Market orientation for the hotel segment: The Portuguese case[*]

Mario Raposo[1], Cristina Estevão[2], Emerson Mainardes[1], Maria José Domingues[3],

(1. NECE, University of Beira Interior, Covilhã 6200-209, Portugal; 2. University of Beira Interior, Covilhã 6200-209, Portugal;

3. Center of Social and Applied Sciences, Regional University of Blumenau, Blumenau 89012-900, Brazil)

Abstract: In view of the importance of the hotel segment for the tourism and for the economy of countries such as Portugal, the objective of this study was to measure the level of orientation for the market of the largest hotel groups of Portugal. This investigation initially emphasized the importance of the marketing for the organizations, mainly the orientation for the market. After a brief explanation on the hotel segment in Portugal, an empirical study was presented, of quantitative, exploratory and traversal character, performed with the largest groups of 20 hotels of Portugal, using as an instrument of collection data, the traditional Markor scale (market orientation) adapted to the hotel sector. After analyzing the data, it was found in the investigated organizations that a good capacity to generate market information and response to the market, which formed two of the three constructs of Markor scale. However the results obtained with the construct of the dissemination of market information were below the expectations. It was possible to conclude that marketing professionals of the large hotel groups in Portugal are well oriented to the market, something not shared by other investigated departments of the hotels. So the current challenge for the main networks of hotels in Portugal is to improve the internal dissemination of information that marketing professionals gathered at the market.

Key words: marketing management; orientation to the market; Markor; hotel sector in Portugal

1. Introduction

The awakening of the consumption brought economical, politics, social changes, where previously they governed the forms of production and administration of small scales, typical from the centuries XVIII and XIX. With the mass production to assist to the growing consumers' needs around the globe appeared the marketing inside of the organizations (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990), after all the first function of any company is to maintain its activity, being this way, necessary to generate and to maintain consumers (Levitt, 1986). In the first two decades of the XX century, the marketing had as function the facilitation of the trade and distribution of products (Bartels, 1988). From 1920, the marketing starts to try to understand the reasons that took the consumers to acquire products and services, something that only solidifies from the 1940's.

Thereafter, it started to be fundamental for the companies the implementation of the marketing not only as

one more organizational function, but mainly as a philosophy that includes the whole company, in all of the hierarchical levels (Narver & Slater, 1990). Nowadays, it is not an exaggeration to affirm that the administration of the marketing is the most important function in the organizations (Jocz & Quelch, 2008). According to Kotler and Armstrong (1996), currently managing of the marketing companies are used to satisfy their consumers, planning products, services and appropriate programs and determining the actions of organizations in the market, and the other areas of businesses subject to the decisions of marketing managers, after all the needs and desires of customers have become crucial to the survival and growth of any organization in the market, this fact that justifies studies regarding this theme.

Among the marketing organizations, the companies of the hotel sector stand out because they are important for the tourism development of any nation, including Portugal, a major European tourist destination. In this country, tourism grows year by year, and has earned significant representation in the Portuguese economy. As being a strategic sector for this nation, to investigate the market orientation of hotels in Portugal, a key element for the development of tourism, it is important for actions that motivate the tourism in Portuguese soil.

Being this, it is questioned—What is the degree of implementation of the marketing concept in the major hotel groups in Portugal? To answer this question, this study had to measure the general level of the market orientation for the largest hotel networks in Portugal. As specific objectives, it was sought to: (1) compare the level of generation and dissemination of marketing information and response to the market between the hotels of Portuguese origin *versus* hotels of foreign origin; (2) compare the level of generation and dissemination of marketing information and response to the market between the professional marketing of Portuguese hotels *versus* the same professional organizations, but acting in departments other than marketing; (3) to identify the elements that can be improved for the optimization of the generation levels and the spread of marketing information and of answer to the market of the large hotel groups present in Portugal.

The study in question intended to contribute to the companies of the Portuguese hotel segment, when indicating the orientation level of the main representatives of the market sector. The contributions extend to the marketing apprentices, when establishing the importance of the implementation of the marketing concept for all of the organizations, and for the academy, when demonstrating the importance of the studies in marketing for the organizational environment and for society in general.

For the accomplishment of this study, the marketing was contextualized as a function of the company and as an administration philosophy. Following, the orientation was described for the market, and the models developed to measure the orientation level for the market in the organizations positioning them presently. After a brief characterization of the current state of the Portuguese hotel sector, followed by the presentation of the methods and research techniques used. Soon afterwards came the analysis of the collected data. It finishes the study with the conclusions and implications of the accomplished study, as well as the recommendations of future lines of continuity investigation in this study.

2. The philosophy of marketing and management organizations

Since its conception, the marketing has become a business function, over time to a business philosophy. Since the 1960s, the incapacity of distinguishing between the two has been mentioned by several authors (Kotler & Levy, 1969; Howard, 1983; Levitt, 1986; Brown, 1987; Grönroos, 1989; McKenna, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1996; Baker, 2003; Kotler & Keller, 2005; Wilkie & Moore, 2007), as one of the key factors in the promotion of the

incomprehension on the nature of the marketing and its role in the business administration (Brown, 1987). For Kotler and Armstrong (1996), the administration of the marketing in an organization is not limited to identifying the company consumers' needs, but it also involves the planning of products, services and appropriate programs. In other words, it is not an isolated function in the organization, but an advisor of all of the actions of the company, as well as an agent propeller of external associations to the organization with views to provide a superior value to their consumers. The marketing actually is a work of everyone in the company (McKenna, 1991).

