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## FROM MARKETING AS A THOUGHT TO MARKETING AS A SCIENCE: THE SCOPE, PROPERTIES AND METHODOLOGY OF MARKETING SCIENCE

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### Abstract

Since its emergence in economics as a distribution matter, marketing has been discussed as to whether it is an art or a science. Although marketing as a thought dates back approximately a century, its existence ontologically coincides with the similar timeline of the appearance of mankind on earth. While practitioners and some scholars with a narrow view of marketing are inclined to see marketing as an art, scholars and practitioners with non-profit/macro/positive perspective acknowledge marketing as ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically an original science. The main purpose of this study is to raise awareness about the scientific nature of marketing and discuss its scope, properties, and methodology. In the context of this study, it has been emphasized that marketing is a science of exchanges which is built upon the teachings of the four pillars of social sciences, namely sociology, psychology, economics and anthropology. Marketing aims to understand, explain, predict and, to a certain extent, control the exchange behaviors of humans in the real-world conditions and to bring theory and practice together. If marketing is separated from practice, it would diverge from reality and turn to a blackboard science which produces synthetic knowledge that fails to provide benefits to businesses and society, at large. This is why marketing has been evaluated as an original and synthesized applied science in this paper.

**Keywords:** Marketing Theory, Marketing Science, Science of Exchanges, Exchange Relations, Marketing Methodology

### Bir Düşünce Olarak Pazarlamadan Bilim Olarak Pazarlamaya: Pazarlama Biliminin Kapsamı, Özellikleri ve Yöntemi

### Öz

Dağıtım konusu olarak iktisadın içerisinde ortaya çıktığından beri, pazarlamanın bir sanat mı yoksa bilim mi olduğu tartışılmaktadır. Pazarlama bir düşünce olarak yaklaşık yüz yıl kadar geriye gitmesine rağmen, ontolojik olarak var oluşu, insanlığın yeryüzünde ortaya çıkışıyla aynı zaman çizgisine rast gelmektedir. Pazarlama konusunda kısıtlı bir görüşe sahip

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uygulamacılar ve bilim adamları pazarlamayı bir sanat olarak görme eğilimindeyken kar amacı gütmeyen/makro/pozitif açıdan bakan bilim adamları ve uygulamacılar ise pazarlamanın ontolojik, epistemolojik ve metodolojik olarak bağımsız bir bilim olduğunu kabul etmektedirler. Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, pazarlamanın bilimsel doğası hakkında bir farkındalık oluşturmak ve kapsamı, özellikleri ve yöntemi üzerinde tartışmaktır. Bu çalışma kapsamında, pazarlamanın sosyal bilimlerin dört temel direği olan sosyoloji, psikoloji, iktisat ve antropolojinin öğretileri üzerine inşa edilmiş bir değişim bilimi olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Pazarlamanın asıl amacı, gerçek dünya koşullarındaki insanların değişim davranışlarını anlamak, açıklamak ve belli bir ölçüde kontrol etmek ve teori ile pratiği bir araya getirmektir. Eğer pazarlama uygulamadan ayrılırsa gerçekten uzaklaşarak işletmelere ve, geniş ölçekte, topluma fayda sağlamayan sentetik bilgi üreten bir karatahta bilimine dönüşür. Bu yüzden, pazarlama bu çalışmada orijinal, sentez ve uygulamalı bir bilim olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Pazarlama Teorisi, Pazarlama Bilimi, Değişim Bilimi, Değişim İlişkileri, Pazarlama Metodolojisi

### **Introduction**

According to Sheth (2021), while the modern practice of marketing is almost two hundred years old, its roots can be traced back to the ancient trading relationships between buyers and sellers. Organized trading began on the Silk Route over two thousand five hundred years ago, where international trade between Chinese silk and Western products took place. As a result, marketing is an ancient practice that has existed for as long as civilizations. It is worth noting that in terms of its definition, description, and explanation as a science, marketing has been studied for almost a hundred years.

The debate over whether marketing is a science or an art dates back to around the 1950s (Bartels, 1976). This decade marked a turning point for marketing, as it entered a period of maturity and began to transform into a unique and original branch of science (Weitz and Wensley, 2002). However, the foundation of marketing as a concept can be traced back to the 1900s (Bartels, 1951), and the first marketing course was offered at the University of Michigan in 1902 (Baker and Saren, 2016). Initially, marketing was discussed primarily as a distribution matter in economics, and scholars did not fully comprehend the concept they were dealing with. Over time, however, marketing has developed into a science in its own right. By the 1920s,

marketing had been identified, conceptualized, and studied within the field of economics (Weitz and Wensley, 2002).

The positivist paradigm has played a significant role in shaping the foundation and development of marketing, leading to a dominance of quantitative research in the field (Hunt, 2014). Researchers in marketing are expected to excel in quantitative methods, and those who lack such skills are deemed incompetent and unworthy in scientific terms. In this vicious cycle, it is not surprising that marketing fails to generate new and original theories. On the one hand, marketers are under the stress to learn every new statistical technique and apply them in studies, which often overshadows the importance of the research purpose, content, and problem-solving. On the other hand, marketers are prone to criticizing the field for its inability to generate original theories and for conducting studies with fruitless results that fail to solve existing marketing problems, while solving artificial problems that researchers themselves generate. This situation presents a dilemma for most marketing studies.

To gain respect as a young science in academia, marketing must create its own theories and distinguish itself from the dominance of other social sciences from which it borrows concepts and theories (Hunt, 2014). This requires theoretical and conceptual studies to develop the meta-theory of marketing. However, before achieving this goal, marketing must first clarify its core ideas and what it deals with as a science. This paper aims to evaluate marketing ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically as a science, investigating its concept, scope, and properties. The motivation for writing this paper arises from the dilemma currently faced by marketing and the need for theoretical and conceptual papers on what marketing is as an applied synthesis science. The study will analyze the development of marketing from its emergence as a thought in economics to a systematized and distinctive branch of science. In doing so, the concept, scope, and methodology of marketing will be discussed.

