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Impact of Market Orientation on the Student Satisfaction of Business School in Hyderabad and Rangareddy District of Telangana State

Arijit Santikary¹, S.F. Chandrasekhar²

Abstract

The turbulent business environment today is challenging both to the corporations and also to the higher education in general and business management education in particular demanding focus on strategies to face them. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the effects of such strategy namely, market orientation on the student satisfaction of Business Schools in Hyderabad and Rangareddy district of Telangana State. The effects of perceived market orientation are visualized on different dimensions of student satisfaction which were developed for Business School specifically. Data was collected from 360 students of 30 randomly selected from AICTE approved B-Schools. The correlation and regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesis. The findings confirm the relationship of market orientation and student satisfaction. It was also found that market orientation has positive and significant influence on student satisfaction. This study points out the importance of market orientation in Business Management Institute. The Business educational institute with high level of market orientation will have higher level of student satisfaction and that will lead to growth in admission enrolment, increase student retention and create positive word of mouth.

Keywords: Business School; Market Orientation; Student Retention; Word of Mouth.

Introduction

The last few decades have witnessed growing number of researches aiming at operationalizing the concept of market orientation. The study of market orientation has been extended from manufacturing sector to service sector and even to not-for-profit organizations (Caruana et.al., 1998 [1]; Keneley and Hellier, 2001 [2]; Webster et.al., 2006 [3]). In this dynamic environmental changes higher educational institutions face many challenges. Marketing literatures on market orientation suggest that those challenges can be overcome by implementing market orientation to such institution. This paper contends the relevance of market orientation strategy in

Business educational institution, especially its effects on major stakeholder (student) satisfaction of business school. In business education context there are enough reasons for the implementation of market orientation strategy like moving towards professionalization of Business schools, budget cuts and constraints, Stakeholders changing requirement and so on. Business education or higher education has to respond to those changes (Bricall, 2001 [4]; Coaldrake, 2002 [5]) and implement marketing strategies.

Review of Literature on Market Orientation

Market orientation is a topic of interest for many researchers in recent times. However, a brief review of market orientation research is presented in this section. According to Kotler (1972) [6] and Kohli and Jaworski (1990) [7], market orientation is implementation of marketing concept. Market orientation in conceptualization has focused two important approaches and considered to be widely used and tested by the researchers at different times like Kohli and Jaworski's (1990) [7] model of market orientation

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and Narver and Slater (1990) [8] model of market orientation. According to Kohli and Jaworski (1993) [9,10], market orientation is explained by three behavioural dimensions as (i) organization-wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future needs of customer, (ii) dissemination of intelligence within the organization and (iii) responsiveness to it. Market intelligence generation refers to collection and analysis of the data regarding customer needs and wants and the environmental forces which influence the development of customer needs. Intelligence dissemination refers to the process of communicating and involving all the functions, divisions and departments of the organization for the collection and assessment of market information. Whereas, responsiveness refers to the action taken to response the gathered market information.

The second model given by Narver and Slater (1990) [8], defined market orientation as customer driven organizational culture where all the department, divisions and functions will work closely to create superior value for the customer on regular basis. They mentioned three behavioural components namely customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination and two decision criteria namely long-term focus and profitability in their model. Customer orientation refers to the sufficient understanding of customer's needs and wants to create superior value for them. Competitor orientation refers to analysing and understanding competitors and their strength and weaknesses and long-term capabilities and their market strategies to compete and gain competitive advantage in the eyes of customer (Porter, 1985[11]). Interfunctional coordination means coordinated effort by all the department and functions right from gathering information of customer and competitors and take action. Thus, both the model explains superior customer value creation by all the function and departments and also confirm that creating value to the customer is not the primary job of only marketing functions but all the other functions also. The above discussed models have been extensively used in empirical research (Carr and Lopez, 2007 [12]; Ellis, 2005 [13]; Pitt et al., 1996 [14]; Greenley, 1995 [15]; Deshpande et.al., 1993 [16] and soon).

