THE ISSUE

Marketing both in its mechanics and even more so in its hierarchical position in the organization has been undergoing important changes for some time. The causes for these changes can be found in the economic and social developments that have occurred around the world, at least since the end of World War II. For example, technological improvements in the production and distribution of goods and services; the tendency towards professionalization of work; the gains effected by organized labor; the commitments of governments to provide social welfare services; education extending over longer periods of time; progress in health; gerontological developments; earlier marriages; greater leisure; peoples' shift from an 'inner-directed' Puritan to an 'outer-directed' hedonistic life style; and possibly most important the widely held belief that such trends are irreversible. Thus an important change came about in the distribution of disposable income in the population, and a corresponding spur in industrial capital spending. These factors, among others, combined with increasing competition make Marketing possibly the most important and certainly the most glamorous business function at this time. It has assumed the role of providing and is expected to deliver the planned corporate profit.

Marketing techniques derived from the various disciplines have also developed rapidly. However, when compared to the corporate demands made on marketing, they are as yet inadequate to replace hunches with scientifically derived data, so that marketing decisions could be seen in the main to be a function of technological competence. In short, there is still far more in the field of marketing that is...
unknown or hazy, than that which is clear. Many engaged in marketing consider especially the social sciences to fall short of providing the degree of insight they think necessary and desirable in the execution of their work.

There is a growing concern among market researchers, their marketing managers and clients, about the factors that determine the results of market research studies and their use in the process of making marketing decisions. Some assert that it is management's responsibility to use research sophisticatedly, others claim that the quality of the research results are shaped by the ability of both marketer and researcher realistically to perceive the marketing problem, the resources in time and money made available by the marketer, and the methodology chosen by the researcher. Still others believe that marketing decisions are successful to the degree that the researcher has done his work properly. According to Carlson (3) the marketer-researcher interaction is an important determinant in marketing. Regardless of causes, simple or complex, disquieting feelings about market research and its uses are in evidence.

These anxieties seem to be more noticeable in industrial market research than in consumer or opinion research. One of the reasons for this may well be the industrial market researcher's lack of intimate knowledge of technologies related to the production or use of the product. Even should he have this knowledge, it will likely be less developed than that of his marketing manager or client. The team approach, for example employing engineers, economists, social scientists, only occasionally provides the integration necessary to allay the client's anxiety. Another reason may well be the absence of a generally accepted research methodology. For example, sampling based on statistical probability is frequently impossible, at times not even desirable. The need to resort to 'confidential information', often not verifiable and the source of which it is not ethical to identify, represents another factor. Yet, aggravating though these special conditions might be, the anxieties related to market research in general seem to cover common or at least largely overlapping ground.
The growth of marketing has also furthered the growth of two series of roles, one that of the Marketing Manager and another that of the Marketing Researcher. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the role of the researcher and its relationships with the marketer and with others, both within the same and in separate organizational structures. Many of the concepts used in this examination are socio-psychological, some are psycho-analytical, all are directed to the economics of the market.

THE RESEARCH SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

The pilot study described here was conducted over the past five years investigating the work of 85 market researchers in nine countries, including the U.S., U.K., Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Kenya and Tanzania. The industries involved were textiles, consumer durables, foods of convenience, household supplies, business services, heavy engineering and public entertainment, thereby relating to industrial users and consumers, providing them with products and services. All researchers involved were nationals of the country in which they worked; all but one were male; each in the job for a time period ranging from 21 months to 6½ years; about 40% had a baccalaureate or post-graduate degree in the Social Sciences, about 35% in Economic or Statistics, and the remaining 25% had what one researcher proudly termed "graduated by practical experience".

68 researchers were individually interviewed about their work in one or two extended meetings each. In 24 instances, there was also an opportunity to follow up the information provided by the researchers with their managers, the marketers. With 16 researchers, there was an opportunity to observe them closely in their work for time periods between two and ten months. In such cases the author was a consultant to their firms.

In addition to these interviews the relevant published literature was scrutinized.
THE FINDINGS

The findings of the study can be summarized under ten main headings. They are:

1. Market Research Findings played in each instance an important part in the formulation of the marketing plan of these organizations. However, the validity of these findings was frequently seen by marketers as debatable. Their anxieties were initially focused on the data and its interpretation, but over time spread to the role and competence of the researcher and his employer.