This role of the marketing inside of the organizations was the study object of Brown (1987). For the author, the true role of the marketing in the organization, in reality, is to act as a bridge among several functions of the company about how they interpret its role, and how they see the company customers' needs. The author concluded that the marketing has the task of understanding the customer's needs and of communicating and guiding their discoveries to other areas of the company, in order to guarantee that all become truly guided to the customers, as it can be visualized in Fig. 1, which presents the model proposed by Brown (1987).

Agreeing to point out that the marketing is not only the blind search of nay client at any price, and wrong interpretation and very common among the professionals that do not understand the marketing (Baker, 2003). The functional managers should not feel that the marketing implications are supposed to satisfy all the potential clients, independently of the cost. The marketing involves the identification and resumption of the objectives clearly defined by the clients, those in which the company is more suited to serve in a competitive market (Brown, 1987).
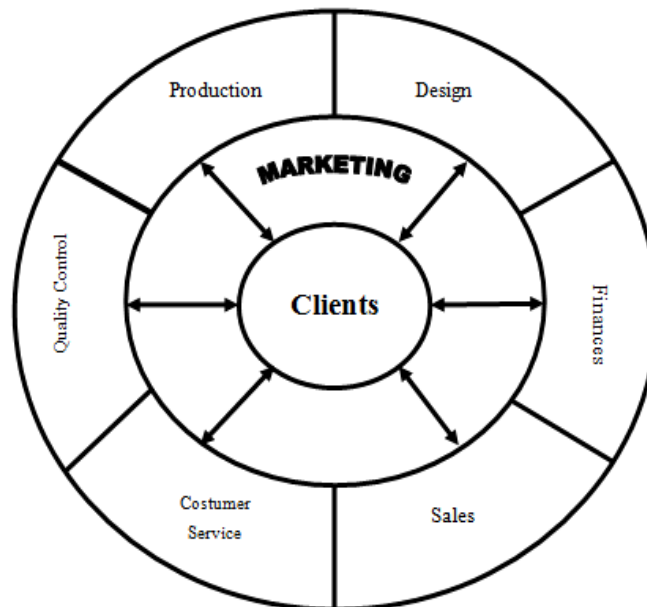
Fig. 1   The role of the marketing in the organizations
Data source: Brown (1987, p.27).

For Thomas (2006), the marketing as an organizational culture, preserves all the company as a uniform way, the active is more important for an organization—its relationship with its global clients. According to Greenly, Hooley and Saunders (2004), the marketing professionals have a critical role as the clients internal defenders and for a value system that puts the client in first place, after all, the most important resource of any company is the consumer public—something that should be present in the minds of all organization collaborators, independent of its function.

Knowing and interpreting the current needs and the potential consumers of the product and/or services of an organization, it is possible to establish policies and plans, develop competences, guide resource and sectors of the company, or focus all the organization actions for the needs and desires of the clients, increasing the probability of the company's success (Pearson, 2002). The management of all this process is leaded by marketing professionals (Kotler & Keller, 2005). However, in order to be possible, the management focused on the client is necessary with the marketing concept be implemented in all of the organization. This implementation is traditionally known as orientation for the marketing (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990).

3. Organizations guided to the market

The evolution of the marketing concept having as its main focus the client in the center of the enterprise strategy, made with that, the organizations started to have a strategic turned for the marketing (Kotler & Armstrong, 1996). The term "orientation for the marketing" appeared as an organizational culture, therefore, as a set of values and creeds which puts the consumer in the first place, in the moment of elaboration of the organization strategic (Deshpandé & Webster, 1989). In the beginning of the 1990's, many definitions and models appeared around this concept, namely through the developed work by Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Narver and Slater (1990), Desphandé, Farley and Webster (1993) and Day (1994) and which remain valid until today.

3.1 Orientation for the marketing according to Kohli and Jaworski (1990)

Kohli and Jaworski (1990) defined the concept of orientation for the market as being the information generation of the market for all the organization related to the current and future clients needs, the dissemination of the market information through the departments and the answer of the company to this information. The study of these authors about the orientations for the market identified three components: (1) information generation; (2) dissemination of the information; (3) answer to the market. The generation of the market information related to the exogenous factors to the organization, in which all the departments should collect and treat the information concerning of the current and future needs and demands of the clients, and about the factors that can directly achieve the consumer desires, namely competitors, technological-political suppliers, socio-cultural factors, among others, a way of the organization be able to monitories the conjuncture and the external environment.

With the information collected, this should be transmitted by various sectors of the organization in order to be known and parted in the core of the organization as vision presented for the dissemination of information. Later, the two first components surge the construction of the answer to the market which consists in the formulation and execution of logical actions with the market study, therefore, it consists in the transformation of the acquire knowledge in the previous stage in real actions, which reflect itself in the current needs and desires and future and real and potential consumers.

According to Kohli and Jaworski (1990), a guided organization for the guided market implements and acts according with the concept of marketing, in other words, it is that which the actions are consistent with the concept of marketing. The initial proposal of the authors resulted in the scale, known as Markor—*Market orientation*, which it was proposal initially with 3 constructs and 32 variables (generation of the marketing intelligence—10 variables, dissemination of marketing intelligence—8 variables, and answer to the market—14 variables) and which measures the level of orientation for the market of a determined organization. This scale was tested (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993) and later adjusted for 20 variables and statistically valid (Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar, 1993), being the Markor scale the most used for the academics and the marketing observers when it tries

to find the marketing concept of the implementation level in all the organization, in other words, the company for its market (Koller, 2002).

