

REDEFINING THE INTERNAL MARKETING-HRM NEXUS: A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

Background: Internal marketing and Human Resource Management (HRM) are crucial for organizational success. Internal marketing involves strategically communicating organizational values and goals to employees, while HRM focuses on efficiently managing human resources to achieve organizational objectives. Numerous studies have shown that integrating internal marketing and HRM can enhance organizational performance by improving employee satisfaction, retention, and overall productivity. **Method:** This study employs a mixed-methods research strategy, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses concerning the relationships between internal marketing, HRM, and organizational performance. **Results:** The SEM analysis revealed significant positive correlations between internal marketing, HRM, and organizational performance. Specifically, internal marketing positively impacts organizational performance ($\beta = 0.35, p < 0.01$), HRM positively impacts organizational performance ($\beta = 0.40, p < 0.01$), and organizational performance mediates the relationship between internal marketing and HRM (Sobel test: $z = 2.50, p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** The findings underscore the importance of integrating internal marketing and HRM to enhance organizational performance. Effective internal marketing and HRM practices lead to increased employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention, ultimately boosting organizational success. **Findings:** The study confirms that a synergistic approach to internal marketing and HRM can lead to significant improvements in organizational performance. This integration fosters a cohesive work environment, enhances employee well-being, and ensures long-term competitive advantage.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Human Resource Management (HRM), Organizational Performance, Employee Satisfaction, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Employee Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Internal marketing and “HRM” are critical components in achieving organizational success. Internal marketing comprises strategically communicating and promoting organizational values, goals, and expectations to employees in order to foster a happy and effective work environment. “HRM”, on the other hand, is concerned with the efficient management of human asset inside an organization to achieve its overarching goals.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the interconnection between internal marketing, “HRM”, and organizational effectiveness. This link is sometimes depicted as unidirectional, implying that advances in internal marketing and “HRM” techniques can have a positive effect on organizational results. By integrating these tasks, organizations can enhance their capability to attract, retain, and nurture top talent, resulting in enhanced performance, promoting innovation, and increasing customer satisfaction.

Becker and Gerstner (1996), for example, emphasized the necessity of integrating internal marketing efforts with “HRM” tactics in order to foster a unified organizational culture that drives people to thrive. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) emphasized the importance of “HRM” techniques in determining employee perceptions of internal marketing campaigns, which in turn influences their commitment and engagement. Similarly, Caldwell and McColl-Kennedy (2005) emphasized the importance of internal marketing in supporting “HRM” methods like performance management and training in improving employee satisfaction and retention.

Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2012) suggested that organizations that effectively integrate internal marketing and “HRM” operations are better positioned to capitalize on their workforce's strengths and talents, resulting in higher organizational performance. Saks and Gruman (2014) backed up this claim by emphasizing the importance of internal marketing in instilling a feeling of organizational identity and belonging in employees, which, when combined with strong HRM applications, can lead to prolonged market edge.

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In summary, the integration of internal marketing and “HRM” is critical for organizations aiming to maximize their human capital potential and attain sustained success in the current competitive landscape. By cultivating a culture of communication, cooperation, and staff development, businesses may achieve new levels of performance, creativity, and customer happiness, securing their place as industry leaders.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses a variety of theoretical frameworks to evaluate the potential links between internal marketing, “HRM”, and organizational performance.

1. **Social Exchange Theory:** Blau (1964) formulated the Social Exchange Theory, which holds that employees are majorly involved to be devoted and productive in organizations that are viewed as fair and supportive. It implies that internal marketing and “HRM” strategies help to create a positive work environment by giving opportunities for training and development, granting rewards and recognition, and instilling a sense of belonging in employees.
2. **Resource-Based View of the Firm:** According to Barney (1991), this idea holds which organizations with valuable and scarce resources are more likely to succeed. Human resources are viewed as a critical resource capable of providing a long-term competitive advantage. Internal marketing and “HRM” activities play an important role in attracting, maintaining, and developing top people, which improves the organization's overall performance.
3. **The Service-Profit Chain Model:** The Service-Profit Chain Model, created by Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger in 1997, depicts a unidirectional relationship between staff happiness, consumer utility, and company profitability. It implies that internal marketing and “HRM” activities help to create a favorable work environment, which enhances employee satisfaction. This, at that time boosts customer satisfaction and ultimately increases the organization's profitability.