2. Mutual Judgements of Marketers' and Researchers' Competence generally indicated that the marketer's judgement of the researcher's work depended, though not necessarily in that order of importance, on the information provided, the form in which it was provided, and the ease with which they related to one another in the course of their work. The marketer's performance was judged not only by the relevance of his planning decisions, but also by the way he decided to implement his plan for the market.

Frequently, marked anxiety prevailed between marketer and researcher. It seemed to relate to their mutual perception of the other's technical competence and performance. Particularly in instances of marketing inefficiencies, whether consciously perceived or unconsciously felt, by either or both, mutual blame and attempts at scapegoating were in evidence.

Researchers claimed that marketers neither understand nor appreciate research; do not permit researchers to acquaint themselves with all the relevant aspects of the problem; do not provide adequate resources in expenditure or time for "good research"; are disinclined to permit "general research" essential for long-range planning; and frequently misuse research for purposes other than information gathering related to marketing. Often, they felt, they were expected to furnish convincing reasons for what they thought were "wrong decisions". When they found themselves unable to do so, they met their marketers' outbursts of banalities and even invectives. This was countered by marketers who stated that researchers did not appreciate the complexities of practical
marketing problems and were frequently overambitious empire builders.

An analysis of several of these situations indicated that all these arguments were of some substance. There were occasions when researchers, especially those with independent agencies, were not permitted to see the whole of the marketing problem. At times, there was a strong implication that research was commissioned to prove someone in the organization right, wrong, to justify firing him, to delay or even substitute for marketing implementation. Indeed some marketers, who perceived market research reports as critical of their intuitive methods, seemed to view them as quasi acts of subversion. When hampering the researcher, marketing managers produced self-fulfilling prophecies. They expected research to be inadequate, even to fail. They, then, enforced decisions that in fact induced the failure. This, then, provided the rationale for "returning to the old though not always proven method" of intuitive hunches, which, however, not infrequently produced favorable results.

3. An Examination of the Literature revealed a paucity of published and unpublished material related to this problem, in itself giving cause for considering the significance of this condition.

4. By contrast there was a Wealth of Papers dealing with Methodology. Though cognizant of the scientific importance of methodology, one could not help but notice a quasi infatuation of some researchers with their chosen instrument. At times, methodology described as useful for the solution of one problem was uncritically applied to others. The prescribed procedures were followed implicitly, yet the results were not quite in accord with the researcher's expectations. There seemed to be a relation between the researcher's motives and his newly acquired technique. This technique was seen by the researcher not only as a tool to gain knowledge about a given marketing problem; beyond this, it seemed to be holding out the promise for successfully manipulating the marketing manager or client. This impression was reinforced by the observation that considerable differences among researchers about
the validity of some methodologies found relatively little attention in professional meetings or in shop talk, while these differences were aired rather considerably in presentation to potential clients or in public statements.

5. Jargon was heavily used by researchers in their conversations and even more so in their reports. Marketers in some instances seemed to be equally affected by this. The tendency to stress jargon terms, often newly coined and not always well defined, seemed to serve less the illumination of relations important to the marketing process, but more so to substitute for understanding derived from rigorously tested observations. (11).

6. Confused Perception of the Researcher's Role by both researchers and marketers was noticed almost throughout this study. When the researchers' roles as described by themselves were compared with the descriptions of their managers, the marketers or with the official company job specifications, substantial differences were found among them. In two instances where this did not occur, the researchers had written their own job specification when they were recently promoted.

