with a specific group concerning research in retailing (Bello *et al.*, 1999; Luque, 1995; Vázquez, 1990, 1994, 1999).

The most common practice has been to discuss the research topics that deserve most attention on the basis of either the authors' own experience or on qualitative analysis (Hirschman, 1981; Hollander, 1986; Filser and Jallais, 1988; Berry *et al.*, 1990; Dawson, 2000; Mulhern, 2000) or, as occurs in the approaches adopted by Denis and Czellar (1997) and Whysall (2000), on content analysis methodology. The lines of research put forward in these works have been classified into nine major groups in the form of thematic blocks. Table 1 shows a summary of these nine topics, with a set of the sub-lines identified in each on the basis of the programmes and lines of research put forward by some of these authors. Hence, the major topics identified in

retailing research are: retail structures; retail strategy; distribution channels; environment; consumer behaviour; logistics; business management; PERFORMANCE; and other topics.

#### TABLE 1

In the light of the lines of research defined by the preceding proposals, the intention of this paper is to observe the evolution of academic research into retailing over the last five years.

Our ultimate aim is therefore to identify the thematic fields which have proven to be of most interest to retailing researchers over the last five years by reviewing the articles published in said period in different scientific journals on the basis of content analysis. Consequently, in order to complete the knowledge of retailing research, we aim to compare this evolution in three geographical regions: Spain, Europe and the USA, in order to determine whether there are differences amongst the subjects addressed. All this will enable thought to be given to the fields of study which have aroused most interest and those which deserve greater study in the future, by determining both present-day trends and the new lines of retailing research.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

In order to apply the content analysis methodology, it is first necessary to select the research sources, i.e. the publications from which the studies to be reviewed are taken.

In the Spanish context, the research sources consist of a set of periodical Spanish publications likely to contain papers about retailing. Such publications include both journals and conference proceedings<sup>2</sup>.

Since there are very few Spanish publications specialised in retailing, information sources also include publications that address a variety of fields of specialisation. In this respect, the publications which will constitute the Spanish information sources can be classified into four groups according to the breadth of their scope: retailing, marketing, business & management, and economics in general (see table 2).

#### TABLE 2

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<sup>2</sup> The conferences selected are the most important conferences in Spain in the area of business management and marketing. These submit the contributions received to blind, anonymous reviews in accordance with a strict selection process.

The research sources in the European and American fields consist of seven marketing journals generally acknowledged to play an important role in the dissemination of marketing knowledge. The journals chosen can be classified according to their specialisation into two main groups: marketing and retailing, whilst in terms of origin, publications can be divided into those that originate in the USA and those originating in Europe.

The choice of the journals to constitute the Europe-USA information sources was made on the basis of the ranking of marketing journals drawn up by Hult et al. (1997), taking the first two journals on marketing in general (*Journal of Marketing* and *Journal of Marketing Research*), the only European journal on marketing (*European Journal of Marketing*) and the only journal specialised in retailing (*Journal of Retailing*). This group of journals selected from the ranking was then completed, in order to increase European participation, by adding the journal *Recherche et Application en Marketing* and those specialised in retailing i.e. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* and *The International Review of Retail Distribution and Consumer Research*.

The composition of our samples could in any case be debated. In our case, the selection in the Spanish context was based on the criteria of scientific prestige and the need to work with a sufficiently large sample, given the dearth of specialised publications, whereas in the European-USA context, as we have already said, the criteria were based on scientific recognition and the advisability for researchers to have a sample containing European journals specialised in retail distribution.

We consider that all the sources mentioned constitute quite a wide and representative sample of what could be called the *retail and distribution research forum*, encompassing a review of the literature over the five-year period from 1996 to 2000: a sufficiently long period to analyse the evolution of research trends.

The second stage in the content analysis methodology involves taking a sample of papers from the chosen journals to create the retail distribution database. In the case of Spain, all the papers concerning retail distribution were selected, there not being very many. As regards the European-USA context, different approaches were adopted for marketing journals and retail distribution journals. In the case of the former, every article on distribution was used, whereas only about 50% of the articles in the latter were used, to avoid an oversized database, taking the first three articles about retail distribution appearing in each edition.

