MARKETING FLEXIBILITY ORIENTATION AND MARKETING PERFORMANCE: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, several industries are faced extreme pressures that relate to globalization progress, fast changing technology, as well as customers' needs and behavior changing. In terms of marketing practice, managers are facing with challenge for responding to environmental change. Therefore, marketing flexibility orientation is the key significant strategy for a firm that will lead in responding to the satisfaction of a customer, have success in firm survival, achieve in competitive advantage, and accomplish superior performance under environmental change. This paper aims to explore and the relationships between marketing flexibility orientation and marketing performance. In addition, this paper proposes a conceptual model of marketing flexibility orientation, which comprise of five newly dimensions include, marketing alliance enhancement, collaborative new product development, marketing knowledge integration, customer information exchange, and stakeholder learning competency, based on the dynamic capability and contingency theories. Moreover, a discussion of the theoretical and managerial contributions and future research direction are included.

INTRODUCTION

Due to rapidly changing technology, globalization progress, customers' needs and changing demands, business environment, and extreme competition, various business sectors have faced strong pressures (Shih &Jue, 2006). Consequently, firms face ever more complexity and increased in their competition fields. As such, managers are facing challenges in responding to both internal and external change (Combe, 2012). One of the most significant drivers for current management practice is the need to better understand flexibility.

The literature indicates that the flexibility topic is growing in many business disciplines as emphasized in large articles published on the topic (Combe, 2012). Both theoretical and technological growth has increased the essential of flexibility for customer satisfaction, competitive advantage and performance (Gurau, 2009). Likewise, strategic flexibility refers to abilities that facilitate firms to respond or lead to change that respond tothe changing of the environment (Evans, 1991; Sanchez, 1995; Grewal &Tansuhaj, 2001). In addition, strategic flexibility can also lead to change when in current operation,and fast-moving, hyper-competitive markets (Evans, 1991; Johnson et al., 2003).

However, in terms of marketing practice, managers are confronting challenges when leading and responding to environmental change. Furthermore, the need and behavior of consumers are unpredictable. In addition, there are frequently high and contrasting customer value systems and lifestyles (Firat, Dholakia&Venkatesh, 1993). Consequently, flexibility is vital to deal with such the consumer behavior changes (Combe, 2012). Marketing flexibility orientation is one of several strategic terms that have the capability to deal with pressures for change and the result of a former problem (Grewal &Tansuhaj, 2001). Apparently, the topic of marketing flexibility is relevant to flexibility assumptions in different strategy paradigms, including the internal environment, external environment; andare balanced with both the internal and external environment (Combe, 2012). Various factors that are important to marketing flexibility orientation include marketing alliance focus (Fisch&Zschoche, 2011); improvement and generating skills, knowledge, and learning of both employees and other stakeholders (Berings et al., 2005); establishment of new product development; improvement of technology and innovation (Matthyssens et al., 2005); firm resource allocation; and customer needs understanding. In addition, flexibility needs high technology settings for the reason that managers face relatively distinctive challenges to cope with continuous dynamic change all along (Evans, 1991). Likewise, some researchers have focused on the necessity of unique resources for creating and defending positions, innovation, and leadership (Hooley &Greenley, 2005; Menguc, Auh& Shih, 2007; Teece, 2007; Theoharakis& Hooley, 2008). Therefore, marketing flexibility orientation is the key significant strategy for a firm that will lead in responding to the satisfaction of a customer, have success in firm survival, achieve in competitive advantage, and accomplish superior performance under environmental change (Taussig, 2013).

To clearly understand it, this research focuses on marketing flexibility orientation with five new dimensions, including, marketing alliance enhancement, collaborative new product development, marketing knowledge integration, customer information exchange, and stakeholder learning competency, based on the dynamic capability and contingency theories. These new dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation are predicted to effect to marketing performance through the relationships of marketing innovation, marketing excellence, marketing effectiveness, and marketing satisfaction. Therefore, the main research question in this paper is, "How is marketing flexibility orientation associated with firm marketing performance?" Likewise, the main research objective aims to explore the relationships between marketing flexibility orientation and marketing performance.