3.2 Orientation for the market according to Narver and Slater (1990)

For Narver and Slater (1990), the orientation for the market is considered as an organizational culture, which stimulates the behaviors necessary to the creation of the superior value for the client, providing that a competitive advantage for the organization. According to these authors, the orientation for the market is constituted by three components: (1) client orientation; (2) competition orientation; (3) interfunctional coordination, which two decision criterion: (1) long-term orientation and (2) profitability.

The orientation for the customer means to make an effort in the sense of understanding its chain of value, as well as creating value, it could happen in two ways: (1) increasing the customer's benefits in relation to the offer; (2) reducing the costs in the acquisition of a property or service. The orientation for the competition corresponds to the knowledge, on the part of the organization, of the actions of their main current and competitive potentials, as well as of their forces and weaknesses, potentialities and strategies. The third component of the orientation definition for the market, the coordination interfunctional, links itself with the so mentioned the function of all in the organization, leaving the idea behind that the marketing or the concern with the consumer, be the function of a single sector. Each individual that participates in the organization has essential responsibility in accomplishing their activities with the purpose of providing benefits with reduced costs to the customer (Narver & Slater, 1990).

The authors pointed out that the development of the three behavioral orientation components to the market, as well as the results originating from this orientation happening in the long term, as dealing with the alteration of the organizational culture. The creation and maintenance of relationships for a long period, induce the organization to a superior development, offering to their customers a superior value. As to the profitability, this is the objective for the market orientation. The profitability is seen as a desirable consequence of the orientation for the market and, in nonprofit organizations it is a synonymous of survival (Narver & Slater, 1990).

3.3 Orientation to the market according to Desphandé, Farley and Webster (1993)

According to Desphandé, Farley and Webster (1993), the orientation for the market is a group of faiths that puts in the first place the consumer's interests, not excluding all the other relevant publics, such as proprietors, managers and collaborators, in order to develop a long term lucrative organization. This approach was substantiated in the relationship between market orientation and organizational culture, where according to Deshpandé and Webster (1989), the individuals who are part of the organization centralize all the organizational activities in the customer value construction, not simply focusing on needs and desires of consumers. According to these authors, organizational culture is the set of shared values and beliefs that assist individuals in understanding the functioning of the organization, in addition to providing the same standards of behavior of the organization.

Market orientation is seen as more than a simple idea. It is regarded as the organizational functions guide, by clearly showing that the path being developed daily must be justified in understanding by all parts of the organization, that the consumer is the beginning and end of the business enterprise (Desphandé, Farley & Webster, 1993). The study developed by these authors, as well as the theoretical foundation relevant to the issue involved in the field of quantitative research, which had as the objective to examine the impact of organizational culture, guiding the consumers and innovation in relation to company's performance. The contribution of this study relates to the internal awareness development, to be spread by the company, the importance of consumer-oriented actions, being considered and advocated as higher value for the organization towards its own organizational culture.

3.4 The second market orientation

Day (1994) defined guidelines for the market as a skill in understanding the customers' superior satisfaction. This skill is obtained through the development of organizational capabilities. Thus Day (1994) considered that businesses become more market-oriented insofar as they identify and develop special capabilities, establishing advantages in relation to competition. Day (1994) ranked capabilities into three categories: internal, external capabilities and capacity expansion capabilities. Internal capabilities correspond to the development of organizational skills for the environment, for example: cost, finance, logistics, production, human resources among others. External capabilities relate to skills to manage aspects of the market: technology, channels, consumers, etc. Finally, the authors unite emphasis internal external emphasis, which are integrated through expansion capabilities, which are activities that comprise the process used to meet anticipated needs of consumers, identified capabilities.

The development of these capabilities is the crux of a market-oriented company. There are five steps to achieve this goal: diagnose current capacities to anticipate future needs, capacities of process redesign at operational level staff, direct the senior management and monitor progress (Day, 1994). Second Day (1994), the overall goal was to demonstrate a commitment to the organizational capacity development, both the internal to external environment, reflecting the philosophy that all decisions starting with the consumer and which are guided by a deep and shared understanding of the needs of these consumer behavior, capabilities and intentions of competing for the purpose of achieving superior performance, satisfying the consumers better than the competition.

3.5 Orientation for the 21st century market

According to Foley and Fahy (2009), operationalizing the concept of market orientation for researchers such as Kohli and Jaworski (1990) and Narver and Slater (1990) had a significant benefit for marketing thinking progression by influencing it until now. Even today, the backgrounds on the market-orientated represent important levers to increase the orientation within a company on the market. This background knowledge certainly helps the managers in their efforts to implement a market orientation (Raiij & Stoelhorst, 2008).

Major studies on market orientation are from the 1990s, now this issue continues to deserve close attention from researchers, although new models that arise not outweigh the models developed in the 1990s. It was the case of Lafferty and Hult (2001), which gave great importance to the definition of concepts about market orientation and affirmed that many research projects have set up the constructs and exploited their application and implementation in companies. Over time, the orientation of the market has become synonymous of how to implement the marketing concept.