The outcome was a database in the Spanish context of 283 papers published in the seventeen different journals listed in table 2, and a database of 276 papers in the European-American context published in seven different sources, the highest percentage of which (78.62%), as expected, was from publications specialised in retailing and distribution whilst articles in this field are infrequent in marketing publications.

Once the database of research papers on retailing had been established, each one of them was analysed individually using a data collection card to gather information of different types: references or identification, the type of outlet studied, the research topics addressed and, in the case of empirical studies, the methodology employed too. This information was codified and dealt with in a quantitative manner to produce the results set forth below.

## **ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

In this paper we will focus on the analysis of the information about retailing research topics. The topics listed on the data collection form cover 63 specific lines grouped into the 9 thematic areas shown in Table 3. This list was obtained firstly by compiling the key words of the reviewed papers and secondly, by occasionally adding to this list certain lines that we deemed necessary in order to specify the content of the research more precisely.

An overview of the research results can be obtained from the information set forth in Table 3, which shows the percentage of papers which have addressed each line of research in Spain, Europe and the USA. It may be observed that the predominant field of research was in general that of business management, although considerable differences are evident in the three geographical areas: Spain, Europe and the USA. The follow-up of each research field revealed the predominant foci of interest in Spain and Europe to be the lines of research concerning the environment, structure and strategy whilst in the USA the preferred line of research was management and PERFORMANCE (see graph 1).

### **TABLE 3**

### **GRAPH 1**

A longitudinal analysis over the last five years (see table 4) shows the differences between each thematic group in greater detail, and clearly reveals the existence of trends in research according to geographical area).

#### TABLE 4

The years 1998 and 1999 were particularly intense as regards the publications concerning management and strategy topics. A more in-depth study is set forth below of each thematic group in each geographical context, enabling the research patterns and trends over the last five years to be seen more clearly.

As regards the line of research addressing retail structures, graph 2 shows a similar evolution in the research conducted in Spain and in Europe, which differs from that of the USA where this line of research has hardly been developed, accounting for 5.9% of all papers as opposed to 29% of the papers published in Spain and Europe.

#### GRAPH 2 (ALL THE SET OF GRAPHS MAY BE INSERTED HERE)

In the Spanish and European contexts, the lines of research concerning structures have been followed, both on the basis of traversal and longitudinal statistical data. The topic of new selling structures has received special attention.

Furthermore, longitudinal analysis has shown a growing interest since 1998 in this line of research in Europe and the USA.

As regards strategy, research in the European context has shown a great deal of interest in the study of these areas. 43% of the papers concern this topic, a figure that contrasts with the level in Spanish publications where they account for 24.4% of the papers analysed, and the even lower level in US publications, a mere 8.3% (see table 3).

The evolution plotted in graph 3 reflects both a more or less homogeneous pattern in the case of Spain where the percentage of studies in this field has been approximately 15% every year. It must be emphasised that apart from the line of research into market orientation in retailing – which until now has not been followed in either Spain or Europe – the other proposals in this field have all been covered by researchers.

Research into distribution channels reveals a clearly American tradition: 34.2% of the studies published in the American journals which were reviewed addressed relationships in the distribution channel, focussing mainly on the analysis of power, conflict, and cooperation (15.3%) and distribution channel planning (8.2%), percentages which contrast with those of Spain and Europe.

It is obvious that during these five years (see graph 4), American researchers have shown greater interest in the analysis of such subjects whilst the attention paid to them in Europe in the same period has been rather insignificant, with a decline in the number of studies into these subjects in the last three years.

Fewer studies have been made of international channels in all three geographical areas, a line of research which has not been followed at all in Spain, and likewise the analysis of the value chain in the channel.

The study of the retail environment has been developed very little in the USA, accounting for just 4.8% of the articles, a percentage which is very different from that of Spain: 42.4% of papers. The lines of research developed to the greatest extent in Spain have concerned legal and competitive factors, which account for 7.1% and 8.1% of the papers respectively, although it can be seen that there is a dearth of studies on the ethical considerations that affect business, and on technological factors. The analysis of change over time (see graph 5) also shows that the interest in this field has remained constant amongst Spanish researchers and has grown in Europe.

