Measurement Model of the Market Orientation: New Theoretical Framework NEWMKTOR Model

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Abstract: **With the rapid growth of the business industry Marketing field received a significant amount of attention from the business people in different countries when compare with the past. Unlike past, today most of the businesses have realized about the importance of the market orientation practices as a strategy to maintain profitable relationships for achieve goals and objectives of the organizations. Most of the businesses give priority to identify whether they are market oriented or not. In order to do so numerous measures are applied by the professionals.**

Although there are many measurement models of Market Orientation have been developed by different scholars, most widely used the MKTOR model (Customer Orientation, Competitor Orientation and Inter Functional Coordination) introduced by Slater and Naver in 1993. But they did not take in to account societal marketing and the corporate social responsibility when developing MKTOR model. Today most of the people both customer and businesses tend to concern about the social benefits. Therefore this paper discuss about the importance of the social benefits as a strategy to gain profits and maintain profitable relationships. Further, this paper introduced an advance model called NEWMKTOR Model of Market Orientation to measure the market orientation by adding a new variable to the MKTOR model introduced by the Slater and Naver (1993). It is a new perspective of market oriented strategies.

Keywords: **Market Orientation. MKTOR Model, NEWMKTOR Model.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Market orientation constitutes one of the most stimulating marketing and organization topics this last decade. A growing number of contributions have been devoted to the operationalization of the concept and to the exploration of the links between market orientation phenomenon and business performance, strategic orientations, sales force management. In these contributions, the most widely used scale, MKTOR, developed by Narver and Slater (1990), are often used without further examination. A conformist use of the market orientation scales prevails.

Nevertheless, parallel to this academic enthusiasm, certain contributions raise doubts concerning the validity of existing scales and also concerning the concept delineation. From the statistical viewpoint, MARKOR's reliability is lower than MKTOR (see Pelham 1993; Pelham & Wilson 1996); moreover it does not achieve a simple factor structure. The authors themselves admit that the validity of the scale is fragile. When examined rigorously (Siguaw & Diamantopoulos, 1994) the measurement model of MKTOR is poorly adjusted.

A central idea in the marketing literature is the proposition that any firm that is able to raise its level of market orientation will improve its performance in the market place (Narver and Slater, 1990). Market oriented firms are defined by their superior understanding of customers' current and future needs and by their ability to offer solutions to those needs that are superior to rivals' offerings (Slater and Narver, 2000).

Due to the globalization and advancement of the technology business field has become very complex and turbulent. Therefore customers also highly concern about business practices of the organizations. Rational customers keep eye on business practices of the companies. On the other hand with the evolution of the Marketing, today Most of the companies use the Marketing concept while concerning Societal Marketing Concept. In this Paper exhibits the important of the benefits provided by the companies to the society and improved the MKTOR model as NEWMKTOR model by adding the Social Benefit Orientation to the MKTOR Model.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Market Orientation:

Market Orientation receives a significant amount of attention from researchers (e.g., Etgar, Slater and Naver, 1990; Gronroos, Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Ruekert, 1992; Gainer and Pandanyi, 2005; Carr and Lopez, 2007). Market orientation can be defined as a form of organizational culture where employees are committed to continuously create superior customer value, or as a sequence of marketing activities that lead to better performance. Most of researches have concluded that high market oriented companies perform better than companies that are less market oriented. They focus on adapting their products and services to the needs and expectations of their customers instead of those who are product oriented and focus on developing a product or service that is then marketed and hopefully sold (Gronroos, 2006). To achieve this customer focus, a firm with a high degree of market orientation cultivates a set of shared values and beliefs about putting the customer first and reaps results in form of a defendable competitive advantage, decreased costs and increased profits (Desphande, 1999).