The next section reviews the previous research and the related literature on marketing flexibility orientation, describes the theoretical framework to explain the conceptual model and the relationships among the different variables, as well as develops the related propositions. Furthermore, the conclusion, theoretical and managerial contributions, and future research direction will be discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

This paper aims to integrate several theoretical perspectives that support how marketing flexibility orientation affects marketing performance. Two theories that are employed for supporting this research are the dynamic capability theory and the contingency theory. First, dynamic capabilities are introduced by Teece, Pisano &Schuen (1997).The concept of dynamic capability is defined as the ability of a firm to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies in order to deal with the quick change of environments (Teece, Pisano &Schuen, 1997). Dynamic capability theory can explain a behavior of a firms focus to reconfigure, integrate, recreate and renew its capabilities and resources and, most essentially, reconstruct and upgrade its core capabilities for responding to the changing of environments to attain the sustainability of competitive advantage (Wang & Ahmed, 2007).

On the other hand, according to the contingency theory, the context of organizational structure function is simultaneously determined by a variety of factors that include endogenous and exogenous factors such as business strategy, environmental uncertainty, stakeholders, and competitors (Anderson & Young, 1997; Liu & Pan, 2007). Typically, there is no one best way to deal with an organization (Galbraith, 1973). However, the contingency theory proposes that the effectiveness of firm is based on capability of firm to adapt to the internal and external environments (Lawrence &Lorsch, 1967).

In summary, the two theories which are employed for this research include the dynamic capability theory and the contingency theory, which are integrated to describe the phenomena. These relationships are presented in Figure 1.

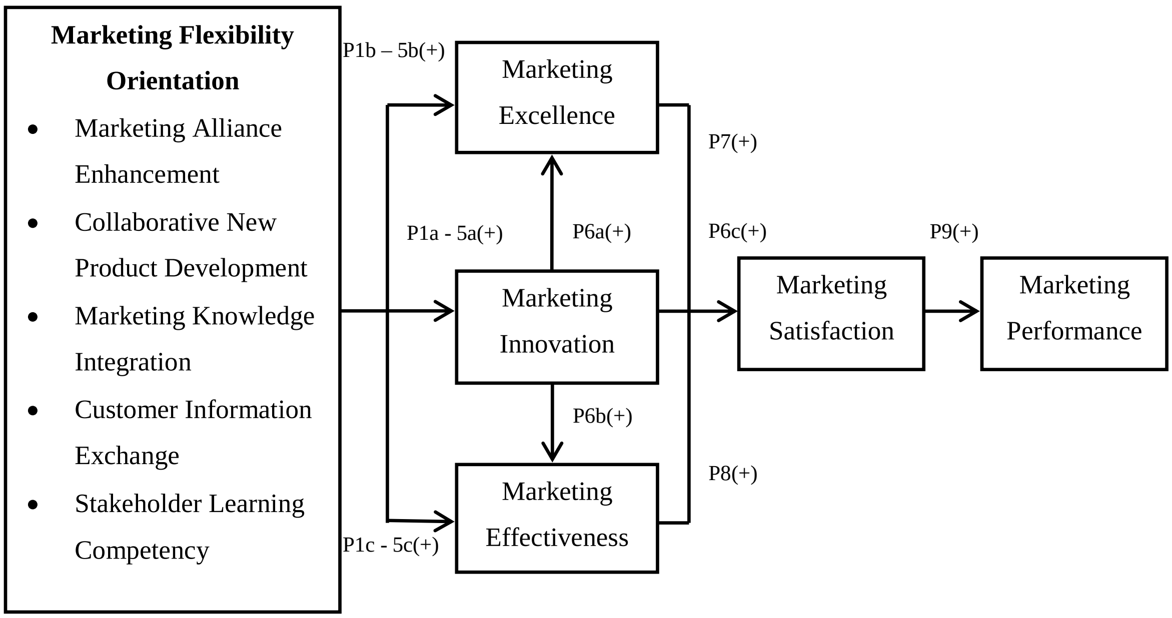

Figure 1A Conceptual Model of Marketing Flexibility Orientation and Marketing Performance

Marketing Flexibility Orientation

Flexibility has been broadly accepted as a main factor to respond to environmental change, which provides contribution to achievement and survival of organizations when they face marketing competition (Li, Su & Liu, 2010). Flexibility can be linked to several functional areas such as operations, management-maintaining excess capacity, flexible manufacturing equipment processes, managementhaving a decentralized decision-making system, strategic management-strategic flexibility, overcoming inertia, marketing-participation in multiple product markets, finance-having emergency borrowing and stock-issuing power, and HRM-labor flexibility (Aaker&Mascarenhas, 1984). In addition, flexibility is defined in diverse literature and in specific ways (Rubin & Martin, 1994). Gupta &Goyal (1989) refer to flexibility as the ability to deal with environmental uncertainty. Whereas, Bahrami (1992) refers to flexibility as the ability to constantly respond to both anticipated and unanticipated change, and to modify to the changing consequences that are unexpected. This ability of firms responds to the changing of the environment in current markets that are hypercompetitive and fast-moving (Grewal &Tansuhaj,

2001). Likewise, Buckley &Casson (1998) indicate that flexibility also enhances the ability of an organization to rearrange resources quickly in response to change.