There is considerable amount of research done on the relationship of market orientation and business performances. Narver and Slater (1990), investigated that market orientation has significant influence on business profitability and they also mention that market orientation creates knowledge and coordination in an organization to perform better (Slater and Narver,1998 [17]). Importance of market

orientation in different socio-economic environments to get better business performance was explored by Zebal & Quazi (2011) [18]. The relationship between market orientation and business performances was confirmed by many other researchers at different times (Snoj et. al., 2007 [19]; Hammond et al, 2006 [20]; Kaynak and Kara, 2004 [21]). Market orientation has significant impact on financial and marketing performances regardless of different organizational structure were confirmed by Green et.al., (2005) [22]. In this connection Sin et.al., (2005) [23], mentioned the positive relationship of market orientation and financial performances such as sales growth, return on investment, market share and return on sales etc. and also marketing performances such as customer satisfaction, customer retention and customer trust and loyalty. Market orientation creates learning organization which reinforce performances with regard to economic and non-economic outcomes of an organization (Santos-Vijande et.al., 2005 [24]).

Market Orientation in Higher Education

The existing literature on higher education and market orientation suggest that market orientation is necessary to face the changing environment of higher education. The governance of the higher education must adopt market orientation (Braun and Merrien, 1999 [25]). There is considerable amount of literatures available where it says market orientation and customer orientation should have evolved in quality system of any higher educational institution to achieve sustainability in performances (Hooley et al., 2001 [26]; Davies, 2001 [27]; Day,1994 [28]; Wong and Saunders,1993 [29]; Barney,1991 [30]). According to Haug (2001and 2002) [31,32], higher educational institutions face many challenges for increasing competition among national and international institutions and students have variety of institutes and courses to choose for their studies which may affect the sustainability of a higher educational institute. He opined that institutions with such challenges must adopt market orientation in the strategic process to overcome those challenges and get greater performances. Many researchers who empirically tested the Kohli and Jaworski's (1990) construct and Narver and Slater (1990) construct on market orientation in higher educational institution and found its significant relationship with institute's performances (Flavian and Lozano, 2006; [33] Webster et.al., 2006 [3]; Kenely and Hellier, 2001 [2] Wasmer and Bruner, 1999 [34]; Caruana et. al., 1998 [1]). According to Siu & Wilson, 1998 [35], University management plays an important role in creation of market oriented organizational culture and this

culture will certainly improve all the important activities which lead to performances of a University. Any higher educational institute or University should include student centric approach in their mission statement and meeting the expectations of the students should be the primary aim of the institute and thus market orientation will be developed (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2010 [36]).

Student Satisfaction as a Performance Measure in Higher Education

The literatures in higher education shows continuous debates on who is customer? However, the student as customer of higher education was accepted by many researchers (Ostrom et. al., 2005 [37]; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006 [38]; Cuthbert, 2010 [39]; Caru and Cova, 2003 [40]). Marketing literatures suggests that customer satisfaction as performance measures while identifying the impact of market orientation on customer satisfaction (Patterson, Johnson and Spreng, 1997 [41]; Grönroos, 1990 [42]; Krepapa, Areti, et. al., 2003 [43]; Narver and Slater, 1990; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). Since students are considered to be customer, it is important to understand the relationship of market orientation and student satisfaction in higher education sector. Diaconu et. al. (2012) [44], opined that market orientation has significant impact on student satisfaction. Tanrikulu, C., Gelibolu, L. (2015) [45], stated that perceived market orientation and the elements of market orientation has significant influence on student satisfaction and building brand equity. They also confirm that student satisfaction has fundamental roles in forming perception of market orientation and brand equity. Therefore, existing literature has confirmed that market orientation has significant effect on student satisfaction.