Market orientation is not a new concept to the marketing and management literature. Scholars argued that the postulate by Drucker (1954) that the customer must be focus of organization's operations and the subsequent support given to this idea by Levitt (1960) that the customer is the reason for the organization's existence were all pointing to the fact that market orientation behavior was necessary at that time. This idea was extended to become known as the marketing concept (McNamara, 1972). The market orientation concept focuses on coordinated business intelligence generation, dissemination and responsiveness to market information for efficient and effective decisions (Sundqvist, Puumalainen and Saminen, 2000; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). The concept is also concerned with issues including organizational culture, innovation, human resource planning and organizational learning (Narver and Slater, 1990; Ruekert, 1992; Baker and Sinkula, 1999; Greenley, Cadogan and Fahy, 2005; Keskin, 2006).

Market orientation scholars such as Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Narver and Slater (1990), Ruekert (1992), Gainer and Pandanyi (2005), Carr and Lopez (2007) have argued that market orientation traces its origins from the market concept and has consequences to overall business strategy. The marketing concept is concerned with customer orientation, competitor orientation, innovation and profit as an inducement for creating satisfied customers (Narver and Slater, 1994; Hunt and Morgan, 1995).

In addition to that, there are so many scholars tried to view Market Orientation in different ways. Those are very important to get a sound understanding about the concept of Market Orientation and progress of the research Study.

According to Drucker (1954) and Levitt (1960) market orientation is a central element of a management philosophy .Similarly; the market orientation construct is at the very heart of modern marketing and a frequently studied research subject. It was presented in the 1990s as the actions that firms undertake to implement a customer orientation, and include a set of behaviours and the organizational culture that supports them(Grinstein, 2008). Accordingly, Baker and Sinkula (2005) stated that market orientation is a value-based strategic philosophy exhibiting itself in behaviours which help firms stay close to their consumers (Hsieh et al. 2008). Conceptually, market oriented organizations are organizations that are well informed about the market and that have the ability to use that information advantage to create superior value for their target customers. Two main perspectives on market orientation have emerged as a result: a behavioural perspective based on Kohli and Jaworski (1990), and a cultural perspective based on Narver and Slater (1990). But in this research study paid attention to the behavioural perspective than Cultural Perspective.

Narver and Slater (1990) proposed that market orientation is the extent to which culture is devoted to meeting customer needs. They defined Market orientation as the competitive strategy that most efficiently generates the right kinds of behaviour to create enhanced value for the consumer and therefore assures better long-term results for corporations (Maydeu-Olivares and Lado, 2003).Therefore, market orientation comprises three components: customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter functional coordination. Customer orientation and competitor orientation include all the activities involved in acquiring information about the customers and competitors in the target market and disseminating this information throughout the organization. Inter functional coordination involves coordinated efforts, which typically involves more than the marketing department, to use this information to create superior customer value (Narver and Slater, 1990; Kumar et al., 1998). A long range investment perspective is implied in market orientation due to the need to prevent the organization's competitors from overcoming the superior customer value created by the organization (Subramanian, 2009) .The three components of market orientation collectively form a unique strategic marketing resource and are vital to the performance of the firms (Hsieh et al., 2008). Market orientation is indeed a learning process in which organizations learn from all aspects of their environment, including customers and competitors, and take both short and long term organizational goals into consideration (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). According to Narver and Slater (1990); Shapiro (1988), being market oriented implies delivering products and services valued by consumers, usually accomplished through (1) on-going monitoring of market conditions and (2) adaptation of organizational responses. However, top management plays a critical role in fostering market orientation. Given the importance of market orientation, it comes as no surprise that this construct has received scrutiny from marketing scholars (Grewal and Tansuhaj, 2001). A standard argument in the market orientation literature suggests that market-oriented firms are in a better position to satisfy the needs of their customers (Narver and Slater, 1990). Therefore, researchers expect market orientation to be manifested in enhanced firm performance (Grewal and Tansuhaj, 2001). In addition, some academics consider market orientation as a resource and/or a capacity of the company to provide a sustainable competitive advantage (Aldas Manzano, 2005). The definition of market orientation adopted in this study is that put forward by Narver and Slater (1990). According to whom "market orientation is the organization culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviours for the creation of superior value for customers and, thus, continuous superior performance for the business" (Narver and Slater, "The effect of a market orientation on business profitability", Journal of Marketing, 1990).They conceptualized market orientation as a one dimensional construct that incorporates three behavioural components (customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter functional coordination) and use a single aggregated measure of market orientation (MKTOR). The three components of market orientation collectively form a unique strategic marketing resource and are vital to the performance of the firms (Hsieh et al., 2008). However, a firm generally seeks to develop its own market orientation to ensure the continuous needs assessment of its customers, the early detection of shifts in the marketplace, and to prompt internal review and realignment of marketing strategies and activities where required. Nevertheless, research in the area of marketing orientation continues to be very prolific (Farrelly and Quester, 2003).

