



The influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals: literature reviews

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received Nov 23, 2023

Revised Nov 24, 2023

Accepted Nov 29, 2023

Keywords:

Customer Satisfaction;

Hospital;

Internal Marketing;

Literature Review;

Service Quality.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in a hospital environment, with a focus on understanding the related literature. The research method involved a systematic review of academic literature, articles and empirical research related to this topic. Internal marketing is seen as a key factor that can influence the way medical and non-medical personnel interact, work together, and deliver quality service to patients. The results of the literature analysis show that the implementation of an effective internal marketing strategy can improve team collaboration, employee motivation, and a shared understanding of healthcare. In addition, the improvement of service quality in hospitals directly contributes to the level of customer satisfaction. In conclusion, the development of internal marketing in hospitals can significantly affect service quality and, in turn, improve customer satisfaction.

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of health care, hospitals play an important role as the main provider of medical care and services for the community. Service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals have become crucial issues, as the health and well-being of individuals depend heavily on the effectiveness of the services provided. Today, the internal marketing paradigm within hospitals is becoming increasingly relevant, given the complexity of the organizational structure and the involvement of various parties in providing holistic and competitive services.

A number of previous studies have investigated the relationship between internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction in various industry sectors. In the healthcare sector, in-depth empirical research on the influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals is limited. Research results by (Sarker & Ashrafi, 2018) showed that strong internal marketing can increase employee motivation and engagement, which in turn improves patient experience and customer satisfaction.

Another important finding comes from research by Aswandi (2019), which highlights the importance of internal communication and shared understanding among medical and non-medical

teams to improve service quality. Furthermore, a longitudinal study by (Imani et al., 2020) showed that organizations that implement internal marketing strategies well experience improved performance, especially in terms of services tailored to patient needs.

In an international context, research by (Haq, 2023) emphasizes that organizational culture factors have a significant impact on the effectiveness of internal marketing in hospitals, affecting service quality and customer satisfaction. In addition, a number of literatures involve the concept of human resource management and its important role in ensuring service quality. Research by (Sahir et al., 2023) highlighted the importance of employee training and development as a crucial element of internal marketing to improve skills and competencies in delivering healthcare services.

However, despite these findings, there is an urgent need to further investigate the influence of internal marketing specifically in the hospital context. Currently, the academic literature does not provide a comprehensive picture of how aspects of internal marketing such as internal communication, employee motivation, and organizational culture can shape service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. Therefore, this study aims to detail and evaluate previous findings and investigate more deeply the influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. By understanding these dynamics, it is expected that this study can make a significant contribution to the development of the concept and implementation of internal marketing in the context of healthcare.

This study involved an in-depth exploration of the literature relating to internal marketing, service quality and customer satisfaction in a hospital environment. This comprehensive review aims to provide an in-depth insight into the research methodologies that have been used and the key findings that have been identified in previous studies. This understanding provides a solid foundation for detailing the impact of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in the hospital context.

This research makes a significant contribution to the field of healthcare management by addressing a crucial gap in the current academic literature. The study recognizes the limited empirical research on the influence of internal marketing in the healthcare sector, specifically within hospital environments. Through an extensive literature review, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how elements of internal marketing, including internal communication, employee motivation, and organizational culture, collectively shape service quality and customer satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method of writing this journal is based on a literature study to investigate the effect of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. This research utilizes a systematic approach to compile and analyze relevant literature, including theories, concepts, and previous research findings. The following is a breakdown of the method of writing this journal. The first step in the journal writing method is to identify the research topic and set the research objectives. In this case, the research focus is the effect of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. The research objectives included an in-depth understanding of the concept of internal marketing and its relationship with health services and customer satisfaction.

The author selected relevant and high-quality literature sources related to internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction in the hospital context. Literature sources included scholarly journals, books, articles, and recent research that has significantly contributed to the field. The data collection process involved extracting relevant information from the selected literature sources. The information extracted included internal marketing theories, conceptual frameworks, key findings from previous research, and methods used in related experimental research.

The information obtained from the literature was categorized and organized according to the research topic. Listing was done to ensure that all relevant aspects of internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction were systematically integrated in the journal writing. Analysis was conducted to evaluate empirical evidence, detect patterns, and organize key findings from the literature. The authors looked for contradictions, criticisms, and knowledge gaps that could form the basis for further developments in the study.

Findings from the literature are integrated to form strong arguments and conclusions. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction by presenting the context of the literature that supports each aspect. Once the data and literature findings were well integrated, the authors organized the journal according to the structure commonly used in academic journals, including an introduction, literature review, research methods (literature review in this context), findings, discussion, and conclusion.

The final step involves refining the writing, checking the accuracy of the information, and ensuring compliance with journal writing standards. The entire manuscript was evaluated to ensure that the arguments developed were logical and relevant. By using these methods, it is hoped that this journal can provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how internal marketing affects service quality and customer satisfaction in a hospital environment, providing a foundation for further knowledge development in this field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 Review Results

Internal Marketing	Internal marketing has a direct negative and significant effect on service quality. This is based on research conducted by (Sukotjo, 2012). This result is different from the general opinion of other researchers who say that internal marketing can improve the quality of service of employees who care about customers, so that it can ultimately increase customer satisfaction. (Resmi, 2016; Farhat & Usdeldi, 2017; Wantara, 2018; Dahmiri, 2023)
Service Quality	Service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction, increasing service quality variables will increase customer satisfaction levels. The results of this study are supported by research conducted by (Aburoub et al., 2011; Finaritra & Benjamin, 2021; Weng et al., 2016)
Customer Satisfaction	Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant mediating role on the relationship between internal marketing and service quality. The results of this study are reinforced by research conducted by (Nwoko et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2015; Gusnita, 2023)