Consumer behaviour and the construction of models to explain their relationship with the establishment have been the object of a considerable number of articles, particularly in the USA where they account for 45.9% of the articles reviewed. There was also a high percentage of articles in the USA between 1997 and 1999 (see graph 6), paying particular attention to research into buying decision processes.

In Europe, the trend in this field of research is less marked although in the last year, the percentage of articles was similar to those in the USA. Finally, Spanish studies have focused mainly on the choice of outlets (11.3% of the articles). The research programmes put forward show that the lines of research related to consumer and buying habits have been followed less, particularly in the USA.

Logistics, in general, is one of the topics studied least, with few studies of the importance of logistics operators and warehousing and haulage practices: supply efficiency monitoring and distributors' speed of response, in the three geographical contexts studied. A dearth of studies was also detected on the subject of efficient stock management in Europe, a very different situation from the USA where 7.1% of the articles are related to this line of research.

The analysis over time (see graph 7) does however reveal an incipient interest in the scope of this subject group in Spain whilst it is followed intermittently in the USA.

The foremost topic in terms of the number of papers in the USA is business management accounting for 87.1% and a predominance of articles on price, assortment, and retailer brands. This percentage doubles that of Spain and Europe which have similar percentages of research in this field (41.4% and 40.3%, respectively), although almost all of them focus on retail companies, hence a line of research into wholesale companies can be suggested for future research. There is also a lack of articles on financial management in the three geographical areas and also on atmosphere and merchandising topics, mainly in Spain and Europe in general, whereas location has aroused little interest in the U.S.A.

In short, on the basis of the evolution of this line of research in the last three years, it can be said that interest in this topic has remained stable in Spain and Europe and has declined in the U.S.A. (see graph 8).

Once again imbalances can be seen between the interest of American and European academics in research addressing performance, mainly in topics concerning economic results: profitability, productivity, etc, and also in topics related to satisfaction, a gap which has widened in recent years (see graph 9), as the interest in this line of investigation has increased in the USA, whilst remaining stable or waning Spain and Europe.

Finally, as regards other fields of research which deserve special attention, such as the methodology of research applied to retail distribution, there is hardly any tradition of research in this field in Spain (5.3% of papers) unlike in the USA (15.3%). However, the analysis of the annual evolution of research into these other fields of research shown in graph 10, reveals that there has been a slight increase in the last two years, suggesting that this line of research will be developed in the future.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The intention of this paper has been to provide a diagnosis of the situation of retailing research in three different geographical contexts: Spain, Europe and the USA. This was achieved by analysing the content of a group of 559 papers taken from 24 scientific publications of Spanish, European and American origin, over the 1996-2000 period.



The two general conclusions that can be drawn from an overview of the data, is the unequal attention paid to the different subjects and also the existence of different foci of interest in the European and American contexts.

It can be seen that business management and consumer behaviour topics have been addressed frequently whereas topics concerning performance, logistics, and distribution channels, have been studied less often. It is however difficult to reach general conclusions on this subject since the areas of interest vary considerably in each geographical area.

Hence, one of the main conclusions of our research is that the areas of interest vary according to the geographical context, i.e. Spanish, European and US scientific publications feature different foci of interest in relation to retailing and distribution. The origin of said diversity could be due to several factors such as the degree of originality of the subject in the journal's area of dissemination, or the existence of research teams or institutes for retailing research with specific aims and objectives. It must be emphasised that research in Spain and Europe has quite homogeneous patterns when considering the American pattern. The former shows an interest in more lines of research than the latter. It can be said that research in Spain and Europe encompasses four lines of research each of which represents between 25 and 40% of the papers published, whereas research in the USA is specialised on two lines of research each of which accounts for more than 50% of the published papers.

We will now compare the state of retailing and distributions research in Spain with that of Europe, and then compare the European group with that of the USA. These comparisons will make it possible to pinpoint emerging lines of research and research gaps.

Spanish research in relation to European research does not differ greatly as regards the topics of most interest. The greatest parallels are found in the areas of distribution structures, consumer behaviour, business management and performance, which are addressed by a similar percentage of papers in Spain and Europe. At the other end of the spectrum, there are considerable differences between the percentages of papers dealing with the following subjects: retail strategy, addressed by 24.4% of papers in Spain and 45% of those in Europe, and environment which account for 42.4% in Spain and 29.8% in Europe. Although the differences are smaller, research is conducted into the topic of logistics more frequently in Spain, with less research in Spain into the topic of performance.