Lafferty and Hult (2001) presented a framework which brought together contemporary conceptions of market orientation from a summary of its components. Although there are some differences between models, the emphasis of market orientation is to meet the needs and create value for the customer. A second element is the importance of information within the organization. This information is all that can be generated on customers and competitors, to help the company's search for the internal market for which they are oriented. As soon as this information is accessible through the concerted effort of all the different roles within the company, the organization must then disseminate this knowledge to all strategic business units of the organization and its departments. This interfunctional coordination is the third principle unifying models. Finally, the four perspectives on the direction of market stress the need to take appropriate measures by the company to implement the strategies required for the market that it is searched. Considering the importance of this construct for the performance of the organization and its potential to provide a competitive advantage, it is likely that the concept of market orientation

will continue to evolve, but following the principles developed in the last decade of the 20th century (Lafferty & Hult, 2001).

4. The Portuguese hotel segment

Cooper, et al (2008) affirmed that the newly created segment is the largest sector within the touristy economy, as an important supportive structure for a tourist destination. The hotel can also appear as an important element in broader strategies of economic development. The PITER Report (2005) reaffirms that the hotel is a basic sector to support tourist, being very important in the development of the tourism industry. It is to highlight the role that the accommodation is in the local economy (since it is this sector that are made the biggest expenses) helping to increase incomes in local communities (multiplier effect).

Table 1   Hotels rankings in Portugal

		Hotel establishments		Housing	Units
	Hotel Goup	Number	Total (%)	Number	Total (%)
1	Pestana Hotels & Resorts/Pestana Hostels	64	5.3	4,677	4.4
2	Vila Galé Hotels	14	1.2	3,191	3.0
3	Accor Hotels	28	2.3	2,945	2.7
4	Espirito Santo Hotels	10	0.8	2,393	2.2
5	Vip Hotels	13	1.1	2,309	2.2
6	Hotti Group	14	1.2	1,877	1.8
7	Starwoods Hotels & Resorts	6	0.5	1,789	1.7
8	Luna Hotels	16	1.3	1,693	1.6
9	Iberotel Group	5	0.4	1,643	1.5
10	Dom Pedro Hotels	7	0.6	1,399	1.3
11	Continental Group	12	1.0	1,347	1.3
12	Sana Hotels	9	0.7	1,275	1.2
13	Riu Hotels & Resorts	3	0.2	1,176	1.1
14	Marriott	4	0.3	1,139	1.1
15	Porto Bay Hotels & Resorts	6	0.5	1,099	1.0
16	Real Hotels	7	0.6	1,087	1.0
17	Fenix Hotels	7	0.6	1,062	1.0
18	Bensaude Tourism	8	0.7	1,058	1.0
19	Fernando Barata Hotel Group	6	0.5	886	0.8
20	Petchey Leisure	3	0.2	875	0.8
	Sub-Total	242	20.0	3,4920	32.6
	Other Hotel Groups	305	25.2	3,1086	29.0
	Independents	662	54.8	4,1165	38.4

Data source: Atlas da Hotelaria 2009 (2009, p.32).

In Portugal, in accordance with the Atlas Hotel 2009 (2009), the provision of accommodation comprised 1.209 hotels until the date of 31 December 2008, including tourist resorts, hotels, hotel apartments and inns of Portugal. In that, Atlas was presented with a ranking of 20 major hotel groups (see Table 1) where the base of ranking was the total number of housing units (number of rooms and apartments). Table 1 reveals that the Pestana Group (hereinafter Pestana Hotels & Resorts/Pestana Inns) tops the ranking in Portugal. At the 2nd and 3rd place

these rankings arise, respectively, Vila Gallé Hotels and Accor Hotels. The groups the Espírito Santo and VIP Hotels complete the top 5 hotels in Portugal. One hotel group also presents in the top 20 representing 32.6% together of the national offer available in housing units, and other 67.4% of households divided between 305 establishments belonging to small groups hotels and also 662 independent hotels. This leads to the conclusion that the 20 largest hotel groups in Portugal are highly significant for tourism in the country. Therefore, a strong market orientation of these hotels groups encourages important Portuguese tourism market, benefiting economically local communities, reflecting positively on the Portuguese economy as a whole.

5. Search methods and techniques

The field research conducted quantitative personality-descriptive and cross-section (Hair, et al., 2003) had intended to apply the traditional Markor model from studies of Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Jaworski and Kohli (1993) and Kohli, Jaworski and Kumar (1993), the Portuguese Hotel segment. This generic scale measures the market orientation of a particular organization, regardless of what it produces. The measurement scale of an endpoint for the current market reflects the degree of implementation of the marketing concept in the organization. The development of the Markor scale arose from the need for the practice of marketing and its management on market organizations, i.e., the model proposed by Kohli and Jaworski (1990) subsequently validated and adjusted empirically (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar, 1993), identifies three modern organizational actions geared to its target market: the generation of market information (marketing intelligence), and the spread of this information throughout the organization, and based on the information raised and disseminated, the response to market with products and/or services appropriate to the needs and desires of their clients.

The scale Markor was originally proposed initially with 32 variables in 3 constructs (generation of information, dissemination of information, market response). Subsequently, in 1993, being adjusted, keeping three modern, however measured by 20 variables, all tested and validated empirically (Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar, 1993). In the case of this study, it was sought to evaluate the implementation of the marketing concept in the Portuguese hotel segment, target population of this research. For this, it was measured the sample significantly representing this sector, market orientation of the 20 largest hotel groups in the country, as the ranking presented in the Atlas Hotel 2009 (2009), by the latest Markor scale, the 1993 version. This type of sample configures itself as a non-probability sampling for trial, because it sought to realize the research qualitatively with representative elements of a particular sector (Hair, et al., 2003).

