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Building Understanding and Knowledge: A Case Study in Stakeholder Orientation

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Good scientific research looks for cross-study accumulation of knowledge (McKinley, 2007). Such accumulation requires three basic things: (1) consistent definition of the construct of interest (see Hill *et al.*, 2012); (2) solid instrumentation (see McKinley, 2007; Oxley *et al.*, 2010) and (3) replications with extensions (see Hubbard *et al.*, 1998). There have recently been a number of calls for strategy researchers to address these problems. In 2012, Bettis lamented that "the search for asterisks" (of significance) has compromised the future of strategic management research. To establish the reliability, validity, and generalizability of findings, more consistency in construct definition, better instrumentation, and replications are needed. As Hubbard *et al.* (1998: 251) put it, "A literature dominated by unreplicated findings is of marginal value."

Singh *et al.* (2003) also conclude there are not enough articles that replicate methods and measures of previously published research in strategic management. One reason postulated is the state of strategy theory, where original research is sought to more fully examine the fundamentals of theory development. However, a field concentrated on theory development runs the risk of a lack of consensus on the fundamentals (Pfeffer, 1993) and will not develop the requisite depth to build understanding. To encourage more replication, Singh *et al.* (2003) suggest an approach based on the "good-enough principle" (Leong, 1985; Serlin and Lapsley, 1985). This principle acknowledges that exact duplication of research is nearly impossible in the social sciences, but that variation can provide an acceptable deviation and can be a "good-enough" approximation of the original research.

This study discusses one area of strategy research within stakeholder theory—stakeholder orientation—that clearly has importance to practicing managers, but needs

a stronger foundation upon which to build understanding (Laplume *et al.*, 2008; Mainardes *et al.*, 2011). Stakeholder orientation has been researched for nearly twenty years (Greenley and Foxall, 1996) yet there is no generally accepted psychometrically developed scale for stakeholder orientation (Yau *et al.*, 2007). To develop a deeper understanding of stakeholders from the manager's perspective and in the spirit of Bettis (2012) and Singh *et al.* (2003), this research replicates Yau *et al.* (2007) for purposes of validity and generalizability. This work has clear implications to practicing managers. Without valid and generalizable measurement tools, managers are left to construct their own forms of measurement based on their own biases. On the other hand, a reliable and valid measurement tool for stakeholder orientation that is also generalizable would allow practitioners to understand the effect of their orientation on each of the various stakeholder groups and allow them to better utilize their firm's resources to create and capture value.

The purpose of this research is to develop stronger strategy research methodology by offering a study of stakeholder orientation from the manager's perspective using the instrument developed by Yau *et al.* (2007). In addition, this replication takes place in the context of small firms as called for by Laplume *et al.* (2008) and Perrini (2006). This will increase the generalizability of the construct. The organization of this paper is as follows—an overview of the definition of a stakeholder and stakeholder orientation, a brief examination of patterns of knowledge accumulation in stakeholder orientation research areas, a replication and extension of Yau *et al.*'s (2007) psychometrically developed scale, and a discussion of future directions for the stakeholder orientation scale.

Stakeholder Theory (Concept) and Stakeholder Orientation

Stakeholder theory as conceptualized by Freeman (1984) has been discussed a great deal. It is highly cited in multiple fields such as strategy, ethics, and marketing. In the strategic management field, there has been much debate about who the key stakeholders are, how to manage them, how to acknowledge them, etc. What is known for sure is that despite much research, many questions remain. The simplicity of the theory is appealing but also leads to ambiguity (Mainardes *et al.*, 2011). Trevino and Weaver (1999) stated that stakeholder theory is not a theory but a way of studying groups of which organizations need to be cognizant and be able to relate. What makes stakeholder theory and related areas of research even more confounding is the lack of consistent definition and measure. For example, Mainardes *et al.* (2011) indicated there are 66 different definitions (conceptualizations) for the term "stakeholder." Clarkson (1995) indicated there are three factors that are the base of the stakeholder relationship: the organization, the other actors, and the nature of the firm-actor interactions and relationships; however, the key factor for having a stake is risk. In other words, without risk there is no stake (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). Freeman (1984) focused on the relationship of firms with those who have a "stake" in his development of stakeholder theory.

With so many conceptualizations, it is difficult to build a foundation for understanding the relationship between stakeholders and organizations. In 1990, the marketing field delineated stakeholders critical to marketing with the concept of market orientation (MO) (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990). Narver and

Slater (1990) developed a psychometrically tested instrument that has been used in MO research for several decades. Because of the development of instrumentation in a sound scientific way, there have been nearly 1000 studies in MO with multiple meta-analyses (e.g., Grinstein, 2008a; Jaramillo *et al.*, 2007; Shoham *et al.*, 2006).

