

The Importance for Colleges and Universities Teaching both Marketing and Operations Management Courses to Effectively Link the Material with a Course in Supply Chain Management

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In today's globally competitive marketplace, a large number of organizations have adopted the supply chain management philosophy as the foundation to its business practices. Practitioners with responsibilities in the areas of marketing and operations management have become keenly aware of the need to work collaboratively in support of supply chain management. As academics teaching in the areas of marketing and operations management it is important that we recognize the importance for integrating the marketing and operations management curriculums so as to promote a strong interest and understanding of supply chain management to our students. In this paper we examine the integration of the marketing and operations management curriculums in support of providing students with an understanding for the need and importance of the supply chain management philosophy as a means for an organization to gain and maintain its competitive advantage.

INTRODUCTION

Many organizations today have demonstrated the importance to integrate rather than isolate the functional areas of its businesses. As academics, we are charged to ensure that the academic curricula under our governance is providing students with the same level of importance attached to the linking and integration of the functional areas in the business school curriculum. There are limited programs that are truly global. Traditional supply chain courses have been limited in providing global process and concepts according to Long, Moos, and Radic (2012). In a survey, Fawcett (2009) reports that practitioners' view the establishment of an undergraduate and graduate curriculum as a key factor in building a successful supply chain management program. As organizations increase their adoption and implementation of supply chain management into their overall corporate strategy, it is important that today's students who will become tomorrow's organizational leaders gain a comprehensive understanding of the supply chain management philosophy.

In the revealing survey, Fawcett (2009) reports that practitioners' view the establishment of an undergraduate and graduate curriculum as a key factor in building a successful supply chain management program. We argue that the integration of the marketing and operations management disciplines within

the business school environment is critical to attaining a strong and viable supply chain management course and program. The need and importance for cross-functional integration between the marketing and operations management disciplines was first identified in the literature four decades ago. In early papers, both Bagozzi (1975) and Shapiro (1977)

examined the rationale for marketing and operations to co-exist in support of the underlying and fundamental premise that marketing was the exchange of value among individuals, organizations, society, and all their stakeholders. The historical prominence of logistics, which many view as the origin of modern day supply chain management, within the marketing discipline was also well recognized (see for example, Novack, Rinehart, and Wells 1992). The marketing and operations interface has been discussed from the perspective of coordinated and collaborative planning models for manufacturing and services (see for example Tang, 2010 and Pullman and Moore, 1998) as well as from the pedagogical perspective of cross-functional team building and integrated decision making using simulation (see for example Darian and Coopersmith, 2001 and Ouardighi, Jorgensen and Pasin 2008). The marketing operations management interface is also a timely research topic as evident by the special issue of the *Journal of Operations Management* (Volume 20, 2002) in which six articles addressed methodologies on how to span the continuum between marketing an operations management.

The above cited literature represents a positive effort to integrate the marketing and operations management disciplines. The need for such integration is intensified by the premise for interdisciplinary planning and decision making which is inherent to the supply chain management philosophy (Larson, Poist, and Halldorsson 2007; Stank, Fugate, and Davis 2005). It is apparent that marketing tends to place a greater focus on customer relationships while operations management tends to focus more on process management and finished goods. This subtle difference can have an important impact on the entire departments in business; hence it is necessary to determine an optimum way to make the important decisions within this area. Several decades ago, an Ohio State University Supply Chain Council (Cooper, Lambert, and Pagh, 1997) emphasized that supply chain management is more comprehensive than logistics, and encompasses the management of multiple business processes including logistics processes. The Ohio State model suggested that supply chain management utilized eight business processes including; customer relationship management, supplier relationship management, customer service management, demand management, order fulfillment, manufacturing, flow management, product development and commercialization, and returns management. A common theme across these definitions is the need for coordination and collaboration among suppliers and customers in conjunction with demand and supply side planning.

Although it is agreed that supply chain is interdisciplinary, we argue that current business school curriculums may not be providing the students with the necessary degree of interdisciplinary study that industry wants and needs. In this paper we raise a series of discussion points for the purpose of stimulating dialogue among business school educators on the importance of providing business school students with a supply chain management curriculum that is based on the integration of the marketing and operations management disciplines.

