

Effect of Internal Marketing on Employees' Perception of Their Performance

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Abstract

The services sector in India has remained the most vibrant sector in terms of contribution to national and state incomes. India is ranked at the 11th position in the world with the GDP of about \$1185.79 billion as a contribution from its service sectors (Statistics Times, 2017). The banking sector contributes a greater share in the services sector of India. Internal marketing practices are generally followed by the service organizations to maximize their customer satisfaction and hence increase the performance of the organization. The present study was undertaken to examine the relationship of communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities (variables of internal marketing) with the employees' perception on their performance in the banking sector. The relationship between the perception on performance and categorical variables like gender, education, department, and experience was also examined in the given study. Data were collected from the front and back office staff of a private sector bank. Analysis was done using correlation and chi-square test to understand the relationship of categorical and internal marketing variables with performance of the employees at the bank. The results of the study indicated no association among the categorical variables and the variables of internal marketing. It was also observed that only some items of the variable of supervision and intangible benefits had a relationship with the employees' perception of their performance, while rest of the items and variables were found to be independent.

Keywords : internal marketing, banking sector, perception, employee performance, communication, compensation, benefits, facilities

JEL Classification : G21, M10, M12, M31, M30

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The services sector is the largest sector of India. Gross value added (GVA) at current prices for the services sector was estimated at 73.79 lakh crore INR in 2016-17. The sector accounts for 53.66% of total India's GVA of 137.51 lakh crore Indian rupees and hence plays a crucial role in the development of the Indian economy (Statistics Times, 2017). The banking sector is one of the major contributors of the services sector. Service consumption and generation occurs simultaneously in any service giving undertaking. Thus, a quality service given by the employees of an organization plays an important role in satisfaction of the customer of the service organization. This unique quality of organizations of the service sector forces them to recognize the importance of internal audiences or employees as part of their strategy implementation. Employees are the most important stakeholders as they are the deciding factor and determine the direction and level of success a business attains, especially in a knowledge economy, where services are high in demand (Sinha & Mishra, 2014).

Internal marketing is a strategic weapon which helps to achieve excellent service quality and thereby greater customer satisfaction (George, 1990). It is a systematic process of environmental analysis by mapping, classifying, and analyzing environmental variables. Proper analysis of environment helps in communicating

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conclusions and implications widely in the organization for discussion (Varey, 1995). Cowell (1984) proposed internal marketing as a management approach which enables and motivates all employees of the organization to examine their own role and to adopt a customer consciousness and service orientation, whether they are "front-line" service performers or "back-office" service support workers.

In light of the above discussion, the present study was undertaken to understand the relationship of variables of internal marketing: communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities with the performance of employees in the banking sector.

Internal Marketing

The marketing concept for internal audience (employees) of the organization entered the marketing and service management literature in the late 1970s. The concept of internal marketing was interpreted differently by different authors. It was interpreted as the company's efforts to satisfy the needs of "customer-affecting" personnel (Berry, Hensel, & Burke, 1976 ; Berry, 1981 ; Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). The management's actions in organisations help in generating a positive service attitude among the employees (Keegan, Moriarty, & Duncan, 1992). Internal marketing is a strategic weapon focusing on achieving effective internal exchanges of value and symbols between the organization and its employee groups (George, 1990). It is also said to be an act of attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining qualified employees through job-products that satisfy the needs of employees (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985). An effective response to the information gathered and an act of disseminating it, which helps in aligning employees' needs with job requirements is also known as internal marketing (McGrath, 2009). Internal marketing practices followed by the management motivate employees to achieve desired results from performance of the job tasks.

Christopher, Payne, and Ballantyne (1991) viewed internal marketing as important activities that help in developing a customer-focused organisation, with a fundamental aim to develop internal and external customer awareness and remove functional barriers for organizational effectiveness. Kotler (1991) defined internal marketing as a method that organisations use successfully to hire, maintain, and motivate employees to provide better services to customers. Jaiswal and Saha (2007) viewed internal marketing as an important implementation tool that aids in communication and helps in overcoming resistance to change. It is a tool which aids in enhancing the organizational performance with committed and satisfied employees in the organization. Zaman, Javaid, Arshad, and Bibi (2012) examined a significant impact of internal marketing programs on employees' commitment, their market orientation, and overall profitability of the firm. For the effective market orientation, an organization should consider for individual-level antecedents and consequences of employees at every level of the organization (Baber, Upadhyay, & Kaurav, 2014).