The strategic flexibility notion is probably borderingon an everyday understanding of flexibility. It is the ability to do something other than that which had been originally intended (Evans, 1991). Consequently, there are two ways for strategic flexibility conceptualizing; namely, the variation and diversity of strategies andthe degree in which companies can fast shift from one strategy to another (Slack, 1983;Nadkarni& Narayanan, 2004).

Strategic flexibility facilitates a firm to predict the needs of consumers and achieve proactively, whichis an outcome of developing additional innovative and creative products, for both domestic and international markets (Matthyssens, Pauwels&Vandenbempt, 2005). Although strategic flexibility is currently of interest in the marketing literature on is topic, it also has historically presented few studies in marketing flexibility issues (Combe, 2012).

In terms of marketing, marketing flexibility orientation is one of several strategy terms that has the capability to deal with pressures for change and the result of a prior crisis (Grewal &Tansuhaj, 2001). Marketing flexibility orientation refers to the ability of the firm to adapt, learn, and obtain benefit from marketing environmental change in order to achieve advantage and superior performance. Using flexibility orientation to better meet inter-organizational and intra-organizational requirements may allow the firm to develop a competitive advantage that has an effect on improving marketing performance. Therefore, flexibility, regarding capabilities to recognize changes in the environment, rapidly creates new ways to respond to those changes (Katsuhiko &Hitt, 2004). Likewise, Taussig (2013) indicates that marketing flexibility is the key strategy that will lead to responding to the satisfaction of customers, success in firm survival, achieving competitive advantage, and accomplishing superior performance under environmental change.

However, this research adapts the marketing flexibility concept from Gurau (2009), which provides the flexibility of a marketing systems model. According to Gurau (2009), the flexibility of the marketing systems model represents the main feature of participative marketing systems that link to three elements, including flexibility of participation, flexibility of interaction, and flexibility of implementation. In addition marketing flexibility allows interaction with employees, customers, and other stakeholders within specifics determined by a company’s skills, resources and profitability objectives. Therefore, this research attempts to provide more detail as discussed on the five dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation and its consequences. As such, marketing flexibility orientation has five dimensional components that are indicated to assess how marketing flexibility orientation creates marketing outcomes and marketing performance; namely, marketing alliance enhancement, collaborative new product development, marketing knowledge integration, customer information exchange, and stakeholder learning competency.

Marketing Alliance Enhancement

Lavie, Lechner& Singh (2007) mention that an alliance is a voluntary arrangement among independent firms or partners that exchange and share resources for joining and developing the technologies. Marketing alliance has relevance to the ability of firms to generate higher returns from marketing alliances over time (Swaminathan& Moorman, 2009). In accordance with Day &Nedungadi (1994), marketing ability entails complex and rich marketing knowledge and skills that will enable an alliance partner’s strategy to coordinate resources of marketing and the overall improvement performance of the alliance. In this paper, marketing alliance enhancement is defined as an ability of a firm to emphasize its own ability to coordinate operations among other firms or partners that exchange, join, and share resources; market information, technologies development, and generate new ways of firm improvement in order to respond to environmental change and generate marketing effectiveness (Rosenkopf et al., 2001;Lavie, Lechner& Singh, 2007).

In addition, Kogut (1988) states that strategic alliance is a way for managers to learn managerial capacities and skills. In particular, it can become involved in information exchange, the design and guarantee of new products, negotiation and evaluation of proposals, and monitoring of partner agreements with marketing alliance decisions (Farrell &Saloner, 1988). Therefore, the role of marketing alliance strategies is mechanisms for managerial organizational learning. Likewise, there are several aspects that relate to the role and benefit of alliance strategy; for example, strategic alliances involved in cooperative arrangements, flows and linkages with resources utilization, and governance organizations structures for the mutual achievement of organizational objectives linked to the company mission of each sponsoring firm (Parkhe, 1991). In addition, Rosenkopf et al., (2001) mention that the potential benefits available to partners in alliances include access to technical market information, networking, investment opportunities, R&D, engineering, marketing resources, and the evolution of industry standards. Likewise, an alliance is related to managerial experiences of their competency in generating new growth opportunities (Kor, 2003), adaptation to change, access to technical and market information, and gaining insights into the skills and technological innovations of other partners (Cavazos &Varadarajan, 2012). As such, a marketing alliance enables a firm to establish superior performance (Lavie, Lechner& Singh, 2007).