B. Different views of Market Orientation:

Although there are several scholars have developed the theories regarding Market orientation concept this paper discuss the theory which have been developed by the most famous research scholars and Slater and Naver, (1990) based on their perspectives.

Narver and Slater's View of Market Orientation:

The professional scholars John C. Narver and Stanley F. Slater published their famous article about Market Orientation in 1990, several months after their distinguished colleagues Kohli and Jaworski. Narver´s and Slater´s goal was to shed light on the components that build a market orientation and propose a useable definition of the concept. They interviewed managers in 113 strategic business units in one corporation.

However, they took the definition further and argued that market oriented firms are focus not only on customers but also equally much on competitors. Additionally, they placed emphasis on inter functional coordination that is meant to create unison between all functions in the organization and become part of the organizational culture. So they have developed this definition: "Market orientation consists of three behavioural components such as customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter functional coordination and two decision criteria long term focus and profitability."

Narver and Slater (1990) defined three equally important behavioural dimensions of market orientation, them being customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter functional coordination. They add two decision criteria that are long term focus and profitability to their model.

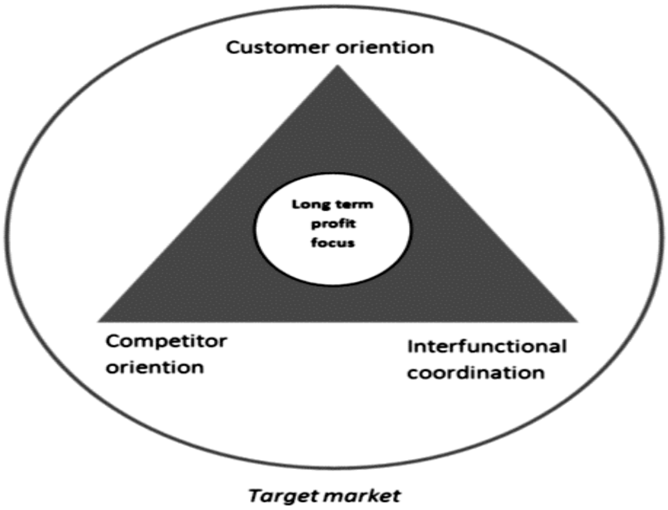

Fig. 1: Narver and Slater's view on market orientation.

Source: Narver and Slater (1990).

Fig.1.shows the interaction between the three behavioural components; customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter functional coordination.

Research shows that the consequence of market orientation materializes in all tasks performed by a firm. The degree of market orientation shows through employee and customer satisfaction, as well as content shareholders. Customers of a company with a high degree of market orientation experience great value for money and excellent service that is gladly delivered by skilled and professional employees of that company.

Gray (1998) found that the more market oriented companies have more satisfied and loyal customers and employees there. Also not only that, Day and Wensley (1988) found that market orientation means that organizations do not only understand the customer, but also its customer´s customers and their business environment and how that will develop in the future. This concept matches with Kohli´s and Jaworski´s (1990) suggestion that companies must collect and assess data on customer´s current and future needs. These companies' employees should emphasize service delivery and manage their customer relations well. Employees should spend considerable time with their customers (Narver and Slater, 1994). Competitor orientation is the second component of market orientation and states that organizations should identify, analyse and use the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and capabilities of both current and future competitors. This is very logical although not entirely new. Already in 1960, Levitt said that parallel to customer analysis, companies must do competitor analysis and contemplate possible solutions that might full fill current and future customer needs and expectations (Levitt, 1960).

