DEVELOPING A REFINED QUESTIONNAIRE TO INVESTIGATE THE LAYERS OF A MARKET ORIENTED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

ABSTRACT

Strategically develops a refined questionnaire that can be used to investigate the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, specifically: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours.

A self-administered questionnaire was identified as being the most prominent tool used to explore Organisational Culture. However, questionnaires for exploring Market Orientation are limited, with Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) being the first and virtually only instrument to incorporate each of the four layers of this specific culture.

Yet, this 78-item survey instrument is admittedly lengthy in nature and, more significantly, fails to capture some of the fundamental characteristics of these layers that are stressed in the literature.

This paper strategically develops and, consequently, presents a refined questionnaire aimed at addressing these shortcomings.

The author's refined questionnaire can be used to investigate the relationships between the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture. A deeper insight into the relationship(s) between these layers would provide a better understanding of the role that each one plays in creating and driving this culture. This would ultimately allow clear guidance to be offered to managers who are seeking to change their organisation's culture and/or become Market-Oriented. Such guidance is desirable due to the strong, positive relationship between Market Orientation and organisational performance.

Moreover, the questionnaire presented in this paper can be employed in a practical manner by managers who wish to assess their level of Market Orientation. This would allow specific areas of weakness to be identified, improvement of which may result in an overall stronger degree of Market Orientation.

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION & RESEARCH GAP

INTRODUCTION

This paper strategically develops a refined questionnaire that can be used to investigate the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture.

Since the early 1980s there has been a surge of research in the area of Market Orientation, a concept that has remained at the heart of marketing literature for quite some time (Hajipour *et al.*, 2013). This concept implies that an organisation is strongly focused on its market, particularly the customer (Gheysari *et al.*, 2012). The associated surge in research has been underpinned by a recognised link to organisational performance. Essentially, there is widespread agreement that organisations who establish a strong Market-Oriented culture "generally do outperform" other organisations (Deshpandé *et al.*, 1993, p. 4; Liao *et al.*, 2011).

This paper strategically develops and, consequently, presents a refined questionnaire tool that can be used to investigate the relationship(s) between the four layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, specifically: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours.

A deeper insight into the relationship(s) between these layers would provide a better understanding of the role that each one plays in creating and driving this culture (Homburg and Pflesser, 2000; Farrell, 2005). This would ultimately allow clear guidance to be offered to managers who are seeking to change their organisation's culture and/or become Market-Oriented.

Moreover, the questionnaire presented in this paper can be employed in a practical manner by managers who wish to assess their level of Market Orientation. This would allow specific areas of weakness to be identified, improvement of which may result in an overall stronger degree of Market Orientation (Homburg and Pflesser, 2000).

RESEARCH GAP

A self-administered questionnaire was identified in the literature as being the most prominent tool used to explore Organisational Culture (Appendix 1) (Taras *et al.*, 2009; Jung *et al.*, 2009).

However, existing questionnaires for exploring Market Orientation are limited, with Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) being the first and virtually only instrument to take each of the four layers of this specific culture into account, that is: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours. Although this survey instrument has acted as a crucial stepping stone for researchers wishing to investigate the relationship(s) between these layers, it is not without shortcomings:

Most significantly, despite incorporating Kohli *et al.*'s (1993) MARKOR tool for measuring Market Orientation, Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) survey instrument fails to capture some of the fundamental characteristics of these layers that are stressed in the literature.

Furthermore, their survey instrument is admittedly lengthy in nature, consisting of a total of 78-items used to measure Market Orientation. Consequently, Homburg and Pflesser (2000, p. 458; Farrell, 2005) recommend that "From a managerial perspective, it might be useful to develop more parsimonious measures of market oriented organizational culture while still making a distinction among [its] different layers".

This paper strategically develops a refined questionnaire tool aimed at addressing these research gaps.

SECTION B: QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

In order to develop a questionnaire appropriate for investigating the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, it was necessary to determine precisely <u>what</u> needed to be measured and <u>how</u> it would be measured (Field, 2009).

WHAT TO MEASURE

> We do not yet know the complete map of culture, nor are we likely to in the near future (Taras *et al*., 2009, p. 362)

Therefore, to develop a questionnaire for investigating any aspect of Organisational Culture, one must define its most applicable dimensions in a given context and use these as their guide (Taras *et al.,* 2009; Jung *et al.,* 2009).

As stated earlier, this paper set out to develop a refined questionnaire for investigating the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture (values, norms, artifacts and behaviours). Hence, these four layers represented the dimensions that were relevant to this paper. Accordingly, the questionnaire needed to be "multidimensional" in nature as per "all existing known . . . [cultural] survey instruments" (Taras *et al.,* 2009, p. 360).

Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) survey instrument was identified in Section A as being the first and virtually only instrument to take each of these dimensions, i.e. the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, into account. Resultantly, this survey instrument, which incorporates Kohli *et al.*'s (1993) widely utilised MARKOR measurement tool, was used as a guide for developing the questionnaire presented in this paper.

MEASUREMENT OF THE APPLICABLE DIMENSIONS

Once the applicable dimensions were identified they then needed to be made measurable (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Taras *et al.*, 2009). Hence, "operationalisation" was the next step (Bryman, 2008, p. 141).