Discrepancies between role descriptions held by managers, their subordinates and job specifications are frequently observed. It is, however, curious that this should exist so pronouncedly among specialists whose chosen field is the observation and description of relationships among people and objects. Particularly striking were, at least in some instances, the rapidity of changes in the perceptions of the same researchers' roles by both researchers and marketers. This was noticeable in several interviews held within time periods of a few weeks. At times these changes coincided with preliminary discussions about a research project, the time of the interim report, the final report and the use of the findings in the marketing process. Each time the description of the scope and especially the discretion in the work changed considerably, in one interview almost kaleidoscopically three times.
Researchers' Reporting to the Chief Executive Directly was frequently suggested by the former as important to the company and, therefore, organizationally appropriate. Independent researchers, contracting for specific jobs, repeatedly spoke of the benefits to be derived from their continuous and direct relationships with the heads of their client companies; researchers, employed directly with industrial organizations, expressed convictions of corporate needs for them to advise their chief executives at first hand. Stacey (16) advocating this view, bases it on the flat statement that the chief executive is the "supra-researcher". Yet, struggling with a confused perception of the 'integrated marketing concept' (4), he seems to provide greater contradiction to his dictum than substantiation.

The researcher's desire to report to the chief executive, directly represented, at one level, his complaints about the marketer's lack of professional competence. Correctly perceived or otherwise, it was unlikely to be improved by a structural change in the researcher's position. All that such a change might effect would be to place the researcher on a par or possibly higher organizational level than the marketer. The chief executive, responsible for the conduct of the organization, evaluates personally at least his immediate subordinates, among them the marketing manager. Consequently, the researcher's appeal to be directly attached to the chief executive does not only represent a complaint about the marketer's lack of competence, but also of the chief executive's who permitted such lackluster performance directly under himself.

The researcher's request, furthermore, expresses his need to be decisively effective in the conduct of the company and at the highest level of authority. Ultimately, such effectiveness is reached by occupying the chief executive's role. When asking to be only his 'persuasive' advisor, the researcher in fact aspires highest organizational authority while unwilling to accept its full responsibility. This may manifest an awareness of the lack of competence to handle the chief executive's tasks. In terms of
organizational reality, it represents a lack of clarity in the perception of the researcher's own role. In fact, these researchers repeat the clamor made in the past by other specialists, e.g. public relations men, advertising men, image makers, accountants, that they had the ultimate insight necessary for the corporate good.

8. **Marketers' Formal Training for their Work** was in many instances found to be non-existent. Of the total sample consisting of 40 men only 12 had formal marketing training. Ten were American, two British, the latter American-trained by their parent-companies. Of the 40 marketers 15 had some college-level education. Not all of them had graduated.

9. **The Marketers' Verbalization of their Marketing Philosophies** can be placed into two groups. One consisting of 14 college and 3 non-college educated men expressed adherence to the 'integrated marketing concept' (4), although in varying degrees of acceptance and understanding. One member of this group referred to this marketing concept as "castor oil that keeps the organization well-purged and functioning."

The other group embracing marketers who had learned their business techniques by practical experience only, stressed a marketing concept in which reliance on economic strength and tightly controlled organizational structure seemed all-important. Members of this group expressed resistance to market research, often referred to somewhat sarcastically as "the scientific methods and their results". Market research reports implying or recommending reviews of company marketing policies were termed "sweeping", "irregular", "disruptive", "unorganic", and even "destructive."

10. **Researchers' Personal Background.** In reply to questions related to their personal background and, in particular their childhood, 26 researchers out of a total of 40 provided data that seemed to fit a consistent pattern. It was: a father, frequently a professional man, apparently ambivalently loved by the son, often described as disciplinarian or authoritarian, but considered worthy
of emulation; a mother over-protective, frequently quarreling with the son and refusing to let him grow up; the family usually well to-do, having reached or aspiring to a higher middle-class status. The researchers' academic background revealed a main interest in Literature, the Social Sciences or sometimes Chemistry. Almost without exception was there mentioning of some personal health problem, often of apparently psycho-somatic nature. The other 14 researchers interviewed did not fit this pattern nor indeed did any other pattern clearly emerge.

The researchers were, then, arranged in two categories in accordance with the nature of their attitude towards their marketing managers. One, those who clearly pictured this relationship as one of dominance-submission accompanied by aggressive and hostile verbalization. The other, those thinking the relationship unsatisfactory, moderately good or even good, nevertheless accepting it without hostility. When the 40 researchers were divided in accordance with their attitude towards their marketing managers and adherence to the personal background pattern described before, the following grouping emerged:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal background pattern described before</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>relationship not always satisfactory or acceptable without hostile verbalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not adhering to this pattern</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 3.238 \quad p > .05 \]

The statistical analysis shows that the two groups do not differ from each other significantly. The probability is close but does not quite reach the 5% significance level which in this instance represents a \( \chi^2 \) value of 3.481.