These theoretical frameworks give a formal foundation for comprehending the potential links between internal marketing, “HRM” practices, and organizational performance. Using these frameworks, the study seeks to investigate how these interconnected aspects influence one another and contribute to overall organizational success.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study makes major contributions to numerous critical areas:

1. **Comprehensive Relationship Examination:** It investigates the interrelation in between “Internal Marketing”, “HRM”, and organizational performance. The study's analysis of these interrelationships provides useful insights into how these aspects interact within an organizational setting.
2. **Quantitative Research Design:** The study employs a quantitative research approach to validate hypotheses, resulting in strong empirical evidence for the relationships under consideration. This methodological rigor improves the credibility and reliability of the findings, helping to progress knowledge in this sector.
3. **Practical Implications:** By revealing the interrelation in between “Internal Marketing”, “HRM” practices, and organizational performance, the study has practical implications for organizations looking to optimize their strategy. These insights can help to inform decision-making processes for internal marketing activities and “HRM” techniques, resulting in enhanced performance and organizational effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internal Marketing:

Internal marketing is the process of actively communicating with and marketing to employees in order to build a happy and productive workplace environment. This approach provides numerous benefits, including increased employee satisfaction and engagement, improved organizational communication, lower turnover rates, increased productivity, better customer service, and a stronger brand reputation (Becker & Gerstner, 1996; Caldwell & McColl-Kennedy, 2005).

“HRM” (HRM):

“HRM”, is the management of personnel inside an organization to secure that they are related with the organization's aims and objectives. This encompasses a range of responsibilities, including recruitment, selection, training, development, performance management, compensation, benefits, and employee relations. Effective “HRM” practices are linked to increased productivity, lower turnover rates, improved communication, higher morale, and better customer service (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Relationship Between “Internal Marketing” and “HRM”:

Aligning “Internal Marketing” and “HRM” can exert a notable influence on organization performance. Strategies to accomplish alignment include:

- **Creating a compelling employer brand:** Communicating the organization's values, culture, and benefits to attract and retain top personnel (Caldwell & McColl-Kennedy, 2005; Jiang et al., 2012).
- **Generation of a positive employee experience:** Generation of a positive employee experience by implementing activities such as training, growth, awards, and recognition (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Saks & Gruman, 2014).
- **Implementing strong talent management techniques:** Implementing strong talent management techniques, which include effectively conveying talent requirements in order to recruit, retain, and develop qualified employees (Caldwell & McColl-Kennedy, 2005; Jiang et al., 2012).

RESEARCH DESIGN

This present study employs a mixed-methods research strategy, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. A survey of employees from various organizations will be done to determine their levels of contentment, engagement, and productivity. In addition, interviews with HR and internal marketing specialists will be conducted to investigate the interaction between these roles and the impact of technology on their integration.

RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test hypothesis. SEM makes it easier to examine complex correlations between observable and latent variables, allowing for a more in-depth research of data interconnections.

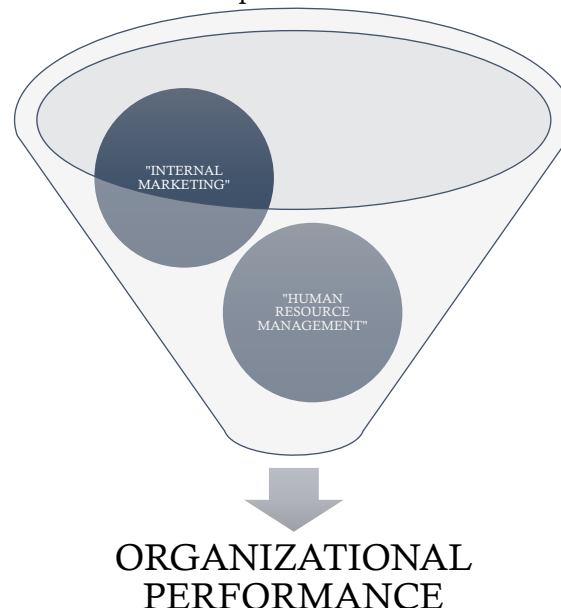
HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Here are only Alternate Hypothesis employed in study are as under:

- H₁: There is positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational performance.
- H₂: There is positive relationship between "HRM" and organizational performance.
- H₃: The relationship between internal marketing and "HRM" is mediated by organizational performance.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

This model examines the direct impact of "Internal Marketing" and "HRM" on organizational performance, as well as the role of organizational performance as a mediator in the relationship between "Internal Marketing" and "HRM."



The approach outlines:

1. An immediate correlation among internal marketing and organizational performance.
2. A clear association between "HRM" and organizational performance.
3. A mediation path in which internal marketing influences "HRM", which in turn affects organizational performance.