To make a concept measurable "*indicators* are required which will stand for" that concept (Bryman and Cramer, 2005, p. 67, italics in original). In most cases, more than one indicator is needed to effectively capture a concept, so, "researchers often favour multiple-item measures" (Bryman and Cramer, 2005, p. 67; Taras *et al.*, 2009). Generally, a minimum of four items are used to represent a concept, although there is no defined correct amount (Swanson and Holton III, 2005).

Collectively, items form a scale that represents the overall concept being measured.

In this case, scales were needed to represent Market-Oriented values, norms, artifacts and behaviours. As explained above, Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) survey instrument was used as a guide during this phase.

In order to systematically develop these four scales, the author created a development process for each one. As an example, the following sub-section sets out the process that was used to develop the scale for Market-Oriented values. It then goes on to illustrate how this development process was implemented by the author.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCALE FOR MARKET-ORIENTED VALUES

In order to systematically develop the scale used to measure Market-Oriented values, the author created a six step development process, as follows:

STEP 1	List the original scale items used by Homburg and Pflesser (2000) to measure Market-Oriented values.

STEP 2	Determine whether or not any of the items are similar enough to be combined to form a single item, thus reducing the overall length of the scale.

STEP 3	List the fundamental values associated with market orientation as identified in the literature review.

STEP 4	Determine whether or not the fundamental values listed in step 3 have been captured in Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) scale items as they now stand following Steps 1-3. If all values have been captured, proceed to Step 6. If not, proceed to Step 5

STEP 5	If a value has not been captured, one of three options can be taken. These options are listed in preferential order i.e. option 2 should only be considered if option 1 cannot be taken, and so on: 1. Refer back to Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original items in step 1 and determine whether or not any of the items combined in step 2 had originally captured the missing value. If so, return the combined item back to its original form and add it to the scale; 2. Refer back to the specific literature from which the missing value originated and identify whether or not an appropriate item has been provided; if so, add it to the scale; or 3. Create a new item that captures the missing value.

STEP 6	Review the scale as it now stands: can it be refined and/or reduced any further or are all of its items necessary?

This development process was subsequently implemented as follows:

STEP 1:

The original scale items that Homburg and Pflesser (2000, p. 459) used to measure Market-Oriented values are as follows:

Table 1: Scale Items used by Homburg and Pflesser to measure Market-Oriented Values	
In our SBU . . .	
1	We place great value on performance-oriented employees.
2	We strive for success very strongly

Table 1: Continued	
In our SBU . . .	
3	We particularly emphasise innovativeness and creativity.
4	We rate the flexibility of the employees very highly.
5	We are very open toward innovations (e.g. related to products or processes).
6	Open communication is valued very highly.
7	We aspire to a high degree of inter-functional information exchange.
8	We put very much value on information flow.
9	We aspire to proactive communication.
10	Error- free work results are valued very highly.
11	We put very much value on high-quality work results.
12	We aspire to a maximum of qualification and competence in the subject.
13	We aspire to speed in all work processes.
14	Every employee aspires to speed in the work processes.
15	We place great value on inter-functional teamwork.
16	Cooperation among different functions (e.g. marketing, research and development) is valued very highly.
17	We aspire to cooperative work.
18	We value very highly that every employee thinks and acts like an entrepreneur.
19	The responsibility of the single employee is stressed very strongly.
20	The appreciation of the single employee is stressed very strongly.
21	We place great value on a feeling of belonging among the employees.
22	We aspire to high employee satisfaction.

STEP 2:

The following items were deemed comparable enough to be combined to form a single item:

Table 2: Items Combined to form a Single Item		
Items Combined	**Ref**	**Resulting Item Formed**
3 and 5	A	We are very open toward innovations (e.g. related to products or processes) and creativity.
6 and 9	B	We aspire to open, proactive communication.
7 and 8	C	Inter-functional information exchange is valued very highly.
10 and 11	D	Error-free, high-quality work results are valued very highly.

Table 2: Continued		
13 and 14	E	We aspire to speed in the work processes.
15 and 16	F	Teamwork and cooperation among different functions (e.g. marketing, research and development) is valued very highly.

Combining these items reduced Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original scale (Table 1) from 22-items to 16-items.

STEPS 3 AND 4:

Although Market Orientation is now one of the most widely studied aspects of marketing (Hajipour *et al.*, 2013), the literature on values that are specific to this culture appears somewhat limited (Byrne, 2014). Consequently, only two studies that investigated the fundamental values associated with a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture were identified. These are detailed in Table 3, as follows:

Table 3: Fundamental Values associated with Market Orientation		
Researcher(s)	**Fundamental Value(s) Identified**	**Value Captured in Scale?**
Homburg and Pflesser (2000)	Success	Items 1 and 2 (Table 1)
	Innovativeness	Item A (Table 2)
	Flexibility	Item 4 (Table 1)
	Openness of Internal Communication	Items B and C (Table 2)
	Quality	Item D (Table 2)
	Competence	Item 12 (Table 1)
	Speed	Item E (Table 2)
	Inter-functional Cooperation	Item 17 (Table 1) and item F (Table 2)
	Responsibility of Employees	Items 18 and 19 (Table 1)
	Appreciation of Employees	Items 20, 21 and 22 (Table 1)
Gebhardt *et al.* (2006)	Market as the Raison D'être	NOT CAPTURED
	Collaboration	Item 17 (Table 1) and item F (Table 2)
	Respect/empathy/perspective taking	Item 21 (Table 1)
	Keep promises	NOT CAPTURED
	Openness	Item B (Table 2)
	Trust	NOT CAPTURED

STEP 5:

As highlighted in Table 3, Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) scale items failed to capture the three values of market as the raison d'être, keep promises, and trust, all of which Gebhardt *et al.* (2006) found support Market Orientation.