When individual needs are taken care of by the organization, it leads to employee engagement behaviour and thus provides an employee a successful career in the organization (Rao, Vani, & Meesala, 2014). Thus, from the above, internal marketing can be viewed as a process of initiating, maintaining, and developing relationships between employees, management, and organization for the purposes of creating superior value for customers.

Literature Review

This section explains selected empirical work of internal marketing undertaken by the researchers for identifying the different components of internal marketing and examining its effectiveness on performance of employees and organizations.

Turkoz and Akyol (2008) explored the effects of internal marketing on performance of hotels in Istanbul, Turkey. The study was undertaken with an aim to analyze the relationship between internal marketing and di-

mensions of company performance (customer ratio, occupancy ratio, educated personnel ratio, profitability ratio, budget for education, service quality, supporting participation in decision making, hotel performance, handling customer wants and arguments). The results of the study found a significant effect of internal marketing on the company's performance. The authors observed a positive relationship between internal marketing and the dimensions of company performance.

Kaur, Sharma, and Seli (2009) examined the level of internal market orientation in Indian banking from the perspective of internal customers and suppliers. They studied the perspective with regard to the three components of market orientation: intelligence generation, intelligence dissemination, and responsiveness. The results of the study indicated that components did help in determining the internal market orientation level. Furthermore, it was also seen that continuous emphasis on internal market orientation by internal suppliers resulted in organizational commitment and job satisfaction among internal customers.

Tag-Eldeen and El-Said (2011) rated internal marketing implementation according to employees' perceptions based on the four dimensions: establishment of a service culture, development of a marketing approach to human resource management, information dissemination to employees, and implementation of a reward and recognition system. The results of the current study revealed that all the internal marketing dimensions were implemented, but their rate of implementation differed. The study also traced the difference in perceptions between satisfied and unsatisfied employees, different age groups, and different categories of work experience. The findings in this context confirmed the difference in perceptions between these different categories.

Carlos and Rodrigues (2012) undertook a study on internal market orientation in higher education institutions. The aim of the researchers was to understand the relationship between marketing directed towards the internal market and the attitudes or behaviours of workers. The study was carried out to analyze the interrelationships between internal market orientation and job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour, and performance. Through analysis of the data, it was concluded that internal market orientation had a direct impact on satisfaction and organizational commitment, while an indirect and low impact was found on organizational citizenship behaviours and performance. A positive correlation was found among the variables which suggested that organizations must become more oriented towards the internal market, which implies an increase in the quality delivered to external customers. Job satisfaction was found to have a direct impact on commitment of employees in higher education.

Alhakimi and Alhariry (2014) tried to figure out the level of internal marketing perception and its implications in the banking industry. Internal marketing was examined using the underlying five dimensions: communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediaries. The results of the study revealed that a high level of perception for communication and supervision (factors) aided in enhancing employees' knowledge and led to customer-oriented behaviour. Intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediaries were found to have a moderate level of influence, where the authors suggested scope of improvement in the bank under study.

Ullah and Ahmad (2017) established a model by discussing the impact of internal marketing on firm performance through the mediating role of organizational culture. For the purpose, vision, reward, and development were taken as variables of internal marketing. Organizational culture was examined through clan, hierarchy, market, and adhocracy. The organizational performance was measured through the variables like process, financial performance, and employee development.

Selvarasu (2017) studied the effect of the internal marketing mix on the involvement of the internal customer. The effects of the five components of internal marketing: vision, development, reward, empowerment, and internal communication were observed on internal customers' services support, brand partnership and corporate ownership, factors which depicted involvement of internal customers of healthcare, education, and banking industries. The components of the IM mix were matched with the giant metaphor mix such as the balance, journey, transformation, connection, container, resources, and control of the organizations. The results of the study for educational services showed that the components like reward, empowerment, development, and internal

communication were acceptable except the component of vision for internal marketing mix and all the three components of involvement mix were positive with all the stakeholders in three different tiers of the customer pyramid. Haider and Akbar (2017) explored the effect of internal marketing with mediating effects of job embeddedness and social capital on innovative work behaviour. The study was undertaken on the employees of the engineering sector of auto parts manufacturing firms in the vicinity of Islamabad and Rawalpindi regions of Pakistan. The results of regression analysis revealed a positive effect of internal marketing on innovative work behaviour and job embeddedness, but no significant effect was seen on social capital. Likewise, job embeddedness as an independent variable had a positive effect on innovative work behaviour and social capital. The Hayes bootstrap analysis averred the significant mediation of job embeddedness and insignificant mediation of social capital between internal marketing and innovative work behaviour.