Relevance of the Study

The business management education enjoys higher status among all kinds of education. In higher education, business education has seen a tremendous growth in the last decade. Presently AICTE (2017) [46] revealed that there are 3232 B-Schools or Management Colleges in India with total of intake of 3,93,035 students. On the contrary, during the last five years around three hundred institutions offering business education have withdrawn offering the courses by winding up their operations (AICTE, 2014; [46] The Times of India, 2015 [47]). In 2017 there are 23 institutes offering business education had closed their operation. A good number of them are

still struggling for survival while the matured established institutes are thriving.

Perhaps, such dismal scenario of the institutes meant for offering management education could be due to certain explicit and implicit reasons of internal and external business environment. Most pertinently the internal reasons may be related to structural and functional issues of these institutions including their management practices like, marketing, HR, Finance and operations of these institutions (Warren G. Bennis & James O'Toole, 2005 [48]). B-Schools are facing varied challenges, encompassing marketing of the institutions to students for admissions and recruiters for placements, managing internal operations, recruitment and motivation of human resources. More recently, it has been also noticed through various online forums and also through literature that the students and faculty satisfaction is lowering consequently the satisfaction of corporate clients is also affected. B-schools should adopt a market or customer oriented approach that focuses primarily on students to improve the service provider-customer relationship. The objective of market oriented institutions is to satisfy customers by coordinating activities around their needs (Levitt, 1960 [49]; Boyd & Walker, 1992 [50]). Many of these institutes have realized the need for establishing marketing function to address some of these challenges. Marketing function addresses inculcating all the employees with market orientation, through training and development activities, to ensure that the institutions perform effectively year after year. Institutional performance is determined by the many financial and marketing measures, however, the present study is confined to one of the marketing performance measures as student satisfaction.

The present study intends to examine the market orientation in the context of the B-schools' students, as they are co-creators of services and also primary customer who receive the services. Therefore, there is a need to understand such marketing efforts, particularly the market orientation perceived by the students and their satisfaction with their institutions.

The main objective of the Study is to address and analyzes the relationship between market orientation and student satisfaction of the B-Schools, perceived by the student.

Oliver (1997 [51]) defined satisfaction is the fulfilment of consumer needs. In higher education, student satisfaction means a short-term attitude formed after evaluating their experiences in the institution. Student will be satisfied if their desired expectations are met (Elliott & Healy, 2001 [52]).

According to Voon (2006, 2007 [53,54]), an organization should perform activities to satisfy its customer. In higher educational context it was found from the previous studies (Casidy, 2014 [55]; Voon, 2006 [53]) that all the dimensions of perceived market orientation positively influenced student satisfaction. Students will be happy and satisfied if their educational institution provide superior value with respect to offering overall experiences of quality on a continuous basis which can be ensured through adoption of market orientation philosophy and practices. Thus, there is a need to understand the extent of relationship of market orientation with student satisfaction in a business school context. Therefore, it is hypothesized that *"There is no relationship between Market Orientation and Student Satisfaction among B-schools as per the student perception"*. Following sections will discuss the analysis and results pertaining to test this hypothesis.

Research Methods

The study was carried out in 30 AICTE-approved select business schools of Greater Hyderabad district of Telangana state in which 13 of them were autonomous business school, 13 were University affiliated business schools and 4 were University departments. While adopting descriptive-analytic research design this study presents the understanding of the status of business school in relation to their market orientation perceived by their very students.

With regard to sampling, students were chosen randomly using their admission numbers allotted by their respective B-schools. As such, the total number of student is 360. A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect the data from students about their personal profile and the modified Narver and Slater

(1990) MKTOR scale were used to measure market orientation. Another scale was prepared to measure student satisfaction from the existing satisfaction instruments different rating agency sources. Response collected through structured interview and also through email by using google docs. Statistical tools such as means, standard deviations, f-values, correlation coefficients and regression analysis were used and the results of the study were presented.