None of these values were captured in Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original scale prior to combining any of the items (Step 2).

Gebhardt *et al.* (2006, p. 43) provided the following statements that reflect each of these values:

- Market as the raison d'être: "We come together as an organisation to serve the market and make a living."
- Keep promises: "To succeed, everyone must do his or her part."
- Trust: "Everyone is committed to the same goal. Therefore, we can have positive expectations about their intentions and behaviours."

Therefore, these statements were used as a guide for creating items that captured these values.

STEP 6

As highlighted in Table 3**,** some of the values that support Market Orientation, e.g. appreciation of employees, were represented by two or more items. In such a case, the number of items was reduced so that each value was represented by a single item, with the overall scale representing Market-Oriented values. The item that was determined to be most applicable to the relevant value was retained.

Subsequently, the scale was as follows:

Table 4: Refined Scale used to measure Market-Oriented Values

	Item	**Value(s) being captured**
1	We place great value on performance-oriented employees.	Success
2	We are very open toward innovations (e.g. related to products or processes) and creativity.	Innovativeness
3	We rate the flexibility of the employees very highly.	Flexibility
4	We aspire to open, proactive communication.	Openness of Internal Communication
5	Error-free, high-quality work results are valued very highly.	Quality

Table 4: Continued		
Item		**Value(s) being captured**
6	We aspire to a maximum of qualification and competence in the subject.	Competence
7	We aspire to speed in the work processes.	Speed
8	Teamwork and cooperation among different functions (e.g. marketing, research and development) is valued very highly.	Inter-functional Cooperation; and Collaboration
9	The responsibility of the single employee is stressed very strongly.	Responsibility of the Employees
10	The appreciation of the single employee is stressed very strongly.	Appreciation of the Employees
11	We place great value on a feeling of belonging among the employees.	Respect/Empathy/ Perspective Taking
12	We aspire to serve the market.	Market as the Raison D'être
13	Every employee aspires to do his or her part.	Keep Promises
14	Everyone is committed to achieving the same goal and, thus, we can have positive expectations about their intentions and behaviours.	Trust

As a result of implementing the author's six step development process, Market-Oriented values were measured using a 14-item scale (Table 4). This scale consisted of eleven items (1 – 11) adapted from Homburg and Pflesser (2000) and a further three items (12 – 14) adapted from Gebhardt *et al.* (2006).

The values scale was subsequently titled "Our company's aspirations and values" (Appendix 2).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCALE FOR MARKET-ORIENTED NORMS

The scale for Market-Oriented norms was developed using a five step process created by the author. This took an almost identical approach to the process used to create the values scale as has been detailed above. Hence, it involved reviewing Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original scale, identifying any existing gaps between it and the literature and attempting to address any gaps that were found.

Resultantly, norms were measured using a 13-item scale. This scale consisted of ten items adapted from Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original 25 items, with the remaining three items being adapted from Gebhardt *et al.* (2006).

The norms scale was subsequently labelled “Expectations about our routines and practices” (Appendix 2).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCALE FOR MARKET-ORIENTED ARTIFACTS

Similarly to the above, the scale for Market-Oriented artifacts was systematically developed using a seven step process created by the author. This process followed the same premise as the preceding processes.

Resultantly, Homburg and Pflesser’s (2000) original 19-item scale was reduced to twelve items. Of these twelve items, eleven were adapted from Homburg and Pflesser (2000), while one was created by the author.

This scale was titled “Our company’s observable and visible aspects” (Appendix 2).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCALE FOR MARKET-ORIENTED BEHAVIOURS

Finally, three scales were required to operationalise Market-Oriented behaviours: one to measure generation of market intelligence, a second to measure dissemination of market intelligence and, finally, a third to measure responsiveness to market intelligence.

In order to systematically develop these scales the author created an eight step development process that again involved reviewing Homburg and Pflesser’s (2000) scales, which strongly incorporate Kohli *et al.*’s (1993) original MARKOR scales, identifying any existing gaps between them and the literature and attempting to address any gaps that were found.

Subsequently, Market-Oriented behaviours were operationalised as follows:

Generation of market intelligence was measured using a 6-item scale that consisted of the four items used by Homburg and Pflesser (2000), plus an additional two from MARKOR’s 32-item scale (Kohli *et al.*, 1993).

Dissemination of market intelligence was measured using a 4-item scale. This scale consisted of three of the four items used by Homburg and Pflesser (2000), plus an additional item from MARKOR’s 32-item scale (Kohli *et al*., 1993).

Finally, responsiveness to market intelligence was measured using Homburg and Pflesser’s (2000) 4-item scale as, in this case, no gaps were identified between it and the literature.

The above three scales (fourteen items in total) were combined to form an overall measure of Market-Oriented behaviours. The resulting scale was labelled "How we collect, communicate and act on information" (Appendix 2).

HOW TO MEASURE:

The development of the above scales ultimately allowed the author to define exactly what needed to be measured. Hence, the next step was to determine how these scales would be measured (Field, 2009).

The author opted to use a Likert scale measurement approach. This approach is common with research involving multiple-item measures, as well as with research in the area of Organisational Culture (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Jung *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, Likert scales were also used in the works of Kohli *et al.* (1993) and Homburg and Pflesser (2000), both of which formed the basis of the questionnaire.

