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# Digitalization of Marketing Education: New Approaches for Universities in the Post-Covid-19 Era

**Gonca Telli, Samet Aydın***

Maltepe University, Faculty of Business and Management Sciences, İstanbul/Turkey
ORCID: G. Telli (0000-0002-8238-3185), S.Aydın (0000-0003-2275-4682)

## Abstract

Education is one of the areas most affected by the transition to the information age. Universities and faculties/schools have to adapt to this, otherwise the consumption of information that is increased and shared from different environments may be detached from universities. Marketing education, of course, gets its share from these developments. In this direction, a descriptive study was conducted on how to follow marketing science and education in this new situation. This study focuses on digital disruptions in education and the effects of the deterioration caused by digitalization on marketing education. Moreover, the new approaches which are appropriate for the mandatory change in marketing education with reasons and recommendations are discussed. In the information age, educational institutions have to adapt to these new situations and new norms. Therefore, concepts such as active, adaptive and experiential learning with addition of new tools should be included in marketing education.

**Keywords:** Marketing education; digital transformation; active learning; experiential learning.

## Pazarlama Eğitiminin Dijitalleşmesi: Covid-19 Sonrası Dönemde Üniversiteler İçin Yeni Yaklaşımlar

## Özet

Bilgi Çağı'na geçişten en çok etkilenen alanlardan biri de eğitimdir. Üniversiteler ve fakülteler farklı ortamlarda paylaşılan ve hızla artan bilgi tüketimi nedeniyle buna uyum sağlamak zorundadır. Pazarlama eğitimi elbette bu gelişmelerden nasibini almaktadır. Bu çalışmada; çağın gerektirdiği bu yeni durumda pazarlama bilimi ve eğitiminin nasıl takip edileceğine dair betimsel bir çalışma yapılmıştır. Çalışma; eğitimdeki dijital gelişmeler ve dijitalleşmenin neden olduğu değişikliklerin pazarlama eğitimi üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanmaktadır. Ayrıca pazarlama eğitiminde zorunlu değişime uygun yeni yaklaşımlar, gerekçeler ve öneriler tartışılmaktadır. Bilgi Çağı'nda eğitim kurumları bu yeni durumlara ve yeni normlara uyum sağlamak zorundadır. Bu nedenle pazarlama eğitimine aktif, uyarlanabilir ve deneyimsel öğrenme gibi kavramların dâhil edilmesi gerektiği anlaşılmaktadır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Pazarlama eğitimi; dijital dönüşüm; aktif öğrenme; deneyimsel öğrenme.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It was inevitable that the subject of education was affected by changes in lifestyles, ways of doing business, and digital transformation at the beginning of the new millennium. New information and communication technologies and new technological devices have been playing an important role in this. Online education has been gradually increased over the last two decades. Several online courses have started at universities and MOOCs like Coursera, EdX, Udemy have become accepted and used by the individuals in masses. Not only education but also businesses have started to require new types of employees on these new types of businesses. Old theories and applications have lost their former power or impact on the business world. Online education has gained a leading role in the educational arena (Telli Yamamoto & Altun, 2020). There have been important developments after the Covid-19 Pandemic to online education indeed. There is also a high need for new types and new methods of education already with the transition to the information society. This means all higher education institutions will be affected by this trend.

Marketing science and education should also adapt to this change and digitalization. Another important thing is the market demand. Educational institutions should also follow the real needs of their surroundings, changing customer trends and disruptive innovations in this regard. This study questions how this trend goes into marketing education and the digitalization of marketing education. The faculties of business administration and business schools are the leading institutions that will be most affected by these issues. Studies should be carried

*Yazışma Adresi / Address for Correspondence:
S. Aydın, Email: sametaydin@maltepe.edu.tr

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out in Business Faculties/Schools to adapt to these developments, especially in marketing, which has the most dialogue with people to spread the knowledge and holds an important strategic position in this context for the next generation of businesses.

## 2. DIGITALIZATION OF MARKETING EDUCATION

### 2.1. Digital Disruption

The reflections of digital disruption can be seen in all dimensions of life. This has started Christensen's disruptive innovation concept as companies tend to innovate faster than their customers' needs evolve, most organizations eventually end up producing products or services that are actually too sophisticated, too expensive, and too complicated for many customers in their market (Christensen, Raynor & McDonald, 2015). Education is also another field where digitalization occurs and changes the rule of the game. In marketing, digital transformation shapes not only the behaviors and attitudes of consumers but also how companies approach these new trends. So, while the market and marketing change continuously, it's obvious that teaching marketing should also adopt new approaches in the way that it also makes the learners be a part of the new age besides getting used to it.

Bolton, Chapman, and Mills (2019) state that "digital disruption is the change that occurs when new digital technologies change customer experiences, business processes and business models, thereby changing how value is co-created by actors in an ecosystem". But it should not be evaluated with its harm to the routine and defined as a threat because it is not a single big event like a natural disaster, it is the way of new life. Educational institutions have to adapt to these new situations and new norms.

In recent years, lots of new digital tools have been developed and in turn, several ways of technology-driven learning were introduced (Uncles, 2018). Education is also widely open to disruption that will generate too many new opportunities for the field. Not only e-learning but also mobile learning has an important role for Educational Institutions. After the use of PC in the classroom, the Internet has become a teaching tool that can be used inside and outside the classroom (Natesan & Smith, 1998). New technologies provide essential tools for educators while they stress marketing educators to be a part of novel approaches and bring new ideas to marketing programs and curricula (Brennan, Lu & von der Heidt, 2018).

Similar to marketing professionals, marketing educators as well need to understand the new technologies like augmented reality, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), etc. (Crittenden, Biel & Lovely, 2019) to the extent that what these new technologies bring and how those might be turned to benefits for customers, businesses and students. Marketing educators should also be aware of the new talents and skills or experiences which the business as an employer expects from the new candidates, so they help their students become equipped with them before they graduate. Only the students –the future graduates seeking jobs– who hold these new skills would have the chance to become hired first and then recognized as successful employees in these economic settings. Marketing Educators should also realize these changes in their surroundings and marketing education should be adopted to the new era.

