The antecedents and consequences of the marketing manager and R&D manager working relationship during new product development: an empirical study

Elias Kyriazis
University of Wollongong, kelias@uow.edu.au

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THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE MARKETING MANAGER AND R&D MANAGER WORKING RELATIONSHIP DURING NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Elias KYRIAZIS, B.Com, M.Com (Hons)

School of Management and Marketing

2005
DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this thesis has not been submitted previously as part of the requirements of another degree and that it is the result of my own independent research.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many years ago a fellow academic told me that the “loneliest time of his life was while he was doing his PhD”, happily this was not my experience! I have had support and understanding from many quarters. At home from my long suffering wife, Roni, who at times felt like a widow, yet has been a rock when the PhD storm raged. Our young children, Demee and Ross, who have endured Daddy “writing his book” far too often yet have always given me “big kisses and cuddles” when I came home! My parents, Spyridon and Demetra, and the in-laws Ron, Robyn and Cameron, have always been there when help was needed. Without their love and understanding this would have been a far more painful experience. Special thanks also goes to my supervisor, Associate Professor Paul Couchman who has provided invaluable support and guidance, thus greatly enhancing this study. From my dear friend, Dr. Graham Massey I have received much moral support, encouragement and excellent advice and consider him a “Brother-in-Arms”. Also my colleagues and close friends, Jennifer Thornton, Robert Grant, Gary Noble, Karin Wells, Janette Rowland, and recently Lars Bergkvist, deserve special thanks as they patiently and empathetically endured many of my PhD driven tirades! My appreciation also goes to the support of Associate Professor Lesley White and Phil Scott, who as Departmental Heads kept at me to finish! Professor Rossiter has also given excellent advice as has Dr. Peter Caputi “the stats guru”.

This PhD process has felt like running a Marathon with many twists, turns, potholes and steep hills. It has only been with the cheering and encouragement from these excellent people that the race has been run. My appreciation goes out to all of them.
THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE MARKETING MANAGER AND R&D MANAGER WORKING RELATIONSHIP DURING NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

ABSTRACT

The antecedents and consequences of “interdepartmental working relations” have been examined in detail in the new product development (NPD) literature, however, less attention has been given to the relationship between functional managers at the interpersonal level. The study presented in this thesis developed and empirically tested a model of the antecedents and consequences of the working relationship between the Marketing Manager and R&D Manager at the NPD project level. By including interpersonal trust as a two-dimensional construct (affective and cognitive-based trust) and conceptualising it as a key mediating variable, the study provides great explanatory power regarding the interplay of important interpersonal dynamics such as communication frequency, quality of communication, functional conflict and interpersonal collaborative behaviour on the dependent variable of perceived relationship effectiveness. Further, the role that interpersonal politics play in shaping working relationships has not been previously addressed in the NPD literature and the new construct of “Perceptions of the Marketing Manager as a Political Ally” was found to be one of the key antecedents of interpersonal trust and positive relationship dynamics.

The data used to test the conceptual model was collected from 184 technically-trained respondents (e.g., R&D Managers and Engineers) from Australian firms predominantly involved in manufacturing activities. The model tested was found to be rich in meaning
and explained 80.5% of the variance in Perceived Relationship Effectiveness thus providing a greater understanding of the complexities of the working relationship at the Manager level than previous conceptualisations.
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