Sharma and Verma (2017) used MARKOR multi-item scale to measure the extent of market orientation in selected commercial banks in Punjab state. They also compared private - sector and public-sector banks and rural & urban branches of commercial banks to find out the nature of market orientation. The scale undertaken under the study consisted of three constructs namely: intelligence generation, intelligence dissemination, and responsiveness. The results of the study depicted considerable market orientation in commercial banks of Punjab. However, considerable difference was seen in overall and dimension wise mean scores of market orientation of public sector and private sector banks in the state.

Objectives and Hypotheses of the study

The current study was undertaken with an aim to understand the relationship of variables of internal marketing: communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities with the employees' perception on their performance of selected branches of a private sector bank in Vadodara city, Gujarat. It has also tried to trace out the difference in perception on their performance due to the categorical variables like : gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees.

The prime objectives of the study are :

- (i) To examine the dimension and relationship between communication and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- (ii) To assess the role and dimension of supervision on employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- (iii) To analyze the impact of intangible benefits given by the organization on employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- (iv) To measure the effect of compensation on employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- (v) To determine the nature of intermediary facilities on employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- (vi) To identify the impact of categorical variables (gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees) on employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

In order to attain the above-mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses have been established in the study :

- ☞ **H1** : There is a relationship between gender, education, department in which employees work, and experience of employees with employees' perception of their performance in the bank.
- ☞ **H2** : There is a relationship between items of communication and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

↪ **H3** : There is a relationship between items of supervision and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

↪ **H4** : There is a relationship between items of intangible benefits given by the organization and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

↪ **H5** : There is a relationship between items of compensation and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

↪ **H6** : There is a relationship between items of intermediary facilities provided and employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

Research Methodology

This section involves discussion on the data employed for the study, reference period of the data collected, and methodology adopted for analyzing the data. Data were collected from 50 respondents working in different branches and departments including front office and back office employees of a private sector bank in Vadodara city. Survey was undertaken during the months of February and March 2016. A structured close-ended questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the employees for capturing their responses pertaining to variables of internal marketing: communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities; and their effect on employees' perception of their performance. The questionnaire was structured into two parts.

First part of the questionnaire included questions related to respondents' demographics and profile, and the second part was made up of 25 questions distributed between six variables. The questions were categorized on the basis of different parameters or dimensions. Three structured questions were framed to generate data for communication process in the bank; five questions were included to assess the role of supervision; six questions aimed at understanding the intangible benefits given by the organization ; three for viewing the compensation process ; two questions for examining intermediary facilities provided; and five questions were framed to measure employees' perception of their performance. Each question measured different perceptions regarding variables of internal marketing. The respondents were asked to rate their responses towards the six variables on a 5-point scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)*, *Disagree (2)*, *Neutral (3)*, *Agree (4)*, and *Strongly Agree (5)*.

The hypotheses of the study have been examined using suitable statistical tools. To analyze the relationship and role of variables of internal marketing on employees' perception of their performance in the bank, chi-square test and correlation were performed among the variables. The relationship between gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees with employees' perception of their performance in the bank was measured using the chi-square test.

The Table 1 displays the demographics and profile of the respondents. Responses were received equally among both the genders. In terms of education, seven respondents were members of professional institutions ; 19 possessed a master's degree ; and 24 were bachelors. Responses were collected from six departments of the organization. The highest response '13' was received from employees rendering professional services followed by sales department with '12' responses, '9' responses were received from the customer service department, '8' from general administration, '5' from system engineers sales, and '3' from marketing. Experience of the employees was inquired in five categories. Out of the total respondents, 24% had an experience of less than a year ; 52% had an experience between 1 to 3 years, 20% had an experience between 4 to 6 years; 4% had an experience between 7 to 10 years. I was unable to collect responses from the employees working for more than 10 years in the same bank.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographics and Profile