### 2.2. Marketing Education in the New Era

Today, marketing becomes a social science that heavily relies on new technologies. As technology advances so do marketing and marketing education. It's clearly obvious to predict that marketing education would differ from the past to several extents, hence educators of this science should be aware that they should update their knowledge frequently, learn the new tools started to be used in marketing, develop their software and hardware skills and adjust their teaching approach, and materials accordingly.

The students of today might be viewed as the professionals and leaders of the future, they need to be prepared well for their prospective roles but they are different from the previous ones because they've been raised in the technology era. As being technology native and called Generation Z, the ways they entertain, interact, and socialize are too much different from the recent past due to the technological advances vastly influenced by the internet and the mobile (Schneider, 2015). Gen-Z-ers expect these advances also in education systems and they see learning tools be available on-demand and with low barriers to access (Kozinsky, 2017). They don't want to be limited to the classroom; instead, they believe learning can occur at any time, anywhere. Educators should never tend to approach this new generation by neglecting their different characteristics (Doucette, 2018). So, it can be said that as in other fields of education, marketing education also requires adapting new skills and technologies to the field.

Marketing departments in business faculties/schools should be ready for this change, maybe more than most of the other fields, thus they need to assess their readiness for change. If the marketing department's culture, climate, and policies fail to get ready for this change so do their targets to load the new skills to their students and help them get ready for the changed business settings (Chonko, 2003), (see Figure 1).

Considering marketing departments as learning organizations, to be ready for the future they need to promote market orientation and entrepreneurship (Slater and Narver, 1995). This is more than teaching students the changes, instead, making them gain the lifetime learning view or value because things they learn related to changes will also change soon (Stringfellow et al., 2006).

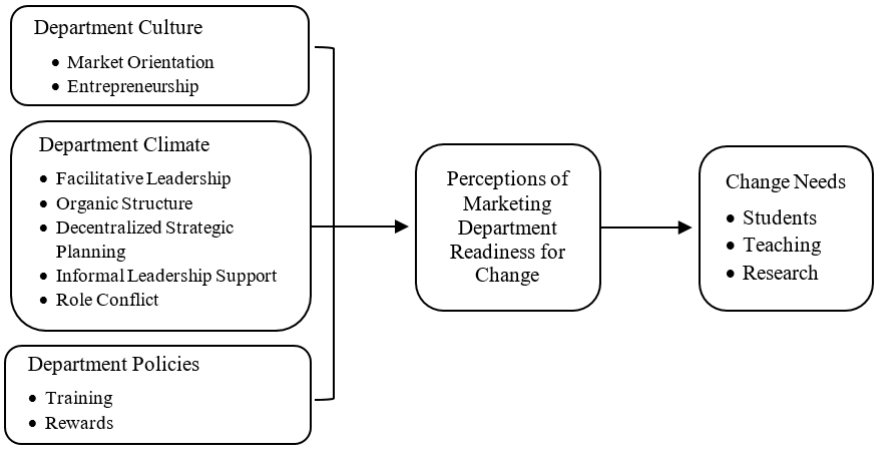


**Figure 1.** A Framework for Examining Faculty Perceptions of a Marketing Department's Readiness for Change

Source: Chonko, 2003

So, the programs should be set in the way that students understand the changes, embrace them, and get used to learn and adapt to the consequent changes. To talk about market orientation in the ages when the market changes, the learning should also be continuous (Ramocki, 2007). Therefore, the students should graduate by bearing this market orientation in mind.

Aside from market orientation another important skill to get the students ready for competition is entrepreneurship. Kanter (1989) defines entrepreneurship as "an element of a culture characterized by traits such as risk tolerance, proactivity, receptivity to innovation, and resistance to bureaucracy". Bringing new solutions to the existing problems or solving new problems in the information age requires an entrepreneurial view. Although many great entrepreneurs lack high school education, it does not mean that freedom in thinking should be independent of knowledge. Universities do not need to be the places that raise their students to establish new companies, each with brand new ideas, but the important thing is that every marketer must have some degree of entrepreneurial vision to be successful and competitive in the workforce.

In the digital age, everything can be learned outside the university. This does not mean that universities become obsolete, instead, they should be the environment where students meet new technologies, learn to separate the useful information from the bulk of knowledge, turn this useful information into successful applications. So, the role of the educators of marketing in universities turned to a facilitator role instead of just a teacher's role (Chonko, 2003).

Reasons for the change in marketing education can be summarized as follows:

- Changing technologies and improvements in communication and learning
- Sustainability
- New demands from customers (7/24 service requests, reliable comparisons, etc.)
- New types of businesses (e-business, mobile apps, etc.)
- New demands from businesses (disruptive innovation and need to change)
- Creating more touching points with information technologies
- Ease of access to information
- Open resources and easy access to information
- More competitive structures and innovations in education such as MOOCs
- Need for content development for these new demands
- Other

### 2.2.1. Marketing and the Internet

Maybe one of the major causes of this change in marketing education is the Internet with new technologies and improvements it brings into communication and learning. For the last decade, distance education has been seen as a supplement for face-to-face education which was the same for marketing education. The Internet has been also thought of as a supplement (Close, Dixit, & Malhotra, 2005; Telli Yamamoto, Demiray & Kesim, 2010) or taken as a tool for increasing students' interest in the field and their involvement but recently it has become an indispensable part of it. But it has changed since the last decade, therefore concepts such as active, adaptive, and experiential learning with new tools should be included in learning.

