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The Evolution of Marketing as an Innovative Knowledge Stream: The Evolving Role of Stakeholder Causal Scope

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1 Introduction

Marketing management and the allied dynamics—as is acknowledged today—have been evolving persistently, based on the mutual endeavours of academics and reflective industry-based practitioners. Marketing academics and practitioners proactively deal with various market issues, competitive forces and challenges, as well as exploit opportunities and create value to nurture contemporary and latent market needs. In this game of market intelligence, successful marketing initiatives are substantiated by market competitiveness, cost effectiveness and social acceptability (including as this relates to the key stakeholders). Different market issues and competitive forces have influenced the market dynamics at times. These issues and forces expose the various limitations of existing marketing strategies to deal with market competitions. Therefore, managerial efforts coupled with academic research have been contributing to

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the development of marketing thinking and practice, in order to cope with varying contemporary market needs since the early 1900s.

From this perspective, the aim of this article is to concisely review the evolution of marketing management, as a field of managerial practice and as an academic discipline, the different eras of this evolution, and relevant market drivers and competitive forces, in order to reinforce our perceptions of the advances of marketing dynamics that protract competitive advantage and ensure business sustainability. The findings illustrate six eras in this evolution of marketing management, and their respective competitive forces, alongside the progress of marketing thinking and practice to deal with those competitive forces. Together with other issues, value- and service-driven stakeholder relationship management is generally acknowledged as the key challenge in contemporary competitive markets. In response to this challenge, an analysis of the causes and consequences of stakeholder relationships and interactions as a stakeholder causal scope (SCS) of strategic market/stakeholder orientation is proposed as an alternative approach of relationship marketing (RM) to deal with contemporary competitive markets, with an aim to prolong competitive advantage. This article follows an inductive constructivist view to support findings to evolve rationally from the reviewed data (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 1994; Shams and Kaufmann 2016). Therefore, it presents the relevant literature through the progress of discussions, as an inductive analysis, to rationalise the findings in relation to the aim of the chapter (Hallier and Forbes 2004; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Shams and Belyaeva 2017). The remainder of this article discusses: changes in the markets and the evolution of marketing management; the role of marketing in the contemporary competitive market; and implications and future research.

2 Methodology

In general, an inductive constructive approach as a research methodology offers wide scope to review historical perspectives and/or previous studies, in order to justify the arguments of the study (Larchey-Wendling n.d.). Inductive discovery [...] from [...] observed data [...] to derive a law (a procedure) and an explanation via the model (a concept) about

how the law is generated from the fundamental axiomatic mechanisms of the model.

“An inductive approach starts with observations and experiential data, from which students analyze and generalize and then find ways to apply the conclusions in solving real-world problems (Prince and Felder 2006). An inductive approach does not mean that teachers never lecture; rather, teachers assess what students know and believe, help question and clarify those beliefs, and then work to facilitate the construction of new knowledge.” (Bransford et al. 1999 as cited in Smart et al. 2012, p. 393)

From this context, the inductive method appears “as a fundamentally constructive premise for theorizing and research” (Ketokivi and Mahoney 2016, p. 124). In terms of inductive constructivist method, “the underlying logic can be classical logic, or, in cases where the computational (reasoning) power of a theory should be enhanced, intuitionistic (constructive) logic” (Cohen 2016, p. 3). Cohen (2016) discussed the implications of inductive constructive approach; the reasoning pattern in knowledge development predominantly relies on cross-checking with existing knowledge for further justification of the newly created knowledge. As a result, this chapter follows the traditional inductive constructive method to develop new insights by analysing the literature and relevant information in order to enable the findings to evolve through the discussion, and to justify it and the underlying findings, based on the scholarly arguments, so that new insights can be generated inductively, while moving forward with the supporting factors, variables, ideas and concepts.

3 The Changes in Markets and the Evolution of Marketing Management

In the early 1900s, marketing as a field of practice and academic discipline was established in the USA (Firat et al. 1995) to bridge gaps in the understanding of the market in modern society. Berner and Tonder (2003) discussed modernism as associated with the transition experienced

in social and economic institutions, which was characterised as a progressive and innovative movement begun in the preceding century (Burke 2012) and shaped during the industrialisation of the 1920s (Hassard 1993). In modern society, success was perceived as the outcome of industrialisation and mass production (Thomas 1997); the role of marketing was merely to meet the basic market needs. During this modernist era, customers were satisfied as soon as they recognised their needs were met—that is, as soon as they could find the desired products on the shelves of the nearby shops. Therefore, the role of marketing was centred on the production and sales concept simply to bridge the market gaps by ensuring the availability of standardised mass-produced products to satisfy the basic needs of the modern market.