Also, recent studies recognize the potential collaborations from diverse resources and argue that collaborating with diverse partners provides opportunities for gaining new information that contributes to innovation (Wuyts, Dutta &Stremersch 2004; Swaminathan& Moorman 2009). As such, marketing alliance enhancement benefits a firm in learning to develop structures and systems that are more adaptable and responsive to environmental change (Dodgson, 1993). These notions lead to posit the following proposition.

P1: Marketing alliance enhancement has a positive influence on (a) marketing innovation, (b) marketing excellence, and (c) marketing effectiveness.

Collaborative New Product Development

Prior study on the issue of new product development has identified new product development as a core capability, and has a significant effect on the overall performance of the firm (Reid & Brady, 2012). Furthermore, the importance of driving-market activity attempts to encounter customer needs but also searches for new products for responding to customer demand (Beverland, Eving&Matanda, 2006).

New product development is a significant activity, depending on the orientation and innovativeness that impacts on customer value creation (Baker &Sinkula, 1999). It is mentioned as a source of competitive advantage (Li, Liu & Zhao, 2006). In addition, new product development also has more benefits to a firm, such as knowledge competence of cross-functions in problem-solving. Moreover, firms that concentrate on strategic orientation of new product development can also achieve effective new product development and reduce the risk of innovation from rapidly-changing market environments (Li, Liu & Zhao, 2006). Thus, the firms that establish and introduce new products or services shows that these firms have a concern for the response to customers and are more likely to gain performance.

Actually, a firm not only accomplishes business strategy, but also intends to cooperate with activities in each firm unit in order to meet the concept of collaboration. Collaboration is the ability to cooperate and be willing to collaborate with the others, which are factors that affect improving managerial performance (Fyall, 2012). Each firm establishes a connection with other firms via the collaboration of operation, and connects the relationships which are important factors that provide relationships toward networking, with each other. As such, a firm will acquire numerous resources and capabilities which share main activities with other partners (Tanpinyoputtikhun&Ussahawanitchakit, 2009). Specifically, collaboration encourages the development of individual, interdependent dynamic goals, and can exchange ideas for the problem-solving of organizations in order to create or increase their work efficiently and effectively.

Therefore, collaboration for new product development is defined as the ability of a firm to promote corporate policy and be willing to collaborate with both organizational members and partners to create a new idea, product, or service in order to achieve marketing performance (Nakata &Sivakuma, 1996;Fyall, 2012). Likewise, collaboration for new product development helps to save the cost and time of gathering and transferring of research and development, marketing activities, and production process (Kim et al., 2010). In particular, this process regularly involves the tasks of information processing; namely, new product idea generation, business attractiveness analysis, and market testing that involve customer offerings, which are, in turn, regarded as the important factors for new product innovation. Hence, the proposition is proposed as follows:

P2: Collaborative new product development has a positive influence on (a) marketing innovation, (b) marketing excellence, and (c) marketing effectiveness.

Marketing Knowledge Integration

Srivastava, Shervani& Fahey (1999) suggest that the concept of marketing knowledge is regarding fundamental marketing tasks, and incorporates market information that create customer value. Furthermore, marketing knowledge also can be defined as the process outcomes which stem from internal and external sources. Similarly, Ogrean, Herciu&Belascu (2009) suggest that a marketing knowledge set regardsthe understanding of the how the organization fits into the business environment, which includes the firm's strategies and products, and the organizational resources to track market opportunities. Thus, marketing knowledge has been intellectualized as important material of marketing (Moorman & Miner, 1998).

Likewise, Brockman &Mogan (2003) define knowledge integration as the incorporating of new information processes into an existing knowledge body. In addition, some scholars focus on acquiring manufacturing-specific knowledge such as technological or industrial organizational know-how (Lam, 1997; Bresman, Birkinshaw& Nobel, 1999). Nevertheless, Casillas et al., (2009) propose that the generating of a knowledge model comprises several stages; it includes existing knowledge, new knowledge acquisition, knowledge integration, action and feedback. As such, this process is considered as knowledge sources which can help a firm to bring about firm performance. Therefore, in this research, marketing knowledge integration is defined as the firm's ability to acquire marketing knowledge diversity, share marketing information, and exchange marketing ideas with all member organizations for enhancing skills and generating superior firm performance (Hanvanich, Droge&Calanetone, 2003; Fang &Zuo, 2009).