The pattern of European research in comparison with the research published in the USA is completely different. Retail structures accounts for some 30% of the papers in Spain and

Europe, but only 6% of those in the USA. Similarly, retail strategy is a topic of little interest in the USA, being the subject of 8.3% of papers as opposed to 43% of European papers, whilst the topic of environmental factors is covered by 4.8% of US papers and 29.8% of European articles. One topic which the interest of research into retail distribution focuses on to a considerable extent in the USA is business management, the subject of 87.1% of the articles. Although this topic is ranked second in Europe, it accounts for less than half of the articles. Although the differences are not so noteworthy, subjects which also receive more attention in the USA are those of distribution channels, performance and consumer behaviour. It would therefore seem that research in the USA focuses on more operative issues that are more directly applicable to the management of distribution companies.

The lines of research into which we believe it would be useful to conduct further research in Europe are as follows. In the structure group, it would be advisable to stress theories of structural change and attempt to explain the evolution of formats. In the strategy group, there is a gap in the research concerning market orientation and relationship marketing, lines which have already been developed to a certain extent in the USA. Generally speaking, the subject of distribution channels seems to have been abandoned by European researchers, therefore we would suggest it be reconsidered, paying emphasis to the aspects that characterise present-day structural trends, e.g. vertical integration and the choice of international channels. Likewise, researchers have not conducted many studies on logistics, therefore we would recommend in this respect that research be carried out into the impact that any logistic activity may have upon achieving a competitive advantage. Although European researchers have paid considerable attention to business management, further research could be done on specific subjects such as retailers' assortment and prices: subjects which receive far more attention in the USA. As regards performance, we would recommend that, due to the importance of this topic, more studies be conducted of how economic and market results are measured; research into satisfaction, service quality and loyalty; and also the relationships between them. As we said earlier, all the lines of research related to performance are given far more attention by US researchers. Finally, the research methodology line of research should not be neglected, taking the new techniques arising in other fields into account, and likewise, the aspects that concern training since courses specialising in retail distribution are mushrooming.

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**TABLE 1**  
**Retailing and distribution topics suggested by some authors**

MAIN THEMES OF INTEREST	SPECIFIC TOPICS SUGGESTED BY RETAILERS
<b>RETAIL STRUCTURES</b>	Retail formats as “retail institutions” (Hirschman, 1981); Models of competition among retail formats (Hollander, 1986); Macroretailing: forces affecting retailing structures and their evolution (Hollander, 1986); Store evolution from a more general historic framework (Mulhern, 1997); E-commerce (Denis and Czellar, 1997); New selling formats (Vázquez, 1999; Bello et al., 1999) Application of economic theories of competition to retailing (Dawson, 2000) Franchising economic and business effects (Bello et al., 1999)
<b>RETAIL STRATEGY</b>	Models of the process of strategy formulation (Filser and Jallais, 1988); Empirical tests of the paradigm strategy-conduct-performance (Filser and Jallais, 1988; Vallet and Mollá, 1995); Retailer image and positioning (Hirschman, 1981; Filser and Jallais, 1988; Vázquez, 1990); The overall topic of “marketing in retailing” (Vallet and Mollá, 1995; Berry et al., 1990); Resources needed to achieve competitive advantages (Vallet and Mollá, 1995); Marketing orientation (Berry et al., 1990)
<b>DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS</b>	Relationships in the channels (Hirschman, 1981; Denis and Czellar, 1997; Vázquez, 1999; Modelling of the power relationship in the channel (Filser and Jallais, 1988); Heuristic models of distribution channels (Filser and Jallais, 1988) Information exchange (Luque, 1995), Exclusive agreements (Vázquez, 1999; Bello et al., 1999) Models of distribution channels (Dawson, 2000)
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	Influence of consumerism and public policies (Hollander, 1986); Concentration: indexes, benefits, effects at geographical level (Vázquez, 1994) Risk assessment (Dawson, 2000) Retailing as an economic and social stimulus (Dawson, 2000) Contribution of new technologies to retailing (Mulhern, 1997)
<b>CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR</b>	Factors affecting trends in consumer habits (Hollander, 1986); Relationships between retailers’ actions and changes in consumer habits (Hollander, 1986); Models of consumer choice and patronage of retail outlets (Filser and Jallais, 1988; Vallet and Mollá, 1995; Vázquez, 1999; Mulhern, 1997; Denis and Czellar, 1997)
<b>LOGISTICS</b>	New information technologies (Vázquez, 1990; Mulhern, 1997); Logistics operators (Denis and Czellar, 1997; Vázquez, 1999); Efficiency in physical distribution (Luque, 1995)
<b>BUSINESS MANAGEMENT</b>	Site selection models (Hirschman, 1981; Vázquez, 1999; Bello et al., 1999); Customer service: costs and benefits (Berry et al., 1990); Application of services marketing to retailing (Mulhern, 1997); Merchandising productivity (Hollander, 1986); Retail human resources management (Hollander, 1986); Evolution of the retail organisation (Hollander, 1986); Models of the retail organisation (Dawson, 2000; Berry et al., 1990); Retailer marketing mix (Berry et al., 1990); Retailer brands (Vázquez, 1994); Data based approach to pricing, promotions, and advertising (Mulhern, 1997); Prices (Vázquez, 1994); New product launch (Denis and Czellar, 1997) Evolution of retailer functions (Dawson, 2000) Influence of physical environment on consumer behaviour (Mulhern, 1997)
<b>PERFORMANCE</b>	Loyalty to the retailer (Vázquez, 1999; Bello et al., 1999); Satisfaction and service quality (Luque, 1995); Retailer margins (Vázquez, 1999; Bello et al., 1999) Productivity: measurement (Dawson, 2000), determinants (Hollander, 1986; Berry et al., 1990)
<b>OTHER</b>	Scanner utility (Vázquez, 1994); Contribution of new technologies (Mulhern, 1997) Data base marketing (Mulhern, 1997; Dawson, 2000)

