



Marketing for Non-marketers: Inclinations towards Market Orientation among Public University Librarians

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ABSTRACT

Marketing and market orientation are well-known subjects within the field of librarianship. Despite the nomological similarity between the terms, both are distinct in conceptualization. Most librarians are actually referring to the total implementation of market orientation and cultural aspect of achieving patron's value when addressing libraries' marketing. In business studies, market orientation is a long established subject in itself. Yet, it hasn't been studied rigorously within the librarianship, though the librarians claim their understanding of the library's market and marketing. Nonetheless, the understanding about the difference is getting recognition among the librarians. Most studies will employ on either Narver and Slater's (1990) or Kohli and Jaworski's (1990) dimensions. However, researchers have argued that to explain the phenomena fully, it will mostly benefit when the subject is investigated as an integrated concept. This article would like to discuss the usefulness of employing market orientation within the public sector such as public university libraries and how the librarians may benefit from it. This article proposes market orientation as an important factor within the libraries' strategies, so that the librarians could perform better, remain competitive, continue to be relevant to their parents' organizations as well as an effort towards survival of the professions' itself.

Keywords: Market Orientation, Public University Librarians, Strategic Decision Making, Global Changes

JEL Classification: M31

1. MARKETING AND THE LIBRARIANSHIP

Librarians pride themselves as an efficient information service provider. Customarily, most librarians view marketing as a requisite to deliver satisfying service and delighting their customers. Author like Renborg (1997) in Gupta (2008) claims that writings about marketing in the library context had first appeared in Samuel Swett Green's quoted speech at the ALA Conference in 1876. Instead of 4P's of marketing principle (product, price, place and promotion), the marketing strategies for the libraries consist of 7P's which include participants, physical evidence and process (Ewers, 2004; Sharma and Bhardwaj, 2009). Table 1 depicts the 7P's for the library marketing strategies.

Somehow, certain librarians have controversial attitudes about marketing because it is regarded as a managerial process links to profits inclination (Aharony 2009; Garoufallou et al., 2013b; Shontz et al., 2004). For example, Rossouw (2001) in

Garoufallou et al. (2013b) argued that marketing is costly and unfit for university libraries. Nonetheless, in the marketing field, an influential paper by Kotler and Levy (1969) argued that marketing concept is applicable across all types of organizations. What's more, Spalding and Wang (2006), Garoufallou, et al. (2013b) and the Association of Research Libraries augment that, the practice of marketing techniques not only directed to better funding effort, but it also improved the delivery of library services and collections which provide higher visibility for the libraries' corporate image. Upon realizing the tremendous changes in people's preferences and organizational settings, librarians proactively position their service orientation to meet the need, wants and demands of their customers by adopting marketing strategies (Garoufallou et al., 2013b). More librarians are currently viewing their users or patrons as "customers" (Garoufallou et al., 2013b) and employs marketing to upgrade their library services (Koontz et al., 2006b). Likewise, it has been postulated that, the library marketing should include total

Table 1: The 7P's of the library marketing strategies (Sharma and Bhardwaj, 2009)

The Ps'	Definition
Product	Products or services of the general reference and information service department. This is, of course, the information, reference, and ancillary services that add value
Price	Pricing of use of the library is usually that of the time and effort the user spends travelling to the library, as well as the time and effort spent
Place	Place of service, based upon knowledge of the market of a library, is essential in order to identify users and their discrete information needs and wants. To expand the service area, the library may have branches, bookmobiles, or electronic access, etc.
Promotion	Promotion includes utilizing persuasive information about general information, services, and communicating this information to target market segments that are potential users. Five kinds of promotion include: Publicity, public relations, personal representatives, advertising, and sales promotion
Participants	All human actors who play a part in reference and information service delivery, namely the library's personnel
Physical evidence	The environment in which the reference and information services are delivered, that facilitates the performance and communication of the service
Process	The procedures, mechanisms and flow of activities by which the reference and information services are acquired

organizational effort, and proceed beyond the realm of marketing to best served their customers (Shontz et al., 2004).

The objective of this article is to position market orientation as a potential strategic opportunity to optimize customers' expectation and retain competitiveness among public university libraries in Malaysia. Moreover, with the current academic transformation as well as scarcity of government sponsorship, it is a necessity to move beyond the customarily practice of library marketing. To position libraries usefulness, and gain recognition as one of the university's strategic business units, the library workforce must be bold enough to employ new behavioral and cultural proclivities, such as becoming more market orientated. Thus, the authors posit that being a market orientated may emphasize better funding effort, improved the efficiency and effectiveness of library services and collection and provide higher visibility for the library's usefulness within the central organization (Spalding and Wang, 2006; Garoufallou et al., 2013b).