But even if the data were significant, three caveats must be entered here. One, the sample is small and not randomly drawn. Second, the data reported here are derived from interviews only
and not supported by any other evidence; they may well have some impressionistic quality. Third, the explanation suggested in the following is in part based on psychoanalytic theory. Although a close working contact had been maintained with many researchers of this sub-group, no prolonged psycho-analytic study of any of them was carried out. Consequently, the psycho-analytic concepts integrated into the following psychological explanation cannot be considered as proved in terms of this study but rather tending to throw light on facts that otherwise might remain, at least in part, obscure.

ANALYSIS

Two questions pose themselves at this juncture:

A. What are the dynamics of the organizational friction causing anxiety and potential inefficiency of personnel otherwise well-qualified in marketing?

B. What are the dynamics causing the individual confusion about the identity of the researcher’s role and the principles that govern the acceptable conduct in this role?

The former may well have its matrix in the working environment, particularly in its social and technical conditions. The latter's may be found in the personality structure of the individual and possibly also in his physical condition. It is, however, important to note, that these three assumptions are likely to be interrelated, thereby presenting different aspects of a common core problem.

SOME SOCIO-TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM

A business organization can be seen as a socio-technical system (8, 17). This implies that an organization carries out its technical or operational tasks through people working together in an organized way. Consequently, the structure and policies of the organization needs to be clearly and consistently related to its overall objectives, or what Selznick (15) calls its mission, that is all the tasks that are essential for the organization's survival, regardless of the number or priority of these tasks.
To carry out these essential 'primary tasks' (9), the organization employs strategies (1). One of these strategies is its marketing plan, its determined method of dealing with the external world - the market. Another is its organizational structure, that is, the way it arranges itself internally to effect the marketing plan (12). These strategies, by the nature in which they have been conceived and are carried out, will affect the organization's development, its flexibility, its effectiveness and its commitment towards its mission. It will also affect the opportunities it affords its members to satisfy their own personal needs and thereby further the growth of their own personalities.

It can, therefore, be assumed that the degree to which the organization's mission and the members' personal needs coincide, so may we find efficiency in the use of technologies designed to carry out the primary tasks. Conversely, to the degree that this congruence is lacking, there will be a loss of both organizational effectiveness and personal satisfaction.

A marketing organization can be seen as a sub-system with its mission to provide a budgeted profit for the entire organization. To carry out its primary task of creating the marketing plan it requires information to be supplied by the marketing researcher, and derived from judgments about the dynamics of the market, the organization's own work force, its suppliers, the government, public opinion, and other forces too numerous to mention here, each in varying degrees of importance. It is essential to bear in mind that the determinants of the weight of these forces, dynamic in character, are neither finite nor are they stable. Those who might contend that the market researcher's work relates to the market only and not to the other areas mentioned before, may well ponder a little about what happens to research findings that prove not useful because of forces in those areas. It will highlight the fate of simple answers, to simple questions dealing with complex marketing situations. It is, therefore, the work of the market researcher to advise and assist the marketer in the specified formulation of the marketing problem, and then, to provide that kind of relevant and meaningful information that will facil-
iterate the marketer's work to plan creatively for the approximate satisfaction of the market. This marketing plan affects all activities of the organization. Starting from the needs of the prospects for the product or service, through expressing these needs into specifications for production of the products and services, thereby inevitable touching in an important way all work of the organization, to culminate in the delivery of these products and services to customers and consumers in a manner desired by them and profitable to the company. The marketing plan, ultimately approved by the chief executive, can thus be seen as a complex of needs and desires, foremost among them the market's, adjusted to the needs of the company.

The complexity of this primary task and the inadequacy of techniques available, relative to its importance may well engender the dynamics of the organizational friction described before. This organizational friction, however, cannot be fully explained in terms of economic, social or technological determinants exclusively. Without denying their importance, there is a need for a psychological analysis of the individuals' behavior, involving, if necessary unconscious components of their motivations.

