
Rethinking Marketing Education for Gen Z: New Learning Approaches to Developing Future Digital Marketers

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Abstract

The rapid growth of the digital economy has significantly transformed the marketing profession, creating increasing demand for graduates with digital marketing competencies. However, interest among Generation Z students in pursuing marketing-related programs has not always kept pace with these industry developments. This divide brings up the following critical questions regarding the way marketing education might be more aligned to the learning styles, career expectations and motivations of the current student generation. Thus, this paper will investigate the effects of new methods of learning and career-related perceptions of Gen Z students on their interest in studying marketing in the digital marketing era. The study will be guided by the Self-Determination Theory to investigate the importance of career perception, program awareness and exposure, parental influence, and the perception of the job market on the intention of students to enroll in Diploma in Marketing programs. A structured questionnaire was used to distribute in random 301 SPM leavers to a structured questionnaire and this was the quantitative research design used. Data gathered was analyzed in SPSS, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis were done to determine the relationships and predictive power of the variables selected. The results suggest that the students tend to show positive attitudes towards marketing professions and industrial employment. The mean score using descriptive analysis indicates that career perception had the highest score of (3.98), then job market perception (3.92), career information and exposure (3.87) and parental influence (3.54) respectively. The results of regression also indicate that job market perception ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.001$) then job market perception (3.92), career information and exposure (3.87) and parental influence (3.54) respectively. The results of regression also indicate that job market perception ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$) and program awareness and exposure ($\beta = 0.214$, $p = 0.002$), are the next most significant and positively related. Conversely, parental influence ($\beta = 0.087$, $p = 0.091$) does not have a noteworthy impact on the enrolment intentions of students. These results indicate that Gen Z students will be more inclined to think about marketing education when they have a proper vision of relevance of marketing careers in the current transforming digital economy and when they have access to pertinent career information. The paper emphasizes the need to embrace new methods of learning that will merge real life marketing experiences, exposure to digital industry and demarcation of the programs positioning to improve the interaction of the students. The findings of this study can provide useful recommendations to higher education institutions that need to restructure marketing education to prepare the generation of digital marketer in the future.

Keywords : *Marketing Education; Gen Z; Career Perception; Programme Awareness; Labour Market Perception; Self-Determination Theory.*