The choice of the hotel segment is justified because it is an important segment for the Portuguese economy; being one of the sectors where there is greater employability and being one of the main segments to attract external resources and investments for the country. In this way, choosing the largest hotel groups that have Portuguese soil units, as well as the research was entitled to the Portuguese market orientation in these groups, because several of them are subsidiaries of foreign groups. These groups were surveyed on head executives and professional operating in the main areas of a hotel group (marketing, business, shopping, materials, accommodations, receivables, groups, reservations, corporate events and general direction), following the same strategy adopted Kohli, Jaworski and Kumar (1993).

The investigation applied tried to answer a series of questions: How the degree of the generation of marketing information in the largest hotel chains in Portugal? How the degree of dissemination of marketing information in these hotel groups? How the degree of response to the market for these groups? What are the

elements that can be enhanced for the optimization of the degrees of generation and marketing information and also the response to the market for large hotel group present in Portugal?

Answering to these questions, data were collected through a questionnaire by following the precepts of the Markor scale of 20 variables (Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar, 1993). The translation of the scale for the Portuguese language was previously drawn up and validated by Koller (2002). Thus constructed a questionnaire structured, not disguised (Hair, et al., 2003), containing statements followed by the Likert scale of 5 points (I totally disagree to totally agree), where the respondents should identify the degree of agreement for each statement.

The data collection instrument was divided into four parts (attached):

• Part 1: Characterization of the hotel group (group name, city headquarters, number of units in Portugal, classification, role in the hotel group responsible for completing the investigation);

• Part 2: Marketing information generation (6 specific affirmation, collected from the Markor scale, and 1 general statement—capacity to generate marketing information);

• Part 3: Marketing information dissemination (5 specific affirmations, collected from the Markor scale, and 1 general statement—general capacity to disseminate marketing information);

• Part 4: Response to the market (9 specific affirmations, Markor scale, and 1 general statement—general capacity to respond to market).

Because it is an instrument of data collection which has been already often tested and validated, they have dismissed themselves from the pretest step. The data were collected from 11 to 26 May 2009. 60 questionnaires were emailed, three for each network present in the ranking of the 20 largest hotel groups in Portugal (an investigation for the marketing manager of the chain, two surveys for the managers from other areas of group). These 30 questionnaires returned filled in. These were analyzed individually, and 28 were considered valid. Overall, 17 out of 20 major hotel groups in Portugal participated voluntarily on the research, with at least a completed questionnaire. In contrast, three hotels groups indicated that they had an interest in participating in the research, not responding to any of the three surveys sent.

6. Analysis of results

With the completion of the data collection, these were duly tabulated realization of the as of the tests. For analyzing the results used basic descriptive analyses and multivariate-analyses, especially the multiple linear regression (Hair, et al., 2003), which led to identify the elements that can be enhanced for the optimization of the degrees of generation and the dissemination of the marketing information and response to the market for large groups of hotels in Portugal.

6.1 Descriptive analyses

The first step in the analysis of data was to calculate the statistics basics for each construct and variable. To view more deeply of the market orientation of the large Portuguese hotel groups the results were divided in the following way: medium and standards deviation of all participating groups in the survey; after it was considered only as groups genuinely Portuguese groups; another division were the results obtained exclusively from marketing professionals to compare with professionals in other areas of the organizations investigated. The results can be observed in Table 2.

Through the analysis of Table 2, especially the column "All hotels", it was observed that the capacity perceived by the large Portuguese hotels generate market information is very high (4.07 on average, which

corresponds to the maximum value of 81.4%), as even happening perceived ability to respond to market (average of 4.18; 83.6% of maximum value).