The author has demonstrated elsewhere, that organizational behavior which on the face of it or in the light of economic and social factors appears contradictory or at least difficult to explain, is quite likely to become comprehensible in terms of the psychology of the individual who is engaged in it (12, 13, 14). In this sense, no assumption is made that people are 'stupid', but rather that their ability to use more fully their capacity for decision making related to their work, may be affected by an excessive use of psychological defense mechanisms.

SOME POSSIBLE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM

Both the troubled marketers and researchers, when relating to one another and to their own work, seemed to have relied on defense mechanisms to a degree greater than warranted by the nature of their roles. The marketers were frequently inadequately trained for their tasks and their past experiences did not seem to suffice for solving
'complex marketing problems of the present day. They seemed to com-<ref>pare for their inability to operate creatively in their markets by acting negatively towards market research. Rather than utilizing the functioning-but imperfect tools of market research, they experi-<ref>enced them as additional threats and defended against their mounting anxieties by projecting the feelings of their own inadequacies on to the researchers and their scientific methods.</ref>

The researchers felt frustrated in their desire to utilize their professional skills in the production of 'good research'. Wishing to stay on their jobs, or to retain their clients, they felt it essential to develop research findings approximating the marketers' expectations. They assumed that exercising their professional skills and thereby "proving themselves" may have entailed the loss of their roles. Considering the lack of perfection of their own tools and the competence of their marketing managers, they accepted methodological innovations, at times indiscriminately, and saw themselves most appropriately placed closest to the hierarchical top. Yet, they also experienced the value of their own work doubted, their organizational position unchanged, themselves misunderstood and often scapegoated for their marketing managers' shortcomings. They felt that they were responsible for the implementation of their marketing managers' operational plans; they also felt an obligation to be decisively effective in decision making processes of the hierarchical top, all functions which in reality were never theirs.

They appeared deeply involved in the task of understanding their marketing problems and ascertaining information about them. They were, however, less involved in analyzing the effects of their work on their marketers personally. While pointing to inefficiencies in the marketers' work and suggesting remedies through altering their own social position in the organizational structures, they often seemed to be aware of the improbability of such changes to occur. In short, there was a critical confusion about the identity of their roles and the principles that govern the acceptable conduct in these roles. Erikson (5) defined such an identity crisis as a stage in which the individual endeavors to detect some meaningful resemblance between what he has come to see in himself and what his sharpened awareness tells him.
others judge and expect him to be.

At a surface level, the troubled marketer-researcher relationship can be seen to result from two factors. One social, the expectations each has of the other's performance. The other technical, the expertise that each has in his work. These factors are bound to affect the tolerance the occupants of these two roles will have about the other's and their own 'shortcomings'.

But in reality not all marketers are insecure autocrats, and those who might be, in fact, need the help of the researchers, albeit in an understanding and palatable manner, quite badly. Moreover, modern economics, particularly in the countries in which this study was conducted, had almost constantly job opportunities in marketing and marketing research. As a result, the hated dependence on dominating managers cannot be adequately explained in terms of external reality. At a deeper level, this relationship can be seen to be affected by personality traits, certainly those of the researchers.

Psycho-analytic theory would suggest that the personality syndrome of some researchers described before can be seen as a description of an essentially infantile personality, having received too little love in childhood and never feeling entirely accepted by the parents. As a result, there is inadequate security within the individual, a great need of proving oneself worthy, thus becoming accepted by others and eventually being superior to them. This personality type is envious of other peoples' apparent success and security, capable of great hostility, and frequently subject to psycho-somatic illnesses. Unconsciously, these individuals are likely to perceive managers as symbolic representations of the unloving parents, whom they wish to tame, to punish, to degrade and thereby eventually prove to be superior to them.

It is in this sense, that the desire to report directly to the Chief Executive can be understood. The first step-egalitarianism with the marketing managers seems to represent at a deeper level an unconscious denial that there are differences between children and parents. The subsequent desire for further elevation can then be seen as a wish to lord over the parents who then should feel as the child had felt, when he experienced them to lord over him. It also
represents an expression of the fantasy of the family romance, in which the child believes himself to be a changeling reared by parents of a lower station and character than those to whom he was born and with whom he should rightfully be.