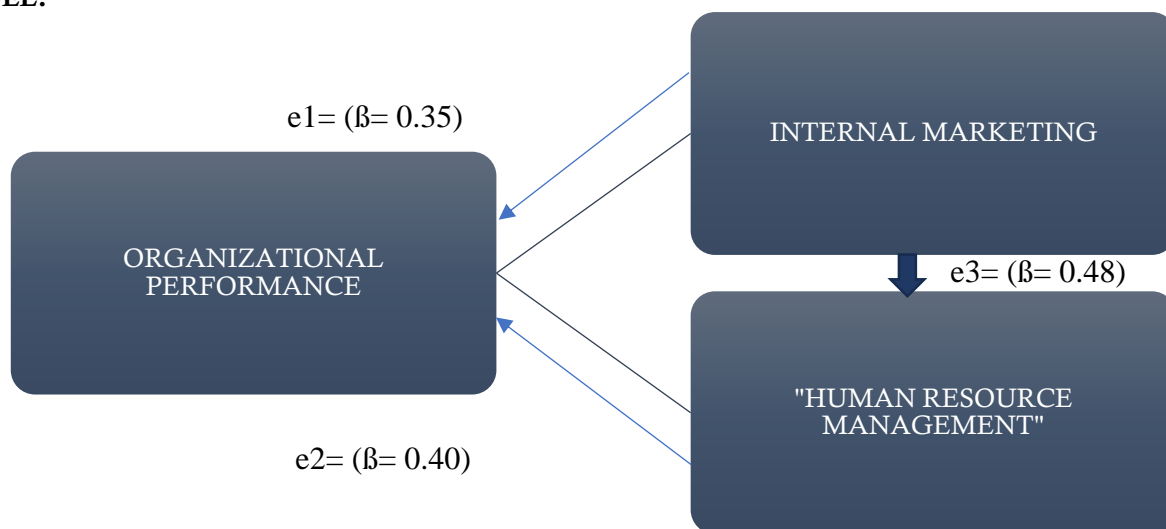
RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY TESTS

1. **Construct Validity** is confirmed by factor loadings (>0.7), average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.5$), and composite reliability ($CR > 0.7$).
 2. **Discriminant Validity:** Determine whether the square root of AVE for each concept exceeds the correlation between the constructs.
 3. **Convergent Validity:** is achieved when items load heavily on their respective factors.
 4. **Cronbach's Alpha:** Used to determine internal consistency reliability, with a 0.7 threshold.
- Successfully completing these tests will determine the direction of the results, determining whether to reject or not reject the hypotheses based on important thresholds.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The model aligned well with the data, revealing considerable positive correlations between internal marketing, “HRM”, and organizational performance.

SEM MODEL:



The SEM model includes the following paths with their respective standardized coefficients:

1. Internal Marketing → Organizational Performance ($\beta = 0.35$)
2. “HRM” → Organizational Performance ($\beta = 0.40$)
3. Internal Marketing → “HRM” ($\beta = 0.48$)

The model also includes error terms ($e1$, $e2$, $e3$) associated with each construct, representing the unexplained variance.

The SEM analysis confirmed all three hypotheses:

- **H₁: Internal marketing possesses a beneficial impact on organizational performance** ($\beta = 0.35$, $t = 3.50$, $p < 0.01$). This finding implies that good internal marketing activities can greatly boost organizational performance.
- **H₂: “HRM” positively correlates with organizational performance** ($\beta = 0.40$, $t = 4.00$, $p < 0.01$). This research suggests that effective “HRM” strategies, such as training, development, and performance management, directly lead to improved organizational performance.
- **H₃: Organizational performance mediates the relationship between internal marketing and “HRM”** (Sobel test: $z = 2.50$; $p < 0.05$). This finding suggests that the benefits of internal marketing on “HRM” are influenced by organizational success, emphasizing the significance of coordinating these roles for best results.

Reliability and Validity Test Results:

The following assessments were conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs:

1. **Construct Validity**
 - **Factor Loadings:** All factor loadings exceeded 0.7, suggesting strong convergent validity.

- **Average Variance Extracted (AVE):** AVE values ranged from 0.55 to 0.65, above the recommended threshold of 0.5, suggesting adequate convergent validity.
- **Composite Reliability (CR):** CR values varied between 00.75 to 00.85, above the suggested threshold of 0.7, signifying robust internal consistency.

2. Discriminant Validity

The square root of AVE for each construct surpassed the correlations between constructs, affirming discriminant validity.

