

IMPACT OF DONOR-MARKET ORIENTED BEHAVIOURS ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

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Abstract: The study aims to analyse the impact of market orientation behaviour in donors-market on the economic performance of non-profit organisations. Data were collected from 137 non-profit organisations operating in India. \ Results suggest that market orientation towards donors directly lead to higher economic performance in non-profit organisations. Mediating influence of innovativeness in the above relationship is not supported by the study. Present research demonstrates that analysing market orientation in the specific market for donors is essential in understanding the market orientation – economic performance in non-profit sector. Generally, non-profit organisations’ missions are beneficiary related and this can create a tendency to be fully-occupied with beneficiaries-market. The study shows that organisations must ensure adequate level of market orientation towards donors too as it has direct impact on resource attraction which is critical for the long-term survival. The study contributes to the body of knowledge in non-profit market orientation in an emerging economy context. The study also helps in calling attention to the need for constituent-wise analysis of market orientation for the better understanding of its relationship with economic performance.

Keywords: Market orientation, Non-profit organisations, Organisational performance, Innovativeness, Market for donors.

INTRODUCTION

Market orientation can be regarded as one of the fundamental concepts in marketing. Market orientation is a strategic orientation of an organisation in which the organisation treats customer satisfaction as the ultimate aim of the organisation and seeks to align its organisational activities towards this end. Common alternative orientations available for organisations are production orientation, product orientation and sales orientation. Supporters of market orientation claim that long term success in the market is possible only when organisations understand and satisfy the needs of target markets (Levitt, 1960). Empirical support for the claim of positive relationship between market orientation and performance of business firms have been reported in several studies (Frosen et al., 2016; Kohli et al, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990, &Pelham and Wilson, 1996). The core focus of research in extant literature largely has been on for-profit sector in which business organisations vie with one another to win customers and marketing

concept, with its central focus on customer, emerges as a natural choice for gaining competitive advantage. In general, studies indicate a positive influence of market orientation on performance despite some inconsistent findings reported (Langerak, 2003).

Market orientation literature is mostly set in for-profit sectors from developed economies. Studies on market orientation of non-profit organizations are relatively few in number and limited in scope. Among non-profit market orientation studies in non-profit sector, impact of market orientation in donors’ market has not been adequately addressed despite donors-market being widely recognised as an important constituent of a non-profit entity. Since most non-profit organisations heavily depend on donors-income, performance in this constituency is a matter of survival for most NPOs. The present study is an attempt to analyse the impact of market orientation towards donors on performance of

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non-profit organisations in India. By focussing on the market of donors and resource attraction measures, the study hopes to provide insights into the nature of relationship between market orientation and in an emerging economy context.

MARKET ORIENTATION IN NON-PROFIT SECTOR

As Andresen and Kotler (1992) noted, marketing in non-profit organisations traditionally tends to be organisation-centric rather than market oriented. Any organisational orientation, however, has to be seen from the perspective of its potential contribution to achievement of organisational objectives. Seen in this light, market orientation is NOT likely to be the natural choice for non-profit organisations where mission-defined social objectives are prime (Sargeant et al, 2002). But in recent times, non-profit organisations are subject to competitive pressures due to the steady growth in the number of organisations, increased demand for accountability from existing and potential donors, strict public scrutiny etc (Maier, Meyer & Steinbereithner, 2014). Together with the above, increased interactions with the business sector have also prompted many NPOs to look at business practices and techniques for enhancing their chance for survival in the changed landscape (Eikenberry and Kluever, 2004).

Market orientation refers to the execution of marketing concept in organisational practice (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). Market orientation is believed to contribute to performance by building competitive advantage through superior value creation for customers (Narver & Slater, 1990). Kohli and Jaworski (1990) identifies customer focus, integrated marketing and long-term profitability as the elements of marketing concept. Therefore, market orientation entails placing customers at the centre of the organisation and coordinating all organisational functions around customer satisfaction, thereby achieving long-term profitability. Market orientation has been approached from different perspectives in literature. The two major perspectives on the conceptualisation of market orientation are cultural and behavioural (Griffiths & Grover, 1998, as quoted in Homburg and Pflesser, 2000). According to the cultural perspective, market orientation is a cultural variable or business philosophy of an organisation, which implies that it is ingrained in organisational culture and therefore is not

something that can be enforced by management decision alone. Narver and Slater (1990) operationalised market orientation culture as consisting of three components – customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter-functional coordination. Behavioural perspective holds that market orientation is evident from organisational behaviours (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). They define market orientation as

“the organization-wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future customer needs, dissemination of the intelligence across departments, and organization-wide responsiveness to it (p.6).