Inter functional coordination or integrated marketing means that all departments within the company play a critical role in satisfying customers. This idea concurrent with Shapiro´s (1988) research that found that market orientation is not marketing orientation, because a market orientation does not suggest that only the marketing department has the most important role here. On the contrary, market orientation emphasizes that all departments and all employees are aware of the fact that their job attitude towards internal and external customers is crucial. According to Narver and Slater (1998), competitor and customer orientation include all activities that involve generating market intelligence about customers and competitors, analysing it and distributing that knowledge throughout the organization. This means that the market oriented company must provide adequate business processes and systems for data input and coordinate the communication of disseminated business info in order to create superior value for customers.

According to Narver and Slater (1998), continuous innovation is implicit in each of these components. If there is no innovation and continuous data generation, employees will not have the right prerequisites to offer that extra service to the customer.

The two decision criteria shown in the fig.1 are a long term profit focus and profitability. It is through the continuous creation of superior customer value that a business creates its long-run profit performance. A short period marketing campaign or sales action might boost sales, but the organizational image and generation of repeat customers only evolves over time along with reputation and word of mouth.

The view on market orientation is very useful to anyone seeking knowledge on market orientation. Paper view market orientation as a concept that leads to a greater competitive advantage and agree that business intelligence about customers and competitors is a key prerequisite to build market orientation. They concluded that all managers and staff members need to participate in creating and maintaining the market and that market orientation is a construct with three equally important components. However, the view has important weaknesses.

C. Social Benefit Orientation:

Social benefits can be defined as the increase in the welfare of a society that is derived from a particular course of action. Most social benefits cannot be quantified (Paul and kwon, 2002). Through this definition it is crystal clear that Social benefit orientation is attached with the welfare of the customers or the society and each and every business organization should pay high consideration to the social benefits. It comes with the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. Furthermore, according to Paul and kwon (2002), Social benefit is the total benefit to society from producing or consuming a good or service. Social benefits include all the private benefits plus any external benefits of production or consumption. Although in this definition they highlighted that Private benefit is a part of Social Benefit this study concern about the External benefits provided by the Organizations. If a good or service has significant external benefits, then the social benefit will be greater than the private benefit (Paul and Kwon, 2002). The social benefit achieved by a social project can be defined as the improvements attained in the living conditions of its beneficiaries that are directly attributable to the project. All different kinds of improvements can be related to one of the four groups of benefits shown below, which refer to as the components of the social benefit: (1) Individual tangible goods (economic nature); Individual intangible goods (intellectual or spiritual nature); (3) Collective tangible goods (ecological nature and basic infrastructure); (4) Collective intangible goods (socio-cultural nature, for the community).

Another way of explaining about Social benefit is defined by measurement against a “third-party standard,” and all statutes permit incorporators to also pursue more “specific Social benefits” Providing (low income or underserved) individuals or communities with beneficial products or services; Promoting economic opportunity for individuals or communities beyond the creation of jobs in the normal course of business, Preserving (or improving) the environment, Improving human health, Promoting the arts, sciences, or advancement of knowledge; Increasing the flow of capital to entities with a public benefit purpose, or The accomplishment of any other particular, identifiable benefit for society or the environment (Matthew F. Doeringer, 2010). Based on above perspectives importance of social benefit oriented activities has been increased. Most of the organizations are aimed to use strategies in order to positioning in consumer’s mind about the organizations as well as the products. When it comes to Sri Lankan context because of the cultural situations, Social Benefit has become very important and essential concept today.

This research paper has contributed both for theory development and for practicing managers. The main contribution to the theory development involves introducing a new variable to the market orientation called “Social Benefits Orientation”. Many researches have been conducted researches about the market orientation by only considering the three component of market orientation (Customer Orientation, Competitor Orientation and Inter Functional Coordination) which were developed by Slater and Naver (1990). They have developed this theory (MKTOR model) after conducting many researches.