In the modernist market, once mass production reached to its peak and products were remaining unsold, producers were started to think about bridging market gaps more philosophically, alongside the basic utility of a product against a basic need, in order to compete and survive. As a result, the gurus of marketing philosophy helped to introduce the traditional 4Ps (product, price, place and promotion) marketing mix during the late 1950s in the mass consumer markets of the USA (Little and Marandi 2003), as a replacement for the production and sales concepts. The 4Ps emphasis that marketing success depends on recognising market gaps not only from the angle of the basic utility of a product, but also from the angles of its competitive pricing and location, backed by concentrated advertising and a wider promotional mix. Therefore, for marketing, the modernist market can be divided into two parts: early modernist and late modernist. The early modernist market centred on the mass production and sales concepts, where marketing was centred on bridging the market gaps through standardised, mass-produced products to offer the basic utility of a product to satisfy a basic need. In the late modernist market, the market encountered intense competition to sell a high volume of mass-produced standardised products in the mass consumer market. Here, marketing success was understood based on the 4Ps philosophy, emphasising bridging market gaps not only through the basic utility of a product, but also through competition centred on the customers' needs in relation to the product's pricing, distribution channels and promotion. As a result, underlying the 4Ps marketing mix, the added

value in addition to the basic utility had started to form the basis of competitive advantage.

The technological developments of the 1970s brought an unprecedented change in marketing management. Here, the postmodern concept was introduced, which coincides with the era of the information revolution. Many young professionals started using the term “postmodernism” during this time instead of “modernism” (Featherstone 1991). This postmodern society relies on global knowledge democracy, emergence management, trans-disciplinarity, value optimisation and knowledge creativity, instead of the modernist concepts of knowledge control, control management, single-disciplinarity, value-maximisation and so forth (Graham 2003). Instead of the individual scientific findings of modern society, the postmodern society focuses on meaning beyond scientific fact and truth; this is embedded in a broader context—a profound focus on the entirety of a situation.

Absolute truth is rejected in the postmodern society, as meaning is repeatedly changing and social meaning is significantly influenced by form and style (Berner and Tonder 2003). Therefore, the postmodern market realigns the 4Ps marketing mix; the “added value” concept was introduced to niche and customised production from the modern market’s standardised mass production, as postmodern consumers have a profound knowledge of immediacy and expect services/tasks to be done straight away (Berner and Tonder 2003; Chebbi et al. 2015; Shuv-ami et al. 2018), in relation to their expectations (Graham 2003). Since the postmodern consumer lives in an era filled with “doubt, ambiguity and uncertainty” (Thomas 1997, p. 58), postmodern marketers offer additional value by utilising information intelligence rather than simply the industrialised power of the modernist concept. In order to keep postmodern customers loyal, the concept of service was introduced through repair and maintenance options for the product-driven marketing in the 1970s; however, the service logic was completely elusive in the marketing management, especially for the service industries—hospitality, airlines, travel and tourism and so forth (Gummesson 2014).

In the 1990s, RM was introduced in marketing management, which aligns well with the service logic (Gummesson 2008, 2014), where customers are active co-creators of service value and contribute to the product/service development processes. In RM, to contribute to the target

markets, marketers work together to design and realign processes to support each other. Fundamentally, there is a continuous and collaborative effort between the key stakeholders to the relationship and an understanding of long-term commitment (Tomer 1998). RM is recognised as

administering marketing activities with a long-term outlook, focusing on the mutually beneficial relationship values and multifarious goals of associated stakeholders, while the stakeholders working interdependently in order to establish, maintain and enhance value for customers by meeting and exceeding customers' anticipation in a way that customers expect and accept, and share that value with the involved stakeholders towards a win-win outcome. (Shams 2013, p. 244)

In the post-2000 postmodern market, "service-dominant" (S-D) logic was coined by Vargo and Lusch (2008), which perceives goods as the distribution devices for services (Gummesson 2014). For example, the information technology companies offer their goods (for example, computer hardware) as the devices to distribute their service (for example, the World Wide Web and related software). The S-D logic is centred on the "co-creation of value and resource integration between suppliers, customers and other stakeholders" (Gummesson 2014, p. 659), which is a fundamental logic of RM as well, if we take the co-creation and integration of resources between the key stakeholders based on the joint power and share of dependency risk and uncertainty among the associated stakeholders (Gummesson 2002; Kurtz 2009; Agariya and Singh 2011; Shams 2011; Rowland et al. 2017). As a result, the postmodern market can be divided into three eras: early postmodern (early 1970s to late 1980s); mid-postmodern (early 1990s to pre-2000s); and contemporary postmodern (post-2000s).