In environmental change, marketing knowledge integration can help to fulfill a better understanding of marketing processes, increasing the quality of employee competency, quickly meet market demand, be ready to respond to environmental change, and enhance firm advantage and survival (Nonaka& Toyama, 2000; Jetter&Kraaijenbrink, 2006).

To integrate marketing knowledge, the firm needs to collect and use information about the customer, competitor, and stakeholder. Therefore, this strategy is one to improve marketing proficiency and enhances the skills of new knowledge management (Fang &Zuo, 2009). Therefore, the proposition is proposed as follows:

> P3: Marketing knowledge integration has a positive influence on (a) marketing innovation, (b) marketing excellence, and (c) marketing effectiveness.

Customer Information Exchange

As marketing capabilities improve, firms require building more interaction with the outside environment in order to acquire significant information and employ it to offer unique value-added products, superior quality, and innovative features to the customer. In particular, the contact between an organization and its customers is a great opportunity to learn more about the need and behavior of customers and to establish and maintain the relationship with them. As such, the firm's contact with a customer tends to provide this information which is product and service quality for responding to customer needs.

Customer information exchange is defined as the firm's ability to share and exchange information with its customer about needs, requirements, preferences, attitudes, behavior, and customer ideas with other customers and organizational members for generating products and service (Cannon &Perreault, 1999; Garcia-Murillo &Annabi, 2002; Chesrough, 2003; Claycomb&Frankwick, 2004; Salomann et al., 2005). The exchanged information constitute both the source of innovation ideas (Lau, Tang & Yam, 2010), and the base for improving innovation absorptive capability (Hughes & Wareham, 2010), by collecting the knowledge from customer interaction points (Salomann et al., 2005). In addition, customer knowledge management is in regards to gaining, sharing and expanding the customer's knowledge, which can establish benefits for both customers and the firm (Gibbert, Leibold&Probst, 2002). In particular, a company learns from its customers who obtain customized solutions and greater service. Thus, this information influences customer relationship management (Maklan, Knox &Ryals, 2005). Meanwhile, knowledge that customers share with the firm induces and generates value for the firm. The firm tends to deploy this knowledge and information to develop product and services of the company. In other words, customers require a fast response to their changing information needs through the product or service purchase, or a resolution of a problem after the sale. Hence, exchange and sharing of information of customer to firm is a win-win benefit.

Customer information has various benefits for the firms. Important customer information is including information about products and service, markets and suppliers that firms offer to their customers.It affects to the perception of service quality among customers; generates ideas about products, service, suppliers and markets for the continuous development of products and services, the needs, requirements, preferences, attitudes, future desires, connections, purchasing behavior, and financial capability of their customers (Garcia-Murillo &Annabi, 2002; Chesrough, 2003; Salomann et al., 2005). Customer information exchange enables firms to find ways for readily keeping track of the customer's needs, and more rapidly respond to changing customer requirements. It forces them to build flexibility into their process and technical infrastructure. As a result it may generate a marketing advantage (Wei & Wang, 2011) and lead to sustainable competitive advantage. Hence, the proposition is proposed as follows:

P4: Customer information exchange has a positive influence on (a) marketing innovation, (b) marketing excellence, and (c) marketing effectiveness.

Stakeholder Learning Competency

Continuous learning is essential to the efficient knowledge development base of organizations. Learning competency is essential for leaders, for using it to evaluate and drive business (Siewiorek et al., 2012). In addition, learning competency is defined as an ability to gain, understand and implement skills, knowledge and experience through education, training and practice in order to obtain goal achievement and obtain job achievement (Prasong&Ussahawanitchakit, 2012). Moreover, learning capability can also be used in the issue of stakeholders, which is a factor that has an important role to the firm. The ways in which stakeholders regard an organization have been varied. Some groups, like shareholders, the workforce, trade unions and consumers, play only in relation to the organization (Roloff, 2007), as well as other stakeholders such as employees and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Davis & MacDonald, 2010). According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives.'' Likewise, Daboub&Calton (2002) state that stakeholders are individuals or groups with whom the organization interacts or has interaction, and any individual or group who can affect or is affected by the decisions, actions , goals or policies of the firm.

According to Jurgens et al., (2010), building and managing stakeholder relationships consists of four steps. Firstly, the process initiates the identification of the stakeholders whose needs the firm must meet. The task of management for generating a list of the firm's stakeholders is for the identifyof its stakeholders, and to formally acknowledge those stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). Secondly, firms have recognized the most essential stakeholder groups in that they must consider the need to determine needs, problems, and potential strategic threats to each firm's group (Murray &Montanari, 1986). Thirdly, firms have developed policies and behaviors essential to meeting expectations of stakeholders. Finally, firms have to monitor stakeholder satisfaction.

