**POSTMODERNISM AND MARKETING EDUCATION: A MODEST PROPOSAL FOR CULTIVATING CRITICAL MARKETING MINDS**

*(SUMMARY)*

Postmodernism as a manifestation of art and literature is taught in universities from the content perspective, however, as a pedagogical perspective it is underutilized, and rarely, if ever, is the postmodern view considered in management education. This paper proposes the adoption of a postmodern perspective in the teaching of marketing, because in the postmodern world, a world in which the Internet is a part of daily business life, a different sort of marketer, one who is critical and imaginative, is required.

Our modern system of higher education operates under the guiding principle that the scientific method is the most appropriate means for discovering and creating knowledge. The postmodern consciousness in the social sciences is a repudiation of positivistic modern science. As a theoretical perspective informing social sciences research postmodernism falls in the critical, radical humanist paradigm. Postmodern thinkers encourage us to direct our attention to the transformations taking place in our society. They focus on the constructed nature of society, and emphasize language as its central support system. They argue against universalism, grand theory, and scientism. Postmodern researchers employ semantic analysis, discourse theory, new historicism, narrative, rhetoric, even fiction, as research methods.

A postmodern view of marketing is a reaction to the ongoing efforts to position marketing as a science. Postmodern marketers have no interest in measuring, calculating, discovering, or proving any grand theory of marketing. Postmodern marketers suggest, rather, that marketing be viewed and studied as an art or an aesthetic; as the social and cultural process that defines society. This permeation of the manifestations of marketing into everyday life is a significant characteristic of our postmodern condition.

Higher education is more than the learning of facts and figures, it is an initiation into a way of life, the modern life. If the world today is no longer modern, but postmodern, should we not be teaching our students the ideas, ideals, knowledge and skills they’ll need to survive there? This paper posits that the modern perspective on marketing education does not sufficiently provide our students with the skills they will need to work in the field of marketing.

A postmodern perspective on marketing education entails teaching marketing within the context of contemporary society. It encourages students to think critically about the marketing concept, and allows them to be imaginative in their application of the principles of marketing in their projects and assignments. A postmodern perspective teaches the marketing concept less as grand theory, more as an approach to marketing that often works, and that might indeed work, but that just as often doesn’t work at all.