**Table 2**  
**Reviewed publications and number of papers**

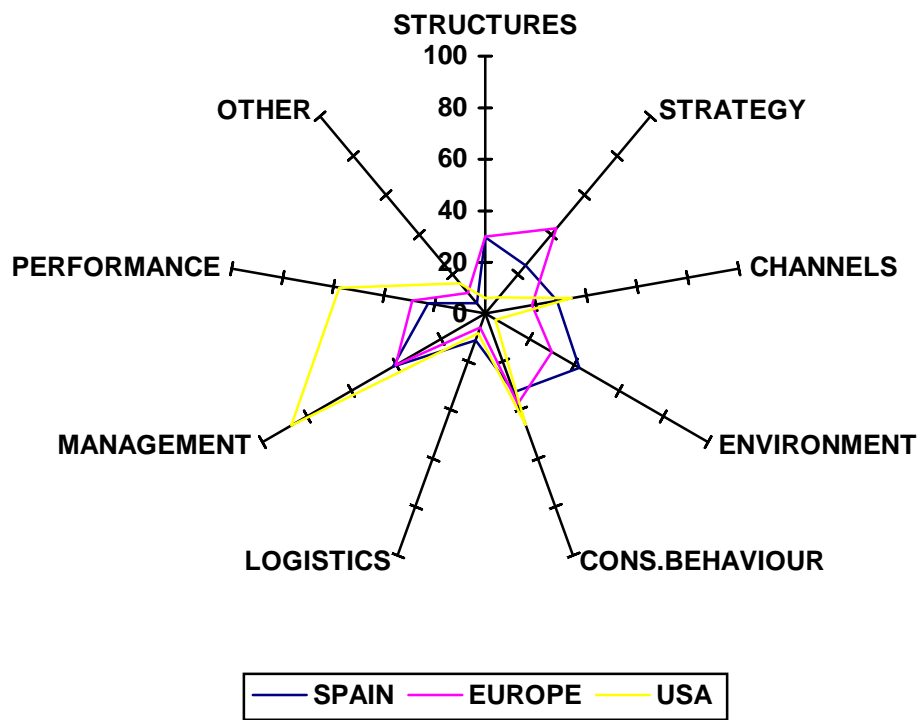
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Publication title</b>	<b>No. of papers</b>		
ECONOMICS	Spain	Boletín Económico de ICE	8		
		Economía Industrial	3		
		Información Comercial Española	14		
		Revista de Economía Aplicada	1		
BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT	Spain	Alta Dirección	3		
		Cuadernos de Economía y Dirección de Empresas	3		
		Esic-Market	14		
		Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa	3		
		Revista de Economía y empresa	1		
		Revista Europea de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa	2		
		Actas congresos Asociación Europea de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa (AEDEM)	46		
		Actas congresos Asociación Científica de Economía y Dirección de la Empresa (ACEDE)	20		
		MARKETING	Spain	Estudios sobre Consumo	9
				Investigación y Marketing (AEDEMO)	9
Revista Española de Investigación en Marketing-ESIC	18				
Actas Encuentros de Profesores Universitarios de Marketing	36				
Europe	European Journal of Marketing		23		
	Recherche et Applications en Marketing		9		
USA	Journal of Marketing		13		
	Journal of Marketing Research		14		
RETAILING	Spain	Distribución y Consumo	93		
	Europe	The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research	57		
		International Journal of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research	102		
	USA	Journal of Retailing	58		

