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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### INTERNAL MARKETING: A BIRD'S-EYE PERSPECTIVE

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#### ABSTRACT

An internal marketing is one of the new topics in the field of management, as it represents the relationship between employees and the organization in the triangle of marketing relations and the field of human resources management, as it requires attention, development, and strengthening the relationship with employees, just as the philosophy of internal marketing goes further from that, it tries to link the HR department to the marketing department by describing employees as internal customers. The study also found, through the theoretical framework, that the application of internal marketing practices in organizations contributes to increasing employee satisfaction and also helps in improving their performance and developing their capabilities and skills to provide services of a distinct level of quality to the customer. The marketing role has become not just the task of providing goods for sale, but also the task that concerns working people and prepares them as internal customers in the organization, providing them with benefits and services and working to increase their capabilities and skills and then increase their satisfaction and improve the level of their performance. Several organizations, in particular services organizations, have realized the benefits that can be derived from the adoption of the strategy of internal marketing, where through this strategy, the organization gets working employees with good expertise and skills that prepare them to take responsibility, and provide customers with high-quality services. This paper contributes to a better understanding of Internal Marketing by adopting a bird's eye perspective of the available scholarly literature ranging from 2000 to 2018 to explore the conceptual boundaries of internal marketing. Findings reveal that the term internal marketing has become the most debated topics of 21<sup>st</sup> century among Marketing team, HR professionals and academicians which leads toward high performance with successful achievement of personal and organizational ambitions.

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## INTRODUCTION

The marketing role has become not just the task of providing goods for sale, but also the task that concerns working people and prepares them as internal customers in the organization, providing them with benefits and services and working to increase their capabilities and skills and then increase their satisfaction and improve the level of their performance, several organizations, in particular services organizations, have realized the benefits that can be derived from the adoption of the strategy of internal marketing, where through this strategy, the organization gets working employees with good expertise and skills that prepare them to take responsibility, and provide customers with high-quality services.

As it is known that the satisfaction of external customers is influenced by the internal satisfaction of employees, and from this point, internal marketing is a requirement for effective external marketing. In addition, improving the capacities and skills of employees and continuing education for them would make it possible for the organization to be better and stronger over time due to the essential capabilities that the organization will possess through these personnel. The concept of internal marketing has emerged as a tool to achieve a quality of service and customer loyalty by treating employees as customers, this concept is no longer limited to service, but it has become clear that any organization may use internal marketing to facilitate the implementation of external marketing strategy or any other institutional strategy (Mohammad Jarousha, 2016). Internal marketing all employees in an organization are internal clients who must achieve organizational goals. Therefore, if the objectives of

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the organization are derived from external marketing, the functions of individuals contribute to this by responding to the employees within the organization, each of which is directly or indirectly linked to the end consumer (Harrell & Fors, 1992). Internal marketing is considered to be one of the most modern tools for achieving employees' satisfaction and improving their performance in banks by recognizing the importance of the role of internal marketing in the productivity of employees in the delivery of banking services. This led the bank's management to focus on internal marketing by marketing the banks themselves internally, To satisfy the needs of the employees and their wishes and training, and provide incentives to them, and the appointment of highly qualified staff which directly reflects the quality of service provided, and the distinction of the bank from other banks, and therefore the management of banks prioritize the need to pay attention to individuals, and Satisfy their satisfaction. Internal marketing policies and programs involve some of the planned and targeted activities of their employees in terms of development, training, reward, employee-employee relations, communication, and clarity of roles (Grönroos, 2004). The main objective of internal marketing practices is to develop, train, and prepare qualified employees, who are able, and retain, satisfy, and ensure their continuity in the organization. Therefore, this paper better focus on understanding of Internal Marketing by adopting a bird's eye perspective of the available scholarly literature

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The prime aim of this study is to examine the relevant literature and researches from previous studies on the concept of internal marketing to probe the theoretical limitations of this subject. This study underlines the need for significant efforts to utilize internal marketing to manage the internal customers of the organizations very well and train them to satisfy external customers. The paper also intends to offer a forum for finding forthcoming research prospects to better guide further research on this subject-matter.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is qualitative in nature. Literatures published between 2000 and 2018 have been considered. The data for this study are secondary data and are procured by reviewing the studies and analyzing research papers in various journals. The papers were obtained from various online resources like scholar.google.com, the National Human Resources Network, emeraldinsight.com, elsevier.com, and the literature available in the book are collected for exhaustive examinations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Internal marketing defined as "employee as an internal customer and job as a product" (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000). Internal marketing is "a cultural framework and instrument for achieving strategic alignment among front-line workers, goals for marketing and the organization" (Ahmed, Rafiq, & Saad, 2003). Internal marketing is more concerned with dealing with an employee as "a customer, meaning organizations should constantly strive to implement strategies and programs that increase employee satisfaction at the same level as external marketing plans, which are also designed to be new and implemented to meet the needs of