A Likert scale consists of multiple statements that relate to a common theme. Participants are asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement based on, most often, either a five-point or a seven-point scale (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008).

Pitt *et al.* (1996, p. 9) note that using a seven-point scale, as opposed to a five-point scale, "should help reliability". Therefore, similarly to Homburg and Pflesser (2000), the author selected a seven-point scale.

As the scale was measuring the extent to which participants agreed with each statement it moved from negative to positive, remaining neutral in the middle (Bryman, 2008). This is illustrated as follows:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree

Figure 1: "Likert scale used in the questionnaire"

The use of a Likert scale allows each statement to be pre-coded resulting in easier and more efficient data entry. Furthermore, although ordinal in nature, Likert scales can be treated as interval data (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Field, 2009). Consequently, the Likert scale is advantageous as it enables a wide array of statistical tests to be performed during data analysis (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Pallant, 2011).

SECTION C: QUESTIONNAIRE REFINEMENT

Having clarified precisely what needed to be measured and how it would be measured, the author then proceeded to refine and finalise the questionnaire.

A potential problem facing the author was the risk of "response sets", particularly "acquiescence bias", whereby participants tend to consistently agree with a given set of statements regardless of the content (Bryman, 2008, p. 147; Taras *et al.*, 2009, p. 366).

> This form of response bias is especially relevant to multiple-indicator measures, where respondents reply to a battery of related questions or items, of the kind found in a Likert scale (Bryman, 2008, p. 210)

Consequently, a number of negatively-worded statements were dispersed throughout the questionnaire. The purpose of these was to act as a corrective measure and allow participants who exhibited this behaviour to be identified (Bryman, 2008; Schimmack *et al.*, 2005 and Smith, 2004, both cited in Taras *et al.*, 2009, p. 366; Gray, 2009).

Strong agreement with a negatively-worded statement indicated a weak degree of Market Orientation; therefore, reverse coding was employed. This premise is illustrated as follows:

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Disagree Somewhat**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree Somewhat**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Positive Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Negative Statement	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Figure 2: "Coding used by the author"

Statements numbered 2, 4, 16, 23, 35, 49, 52 and 53 (Appendix 2) were all negatively-worded and, so, were subject to reverse coding during data analysis.

Finally, minor word changes were made throughout the entire questionnaire. These were deemed necessary in order to simplify each item and, ultimately, make the questionnaire more understandable for participants. The author was careful to ensure that the meaning of each item was not altered at this point.

PRE-TEST

In order to identify any potential problems and/or ambiguity with the initial questionnaire, the author conducted a pre-test using an "expert panel" approach (Czaja, 1998, p. 59). Such an approach facilitates feedback from a number of different perspectives; it involves distributing the questionnaire to a small number of people, generally 3-8, who are knowledgeable about the subject area and/or have experience in research, particularly survey design (Czaja, 1998). The questionnaire was, therefore, administered to six academic staff.

Based on the feedback received, it was concluded that major word changes were required to better convey the meaning of two statements featured in the questionnaire. Revisions were then made to improve the questionnaire's introduction and instructions. Finally, minor word and layout changes were made throughout the entire questionnaire to improve its overall flow and aesthetical appeal.

PILOT TEST

Subsequent to conducting the pre-test, a pilot test was carried out to re-assess the questionnaire (Blaxter *et al.,* 2006). This allowed the author to put contemplated research procedures into practice and ensure that the questionnaire functioned as intended (Blaxter *et al.,* 2006; Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2014).

The use of a self-administered questionnaire meant that the author would not be present to clarify any questions and/or concerns that participants may have. Therefore, pilot testing was of particular importance in attempting to bring unexpected problems to light, thus allowing them to be rectified before proceeding any further (Bryman, 2008; Phellas *et al.,* 2011).

Generally, pilot testing involves administering the questionnaire to a small number of participants comparable to those who will be used in the actual study (Bryman, 2008; Phellas *et al.,* 2011; Pallant, 2011). Resultantly, the questionnaire was mailed to eleven well-established companies in Ireland, accompanied by a cover letter and a pre-paid return address envelope. Nine companies responded.

No major problems were identified at this point. Some additional minor word changes were made completing the required amendments.

The resulting, finalised version of the questionnaire is documented in Appendix 2.

SECTION D: EVALUATING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

ADMINISTERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Once the questionnaire had been finalised (Appendix 2) it was then administered by mail to The Irish Times' database of the "Top 1,000 Companies in Ireland" accompanied by a cover letter and a pre-paid return address envelope. Cleansing of this database resulted in an overall sample size of 952 companies.

A final response rate of 26.4% (n = 251) was achieved, which is within the expected range for an organisational study and, hence, was deemed satisfactory (Baruch and Holtom, 2008).

DATA QUALITY (RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY)

In order to evaluate the overall questionnaire and, thus, the quality of its resulting data, two fundamental properties were assessed, specifically: reliability and validity (Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). Assessing these two properties essentially "gives [one] confidence that [the research instrument] is doing its job properly" (Field, 2009, p. 11).

Given that the questionnaire (Appendix 2) was essentially an adaptation of the works of Kohli *et al.* (1993) and Homburg and Pflesser (2000), its validity and reliability had, to an extent, already been established (Bryman, 2008). Nonetheless, researchers should never solely rely on previously reported results: rather, these two properties should be assessed "each time the test is administered" (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011, p. 53). Therefore, it was necessary to assess reliability and validity in order to ensure that the questionnaire and, thus its resulting data, exhibited both properties.

