

Marketing Education and Marketing Personnel as Research Areas

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In the second of the reports developed by the American Marketing Association task force on research on basic marketing problems, Smith and Cooke ask for research to guide marketing educators in relating education to job performance as well as evaluating curricula and teaching methods. They also point out that there is need to study the best means of identifying, attracting, and stimulating marketing people.

Banks' commentary raises the question of education in marketing vs. education for marketing. He also seconds suggestions by Smith and Cooke that education in marketing may well be an efficient vehicle for understanding contemporary society.

Marketing Education

THERE is little doubt that the character and scope of marketing education is undergoing continual change. Increased emphasis is being given to graduate programs in marketing. There is a move away from courses in certain subject areas, particularly those in the functional and institutional categories. At the same time there has been increased interest in other courses, many of which fall in the categories of "Theory," "Analytical," and "Seminars or Independent Study."

There is, however, a real question as to whether there is available to marketing educators the solid body of knowledge they should have as a basis for decision in shaping marketing curricula. Hopefully, research in marketing education will furnish factual data which will make it less difficult for marketing educators to tailor curricula so that they come closer to performing their function in the most efficient manner.

The Marketing Science Institute has published a study entitled "Marketing Education in the United States," which is essentially an analysis of trends in course offerings and in registrations in marketing courses in the member schools of the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business. In collaboration with the International Marketing Federation, the MSI study has been extended to include colleges, universities, and special institutes in other parts of the world. Such factual studies provide a great deal of information. They are also useful in raising a great many questions, the answers to which can be found only by additional research. Some of these are:

Education and Job Performance

What is the relationship between an individual's performance in a marketing position and his educational background? What kind of education provides the best base for the potential marketing management man? Follow-up studies of the professional experience of marketing students and others with different kinds of training can be done and would be of substantial benefit in providing insights and guidance to the development of the marketing curricula of the future. Perhaps one place to start would be to assemble the many studies of limited scope that have been made in this and in related areas as a base upon which to build.

Evaluation of Teaching Methods

What are the relative merits of different teaching methods as they pertain to various marketing courses? It seems clear that

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virtually all of the methods of instruction currently being used, for example, case method, the lecture method, and business games, have a role to play. However, their relative suitability for different areas and levels of instruction is not clear. Perhaps this is the place for the marketing man to put one of the tools that he values so highly to work, namely, the experimental method.

Relationship of Individual Course Offerings to the Overall Objective

To what extent are marketing educators aware of the relationship of each course required of a major in marketing to the final objective—the preparation of the student for a career in marketing? More information and analysis here would be useful in curriculum development as well as in counseling with individual students. A basic study along these lines might well extend beyond the marketing program itself to include the individual's total exposure to business education, in fact, his total educational experience. It may well be that the presumed dichotomy, the notion that broad liberal education and business education are mutually exclusive, can be validated or disproved by effective analysis in this area. Very few attempts have been made to demonstrate the extent to which the content of courses in marketing contributes to the student's ability to understand and to appreciate the world in which he lives in addition to providing him with professional skills and tools. The hypothesis that courses in marketing may well provide an efficient vehicle for teaching an understanding of contemporary society could turn out to be exciting.

Formal Education versus On-the-job Training

There appears to be a substantial lack of coordination among the goals, techniques, and procedures employed in business schools and in the content and character of on-the-job training carried on in the business community. A collaborative study might well provide the basis for improved understanding of the relationship between the academic and the business communities. Such a jointly sponsored exploration might begin with a series of discussion seminars between businessmen and marketing teachers, these discussions having as their objective the formulation of specific questions to be answered by research. To get such seminar discussions under way, they might well be organized around joint consideration of the results of studies, such as the MSI and IMF investigations.

Marketing Personnel

While marketing education seems to center around the supply side of the market for professional marketing people, "Marketing Personnel" focuses primarily on the demand side with the four following research opportunities:

The Predictability of Effectiveness in Marketing

This obviously basic question with regard to the selection and development of marketing personnel poses many problems from a methodological and procedural point of view. A start might be made by analyzing a number of case situations to determine with some precision exactly what talents and capabilities are required to perform the various tasks involved in various marketing jobs or positions, and to do this at such a level of detail that the result of the exercise would be a yardstick which then could be applied against the supply side of the market with productive results.