## **1. What is Marketing: Its Scope and Properties?**

According to Kotler (2005), the very first marketing activity occurred between Eva and Adam. The item that was subject to this exchange behavior was the forbidden fruit (apple) from the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Eva ate the apple to gain the wisdom of the “good and evil” and offered it to Adam, too. Although God was rather clear about the sin of having a fruit from that tree, in exchange for Eva’s love, Adam paid a great deal of cost by consuming the apple. The cost of the apple was the exile from heaven. However, the only price of staying in the heaven was not to eat the apple. To summarize this transaction behavior from marketing mix perspective, the product is the apple, through which the need for the wisdom of good and evil is intended to be satisfied, the price is breaking the law of God which is the exile from Heaven, the place is the Garden of Eden in Heaven and the promotion is the words of Satan (serpent) who initially convinced Eva to eat the apple in order to gain the wisdom of good and evil. Satan told Eva if she eats the fruit from the tree of knowledge, she would gain a God-like power to know good from evil. In summary, Satan’s promotion of the apple caused all these. Maybe, Izmir (2021) states that this is the reason why marketing has been inaccurately perceived as an evil art by some. However, marketing as a young scientific discipline is still in the process of development and since in its first appearance in the field of economics as a distribution matter, it has covered a great distance. According to Izmir (2021:96), when the definition of marketing is made as “value exchange behavior that arouses satisfaction to the parties involved”, one can easily assume that everything in human relations that create value and satisfaction in the end is a subject of the marketing field. Kotler and Levy (1969), hence, state that everything is, in a sense, “marketable” if approached from a broader perspective. Therefore, Izmir (2021) states that marketing as a science ontologically goes as far back as the appearance of the first humans in history scene.

Hunt (2014) states that each science has a specific “subject matter” with which the researchers deal. For example, chemistry is a science of substances that is

interested in structure, properties and reactions; however, physics also deals with substances. What sets chemistry apart from physics is that it primarily deals with reactions of substances as a focal point. Accordingly, marketing, as a science, has also its own subject matter. In this line of thinking, the subject matter of marketing, in its most basic form, is exchanges whether single or repeated among anonymous parties or parties with long-term relationships. In the same analogy of chemistry, it can be said that marketing is a science of exchanges on which the focal point is the structure, properties and the reactions of marketing with other sciences in the context of the exchanges of values.

As in all other social sciences, humans and their behaviors are the major interest area in marketing. Economics, for instance, is interested in humans, their activities in the market and how they utilize scarce resources. Marketing, on the other hand, substantially deals with human exchange relations in that the major focus is the exchange behaviors (value exchanges) of humans. Human being is a complex being that is usually unpredictable in the way that he acts and reacts. Hence, simplifying and limiting the exchange behavior of an individual in buying goods by paying a specific amount of money is simply a facile argument because consumers, in fact, tend to buy experiences, symbols, and value along with the functional benefits of the physical product (Bagozzi, 1975).

Proposing the generic concept of marketing, Kotler (1972) claimed that the core marketing concept roots in the “transactions” or “exchanges of values” between individuals and other parties. The word “value” here does not necessarily have to correspond to “goods and services” for the consumer side and “money” for the business side. Value concept embraces any physical or psychological phenomena (product, service, idea, effort, time, feeling etc.) that create satisfaction for both the exchanging parties. The content of the exchange involves utilitarian consumption, symbolic consumption or both. Kotler and Levy (1969) in their seminal work “Broadening the concept of marketing” shed light on the fact that the area where marketing is active is not only in the goods market. As opposed to what traditional marketing

suggests, marketing also deals with “services, persons, experiences and ideas”. Once it is stated that marketing is basically the exchange relations of humans, it can be expected that marketing should further comprise non-profit relations, as well.

According to Hunt (2014), marketing can be divided into three distinct categories based on three dichotomies: profit sector/non-profit sector, micro/macro, and positive/normative. The profit sector includes entities that have a primary objective of maximizing profit, while the non-profit sector has unique and lofty goals that do not necessarily involve profit. Positive marketing seeks to understand, describe, explain, predict, and to some extent, control marketing phenomena. In contrast, normative marketing provides advice and wisdom to practitioners and firms on how marketing efforts should be and what organizations and individuals should do. Positive marketing examines “what is,” while normative marketing focuses on “what ought to be.” Micromarketing is also known as tactical or operational marketing. It is considered as an approach focusing on the individual components of the marketing mix and how the elements of the marketing mix are applied to meet the needs and wants of the consumers in specific target markets. This bottom-up approach focuses on a set of marketing activities and strategies at the company and consumer levels. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2016), micromarketing consists of "tailoring products and marketing programs to suit the tastes of specific individuals and locations". This approach makes it possible for firms to meet the unique needs and wants of the specific consumers and to create products/services appealing to these consumer segments. In contrast, macromarketing has a broader perspective and examines marketing systems, efficiency, productivity, and social issues. It also debates the impact of marketing systems on society and vice versa. This top-down approach strives to reach the bigger picture of marketing as a social and economic system. According to Hunt and Burnett (1982), macromarketing deals with the interaction between the aggregate (macro-level) outcomes of marketing activities and the quality of life for members of society. This approach stresses the vitality of comprehend-

ing the social and economic outcomes of marketing activities and the social responsibility of both marketing science and practice for the contribution to the well-being of the society.

Marketing has long been portrayed as an art mainly by practitioners and some scholars with a limited view of what marketing is really interested in. Over emphasis on profit/micro/normative level issues led some practitioners to think that marketing consists of no more than marketing mix elements or so-called micromarketing marketing issues. Marketing, hence, has been perceived and used as a strategic tool for the decision-making of the firms. However, nonprofit/macro/positive perspectives have broadened the marketing concept and elevated its status from being an art to an original science.

### **1.2. The Idea of Marketing Man as Opposed to Homo-Economicus**

Social sciences strive to understand human-being under different circumstances in terms of “what he does, when he does and why he does”. In the effort of explaining, predicting and controlling human behaviors, several branches of social sciences have different perspectives and philosophies of their own. However, each branch has a limited view in the quest to discover, understand and explain human behaviors. This endeavor, although not wrong, should be deemed extremely important despite incomplete identifications and conclusions (Baker and Saren, 2016). For this reason, marketing must better understand the behaviors of consumers, or humans in a broader perspective, in the real market conditions so that it could provide stronger insights for both scholars and practitioners through real and valid theory based on the real world. Once alienated from the real world and practice, marketing would turn into a blackboard science that might have strong theories and equations in explaining the exchange relationships of humans but produce synthetic (unnatural) knowledge and conclusions beyond the realities in the real human behaviors and

market conditions (Baker, 1995; Saren, 2000). Marketing, hence, is an applied science that cannot be separated from “real” world conditions and happenings formed by the behaviors of “real” human beings.