2. ASSOCIATING MARKET ORIENTATION WITH LIBRARIES

For non-marketers such as librarians, the marketing orientation and market orientation terms often being used interchangeably (Sen, 2010; Shapiro, 1988). Despite the nomological similarity between the terms, it is actually refers to different context about the market and marketing itself. One on hand, marketing is currently regarded as an "activity" instead of a "function." This new term positions marketing as a broader activity in a company or organization, and no longer only a departmental responsibility. American Marketing Association Board of Directors (2007) regard the term as "the set of institutions activities and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." This definition refines marketing as providing long term value benefactor than only as an exchange of money (short-term) for the benefit of the shareholder/organization. Likewise, the Institute of Chartered Marketing as cited by Rowley (2003), defined marketing as "the management process, which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably." Furthermore, marketing is eligibly a well-known concept within

librarianship's research (Garoufallou et al., 2013a; Garoufallou et al., 2013b; Jose and Bhat, 2007; Koontz et al., 2006a; Parker et al., 2007; Robinson, 2012; Rowley, 1997; Shontz et al., 2004; Spalding and Wang, 2006).

On the other hand, "market orientation" (or market-oriented behavior) is a well-known term employs by marketing practitioners as an indicator of the extent to which an organization implements the "marketing concept" (Singh, 2005a; 2009b). It refers to "the activity and organizational culture that focuses on the performance and market activities" (Hajipour et al., 2013) p. 94. Both conceptualization from Kohli and Jaworski (1990) and Narver and Slater (1990) provide the overview of market orientation elements. Therefore, according to Shapiro (1988), the most distinct understanding between marketing and market orientation is market orientation projects the comprehensiveness of the whole marketing process, which include the market information and the cultural aspect to achieving customer's value (Hajipour et al., 2013). Within the domain of business and marketing, market orientation is a long established subject in itself. Yet, the concept hasn't been studied rigorously within the librarianship, despite the claims that library's core existence is solely to serve people's information need. Nonetheless, the understanding about the difference is getting recognition among the librarians. Sen (2006; 2010) and Singh (2005b; 2008; 2009a) are among the authors that promote the adaptation of the concept for the libraries. Besides, empirical studies on market orientation are found mostly to be associated with public university libraries than other library types (public and special libraries) (Garoufallou et al., 2013a). For example, study of market orientation and service performance in Finnish public university libraries, yields a highly significant indicator of $P = 0.0000$ (Singh, 2005b; 2009a). As most librarians misunderstood the actual meaning of marketing as they inferred marketing with advertising element, such as promotional activities, the librarians are actually referring to the efforts on emphasizing the customer's satisfaction through actions and philosophical aspects of marketing (Garoufallou et al., 2013a).

Generally, the existence of most organizations is to serve customers either for financial gain or organization's competitiveness. In Morris et al. (2007), non-profit organizations are serving multiple

segments and groups, inclusive of the clients that receive the organization's service and or the sponsors. While the former is the main reason of the organization's existence, the latter enables its existence. The market orientation in non-profit contexts such as the public university libraries will be complicated than profit firms as each group have differing and potentially conflicting interests (Morris et al., 2007). Table 2 explicates summaries on market orientation within librarianship.

Table 2 indicates that the researchers recognize the key points of market orientation as a management style or attitude, customer-focused and long term competitiveness. Most studies were conducted within the public universities than other library type. Most measurement units are based on the organization except for Aharony (2009) and Harrison and Shaw (2004) which is based on individual perceptions. Empirical studies on individuals as the measurement unit are scarce within the market orientation literatures. What's more, the study on library's market orientation has yet been tested within the Southeast Asian region, specifically, Malaysia. Therefore, it will be an added contribution to investigate it from an individual measurement and in Malaysian context. Likewise, Hadcroft and Jarratt (2004) in Sheppard (2011) augmented that, market orientation is a chronological succession of information based behaviors that consist behavioral norms for gathering, sharing and responding to market information. Thus, the understanding on how employees define and conducting market-oriented behaviors are taken as a

key to foster market orientation (Felgueira and Rodrigues, 2012; Schlosser and McNaughton, 2009; Sheppard, 2011). What's more, to further identify the usefulness of the concept, an empirical study on individual's commitment and abilities to act more market orientated could be conducted. Likewise, the concept is identical with library's charter known as the five Ranganathan's law (1931). This law guides how library must operate according to their clients and stakeholders' expectation. The five laws are explicated in Table 3.

