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Abstract

Research has shown that a market orientation can enable an organization to be a successful competitor by creating and maintaining superior value. Because of the anticipated positive outcomes of a market orientation it would be beneficial to have a way to measure the market orientation of and within an organization. This study reviews previous organization level measurements and the research that indicates the need to measure market orientation at the employee level. One purpose of this study is to further investigate the cross-industry application of the Kennedy, Lassk, and Goolsby (2002) customer mind-set scale (CMSI) by testing it in another type of industry: education.

This study was conducted using post-secondary institutions as the population of interest and demonstrates a strong linkage between the internal customer mind-set and the external customer mind-set of employees. It also raises questions regarding the link between customer mind-set of employees and student satisfaction in the higher education sector. One significant finding indicated a very low customer mind-set is linked to low student (customer) satisfaction. Interestingly, of the five functional areas studied, Faculty was found to have a lower internal and external customer mind-set. These findings offer support for the use of the CMSI to draw attention to areas that need improvement. Finally, the study's findings highlight the mixed perceptions of the terms "customers" and "employees" in the higher education sector. This implies the CMSI would need to be adjusted for this industry. Although, the link between the

customer mind-set of employees and external customer satisfaction is inconclusive the questions raised warrant further study.