As aforementioned, stakeholder learning competency is defined as an ability of a firm to understand about the attitudes, needs, and behavior of stakeholders, and establish the relationship with whom the organization interacts in order to enhance firm performance (McDermott & Stock, 1999; Daboub&Calton, 2002). Learning is a factor toward progress for all stakeholders, including internal and external stakeholders. Through joint learning, alliance partners can share their firms' expertise with other alliance members, thus enhancing and improving the overall alliance core competency (Mehta et al., 2006).

In addition, it is directed to help a firm learn, gather, and leverage management know-how and best practices to use technology for the organization (Chaikambang, Ussahawanitchakit&Boonlua, 2012). As a result, the organization can create better knowledge and innovation over competitors. Likewise, close consideration be paid to the firm that should give attention to firms' responses or failures to respond, which is vital for understanding and identifying the needs, expectations, attitudes, desires, values, interests and strategic threats of stakeholder (Turner, 2001; Jurgens et al., 2010). Then, when the firm has identified its important stakeholders, it must continue develop and adjust the appropriate firm policies and behaviors to satisfy these stakeholders on an ongoing basis (Murray &Montanari, 1986). As a result, the organization can create better knowledge and innovation over competitors. Hence, the proposition is proposed as follows:

> P5: Stakeholder learning competency has a positive influence on (a) marketing innovation, (b) marketing excellence, and (c) marketing effectiveness.

The Effects of Marketing Flexibility Orientation on Its Consequences

This section explores the effects of five dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation that consist of marketing alliance enhancement, collaborative new product development, marketing knowledge integration, customer information exchange, and stakeholder learning competency on their consequences; comprising marketing innovation, marketing excellence, marketing effectiveness, marketing satisfaction, and marketing performance as discussed below.

Marketing Innovation

Typically, the capability to innovate is a main factor that impacts business performance. Both practitioners and academics on the innovation issue accept that it is a significant driver of progress and competitive success (Sawhney et al., 2006; Denning, 2007). Especially central to the innovation concept is the newness idea (Gupta, Tesluk& Taylor 2007).

Generally, innovation is a strategy of firms to learn and interact with a degree of newness concentration, developing new products or entering new markets with existing products and having a creative climate (Berthon, Hulbert & Pitt, 1999). Furthermore, innovation can create value for firms by generating new products and services, new technologies, and new markets (Haddad &Algadeer, 2004). Moreover, the capability to innovate is reflected in the firm ability to implement or adopt new ideas, products, or processes successfully (Charpavang&Ussahawanitchakit, 2010).

Similarity, this research defines marketing innovation as newness of technologies, ideas, processes, products or services, implementing them in markets, and acquiringnew methods which lead to business achievement and advantage (Berthon, Hulbert & Pitt, 1999; Haddad &Algadeer, 2004; Vijande& Gonzalez, 2007).

Previous research finds that the relationships of marketing innovation have a positive effect on firm performance (Shergill, 2005). Similarly, Branzei&Vertinsky (2006) indicate that the process of marketing innovation leads to a firm's is competitive advantage. Innovation generates the acceptance of new ideas and processes of a firm (Garcia &Calantone, 2002). Thus, a firm needs to establish technological capabilities as well as skills of employees and resource allocation within the organization (Anderson &Tushman, 1990; Song et al., 2005). As such, marketing innovation is regarded as a mechanism for increasing product and service differentiation, sustaining a competitive advantage, and securing greater performance (Dos Santos, Peffers&Mauer, 1993; Ferguson, Finn & Hall, 2005; Spacapan&Bastic, 2007; Naidoo, 2010). Therefore, the proposition is proposed as follows:

> P6: Marketing innovation has a positive influence on (a) marketing excellence, (b) marketing effectiveness, and (c) marketing satisfaction

Marketing Excellence

Marketing excellence is regarded as the best practice of marketing strategy to generate marketing expertsand effective business strategy (Kanchanda, Ussahawanitchakit&Jhundra-Indra, 2012). In particular, marketing excellence refers to an ability of a firm to encompass a greater understanding of markets, making strategic choices, delivering value, and monitoring value better than the rivals (Jagersma, 2006). Likewise, firms achieve efficient marketing activity, cost reduction, and product quality, which lead firms to higher marketing performance (Reimann et al., 2010). Therefore, this research refers to marketing excellence as the ability of firm to comprehend a better understanding of marketing strategy, integrate marketing practices in value and satisfaction for delivering to customers, and success in marketing performance over the competitors (Jagersma, 2006; Stuart-Kregor, 2006).