Table 2   Statistical descriptive

Constructs and variables	All hotels		Foreign hotels		Portuguese hotels		Marketing professionals		Other departments	
Generation of market information	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation
Regular meetings with customers	4.32	0.77237	4.40	0.894	4.30	0.765	4.44	0.726	4.26	0.806
Market research	3.96	0.96156	4.00	1.000	3.96	0.976	4.22	0.833	3.89	1.049
Slowness in detecting changes in preferences	1.68	0.86297	1.20	0.447	1.78	0.902	1.56	0.726	1.74	0.933
Researches next to the customers	4.00	1.05409	4.00	1.000	4.00	1.087	4.67	0.500	3.79	1.134
Slowness in detecting changes in the market	1.75	0.79931	1.20	0.447	1.87	0.815	1.56	0.726	1.84	0.834
Periodic assessment of the effects of changes in market/customers	4.18	0.94491	4.60	0.548	4.09	0.996	4.56	0.527	4.00	1.054
General capacity to generate market information	4.07	0.85758	4.60	0.894	3.96	0.825	4.33	0.707	3.95	0.911
Dissemination of market information	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation
Periodic meetings between departments	4.32	.90487	4.40	0.894	4.30	0.926	4.78	0.441	4.21	0.976
Discussion MKT/Other depts. on future customers needs	4.07	1.11981	4.80	0.447	3.91	1.164	4.56	0.726	3.79	1.182
Problems with customers quickly transmitted to all	3.64	1.09593	4.80	0.447	3.39	1.033	4.11	0.782	3.32	1.108
Customer satisfaction regularly disseminated across the enterprise	3.64	1.22366	5.00	0.000	3.35	1.152	4.11	1.167	3.37	1.165
Slowness of depts. to communicate about market issues	2.11	0.99403	1.60	0.894	2.22	0.998	1.78	0.833	2.37	1.012
General capacity of dissemination of market information	3.71	0.85449	4.20	0.837	3.61	0.839	4.22	0.833	3.53	0.772
Response to the market	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation
Slowness of response to competitors	1.79	1.06657	2.00	1.732	1.74	0.915	1.44	0.726	1.95	1.177
Ignore recognition of new needs of customers	1.68	0.86297	1.20	.447	1.78	0.902	1.44	0.726	1.79	0.918
Continuous review of the hotel services	4.21	0.83254	4.60	.548	4.13	0.869	4.56	0.726	4.05	0.848
Meetings of depts. to respond to market changes	4.04	0.83808	4.60	.548	3.91	0.848	4.22	0.833	3.84	0.834
Responding to the communication campaigns of competitors	3.50	1.23228	3.40	1.517	3.52	1.201	3.89	1.167	3.37	1.212
Coordinated activities between depts.	3.61	0.78595	4.60	.548	3.39	.656	4.00	0.707	3.37	0.684
Customers complaints not heard	1.46	1.17006	1.80	1.789	1.39	1.033	1.00	0.000	1.47	1.124
Failure to implement a great plan of MKT	1.64	0.86984	1.40	.548	1.70	0.926	1.22	0.667	1.79	0.918
Discovering the need of changes the depts. perform them	4.00	0.72008	4.20	.837	3.96	0.706	4.22	0.441	3.89	0.809
General capacity to respond to market	4.18	0.77237	4.80	.447	4.04	0.767	4.11	0.782	4.21	0.787

Data source: The authors' elaboration.

Already the ability to disseminate the information obtained from the rest of the company (one of the constructs that characterize the implementation of the marketing concept in organizations) was lower than the

other constructs, receiving 3.71 average memo (equivalent to 74.2 % of maximum value). With regard to the variables, it was noted:

● Market research got few consensus among the respondents, i.e., there are hotel groups that perform little or no market research (or some of the professionals that act in the working group did not know the existence or frequency of carrying out such surveys);

● The high dispersion of answers in the variables "research with clients" reflects the ignorance of the professional part that act in these groups, as regarding to the evaluation with customers the quality of services offered;

● Two variables of the construct of market information dissemination (relating to the disclosure for all the enterprise the major problems with clients and client satisfaction results) received underperforming values (3.64, equivalent to 72.8% of maximum value) and great dispersion of answers which reflects that these information, in some of the major hotel groups are not properly disseminated;

● As regarding the construct response to market, also two variables stood out with medium value lower than expected: "response to competitors' communication campaigns" and "coordinated across departments' activities". These variables present themselves as more fragile when it is intended to reply to the market;

● Also highlighting for the high dispersion of answers in two variables: "slowness in response to competitors" and "customers" complaints are not heard". This high dispersion configures that part of the individuals that act in these groups of hotels are unaware of the speed of their companies" response before their competitors, as well as the treatment of complaints from customers.

To deepen the understanding on the overall results, two comparisons were made: foreign groups *versus* Portuguese groups; marketing professionals *versus* professionals from other sectors. In the first comparison, it was noted that the highest average (for positive aspects) or lower ones (for negative aspects) were predominantly of foreign groups. Likewise happened with the dispersions of responses (standard deviation), where the smallest one has been noticed in foreign groups. In relation to the Portuguese groups which were met averages less than to the foreigners and greater dispersal of answers. This leads to concluding that the market-orientated foreign groups are more evident than Portuguese groups. Varying the responses showed that in the organization not all claim the same discourse.

With the comparison among marketing professionals and professionals from other areas, it was found better results and less dispersal of responses among their active marketing networks investigated. On the other hand, the professionals from other areas gave more scattered answers, what brought to light, that the discourse of the Marketing Department is not accompanied by other sectors of the organization. In short, a good ability to generate information market (marketing intelligence) and to respond to market (most answers between I totally agree and I partially agree), but the spread of information collected is not a consensus (most answers in neutral position) among professionals operating in the various departments of large hotel groups in Portugal.

6.2 Multivariate analysis

In this moment, the initial analysis focused on establishing the correlations between general research variables ("General capacity to generate market information"; "General ability to disseminate market information"; "General capacity to respond to the market"). It was used as the support tool of SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Performing the Pearson correlation test between the three variables, a significant correlation between the "General capacity to generate market information" and "General capacity to respond to market" was found. The construct "General capacity to disseminate market information" was not correlated to any of the two other, when

the database were all respondents. Separating the databases (foreign hotels, Portuguese hotels, marketing professionals, professionals from other areas), the only significant correlation was with the construct "General capacity to disseminate market information" which was on the basis of marketing professionals and the correlation of this construct it was with the construct "General capacity of response to the market ".

Another multivariate analysis used was the cluster analysis. This analysis aimed at grouping similar cases, highlighting two clusters: the cluster of international hotels and of marketing professionals (Group 1). In this cluster, the best values were obtained on all items that measured the tendencies of the largest hotel groups in Portugal. The other cluster (Group 2) was characterized by grouping hotels of Portuguese origin and professionals from distinct areas of the marketing. The second cluster showed the lowest value in all the variables, i.e., less market-oriented (see Table 3).