Early Identification of Marketing Talent

As a follow-on issue, it seems that if we had some idea of what constitutes marketing talent and where the need for it exists, we might be able to design or apply tests, structured employment interviews and what-not that would serve to increase the probability of accurate prediction of the presence of this talent. This would appear to be the most critical area requiring personnel research in the field of marketing. Marketing men these days are often self-designated or experience-designated. If one sets about to hire a young man for a marketing job, he has little or no basis of selection except an expression of interest combined with some sort of academic accomplishment.

Motivation

Little is known about the incentives that are really effective in the field of marketing. *Marketing*, to some degree, is inheriting the mantle once carried by the *sales* activity in companies; and there is some reason to suppose that sales personnel are effectively motivated by individual financial incentives. One has the suspicion, and perhaps it is no more than that, that the marketing man is not effectively stimulated by the same sort of incentives

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that have worked with salesmen. This is an area where a rather simple piece of research could produce useful results.

The Image of Marketing

It is a matter of common observation that sales and/or marketing activity has never been particularly successful in attracting the interest of the more gifted students. The marketing area seems to be something that a great many people fall into in more or less haphazard fashion. Clearly, if we are to make a science and profession of marketing, it is necessary that the field acquire stature and repute

as a highly regarded career among young people, particularly the college trained. In this age of highly-developed techniques for image measurement, it could turn out to be worthwhile to conduct such a project for the purpose of finding out what the image of marketing as a career really is among appropriate audiences. It thus would become a means for determining the course of action that the American Marketing Association and others might want to initiate to bring about some change. The efforts that have been made in this direction thus far by the Marketing and Sales Executives group job training but the proliferation of short courses; and others have not been conspicuously successful.

Commentary on "Marketing Education and Marketing Personnel as Research Areas"

SEYMOUR BANKS

Marketing Education

Education in Marketing vs Education for Marketing

THE questions raised by this paper are pervasive for all industry. As the rate of innovation accelerates, we find that both the demands upon education and the qualities demanded for long-run success in business are changing.

It used to be that education was of two kinds: it was purely honorific and represented conspicuous display of ornamental rather than utilitarian arts, clearly differentiating such a person from others of less exalted status, two examples being the long fingernails of the old Chinese mandarin class and the classical education of the English aristocracy. Or else, education was clearly functional and vocational in the sense that it gave someone the tools of his trade which were usable with relatively little modification for his entire professional career.

However, we find that as innovation becomes the order of the day, and as our society becomes more and more open to movement from one class to another because inherited status is of less consequence, many of the old bases for education no longer are applicable—in fact, they may even be perverse in their performance. In addition, the question of the proper nature of education for professional performance in a world of accelerating innovation becomes quite difficult.

Smith and Cooke write from the perspective of collegiate professional training in marketing for marketing. However, several major issues need to be faced. First of all, there is an issue touched upon by Professor LeBreton in his 1966 presidential address to the Academy of Management; he points out the need to educate future administrators on the basis of a model of the administrative process which would have general applicability across insti-

tutional groups and environments. The question of interest is what contribution courses in marketing can make to executives who increasingly serve as administrators in more than one organization at a given period of time (in addition to their jobs, executives frequently serve as officers or directors of civic, cultural, religious, and educational organizations ranging from neighborhood to national scope) as well as movement across organizational types during their professional life span. Smith and Cooke suggest that courses in marketing may provide an efficient vehicle for teaching an understanding of contemporary society. The challenge, of course, is to create the courses which fit marketing into this broad cultural/professional perspective.

Second, let us turn to the people who become professionally involved in marketing some time in their working careers. Since neither students nor their future employers are likely to be very good predictors of careers of specific individuals, one must raise the question of the match between college training and future employment. In other words, we should discover what proportion of the people who work as professional specialists in marketing were trained in marketing and other disciplines and the relative performance rates of marketers trained by various collegiate curricula. These studies would determine how the demand for marketing executives was satisfied, and what happened to the potential supply of students trained in marketing and the identification of those curricula which seemed to do best in preparing people for high-level performance in marketing.

It must be made clear that the comments made in the previous paragraph are not to be taken as any fundamental criticism of the sincerity and effort of marketing educators. They have undertaken many