Marketing, therefore, utilizes theories of different branches of social sciences to be able to evaluate human behaviors more appropriately. Human beings are inherently hard to understand, explain, predict and control, therefore, looking from the perspective of only one discipline is likely to result in partly seeing the big picture. However, marketing as a synthesis science intends to fully understand humans’ exchange relations arousing satisfaction so that real recommendations to the practitioners can be made (Baker, 1995). The fact that applicability of the teachings of a given field in science is very crucial yet difficult because gaining the label of “science” for a field of study might be sometimes equally the same with divergence from reality to some extent. For instance, Bagozzi (1975) implicitly criticizes the foundations of the thought of "economic man" (homo economicus) on the grounds that the depiction of man in economics science is flawed and does not bear the real characteristics of the real person in real life. He basically aligns the reflections of this thought in marketing under four main points:

- “1. Men are rational in their behavior.*
- 2. They attempt to maximize their satisfaction in exchanges.*
- 3. They have complete information on alternatives available to them in exchanges.*
- 4. These exchanges are relatively free from external influence.”*

Contrary to the reflections of classical economics thoughts in marketing, Bagozzi (1975) argued that the behaviors of the humans are not always centered around rationality. Humans are mostly motivated by both tangible and intangible rewards gained by engaging in both utilitarian and symbolic exchanges involving a set of psychological and social aspects. Bagozzi (1975) acknowledges that people do not always act on their self-interest and that social, cultural and individual factors make



certain influences on their behavior. Levy (1959) also criticized the classical economic view on human behavior. He objected to the depiction of humans as a rational-beings and argued that individuals are not purely rational actors. Therefore, proposing a social/symbolic man whose main characteristics are opposite to homo-economicus, he acknowledged that human beings are social beings who are influenced by the behaviors of others. Levy (1959) argued that individuals may make irrational decisions in order to conform to social norms or to differentiate themselves from others. Bagozzi (1975) goes further and tries to depict a real “marketing man” as opposed to “economic man” under six main points:

*“1. Man is sometimes rational, sometimes irrational.*

*2. He is motivated by tangible as well as intangible rewards, by internal as well as external forces.*

*3. He engages in utilitarian as well as symbolic exchanges involving psychological and social aspects.*

*4. Although faced with incomplete information, he proceeds the best he can and makes at least rudimentary and sometimes unconscious calculations of the costs and benefits associated with social and economic exchanges.*

*5. Although occasionally striving to maximize his profits, marketing man often settles for less than optimum gains in his exchanges.*

*6. Finally, exchanges do not occur in isolation but are subject to a host of individual and social constraints: legal, ethical, normative, coercive, and the like.”*

Bagozzi (1975) was one of the pioneer scholars in the development of the idea of marketing man as opposed to homo economicus. The idea that Levy (1959) has initiated is also consistent with the concept of the marketing man, in which various social and individual factors beyond self-interest are recognized. The marketing-man concept can be regarded as a reaction to the concept of homo economicus of the traditional economic view. The idea of homo economicus is based on a model of economic behavior that evaluates individuals as purely rational and self-interested actors whose decisions are shaped by complete information on the costs and benefits

of their choices. This economic model has been criticized by marketing and other social sciences for being overly simplistic and failing to reflect the complexity of real-world human behavior. Contrary to this view, the concept of marketing man intends to take into account the vitally important social, cultural, and psychological factors that make strong impacts on consumer behavior. In his marketing-man model, what Bagozzi (1975) strove to do is, more or less, to approximate and depict a real human with his behaviors in the real life. There are other scholars in the development of the thought of marketing who made certain contributions to the idea of marketing man. According to Sheth et al. (1999), the motivations of consumers are centered around utilitarian, symbolic, and hedonic needs. Similar to the opponents of the idea of homo economicus, they asserted that behaviors of the consumers cannot be only and purely rational and that their decisions are shaped by emotions, perceptions, and attitudes. The mistake of economics is to evaluate humans as mechanical, robotic and artificial beings for the sake of abstraction and simplification of real human behaviors to create meta-theories. In the end, economics, so to speak, managed to create theories that other disciplines utilize in their works, yet the cost was the divergence from the real-life conditions and happenings.

As an applied science, marketing cannot fall into the same mistake as economics. The concept of the marketing man as opposed to homo economicus represents a shift away from the traditional economic model of human behavior towards a more nuanced understanding of consumer behavior and has important implications for marketing theory and practice. Upon recognizing the utilitarian, symbolic, and hedonic needs together and that consumers are not purely rational actors who are under the influence of various social, cultural, and psychological factors, marketers can develop more effective marketing strategies that better suit the specific needs and desires of the consumers. In that, through the right advertising and other marketing tactics, consumers' emotions and perceptions are emphasized over the utilitarian benefits of products or services. This perspective can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, which can in turn lead to increased profits for the firm.

### **1.3. The Mistake of Marketing Mix Approach**

According to Baker (2000), there are two main schools of thought in marketing, Alp-German and Anglo-Saxon. The Anglo-Saxon approach focuses mainly on transactions and is more business-oriented than consumer-oriented. The extensions of this thought have formed the concept of the marketing mix, or so-called 4P's of marketing. Each element of the marketing mix concept is geared toward managing various business processes through a pure (business-oriented) managerial approach. However, this approach overlooks the importance of the consumer, which is a key element in all marketing activities. In contrast, the Alp-German approach emphasizes the vitality of building relationships with customers, striving to establish trust and commitment with them over the long term, rather than just achieving a one-time transaction.

According to Grönroos (1994), critics of the traditional marketing mix concept argue that the focus on the 4P's (product, price, promotion, and place) is too narrow and business-oriented, failing to fully capture what consumers truly desire. Conceptualizing the needs and interrelationships in the dynamic market structure from the aspects of the marketing mix ignores the processes, experience, interdependence and cooperation. This myopic approach is unsustainable in establishing satisfying and long-term relationships, as it ignores the importance of understanding the needs and desires of the consumers in the target market. Instead, every marketing paradigm should be based on a customer-oriented approach, allowing companies to better understand their consumers and offer appropriate products and services.