**Table 3**  
**Retailing & distribution topics: relevance by context**

RESEARCH TOPICS	SPAIN		EUROPE		USA	
	Ranking	(%)	Ranking	(%)	Ranking	(%)
<b>RETAIL STRUCTURES</b>	<b>4°</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>4°</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>8°</b>	<b>5.9</b>
In general		0.4		0.5		2.4
Classification – Statistical data		9.2		6.8		
Theories of structural change				2.6		
History and evolution		8.1		7.3		
New forms of selling: e-commerce, franchising		12.0		12.6		3.5
<b>RETAIL STRATEGY</b>	<b>6°</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>1°</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>6°</b>	<b>8.3</b>
In general		3.2		6.8		
Growth strategies		2.5		8.9		
Segmentation strategies		2.1		2.6		
Image strategies		4.2		6.3		1.2
Positioning strategies		2.1		3.7		
Loyalty strategies		1.1		2.1		1.2
Marketing planning		2.1		3.1		
General strategies, typologies and taxonomies		5.7		4.2		
Competitive advantage and competitiveness		1.4		4.2		
Market orientation						1.2
Relationship marketing		2.1		1.1		4.7
<b>DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS</b>	<b>5°</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>7°</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>4°</b>	<b>34.2</b>
In general		5.0		1.6		
Dimensions: power, conflict, dependency and co-operation		8.5		4.7		15.3
Relationship distributor-provider: payments, deferments, and negotiations		3.9		1.6		5.9
Value chain		1.1		2.1		2.4
Vertical integration		2.8		2.1		1.2
Horizontal integration		3.2		2.1		
Channel planning: choice and management		3.9		1.1		8.2
International channels				3.1		1.2
<b>ENVIRONMENT FACTORS</b>	<b>1°</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>5°</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>9°</b>	<b>4.8</b>
In general		11.3		7.33		
Competitive factors		8.1		4.2		2.4
Legal factors		7.1		2.1		1.2
Political factors		4.2		5.2		1.2
Technological factors		2.1		0.5		
Ethical factors		0.4		3.1		
Social and Demographic factors		4.6		6.3		
Economic factors		4.6		1.1		
<b>CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>3°</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>3°</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>3°</b>	<b>45.9</b>
In general		4.4		3.7		1.2
Choice of retail outlet: process and criteria		11.3		6.3		3.5
Consumption and shopping habits		3.9		5.8		1.2
Buying decision process: models and components		5.0		14.7		29.4
Typologies of consumers		8.1		6.8		10.6