The Table 3 explicates the comprehensive commitment to attain customer's benefits within the library's philosophy. Thus, the authors posit that, by employing the whole dimensions of being market orientated, the librarians could strongly support their organizations to create superior customer value, through the constitutional capabilities of its workforce, thus makes the firm more market-driven and sustain competitiveness (Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Vorhies and Harker, 2000). Besides, earlier studies on market orientation augmented that, employees do play a significant part in the success of market orientated organizations (Felgueira and Rodrigues, 2012; Schlosser and McNaughton, 2009).

3. MARKET ORIENTATION CONCEPT

Market orientation is broadly discussed from behavioral and cultural aspects (Gray et al. 1998; Kirca et al., 2005; Kohli and

Table 2: Summaries on market orientation within librarianship

Author (year)	Definition	Measurement unit	Country settings	Organizational setting
Ewers (2004)	Customer is the focal point of all organizational goals and integrates structure, management and operations	Secondary data	Queensland, Australia	Public university
Ewers and Austen (2004)	Is management style or attitude towards attaining customer's value as customer is the focal point of all organizational goals and integrates structure, management and operations	Conceptual	Australia	Public universities
Harrison and Shaw (2004)	Market orientation is considered to be an integral factor in the success of public libraries, and relates to gaining a sustainable competitive advantage by creating a consistently superior offering for consumers	Individual	Victoria, Australia	Public libraries
Singh (2005a; 2008; 2009b; 2013)	Is about continuous and organization-wide gathering, disseminating and responding to market information to satisfy the target customers' needs profitably thus leading to superior service performance of the organizations	Organization	Finland	Research libraries (public universities and special libraries)
Aharony (2009)	Customer is the focal point of organizational goals - by understanding clients' want and needs, the environment in which they operate, their resources and strengths, and the social factors which influence their clients	Individual	Israel	Public, academic and school librarians
Sen (2010)	Concerned with achieving value through a clear understanding of the customers, the organization and the wider business environment - encompassing corporate culture and engaging all departmental functions in customer-focused operations and strategy, p. 345	Organization	United Kingdom	Public libraries
Klaib (2012)	Market orientation refers to the extent to which the organization is oriented towards the user and the recognition of the importance of the role of marketing in the delivery of marketing needs to all sections of the organization	Organization	Jordan	Private and public universities

Table 3: Ranganathan's the law of the library

Law no	Ranganathan's law	Description
1	Books are for use	Books in libraries are to be promoted and marketed to its users
2	Every reader his (or her) book	Librarians remain neutral in serving various needs of its users by acquiring and serving varied collections for vast patrons' information desire
3	Every book its reader	Though a small number of readers will read a certain book, the book still has a place in the library
4	Save the time of the reader	Patrons must be able to easily, quickly and efficiently locate the material desired
5	The library is a growing organism	A library should be an up-to-date and dynamic changing institution; its outlook, books, methods, and its people

Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990; Renko et al., 2009). Kohli and Jaworski (1990) with Narver and Slater (1990) provide the most established concept on market orientation. Market orientation comprises of organizations values and beliefs about putting the customer foremost in business planning (Renko et al., 2009). The behavioral perspective is represented by Kohli and Jaworski (1990) conceptualization, which concentrates on organizational activities that associated with the generation and dissemination of and respond to market intelligence (Kirca et al., 2005). Three elements represent Kohli and Jaworski's (1990); intelligent generation, intelligent dissemination and responsiveness. Intelligent generation or market intelligence consists of customers' feedbacks as well as analysis of exogenous factors that may influence customers' needs and preferences. Next, the market intelligence which about the intelligent dissemination on how the information being shared, communicates, exploit, innovate or 'purchase' by other departments fulfill customers' preferences. Finally, responsiveness is the action conducted based on market intelligence by the act of distributing the collected information. From this perspective, it defines as "the organization wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future needs of the customers, the dissemination of intelligence horizontally and vertically within the organization wide action and responding to it (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993). MARKOR scale is developed in 1993 to measure firm's performance (Kohli et al., 1993).