### 2.2.2. Active Learning

Active learning is old as history and it focuses on the importance of experience and views abstraction insufficient for learning. Haider (2000) defines active learning as "a teaching method that includes learning things that force learners to think about what they have learned". According to Saada et al. (2006), active learning is a method of learning and education that allows students to participate in various activities that allow them to think carefully

and analyze them correctly, and to share their views with others (AL-Dahlaki & AL-Tameemi, 2019; Maher et al., 2020).

Search engines both in terms of general-purpose (e.g. Google), academic uses (e.g. ResearchGate, Academia.edu, Google Scholar), or scientific databases (e.g. Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, etc.) help students reach information just in seconds. Some common popular websites also offer additional search tools. For example, YouTube (assumed to be the search engine for the next-gen) provides educational channels and LinkedIn hosts several videos for training professionals. Today's learners access information at the exact time of an educator's ongoing speech. In the past students needed to go to a library and spend some time checking books, finding the related resources, and comparing the knowledge with those the educator had explained. Hence, it can be said that while students have become active learners (Sweeney & Ingram, 2001) educators also become one of the many sources which students can benefit from, thus the educators should stop pretending as if they are the unique source of information. Instead, they need to emphasize encouraging the students to seek other resources, make their comparisons, and learn by embracing these findings.

Many marketing lecturers use the Internet to some extent, generally as an in-class exercise tool. Letting students watch commercial videos or film scenes might be used as a tool to increase their attention and prevent them get bored. But as the Internet offers more it's not sufficient to use it limited to services like Google or YouTube. Simulating some scenarios which reflect real business life. Some finance intermediaries developed websites that let students subscribe and manage a virtual saving in stock-markets. The shots of financial commentators or news on YouTube can show current information interpretation. Simulations of some current events can also be created for this type of lively issues. These simulations can also be prepared for CRM or internet advertising classes.

According to Benbunan-Fich et al. (2001) integrating information technology into the marketing curriculum has been understood via five technological modules These are:

- Communication through instructors and students by using web-based tools.
- Using the website of the marketing department as a tool for education by making it an environment where students reach valuable resources.
- The use of the Internet for marketing purposes.
- Analyzing markets by using IT solutions and harnessing them for supporting decision-making.
- Enriching business presentations with the help of new tools developed in terms of visual design and interaction.

Using these modules in classrooms would help the learners embrace new marketing skills, increase their competency in communication and critical thinking, and evaluate the impact of new media tools on achieving companies' marketing strategies and satisfying consumers. However, such modules are intended for face-to-face lessons only. Now the online marketing education needs to get more attention and more improvements.

### 2.3. Adapting Experiential Learning to Marketing Education

Marketing educators are aware that they need to apply experiential and more interactive methods of learning, instead of more theoretical one-way knowledge transfer approaches which are found passive by students (Frontczak, 1998). Here in this new method of teaching, the applicable methods are almost unlimited and only require more imagination.

In experiential education, the success of teaching and learning is believed to be based on a solid link between educative activities and theoretical lessons. Experiential learning emphasizes direct experience which stimulates students' learning motives, and also requires close guidance from the educator. So, it's an active and student-centered process that is also challenging for the two sides, educators and students (Chapman, McPhee & Proudman 1995). Most often experience itself –so-called "learning by doing"– is not sufficient for experiential education. The process of transforming the experiences into knowledge requires combining the educators' planning, guidance, knowledge with what the students face (Joplin, 1981). Hunt (1981) explains this reflection by relying on Dewey's theory and suggests that experience has primary and secondary parts; the primary experience is immediate and addresses the realities perceived by senses, while the secondary experience (reflective experience) is related to understanding –in other words having the former gain a meaning.

It can be said that the definitions of experiential learning are similar to those of active learning. As active learning also requires students involved in the teaching-learning process by giving them more chances to speak, discuss, or participate in other kinds of interactive experiences, they are more active approaches than traditional knowledge-transfer.

Kolb (1984) suggested that learning is more than a single event and it can be accepted as a continuous process. Here we need to mention Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational objective which is one of the most accepted models in education and business literature which explains learning into six hierarchical, cognitive stages stated below:

- Knowledge: Basic recall.
- Comprehension: Understanding of facts.
- Application: Using material in new situations.

- Analysis: Understanding the relevance of information.
- Synthesis: Putting together parts to create a new solution.
- Evaluation: Judgement of materials and conclusions.

Another model related to experiential learning belongs to Joplin (1981) and suggests five stages stated below for helping teachers design their courses accordingly.

- Focus: In this stage, the subject is introduced to the students and the educator prepares them for the challenges and lets them experience.
- Challenging Action: The actual action or experience for the student.
- Support: The educator should create an environment that prevents the student to boil up carrying on experiencing additional tries.
- Feedback: The educator should provide relevant feedback to students without any judgment and make them understand how they are doing.
- Debriefing: In this final stage learning is articulated by the student, it is also evaluated by the educator and the student.

Table 1 provides a summary of the distinctions of experiential and traditional learning approaches.

**Table 1.** Distinctions Between Experiential and Traditional Approaches

| | Traditional Learning | Experiential Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Students' Roles | • Passive<br>• Spectator<br>• Low involvement<br>• Less risky<br>• Receptor | • Active<br>• Participant<br>• High involvement<br>• Riskier<br>• Responsible |
| Educators' Roles | • Hold the control<br>• Transmitter of knowledge<br>• The one who knows<br>• Judge<br>• Responsible<br>• Decision maker | • Pass the control to student<br>• Facilitator to learning<br>• The one who shares<br>• Guide<br>• Shares the responsibility<br>• Designer |

Source: Adapted from Frontczak (1998)

Experiential education, might not necessarily be purely in line with the steps represented in Bloom's model. Based on the previous theories, Kolb (1984) offered another model related to experiential learning, which released great support from the consecutive studies. According to Kolb's Experiential Learning Model, learning occurs through a cyclical process called an Experiential Learning Cycle.