The business-oriented approaches in marketing are destined to fail in meeting the expectations of the consumers in the long run, for they lay focus more on the business-side than the consumer-side. However, the existence of a business strictly depends on consumers. Understanding how they perceive the world requires empathy and seeing through their lenses. Hence, consumer-oriented approaches are vital for the satisfaction of consumers and the establishment of long-term relationships

with them. The market environment is outside the business environment and it always starts and ends with consumers because they are the key stakeholder in the business network (Heinomen and Strandvik, 2015).

Vargo and Lusch (2004) advocate that historical marketing management means and methods cannot manage to understand and explain today's market environment. They suggest that a new paradigm is needed to fully comprehend the relationships among different market actors. The traditional marketing paradigm, inherited from the microeconomic paradigm and model of exchange, is concerned more with goods, tangible resources and transactions (short-term relationships), which are business-oriented issues. It ignores the significance of both the service approach and relationships.

Conversely to the business-dominant view, the main purpose of a company cannot solely be maximizing its profit because the existence of a company is based on consumer satisfaction. A satisfied consumer is inclined to make future purchases of the same brand's products. If the brand manages to reinforce consumer satisfaction in the continuing purchases, mutual trust can be established between the brand and the consumer. Over time, the consumer turns out to be a customer and long-term relations based on commitment would be achieved. This is the main idea of relationship marketing. Vargo and Lusch (2004) and Finch et al. (2015) claim that when a business casts its focus from its internal processes to the consumers/market, it can achieve consumer satisfaction, trust, and commitment through long term relationships. What is essential is being consumer centric than business centric and looking to market through the consumer's lens because otherwise, the business turns to be product-oriented which leads to myopia and losing the grip of the real market conditions.

#### **1.4. Relationship Marketing, Service Marketing and the Concept of Value**

According to Grönroos (1990, p. 138), “Marketing is the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement (usually, but not necessarily, long-term) of relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises.”. Gummesson (1987) states that the aim of relationship marketing is to establish satisfactory relationship networks with customers, distributors, suppliers, and governmental institutions, among others.

Relationship marketing differentiates itself from traditional marketing by not focusing solely on short-term transactions for the sake of immediate sales increases. Instead, it strives to establish brand loyalty through the concept of value co-creation, in order to build long-term commitment with customers. Marketing cannot ignore the wants and desires of consumers. Takala and Uusitalo (1996) state that social exchange theory, which is applicable to marketing exchange theory, is concerned with motivational investment and the socially expected gain. Resources such as love, status, information, money, goods, and services are in circulation among exchange partners in relation to their needs and power. The power, needs, and dependence of the exchange parties are not equally balanced due to the unequal distribution of resources. However, the pressure of social media and consumer-centric laws has strengthened the hand of consumers against businesses.

Marketing interactions, in essence, work in a mechanism where one side of the exchange relationship should offer something valuable to attract the other side to willingly sacrifice something in return to possess ownership of the content in that offering. In the end, both parties expect benefits. A healthy exchange relationship should lead to a sense of satisfactory benefit gain. If the scale of the balance in this exchange favors one side more than the other (or if one side of the exchange relationship feels so), the nature of this relationship is destined to be a short-term transaction. However, Grönroos (1989) states that relationships must be perceived as

profitable by exchange parties so that long-term relationships based on commitment can be established. The essence of establishing, maintaining, and even developing relationships is strongly connected with promises and benefits embedded in the market offering. Szmigin and Bourne (1988) claim that long-term relationships based on trust lead to mutual benefit for both the consumer and the supplier. However, a successful company should set a well-balanced relationship considering company profitability and customer satisfaction. For the sake of perfectly meeting the wants and demands of the consumers to build a long-term relationship, the question of to what extent a company should be willing to sacrifice its profit arises. Creation of value with the consumer can be sometimes too costly for a company to bear, in that the company needs to reconsider the transaction over the relationship.

Gummesson (2007) mentions that in its most basic form, a consumer moves toward the decision of whether or not to buy a market offering that satisfies needs, wants and desires. The market offering may include goods or services, but what a consumer ultimately purchases is the value attached to it. According to Levitt (1986), a market offering consists of four levels: core product, expected product, augmented product and potential product. Similarly, Kotler and Armstrong (2010) claim that there are three levels of a product, which are namely core, actual and augmented product. In both concepts, the core product is the most basic form of the product, for example, that a camera takes a picture is its core benefit. When its core benefits are prepared to be sold as a product in the market, for instance, with its price, brand and package etc., it transforms into actual (or expected) product. However, to differentiate the product from rivals', a company needs to attach more benefits to the intangible elements such as warranty, cheap delivery etc. to increase the perceived value of the product. Then the market offering becomes an augmented product. Drawing on Levy's (1959) seminal work 'Symbols for Sale,' it can be inferred that consumers do not simply purchase a product for its superior quality; rather, they seek to possess symbols that align with their personal identity and worldview. Therefore, a manufacturer needs to perfectly comprehend the fact that it sells symbols as well as goods.

De Chernatony and McDonald (1992) suggest that a consumer perceives the brand as a whole including the quality of the product and what the company stands for. Thus, the value of a market offering consists of both functional and representational elements.

Gummeson (2007) argues that differentiating between goods and services is difficult because the line between them is blurred in today's market structure. The elements that traditionally distinguish services from goods, such as intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability, are symbolic, elusive, and insufficient. For example, there is almost no physical difference between eating a piece of cake at a café, which would be classified as a service, or buying the cake from a patisserie and eating it at home, which would be classified as goods. Similarly, when a consumer purchases a cup of coffee from a café, it is a service, but when a consumer buys a package of filter coffee and prepares it at home, it is a good.

However, from a broader perspective, any goods bought, from the production process to the delivery to the consumers, have a service element embedded in them. For instance, the design of the product and the package, and transportation from factory to supermarket, might have been done by other companies, making the service element a part of the value chain. Even in supermarkets that appear to sell pure goods, consumers make quality judgments based on the supermarket's atmosphere, lighting, staff attitude, membership cards, coupons, lottery, etc. Therefore, Gummeson (2007) suggests that whether classified as goods or services, the product offered is, in fact, a service. Ultimately, what a consumer purchases in a marketing offer is the value attached to the product or service.