In 1996, Greenley and Foxall introduced stakeholder orientation (SO) into the strategic management literature. Unlike MO, stakeholder orientation has seen very little development of sound instrumentation. The strategic management literature has used single-item Likert scales with various stakeholder lists (e.g., Buysse and Verbeke, 2003) and multiple-item Likert scales about "company attention" (Greenley and Foxall, 1996; 1997; 1998). In the study of ethics related to stakeholders (over half of the studies in management identified by Laplume *et al.*, 2008), there have been a plethora of studies using measurements that were developed for other purposes, such as Kinder, Lydenberg, and Domini (KLD) data (Berman *et al.*, 1999) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports (e.g., Cormier *et al.*, 2004; Vurro *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, the lack of agreement on definition and the lack of solid instrumentation have hindered the development of true understanding for the concept of stakeholder orientation. Next, research concerning stakeholder orientation will be discussed and a replication process with an example of a psychometrically developed scale for primary stakeholder orientation will be presented.

Stakeholder Orientation Research

Greenley and Foxall (1997) defined stakeholder orientation (SO) as the strategic attention that an organization directs to the diverse interests of stakeholder groups such as customers, shareholders, and employees. However, the term SO has been used extensively in the ethics and CSR literature in a different way. As indicated earlier, Laplume *et al.* (2008) found over half the "stakeholder studies" were in the areas of ethics and CSR. Most of these studies used results/outcome-based measures derived from the KLD database or CSR reports. While these are important studies, they do not clearly indicate how management is oriented toward the stakeholders of the firm. These measures also indicate what has emerged or happened, rather than the intentions of management toward stakeholders. Since Laplume *et al.* (2008) called for emphasis on the strategic benefits of stakeholder management and Greenley and Foxall's (1997) definition of stakeholder orientation provides directionality of strategic attention by management toward stakeholders, the Greenley and Foxall (1997) definition is used in this study.

The SO of the firm is the lens of management and how the environment is viewed by the firm, not the results found in the environment. For example, an organization that has a greater orientation toward customers will look at the environment relative to the perception of customers. Because of the availability of outcome data, SO researchers have focused their efforts on outcomes rather than on the intended orientation of the firm. As is well known, intention and outcome are often two different things (e.g., Chia and Holt, 2006). In the strategic management literature the theoretical development of stakeholder orientation has been well recognized (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Mitchell *et al.*, 1997), but only a handful of stakeholder orientation studies aimed at understanding the manager's strategic attention and intention have been empirical in

nature (Berman *et al.*, 1999; Greenley and Foxall, 1996; 1997; 1998). Even fewer studies have used a psychometrically developed scale for the measurement of SO (Yau *et al.*, 2007).

Most of the early theory development and testing in SO was done by Greenley and Foxall (1996; 1997; 1998). While there have been many studies concerning various groups of stakeholders, there have been just these few studies focused on SO and attention of the firm. A limitation of these studies is the absence of scale development of the construct. Yau *et al.* (2007) extended these earlier studies through the formulation of a survey. Scale development is an essential next step to provide a valid and reliable instrument to measure the various dimensions of SO. Their subsequent publication of a psychometrically developed scale (Yau *et al.*, 2007) opened the door for researchers to continue to explore the SO construct.

Following Yau *et al.*'s (2007) research, there still were relatively few studies using psychometrically developed scales published. Examples of the research include Tipuric and Lovrincevic's (2011) scale on the SO construct with the majority of the scale developed around stakeholders' participation in the firm's decision-making process as well as the organizational culture. Another example is an SO scale developed by Grinstein and Goldman (2011) directed toward revenue and funding producing stakeholders. These scales lack either the broader definition of stakeholder or the directionality desired in the definition of SO by Greenley and Foxall (1997). Although Yau *et al.*'s (2007) scale provided the appropriate definition of stakeholders and directionality, further research was needed to add to the generalizability of the instrument through replication.

The principle of replicability is an essential component to research and endows greater surety to results. Replication studies protect the literature from the exploratory integration of erroneous empirical results (Hubbard and Vetter, 1996). Furthermore, extensions of previous studies shed light on how broadly a phenomenon exists. Replications with extensions go further by addressing the generalizability of findings and are vital to the continued development of new knowledge (Hubbard *et al.*, 1998).