Narver and Slater (1990) propose the cultural perspective, which focused on organizational norms and values, and promote behaviors that are consistent with market orientation (Deshpande et al., 1993; Kirca et al., 2005; Narver and Slater, 1990). They referred market orientation as "the organization culture (i.e., culture and climate (in Deshpande and Webster, 1989) that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviors for the creation of superior value for buyers and thus, continuous superior performance for the business" (Singh, 2005b), p. 61. The cultural perspective explicates from three behavioral components; customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter functional coordination. Narver and Slater (1990) describe that both customer and competitor orientations include activities of acquiring

information about customers and challengers in the target market and disseminate the information across the organizations. Inter functional coordination component is the efforts to coordinate and manipulate the collected information on customers and competitor by involving the cooperation between all departments to obtain a customer's value (Narver and Slater, 1990). MAKTOR scale is formulated to measure the constructs as proposed by Narver and Slater (1990).

Though both concepts are distinct, there are numbers of work that recommend the integration or collation of both concepts. Author such as Diamantopoulos and Cadogan (1996) introduce an integrated model, which propose competitive orientation and customer orientation into three market orientation elements of intelligence generation, intelligence dissemination and responsiveness (Hajipour et al., 2013). Griffiths and Grover (1998), Gounaris and Avlonitis (2001), Matsuno et al. (2005) and Carr and Lopez (2007) in Al-Hakimi (2010) suggest that both concepts are complementary and supportive of each other. Gray et al. (1998) validates that a combination of the existing market orientation scale proved to be more promising as managerial assessment and as parsimonious scales. Table 3 portrays the supporting literatures for the authors' aim to incorporate both cultural perspectives (Narver and Slater, 1990) and market intelligence (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990).

The Table 4 concludes that, due to the nomological similarities of both concepts, the combination or integration of both concepts may provide a comprehensive understanding about market orientation itself. However, certain authors such as Cadogan and Diamantopolous (1996), Matsuno et al. (2005) are proposing an integration which involves the re-conceptualization of the concepts. For example, reconceptualised both market orientation into a single nomological network (Al-Hakimi 2010). Whereas, Matsuno et al. (2005), introduced that the cultural construct as an antecedents to the behavioral construct (Al-Hakimi, 2010). However, in order to understand the total market orientation proclivity among public university librarians, the authors are more interested in emphasizing the 'collation' effort by putting together both concepts to explain the market orientation construct instead of an integrated conceptualization. Thus, the authors propose market orientation for public university librarians as an individual's action in implementing of the whole marketing concept and organizational culture through competitors and customer orientation, interfunctional coordination and market intelligence by focusing on the customer's expected to produce a long range organizational profit" (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990).

4. MARKET ORIENTATION USEFULNESS FOR THE LIBRARIES

Library administrators indicate the value of market orientation as one of many strategic orientations to be adopted by the libraries (Sen, 2010). Nevertheless, the comprehensiveness of the whole aspects of market orientation is not being fully utilized. Study by Garoufallou et al. (2013b), found that most libraries in Greece

Table 4: Literatures regarding the collation of market orientation's elements

Author	Setting	The discussion
Gheysari (2014), Kirca et al. (2005)	Profit sector	Both concepts of cultural perspective (Narver and Slater, 1990) and behavioral (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990) are inclined towards creating value for customers in exchange with long term profit
González-Benito and González-Benito (2005)	Profit sector	Both approaches to market orientation are compatible and complementary because behavior is the basis for the formation of beliefs and values, and culture provides the rules of behavior (p. 798)
Jones and Rowley (2009)	Profit sector	Incorporates the comprehensive overview of the implicit and explicit marketing behaviors (p. 8)
Al-Hakimi (2010), Cadogan and Diamantopoulos (1995), Carr and Lopez (2007), Farrell and Oczkowski (1997), Gauzente (1999; 2000), Gounaris and Avlonitis (2001), Gray et al. (1998), Griffiths and Grover (1998), Hajipour et al. (2013), Harris and Ogbonna (1999), Homburg and Pflesser (2000), Hult et al. (2005), Hurley and Hult (1998), Jaworski and Kohli (1996), Jones and Rowley (2009), Kohli et al. (1993), Matsuno et al. (2005), Sheppard (2011), Slater and Narver (1998)	Profit sector	The nomological similarity of both dimensions convinced researchers the necessity of integrating/ collating both concepts to explain the phenomena fully