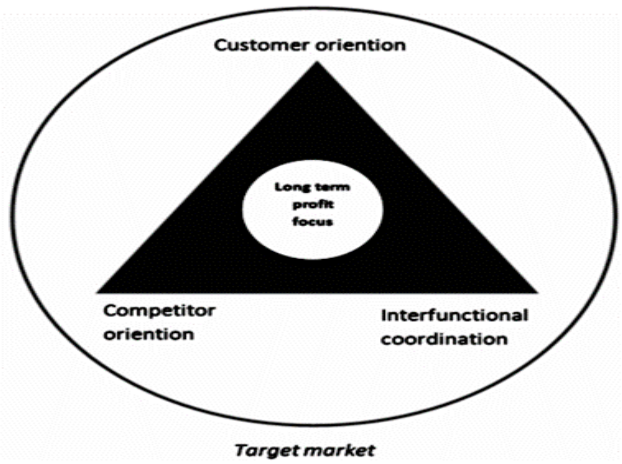

Fig. 2:- Slater and Naver’s view of Market Orientation

Source: - Narver and Slater (1990)

Fig.2. shows that the Slater and Naver point of view on Market Orientation. It explains an organization should achieve long term profits by focusing on Customer Orientation, Competitor Orientation and Inter Functional Coordination with in the organization and it should be done with in target market. In other words, an organization should make strategies within the organization in order to focus long term profits, by considering Customer Orientation, Competitor Orientation and Inter Functional Coordination.

Figure 5.2 shows the developed advanced conceptualized measurement model of Market Orientation. Further involves the confirmation of constructs of Market orientation.

III. NEWMKTOR MODEL

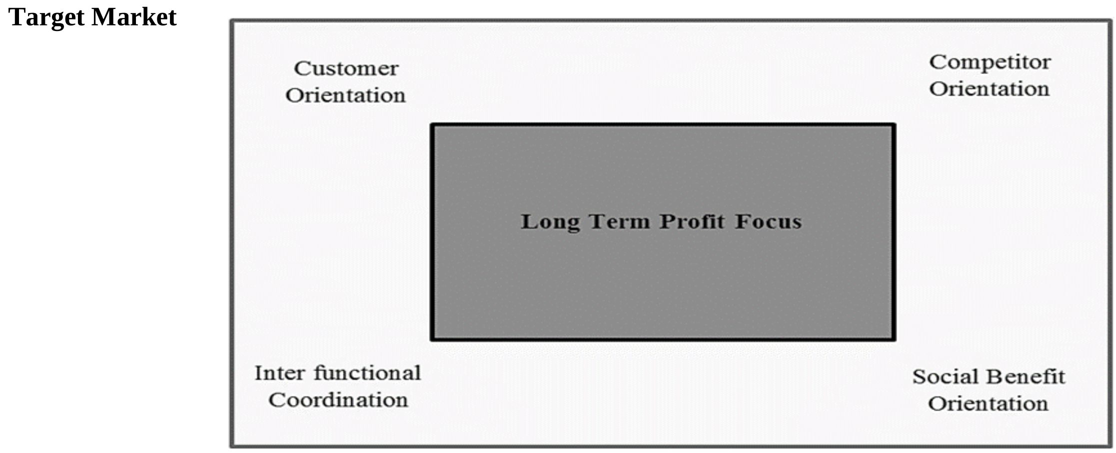

Fig. 3: NEWMKTOR model

Source: - Developed by the Researcher (2015)

Fig.3 shows the new measurement model introduced by the researcher. This model has been developed based on the slater and Naver view of Market orientation. Further this model overcomes the weaknesses of MKTOR model. The NEWMKTOR model explains the Slater and Naver's view with a new sub variable.

According to the model there are four components of market orientation can be identified. Customer orientation, competitor orientation, inters functional coordination and social benefit orientation is the four orientations of market orientation.