To gain greater market share, profitability, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, is the primary goal of firms. Firms who gain the highest outcomes achieve market excellence reputation. Similarly, Stuart-Kregor (2006) indicates that marketing excellence is the driving force of a company to achieve marketing performance.

The challenge of strategy in marketing excellence is strong, updating the product development program, customer orientation, and understanding the value of customer's behavior for competitive importance leading to superior performance (Jagersma, 2006). Acceptably, the products development program makes strategic choices to be flexible and find the most profitable channels (Jagersma, 2006).

Moreover, Stuart-Kregor (2006) concludes that the important drivers of a corporation completing, marketing excellence are involved at the market performance and market success levels. Furthermore, marketing excellence reflects to superior practical ability to define and understand markets more than competitors. Reciprocally, to obtain excellence, firms aim to achieve efficient marketing skills, cost reduction, product quality development and understanding of threats and opportunities that arise from the external environment (Smith, 2007). As such, if a firm achieves these goals, the firm will more likely succeed in superior performance. Hence, the proposition is proposed as follows:

P7: Marketing excellence has a positive influence on marketing satisfaction.

Marketing Effectiveness

Marketing effectiveness is the measure of the marketing operational process that follow the right things that the firm does (Connor &Tynan, 1999). It is relevant to several factors including customer, competitive, corporate, and exogenous factors (Nwokah, 2006).

There are several researchers who provide definitions of marketing effectiveness. As such, Nwokah&Ahiauzu (2008) define marketing effectiveness as the operational function to enhance spending in marketing to gain superior results of goals in both the short and long-term. Likewise, Kotler (1977) defines marketing effectiveness as an ability of firms to learn about the market, identify opportunities, and select target markets to offer superior value to customers. However, this research provides the definition of marketing effectiveness as marketing operations to obtain a greater outcome of a firm goal, both short and long-term (Nwokah&Ahiauzu, 2008).

Pervious research examines the effect of marketing effectiveness. The findings of marketing effectiveness have a strong positive effect on strong market orientation, enhancing customer satisfaction, bettering competitive advantage, continuing long-term growth, having superior firm performance, and achieving excellent firm profitability (Ussahawanitchakit&Intakhan, 2011). In addition, Ussahawanitchakit (2012) found that marketing effectiveness has a strong influence on customer satisfaction, market orientation, long-term growth, profitability, and firm performance.

Actually, when firms have employed marketing effectiveness in their business operations and marketing activities, it is likely to result in a greater action in firm operations. Especially, when the organizational objectives are achieved, it will lead to the acceptance of stakeholders. As such, marketing effectiveness tends to succeed in customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and firm performance. Hence, the proposition is proposed as follows:

P8: Marketing effectiveness has a positive influence on marketing satisfaction.

Marketing Satisfaction

Typically, satisfaction can refer to an "overall customer attitude toward a service provider" (Levesque & McDougall, 1996). It is regarded as major marketing activity outcome that links between decision-making processes and post-purchase or post-consumption processes (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). However, in the marketing area, satisfaction can be measured from managerial feedback outcome. Managerial satisfaction offers a benchmark of performance measurement that in against organizational prospect and influences future strategies (Shoham, 1999). Likewise, Bonoma& Clark (1988) indicate that marketing performance is the satisfaction of management with the outcomes of marketing activities. It relates to feedback outcomes of marketing activity in several ways such as, profit, sales, customer satisfaction, product acceptance, stakeholder acceptance, competitor acceptance, and marketing acceptance, which affect a firm's perception (Kotler, 1994; Levesque & McDougall, 1996; Nwokah, 2006; Chung &Holdsworth, 2009; Prachsriphum&Ussahawanitchakit, 2010). In addition, several performance measures were used by researchers in the field, and a conciliation solution was, consequently, implemented by grouping various performance measures into eight categories, including growth-in-sales related, sales-related, profit-related, growth-in-profit related, market share-related, satisfaction with change in performance, goal achievement satisfaction, and composite scales of performance (Theodosiou&Leonidou, 2003).

Likewise, Zineldin (2000) suggests that satisfaction is a reaction of emotion to the difference between what is anticipationed and what is received. Therefore, marketing satisfaction is defined as a reaction of emotion to the difference between what are organizational expectations and what is received in marketing activity (Bonoma& Clark, 1988; Shoham, 1999; Zineldin, 2000). In addition, satisfaction can also be defined as a complex psychological variable, evaluating the efficiency of performance, which relates the marketing program (Bonoma& Clark, 1988; Lages& Montgomery, 2004). According toCadogan, Diamantopoulos &Siguaw (2002), performance as a measurement of performance, can measured through the satisfaction of a manager with four objectives of a marketing program effectiveness including, image of a firm, profitability of business, growth of sales, and market share. Likewise, Navarro et al., (2010) found that the satisfaction of marketing plays an essential role to the building of performance and increases perceived competitive advantages, which is essential tothe evolution of a firm's own activity. Therefore, the proposition is proposed as follows:

P9: Marketing satisfaction has a positive influence on marketing performance.

