

STATEMENT of RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Jones Salk once said that scientists never have an idea of what they might accomplish; all they do is to pursue a question and see where it leads. As far as my research philosophy is concerned, the research questions that I ask attempt to explain, predict, and understand interesting and challenging marketing phenomena in B-to-B marketing, marketing and society, and marketing research. Given that I am eager to become a researcher in the area of marketing, *what are the specific research issues that interest me, why do I think that these issues are important to me, how do these research areas contribute to the field of marketing, and what specific research projects are aimed at the specific research issues?* This essay aims to answer these questions.

Current and Future Research Questions in B-to-B marketing

B-to-B marketing is a vast and growing field in marketing. The confluence of globalization, the growing importance of knowledge flows, and the changing management of firms have an impact on how business is done and products are traded. This complex system motivates firms to find answers to the question of what capabilities they need to overcome the critical challenges they encounter. In this frame, my B-to-B research interests lie in three areas: (1) intra-organizational new product development procedures, (2) the role of networks, alliances, and partnerships in the innovation process, and (3) the role of market orientation in inter-organizational relationships.

First, in today's changing and increasingly uncertain, nonlinear, and complex business environment, it is reasonable to think that sustained competitive advantage depends significantly on developing new products, services, and processes. When the financial results of radical innovations are taken into account, the questions of (1) *What are the underlying factors that promote developing successful new products, services, and/or processes that organizations face in challenging business environment?* and (2) *Why only some firms surface as having achieved benchmark innovation performance?* motivate me to focus my research on effective innovation management in organizations. These research interests have resulted in two working papers. The first working paper investigates the roles of strategic orientations and ambidextrous management style in resolving the exploration and exploitation innovation paradox. This working paper was presented at the 2007 Society of Marketing Advances' Winter Conference. We intend to submit the completed manuscript to the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. For the second working paper, my co-author, Dr. Bob McDonald and I are exploring the role of absorptive capacity in firms' new product creativity and success. This working paper will be presented at the 2008 ISBM Academic Conference. The intended target for this paper is the *Strategic Management Journal*.

Second, many marketing scholars maintain that the exchange relationship is the primary subject matter and the focal point of marketing science. The exchange based paradigm has informed many

inquiries in the domain of inter-organizational relationships, one of which is networks and strategic alliances. Network capital that firms build into their linkages with other organizations is a key factor in 21st century economy. Many organizations enter into networks and strategic business alliances to quicken the pace of innovation, overcome budgetary constraints, share risks, and gain access to resources. Although it is well accepted that networks and strategic partnerships are essential to bring new products to market and introduce new process and technologies for their creation and delivery, there is a paucity of research in understanding the dynamics for effective innovation management in strategic alliances. Therefore, one of the questions that I aim to investigate is the following: *Which inter-organizational factors help new product alliance partners gain strategic advantages over competing dyads?* In my dissertation, a part of my model attempts to answer this question.

Finally, during almost two decades a movement toward thinking of marketing as an organization-wide process rather than a function has dominated both the marketing discipline and marketing practice. A profound manifestation of this change can be found in the market orientation literature. In general terms, market orientation has been discussed as a major prerequisite for being able to create, measure, and deliver superior customer value, which in turn is regarded as a major determinant of sustainable competitive advantage. New product development efforts have been discussed as the generation, dissemination, and utilization of information. Therefore, it would seem relevant to consider the market orientation of organizations to predict the performance of their new product development efforts. Much of the research in the market orientation literature has focused on the relationship between market orientation and innovation, and has mainly found support for such relationship. However, marketing research on market orientation has largely concentrated on various *intra-organizational* aspects of market orientation. Therefore, the questions that interest me, given the importance of market oriented behaviors of organizations in effective innovation management, are (1) *Can a new product alliance be market oriented?* (2) *If so, How?* (3) *What are the possible antecedents, consequences, and measures of a business strategy of inter-organizational market orientation in the context of new product development?* The main intended contribution of my dissertation is to seek answers to these questions. The potential target for my dissertation paper is the *Journal of Marketing*.

Current and Future Research Questions in Marketing and Society

An examination of my previous questions indicated in this essay reveals that they take a profit/micro/positive perspective of Hunt's¹ (1976) three dichotomies model of marketing. My macro-marketing related research questions focus on the interests of society with regard to marketing activities

¹ Hunt, Shelby D. (1976), "The Nature and Scope of Marketing," *Journal of Marketing*, 40 (3), p. 17-28.

of new product alliances. These research questions take a profit/macro/positive perspective. Marketing scholars have long debated the effects of intra-industry, cooperative activities of organizations on social welfare. Some have claimed that social welfare increases as a result of the information exchange between firms. In contrast, others have argued that competitive rivalry does not always lead to a maximization of social welfare, and it may be harmful to both society and consumer well-being. The main research questions that interest me related to these arguments are the following: (1) *How do market oriented new product alliances influence social welfare?* Given the widespread attention concerning the effects of market oriented behaviors of organizations on society, it seems relevant to question the same relationship in the new product alliance context. (2) *Does innovation primarily cause social changes or do social and economic changes primarily create demand for innovation and technological change?* Given the lack of empirical work investigating such causal direction, these questions can lead to many interesting and stimulating research regarding the relationship between innovation and its social impact.

In another macro-marketing related working paper, my co-author, Dr. Dale Duhan and I investigate the changes in gray market practices. We attempt to build our examination on Dr. Duhan's 1988 *Journal of Marketing* paper and investigate the two-decade changes in this area. Our examination focuses on both the legal and societal aspects of gray marketing activities in the world. The intended target for this paper is the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*.

Current and Future Research Questions in Marketing Education

I regard myself as one of those teachers who love learners, learning, and the teaching life. I strongly believe that teaching is one of the most profoundly intellectually challenging aspects of my job as a scholar. As a marketing scholar, I approach teaching and effective student learning as a research phenomenon, and thereby, include it in my research agenda. I am a strong believer in what is often referred to as Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

In the complex business world, I believe the idea that marketing students should be able to define and creatively solve problems, to efficiently and effectively work in teams, and to provide and receive critical feedback. Therefore, my research questions focus on how to create a learning environment which bolsters students' confidence, enhances their competences, provides them autonomy, and equips them with self-regulatory strategies. This research interest has resulted in a conference manuscript which will be presented at the 2008 AMA Summer Educators' conference. This paper is ready to be sent to the *Journal of Marketing Education*. In this research project, my co-author, Dr. Debra Laverie and I have empirically examined students' involvement in the assessment process. Based on the dynamic assessment literature, we have proposed a new pedagogical tool called Group Based Assessment (GBA). The basic components of this tool constitute in-class team learning, feedback process, and peer-

assessment. We found that GBA procedure, as an active learning and assessment technique, assists students to boost their intrinsic motivation, feel autonomous, use deep and meta learning strategies in their study, increase their perceived competence, and be task-mastery oriented.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe that the purpose of marketing research is to increase scientific understanding through a systematized and structured way to explain, predict, and understand marketing related phenomena. My position as a marketing scientist aligns nicely with the view of Paul Meehl who suggests that “there is a difference between the world and my view of it, the business of science is to get my view in harmony with the way the world is to the extent that is possible.”

Marketing is full of challenging, interesting, and stimulating research questions, and as a marketing scientist I definitely want to be a part of this adventurous/exciting domain. In the final analysis, only these questions matter when I look ahead: How can I best contribute to advancing marketing knowledge? What will be the impact of that knowledge on marketing stakeholders? And how much fun will I have in this learning process?