The four stages of this process are stated below:

- Concrete Experience: The new experience faced by the students.
- Reflective Observation: Feelings, emotions, reflections related to that experience.
- Abstract Conceptualization: Existing concepts and theories are applied to the experience.
- Active Experimentation: Forming new concepts, bringing them alive, and also apply them in new scenarios for additional experiences.

Kolb (1984) suggested that for successful learning the students should travel within the four different stages, hence they need to develop their skills in each of them. With the help of this, they may be able to create a linkage between experiences and theory and combine them into persistent knowledge.

Experiential learning in marketing would increase students' involvement and help them combine the theory to real practices, and in turn, understand real business life. Also, this will increase their motivation for learning because they will realize that theory is more than a bulk of words and also find new possibilities to create solutions for today's problems. The educators of marketing science need to choose or design new experiential learning tools or adapt the prior ones e.g. assignments, in-class activities, role-plays, field visits, etc. accordingly. There is a strong need for the guidance of the educators in these activities either by teasing the students, asking them questions to think, making them discuss the different dimensions of the situation, and giving them feedback to close the learning circle.

### 2.3.1. Game-Based Learning

In human life, playing games can often be defined as activities that take place in preparation for life (Telli Yamamoto, 2009). There is a lot of playtime in preschool and primary education; however, it can be said that playing these games does not necessarily mean putting the games into the learning process. However, this can be considered as an indicator that games can also be an important basis for learning and how important game-based learning is in life. Jean Piaget noticed the connection between child development, learning, and playing games already in the 1930s and 1940s, and he stressed the importance of learning through play, through imitation and experience, rather than through hammering in knowledge without application (Piaget, 1945).

According to Slota & Young, (2017) game-based learning creates a comprehensive game environment (virtual, board game, or others) where students interact and demonstrate specific real-world skills, and if the learning objectives with the game are correctly aligned, students will use the mechanics of the game as a leverage to get use of the skills or content more easily. Figure 2 provides a gamification framework for human motivation.

Game-based learning can also be implemented in marketing education. The nature of game-based learning requires the involvement of the students and making them forget that they are in an education process, instead, stimulates their winning ambitions and drives them to learn to succeed in the game (Ke, Xie & Xie, 2015). In their research, Silva, Rodrigues & Leal (2019) found out

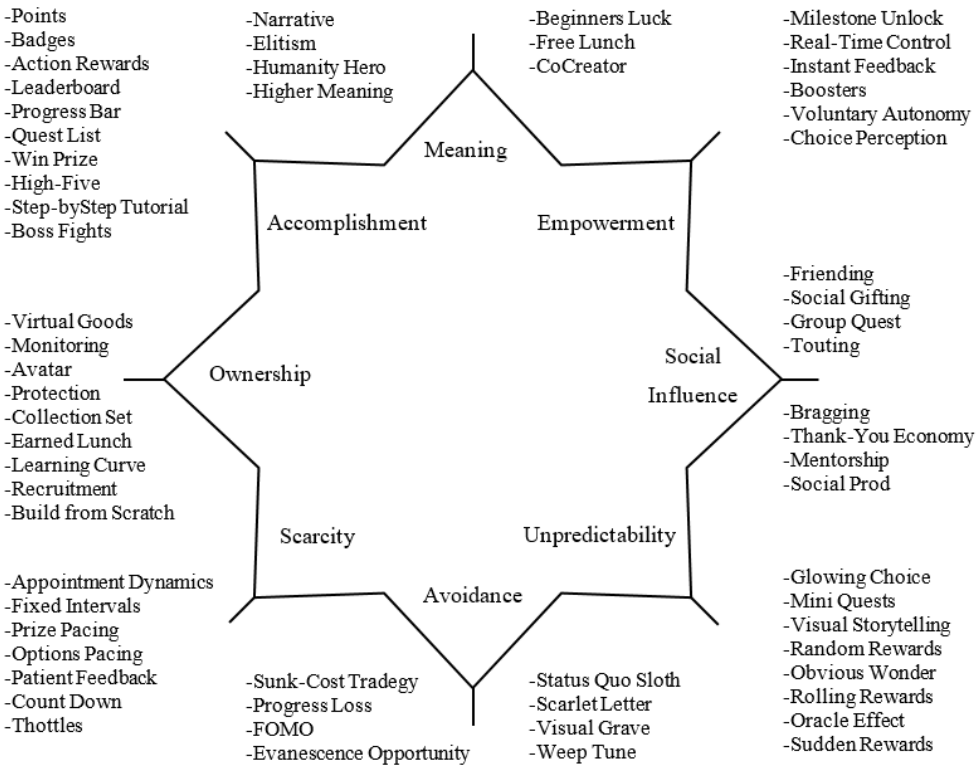


**Figure 2.** A Comprehensive Gamification Framework for Human Motivation

Source: Adapted from Heick (2019)

that introducing games into the marketing curriculum increases students' motivation and interest, therefore games should be evaluated as an effective way for students to learn marketing.

### 2.3.2. Case Studies

A case study is another type of active learning in which students analyze, understand, evaluate, and discuss a real-life scenario, or a previously implemented application. Ramocki (2007) states that case studies may bring real business life into the classroom and hence it helps students learn the different aspects of the practice. Therefore, it is also important in terms of letting the students develop their analytical and communication skills.

According to Brennan & Ahmad (2005) students' attitudes toward case studies vary upon their qualifications and maturity but noted that generally, they like this approach and also find it as an effective way of learning. Today, in every level of marketing education case studies are very common and widely used. Also, the famous Harvard Business School builds its education around case studies. In marketing education, the popularity of case studies can be understood considering their capability to link the theory to the practice and close the gap between them. Case studies allow the students to apply the theory they learn from the textbooks to real-life issues.