Aijo (1996) argues that the rapid and radical changes in the market have led firms to place more emphasis on services, building close relationships, optimizing business processes, and satisfying the needs of different stakeholders. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994: 22), exchange behavior in marketing relationships cannot be constrained to the interactions between buyers and sellers alone. They suggest that "exchange participants... are not just buyers, sellers, customers, or key accounts,

but rather partners who exchange resources." When viewed from a broader perspective, exchange relationships involve multiple stakeholders, not just buyers and sellers. Aijo (1996) emphasizes that a company cannot effectively satisfy customer needs without close and smooth cooperation with other parties involved. The consumer's experience with the product (value-in-use) is a vital element, as is the co-creation of value with the provider. Therefore, the meaning of an offer to consumers depends on the total value-in-use and co-created value. Heinomen and Strandvik (2015) argue that marketing should create an environment in which consumers are responsible for creating, dominating, and controlling value, not the other way around. According to Grönroos (2012), value creation is a process that requires essential co-creation between the consumer and the provider. To achieve this, a company should always keep its communication channels with consumers open.

## **2. The Fundamentals of Marketing: Interactions between Four Pillars of Social Sciences and Marketing**

According to Baker and Saren (2016), the foundation of marketing is based on the teachings of four pillars of the social sciences, which are economics, psychology, sociology, and (cultural) anthropology as illustrated in **Figure 1**. Winick (1961) states that anthropology is defined as the "study of man". If anthropology is meant to be applied in marketing studies, the teachings of cultural anthropology are more relevant because according to LeVine (1982), the interaction between culture and personality is an important matter in especially consumer behaviors. Hofstede and McCrae (2004) claim that culture and personality interaction under different socialization contexts forms personality types in which anthropology is interested. Cultural anthropology has many common themes, concepts and interests together with psychology and sociology.

Winick (1961) mentions that three basic sciences are interested in humans in their own cultural settings. However, when it comes to the emphases of these sci-



ences on different dimensions of the relationship between humans and their environment, it is quite salient that psychology, sociology, and anthropology address different elements of this relationship. When approached in a broader sense, human behaviors in their origin come out of the interrelationships of psychology, sociology, and anthropology whose focal points, respectively, are personality, social systems and culture.

**Figure 1:** Four Pillars of Social Sciences on Which Marketing Bases



According to Varey (2016), sociology studies on internal composition of marketing groups and their relationships. Psychology, however, focuses on the behaviors of individuals in marketing activities by studying on such unobservable variables as “attitudes, motivation and personality” to understand, predict and control the observable variables. Economics examines the market, behaviors and the interplays between both buyer and consumer sides to unravel their impacts on the utilization and allocation of scarce resources. Anthropology is interested in the psychical, social and cultural aspects of humans to better understand the roots of their behaviors in marketing processes.

Through the lenses of different social sciences, a researcher would be able to see and evaluate his subject matter differently. For instance, when these sciences look at a family, they would see disparate elements and evaluate the behavior patterns of the family differently from each other. Psychology would examine the family as an individual entity and intent to understand the elements that drive the emotions, happiness, attitudes, learning and motivations of the family members. Sociology would substantially focus on the role, status, power, norms, conflict within the family and relations with other families which form social structure through internal and external arrangements. However, the training of a psychologist is based on different schools like Gestalt, behaviorist, psychoanalytic, learning theory etc., while the training of a sociologist includes such schools as demographic, functionalism, historical, ecological, and determinism. All these trainings provide both the sociologist and psychologist different views which results in different emphases. Anthropologists would look through a different lens and investigate technology, culture and their relationships, housing and food choices of the family, inheritance of property, language, kinship and the impact of the age difference etc. Anthropology, in fact, would collaborate closely with sociology and psychology while examining human behaviors. Sociology and psychology would not acquire the knowledge that anthropology has; however, sociology and psychology have their unique ways of deciphering the dynamics of social life (Winick, 1961). On the other hand, economics would observe how the interaction between producers and consumption patterns of the households make an impact on resource allocation and utilization. Under the context of family members' rational choices in their purchase behaviors, it is meant to realize how much money they earn and how much money they need to maintain their purchase habits (Varey, 2016).

The teachings of the four pillars of the social sciences play crucially significant roles in better understanding the behaviors of real humans and not losing grip of real life because each mentioned science has a unique way of explaining human behavior. Nonetheless, the complex nature of humans is required to employ a holistic

view. When, for example, the psychological aspect outweighs, human behaviors are portrayed as personally oriented. Similarly, when sociological aspects are emphasized more, human behaviors may be attributed solely to social reasons, leading to the oversight that individuals possess unique personal characteristics that are inherently linked to their existence in society. Classical thought in economics puts a strong emphasis upon the rationality of humans and profit maximization in purchase behaviors, while marketing partly accepts rationality and proposes the idea of bounded rationality of humans. Basing its foundation on these four pillars of social sciences, marketing, hence, appears to be a synthesis science of above-mentioned social sciences. These arguments propose the idea that marketing is an applied-synthesized science that basically deals with the exchange behaviors that generate reciprocal value and satisfaction to the parties of the (preferably long term) exchange.

### **3. Discovery and Justification of Empirical Generalizations, Theories and Laws**

Lewin (1952:169) asserts that “there is nothing more practical than a good theory.”. Baker (1995) suggests that there is an excessive need for a sound and solid theory in marketing. He claims that the orientation in science should aim to move from descriptive to analytical basis by which scientific breakthroughs can be reached. On the one hand, naming/describing the various organs of the human body and their physical appearance is done on a descriptive basis. On the other hand, Harvey's discovery of blood circulation was an analytical breakthrough that revolutionized medicine as a profession. Baker (1995) claims that many breakthroughs in “thought” and “practice” has not come into existence through the “application of the developed theory”. For instance, James Watt, without knowing about the theory of thermo-dynamics, created the first prototype of steam engine based on his observations of the pressure of the steam derived from boiled water in the teapot that moves the lit. However, after the development of the theory of thermo-dynamics based on

the expanded theoretical principles rather than more observations and random applications, the steam engine transformed into today's technological and efficient engines. The transition from applications based on observations to analytical (theoretical) knowledge has proven its use in the development of civilizations. Hence, it can be said that to start the initial steps of development, observation and application are of great essence so that analytical knowledge can be raised over time.