external customers" (Al-Dmour & Ayesh, 2005). More precisely, internal marketing is "a set of policies and procedures on human resources (HR) that treat employees as members of the internal market, who need to be aware, trained, developed, and empowered to serve customers more effectively" (Arnett, German, & Hunt, 2003).

## Significance of Internal marketing

(Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003) entitled "Commentary Internal Marketing, Issues & Challenges, and European Journal of Marketing." The goal of this study was to explain the challenges dealing with internal marketing research, clarifying the relationship between employee satisfaction and the overall performance of the organization, and the need to analyze coordination and practical interaction to attain the effective application of marketing strategies. Increasing the studies at the significance of internal marketing within the development of efficiency through understanding, trust, and communication, and that department have to know the importance of internal marketing and its application, and therefore the importance is more important because it's important to the marketing strategy of the organizations.

(Waleska Vasconcelos Queiroz, 2009) entitled "An Evaluation of Internal Marketing Practices of Multinational Companies (MNC) in Brazil." The study was conducted into carried out to categorize earlier research and to get a better understanding of internal marketing and its advantages, as well as its implementation and boundaries. The concept of internal marketing becomes nevertheless to be disagreed upon. As an end result, there were different definitions of internal marketing, and a maximum of them have a different approach. Primary statistics were collected via an electronic mail questionnaire that disbursed to key individuals together with the Marketing and Human Resources Managers of 100 companies. The researcher was able to offer an image of the internal marketing practices used by MNCs in Brazil. As an end result, the internal marketing practices of these businesses had been investigated and the management's perceptions of internal marketing understanding evaluated. The results suggest that the companies researched use communication techniques, and motivation programs. As a consequence, it can be assumed that they need an enclosed marketing mind-set. In addition, the managers seem to have great information about the topic researched.

(Salwa Mahmoud, 2010) entitled "The application of Internal Marketing in Manufacturing Companies in Jordan, Middle East University." The study aims to "measure the internal marketing practices in furniture industry firms in Amman from the group of workers' factor of view (Administrative support, career development, business communications, working relationships, teamwork, and participation in decision-making, salaries, and incentives)." The sample study was made up of 100 companies with more than 100 Employee per company and study hypotheses formulated according to the study's literature and objectives, the five Likert scales were used in the questionnaire, the survey contains 36 questions addressed to the respondents. Results of the study found that organizations provide administrative support to staff, and found that organizations should provide administrative support to staff based on the application of internal marketing practices through the implementation of policies appropriate recruitment, training, and development

of staff promotes internal communication, promotes cooperation and internal work relations, and develops job opportunities. The study also indicated a lack of agreement on the participation of workers in decision-making and not implementing a system of equitable and equitable salaries and incentives. The study proposed focusing the attention of the organizations on the involvement of employees in decision-making, seeking an equitable system of incentives and rewards to meet the satisfaction of workers. (Fernando, 2012) entitled "Impact of internal marketing on operational performance." The study was aimed to establish correlation relationships between internal marketing practices and operational performance. For the analysis, data obtained from 209 questionnaires were being used. The findings suggested that there was a significant link between "training and development, top leadership and empowerment, and operational performance." There was also no evidence that the operational performance works well with strategic incentives and internal communication. Findings show that low-cost carriers' managers must keep pay attention on a continuous and regular basis to improve personnel' understanding of marketplace requirements, especially the use of labor-saving technology to sustain competitiveness.