Generally, a marketing case study provides students with the background of the activity, information related market conditions, competitors, targets of the companies or consumers' attitudes and then ask the students to take the responsibility to give decisions or evaluate the strategy of the company in terms of their weaknesses and strengths. By the use of case studies, students may engage with marketing managers' daily life. They can explore the problems, search for solutions, and also join discussions with their peers. Further, case studies also help students develop their skills in communication and presentation since there is generally no pure correct answer as it is in real business life.

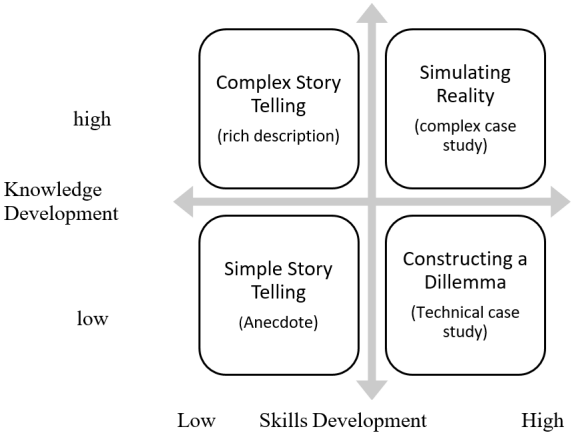


**Figure 3.** Case Study Orientations

Source: Brennan, 2009

Figure 3 provides a taxonomy for the balance between skills and knowledge development in case studies. As depicted in the figure, a small anecdote may require the least from the students but also it generates the least in

terms of development (Brennan, 2009). Simulating real marketing strategy formulations requires complete background information regarding the company, the industry, the organization, the market. These complex case studies are used in both graduate courses and business training and require some prior experience in the field and marketing skills, surely they generate the maximum development output for the eligible ones.

## 3. TEACHING MARKETING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Students always complain about the relevance of the theories in heavy textbooks with the exact life. Some of them accuse the faculties or academicians of keeping the curricula outdated although the professors put great effort to embrace the new developments and use them in their lectures. As digital transformation is being observed in any field, the distance between the marketing practice and academia tends to widen (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Gen-Z-ers are also involved in the field as students.

Zahay et al. (2019) suggest that the set of skills and theory which are being taught in faculties are still essential but digital marketing has introduced new ones and forced the theory to update. Also, the close relation between IT and marketing generated a lot of new online tools to promote, communicate, analyze, in turn, it can be said that the faculty yet is not the only place for the marketing science to develop. These novelties require employers to look for new skills. According to McKinley Marketing Partners (2018), 60% of employers are looking for new digital marketing skills. This indicates that there is a need for developing marketing education in a way that it improves the digital marketing competencies of the individual.

So that considering the change toward digital, it can be proposed that digital marketing becomes marketing (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Hence, the implementation of digital marketing should take place in marketing curricula. It can be seen that faculties try to close the lag between the practice and the theory by adding new courses to their programs. The famous textbooks also reflect this change in their new editions and also new books titled "digital marketing" started to appear. Therefore, marketing education in the digital age should embrace new educational approaches.

### 3.1. Virtual Classrooms

A virtual classroom might be seen as a digital replica of a traditional classroom or training room. The instructors teach, and the participants learn in real-time, face-to-face but via internet-enabled technology devices. In virtual classrooms, two or more universities –in different regions of the country or the world– use IT-based solutions to bring their expertise together and improve the learning process in a virtual classroom (Simon, Haghirian & Schlegelmilch, 2003). Especially by creating a group of learners from different countries and cultures may generate opportunities for teaching global issues in marketing. Virtual classrooms should not be thought of as only using computers connected to the Internet, the more is required. Every dimension of education should be designed from the scratch for the success of virtual classrooms.

As virtual classrooms diminish borders, two or more educator-student groups from different locations are needed. Content for the course also should not be limited to only one source to make students understand, compare, and embrace knowledge. There should be interaction facilities to make students discuss and share their knowledge and thoughts. This will broaden students' perspectives and increase cross-cultural awareness. Students may criticize local issues and understand global ones. The steps for a virtual classroom to go live are as follows. First and foremost, different faculties should accept to implement virtual classrooms. Second, they need to create teams consisting of educators, administrators, and IT departments. Instructors should exchange the content of their courses, materials, evaluation tools, and expected outputs. After this agreement, different parties should have testimonial connections before launching the classroom. A process that should take place with such voluntarily or with little force has been rapidly activated due to an external attack such as Covid-19, and virtual classroom applications have suddenly become one of the most popular applications.

Simon et al. (2003) stated that measuring the effectiveness of a virtual class need to be based on learner satisfaction, and perceived teaching performance, in turn, proposed a model as depicted in Figure 4. The model covers learner-specific, technology-specific, and instructor-specific factors.

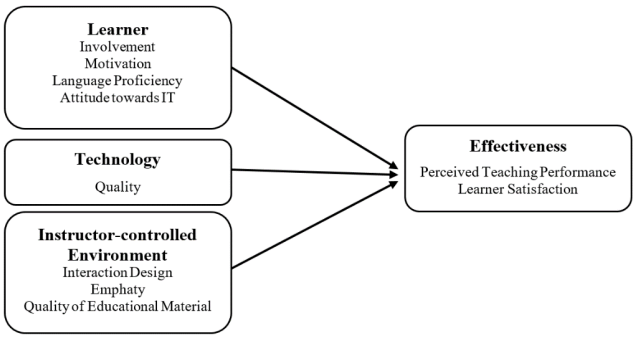


**Figure 4.** Effectiveness Model for A Virtual Classroom

Source: Simon et al., 2003

All these three have an impact on the effectiveness and also each consists of different components. The first dimension, associated with a learner, has the influence factors like involvement, motivation, language proficiency, and attitude towards IT. The second dimension, related to the technology, emphasizes the quality of the technology used. So, it's proposed that the higher quality of the technology, the more positive influence on virtual class-

room effectiveness. The third and the last dimension is called instructor-controlled environment and involves interaction design, empathy, and quality of educational material used. More details regarding the components of the model are given below.