When Yau *et al.* (2007) developed their scale, it was tested on a variety of organizations of all sizes, but mostly large corporations that were either joint ventures or state owned in the emerging markets of three large cities in China. Yau *et al.* (2007) have taken the first step in developing a reliable and valid SO scale, but SO may have a different effect on small businesses than might be observed in large firms (Thompson and Smith, 1991). For example, small businesses by their very nature may rely more heavily on stakeholders to survive and later to prosper. The relationship between small business owners and the care they exhibit toward stakeholders may be based more on personal relationships. However, little research has been done that examines how small firms relate to stakeholders (Perrini *et al.*, 2007). Research has called for studies that re-direct the current emphasis on stakeholders in large corporations, to smaller organizations (Jenkins, 2004; Laplume *et al.*, 2008; Laura and Robert, 2003; Murillo and Lozano, 2006). To further advance an understanding of the impact of how managers view stakeholders, there needs to be further replication research and testing of validity to increase the generalizability of the SO scale.

Next, a replication of the SO scale developed by Yau *et al.* (2007) will be presented in a very different context. Small, privately-owned firms in rural areas in the developed

U.S. marketplace will be examined to test the generalizability of the scale and build a firmer foundation for measuring SO in such a way that results can be compared, cross-referenced, and used to build understanding of the phenomenon (McKinley, 2007).

METHOD

Stakeholders are classified as primary (those that are directly affected in the economic exchange relationship (Post *et al.*, 1996)) and secondary (ancillary to the exchange relationship (Preston, 1975)). Because of limited resources, small businesses must certainly be oriented toward primary stakeholders. Therefore, following the practice of Yau *et al.* (2007) and earlier studies, this study will use primary stakeholders – employees, customers, and competitors as well as shareholders/investors (Agle *et al.*, 1999; Berman *et al.*, 1999; Greenley and Foxall, 1996, 1997, 1998; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990; Post *et al.*, 1996; Yau *et al.*, 2007). Since small firms are generally not publicly traded (that is, privately owned), investors (rather than shareholders) are included with employees, customers, and competitors in this study. Therefore, to replicate the Yau *et al.* (2007) study, this study will use the same definition that stakeholder orientation has been found to be a multi-faceted construct consisting of four dimensions – employee, customer, investor, and competitor orientations – and the Yau *et al.* (2007) scale to measure each orientation (see Table 1).

Table 1
Yau *et al.* (2007) Stakeholder Orientation Scale

Customer Orientation: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.762

1. Competitive strategies are based on understanding customer needs.
2. Customer satisfaction is systematically and frequently assessed.
3. Our commitment of serving customer needs is closely monitored.
4. Close attention is given to after sales service
5. Our objectives and strategies are driven by the creation of customer satisfaction.

Competitor Orientation: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.668

6. Sales people share information about competitors.
7. Top management regularly discusses competitors' strengths and weaknesses.
8. We achieve repaid response to competitive actions.
9. Customers are targeted when we have an opportunity for competitive advantage.

Shareholder Orientation: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.753

10. Our objectives are driven by creating shareholder wealth.
11. Senior managers have regular meetings with shareholders.
12. We regularly compare our share value to that of our competitors.
13. We regularly carry out public relations aimed at shareholders.
14. Designated managers have responsibility for aiming to satisfy shareholders' interests.

Employee Orientation: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.763

15. We have regular staff appraisals in which we discuss employees' needs.
16. We have regular staff meetings with employees.
17. As a manager, I try to find out the true feelings of my staff about their jobs.
18. We survey staff at least once each year to assess their attitudes to their work.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

For this study, data was collected from privately held, small firms headquartered in an 11-county metropolitan area in the Southwestern U.S. through a field study using mailed questionnaires. Small organizations were defined as businesses with 5-500 employees. The Small Business Association (SBA) varies its definition of a small business depending on the industry to accurately reflect the differences between industries. Karlsson and Olsson (1998) also found that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) could be defined as 500 or fewer employees in their research. A lower limit of five employees was set to enhance the response rate by eliminating those firms that were so small they would likely not have the resources or time to reply to a mailed questionnaire.

The field study was mailed to small businesses that met the targeted profile based on a procedure developed by Dillman (1991). The sample size was small, so to check the ability of the overall sample size to reject a false null hypothesis, power analysis was computed. It was found that at the 0.995 confidence level, a response size of 97 was acceptable. The 105 responses provided sufficient assurance that the sample had the ability to detect a significant effect in the regression analysis.