had never performed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis or prepared a marketing plan, what's more, employing a strategic evaluation of the whole concepts of market orientation. Most libraries are also focusing on selected aspects of market orientation, for example, customer orientation. This is related to the former curriculum the librarians received during their academic years. In addition, global financial crisis also stunted marketing activities as the sponsorship from the government and university funding are getting less (Garoufallou et al., 2013b). However, more experienced librarians are more likely to engage in market orientation efforts as they gained more understanding and additional training on the concepts. Besides, more librarians are aware of the current challenge faced by libraries. Thus, many librarians realize the potential of employing market orientation as a strategic option towards optimizing customer's value despite the fund limitation. This effort is also a strategy to upgrade their reputation, and achieving the longer term in competitiveness (Aharony, 2009).

For public university libraries, organizational changes within the academic landscape influence how the libraries should position their marketing strategies. The transformation includes new accreditation strategies, global ranking competitiveness and challenge from private and virtual universities (Anis et al., 2015; Ujang, 2012). In the pursuit of competitiveness, fulfilling customers' expectation is a priority for any service based organization. More librarians are willing to employ the term customers to address their clients. For public universities, customers are segmented as clients (students, academics, interdepartmental employees and related agencies) and stakeholders (sponsors or policy makers) (Morris et al., 2007). To position the fit between organizational changes and clients into the new "business" framework, a collaborative efforts or "inter functional coordination" between university's departments or within the department itself, is crucial. To attain the fruit, the librarians should move from an ad hoc approach, towards collecting information sharing, a formal information and knowledge management strategy with improved communications strategies (Sen, 2010).

Despite the changes, academic librarians had taken less effort in improvising their current situation (Sa'ari et al., 2012). A single report by Allen (1998), unfortunately, indicates librarian-to-be as less proactive, complacent, risk averse and bureaucrats (Allen, 1998). However, the study could be contended as more librarians are open to change to survive the current circumstances. Other than financial issues, librarians should also be alert of the current competing service provider. The existence of competitors isn't direct or almost none within public sectors. However, for information provider agencies such as the libraries, competitor such as Google, which has been claimed to surpass the librarian's mediocre capability, should be accessed seriously (Johnson and Lilly, 2012). Likewise, library science researchers postulate the current challenge with the trend of university students. The four challenges are called 'the four Horsemen of the library apocalypse' that will determine the survival and sustainability of public universities librarian's for the next 5 years (Johnson and Lilly, 2012). Those issues include, (i) the unsustainable cost between procurement of capital funding compare to the library's expenditures, (ii) Google domination as the most powerful online information provider, (iii) declining patrons using the library's materials and facilities and (iv) coping with the new type of patrons' demand. As these are the 'cutting-edge' people with more complicated need, wants and demands, it is a necessity for the librarians to start revamping their current market orientation.

5. CONCLUSION

Globalization affects the current condition of financial, economic and organizations. To survive the impact of globalization, every employee must readily embrace change. There are three categories of change; those who observe change, those who participate in change and the agent of change. To move forward and position the library's relevancy, the public university libraries and librarians should take up the role as an agent of change. What's more, to position the library's usefulness and earned recognition as one of the university's strategic business units, its workforce must be bold

enough to employ new behavioral and cultural proclivities, such as becoming more market orientated. For the librarians provide satisfactory service to their customers, the library marketing should include a total organizational effort (Shontz et al., 2004), which means proceeding beyond the realm of marketing.

Study by Kohli and Jawaroski's (1990) indicate that, being market orientated is an equal responsible for every single employee than the single responsibility of the marketing department. This statement is in line with the intention of this article that posits the worthiness to investigate market orientation from an individual's perception. Moreover, the construction of a quality focused production orientation is supposed to be affected by an employee market-oriented behavior (Schlosser and McNaughton, 2009). Organizations that are able to motivate its employees to act in the market-oriented ways, may eventually success in a market-oriented initiatives (Schlosser and McNaughton, 2009). Felgueira and Rodrigues (2012) also indicate that, when employees believe that they are making a good contribution towards their organization's market orientation, they will form a strong commitment to the organization and more satisfied with what they do (esprit de corps). For public university librarians, the collected efforts will eventually profit customers, stakeholders and finally attaining organizational competitiveness in the longer term.

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