**Table 3 (bis)**  
**Retailing & distribution topics: relevance by context**

<b>RESEARCH TOPICS</b>	<b>SPAIN</b>		<b>EUROPE</b>		<b>USA</b>	
<b>LOGISTICS</b>	<b>8°</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>9°</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>7°</b>	<b>8.3</b>
In general		3.5				
Stocks management				0.5		7.1
Warehousing		1.1				
Haulage		1.4				
New instruments: ECR, category management, scanner, EDI		4.6		4.7		1.2
Logistic operators: outsourcing		0.7		0.5		
<b>BUSINESS MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>2°</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>2°</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>1°</b>	<b>87.1</b>
In general		8.8		6.8		8.2
Location		3.9		5.8		1.2
Assortment and retailer brands		10.3		6.8		20.0
Prices		6.0		4.2		25.9
Merchandising		2.1		1.1		2.4
Atmosphere		0.4		2.6		4.7
Sales personnel: motivation, training, and selection		5.7		5.2		9.4
Sales promotions		2.8		1.6		7.1
Other communication activities				2.6		3.5
Service		1.4		3.1		4.7
Financial management				0.5		
<b>PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>7°</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>6°</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>2°</b>	<b>57.7</b>
In general		1.1		1.6		2.4
Economic results: productivity, profitability		5.0		6.3		11.8
Business results: sales, market share		7.1		3.1		10.6
Satisfaction and service quality		3.5		7.9		20.0
Loyalty		1.4		1.6		3.5
Selection: choice, patronage and preference		4.2		8.4		9.4
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>9°</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>8°</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>5°</b>	<b>15.3</b>
Research methodology applied to retailing		5.3		6.8		15.3
Training and courses in retailing				3.7		



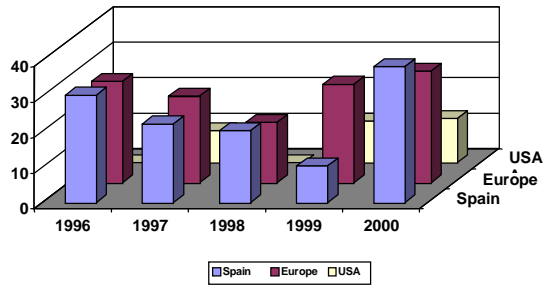
**Graph 1**  
**Research in retailing: comparison of areas of interest among geographic context**



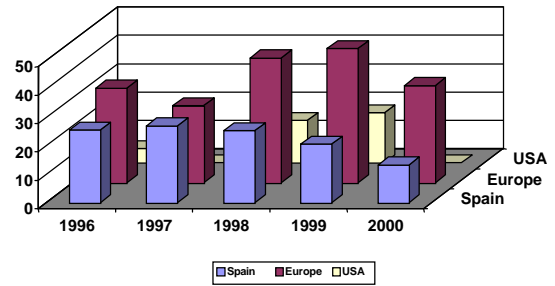
**Table 4**  
**Research in Spain, Europe and USA: papers dealing themes by year**

<b>RESEARCH IN SPAIN</b>							<b>283</b>
<b>MAIN THEMES</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>		
TOTAL No. OF PAPERS	43	63	59	58	60		
1 STRUCTURES	13	14	12	6	23		
2 STRATEGY	11	17	15	12	8		
3 CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION	14	11	8	19	13		
4 ENVIRONMENT	16	21	14	20	21		
5 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR	7	18	18	13	13		
6 LOGISTICS	4	5	2	5	7		
7 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	8	22	24	21	21		
8 PERFORMANCE	6	12	12	10	12		
9 OTHER	6	2	2	1	4		
<b>RESEARCH IN EUROPE</b>							<b>191</b>
<b>MAIN THEMES</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>		
TOTAL No. OF PAPERS	42	37	41	36	35		
10 STRUCTURES	12	9	7	10	11		
11 STRATEGY	14	10	18	17	12		
12 CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION	9	6	9	5	3		
13 ENVIRONMENT	8	8	13	7	15		
14 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR	14	9	14	11	13		
15 LOGISTICS	1	4	3	1	1		
16 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	13	17	16	15	13		
17 PERFORMANCE	7	12	10	12	10		
18 OTHER	5	4	3	3	6		
<b>RESEARCH IN THE USA</b>							<b>85</b>
<b>MAIN THEMES</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>		
TOTAL No. OF PAPERS	20	11	21	17	16		
19 STRUCTURES	0	1	0	2	2		
20 STRATEGY	1	0	3	3	0		
21 CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION	8	3	5	4	7		
22 ENVIRONMENT	0	0	0	3	1		
23 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR	5	5	10	8	5		
24 LOGISTICS	1	0	2	0	4		
25 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	16	3	18	12	8		
26 PERFORMANCE	11	7	8	8	12		
27 OTHER	5	2	2	1	3		