Baker (1995) asserts that theory consists of meaningful, clear, and precise definitions of various terms and concepts, which are used to make related observations and interpretations to test the theory. A robust theory requires definitions of the conditions and assumptions on which it relies. Theories should be constructed based on hypotheses that explain facts or phenomena and their relationships. Marketing, as a synthesized applied science, should strike a delicate balance between theory and practice. If one outweighs the other, a problem arises, and marketing may end up being either a blackboard science that generates only artificial theories with little use in practice, or simply an art that has high practical use but a limited scientific and systematic methodology for problem-solving.

Bartels (1951) notes that marketing has been a concept since the early 1900s, but its ontological roots can be traced back to the beginning of human history. Therefore, marketing as a science is still relatively young and not yet fully developed. This may be one reason why many marketing scholars struggle with both "discovery" and "justification," as Hunt (2014) suggests. Rules, procedures, hypotheses, theories, and laws all require separate processes of discovery and justification. However, some scholars and journals, particularly in the field of marketing, strongly criticize authors for failing to justify their work. Marketing, as a science, has failed to generate new theories and law-like generalizations and this may be partially attributed to the obsession of marketing academia on justification.

Marketing has traditionally been focused on empirical research and quantitative analysis, which have limited the development of new theories and concepts. To address this, there is a growing need for more interdisciplinary research, mixed-

method studies and a broader perspective on marketing that takes into account social and cultural factors, as well as the not-for-profit sector. While some novel theories and concepts, such as the Customer Engagement Theory and Service-Dominant Logic, have emerged in recent years, there is still a general sense that the field has yet to generate as many groundbreaking theories and generalizations as other social sciences. The shortcomings of marketing academics with regards to discovery can be attributed to the methodological hegemony of the dominant paradigm (positivism) and its emphasis on the use of deductive methods and research justification. By looking at the world only through deductive and justification-focused lenses, researchers may miss real-world phenomena and deviate from reality. They may also manipulate data to fit hypothetical models using statistical tricks.

However, academia often ignores the possibility that non-significant paths between two variables might lead to interesting and important results to be evaluated. Each research conducted is a quest for approaching the truth, not just finding significant results. Therefore, just because the research methodology of a scientific paper is excellent in statistical terms, it does not guarantee the excellence of the whole study. Researchers might find statistically significant results that mainstream journals care a lot about, but the results may not reflect facts and events in the real world. Finding statistically flawless but artificial results might be considered significant in statistical terms, but may be definitely insignificant in practical terms.

According to Hunt (2014), the context of discovery involves routes such as "eureka," "dream," "metaphor recognition," observation, and speculation. Archimedes' buoyancy of water and Newton's law of gravitation are examples of the eureka route. The "dream" route involves seeing the formula of a problem or an unsolved equation during a doze. The metaphor recognition route involves using metaphors like "Marketing is a war!" and relating marketing with such war concepts as allies, intelligence, strategy, defense, etc. The observation route through data collection and classification arrives at induction, while the speculation route through assumptions and hypothetical models reaches deduction. All these routes are expected to lead to

the point where the researcher can build empirical generalizations, theories, and laws.

In this phase, the researcher becomes aware of something unknown by a planned act of investigation or through instinct, eureka, intuition, dream, unintended observation, etc. However, in the context of justification, the researcher tests, understands, explains, predicts, and controls the phenomenon that has been discovered. Based on this idea, discovery and justification are separate issues, and there are no certain ways and procedures for discovering theories and law-like generalizations. However, it should be noted that a multi-scientific methodological approach is needed during the justification of the theories and laws.

### **3.1. What Constitutes a Sound Methodology in Marketing?**

Öztay (2021) mentioned the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods, as well as the positivist and post-positivist paradigms that underpin them. According to Öztay (2021), the positivist paradigm views science as an attempt to acquire predictive and explanatory knowledge about the external world, and asserts that scientific techniques can be used in both natural and social sciences. Quantitative research is founded on positivism and employs numerical data to conduct empirical research and draw objective conclusions. On the other hand, the post-positivist paradigm holds that reality takes place in the social environment and is in a constant state of flux, and that qualitative research is of greater significance than quantitative research. Qualitative research entails engaging with individuals in a specific social context to explore connections and comprehend intrinsic motivations and emotions.

It is well-known that within the academic setting of social sciences, positivism is the dominant paradigm that relies on objective reality. Due to the strong influence of positivism in marketing science and other social science disciplines, scholars often focus on drawing predictions and models of consumer behavior rather than striving to describe and understand it. However, some scholars fall into the trap

of methodology fetishism, leading to unfruitful outcomes and a disconnect between theory and practice.

Weiss (1962) suggests that Marketing Science Institute in the USA should remove the word “science” from its title because he believes that some disciplines in the social sciences are substantially “undisciplined disciplines”. Behaviors of a human cannot be “average”; therefore, it does not make any sense to develop scales to measure, predict and analyze parameters related to behavior. On the other hand, Buzzell (1963) states that science is a classified knowledge in a system that is based upon one or more central theories where quantitative methods are of use and it helps researchers to predict and, to some certain extent, control future events. Weiss (1962) states that the scientific method is the only way to succeed. The steps in the scientific methods are “observations and measurement”, “experimentation”, “classification” and “accurate generalization”.

In marketing, whether the scientific method should be quantitative or qualitative is open to debate as in the social sciences in general (Kotler, 1995). Descartes in philosophy, Adam Smith in economics and Augusto Comte in sociology believed that life and the things in the world work by their own mechanism in a static way that it can only be understood through reason and logic. Mechanical philosophy in physics transformed into positivism in social sciences. From that time on, social movements and realities have been explained through the mechanical philosophy in natural sciences.

Hunt (1994) argues that positivism implies the use of quantitative methods, in which researchers focus on causal relationships through deterministic theories. Positivists, in their approach to science:

- Used formal logic as a means of conducting research.
- Acknowledged that unobservable concepts can have validity.
- Avoided metaphysical ideas and relied only on observable phenomena.
- Considered "cause" to be a non-observable and potentially misleading concept.

-Believed that science should only deal with "certain knowledge," and therefore rejected inductive reasoning.

