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**Abstract**

In this paper, market orientation in Croatian higher education (HE) is discussed within the context of stakeholder-oriented management. Drawing on existing studies, the 'classical' empirical model, describing the market orientation of generic nonprofit organisations, has been adapted to the contingencies of the Croatian HE sector. Empirical testing of the model, based on primary data drawn from the majority of public institutions of higher learning in the country, reveals inadequate market orientation toward the relevant stakeholders. Although social market orientation currently does not exist in Croatian HE institutions, the empirical results confirm that it might be possible to initiate a 'virtuous circle', in which relevant market orientation and stakeholder management practices, directed toward one or other of the stakeholders, simultaneously enhance orientation toward the other stakeholders. Unfortunately, the current situation in HE is not satisfactory, which could hinder the implementation of development of knowledge society in Croatia. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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