It is important for both the military and the business sectors, according to Zsidsin, Minor, Davis, and McQuaid (2014) to create efficient and effective supply chains, in which these sectors must develop leaders who have the necessary skills to solve current problems. This further reinforces the importance for the need to provide a consistent integration between marketing and operations management t better develop a clear understanding of the significance of supply chain management in today's economic environment.

DISCUSSION POINTS

In this section we present a set of discussion points for stimulating and channeling discussion on the integration of marketing and operations management in support of extending the scope of supply chain management education for business students. We make no claim as to the comprehensiveness of the list at this point in the research process. The list as presented is intended to provide a starting point for the

important discussion of ensuring that today’s business students leave academia with a knowledge base in supply chain management that meets the expectations of the organizations that will be their future employers.

The list of discussion points for integration of the marketing and operations management disciplines is organized along two themes (see Table 1). The first theme outlines a set of specific issues that have been identified in the literature to be important to the supply chain orientation of an organization. The second theme addresses pedagogical issues in the delivery of courses in marketing and operations management.

In Table 1, the five organizational issues directly address the rising expectations that an organization’s supply chain must be managed with minimal negative effect on the environment. In both the academic and industrial settings there is not a clear consensus as to what constitutes a “green/sustainable supply chain strategy.”

**TABLE 1
ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES FOR INTEGRATING MARKETING AND
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT**

Organizational Issues	Suggested Background Literature
1. Green and Sustainable Supply Chains	Pantelic, D., M. Sakal, and Zehetner (2016), Reppel (2012), Carter and Rogers (2008), Vachon and Klassen (2006), Rao and Holt (2005)
2. Product Design and Development	Calantone, Droge, and Vickery (2002), Singhal and Singhal (2002)
3. Sustainable Sourcing	Walker et al. (2009), Letmathe and Balakrishman (2005)
4. Closed Loop/ Reverse Supply Chains	Wikner and Tang (2008), Blackburn et al. (2004)
5. Multiple Disciplinary Productivity	Arbaugh et al. (2017), Liao-Troth, S., S. P. Thomas, and G. S. Webb (2015)

**TABLE 2
PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES FOR INTEGRATING MARKETING AND
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT**

1. Can a consensus be drawn among business faculty regarding what constitutes supply chain management?
2. Can marketing departments and management departments deliver a consistent them regarding supply chain management?
3. Does the delivery of supply chain management differ among large and small colleges an universities as well as public and private schools?
4. Do current textbooks on supply chain management offer an integrated viewpoint of marketin and operations management?

The pedagogical issues for integrating marketing and operations management are listed in Table 2. Schools that offer majors in management and marketing often cover topics that overlap and reinforce its particular areas. Supply Chain Management, for example, continues to grow in importance in many organizations today, and it is suggested that faculty addressing this topic must present and provide similar examples of the material. In recent years there has been an effort to teach business topics as being important across all majors such as the need for marketing students to understand financial concepts and

management students to understand economics concepts and so forth, but we question whether supply chain management has achieved the same focus.

When reviewing the curriculum at large and small universities, it is apparent that course selection and variety of majors varies, but it is unclear whether the delivery of the topic in supply chain management is consistent across all schools.

We believe it is also important to review textbooks that are devoted exclusively to supply chain management as well as chapters within books that cover the topic to see if there is a similar theme in the material that encompasses both management and marketing. The expectation should be textbook reviews have input from both marketing and operations faculty. The positive contributions provided can offer a more complete supply chain management textbook experience.

SUMMARY

In this paper we have presented a set of discussion points that may contribute to stimulating views on the need and means for integrating the marketing and operations management disciplines. The outcome of this integration may prove supportive to stated organizational and pedagogical concerns for ensuring that business students enter the workforce with an understanding and appreciation for the importance of the supply chain management philosophy. As a direction for future research we plan to: i) audit the academic current course offerings in marketing and operations management of AACSB accredited institutions to determine the extent to which integrated coursework is available, ii) survey the practitioner community to develop a comprehensive list of topics that it views as necessary for entry level employees to possess, and iii) gather feedback from operations and marketing faculty who teach at colleges and universities that offer marketing and management majors and have a connection to supply chain management in the curriculum.

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