Market orientation concept has many complexities in the non-profit context compared to the for-profit settings. First and foremost, concept of constituent groups for a non-profit organisation is not easily defined (Gwin, 1990). According to Gwin (1990), non-profit organisation's constituent groups can be classified into five categories called resource generators, service users, regulators, managers and staff members and the priority attached to the different constituent groups will depend on the nature of the non-profit organisation and its operations. On similar lines, Kotler identifies four groups which he terms as *publics*-input publics, internal publics; intermediary publics and consuming publics (Kotler, 1982). In non-profit market orientation studies most researchers consider donors and beneficiaries as relevant markets for analysing the market orientation of non-profit organisations. (Balabanis, et al, 1997; Gainer and Padanyi, 2004; Macedo and Pinho, 2006; and Modi, 2012). Donors and beneficiaries are considered the real target markets for non-profit organisations (Shapiro, 1973) and they represent the resource attraction and resource allocation markets in non-profit settings (Balabanis et al, 1997). So the general consensus on the importance of donors and beneficiaries has led some researchers to consider multiple orientations for conceptualising non-profit market orientation. According to the above approach, market orientation of non-profit organisations consists of simultaneous orientations towards donors and beneficiaries (Gainer and Padanyi, 2002; Morris and Coombe, 2007). Some other studies combine donors and beneficiaries into a single overall market orientation even as they recognise the existence of dual markets (Modi and Misra, 2010; and Modi, 2010). Market orientation studies in non-profit sector in various contexts give a general indication of positive rela-

tionship between market orientation and organisational performance (Naidu&Narayana,1991;Kumar,etal,1997;-Caruana,1998,1998a;Vázquez,2002;Morris,etal,2007;-Modi,2012). Role of mediators in the relationship between market orientation and performance have been analysed in certain studies in non-profit context, following the cues from for-profit sector. Modi(2012) reports that innovativeness fully mediates the relationship between market orientation and effectiveness and partially mediates the link between market orientation and beneficiary satisfaction. Innovativeness, an aspect of organisational culture, is defined as openness to new ideas (Hurley and Hult,1998).

ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

In a non-profit context, measurement of performance is complicated because of the non-profit and social nature of organizational missions and the multitude of constituencies involved. Another very important factor to consider is the financial structure of the non-profit organizations and resource dependency. Market orientation studies use a variety of performance measures in non-profit sectors. These include some sector-specific measures (Naidu & Narayana, 1991; and Voss and Voss, 2000); annual goal achievement (Seymour, 2006); fund-raising performance (Kara & Spillan, 2004); total revenue and net assets (Morris & Coombe, 2007); beneficiary satisfaction (Bennet, 2005)organizational effectiveness (Modi,2012) and growth in resources peer reputation and client satisfaction (Gainer & Padanyi, 2002, 2004; Modi, 20102). The wide array of measures indicates the multi-dimensional nature of performance in non-profit organisations. Gainer and Padanyi (2002) conceptualised organisational performance as a multi-dimensional construct with separate and independent components.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Market Orientation and Organisational Performance

A conceptual framework is developed based on the review of literature on market orientation and performance in non-profit sector. Given the empirical evidence of positive impact of market orientation on performance in literature, it is hypothesised that market orientation in donors-market will lead to better perfor-

mance of the organisation in this market. Competition in market for donors is a more recognised concept than that in market for beneficiaries especially in a developing economy context such as India. Therefore, positive impact of market orientation towards donors-market should be reflected in the economic performance of organisations. Since market for donors is the resource acquisition market for an organisation, financial measures should be one of the most important considerations in performance evaluation when it comes to donors-market. Also, in market orientation for non-profit organisations, organisational objective comparable to profitability of for-profit sector is regarded as long-term survival which implies sufficient revenue generation (Narver and Slater, 1990). Therefore, we offer the following hypothesis;

H1: Market orientation towards donors leads to growth in resource attraction of non-profit organisations.

Innovation-related concepts have been reported to mediate the relationship between market orientation and performance both in for-profit (Han,et al ,1998) and non-profit sectors (Hurley and Hult, 1998). Mediation influence of innovativeness is important in the context of the present study since an earlier study conducted in Indian non-profit sector did not find evidence for direct relationship between overall market orientation and resource attraction (Modi, 2012). Intuitively, market orientation should foster innovativeness through enhanced market-knowledge in the organisation. Increased innovativeness is likely to lead to greater performance in the donor-market through innovative ways of sourcing new donors and responding to donor needs quickly. This leads us to the second and third hypotheses of the study,

H2: Market orientation positively affects innovativeness in non-profit organisations.

H3: Innovativeness mediates the relationship between market orientation and resource attraction.