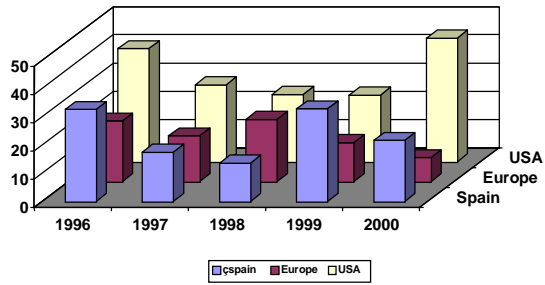
**Graph 2**  
Evolution of research on Retail Structures by context



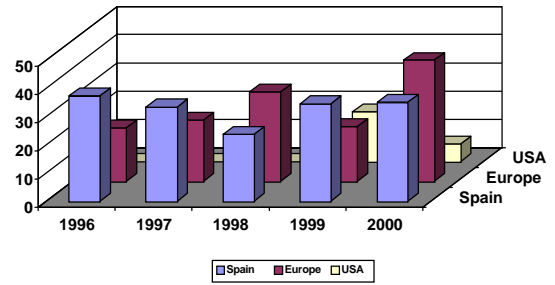
**Graph 3**  
Evolution of research on Retail Strategy by context



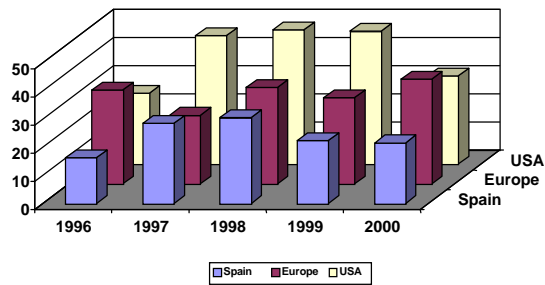
**Graph 4**  
Evolution of research on Channels of Distribution by context



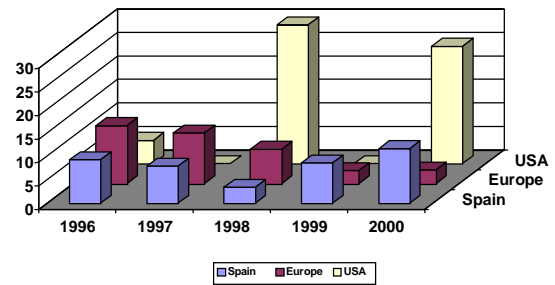
**Graph 5**  
Evolution of research on Retail Environment by context



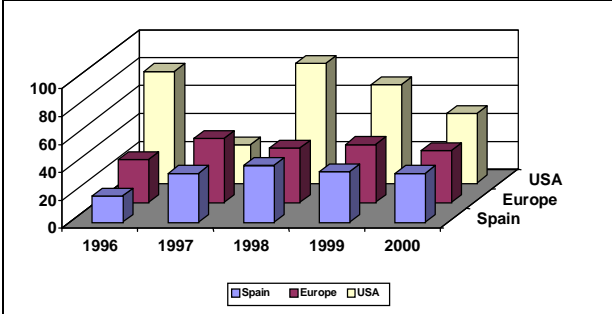
**Graph 6**  
Evolution of research on Consumer Behaviour by context



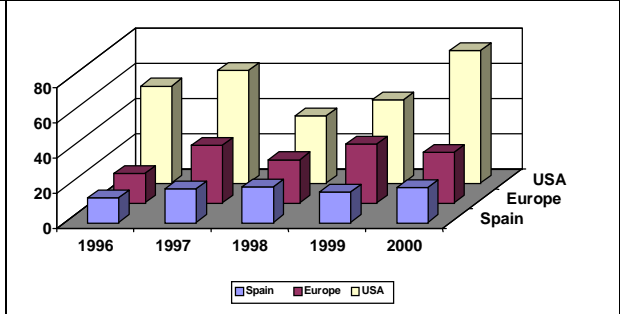
**Graph 7**  
Evolution of research on Logistics by context



**Graph 8**  
Evolution of research on Business Management by context



**Graph 9**  
Evolution of research on Performance by context



**Graph 10**  
Evolution of research on Other Themes by context