Measures

A 16-item five point Likert type questionnaire was used (1 = SDA and 5 = SA) to collect responses for each item. The perceptions of market orientation were measured in 03 constructs (16 items): Customer Orientation, Competitors Orientation and Inter-functional coordination. The students' satisfaction was measured through a 29-item five point Likert type of scale items (1 = Very Dissatisfied and 5 = Very Satisfied) used in 3 constructs namely Educational Experience, support services and facilities, campus life. The items were drawn from the B-school survey questionnaires of Career 360, Business Line, Business today. Particularly, the student satisfaction scale items from these three surveys were culled to prepare an exhaustive list of scale items. Data was collected through personal interview and e-mail. Data processing and analysis was done using SPSS v25. Details regarding reliability of the scales are presented in the following section.

The internal consistency of market orientation scale of measurement was assessed by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients for three dimensions of market orientation individually and also for overall market orientation. Table 1 shows the Cronbach alpha coefficients for each scale are ranged from .792 to .933, which confirms the reliability of scale (Nunnally, 1978 [56]; Santos, J [57]).

Table 1: Details of Market Orientation Scale

S. No.	Scale	Conceptualization	Items	Alpha
1	Customer Orientation	Extent to which student perceive institutes objectives is student centric, whether systemically and frequently measures of student satisfaction ,Institute recruitment and retaining strategy, level of attention to service, faculty and staffs level of commitment to the student needs and desire etc.	7	0.875
2	Competitors Orientation	Perception on institutes adoption of right mix services from the other similar institute, reaction on other institutes strategies pertain to the student satisfaction, encouraging other institutes faculty and staff to interact with students etc.	5	0.792
3	Inter-functional Coordination	Perception on departmental coordination at all level towards creating value for the student, satisfying their needs and upliftment of services, etc. Motto to serve students at all levels.	4	0.872
4	Overall Market Orientation	Sum total of all the above dimension	16	0.933

Internal consistency of Student satisfaction scale of measurement was tested by Cronbach alpha coefficients for three sub-scales of student satisfaction and also for overall satisfaction. Table 2 shows the Cronbach alphas for each dimension ranging from .842 to .949, which confirms the reliability of scale.

Results

The analysis of the data was done in two sections. First section presents the results relating to the profile of the students followed by the next section focusing on the relationships between marketing orientation and student satisfaction in b-schools.

Profile of the Student

In this part, the profiles of student respondent are presented. Various personal characteristics of student

like age, gender, educational qualification, level of studies, pursuing program and their institute types are presented in Table 3.

The table shows that according to the age of the student, majority (55.8%) are between 22 and 23 years of age, followed by 20 and 21 (30.3%) and 24 and 29 is (13.9%). According to the gender of the respondents', majority is male (65%) and the rest female (35%). According to the qualification at graduation level are B. Tech (35.6%) followed by B. Com (27.5%), BBA (15%), B.Sc. (12.5%), BA (3.9%), BCA (2.8%), the remaining few other graduating program (2%). According to the type of institute from where students are studying, majority (53.9%) are from University Affiliated Colleges, followed by (35.6%) AICTE Autonomous B-School and (10.6%) University Department. As per the students currently pursuing program, MBA represents the majority (64.4%) and rest (35.6%) are studying PGDM.

Table 2: Details of Student Satisfaction Scale

S. No.	Scale	Conceptualization	Items	Alpha
1	Educational Experience	Extent to which students are satisfied with the teaching quality, mentoring activity, chosen course or programs, faculty accessibility, academic reputation etc.	7	0.842
2	Support Services and Facilities	Extent to which students are satisfied with the infrastructure, parking, classrooms, library, lab, canteen, transportation etc.	15	0.915
3	Campus Life	Student satisfaction on student diversity, sports and recreation, student clubs, student festivals etc.	7	0.908
4	Overall Student Satisfaction	Sum total of all the student satisfaction dimension	29	0.949