RELIABILITY

The first property, reliability, is primarily concerned with consistency and features both an external and an internal aspect (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011).

External reliability can be defined as:

> The extent to which results are consistent over time . . . If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be [externally] reliable (Joppe, 2000, quoted by Golafshani, 2003, p. 598)

Hence, external reliability is closely related to the replicability and generalisation of results (Golafshani, 2003; Bryman, 2008). This aspect of reliability is most often assessed using a test-retest method (Golafshani, 2003; Bryman and Cramer, 2005). However, this method has been described in the literature as being a problematic approach (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008). The main associated problem is that that “there is no easy way of disentangling the effects of a lack of stability in the measure from ‘real’ changes” that may have occurred since the original testing (Bryman, 2008, p. 150). Moreover, a test-retest method is likely to turn “the investigation of reliability into a major project in its own right” (Bryman, 2008, p. 150). For these reasons, among others, this method is very rarely used to evaluate reliability (Bryman, 2008).

Internal reliability on the other hand is primarily concerned with internal consistency, that is, the degree to which each scale measures a single concept (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). Hence, “internal reliability is particularly important in connection with multiple-item scales” as have been used in the questionnaire presented in this paper (Bryman and Cramer, 2005, p. 77). This aspect of reliability is most often assessed using a statistical technique known as Cronbach’s alpha (α) (Golafshani, 2003; Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Peer and Gamliel, 2011).

Given the cross-sectional nature of this paper and the fact that Organisational Culture can vary over time, a test-retest assessment of external reliability was not considered feasible (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008). Therefore, reliability was statistically assessed in terms of its internal aspect using Cronbach’s α.

Cronbach’s α is the most commonly used objective measure of reliability (Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Peer and Gamliel, 2011). Moreover, it is the most widely reported measure in the relevant research field of Organisational Culture (Taras *et al.*, 2009).

Essentially, Cronbach’s α measures internal consistency by determining how well a set of items are inter-related (Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). This is achieved by splitting the relevant scale in half. The resulting halves are then correlated with one another. Cronbach’s test repeats this process halving the scale in every possible way. Finally, the correlations are averaged to produce Cronbach’s α, which is presented as a value between 0 (no internal consistency) and 1 (perfect internal consistency) (Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Field, 2009; Peer and Gamliel, 2011).

Table 5, which follows, provides a general rule of thumb for interpreting the value of Cronbach’s α:

Table 5: Interpretation of the value of Cronbach’s alpha (α)	
Value of α	**Interpretation**
.9 to 1	Excellent
.8 to .9	Good
.7 to .8	Acceptable
.6 to .7	Questionable
.5 to .6	Poor
Less than .5	Unacceptable

(created by the author from George and Mallery, 2003, cited in Gliem an Gliem, 2003, p. 87)

Although Table 5 indicates that a value in the range of .9 to 1 is excellent, the literature notes that “If alpha is too high it may suggest that some items are redundant . . . [therefore,] a maximum alpha value of .90 has been recommended” (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011, p. 54). Consequently, rather than considering .7 to .8 as being merely acceptable, numerous authors have described this range as being a generally ideal target (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2011; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). Thus, it was considered as such in the context of this paper.

With regard to self-administered questionnaires, Peer and Gamliel (2011, p. 1) note that Cronbach’s α may be “artificially inflate[d]” by response bias. This form of bias occurs when respondents exhibit “a systematic tendency to respond to a range of questionnaire items on some basis other than the specific item content” (Paulhus, 1991, quoted by Peer and Gamliel, 2011, p. 1). Hence, response bias leads to “artificially consistent responses [resulting in] inflated internal consistency” (Peer and Gamliel, 2011, p. 2). To ensure that the reported reliability was genuine, the author took a number of precautions to prevent response bias occurring. These precautions included:

- Keeping the overall length of the questionnaire as reasonable as possible by reducing Homburg and Pflesser’s (2000) original 78-items down to 53-items (Carroll, 1998; O’Rourke, 1999; Swanson and Holton III, 2005);
- Dispersing a number of negatively worded items throughout the questionnaire (Bryman, 2008; Gray 2009);
- Engaging in pre-test and pilot test procedures (Blaxter *et al.*, 2006; Bryman, 2008);
- Providing clear and neutral instructions throughout the questionnaire;
- Ensuring that participants had no affiliation and/or obligation to the author or the third-level institution associated with this paper; and

- Anonymising responses, thus allowing respondents to comfortably provide honest and accurate answers (Bryman, 2008; Gray, 2009).

As established in Sections A and B, the author's questionnaire (Appendix 2) aimed to measure four dimensions of Market Orientation, specifically: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours. "Generally, reliabilities are assessed separately for each dimension included in the" research instrument (Taras *et al.*, 2009, p. 368). Hence, Cronbach's α was applied accordingly. Table 6, which follows, provides a summary of the results obtained:

Table 6: A summary of the Cronbach's alpha (α) results obtained

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's α	Interpretation
Values	14	.870	Within ideal target
Norms	13	.863	Within ideal target
Artifacts	12	.718	Within ideal target
Behaviours	14	.771	Within ideal target

As highlighted in Table 6, each scale achieved the targeted level of internal consistency ($\alpha > .7$, $\alpha < .9$).

These α results were comparable to those reported by Homburg and Pflesser (2000), the average of which was .782. Moreover, all four scales achieved and/or surpassed the average α value of .72, which was reported by over five hundred studies in the field of Organisational Culture (Taras *et al.*, 2009).