After the mechanical philosophy, which began with Newton, was applied to social sciences by Comte, marketing became concerned with distributing goods and services to mass markets by treating consumers as uniform groups, regardless of their cultural and personal characteristics. This approach was based on the quest for objective knowledge of individuals, rather than subjective knowledge that is prevalent in modern societies. Marketers believed that consumers are substantially affected by common sense and the overall tendencies of society. However, Levy (1959) introduced the opinion that consumers actually buy "symbols" along with the core product itself. Elliott (1997) suggests a similar perspective, stating that consumers are more symbolic than materialistic, more individualistic than social, and more satisfaction-oriented than need or want-oriented. They can be rational or irrational in their consumption behavior. Firat et al. (1995) note that, after the modern movement transformed into the postmodern movement, which recognizes multiple (objective and subjective) realities, fragmentation, variety, and so on, generalizability and precision in marketing studies have decreased. As a result, focusing on the requirements of the purpose of the study, researchers should not be enslaved by either subjective or objective reality. This approach requires the use of hermeneutics in science to capture the truth of a phenomenon under investigation.

Hunt (1994) argues that major marketing journals tend to avoid publishing qualitative studies, even though such studies can be motivated by several reasons, including:

- The incommensurability rule makes it impossible to make an objective choice between research paradigms.

- While marketing has traditionally embraced positivism, which favors quantitative methods and emphasizes realism, causality, and determinism, this paradigm has been challenged by the rise of relativism, constructionism, and subjectivism in social science research.



- As a result of this shift, marketing has also come to embrace qualitative methods such as naturalistic inquiry, humanistic inquiry, historicism, ethnography, postmodernism, critical theory, semiotics, deconstructionism, and feminism.

There is a possibility that postmodernist lifestyles in the future may result in the loss of common values in society, weakened cultural codes and reflexes, and ultimately, a fragmented society of individuals. Therefore, the singular realities emphasized in positivism have been discredited, and the recognition of multiple realities in hermeneutics has increased. The systemization and presentation of knowledge do not have to follow a specific way, and this can relieve social sciences from the methodological hegemony of natural sciences. In marketing, facts and events need to be explained through qualitative terms (Firat et al., 1995; Firat and Shultz, 1997).

Marketers who adopt qualitative methods ground their approach on "relativism," "constructionism," and "subjectivism." This may raise concerns about how the researcher justifies the validity and reliability of the study results because he/she has no other means than just "trust me". However, it should not be underestimated that each research is constrained by the paradigm, worldview, and subjectivity of the researcher. The construction of the research methodology heavily depends on the researcher's discretion, regardless of whether they advocate for pure positivism or hermeneutics (Hunt, 1994). The dilemma between objectivity and subjectivity has been a major problem in marketing as in other social science disciplines (Brown, 1995). It is impossible to attain pure objectivity in marketing research. Studies conducted in the field of social sciences have moved towards hermeneutics and qualitative research methods from positivism and quantitative research methods (Brennan et al., 2011).

For example, a researcher conducting a study on brand equity may assign more significance to certain aspects, while others may consider other aspects and factors related to brand equity as equally important. Brand equity is a complex construct that encompasses various dimensions such as brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty (Keller, 1993). On the other hand,

Aaker (1991) proposes a model of brand equity that includes five key components: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other proprietary brand assets. Furthermore, in the literature, different scholars have further broken down these dimensions into sub-dimensions, creating a rich and multi-faceted concept that reflects consumers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors toward a brand.

Given the complexity of brand equity, scholars might attribute more emphasis to certain aspects of this construct based on their own personal, theoretical or empirical interests. For instance, if the researcher is interested in the effect of advertising on brand equity, the focus might be on brand awareness and brand associations dimensions of brand equity. On the other hand, if the researcher has an experiential perspective toward brand equity, the emphasis can be on the perceived quality and brand loyalty dimensions. Moreover, some researchers may prioritize Aaker's (1991) theoretical framework of brand equity, while others might regard Keller's (1993) perspective of brand equity as more useful and relevant based on their own judgments and experiences. For instance, Yoo and Donthu (2001) developed the famous consumer-based brand equity scale based on Aaker's (1991) theoretical frameworks, but failed to ensure the discriminant validity between brand awareness and brand association dimensions. Based on Aaker's (1991) five-dimensional theoretical framework of brand equity, Yoo and Donthu (2001) proposed a three-dimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. All these studies have gained widespread recognition from the literature, but who decides one is better than the other?

In reality, the researcher constructs the hypotheses based on his/her subjective assumptions, and there are multiple and simultaneous relationships in consumer behavior, rather than causality. Therefore, explaining consumer behavior in relation to the context of social and cultural realities becomes more important than predicting it. It should be noted that positivism is the dominant view in marketing research and is based on realism. This perspective advocates that independent realities should free themselves from methodological myopia and recognize that values embedded in

symbolic meanings cannot be expressed comprehensively and literally in quantitative terms (Bareham, 2004).

Social scientists face a paradigm limitation that shapes how they perceive and study phenomena. Therefore, a revision for research methodology in marketing, as well as other social sciences is necessary, as it is challenging to arrive at objective conclusions from a subjective starting point due to the human factor. Direct application of natural sciences' methodological approach is not suitable for social sciences. Similarly, today's philosophical approaches in qualitative studies do not fulfill the requirements of the scientific method because of its advocates' persistence in relativism, constructionism, and subjectivism. Hunt (1994) contends that "critical pluralism" and "scientific realism" can resolve methodological confusion. By being open, critical, tolerant, and fallible, critical pluralism and scientific realism provide a balanced and objective approach to social science research.

Marketing as a growing body of science should not only apply current theory for problem-solution. It should generate new and original theories that match the existing problems practitioners are suffering from. There is a strong belief in science that the existing knowledge can be enhanced through quantitative methods, yet new knowledge can be obtained through qualitative studies. A smart researcher cannot be a follower of either positivism or hermeneutics. Therefore, the method or philosophy to be used in research is only limited to the scope and the purpose of the study.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Every science has its distinct subject matter broadly accepted by the mainstream academic environment. This subject matter should be distinctive and expressive straightforwardly by a couple of words. In this aspect, marketing is the science of exchanges, whether they are short or long term, repeated or with anonymous parties. The applicability of marketing research results is a crucial aspect that distinguishes marketing as a science. If marketing were to prioritize theory over practice

and move away from reality, it would lose its unique characteristic. Marketing's distinctiveness lies in its examination of exchanges between humans and entities (and various combinations of them) in real-world conditions. Divergence from reality would mean the loss of its scientific nature, leading to the creation of synthetic (unnatural) knowledge that creates another mechanical world and a mechanical man, similar to the mistake economics made in the past. Marketing aims to comprehend and elucidate human behavior in market conditions by examining exchanges of humans and human-made entities.

