

Editorial: rethinking marketing

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It brings us great joy to present to the marketing academia, this special issue of decision on “Rethinking marketing”. The timing of the special issue cannot be considered more apt since many scholars have started to call for a critical review of our discipline and therefore a sharp perspective is now required to decide how and where to take our discipline as it deserves a more respectable position in society as well as in the board rooms. Since recent past marketing has been moving beyond serving the narrow objectives of profit enhancement for firms to a more broad-based notion of value enhancement for the society at large. This is aptly reflected in our choice of articles, and book reviews for this special issue. The content of this SI can be broadly divided into three categories—perspective articles, research articles, and book reviews.

The SI begins with three perspective articles that take a critical perspective of how marketing should be moving and where the next milestones for this discipline are. In the first perspective article, Jaqueline Pels and Luis Araujo engage in an interesting argument on why marketing as a discipline must take a

critical re-look at where it is heading to, and what type of markets we are moving to. The authors suggest that marketing should be reconsidering its relationship to markets, given our current obsession with marketization for the last three decades. In the second perspective article, Sharad Agarwal and Tanushree Dutta critically describe the wonders waiting to happen in consumer science at the intersection of neuroscience, engineering, consumer behavior, and other disciplines. The authors argue that more in-depth consumer insights are waiting to be fathomed if we combine technology with our existing knowledge on medical science and other allied sciences. In the third perspective article, Ramendra Singh takes us on a journey of ‘poor market’ and how ‘poor marketing’ (also called BOP marketing) to show the convergences as well as suggests several interesting research areas for new BOP scholars.

In addition to the perspective articles, the SI also entails five peer-reviewed research articles. In the first article, Rajesh Babu and Pushkar Anand review the legal aspects of multilevel marketing in India and how multilevel firms in India are navigating legal waters while marketing their way to success in the direct selling industry.

In the second research article, Nidhi Singh, and Teena Saharan attempt to study the aspects of Indian middle-income consumers’ attitude and perceptions toward their social involvement. The authors

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investigate the relationship between individual's associations with any social cause with respect to their perceived human values. The authors find that the immoral or irresponsible actions of the firms have a negative impact on the customer's perception and they perceive it to be against their values, morals, self-respect and even society. The authors even suggest that the firms should involve their consumers in strategic value creation by engaging them as volunteers in CSR activities.

The third article is also on CSR, and the authors, Mobin Fatma, Imran Khan, and Zillur Rahman, study the role of CSR as a determinant of consumer responses in the financial sector. The authors analyze the impact of CSR activities of financial institutions on their consumers' responses. The authors find that corporate ability association has a stronger effect on consumer identification compared to CSR association. This implies that corporate ability can be highlighted by banks in their communication to customers.

In the next article, Sanjeev Prashar, Chandan Parsad, and T. Sai Vijay explore the impulse buying behavior of Indian customers in the retail sector using the technique of neural networks. As shopper marketing is a hot spot of investment in Indian retail sector, and many retailers are investing a huge amount in in-store promotions and store environment to enhance shopper experience, predicting impulsive buying behavior of shoppers accurately is very important. The authors identify several factors that unfold significant effects on customers' impulsive buying. The findings suggest that the most important set of

factors are, in-store environment variables (attractive display, music, aroma, sales personnel, ambience, card acceptance and crowding), which was followed by promotional factors.

The fifth and final paper by Sandeep Arya and Sandeep Srivastava explore the impact of consumers' primary needs on association between e-loyalty and its antecedents. This is an important study for a more granular understanding of e-loyalty given that previous research shows that website characteristics determine the users' loyalty perceptions. The study includes product websites, service websites and social networking websites. The findings suggest that e-service quality, perceived value, e-trust, e-satisfaction, number of members and number of peers contribute to generate e-loyalty but with varied significance for different websites. Perceived value, e-service quality and number of peers are the most significant contributors of e-loyalty for product websites, service websites and social networking websites, respectively.

Finally, there are reviews of two recently published books: *Branding Chinese Mega-Cities—Policies, Practices and Positioning* (Editors: Per Olof Berg, and Emma Björner; Publisher: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd) by Bhupesh Manoharan, and *Business Relationship Management and Marketing—Mastering Business Markets* (Editors: Michael Kleinaltenkamp, Wulff Plinke, and Ingmar Geiger; Publisher: Springer) by Tinu Jain.

We hope the readers will enjoy this special issue which aims to reflect how marketing will shape us as consumers in the near future, as it re-defines itself.