(Acar, Seker, Bayram, & Acar, 2012) entitled "The effect of internal marketing on the performance of the employee and the mediating role of organizational commitment." The study was aimed to examine the impact of internal marketing on the performance of employees and the importance of organizational commitment as an intermediary. Results indicate that there is a strong correlation between "internal marketing practices, employees' performance, and organizational commitment." Moreover, "organizational commitment has a role as a partial intermediary." As a result, this study contributes significantly to literature, and it helps administrators to develop time and values in terms of organizational commitment and effective internal marketing practices that improve performance of employees'. (Ogunnaike, Oyeniyi, & Adeniji, 2012) entitled "Internal Marketing Practices and Job Satisfaction: Evidence from a Nigerian University Setting." The goal of the study was to identify and investigate the relationship between of internal marketing practices and job satisfaction in Nigeria's university environment. The findings showed that internal marketing had an effect on three main areas or components; "the understanding of organizational vision and values, the quality of external marketing delivery, and the quality of interactive marketing delivery." "The study also found that there is a clear relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction. The results showed that there are strong psychometric values in the university environment; the study recommended that greater emphasis be placed on internal marketing practices that improve the interactive marketing of the University and external. The study recommended that the university should improve job satisfaction among its workers and suggested more research.

(Mahmood, 2013) entitled "Evaluation of the Degree to which Employee Satisfaction is related to Internal Marketing within Universities of Pakistani." The aim of the study was to explore the concept of internal marketing among employees at three universities in Pakistan and its relationship to the development of satisfaction. The internal marketing models were reviewed, which led to the establishment of a conceptual framework in the context of

the study and a detailed description of the relationship between internal marketing and employee satisfaction. Next, the internal marketing concept in higher education was then identified and why targeted universities were selected was justified, this helped to shape the conceptual framework and develop the hypotheses of study based on the relationship between variables "internal marketing and employee satisfaction" to achieve the study goals. The findings confirmed great support for the hypothesized model; all hypotheses are accepted. There was a statistically significant correlation between all variables "internal marketing and employee job satisfaction" at target universities. The study recommended that future studies could be carried out on the internal marketing relationship and the job satisfaction of employees in some countries or markets or through a particular cultural context.

(WALI, 2013) entitled "Internal Marketing Strategy and employee performance." The study was intended to assess how the impact of Internal marketing strategy to employee performance. The study identified internal marketing fields such as the promotion of internal marketing and reward systems as a predictor variable, while an effective organizational commitment was adopted as a moderating variable analysis and a variable standard for employees' performance. The results indicate that a significant and positive impact of internal marketing promotion on the performance of employees. The study showed that the system of rewards had a positive and important impact on the performance of employees and a strong link between organizational commitment effective and employees' performance. As a result, the study showed that an internal marketing strategy is a powerful tool for strengthening Employee commitment, especially in the Nigeria Aviation sector. It suggests that stakeholders and company managers in the Nigerian aviation industry participate in a strategy of internal marketing to enable employees to be productive as best they possible. The organization's managers should also play their employees' transformational leadership roles, rather than the transnational leadership style recommended for their employee performance by this study. However, the effect of adopting this study recommendation is that the performance of employees in terms of productivity would be improved.

(Zyadat, 2016) entitled "The Impact of Internal Marketing on the Performance of Jordanian Islamic Banks in the City of Amman." The study was intended to assess the degree of perception of internal marketing dimensions by Jordanian Islamic Banks and their effect on bank performance and measured and assessed the influence of internal marketing dimensions on bank performance. The findings showed that the Jordanian Islamic banks perceive the concept of internal marketing, there was a significant impact at  $\alpha$  (0.05) level of significance for marketing practices (training and development, hiring, job role clarity, internal communication, and rewards and incentives), that internal communication practice was the strongest variable to influence the marketing performance of Islamic banks. The study recommended that Islamic banks pay more attention to internal marketing planning and strategies and implement more advanced marketing strategies in order to improve bank preferences

**Importance of an organization's internal marketing:**

Internal marketing is a bridge to the organization to reach customers through the development and motivation of the business enterprise's personnel to carry out their responsibilities to the fullest. This approach that internal marketing is the manner that the organization reaches out to outside clients and the performance achieved by the aid of its far a competitive position inside the markets, internal marketing is also important for the organization through the following axes: (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003)

**Change Management:** Many organizations experience a shift in their lifecycle through mergers and alliances, downsizing, or introducing new and modern systems such as information technology or New business practices, and other changes such as changing their name, brand, mission, objectives. Its policies and programs it is necessary to communicate with all relevant parties including employees within the organization to promote this change, internal marketing and through its objectives and practices can contribute to making the organization more responsive and more flexible to changes in the internal and external environment, by creating interdepartmental coordination and cooperation within the organization, and provides a strong internal communications system to support any change of the organization makes this change acceptable to everyone.