Consequently, the questionnaire was deemed to be satisfactorily reliable.

VALIDITY

The second property used to evaluate the overall questionnaire was that of validity.

Validity is concerned with whether the research instrument truly measures what it is intended to measure (Golafshani, 2003; Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Field, 2009; Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). This property is of fundamental importance as a lack thereof leads to the production of questionable data. In short, the integrity of the research findings is at stake (Bryman, 2008).

Table 7, which follows, documents the main types of validity and details the method(s) used to establish each one in the context of this particular paper:

Table 7: Types of validity and the method(s) used to establish each one		
Type of validity	**Brief explanation**	**Method(s) used to establish the specified type of validity**
Face Validity	Concerned with the concept in question being reflected in its associated measure.	Established by pre-testing the relevant measures with six academic professionals who subsequently determined that face validity was present (Section C).
Measurement Validity	Concerned with the specified measures measuring what they are intended to. Considered to be the most important type of validity in quantitative research. Also referred to as construct validity. Linked to reliability – cannot achieve measurement validity if the measure is unreliable.	Used existing measures that had strong links to the relevant literature, therefore, measurement validity had already been established to a degree. Further established by confirming the reliability of each of the four relevant scales (Section D).
Ecological Validity	Concerned with the applicability of the research findings to people's everyday lives in their natural environment. The more disturbances that the research imposes on the participants' natural environment, the more likely the research findings are to be ecologically invalid.	Established by ensuring that minimal disturbances were made to participants and their environment during data collection (Section D). Further established by anonymising responses, thus, allowing respondents to answer as truthfully and accurately as possible.
Internal Validity	Concerned with the level of confidence that one can have in drawing causality from the research findings.	Established by carrying out an extensive review of the relevant literature. Causality was not inferred from the research findings, rather, inferences were made in light of the associated literature.
External Validity	Concerned with the generalisability of the research findings. Sample selection is fundamental to achieving this type of validity.	Established by ensuring that the chosen sample was representative of the defined population of interest. Further established by assessing non-response bias (see below).

(created by the author from Golafshani, 2003; Bryman and Cramer, 2005; Bryman 2008 and Field, 2009)

As highlighted in Table 7, it was necessary to assess non-response bias in order to ensure that external validity had been established. This form of bias is of particular concern to research that employs a self-administered questionnaire and, so, is of notable relevance to this particular paper (Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.,* 2001).

Non-response bias occurs when the subjects who respond to a questionnaire differ to the subjects who do not respond. This results in data that "may not represent the opinions of the entire sample or population" (Miller and Smith, 1983, p. 45; Lindner *et al.,* 2001).

In its most basic sense, non-response bias begs the question:

> Are the data from [the 251 respondents] truly representative of the [overall sample of 952] to whom the questionnaire was mailed? (Miller and Smith, 1983, p. 46)

If the results are not true to the overall sample, then they cannot be generalised to the population from which the sample has been drawn. Thus, the key issue at stake is generalisability (Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.,* 2001).

Although a satisfactory response rate was attained (26.4%), the final response rate was "less than 100%" (Lindner *et al.,* 2001, p. 51). Resultantly, it was necessary to assess non-response bias. This was achieved by comparing early respondents to late respondents (Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.,* 2001).

Research has found "that subjects who respond late are similar to non-respondents" (Pace, 1939, cited in Lindner *et al.,* 2001, p. 51; Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.,* 2001). Therefore, if no major differences are found between early and late respondents, then one can conclude that the results are truly representative of the overall sample (Pace, 1939, cited in Lindner *et al.,* 2001, p. 51; Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.,* 2001). This is the most widely used method for assessing non-response bias in the social sciences (Lindner *et al.,* 2001).

To conduct this assessment, the first 10% of subjects who responded to the questionnaire were categorised as "early respondents". All of the subjects included in this category responded to the questionnaire within seven working days. These were then compared to the final 10% of subjects, who were classified as "late respondents". Overall, "late respondents" took a minimum of 30 working days to respond to the questionnaire. The final response was received 92 working days after the original mailing.

Table 8, which follows, provides a comparison of the average score awarded to the total values, norms, artifacts and behaviours scales by both the early and late respondents:

Table 8: A Comparison of Early versus Late Respondents		
Average Score	**Early Respondents**	**Late Respondents**
Values	79	78
Norms	72	71
Artifacts	56	58
Behaviours	76	73

As highlighted in Table 8, no major differences between early and late respondents were identified. Therefore, "with late respondents assumed typical of non-respondents" Table 8 provides evidence that the respondents were true to the overall sample (Miller and Smith, 1983, p. 48). This meant that the results were generalisable to the population from which this sample was drawn. Conclusively, non-response bias had not compromised external reliability in this particular study (Miller and Smith, 1983; Lindner *et al.*, 2001).

As outlined in Table 7, a number of strategies were employed to ensure that validity was established in this study. Taking all of the above into consideration, the questionnaire and, thus its resulting data, was determined to have exhibited a satisfactory degree of validity.

SECTION E: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper strategically developed and, consequently, presented a refined questionnaire (Appendix B) that can be used to investigate the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, specifically: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours.

A self-administered questionnaire was identified as being the most prominent tool used to explore Organisational Culture (Appendix A) (Taras *et al.*, 2009; Jung *et al.*, 2009).