Marketing Performance

Marketing performance assessment is significant in an organization, because it relates to evaluation and reflection of output and input aspects (O'Sullivan &Abela, 2007). In terms of performance, marketing performance can separate into two types, namely, financial performance and non-financial performance (Schmid&Kotulla, 2011). However, in prior research, there is some research that refers to the meaning and measurement of marketing performance. For instance, marketing performance is defined as a firm's emphasis on success, which consists of marketing adaptation capability and response capability to customer demands in environmental change (Arthurs &Busenitz, 2006; Gao, 2010).

Additionally, Morgan (2012) argues that marketing performance can also define the firm's capability to increase firm activities and sales volumes which are the ultimate organizational goals in terms of financial performance. Meanwhile, in this research, marketing performance is defined as perceptions that involve outcomes of the firm, that indicate the achievement of the firm, including customer satisfaction, customer acceptance, sales growth, market share, and overall performance (Akkrawimut&Ussahawanitchakit, 2011).

Apparently, market performance is the outcome of market strategy toward customers, the marketplace, and the reputational benefits of the reputation for the firm. More clearly, comprehensive performance conceptualization and performance comprises financial and non-financial measurements, which help marketers to completely understand how their strategies affect the performance (Varadarajan&Jayachandran, 1999). Particularly in area of the marketing, marketing performance, as performance assessment, reflects the marketing outcomes. Similarly, marketing activities is measurement of customer behavior, loyalty and satisfaction (O'Sullivan &Abela, 2007). Also, marketing performance is an outcome of marketing strategies for the value of customers and the reputation of the firm. Additionally, a marketing performance measure of profitability, market share, and market growth, will affect marketing success.

As a result, these seem to involve profitability and market performance. On the one hand, they are steering and improving firm-specific assets that will affect firm sustainability. Therefore, marketing performance plays a key role in evaluating the achievement of firm objectives.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Contributions

Since the strategic flexibility topic is currently of interest in the marketing literature, it also has historically presented few studies in marketing flexibility issues (Combe, 2012). The paper provides some theoretical contributions as well as managerial implications.

This paper attempts to integrate various theoretical viewpoints that support how marketing flexibility orientation affects marketing performance. In addition, the theoretical contribution relates to conceptualizing the view of marketing flexibility orientation. Furthermore, this paper provides new dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation that are based on theories, including the dynamic capability and contingency theories, and prior literature. Similarity, the paper proposes that marketing flexibility orientation has an effect in enhancing marketing performance. It also provides more understanding of the relationships among five dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation through marketing innovation, marketing excellence, marketing effectiveness, and marketing satisfaction.

Likewise, the discussions of this paper also provide a managerial contribution. Implementation of marketing flexibility orientation has benefit in enhancing the performance of marketing. It is an importance strategy for firm that to preparing and responding to environment changing.

Future Research Directions

Future research, may study marketing flexibility orientation in more detail; for example, it could concentrate on antecedent that can effect it, as well as moderating the effect of marketing flexibility orientation. In addition, this conceptual frameworkis developed for hypothesis testing in order to test the relationship of each variable.

On the one hand, information and communication technology businesses are interesting targets for representing the effect of marketing flexibility orientation in firms. Information and communication technology businesses provide the numerous opportunities to overcome and the importance of country development. Several benefit of information and communication technology can help improve communications, reduce marketing and transaction costs, launch new products and service, improve efficiency and productivity of operations, and obtain competitive advantage in the global market. Thus, this industry is interesting for future study.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides a conceptual framework and a review of previous studies and relevant literature that explain more detail of the relationship between marketing flexibility orientation and marketing performance. This is purposedby five newly-developed dimensions of marketing flexibility orientation, including: marketing alliance enhancement, collaborative new product development, marketing knowledge integration, customer information exchange, and stakeholder learning competency. In addition, this paper also provides the consequences of marketing flexibility orientation; namely, marketing innovation, marketing excellence, marketing effectiveness, and marketing satisfaction. Moreover, this paper provides the discussion of the theoretical and managerial contributions, and also suggests the direction for future research.

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