Learner-specific Influence Factors

- Involvement: So that virtual classrooms provide a different environment than the students are accustomed to, learners may encounter new problems. In this learning style, more focus from the students is required and high involvement would lead to more effective learning.
- Motivation: Students' motivation has an influence on learning, and technology may be used as a motivation tool to increase their satisfaction with the learning environment.
- Language Proficiency: If the virtual classroom proceeds in a language other than the students' mother-tongue e.g. English, then the students' ability to speak and understand this language becomes an important factor in terms of both efficiency, satisfaction, and motivation. In a traditional classroom setting, lecturers can understand the language challenges the students encounter and adjust their talking speed, the depth of the vocabulary they use, or repeat some important parts but in a virtual classroom, students may pretend they understood or just keep silent.
- Attitude towards IT: Learners who are familiar with technology are assumed to have less problem and more excitement in virtual classroom settings so the lecturers need to understand each student's readiness for this new experience (Clarke, Flaherty, and Mottner, 2001).

Technology- specific Influence Factors

- Quality of Technology: Although technology provides valuable tools to both students and lecturers it still puts a distance between them rather than it is in a traditional classroom. Here, the quality of the technology makes sense. Lower audio or video quality caused by the recording or transmitting (e.g. the low bandwidth connections) can surely decrease the satisfaction with the learning experience (Tsichritzis, 1999). Therefore, program developers should make the needed hardware and software ready for the lecturers and also check if all of the students have sufficient connection facilities.

Instructor-specific Influence Factors

- Interaction Design: In a virtual environment where the students cannot see the others and the lecturer, designing how the different parts interact with each other becomes one of the main issues for the lecturer. The interaction not only helps students keep their focus and motivation towards the course but also lets the students share their knowledge and thus it holds the main role in the overall education process. The lecturers should think of how they design these interactions in the way that they take students' attention and also prevent them from getting bored. The classroom size also is a major factor and the larger sizes create unbeatable challenges for the instructor (Guzley, Avanzino & Bor, 2006).
- Empathy: Piccoli, Ahmad, and Ives (2001) stated that understanding the feelings of the students by instructors is also essential in a virtual learning setting. It may be harder than it is in a physical classroom but the instructors need to put much more effort to understand the experience of the students. For this aim one-to-one assessments might be used.
- Quality of Educational Material: In some courses, the use of slides as the instructors do in traditional classes might be sufficient. This can be supported by putting some remarkable points to the virtual blackboards, showing some online videos. Here, the quality of the materials becomes important because they have a great role in engaging the students in the class in terms of attracting them, keeping them focused, and motivated.

### 3.2. Flipped Classrooms

Flipped classrooms are one of the main innovations in education that started to become popular especially in higher education. An increasing number of universities started to adopt the flipped approach and in some faculties, it became the official way of education (Green, 2015). Considering the content of the marketing, we believe marketing exists in the group of courses that are the most suitable to implement this new approach in comparison to the rest of the other courses.

Flipped classrooms, simply deserve their definition by reversing the teaching-learning process in traditional classrooms. Normally, the students expect to have all learning in the classroom happened by the knowledge transfer from the lecturer. Sure, the lecturer encourages the students to study before they come to the classroom but most of the time this seldom happens. In any case, when students arrive at the classroom they find a lecturer who is ready for their service to explain the current subject in every detail which the students would forget after a few minutes they leave the classroom.

Instead, in flipped classrooms students are required to study the content before the class, by reading the provided or directed material, watching videos, or listening to the pre-recorded materials. So, the time for transmitting this theoretical knowledge is saved and can be used for practicing in classrooms, like hands-on activities, group discussions, etc. The flipped classrooms redesign

the education experience by reversing service delivery. Transferring the course content which might be seen as a general service is left its place to more personalized face-to-face contact and active learner interaction (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

Students who are subject to flipped learning encounter a different learning experience. The lecturer not only just shares the titles of important textbooks and leaves the reading stage to students' own willing, but also pushes and motivates them by providing additional sources. Most of the time only making the students read related chapters from the textbook is not sufficient. So, the lecturers prepare voice or video records in which they share the general content of the course (Green, 2015). For some students, the lecturer's speech in front of the audience is also like watching a video record if they do not actively participate by asking questions or sharing their views. In the flipped approach, this impersonal material is transmitted outside the classroom. In this way, an important time might be saved to be used in class for more individualized learning. When the students arrive at the classroom with a brief understanding of the current content then the lecturer feels more independent to use the time for activities that requires interaction (Crews & Butterfield, 2014). Thus, learned content would be more permanent in learners' minds.

**Table 2.** A Marketing-Specific Framework for Flipped Classroom

| Marketing Courses | Topics | Flipped Learning Experience |
|---|---|---|
| Principals of Marketing | Basics of the marketing mix | • Students create an online blog |
| | Extended marketing mix | • Team-based activities in class |
| | Branding | • Marketing professionals from the industry as guest speakers |
| New Product and Service Development | Services marketing | • Case studies<br>• Develop a new product |
| | A real-life example of innovation | • Watch movie, analyze and discuss<br>• Develop a new service blueprinting |
| Services Marketing | Intangibility, Heterogeneity, Inseparability, Perishability | • Student teams select a service industry and develop solution to failure-recovery strategies |
| | Co-creation | • Interview customers about service failure/recovery |
| Marketing Research | Qualitative methods | • Solve a research problem for a real company<br>• Movie presentations |
| | Quantitative methods | • Develop a videography of consumer behavior<br>• Write a Research Proposal<br>• Run data analyses using quantitative research methods |
| Customer Relationship Management | Customer Lifetime Value | • Class debate to retain or acquire new customers |
| | Complaint management | • Explore websites related to customer complaints and analyze company responses |
| Entrepreneurial Marketing | Entrepreneurial marketing strategies | • In groups, students run a new business and others criticize |
| Sustainable Marketing | Corporate social responsibility | • Develop a social media campaign to cope with an environmental problem |
| | Ethics in advertising | • Define a product with risks to health and develop a promotion strategy |

Source: Adapted from Green (2015)

In flipped learning, lecturers need to suspend their instructional roles and use the time for active facilitator roles contrary to the conventional way of teaching. Other than one-way teaching activity the lecturers in this approach welcome interactions both between the class peers and also themselves to create a social learning environment (Lage, Platt, & Treglia, 2000). These interactions might be in the forms of task-based activities, one-to-one or group discussions, teamwork, and other types of group activities.