All this is fantasied to come about by magic which enables the child to be more-powerful than the parent. This, then, might provide an explanation for the blind faith in methodology that had proven successful for others. This analysis could be carried out in greater detail. However, its basic approach and function may well have become clear by now.

If there is validity about the kind of infantile aspects which show themselves in the market researcher's identity crisis, described here, than it may well be that there is a tendency for market research to attract, among others, some people who, in the psychoanalytic sense of the term, want to 'act out' in their daily work, problems unresolved in their personality structure. If this is predominantly the case, then, these researchers may loudly vociferate about the need to clear up this role-confusion, while simultaneously tend to perpetuate it, because it satisfies other co-existing needs of theirs. On the other hand, market researchers predominantly motivated by a genuine curiosity about the market are likely to go about their work in a manner designed to clarify their roles. Should further research verify these assumptions, thereby indicating a differential capacity among researchers to cope with stress in their work situations, this would have an important bearing on the selection policy for researchers and also on remedial steps for some whom a company may wish to help to develop further their personalities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No claim is made as a result of this pilot study of a precise or complete analysis of the identity crisis of the market researcher, nor, indeed, of a remedy for this problem. Yet, there is an unmistakable aspiration to move towards both. In this sense, three recommendations are put forward, hopefully conceived to provide a measure of remedy. They are:
A. Detailed Role Specification for marketers and researchers when both are members of the same firm or a mutually agreed proposal describing the marketing problem, the scope and depth of the required information, the methodology to be used, the resources in time and monies allocated and an approximate time schedule for the various phases of this work, when the researcher-marketer relationship is that of an independent organization and its client. In either instance it is important that the content of these documents is periodically reexamined or whenever the business situation requires this. This reexamination, at times resulting in revision, will tend to enhance a closer awareness of the business reality and its dynamic changes.

B. Sensitivity Training for both marketers and researchers making for greater awareness, enhancing conceptual skills, that is creative thinking, seeing new relationships, manipulating variables, recognizing unconscious processes and thereby reducing their effect on organizational efficiency (2, 6, 10).

C. An Educational Function specified in the Role of the Researcher and directed towards the Marketer. In this context, education is seen strictly in terms of its Latin base educere, that is - bringing out, developing from latent and potential existence - thus helping the marketer to bring out his potential to understand marketing research problems and thereby facilitate his work. This concept excludes training, instructing or inculcating. It is based on the teaching principle of discovery free from any advocacy. In this, the researcher's work should be aided by his close acquaintance with the social sciences. It will require an essential further quality to sympathize with the marketer. That does not imply agreement with his views or attitudes, but rather their acceptance as being important and meaningful to the marketer. The researcher does not have to like the marketer any more than previously. It should, however, enable him to see his relationship with the marketer in a different light, conducive to greater organizational efficiency.
FURTHER IMPLICATIONS

As it frequently happens in research, this study produced more data than could be accounted for in the hypothesis. Four questions especially seemed important. Their explorations, in themselves promising, may well contribute also further insights into the identity crisis of the market researcher. They are:

1. What might determine the individual's choice of market research as a profession? The economies of the countries in which this study was carried out offered various opportunities for business work. During the time of this research they showed expansion and diversification marked by dynamic initiative and high level aspiration. These conditions, still prevailing, make the relation of the nature of work and the personality attracted to it potentially profitable to explore. Research into this problem should particularly focus on the personality traits that will enable the individual to meet with greater tolerance the difficulties endemic in this work and thereby produce useful criteria for the employment selection process. The data presented here may well provide a convenient starting point.

2. How does the formal and informal training that marketers and researchers receive compare with the requirements of their roles?

3. What is the effect of marketers disregarding market research findings on organizational efficiency and profitability?

4. What might be the effect on organizational efficiency of market research findings and their interpretations which researchers failed to make in an effort to protect their roles, being in that realistic or otherwise?

The author hopes to present at a future date additional findings, potentially leading to recommendations and to further questions resulting from continuing investigations in this problem area.
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