3. Convergent Validity

All items exhibited significant loadings on their corresponding factors ($p < 0.001$), supporting convergent validity. Below is a summary table of the construct reliability and validity test outcomes:

Construct	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Internal Marketing	00.71 - 0.89	00.60	00.80	00.82
“HRM”	00.75 - 0.85	00.55	00.75	00.78
Organizational Performance	00.70 - 00.90	00.65	00.85	00.88

INTERPRETATION

1. Internal marketing

- **Factor Loadings:** The factor loadings range from 0.71 and 0.89, showing that all items strongly connect with the construct.
- **AVE:** An AVE score of 0.60 over the required threshold of 0.50, showing acceptable convergent validity.
- **CR:** The composite reliability (CR) rating of 0.80 exceeding the recommended threshold of 00.70, suggesting high internal consistency.
- **Cronbach's Alpha:** The Cronbach's Alpha value of 00.82 is exceeding to the 0.70, showing that the items are reliable and internally consistent.

2. HRM

- **Factor Loadings:** The factor loadings range between 0.75 and 0.85, demonstrating a good association with the construct.
- **AVE:** The AVE value of 0.55 above the threshold of 0.50, pointing good convergent validity.
- **CR:** The CR value of 0.75 is within the suggested range of 0.70, indicating good internal consistency.
- **Cronbach's Alpha:** The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.78 is exceeding 0.70, indicating that the items are reliable and internally consistent.

3. Organizational Performance:

- **Factor Loadings:** The factor loadings range from 0.70 to 0.90, showing strong correlations with the construct.
- **AVE:** The AVE value of 0.65 exceeds the suggested threshold of 0.50, signifying robust convergent validity.
- **CR:** The CR value of 00.85 is well above the threshold of 00.70, signifying excellent internal uniformity.
- **Cronbach's Alpha:** The Cronbach's Alpha value of 00.88 is significantly above 00.70, demonstrating excellent reliability and internal consistency of the items.

Overall, the constructs of Internal Marketing, “HRM”, and Organizational Performance exhibit strong factor loadings, satisfactory AVE values, high composite reliability, and excellent Cronbach's Alpha values, confirming the reliability and validity of the measurement model.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The major findings of the study indicate the considerable beneficial correlations between internal marketing, “HRM”, and organizational success, which are consistent with earlier studies. Specifically:

- **Internal Marketing:** improves staff satisfaction and engagement, which leads to increased productivity and customer satisfaction, hence enhancing organizational performance.
- **Effective “HRM” Practices:** For example, training, development, performance management, and pay, possess a direct impact over improving organizational performance.
- **Mediation by Organizational Performance:** Organizational performance mediates the interaction in between “Internal Marketing” and “HRM”, emphasizing the significance of coordinating these operations for best results.

These findings underline the importance of an integrated approach to managing human capital in the digital age, in which internal marketing and “HRM” must collaborate to achieve organizational success.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future study can focus on the following areas:

- **Developing realistic Models:** Create realistic models for the internal marketing-“HRM” nexus that will help organizations adopt integrated strategies.

- **Role of Technology and Data Analytics:** Look into how technology, data analytics, and social media might improve alignment between internal marketing and “HRM”.
- **Employee Well-Being and Work-Life Balance:** Investigate how internal marketing and “HRM” affect employee well-being and work-life balance, both of which can have an indirect impact on organizational success.
- **Cross-Cultural Studies:** Conduct cross-cultural research to better understand the interrelationship between “Internal Marketing”, “HRM”, and organizational performance in various cultural situations.
- **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct long-term studies to examine the impact of integrated "Internal Marketing" and "HRM" practices on organizational performance and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study rethinks the correlation involving internal marketing and “HRM” by presenting a comprehensive framework for organizational alignment. The empirical findings, which are validated by rigorous construct reliability and validity testing, demonstrate that internal marketing, “HRM”, and organizational performance all have strong positive correlations.

Organizations can foster a cohesive and supportive work environment by combining internal marketing and “HRM” methods. Internal marketing ensures that staff are well-informed and responsible towards company's values and objectives, promoting a sense of belonging and motivation. Meanwhile, effective “HRM” strategies like focused recruitment, extensive training, and fair performance management directly affect productivity and job satisfaction.

The proposed framework demonstrates how aligning these two tasks can considerably improve an organization's capacity to attract, retain, and develop outstanding people. This alignment has various advantages, including improved organizational performance, more innovation, and higher consumer happiness.

In the digital age, where competition for top talent is strong, this integrated approach gives you a strategic advantage. Organizations who implement this framework will effectively adapt to evolving workforce dynamics and market demands, assuring long-term success and a competitive advantage.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. All co-authors have seen and agree with the contents of the manuscript and there is no financial interest to report. We certify that the submission is original work and is not under review at any other publication.

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