Descriptive statistics of the data sample were computed and collinearity diagnostics were generated to analyze the model for the presence of multicollinearity and identify specific variables that may cause multiple correlations (Hair *et al.*, 1998). Analysis found that multicollinearity may be assumed not to influence the predictors of the model. The highest eigenvalues were found for employee orientation. High eigenvalues indicate predictors that account for much of the variance in the cross-product matrix and those closer to zero explain little variance. Based on the reported eigenvalues, it can be expected that employee orientation will explain the most variance followed by customer, investor, and competitor orientation.

Finally, simple bivariate correlations were calculated to ensure all study relationships were in the expected direction. Pearson correlations, means, and standard deviations were reported for the overall sample. Six of the 55 correlations (10.9 percent) were significant at the $p<0.01$ level, and 14 of the 55 (25.5 percent) were significant at the $p<0.05$ level. This included an aggregated measure of firm financial performance and all control variables used in the study. Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients on the lower diagonal along with means and standard deviations.

Table 2
Empirical Studies of Stakeholder Orientation

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Employee	4.97	1.32										
2. Customer	5.97	0.91	0.374**									
3. Investor	3.12	1.64	0.230*	0.008								
4. Competitor	4.26	1.48	0.449**	0.295**	0.413**							
5. Owner Age	48.51	11.25	0.110	0.210*	0.248*	0.205*						
6. Firm Age	8.45	2.87	-0.094	-0.007	-0.155	-0.050	0.098					
7. Founder	0.73	0.44	0.017	0.243**	-0.077	-0.024	0.203*	0.117				
8. Percent Owner	50.66	37.81	-0.055	0.154	-0.044	0.057	0.172*	-0.030	0.622**			
9. Number of Employees	39.63	70.88	0.000	-0.065	0.157	0.005	0.075	-0.096	-0.145	-0.185*		
10. Service or Mfg.	1.20	0.40	-0.023	0.134	-0.058	-0.016	0.034	-0.003	-0.129	-0.044	-0.057	
11. Overall 12 Months Financial Performance	4.80	1.58	0.158	0.141	0.142	0.079	-0.004	-0.183*	0.019	-0.011	0.104	-0.058

N=105, *p<0.05, **p<0.01

All correlations of dimensions of stakeholder orientation were significant at the $p<0.05$ level or greater with the exception of customer and investor orientation. All other dimension correlations were significant at the $p<0.01$ level with the exception of employee and investor orientation.

Table 3
Rotated Component Matrix and Cronbach's Alpha Comparison

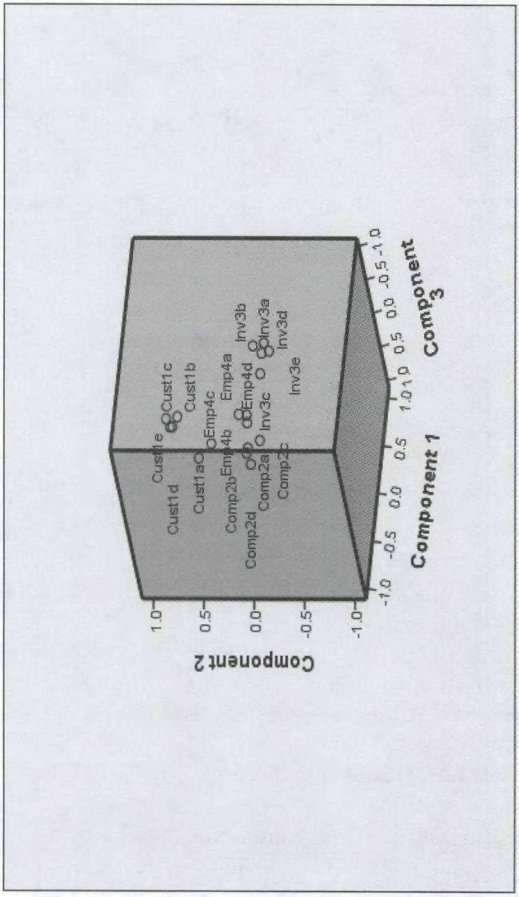
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	Yau *et al.* (2007) Cronbach's Alpha	Current Cronbach's Alpha
Customer 1a		0.524				
Customer 1b		0.731				
Customer 1c		0.837			0.762	0.817
Customer1d		0.790				
Customer 1e		0.793				
Employee 4a				0.836		
Employee 4b				0.850	0.763	0.751
Employee 4c				0.637		
Employee 4d				0.525		
Investor 3a	0.847					
Investor 3b	0.809					
Investor 3c	0.753				0.753	0.887
Investor 3d	0.786					
Investor 3e	0.838					
Competitor 2a			0.627			
Competitor 2b			0.766		0.668	0.792
Competitor 2c			0.751			
Competitor 2d			0.799			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.						
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.					Total SO Scale: 0.848	Total SO Scale: 0.852

Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis of the 18 items that make up the SO scale (Yau *et al.*, 2007) using principal component analysis and varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization revealed that stakeholder orientation was comprised of four factors. The final rotated factor solutions converged after five iterations and mirrored the four dimensions presented by Yau *et al.* (2007). The rotated component matrix is shown in Table 3 with extractions less than 0.400 suppressed for clarity.

Since there were more than two factors extracted, a three-dimensional plot was produced with the factor space defined by the first three factors. The component plot is shown in Figure I with Component 1 defined as investor orientation, Component 2 as customer orientation, and Component 3 as competitor orientation.

Figure I
3-D Component Plot of Stakeholder Orientation



Reliability was examined using Cronbach's Alpha for each of the dimensions of SO and compared to the reliability reported in the original Yau *et al.* (2007) study. The current study found substantially stronger reliabilities in three of the four dimensions and only 0.012 weaker in the employee orientation. All reliabilities were over 0.70, the lower acceptable limit for Cronbach's Alpha (Hair *et al.*, 1998), and most were over 0.80. Comparative statistics of the alpha coefficient between Yau *et al.* (2007) and this study are shown in Table 3.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study support and extend the research of Yau *et al.* (2007). The factor and reliability analysis of the scale developed by Yau *et al.* (2007) were fully supported. Both studies found stakeholder orientation as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of four components or orientations. Consistent with previous literature (Greenley and Foxall, 1996; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990), the four dimensions are referred to as employee, customer, shareholder (or investor), and competitor orientation. Three of the four dimensions were found to have substantially higher reliability in the current study. The item analysis for this new scale was critical since it had only been analyzed as part of the scale development process, and the scale development was done in Chinese with a double translation to English.

These findings are significant to academics as well as practitioners. The previous lack of parsimony in the academic development of the stakeholder orientation construct has led to discrete studies without a synergistic nature or consistency of measures. Not only is the lack of consistency problematic for development of the field, these efforts may also produce specious results. Conversely, the measurement instrument developed by Yau *et al.* (2007) has been found to be a valid and reliable measure of stakeholder orientation. Generalizability of findings have been shown between primarily large corporations in the emerging markets of China to privately owned small businesses in the developed U.S. marketplace offering more consistency in construct definition and better instrumentation.

The importance of validity of these findings can also be extended to practitioners. Without valid studies of the stakeholder orientation construct, practitioners are left to develop their own instruments to measure their actions toward stakeholders and then assess the validity of the measures. With a valid and reliable instrument, practitioners can use these questions to determine how they address stakeholders. Furthermore, this study could help practitioners in the prioritization of resources toward individual stakeholder groups. The generalizability of the study could also lend credence to practitioners beyond those in large corporations in the emerging markets of China or in privately owned small businesses in the developed U.S.

Implications and Limitations for Research

The important implication for research from this study is the Yau *et al.* (2007) scale appears to be a sound measure of stakeholder orientation and should be used to test SO at the dimensional level. The exploratory work of Yau *et al.* (2007), done primarily on large firms in major cities in China, was confirmed in this study through factor analysis

and reliability testing on a sample of small businesses in a developed U.S. economy. Perrini's (2006) assertion about SO not being as important to small firms needs to be examined on a larger scale. The results of this study would indicate that is not the case. Testing of SO in the aggregate form (Greenley and Foxall, 1997, 1998) at best provides an incomplete picture of SO and at worst may provide spurious results. In addition, the studies using outcomes or descriptions of actions such as the ones using KLD data or CSR reports may not reflect what management thinks should be the focus in stakeholder management, but rather may reflect emergent opportunities or other strategic influences. The Yau *et al.* (2007) scale should be used in future studies of management's view of stakeholder orientation.

The results and analysis of this research have several limitations. The first limitation is this survey was conducted on a fairly regionalized (11 county) area in the Southwestern U.S. Greater scope in the targeted geographic area for the survey, such as other regions of the U.S. and other developed economies, could increase the generalizability of the survey results.