Description	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	25	50
Female	25	50
Total	50	100
Education		
Bachelors	24	48
Masters	19	38
Others Professionals	7	14
Total	50	100
Department		
Sales	12	24
System Engineers Sales	5	10
Professional Services	13	26
Marketing	3	6
Customer Service	9	18
General Administration	8	16
Total	50	100
Experience (in years)		
Less than 1	12	24
1 - 3	26	52
4 - 6	10	20
7 - 10	2	4
More than 10	0	0
Total	50	100

Empirical Analysis and Results

This section examines the relation between various categorical and variables of internal marketing with employees' perception of their performance. To observe the relationship, chi-square test (test of independence) was conducted for categorical variables, while correlation was also performed for the variables of internal marketing. The reliability of the questionnaire was also tested using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha of 24 items of the questionnaire came to be 0.813, which is more than 0.60 ; the results of the reliability test show that the questionnaire design was reliable for further analysis of data.

The Table 2 indicates the results of the relationship between gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees with the employees' perception of their performance relating to communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities. All the results of the test are more than 0.05, which indicates that there is no relation between the categorical variables - gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees with the variables measuring employees' perception of their performance relating to internal marketing: communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities. The results clearly indicate that there is no

Table 2. Relation Between Categorical Variables and Employees' Perception of their Performance (Test of Independence)

Variables of Performance	Gender	Education	Department	Experience
Communication has help me to do my job well.	.794	.294	.075	.937
Supervision has helped me to understand and do my job well.	.851	.357	.610	.907
Intangible benefits have motivated me to perform well.	.739	.173	.689	.758
Compensation in the organisation has motivated me to do my job well.	.513	.438	.722	.567
Intermediary facilities in the bank have helped me to perform my work well.	.720	.677	.990	.105

Table 3. Relation Between Communication and Employees' Perception of their Performance

Communication	Communication has helped me to do my job well	
	Correlation	Test of Independence
The bank often announces new policies to us.	-0.05	.545
The bank often shares work- related information.	0.16	.053
The bank regularly communicates its philosophy and values through training courses.	-.164	.064

Table 4. Relation Between Supervision and Employees' Perception of their Performance

Supervision	Supervision has helped me to understand and do my job well	
	Correlation	Test of Independence
Our direct supervisor motivates us to give our best efforts.	0.07	0.11
Our direct supervisor fully understands our work performance.	-0.19	0.01
Our direct supervisor always tries to proactively understand if we encounter job related problems.	-0.04	0.00
Our direct supervisor regularly discusses with us about our career development.	-0.04	0.59
Our direct supervisor provides feedback about our performance.	0.08	0.07

relationship between gender, education, department in which employees worked, and experience of employees and employees' perception of their performance in the bank, which leads to non - acceptance of hypothesis H1. As employees are found to be indifferent about their gender, education, department in which they served, and experience for giving opinions about their perception of performance regarding communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities (variables of internal marketing), this shows that internal marketing practices were followed at various levels in the bank, irrespective of whether they were front-line or back-office employees.

The Table 3 indicates the results of correlation and chi-square between the variables of communication and employees' perception of their performance. A positive relation is found for sharing work-related information and employees' perception of their performance ; while a negative relation is seen in communication of philosophy and values and announcement of new polices. The results display that employees were able to do their job well when the bank shared work related information with them, while new policy announcements and communication of philosophy and values of the organization were not seen to be of much help and so, these variables negatively affected the performance. Chi-square results show no association among the variables, which means a failure to accept H2 as communication relating to internal marketing is not found to be playing a positive role in employees' perception of their performance in the organization.

Table 5. Relation Between Intangible Benefits and Employees' Perception of their Performance

Intangible Benefits	Intangible benefits have motivated me to perform well	
	Correlation	Test of Independence
In my work, I can enhance my interpersonal relationships.	0.27	0.21
The bank treats employees well.	0.01	0.17
The bank treats employees with respect.	-0.10	0.04
My current job allows me to develop my talents and potential.	-0.09	0.49
The bank provide us a comfortable working environment.	0.08	0.78
The bank tries to make our work interesting.	-0.27	0.04

Table 6. Relation Between Compensation and Employees' Perception of their Performance

Compensation	Compensation in the organisation has motivated me to do my job well	
	Correlation	Test of Independence
The bank regularly investigates and understands the employee benefits of compensation.	-0.04	0.74
The bank regularly investigates and understands the employee salary scale of compensation.	-0.08	0.76
The bank sets up different incentive programs for different departments.	-0.10	0.40

Table 7. Relation Between Intermediary Facilities and Employees' Perception of their Performance