4 The Role of Marketing in Contemporary Competitive Markets

The value-driven postmodern market adapts the traditional 4Ps marketing mix with stakeholder (including customers) relationship management and marketing, based on the S-D logic, where the target markets

contribute to the service co-creation processes. In this ever-competitive postmodern market, brand loyalty frequently loses its sustainability as consumers are overwhelmed by information and have available alternative brands with competitive value propositions. As a result, postmodern customers avoid brand commitment and exercise the right to move to an alternative competitive value propositions (Gould and Lerman 1998; Little and Marandi 2003).

Kotler (2003) described how postmodern customers assess which brand offers the most value. As value-optimisers, postmodern customers form an expectation of value within their search costs and the availability of information and act on it (Kotler 2003). Following the service encounters, the customers convey their service expectations and accordingly take part in the service co-creation process, which in general leads to a firm's competitive advantage. But, because of the ease of obtaining information in the postmodern market economy, the sustainability of a competitive advantage relies on the integrated resources and the subsequent co-created value proposition capabilities to survive through the “valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable” (VRIN) test of the resources (Barney 1991) and the co-created value of those integrated resources.

If a competitive advantage cannot be sustained because of its lack of VRIN competency, in order to at least prolong that competitive advantage, the resource integration among the key stakeholders and the subsequent co-creation of the S-D and relationship management logics can rely on the analysis of the causes and consequence of stakeholder relationships and interactions. Various stakeholder relational perspectives of RM—such as trust, satisfaction, commitment, communication, reciprocity and co-creation, reliability, responsiveness and so forth (Agariya and Singh 2011)—are generally originated and enhanced through the causes and consequences of stakeholders' relationships and interactions, as a SCS of strategic market/stakeholder orientation. These SCSs have the ability to recognise unique condition(s) from the relational experience of the stakeholders, which can further enrich the relational perspectives to underpin the co-creation processes among the key stakeholders, and to prolong that relationship:

RM service providers gain a better knowledge of the client's requirements and needs. This knowledge (a possible specific exceptional condition, in

relation to the needs, wants and expectations of the target markets) can then be combined with social rapport built over a number of service encounters to tailor and customise the service to client's specifications. (Little and Marandi 2003, p. 31)

RM focuses on long-term stakeholder relationships (Little and Marandi 2003) to recognise stakeholders' needs, wants and expectations, in order to design and offer customised service (Stavros 2005; Acar and Ozkan 2017), based on that specific knowledge of stakeholders' anticipations and stipulations. Another RM advantage is to retain a concentrated orientation on the evolution of opportunity (possible exceptional conditions) from stakeholder relationships (Kurtz 2009; Santoro et al. 2017; Vrontis et al. 2017), to impact on innovative product/service development and delivery (Donaldson and O'Toole 2007; Thrassou et al. 2016), centred on the relevant considerations and specific knowledge gained from those stakeholder relationships.

Such SCS-driven exceptional unique conditions can outplay the VRIN features, as that unique condition can be learnt from a firm's market relationships and overall learning experience of its internal and external stakeholders (Peteraf et al. 2013). For example, the resource integration among the key stakeholders and the successive co-creation-driven competitive advantage that is originated through such exceptional SCS-centred condition(s) would be valuable until the promised value meets the goals of the stakeholders involved. These relationships and interactions among the key stakeholders would also be rare in the market in favour of the competitive advantage, until a specific stakeholder withdraws their commitment and/or concurrently relates with the competitors. Again, the part of the causes and consequences of stakeholder relationships and interactions perceived by the competitors could be imitable.

However, if the success of such relationships is based on any unique and/or secret understanding of share of dependency, risk and uncertainty and an anticipated win-win value, which is exclusively learnt from the relational experience of specific stakeholders, it could outplay the imitable capacity of the competitors to some extent. In particular, the unique reason that is evolved based only on the joint power of those specific stakeholders would not be imitable by their competitors. Furthermore,

based on the preceding relationship experience, if a firm is able to prove the supremacy of their competitive advantage, with relevant exceptional conditions to customise the stakeholders' needs, centred on those exceptional conditions, the stakeholders will not look for a substitution relationship. Therefore, the role of marketing in the contemporary competitive markets is to identify, establish, maintain and enhance value for the target markets, based on a unique and customised condition recognised from the causes and consequences of a firm's relationships and interactions with their target markets/stakeholders, so that the reinforced value would be mutually valuable for them, but would be rare, inimitable and non-substitutable for the competitors, in order to authentically differentiate the relevance of that value to prolonging the competitive advantage.

Similarly, the contemporary marketing management should be centred on understanding the causes and consequences of stakeholder relationships and interactions (the SCS) and differentiating a value proposition based on that understanding to promote why stakeholders should be associated with that value proposition, instead of the alternative competitive propositions. In such a co-created value proposition, "share of dependency, risk and uncertainty" among the key stakeholders (Kurtz 2009; Gummesson 2002; Giacosa et al. 2017; Bresciani et al. 2017) and their "joint power" (Gummesson 2002) as RM features play a central role in reinforcing the value proposition's competitive advantage.