Our marketing man, unlike the homo-economicus of economics, is not perfect. He is susceptible to human errors, just like we are, when making real-life choices. Sometimes, he makes irrational decisions and ends up paying more for less. Being an individual, he cannot completely disregard society's opinions and takes them into account while making choices. Although he may not always have complete information about the alternatives, he strives to make the best decision with the limited information he has. He tends to make certain judgments about the quality of market offerings based on the available information and inferences/heuristics about the products and brands. He enjoys making symbolic consumptions by willingly bearing extra costs, as well as utilitarian consumptions to find optimal solutions to meet his needs and wants.

Marketing man is a complex being; therefore, to understand and explain his exchange behaviors, marketing science relies on the teachings of sociology, psychology, economics, and anthropology. Each science provides a unique perspective on human behavior, but no single science evaluates humans holistically and comprehensively. For example, sociology regards humans as a group, while psychology emphasizes individuality. However, humans act as a group in their individual contexts, living in a society as individuals. Classical economics depicts humans as rational beings, yet humans can be irrational depending on the context. Anthropology emphasizes the vitality of culture and its power to shape personality and behavior. Therefore, to correctly understand and explain consumer behavior in the real-world

marketing conditions, there is a great need to synthesize the significant contributions of these sciences, as marketing aims to do.

In this paper, it has been emphasized that marketing as a science is based on the teachings of four pillars of social sciences. However, this does not mean that marketing is a fake science forged by academics and practitioners simply by borrowing theories and concepts from other disciplines. Rather, marketing adopts and modifies the concepts and theories borrowed from other disciplines into a new form that suits its purposes. Thus, marketing adds its own unique flavor to its dough and kneads it by itself. It can, therefore, be said that marketing is a synthesized applied science.

Although marketing has proposed original theories such as the Customer Engagement Theory and Service-Dominant Logic, it has long been criticized by some academics for its deficiency in generating original theories and meta-theory of marketing. The reason why marketing lacks, to a certain extent, in generating original theories is due to the confusion between discovery and justification. Any effort to create a theory related to phenomena may end up with a valid theory in the future. A dream, a moment of realization, observations, or speculations might lead to the discovery of a strong theory. However, discovery is one thing, justification is another. Each discovery, when its theory is settled after a period of time, requires justification to determine if the hypotheses and assumptions of the theory reflect the realities in the world conditions. Unfortunately, when it comes to publication possibilities in mainstream academic marketing journals, papers written with the purpose of discovery are often discarded and considered ineligible for publication because they lack justification unless the author is well-known.

When James Watt observed the lifting of a teapot lid due to steam pressure, he had an original idea that led to the first prototype of the steam engine. This invention changed the world over time, and it is important to note that neither thermodynamics nor the theory of machines had even been discovered yet. Similarly, Archimedes discovered the principle of buoyancy through a moment of realization, and

Newton had a moment of realization that led to his theory of gravitation (Eureka!). The significance of these theories cannot be underestimated or disregarded simply because they were based on a moment of realization, observation, or a dream. These discoveries have contributed to the development of civilizations.

After the discovery, these theories had been justified by scientific methods and means to check if they match the facts and events existing in the real world. The discovery route may involve conscious or unconscious efforts, events, and happenings, while justification requires a multi-scientific method that is applicable to each science. When this confusion is resolved in marketing academia, as well as in other social sciences, there is a greater chance to generate original theories that can solve existing problems and make the world a better place.

Marketing should focus on real-life situations and human behavior. Debates about whether marketing is a science or an art do not damage its scientific nature. As evaluated in this paper, marketing is ontologically, epistemologically and methodologically original science with its own theories and advanced methodologies that incorporate contemporary qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, marketing risks losing its scientific validity if it ignores the complexities and realities of the world in favor of creating abstract, simplified meta-theories of human behavior. It is important to remember that marketing deals fundamentally with the exchange relations (value exchange) of humans, and these relationships can be complex due to the complex nature of humans themselves. Insistence on attempting to define the exchange behaviors (value exchanges) of humans through only mathematical equations might ultimately turn marketing into a blackboard science, as has happened with economics. This could lead to the formation of another mechanical man in science history and this mechanistic understanding of human behavior can only explain some aspects of it, while failing to capture its full complexity in real life.

This paper is driven by a quote from Homans, which states that "What makes a science are its claims not its results". Therefore, the main purpose of science is to solve problems for society (Baker, 1995: 15). In the case of marketing, the goal is to

understand, explain, and control exchange behaviors among humans to address issues within marketing systems. As such, debates over whether marketing is an art or a science are no longer fruitful or constructive. The perspective from which one views marketing as an art or a science depends on their point of view. From a profit/micro/normative perspective, marketing may seem like an art, but from a non-profit/macro/positive perspective, it is an original science with great potential.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Although this study intends to provide certain contributions and insights, there are several limitations that need to be addressed. First of all, because the scope and methodology of marketing science are vast, it is very likely that this paper could fail to cover all aspects of it. Therefore, future studies could expand on the thoughts presented here and delve into more specific areas of marketing science.

Second, it is important to acknowledge that the findings presented in this study are based on theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Although some of these frameworks such as Brand Equity, Customer Engagement Theory, Service Dominant Logic etc. have been tested and supported by empirical research, more empirical studies are needed to further validate and refine these frameworks. However, most of the assertions and statements/propositions made by the author in this study cannot be tested empirically as hypotheses because this study is primarily conceptual in nature, reflecting the author's own perceptions of marketing based on the arguments in the literature.

Third, the criticisms of marketing science presented in this study cannot be ignored. While this study argues that marketing science is an original and synthesized applied science, future studies could further explore these criticisms and examine potential solutions to address them.

Fourth, it is worth noting that the field of marketing is constantly evolving due to advancements in technology, changes in consumer behavior, and other external factors. As emphasized in this study, marketing science is rather young and still

continues to develop. Therefore, it is important for scholars and practitioners to stay up-to-date with the latest developments in the field and continually reassess the scope and methodology of marketing science.

Finally, while this study emphasizes the importance of bringing theory and practice together in marketing science, there may be challenges in effectively bridging this gap. Future research could explore strategies for improving the application of marketing science in real-world settings and addressing potential barriers to implementation.

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