Flipped learning is similar to online learning activities which are provided by several higher education institutions and the flipped classroom approach fits well into online learning programs (Snowball, 2014). Table 2 provides examples for implementing a flipped approach in marketing courses.

### 3.3. Simulations

Simulation games can be used as an important tool for education by providing students with experiences that are very similar to those that exist in real marketing settings in business life. In terms of marketing education by using simulations students may experience developing or tailoring products/services, launching new products, and promoting them to different customer segments. Many simulations require group studies that are similar to multifunctional teams in companies, and thus students may feel the competition, collaboration, and conflict that exists in this working style. While business training simulations can take up to one or two days, undergraduate or graduate education simulations may last as long as the term with different rounds. In these different stages, students can encounter issues in designing the product, pricing and promoting for the target markets, and making it available for the customers, hence they cover all the marketing mix elements. The complexity of these issues requires students to conclude on several decisions that help them enhance their collaboration, negotiation, and communication skills (Vos, 2014).

If a simulation is managed properly, then it would become an indispensable learning tool. Therefore, the most important factor of the success of simulation games turns to sound education is the lecturers' feedback and guidance. A loose structure, low level of guidance from the lecturer, and insufficient feedback would decrease student's motivation and also destroy the possible learning outcomes. First and foremost, the lecturer should know the simulations, possible challenges, and solutions to them in every detail. Also, the lecturer, as a guide, should follow the contribution of each student or group, and their progress in learning carefully. According to Vos

and Brennan (2010), the lecturer has three roles in this regard. First, lecturers should plan appropriate learning and teaching strategies. Second, the lecturers should support the students continuously during the different sessions of the simulation to secure learning. And third, lecturers need to develop appropriate assessment tasks. This requires an investment in time and empathy for the lecturer. After each session, the lecturer should set a time for giving feedback and evaluating that session to close the learning cycle and generate learning outcomes.

Simulations can help students get a comprehensive view of real-life and the roles of marketing in business. In this way, they can understand the strategic levels of decision-making in businesses. Simulations help students link the theories they were taught to the practice. In simulations, before students dive to a specific stage they could be provided with theory by the educator –called a debriefing session– and let practice immediately.

Besides the advantages, there are also some threats to the success of simulations. Vos (2015) found that lecturers frequently encounter conflicts in groups that need some of their time to handle. Another threat to achieving the targets of simulations is the resistance from the students which prevents their engagement.

### 3.4. MOOCs

The innovations in information technologies that can be implemented in educational institutions have changed the way of learning, working, and also forming collaboration networks. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) first appeared in 2008 as an implementation of George Siemens' (2005) Connectivism Theory which he defined as "A Learning Theory for the Digital Age". Further called connectivist MOOCs or simply cMOOCs, the courses relied on the philosophy of openness, diversity, and connecting people (Jacqmin, 2019). In 2011, Peter Norvig and Sebastian Thrun, two professors of Stanford launched a website that provided free access to their "Introduction to Artificial Intelligence" course and large content like large short videos, quizzes, and discussion forum facilities. From several countries, a total of 160.000 students had enrolled in the program and 23.000 of them had a certificate of completion. These MOOCs had spread so wide that they are called xMOOCs which represent "large enrollments". One year later, Sebastian Thrun carried this success and created a platform for hosting other MOOCs, named Udacity. The success of the other two MOOC platforms, edX, and Coursera, also took the attraction of the public to this innovation in education.

French universities followed this trend and by the initiative of the French government, France Université Numérique (FUN) platform was established in 2013. As the US equivalents provided courses in their own language FUN did the same, sure the language limited their coverage but still 1.2 million students –one-third from abroad– were reached, and 350 courses were hosted. The courses were from computer science, health or economics required no elective procedures and all free of access. Learning outside the classroom through MOOCs spread to the K-12 environment and in homeschooling by letting students work on learning content outside of the classroom, at their own pace (Brahimi & Sarirete, 2015). Today there are many other examples some of those are presented in Table 3.

According to Jacqmin (2019), MOOCs would not destroy traditional higher education institutions but will be an important complement for them. However, if universities and programs do not prepare themselves, it seems that shortly, MOOCs can fill the shortcomings of universities or departments and create an alternative to them.

Belleflamme and Jacqmin (2014) suggested that by the use of internet-based facilities, new pedagogical approaches may be implemented. These tools provide learners with the possibility to receive and give feedback and also

**Table 3.** Major MOOCs in Different Countries

| Major providers | Description |
|---|---|
| Udacity (USA)<br>www.udacity.com | • An outgrowth of a Stanford University experiment founded by Sebastian Thrun, David Stavens, and Mike Sokolsky. Launched in January 2012. |
| Coursera (USA)<br>www.coursera.org | • A for-profit educational technology company founded by two former Stanford University computer science professors Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller. Launched in April 2012. |
| edX (USA)<br>edx.org | • A not-for-profit enterprise with MIT and Harvard universities as founding partners. Also conducts research learning based on how users use its platform. Launched in May 2012. |
| Open2Study<br>www.open2study.com | • Developed by Open Universities Australia. Launched in April 2013. |
| FutureLearn (UK)<br>futurelearn.com | • A private company owned by the Open University. The first UK-led multi-institutional platform. Launched in September 2013. |
| Rwaq (KSA)<br>www.rwaq.org | • A Riyadh-based company in Saudi Arabia launched in September 2013 a fully native, fully Arabic massive open online course. |
| Iversity (Germany)<br>www.iversity.org | • A company with a diverse interdisciplinary team from Berlin offering MOOC and collaboration network for academia. Launched in October 2013. |
| FUN (France)<br>www.franceuniversite numerique.fr | • France Université Numérique (FUN) provides a wide audience, notably in French-speaking countries, with numerous free classes in every discipline. Launched in October 2013. |
| Edraak (Jordan)<br>www.edraak.org | • An initiative of the Queen Rania Foundation for Education and Development (QRF). Powered by the Open edX platform. Launched in May 2014. |