Table 3: Profile of the Student

S. No.	Variables	Mean %	SD
1	Age Group	20-21 (30.3%) 22-23 (55.8%) 24-29 (13.9%)	0.644
2	Gender	Male (65%) Female (35%)	0.477
3	Graduating Program	BA (3.9%) B.Com (27.5%) BSc. (12.5%) B.Tech (35.6%) BCA (2.8%) BBA (15%) Others (2.8%)	1.521
4	Student's Institute Type	AICTE Autonomous (35.6%) University Affiliated (53.9%) University Department (10.6%)	0.632
5	Currently Pursuing Program	MBA (64.4%) PGDM (35.6%)	0.479
6	Level of Study (Year)	1st Year (42.8%) 2nd Year (57.2%)	0.495

According to the level of study of the student majority (57.2%) is in 2nd Year and 42.8% are in 1st Year.

Correlation and Regression Analysis

It was hypothesized that “There is no relationship between Market Orientation and Student Satisfaction among B-schools as per the student perception”. Thus in order to test hypothesis, correlation coefficients were computed in order to explore whether all the study variables were positive and statistically significant as this is a precondition for regression analysis. Results in this regard are presented in the following Table 4.

It is clear from the above table that all the dimensions of Market Orientation are positively and strongly correlated with the all the dimension of Student Satisfaction. Thus, it is also evident from the above table that the overall scale of Market Orientation is positively and significantly correlated with overall Student Satisfaction, qualifying them for further analysis. Thus, multiple regression analysis was conducted treating market orientation as independent variable and Student Satisfaction as dependent variable. This way, the testing of the hypothesis will be complete. Results in this regard are presented in the following Table 5.

Table 4: Correlation of Market Orientation and Student Satisfaction

Sl. No			Customer Orientation	Competitor Orientation	Inter Functional Coordination	Overall Market Orientation	Campus Life Satisfaction	Support Facility Satisfaction	Educational Experience Satisfaction	Overall Student Satisfaction
1	Customer Orientation	Pearson Correlation	1	0.741 ⁺	0.761 ⁺	0.939 ⁺	0.575 ⁺	0.727 ⁺	0.644 ⁺	0.743 ⁺
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		N	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360
2	Competitor Orientation	Pearson Correlation	-	1	0.716 ⁺	0.891 ⁺	0.587 ⁺	0.72 ⁺	0.635 ⁺	0.741 ⁺
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
		N	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360
3	Inter Functional Coordination	Pearson Correlation	-	-	1	0.892	0.525	0.678	0.634	0.697
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
		N	-	-	360	360	360	360	360	360
4	Overall Market Orientation	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	1	.620	0.78	.700	0.801
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
		N	-	-	-	360	360	360	360	360
5	Campus Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	-	1	0.769	0.499	0.864
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0
		N	-	-	-	-	360	360	360	360
6	Support Facility Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.677	0.967
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
		N	-	-	-	-	-	360	360	360
7	Educational Experience Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.774
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
		N	-	-	-	-	-	-	360	360
8	Overall Student Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	360

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Sl. No	(Constant)	17.461	3.453		5.056	0.00
1	Customer orientation	1.302	0.218	0.33	5.985	0.00
2	Competitor Orientation	2.024	0.285	0.366	7.094	0.00
3	Inter-functional coordination	1.2	0.337	0.194	3.559	0.00

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Statistic	DF	P=(sigma)
1	.815 ^a	0.665	0.662	12.97755	222.046	3,360	.000 ^b

a. Predictors (Constant): Inter-functional coordination, Competitor Orientation, customer orientation

a. Predictors (Constant): Inter-functional coordination, Competitor Orientation, customer orientation

From the above table, it is interesting to note that of all the predictors variables namely customer orientation (Beta = 0.33, P = 0.00), competition orientation (Beta = 0.366, P = 0.00) and interfunctional coordination (Beta = 0.194, P = 0.00) yielded significant beta coefficient. To be more specific if customer orientation improves by one unit, student satisfaction will increase by 0.33 units significantly. Similarly, if Competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination improves by one unit, student satisfaction will increase by 0.36 units and 0.19 unit, respectively.