Intermediary Facilities	Intermediary facilities in bank have helped me to perform well at work	
	Correlation	Test of Independence
The bank often announces and shares work-related information with us on the intranet.	0.22	0.39
The bank provides us with good channels for filing complaints.	0.19	0.55

The Table 4 shows the results of correlation and chi-square between the variables of supervision and employees' perception of their performance. Positive but less degree of relation is seen in supervisor motivating to give best efforts and providing feedback to perform well with employees' perception of their performance related to supervision, while less degree of negative relation is found in understanding the performance, working proactively, and discussing about career development with employees' perception of their performance related to supervision. The chi-square test results indicate a relationship between understanding the performance and supervisor working proactively with employees' perception of their performance related to supervision, which mean acceptance of hypothesis H3 for the items, while no relation is found in supervisor motivating to give best efforts, providing feedback to perform well, and discussing about career development with perception of performance related to supervision, which is understood as failure for acceptance of H3 in case of the above mentioned items of supervision.

The results shown in Table 5 illustrate the findings of measuring the relation between variables of intangible benefits and employees' perception of their performance. The correlation analysis indicates a positive relationship of perception of performance with enhancing interpersonal relationships, treating them well, and providing a comfortable working environment. However, a negative relation is found among treating them with respect, job allowing them to develop talent potential, and trying to make work interesting with employees' perception of their performance related to benefits. A relationship is found between perception of performance relating to intangible benefits and two items of intangible benefits: treating them with respect and trying to make work interesting,

which shows acceptance of hypothesis H4 for the items. The remaining items are found to be independent of each other and the results of the analysis fail to accept hypothesis H4.

The Table 6 represents the results of compensation (variable of internal marketing) and its effects on employees' perception of their performance. Correlation analysis among the variables shows less degree of negative relation among the items of compensation and their perception of performance. The results of the chi-square test of independence indicates failure to accept the hypothesis H5 as no relation is found among the items of compensation and perception of performance regarding compensation. This mean that employees under the study were not affected by the benefits of compensation, understanding their salary scale, and having incentive programmes in different departments.

The relation among the employees' perception of their performance and intermediary facilities is measured in Table 7. A less degree of positive correlation is found among the items of intermediary facilities and perception of performance of the employees. The chi-square test results show failure to accept hypothesis H6 as the variables are found to be independent of each other, and the items of intermediary facilities have no relation with employees' perception of their performance in the bank.

Managerial Implications

Internal marketing practices are adopted by the organizations for achievement of their goals with the help of well-informed and motivated employees. Variables of internal marketing like communication, supervision, intangible benefits, compensation, and intermediary facilities were viewed to examine their effect on employees' perception of their performance. The results of the study reveal lesser effect of the variables on perception of the performance of the employees of the organization. This means that managers of an organization should lay emphasis on those factors of internal marketing which affect the performance of the employees. An in-depth study can also be undertaken on these variables to identify their actual effect on the performance of the employees, which will help in either modification or removal of some of the variables for efficient functioning of the organization.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

Internal marketing is aimed towards attracting, retaining, and motivating employees in the organization with a focus on communicating and training them in such a way that they become more service-minded and customer-conscious. The objective of an organization behind using the internal marketing techniques is to see that employees of the organization perceive desired service quality and help in effective external marketing of the products and services of the organization. These techniques of dealing with the employees aid the organization in achieving competitive advantage in the market. Internal marketing is a structured approach for strategy implementation, diffusion of innovations, recruiting, and retaining service-minded staff to create a service culture, or to increase internal service productivity (Varey & Lewis, 1999).

The present study analyzes the relationship of variables of internal marketing with the employees' perception of their performance. From the analysis, it is observed that only some items of the variables of supervision and intangible benefits have a relationship with the employees' perception of their performance, while rest of them are independent from one another. This reveals that there is no relationship between other variables and employees' perception of their performance. The results of the study contradict the findings of other studies, which showed a relation among the variables. This may be due to small sample size or using convenient sampling method for collecting the responses. Prejudice or not understanding the importance of questions by the employees at the time of filling up of the questionnaire may also have played a role for arriving at such a conclusion. This limitation of the research opens the way for further research in the area with a larger sample size or including more number of

items for measuring the relationship of the variables, which may produce different results. The study can also be conducted in different organization setups to know the effect of variables of internal marketing on employees' perception of their performance.

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