Nonetheless, existing questionnaires for exploring Market Orientation are limited, with Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) being the first and virtually only instrument to take each of the four layers of this specific culture into account. Consequently, theirs has acted as a crucial stepping stone for researchers wishing to investigate the relationship(s) between the layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture. Yet, this 78-item survey instrument is admittedly lengthy in nature and, more significantly, fails to capture some of the fundamental characteristics of these layers that are stressed in the literature (Homburg and Pflesser, 2000; Farrell, 2005).

To address these shortcomings, the author created four development processes aimed at refining Homburg and Pflesser's (2000) original scales for Market-Oriented values, norms, artifacts and behaviours, one of which was presented and implemented in Section B.

These processes essentially allowed the author to follow Homburg and Pflesser's (2000, p. 458; Farrell, 2005) recommendation "to develop more parsimonious measures" of Market Orientation, while simultaneously allowing the author to build a stronger link between these measures and the associated literature.

This resulted in the production of a refined 53-item questionnaire (Appendix B) that is essentially an adaptation of the works of Kohli *et al.* (1993) and Homburg and Pflesser (2000).

From a theoretical point of view, the author's refined questionnaire can be used to investigate the relationship(s) between the four layers of a Market-Oriented Organisational Culture, specifically: values, norms, artifacts and behaviours. A deeper insight into the relationship(s) between these layers would provide a better understanding of the role that each one plays in creating and driving this culture (Homburg and Pflesser, 2000; Farrell, 2005). This would ultimately allow clear guidance to be offered to managers who are seeking to change their organisation's culture and/or become Market-Oriented. Such guidance is desirable as there is widespread agreement that organisations who establish a strong Market-Oriented culture "generally do outperform" other organisations (Deshpandé *et al.*, 1993, p. 4; Liao *et al.*, 2011).

Moreover, this paper and, in particular, the development process presented in Section B, may aid future researchers who seek guidance on how to go about developing a refined questionnaire tool.

From a more practical point of view, the questionnaire presented in this paper can be employed by managers who wish to assess their level of Market Orientation. This would allow specific areas of weakness to be identified, improvement of which may result in an overall stronger degree of Market Orientation (Homburg and Pflesser, 2000).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Researchers identified in the literature who have utilised a self-administered questionnaire

Researcher(s)	Year	Focus of Study	Nature of Study/Method(s) Used
Narver & Slater	1990	Market Orientation and Performance	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Jaworski & Kohli	1993	Market Orientation – Antecedents	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Deshpandé, Farley & Webster	1993	Organisational Culture – Market Orientation	Qualitative – Interviews Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar	1993	Market Orientation – MARKOR	Qualitative – Interviews (used to develop questionnaire) Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail) Primary focus: Quantitative
Maltz & Kohli	1996	Market Orientation – Intelligence Dissemination	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Pitt, Caruana & Berthon	1996	Market Orientation and Performance	Qualitative – Personal Interviews Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Avlonitis & Gounaris	1999	Market Orientation – Determinants	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Homburg & Pflesser	2000	Market Orientation – Relationship among layers	Qualitative – content analysis and field interviews (used to develop questionnaire) Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail) Primary focus: Quantitative
Harris	2001	Market Orientation and Performance	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
González-Benito & González-Benito	2005	Market Orientation – Cultural vs operational	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Farrell	2005	Market Orientation – Cultural effect on behaviour	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Gainer & Padanyi	2005	Market Orientation – Cultural vs operational	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)

APPENDIX 1: Continued

Researcher(s)	Year	Focus of Study	Nature of Study/Method(s) Used
Carr & Burnthorne-Lopez	2007	Market Orientation – Culture and conduct	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Cadogan, Souchon & Procter	2008	Market Orientation – Quality of behaviours	Quantitative – Questionnaire (mail)
Bonavia, Molina & Boada	2009	Market Orientation – Artifacts	Quantitative – Questionnaire (face to face)
Gjerald & Øgaard	2012	Market Orientation – Behaviours	Quantitative – Questionnaire (pen and paper, and electronic)

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire

Creating a Customer-Focused Organisational Culture

Research by:

Catherine Tiernan, Postgraduate Researcher, Institute of Technology Carlow, Wexford Campus

A strong customer-focused culture has been proven to lead to a positive organisational performance. This research aims to understand how organisations can go about creating such a culture.

This questionnaire does not seek any sensitive or confidential information about your company. All data collected will be used for the sole purpose of this study and all responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence; no person or company will be identified. Completion of this questionnaire will take just a few minutes of your time.

If you wish to receive a copy of findings upon completion of this study, please provide an appropriate e-mail address in the allocated space at the end of the questionnaire.

Do not hesitate to contact me by phone 053 9185800 or by e-mail to catherine.tiernan@itcarlow.ie should you have any queries or concerns.

