The authors propose a positioning of old, modern and recent marketing schools. Recent developments in marketing – such as services marketing, industrial marketing and relationship marketing – do not fit into the seminal framework of marketing schools by Sheth et al. (1988). Therefore, a revised framework of marketing schools builds on and extends this seminal framework to incorporate these recent developments in marketing. In extension, it reveals a white spot in the research of the marketing discipline, which may be a field of further research.

While the practice of marketing is very old, the academic discipline of marketing goes back to the early 20th century when classical schools of marketing emerged (e.g. Copeland 1923; Parlin 1912; Shaw 1912; Weld 1916). In the 1950s, a strong expansion of the discipline commenced by the introduction of a practitioner-oriented and pedagogical approach of marketing – the so-called “marketing-mix” or as often known, the “4P:s” (e.g. Borden 1942 and 1964; Culliton 1948; McGarry 1950; McCarthy 1960 and 1964). In fact, the academic discipline was dominated by this approach until the late 1970s and early 1980s when complementary approaches of marketing emerged (e.g. Fisk, Brown and Bitner 1993; Berry and Parasuraman 1993; Grönroos 1979 and 1990; Håkansson 1982; Shostack 1977).

In order to position approaches in marketing that have recently appeared in the last decades, it is necessary to have an understanding of the historical development of the field and its theoretical structure. Therefore, we will present a way of structuring the different strands of marketing thought, based on the seminal work of Sheth et al. (1988). Their framework is based upon the dimensions of interactive/non-interactive perspectives versus economic/non-economic perspectives. They argue that they are crucial to structure the elements in marketing. These two dimensions combined give rise to four groups of schools.

Recent developments in marketing – such as services marketing, industrial marketing and relationship marketing – do not fit into the seminal framework of marketing schools. We will make an attempt to position the recent approaches in relation to this seminal framework.

Our up-dated framework of marketing schools builds on and extends the seminal framework of Sheth et al. (1988) to incorporate the recent developments in marketing. In extension, it reveals a white spot in the research of the marketing discipline. – a field of further research that may focus on a combination of economic and relational dimensions of marketing. It also connect the recent approaches to the past.

REFERENCES