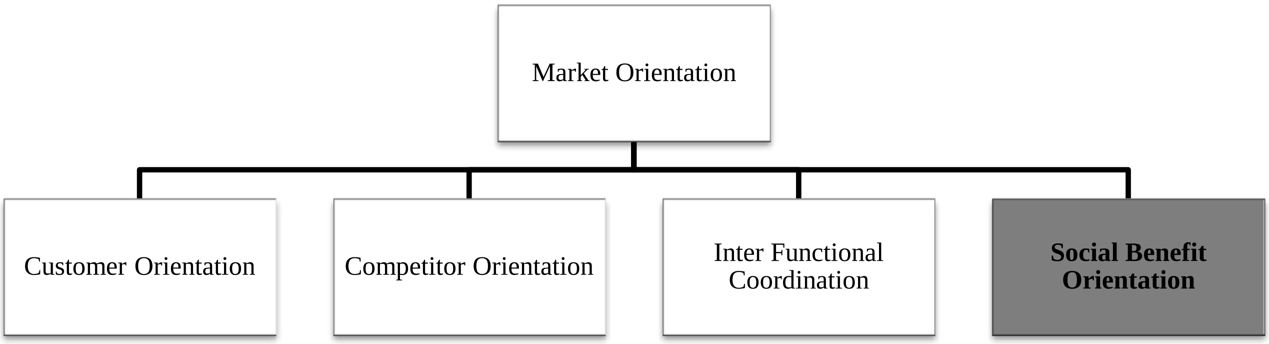

Fig. 4: Four Components of Market Orientation

NEWMKTOR Model explains how an organization should focus long term profits based on the market oriented activities with in the target market. In other words, in order to acquire long term profits, an organization should consider Customer orientation, Competitor orientation, Inter functional Coordination and Social Benefit Orientation. In this research paper highlighted the importance of the social benefit oriented activities for long term profit focus business organizations in global Context. Therefore this model contributes to the Market orientation theories and brings for new perspective. Further Corporate social responsibility and societal marketing concepts are useful when adding social benefit orientation to the market orientation.

As this is a new model to the market orientation, it is needed to confirm the validity of the NEWMKTOR model by applying in different contexts and different industries.

The validity of the NEWMKTOR model confirmed for the first time by applying to the Small and Medium scale manufacturing organisations in Sri Lanka. The constructs for three components customer orientation, competitor orientation Inter functional coordination gathered from the previous research studies related to the Market orientation and the measures for social benefit orientation developed by the researcher. Model tested by getting 240 both male and female managerial level employees in southern province those who are working in small and medium scale manufacturing organizations. The analysed data shows that Social benefit orientation is strongly related to the market orientation. Based on the findings the researcher developed a measurement model by considering the Slater and Narver (1990) developed tri component model of Market Orientation (MKTOR model).

The results confirmed the validity of the NEWMKTOR model. Table 1 shows the measures of NEWMKTOR model of Market Orientation used to confirm the validity of the measurement model of market orientation (NEWMKTOR model).

TABLE 1: Measures of NEWMKTOR Model

Measurement Items of NEWMKTOR Model
Customer Orientation
• Our firm gathers information about customers' needs. • Our firm has insight into the buying process of customers. • Our firm consults customers to improve the quality of service. • Our firm handles customers' complaints well. • We regularly measure customer satisfaction. • Our firm looks for ways to offer customers more value. • Our firm treats customers as partners.
Competitor Orientation
• Our firm knows whether competitors are open to complaints by customers. • Our firm knows why customers continue buying from competitors. • Our firm knows whether customers buying from competitors are satisfied. • Our firm knows how competitors maintain relationships with customers. • Our firm monitors customers buying from competitors. • Our firm knows why customers switch to competitors. • Our firm knows which products competitors offer customers. • We respond rapidly to our competitor's actions.
Inter Functional Coordination
• Our firm's departments coordinate their contacts with customers. • Our firm's departments jointly satisfy customers' needs. • Our firm's departments are collectively responsible for the relationship with customers. • Resources are frequently shared by different departments. • Our firm's departments take decisions that affect the relationship with customers collectively. • Our firm's departments are collectively aware of the importance of the relationship with customers. • Our firm's departments coordinate their activities aimed at customers.
Social Benefit Orientation
• Our firm establishes policies by focusing social responsibilities. • Our firm thinks social benefit as an obligation to the society. • Our firm considers Ecological nature. • Our firm considers basic infrastructure facilities. • Our firm focuses Socio-cultural and community. • Our firm organizes donation programs. • Our firm thinks corporate social responsibility (CSR) as an obligation of the company.

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