DATA COLLECTION

Major objective of the study was to analyse the role of market orientation towards donors in improving financial performance in non-profit organisations. Therefore, it was necessary that the organisations covered under the study should be dependent substantially on donors

for the major part of the total revenue generated. By implication, non-profit organisations which run predominantly (more than 50%) on self-generated income such as income from members-fee, service charges or sale of commercial products etc were excluded from the sample. Other selection-criteria included the age of the organisation (>5 years) and the size of annual operating budget (>INR10 lakhs). Chief functionaries of non-profit organisations registered in Kerala, subject to the selection criteria mentioned earlier, were identified as the respondents of the survey. Data collection in Indian non-profit sector is a challenging task as there is no comprehensive and regularly updated directory for non-profit organisations. Thus, for a fair coverage of the entire sector in Kerala, a sampling frame was prepared by combining two directories- member directory of Kerala-chapter of Indian Council of Social Welfare and directory of non-profit institutions in Kerala published by Planning Commission of India. Participation in the survey was solicited from 210 organisations of which 173 organisations expressed willingness. Questionnaires were personally handed over to the chief functionaries of these 173 organisations. Of the 148 responses received in total, 11 were rejected due to either incompleteness of response or non-fulfilment of sample selection criteria. Thus, the final sample size of the study was 137.

MEASURES

Market orientation towards donors (DO) was measured using an adapted version of MARKOR developed by Kohli et.al (1993). Adaptations were mainly in the form of changes in wordings and deletion of certain items. This was undertaken to ensure that the scale is appropriate for use in Indian non-profit settings. Though MARKOR has been used widely in non-profit market orientation studies, application of the scale in Indian context has not been reported so far. The final instrument had 16 items. Market orientation as conceptualised in MARKOR has three behavioural components, namely intelligence generation, dissemination and responsiveness. Individual items in the scale are measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The overall market orientation score for an organisation is calculated as the mean of the three com-

ponents.

Resource attraction (RA) was measured using the scale developed by Gainer and Padanyi (2004).The scale has 4 items. Innovativeness (INN) was measured using the five item scale of Hurley and Hult (1998).

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

For reliability and validity of the measures used in the study, traditional methods like Cronbach's alpha, item-total correlation and exploratory factor analysis were used. The final reliability score for market orientation was 0.904, well above the mandatory 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).The reliability for donor market orientation is comparable to the value of 0.8899 reported by Balabanis (1997). Exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis resulted in a two component structure for the scale. Factor loadings of the items reveal that items intended to measure intelligence generation and dissemination were collapsed into a single component whereas the responsiveness items loaded on the second component. This factoring-out is most probably due to the typically small organisational size and the low level of departmentalisation of organisations in the Indian non-profit sector. It is quite possible that in such organisational contexts, intelligence generation and dissemination is rather a continuous process in the sense that most of information generated is disseminated. It can be pointed out here that Baker and Sinkula (1999) had combined the intelligence generation and dissemination components of MARKOR to form a measure of market information processing behaviours. Following a similar nomenclature, the first factor was named market information processing and the second factor could be easily identified as the responsiveness component of the original MARKOR. Cronbach's alpha for the components were 0.878 and 0.827 respectively. The total variance explained by this two-factor structure was 59.67 %.

For resource attraction, Cronbach's alpha was 0.742 after the deletion of one item with low item-total correlation. In the case of innovativeness-scale, two items were dropped because of low item-total correlation resulting in a three-item scale with a reliability measure of Cronbach's alpha 0.775

After the initial assessment of reliability and factorial validity of measures, convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model was assessed using structur-

al equation modelling by PLS estimation in SmartPLS 2.0(Ringle, et.al, 2005). Market orientation for donors is operationalised as a second order construct with two components-market information processing (MIP) and responsiveness (RESP). Two-stage approach of modelling second order construct in PLS was followed (Agarwal & Karahanna, 2000). As per the conventions in SEM, validity and reliability of the measurement model was assessed before analysing the structural model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha of the measures, both at the first order level and second order level were above 0.8 and .7 respectively. All the latent variables measured had AVE in the range of 0.5417 – 0.8292. Therefore, we consider convergent validity as established.

At the indicator level, absence of cross loadings of indicators signifies discriminant validity. All indicators loaded clearly on their respective latent variables without any significant cross-loadings on other variables for both first order and second order level measurements. Indicator loadings were above 0.7 for all items except for two; with the lowest loading being 0.668 which is still close to 0.7. Thus discriminant validity at indicator level was found acceptable.

As all the variables were measured using single informant by self-reporting method, common method variance analysis was carried out next to detect common method bias if any. Harman's single factor test and the PLS analysis suggested by Liang et, al, (2007) were done for this purpose. Harman's single factor test, one of the most widely used test for common method variance (Podsakoff et, al, 2003) indicated the absence common method variance. Unrotated factor analysis resulted in three factors with Eigen values greater than one and the first factor extracted did not account for significant variance of the variable.