5 Implications and Future Research

However, the marketing research and practice have been evolving since their beginnings to cope with the changing market needs; the traditional production and sales-focused transaction marketing and the 4Ps marketing mix have not been rejected since they are the core of marketing management. Following this traditional 4Ps marketing mix, various concepts have been added in marketing management to deal with the market competitions. These concepts are: added value; niche and customised value proposition; value optimisation; value co-creation; stakeholder relationship management; S-D logic; and the SCS concept.

Underlying the marketing mix and these concepts, the SCS analysis has evolved as an alternative approach to deal with the contemporary market issues and competitive forces, in order to prolong competitive advantages. Table 8.1 briefly describes these changes in marketing and their associated dynamics. From this angle, this chapter contributes to

Table 8.1 The evolution of marketing management in response to the market competition

| Timeline/era | The market | Market drivers/ competitive forces | The role of marketing in response to the market competitions |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Early 1900s to late 1940s | Early modernist market | Industrialisation and mass production (Hassard 1993; Thomas 1997) | Transactional sales concept |
| Early 1950s to late 1960s | Late modernist market | Unsold mass- produced goods | Introduction of added value based on the 4Ps marketing mix |
| Early 1970s to late 1980s | Early postmodernist market | Knowledge democracy (Graham 2003) | Niche and customised value proposition (Stavros 2005) |
| Early 1990s to pre-2000 | Mid- postmodernist market | Ease of information Value optimisation (Graham 2003) Symbolic (form and style) | Stakeholder relationship management for value optimisation within a value network (Gummesson 2008) |
| Post 2000 | The millennial postmodernist market | representation of value Service dominance (Gummesson 2008) Corporate social responsibilities, environmental issues and social wellbeing (Gummesson 2014) | S-D logic: integration of resources among the key stakeholders and value co-creation (Gummesson 2008); SCS analysis to recognise exceptional unique conditions from the experience of the associated stakeholders to possibly outplay the VRIN features, in order to prolong competitive advantages (Shams 2016a, p. 676) |

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

| Timeline/era | The market | Market drivers/ competitive forces | The role of marketing in response to the market competitions |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| Post 2010 | The millennial stakeholder- dominant market | Phenomena in stakeholder casual scope (Shams 2017a) | Analysing the “the cause and consequence of stakeholder relationships and interactions in a network, as a SCS [...] to collaborate with the stakeholders, with an on-going understanding on the contemporary and latent needs, and subsequent value- anticipation of the associated stakeholders” (Shams 2016a , p. 676), in order to design and deliver value in a way that would be expected and accepted by the key stakeholders (Shams 2016b , 2017b) |

our understanding of the role of marketing management, in response to the contemporary market competition, where the SCS analysis is proposed as a preliminary conceptual viewpoint which needs to be reinforced by empirical results. Additionally, this chapter provides a concise review of existing literature on the different eras of marketing management as a field of practice and academic discipline, relevant competitive forces and the role of marketing management, in response to these competitive forces. As a result, it provides a quick snapshot for researchers of the historical and contemporary issues of marketing management.

Following the introduction of the chapter, an overview of the methodology is provided. Then the chapter discusses changes in markets and the

evolution of marketing management as a practice and as a discipline of knowledge. Following this discussion on the evolution of marketing and the relevant changes in market dynamics, the chapter then discusses the role of marketing in contemporary competitive markets. Following this discussion, the SCS analysis concepts evolves in a new direction in the role of marketing management to influence the traditional marketplaces, as well as to influence contemporary market-spaces, in order to co-create value in a way that would be expected and accepted by the stakeholders involved, including the target customers. In such SCS dynamics, the ultimate goal is sustaining the competitive advantage of a business firm and/or its products or services, in comparison to the competitive products or services.

Future research and practice could be centred on typifying the nature of SCS: why, when and how the SCS arises; recognising the early growth and declining stages of SCSs and its building-blocks to intensify co-creation; and recognising the role of relational perspectives to identify, establish, maintain and enhance SCSs, in order to understand the underlying variables, so that the SCS could evolve and be outlined based on a logical sequence of relationships and interactions. Another avenue for future research would be correlating these interconnected concepts of transactional marketing (sales and production concepts of marketing), marketing mix, added value, value optimisation, value co-creation, stakeholder relationship management, S-D logic, SCS and other emerging concepts, in relation to the market dynamics, in order to enrich the strategic direction through this evolving strategic marketing management philosophy. Beside the academic interest, further research will also satisfy the need for explicit guidance for practice.

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