Table 3   Cluster analysis

Ward method		Regular meetings with customers	Market research	Slowness in detecting changes in preferences	Researches next to the customers	Slowness in detecting changes in the market	Periodic assessment of the effects of changes in market/customers	General capacity to generate market information	Periodic meetings between departments
1	Mean	4.53	4.06	1.35	4.29	1.29	4.65	4.41	4.71
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
	Std. deviation	0.717	0.748	0.606	0.772	0.470	0.493	0.618	0.588
2	Mean	4.00	3.82	2.18	3.55	2.45	3.45	3.55	3.73
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	Std. deviation	0.775	1.250	0.982	1.293	0.688	1.036	0.934	1.009
Total	Mean	4.32	3.96	1.68	4.00	1.75	4.18	4.07	4.32
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Std. deviation	0.772	0.962	0.863	1.054	0.799	0.945	0.858	0.905
Ward method		Discussion MKT/other depts. on future customers needs	Problems with customers quickly transmitted to all	Customer satisfaction regularly disseminated across the enterprise	Slowness of depts. to communicate about market issues	General capacity of dissemination of market information	Slowness of response to competitors	Ignore recognition of new needs of customers	Continuous review of the hotel services
1	Mean	4.76	4.12	4.18	1.76	4.12	1.41	1.29	4.65
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
	Std. deviation	0.437	0.781	0.951	0.903	0.781	1.004	0.588	0.606
2	Mean	3.00	2.91	2.82	2.64	3.09	2.36	2.27	3.55
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	Std. deviation	1.000	1.136	1.168	0.924	0.539	0.924	0.905	0.688
Total	Mean	4.07	3.64	3.64	2.11	3.71	1.79	1.68	4.21
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Std. deviation	1.120	1.096	1.224	0.994	0.854	1.067	0.863	0.833
Ward method		Meetings of depts. to respond to market changes	Responding to the communication campaigns of competitors	Coordinated activities between depts.	Customers complaints not heard	Failure to implement a great plan of MKT	Discovering the need of changes the depts. perform them	General capacity to respond to market	

(to be continued)

1	Mean	4.35	3.94	4.00	1.24	1.35	4.24	4.47	
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
	Std. deviation	0.786	1.298	0.707	0.970	0.702	0.664	0.717	
2	Mean	3.55	2.82	3.00	1.82	2.09	3.64	3.73	
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	
	Std. deviation	0.688	0.751	0.447	1.401	0.944	0.674	0.647	
Total	Mean	4.04	3.50	3.61	1.46	1.64	4.00	4.18	
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	
	Std. deviation	0.838	1.232	0.786	1.170	0.870	0.720	0.772	

Data source: SPSS Version 17.0.

The last multivariate analysis was the multiple linear regressions. It was objectified to find the variables that most contribute for the three constructs of Markor scale: "Generation of market information" (6 independent variables); "Market information dissemination" (5 independent variables); and "Market response" (9 independent variables).

For performing this analysis, some validity tests need to be carried out. The tests described in the following were made:

• The first tests examined three key characteristics to validate the regression analysis which were normality of waste, waste constant variance and randomness of waste. Generated in SPSS charts for the three regressions have shown normality of waste, the consistency of the variance of waste and the randomness of waste. These three factors validated the regression analyses;

• Then the test examined the ANOVA test results. In the data generated by SPSS, it was realized that the three models are useful to explain the relationship between each of the three dependent variables and their independent variables. Considering that the null hypothesis of the ANOVA test is that the model is not useful, rejected the null hypothesis, since the significance, in all three cases, it was less than 0.05.

Having the validity confirmed a new realization of the linear regression took place, using the stepwise method. The results obtained for the construct "Generation of market information" are in Table 4.

Table 4   Construct linear regression generation of market information

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.156	0.574		7.238	0.000
Slowness in detecting changes in the market	-0.637	0.155	-0.594	-4.121	0.000
Researches next to the customers	0.258	0.117	0.317	2.198	0.037
	Model summary[a]				
	Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
	1	0.697[b]	0.486	0.444	0.639

Notes: [a] Dependent Variable: General capacity to generate market information; [b] Predictors: (Constant), Velocity in detecting changes in the market, Researches next to the customers.

Data source: SPSS Version 17.0.

Observing Table 4, it was realized that the R^2 adjusted which demonstrates how the independent variables

explain the variance of the dependent variable was 44.4%, a good adjustment of the model. Thus, one can adjust the regression equation, where only the variables "slowness in detecting changes in the market" and "customer researches" have shown to be significant, because its significance was less than 0.05 per cent (Table 4, last column). Other variables were not significant. This way, the regression equation was determined through performing the regression with only the significant variables, and the following equation:

Market information generation = 4.156–0.637 * Slowness in detecting market changes +0.258 * Research next to the customers.

This equation represents each negative increment (negative sign) of a unit of the variable "slowness in detecting changes in the market" increases positively in 0.637 the ability of generating market information. The same reasoning is used for the variable "researches next to the client", where the positive increment of a unit of this variable increases positively in 0.258 the generation of market information.

In the sequence, for the construction "market information dissemination" regression results were presented in Table 5.

Analyzing Table 5, noted that the R^2 adjusted was 49.7%, also a good adjustment of the model. In this case, only the variable "Discussion Mkt/other depts. on the future needs of customers" and "Periodic meetings between departments" which showed to be significant, because its significance was less than 0.05% (see Table 5, last column). The other variables were not significant. Thus the regression equation was determined by performing the regression with only the significant variables, and the following equation:

Market information dissemination = 0.670＋0.354 * discussion Mkt/other depts. on future customers needs ＋0.371 * periodic meetings between departments.