Source: Brahimi & Sarirete (2015)

customize the program for individual needs. Large populations, who otherwise cannot, will be able to access new educational opportunities for lower fees (Deming et al., 2015). Howarth et al. (2017) take attention to other important outputs of MOOCs which helps improve the visibility of institutions amongst the competition. MOOCs may give some students a chance to have an education and also it may motivate some of those who do not consider enrolling in a program to do so. In some cases, it may act as a selling promotion or testimonial in which some students will try the educations and if they believe they can get more in a school environment they would further register to a normal program (Howarth et al., 2016).

In marketing, MOOCs can easily be run for graduate education. Marketing courses, especially those related to digital, are not limited to marketing programs, and graduates from many fields want to have a brief understanding of marketing to use it in their own professions (Shaltoni, 2016). Although marketing programs are dissimilar (Shah, Madhavaram & Laverie, 2019), MOOCs related to Digital Marketing can be a great chance for several people to understand the basics of marketing. Besides, Ölmez et al. (2018) suggested the usage of blockchain technology to certify the graduates of an education program, and in turn, the certificates can also be provided through digital innovations.

MOOCs represent an evolutionary change in education services to the extent they are delivered and consumed. Despite the advantages, MOOCs have many drawbacks. In a research, Voss (2003) stated that the completion ratio of students can be also low as 5%. Some students simply enrolled because of curiosity and later dropped, some did not have time to follow the procedures, or some did not find it fits with their expectations. Moreover, MOOCs need substantial investment to be ready for going live. As the concept is delivering the education service for free, support from the education institution, otherwise a sponsor is needed. Although Howarth et al. (2016) pointed out the increase in the awareness of the institution and the ability of MOOCs to be used as a promotional tool, if implemented poorly then this program will harm the reputation of the associated institution (Barclay & Logan, 2013). Another situation is that MOOCs are no longer a tool that provides promotional support, but rather as a learning tool.

## 4. OBSTACLES FOR NEW EDUCATIONAL METHODS IN MARKETING

As mentioned before, one of the major problems in marketing education is the lag between academia and practice. The faculties are trying to prepare their students –future leaders– for professional life but the educators lack information or experience related to the digital tools which have been started to be used in the business recently. To cope with this problem not only the professors' own initiative but also support from the administration is necessary. The lecturers should be close to the field and they need to spare some time for understanding "what's happening" in the real market. The administration should consider providing free time for their staff for this aim, and also the more support to implement these novelties to their courses which may involve industry educations and practices.

Online marketing companies also provide some training. For example, HubSpot provides tools for academicians to use as a part of their courses. Similarly, companies like Google, SalesForce, HootSuite organize online learning programs and offer certifications to prospective learners. So, as the universities want their graduates to be ready for the practice, it can be said that lecturers have also the opportunity for developing their skills in digital marketing so they can pass this knowledge to undergraduate students. The effort put from marketing departments and faculties to learn new digital marketing can be based on organizational learning theory (Sinkula, Baker & Noordewier, 1997). As the theory suggests, organizational culture, leadership, administrative support, and shared vision are important components to develop a competitive advantage for business faculties.

New approaches require new materials to be designed and produced. Ryan, Valverde & Rodríguez-Ardura (2001) pointed out the longer production process of these materials in comparison to those been produced for traditional learning materials. Here, another issue is producing new material with the new technologies of hypermedia may require additional skills to be gained (Kolosseus, Bauer & Bernhardt, 1995). Therefore, institutions need to push a collaboration environment and convince departments like computer sciences, software engineering, graphics, etc. to host their expertise to marketing departments.

In a research conducted by Clarke et al. (2001) on online undergraduate courses, the instructors were perceived less responsive to students either in satisfying their needs or answering their questions and also less enthusiastic. Some students may have difficulties with the new methodologies or some may be surprisingly weak in technology. In this case, educators should prevent them to get lost in hyperspace (Burbules and Callister 1996) and provide close support and make them feel comfortable.

Active learning might also be difficult with large class sizes. In a classroom with more than 100 students, engagement can become a real problem (Tanner, 1999). When the students don't feel and see the support from their tutors then they may lose the meaning which lies under active learning. Therefore, the administrators should balance the sizes and/or support the lecturers with teaching assistants to secure the targeted gains of the new methods.

## 5. CONCLUSION

As a result, there is a need for new regulations and changes in the styles and methods of marketing education, both voluntarily and sometimes challenging, both individually and collectively. Institutions have to keep up with these destructive changes. Elements such as the fact that learning in the classical style is not enough in the information age and that information can reach large masses will force universities in different geographies to collaborate. In this sense, marketing education should be managed correctly and effectively as it contains a structure that is very closely related to humans. This can happen with visionary and technology-oriented management both in universities and institutions.

We think that we will see more items such as virtual classrooms, flipped learning, simulation, and MOOCs in marketing education. The reason for this is changing market expectations and changing student profiles.

New tools and methods brought by digital technologies have been embraced by marketing practice so fast that aside from high-tech businesses marketing functions become the leaders of innovation in companies. This requires young talents equipped with relevant skills and knowledge, and therefore business faculties/schools should try to understand, evaluate, and meet the needs of marketing today and the future.

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