**Build and improve the reputation of the organization:** A society's reputation for different organizations depends on their strength or weakness depending on the nature and quality of communication between the community and those organizations, and the extent of community interest or impact on their activities. The process of building a good reputation for the organization is complex. The main issues facing the organizations are the collapse of borders and the separation between their internal functions and their external relations. The internal relations of the organization are intertwined with the daily practices of its employees. It works to integrate the organizational structure, work culture, HRM, vision, organization strategy with the social and professional needs of these workers, which contributes to building a positive collective image of the organization to the community.

**Developing strategic plans for the organization:** The planning, building, and implementation of any strategy requires the efforts and full coordination between the organization and its employees, Internal marketing practices help to reduce conflicts among employees by activating training programs, motivating employees, reaching the satisfaction of employees, and building the required commitment to implement these strategies.

**The importance of internal marketing to employees:**

There is a great deal of importance to internal marketing in meeting the needs and desires of employees, It also creating an internal environment that supports morale employees have and develop positive behavior that increases their satisfaction that leading to improve their performance and achievement of the organization's objectives. According to (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003) pointed out to the adoption of internal marketing practices and a program has many benefits for employees within the organization as:

**Achieving employees' satisfaction:** The philosophy of modern management is based on the principle that customers

always expect the best from the organization, and through the internal marketing vision to the employees as internal customers, it aims to motivate, train and support employees and promote empowerment, which works to improve the relationships between the employees, which satisfies their desires and contributes to their satisfaction (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003)

**Employee's performance improvement:** Management can move an individual's desire by meeting his or her motivations and needs that lead to increased individual productivity. Internal marketing helps the organization to discover these motivations and needs and meet these needs, making performance improvement as a result of internal marketing processes.

**Organizational Commitment:** The lack of organizational commitment of employees in any organization leading to catastrophic consequences may lead to the closure of this organization. The main pillar of the internal marketing philosophy is to ensure that employees believe and feel that the management of the organization takes care of them and seeks meets their needs. If these needs are met, employees will feel the organizational commitment and organizational citizenship towards their organizations; there are many advantages and benefits that employees earn it as a result of applying and adopt internal marketing strategies, these benefits contribute to satisfaction and feeling of stability among employees. One of the most important factors contributing to employees' satisfaction and improve their performance that achieved by looking at their requirements and meeting their needs.

**Internal marketing and employee's satisfaction:**

According to (Berry, 1981) that "employees as customers" The internal marketing concept is to consider employees are just like external customers, they desire to meet their needs as internal customers. By meeting the needs and satisfaction of internal customers, the logic is that organization should be better position to provide high-quality services to obtain the loyalty of external customers. Implicit in this is the belief that satisfying employees needs increases employee motivation and retention and, as a result, the higher the employee satisfaction, the greater the ability to generate external customer satisfaction and loyalty. If the organization implements internal marketing, the organization will improve employee satisfaction which will certainly improve their performance, as a result of a lot of research. In business organizations that provide services and that require them to deal direct to customers through employees, the most important goal of these Organizations is satisfy the customer through the frontline employee, to achieve this goal the employees have high expectations from their jobs as a source of self-actualization and self-development. Under these conditions, that adoption of internal marketing practices can be increases external customer satisfaction through those employees they have been given their needs and requirements, resulting in the use of behavior nice and empathetic when dealing with the external customer. Internal marketing is generally aimed to coordination and commitment between functions and reducing interdepartmental tension to ensure the effectiveness of external marketing strategies.

**Findings & Conclusions:** Through previous studies and the theoretical framework of the study, the concept of internal marketing is a modern concept in the field of management in general and marketing management in particular, the concept of internal marketing through the marketing relationship triangle represents the relationship between employees and the organization, as well as a human resources management area. The philosophy of internal marketing goes further, trying to link human resources management to marketing management within the organization by describing employees as internal customers, as it seeks to be generally interested with employees requirements, their development, and meets the needs of employees. The results of this study indicate that organizations that adopt the concept of internal marketing and apply its practices are able to meet the needs and satisfaction of their employees, as well as to observe an improvement in the performance of their employees by providing a high quality services to external customers. The interest of internal marketing is no less important than external marketing, so the orientation towards employees (as internal customers) is no less important than the orientation towards external customers and satisfying their desires. Through the above, the success of internal marketing depends primarily on the organizations that adoption of this concept and the work to apply their practices to achieve their goals. In light of this, the future studies can be taken on evaluating the internal marketing practices of various services and finding the best practices for internal marketing implementation.

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