Table 5   Constructs linear regression market information dissemination

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.670	0.601		1.116	0.025
Discussion MKT/Other depts. on future customers needs	0.354	0.117	0.464	3.033	0.006
Periodic meeting between departments	0.371	0.144	0.393	2.565	0.017
	Model summary[a]				
	Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
	1	0.731[b]	0.534	0.497	0.606

Note: [a] Dependent Variable: General capacity of dissemination of market information; [b] Predictors: (Constant), Discussion MKT/Other depts. on future customers needs, Periodic meeting between departments.
Data source: SPSS Version 17.0.

Therefore, for each positive increment of a variable unit, "discussion Mkt/others depts. on future needs of customers" increases positively in 0.354 the ability of the market information dissemination. The same reasoning is used for the variable "Periodic meetings between departments", where the increment of a unit of this variable increases in 0.371 the dissemination of the market information.

Finally, for the construct "Response to the market", the regression results were presented in Table 6.

Table 6   Construct linear regression response to the market

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
1 (Constant) Coordinated activities between depts.	1.807 0.657	0.528 0.143	0.669	3.420 4.589	0.002 0.000
	Model summary[a]				
	Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
	1	0.669[b]	0.447	0.426	0.585

Notes: [a] Dependent Variable: General capacity to respond to market; [b] Predictors: (Constant), Coordinated activities between depts.
Data source: SPSS Version 17.0.

In the last construct, the R^2 adjusted resulted in 42.6%, a proper adjustment of the model (see Table 6). The analysis made identified only one significant variable ("Activities coordinated among depts."). Performing again the regression with only the significant variable, the following equation:

Responding to the market = 1.807+0.657 * coordinated activities among depts..

7. Conclusions and recommendations

At present, marketing shows relevance both for organizations and for society (Kotler, 2005). The evolution of this important concept, which initially sought to facilitate transactions between buyers and sellers, reached a point of positioning itself as the main function within the companies, being considered as an organizational philosophy of action (Brown, 1987; Narver & Slater, 1990).

Considering the importance of marketing for the business community, the perfect understanding and implementation of its concept for all of those involved in an organization becomes crucial to the success of a company (Lafferty & Hult, 2001). It is what Kohli and Jaworski (1990) have called market orientation.

In this study, as a general objective, it was sought to measure the degree of market orientation of the main representatives of an important sector for the Portuguese economy—the hotel segment. From an empirical research with 17 out of 20 major hotel groups in Portugal, and using as an instrument of traditional data collection Markor scale (Kohli & Jawoski, 1990), it was noticed that for the market information generation (marketing intelligence), as to the ability to respond to market, they are well recognized by professionals who act in managing the several areas of the hotel groups investigated.

However, one has noticed that the dissemination of information from the market, one of the constructs market orientation, requiring greater attention, after all, empirical investigation has shown that not all collaborators' research were unaware of the information generated, because this construct was not correlated with two other constructs (market information generation and response to the market, which correlated with each other). It is concluded in this way that the implementation of the concept of marketing for the hotels in Portugal, translated as orientation for the market, can be considered, but it needs to be better produced internally by the managers in particular by the marketing executives responsible for these hotels groups.

In terms of specific objectives, the first regarded the comparison between foreign origin hotels *versus* genuinely Portuguese hotels. It was noticed in the descriptive analyses and clusters that foreign hotels tend to be more market-oriented than national hotels. A similar comparison between the tasks performed by the respondents,

being the second the specific objective of this study. One can see that the marketing professionals from the large hotel groups of Portugal tend to be market-oriented, but the same does not happen throughout the organization, after all a large proportion of the staff of the enterprises have been investigated, which act in separate marketing functions, didn't demonstrate that the same market orientation of marketing professionals working in these companies.

The last specific objective was to identify which elements are meaningful to the optimization of the degrees of generation and dissemination of the market information and the response to the market for large groups of hotels in Portugal. It was noticed that, in order to improve market information in these organizations, one must be quick in detecting changes in market and continuously perform more and better researches with customers. With the spread of market information, there is the need of the marketing departments from these hotels groups to discuss with other departments the future needs of these clients, and these meetings should happened periodically. Finally, regarding the degree of response to the market, the most important thing is working together with the departments. These factors listed here contribute significantly to a better market orientation of major hotel groups in Portugal, implementing the marketing concept in these organizations.

As implications, the performed study recorded the importance of the marketing concept for the main organizations that work in the hotel sector in Portugal, as well as the points to be improved in order to achieve a high degree of guidance for this important market. In accordance with the academics, it was highlighted the importance of the discipline of marketing, considering the applicability of its theories in the social reality. Scientific researches in the field of marketing are critical to organizational and social development.

In terms of limitations, matters to highlight that the research focused only on the largest representatives of a relevant sector of the Portuguese economy: the hotel sector in Portugal. It did not consider the small and medium size companies of this sector, therefore it was not accomplished a sampling statistically meaningful, which impels the generalization of results and the establishment of a general degree of orientation for the Portuguese hotel market. This way, as recommendation for futures studies, it is suggested the expansion of the same research for the entire Portuguese hotel sector, as well as the menstruation of the orientation for the other important sectors of the economy in Portugal. This ample research can aid in the development of future expansion projects of competitiveness for the Portuguese nation.

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