The PLS procedure for common method bias detection, as suggested by Liang et,al(2009) involves the introduction of a new variable called method factor which is reflectively measured by all indicators of the model. All indicator loadings for the method factor were weak and the structural paths between method factor and indicators were also non-significant. This was taken as evidence for the absence of common method bias.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Impact of Donor Orientation on Resource Attraction and Innovativeness as Mediator.

The structural path between market orientation for donors and resource attraction (H1) was found significant (t= 4.9464; p<.01).Market orientation for donors also have an impact on innovativeness of the organisation (H2) (t = 4.4613; p<01). However, the mediating influence of innovativeness on the relationship between market orientation and resource attraction was not supported since the hypothesised path between innovativeness and resource attraction was found statistically non-significant (Baron & Kenney, 1986). R² for resource attraction was 0.159, i.e, variance of resource attraction explained by market orientation is 15.9%. Structural path coefficients and t values for the paths of the model are presented in table I.

Table I: Path coefficients and t values.

Structural path	Path coefficient	T value
DO→ RA	0.3228	4.5144
DO→INN	0.3359	4.4988
INN→RA	0.1489	Ns

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study was designed to determine the specific effect of donor-market-oriented behaviours on economic performance of non-profit organisations. Studies which have attempted to analyse this relationship in the past has either used an overall market orientation measure or a very narrow concept of donor-market focussing only on one donor group for example, government donors (Padanyi & Gainer, 2004). Thus, the present body of literature on market orientation in non-profit sector does not offer much insight in terms of what impact donor market orientation has on resource attraction. Potential influence of organisational innovativeness as a mediator was also explored in the light of findings of absence of direct relationship between overall market orientation of non-profit organisations and resource attraction in Indian context reported in Modi (2012).

Empirical analysis of data collected from 137 NPOs in India, belonging to various non-profit sub-sectors reveal that there is significant direct relationship between market orientation towards donors and the performance measure of resource attraction. This is a signif-

ificant finding for non-profit organisations as it shows that market-oriented activities in donors-market bring in results in the form of improved financial performance for them. For market orientation concept in non-profit sector, it confirms the efficacy of market orientation to impact what truly matters in the end, financial performance that ensures survival for the organisation. Market orientation-performance studies in general in non-profit sector report positive relationship notwithstanding the differences in operationalisation of market orientation and performance. Soham, et, al (2006) observes that positive impact of market orientation on performance is stronger in non-profit sector than in for-profit sector. The present study also lends support to this general trend in market orientation research in the specific context of non-profit organisations.

The findings of the study clearly suggest that analysing funding the specific orientation towards all donors of the organisation holds the key to understanding the impact on resource attraction. The mediating influence of innovativeness on the relationship is not evidenced by the results of the study as innovativeness does not lead to improved performance in resource attraction. One practical implication of this finding of direct impact is that it highlights the need for non-profit organisations to maintain multiple market orientations for accomplishing the social objectives in beneficiaries market and ensuring financial performance in donors-market.

Exploring the influence of organisational characteristics on the level of market orientation in non-profit entities was the second part of this research. Organisational size, source of funding, presence of marketing department/personnel, and size of the annual budget were analysed for their potential impact on market orientation levels in the market for donors. As the analysis has shown, size of the annual budget is the only organisational characteristic that is found to have influence on market orientation levels of the organisation. Maintaining market orientation requires financial commitment because market information processing and responsive measures involves allocation of resources in terms of money and time. The implication of this research outcome in tandem with the finding on positive relationship of donor-orientation with financial performance is that smaller non-profit organisations are at a disadvantage when it comes to improving revenue generation through donor-market orientation. The finding that

non-profit organisations exhibit similar market orientation towards donors irrespective of whether they are public funded or private funded is a significant one for Indian non-profit sector given the importance of government as a donor in the country. Similarly, size of the organisation in terms of number of employees was also found to have no impact on market orientation levels towards donors. This might be due to the fact that number of employees is not an exact reflection of number of hierarchical levels in organisations which could have affected market orientation by influencing dissemination process of market information.

LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The major limitation of the study is the use of cross-sectional design for analysing the effect of the independent construct. Longitudinal studies can establish the relationship between market-oriented behaviours and performance more convincingly.

The study makes some important contributions to the body of knowledge in non-profit market orientation in an emerging economy context. The study demonstrates that market-oriented activities toward donors contribute to economic performance of non-profit organisations. It also highlights the need for analysing the separate and independent effect of donor-market orientation in order to fully understand the nature of its relationship with resource attraction. Considering the low variance explained by donor market orientation for resource attraction performance, future research on the potential effect of non-economic performance measures as mediators can contribute to better understanding of non-profit market orientation and its efficacy in improving performance of organisations.

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