The coefficient of determination yielded value of 0.662 which is statistically significant evident from F statistics presented in the table. This means all the predictor variables namely customer orientation, competitor orientation and Interfunctional coordination put together explained 66 percent of change in student satisfaction. Their remaining 34 percent of change may be because of extraneous variables.

Thus, the null hypothesis *"There is no relationship between Market Orientation and Student Satisfaction among B-schools as per the student perception"* stands rejected and the alternative hypothesis *"There is significant relationship between Market Orientation and Student Satisfaction among B-schools as per the student perception"* is accepted.

Market orientation is an attitude of employees of an organization has a potential to determine quite a number of possible outcomes both for the organization and for its stakeholders, particularly, the user or consumer. One such positive outcome is satisfaction with the service offered by such

organizations. Interestingly, attitude begets attitude. This study brought to light an observation of relationships between market orientation as an attitude of employees which was observed by the users. The case in point is the B-schools' students reflecting upon market oriented nature of the faculty and staff of the business schools and thereupon its influence on the satisfaction with the overall services offered in the institute. In other words, as market orientation of employees increases student satisfaction improves positively and significantly. All dimensions of market orientation namely customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination are the real predictor of satisfaction.

Implication and Conclusion

The purpose of the study is to identify the association between market orientation and student satisfaction of B-Schools in Hyderabad and Rangareddy district of Telangana state. It is evident from the correlation that there is positive association between market orientation and satisfaction of the students. This study also confirms that when the Business School become student (customer) oriented they need to develop strategies and perform activities to bring satisfaction among students regarding their educational experience, campus experience and experience from the support services of business school. Developing market oriented strategies means to develop strategies to fulfil the current and future needs of the customer more than the competitors do. For a business school, strategy must be formulated according to students needs and desires and by doing so student will get satisfaction and satisfaction will

lead to positive word-of-mouth from the students to potential students which will help the Business School to get demand for the enrolment of the courses offered and such demand will help to ensure quality student intake in the business school. Student satisfaction can also ensure student retention by number of withdrawal during the course can be minimized. This value offering gives a market oriented Business School a privilege of students' satisfaction which give reason to students to stay loyal with the Business School. All this will consequently help B-schools to achieve higher financial performances such as good number of enrolment bring revenue to the institute and student retention means minimum occurrence of losing revenue, achieving student loyalty means gaining preferences for the institute compare to competitor institutes means gaining higher market share (Niculescu et al., 2009 [58]; Zebal and Goodwin, 2012 [59]). All these outcomes are possible if students are continuously satisfied and Business Schools' successfully adopting market orientation.

With the development of Business Educational Institution in India as well as in the World, the importance of market orientation to provide students' satisfaction was emerged in the marketing literature. In the light of findings from the results, it can be concluded that market orientation increase student satisfaction in business schools. The managers in business educational institutions must make concrete efforts to promote market oriented culture in their institutions by taking into consideration of student orientation, information collection about changing needs and preferences of students and provide superior value from the competitor by improving their inter-functional coordination and immediate responsiveness to enable B-schools to satisfy their students and profitability through growth in enrolment and enhance B-schools performance.

This study offered potential opportunities for future research, firstly, as this research was done only on Business Schools of Hyderabad and Rangareddy district of Telangana state, it can be extended to the B-schools of entire country. Secondly, the research can be done on how to improve market orientation in business schools. Thirdly, it can be investigated that the effect of market orientation towards financial performances of business school and also a longitudinal study can be done to see the effect of student satisfaction towards increase in enrolment and financial performances. Lastly, there are more avenues of future research available to the same topic right from developing a new construct or identifying antecedents and consequences of both the study

variables. Such efforts, in the long run will enhance professionalization in B-Schools resulting in increased corporate client satisfaction and student satisfaction. Eventually, long-term survival in institution of higher learning.

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