A second limitation of the study is there may be a lack of larger organizations as measured by number of employees from the respondents. Small organizations were defined as businesses with 5-500 employees and that was the target for the database that was assembled. The average number of employees in the responding businesses was 39.63 and there were only 11.4 percent with 100 to 400 employees. No respondents had more than 400 employees. Greater breadth in the size of the small businesses surveyed could offer findings with superior insight.

Future Research

Stakeholder orientation is a relatively fertile area for research because few empirical studies have been published. Conversely, the concept of market orientation (MO) accepted a psychometrically developed scale over twenty years ago and, as indicated earlier; there have been nearly 1000 published research articles as well as multiple meta-analyses. The understanding of MO is much stronger and better researched than SO. Strategy researchers could look to the marketing field for further research venues in the form of context variables, additional dimensions of orientation, and outcome variables. Several suggestions for future research are offered.

First, the SO scale by Yau *et al.* (2007) has been shown to be generalizable to this study of small businesses in the U.S. More studies of this nature are needed to add to the generalizability of the scale. Beneficial research could be conducted on organizations according to firm size (that is, small, mid-cap, and large firms), ownership (that is, publicly-held and private organizations), as well as geographic location (that is, developed and developing economies). Other context variables revealed in MO meta-analytic research include culture, cultural distance, market size, level of economic development, type of industry, as well as profit and non-profit organizations (Grinstein, 2008a; Shoham *et al.*, 2006).

Second, the two approaches to SO—through the lens of management views and the view of what the firm is actually doing relative to stakeholders—should be studied in concert. If managers indicate with the survey that employees are the most important stakeholder, but the actions of the firm are more aligned with customers, then the firm

is not clear about its intent versus its outcomes. This is a potentially rich area of research. Do firms whose actions reflect management's views in the area of SO perform better? Or, is it better to be in step with the industry?

Third, future research could examine other stakeholder dimensions beyond the four used in this study. Other studies could examine the impact of suppliers, community, government, unions, and the environment. MO research has also examined learning orientation, entrepreneurial orientation, and innovation orientation (Grinstein, 2008b; Jaramillo *et al.*, 2007).

Fourth, it is prudent to assume that stakeholder orientation would change over time. Given this assumption, future research should be directed toward collecting longitudinal data. For example, this study was conducted during one of the largest economic downturns in decades. A similar study during a time of economic prosperity could likely provide a different, and hence, a broader insight into stakeholder orientation.

Finally, this study used an aggregated measure of firm financial performance as an outcome variable. A review of several meta-analyses of the MO concept provide a rich template of additional outcome variables beyond financial performance, such as business performance relative to competitors, new product performance, and a subjective assessment of performance. Innovative consequences could be examined, for instance new product development, and the diffusion of innovation. In addition, other variables studied could be organizational commitment, individual job performance, and cognitive processes (Cynthia *et al.*, 2004; Ellis, 2006; Shoham *et al.*, 2005).

This study has replicated and extended knowledge of stakeholder orientation by providing additional support for the SO scale. The factor and reliability analysis confirmed stakeholder orientation as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of four components or variations. The extension of the scale developed by Yau *et al.* (2007) to small businesses in a developed economy provides researchers a greater degree of surety as they continue to build upon the implications for stakeholder orientation within organizations.

The major contribution of this study, however, is not found in the results of the SO study itself, but rather in the illustration of how to move beyond looking for asterisks (Bettis, 2012) to the goal of scientific research—building understanding and knowledge. As the related work in market orientation so clearly shows, definition and instrumentation are key components to building understanding. This analysis also fits the good-enough principle (Singh *et al.*, 2003) where the current study is a close enough approximation of the original research to allow for further building of understanding and knowledge of the stakeholder orientation concept. Not only does more agreement about the definition of the SO concept emerge, but the measurement of the construct is now available to examine other relationships in ways that can answer the questions about how the concept affects other dimensions of the firm and multiple aspects of its performance. SO can also be monitored and managed by the management team. It allows managers to be more aware of how they think of their stakeholders. This tool will help managers as an instrument they can use within their own organizations as well as open a myriad of opportunities for researchers to build more understanding of stakeholder orientation.

The fact that market orientation and stakeholder orientation both have roots in stakeholder theory and market orientation has over a thousand published studies using highly related measurement instruments that have built a valuable understanding of the marketing function should shout to strategic management scholars that there needs to be more focus on building understanding and less focus on "seeking asterisks." This research illustrates the beginning process of how this is done. Hopefully, in the next ten years there will be much more learning about how stakeholder orientation relates to important inputs and outputs of the firm.

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