Please read the following statements and circle the appropriate number that best indicates your level of agreement with each one. Please circle just *one number per statement.*

How we collect, communicate and act on information

In Our Company:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	We meet with customers at least once a year to find out what products or services they will need in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	We are not always quick to detect changes in our customers' product and/or service preferences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	We survey customers at least once a year to assess the quality of our products and/or services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	We are not always quick to detect crucial changes in our industry (e.g. competition, technology and/or regulation).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	We collect industry information by informal means (e.g. lunch and/or talks with our industry contacts).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Market intelligence (e.g. regarding customers, competitors, technology) is generated by multiple departments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	We have regular meetings involving co-workers from multiple departments to discuss market trends and developments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	When something important happens to a major customer or market, the whole company knows about it within a short period.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	Market intelligence (e.g. regarding customers, competitors, technology) is communicated at all levels on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	A lot of informal communication (e.g. conversations during break times) is about our business environment (e.g. customers, competitors, technology).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	We regularly review our product and/or service development efforts to ensure that they are in line with what customers want.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	Co-workers from multiple departments get together regularly to plan a response to changes taking place in our business environment (e.g. regarding customers, competitors, technology).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	When implementing plans based on our market intelligence (e.g. regarding customers, competitors, technology), our departments carry out their activities in a coordinated manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	When we find that customers would like us to modify a product or service, the departments involved make a coordinated effort to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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APPENDIX 2: Continued

Our company's aspirations and values

In Our Company:

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
15.	We aim to place great value on performance-oriented employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	We are not always open towards innovations and creativity related to products and/or processes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	We feel that the flexibility of our employees should be rated very highly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	We aspire to open and proactive communication between our departments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	High quality work is greatly valued.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	We aspire to achieve the highest level of qualification and competence in our field.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	We aim to carry out our work in a prompt manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	We believe that teamwork and cooperation amongst our departments should be valued very highly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	The responsibility of each individual employee is not always emphasised.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	We strive to emphasise our appreciation of each individual employee.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	We endeavour to place great value on a feeling of belonging among our employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	Our main aspiration is to deliver the best possible service and/or solutions to our market (e.g. customers).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	Each individual employee strives to do his or her part.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	We feel that we can have positive expectations about our co-workers' intentions and/or behaviours.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Expectations about our routines and practices

In Our Company We Expect That:

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
29.	Market performance (e.g. market share, customer satisfaction) is measured regularly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	New products and/or services which add value for our customers are frequently identified and developed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	Standardised practices and procedures are reviewed regularly to improve efficiency in serving our customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	Regular meetings are held between co-workers from multiple departments to openly discuss and record market related trends and/or problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	Quality is assessed by customers or, at least, from the customers' point of view.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34.	Employees who have contact with customers have all of the necessary work and social skills to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35.	We cannot always respond quickly to market changes (e.g. competitors' actions).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	Decisions based on our market intelligence (e.g. customer satisfaction) are made in a coordinated manner by multiple departments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37.	Each individual employee feels responsible to our customers, particularly for the detection and solution of their potential and actual problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38.	Our employees are essential to us in fulfilling our customers' needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39.	We always consider how our decisions and actions will affect our market, particularly our customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40.	Each individual employee is responsible for following through on commitments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41.	Our employees are honest and will follow through on commitments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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APPENDIX 2: Continued

Our company's observable and visible aspects

In Our Company:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
42.	Our buildings and their exterior surroundings are laid out very clearly so that visitors/customers can easily find their way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43.	Our reception area is well organised and clearly laid out.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44.	Our online presence (e.g. company website, social media) is designed to allow easy navigation and browsing for customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45.	Our meeting and discussion areas (e.g. canteens, offices, meeting rooms) are designed to support communication.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46.	Employees who are exceptionally customer-focused are rewarded regularly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47.	We regularly organise events for our customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48.	We often hear about exceptional customer-focused behaviour of management (e.g. founder, chief executive, manager).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49.	We often hear about factors that prevent us from being customer-focused (e.g. communication barriers, unwritten rules).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50.	"From the customer's point of view . . ." is a statement, or similar to a statement, that we often hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51.	"Can we offer our customers what they are expecting?" is a statement, or similar to a statement, that we often hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52.	"I know exactly what our customers want" is a statement, or similar to a statement, that we often hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53.	"I am not interested in what competitor XY plans! We need to . . ." is a statement, or similar to a statement, that we often hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Company information

The following questions aim to gain a broad overview of your company and do not seek any sensitive or confidential information.

54. Please indicate the sector(s) that you operate in as accurately as possible based on the options below (tick all that apply):

Agribusiness ☐	Communications ☐	Construction ☐
Energy ☐	Financial Services ☐	Food and Beverage ☐
Health ☐	Manufacturing ☐	Media and Marketing ☐
Non-Profit ☐	Pharmaceuticals ☐	Professional Services ☐
Property ☐	Resources ☐	Retailing ☐
Technology ☐	Tourism ☐	Transport ☐
Other (Please specify) ☐ ____________		

55. What is your position within the company? (Please tick just *one box*)

Managing Director ☐	CEO ☐	Marketing Manager ☐	PR / Communications Manager ☐
General Manager ☐	Sales Manager ☐	Other (Please specify) ☐	____________

56. How long has your company been in business? (Please tick just *one box*)

Less than 1 year ☐	1-10 years ☐	11-20 years ☐	21-30 years ☐
31-40 years ☐	41years + ☐		

57. How many people are employed in your company? (Please tick just *one box*)

Less than 10 ☐	10-49 ☐	50-249 ☐	250+ ☐

58. How long have you have been employed with your present company? (Please tick just *one box*)

Less than 1 year ☐	1-10 years ☐	11-20 years ☐	21-30 years ☐
31-40 years ☐	41years + ☐		

Contact e-mail address to receive a copy of findings (optional):

Please Use Block Capitals

Sincere thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. All data will be used for the sole purpose of this study. Please do not hesitate to contact me by phone 053 9185800 or by e-mail to catherine.tiernan@itcarlow.ie should you have any queries or concerns

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THE SUNDAY TIMES INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY OF THE YEAR 2014