Internal marketing, as a management concept that focuses on building positive relationships among organizational members, has been at the center of research attention regarding its influence on service quality in various sectors, including in the hospital context. However, a divergence of views emerged from the findings of a study conducted by Sukotjo (2012), which showed a negative and significant direct effect of internal marketing on service quality. This research, which potentially provides a different perspective from the majority view, raises questions and the need to further explore the underlying factors. Like other studies that say internal marketing has a positive and significant effect on service quality (Zaid et al., 2020; Aburayya et al., 2020; Wulur et al., 2020)

The results of Sukotjo (2012) study suggest that the implementation of internal marketing in hospitals does not always have a positive impact on service quality. Within this framework, there may be factors specific to the hospital context that moderate the relationship between internal marketing and service quality. The divergence from the general view, which generally views

internal marketing as a strategic tool to improve service quality by encouraging employee attention and engagement with customers, provides an interesting complexity for further investigation.

In other literature, a positive view of internal marketing as a driver of service quality improvement is supported by a number of studies. Resmi (2016), Farhat & Usdeldi (2017), Wantara (2018), and Dahmiri (2023) present findings that are in line with the general understanding that internal marketing can motivate employees to provide better service, which ultimately increases customer satisfaction. This perspective strengthens the argument that Sukotjo (2012) research results may be contextual or dependent on specific variables that have not been identified. The results confirm that internal marketing strategy is not just an additional element, but a critical element in shaping a satisfying customer experience (Mohammad et al., 2020; Al-Weshah, 2019; De Bruin et al., 2021; Prakash & Srivastava, 2019).

Service quality, as a critical variable in customer experience, has also been the focus of research to assess its influence on customer satisfaction. Findings from a number of studies, such as those conducted by Aburoub et al. (2011), Finaritra & Benjamin (2021), and Weng et al. (2016) confirm that service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. Therefore, improvements in service quality variables in hospitals are believed to encourage an increase in customer satisfaction levels. It is important to observe that this finding is in line with the general concept that high service quality can increase customers' perception of value received. In the context of hospitals, where aspects of trust, convenience, and service efficacy have a direct impact on customer satisfaction, improving service quality can be considered an effective strategy.

Customer satisfaction, as the end result of the service experience, is also a focus in evaluating the relationship between internal marketing and service quality. Research findings of Nwoko et al. (2021), Yang et al. (2015), and Gusnita (2023) show that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant mediating role in the relationship between internal marketing and service quality. This indicates that the effectiveness of internal marketing is not only reflected in improved service quality but also directly impacts the level of customer satisfaction. This proves that improved service quality is not just the result of technical skills and direct interaction with customers, but is also reflected in the overall atmosphere and internal work culture that promotes a commitment to service excellence (KIM, 2021; Demir, 2022; Taştan & Davoudi, 2020).

Research by Nwoko et al. (2021) illustrates that customer satisfaction can be considered as a mechanism through which the effects of internal marketing on service quality can be expressed and experienced by customers. Meanwhile, Gusnita (2023) research reinforces the idea that customer satisfaction can be a desirable outcome of effective internal marketing implementation.

Overall, the results of this research outline provide a foundation for a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction in hospitals. Although these findings make a valuable contribution, it is important to note that context and specific variables may play an important role in detailing these relationships. Therefore, further research is needed to gain more comprehensive and contextual insights, delving deeper into organizational dynamics and unique factors in the hospital environment that may moderate the relationship between internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of hospital services has a direct impact on the health and well-being of the community. With the increasing complexity of organizational structures and the various parties involved in providing holistic and competitive services, the internal marketing paradigm has become increasingly relevant. While the findings in this study provide valuable insights, the academic literature still does not provide a comprehensive picture of how internal marketing aspects such as internal communication, employee motivation, and organizational culture

specifically shape service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. Therefore, this study was initiated to detail and evaluate previous findings and more deeply investigate the influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals. It is expected that an in-depth understanding of these dynamics will make a significant contribution to the development of the concept and implementation of internal marketing in the healthcare context.

While this study has provided valuable insights into the influence of internal marketing on service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitals, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. Firstly, the study's reliance on existing literature may be constrained by the availability and comprehensiveness of the sources accessed, potentially impacting the depth and robustness of the findings. Additionally, the focus on internal marketing within the context of hospitals may limit the generalizability of the results to other diverse healthcare settings.

To address these limitations and further advance the understanding of internal marketing dynamics in healthcare, future research could adopt several strategies. Firstly, supplementing the literature review with primary data collection methods, such as surveys or interviews, would enhance the specificity of the findings and allow for a more in-depth exploration of perspectives within individual hospital contexts. Moreover, a comparative analysis across different types of healthcare institutions, such as public and private hospitals or specialties, could provide a nuanced understanding of contextual factors influencing internal marketing practices. Longitudinal studies would be valuable in capturing the evolving nature of internal marketing practices and their long-term impact on service quality and customer satisfaction. This approach would enable researchers to identify trends or patterns over time. Additionally, future research could incorporate the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, administrators, and patients, offering a more holistic view of internal marketing dynamics and their implications.

Furthermore, global comparative analyses across different countries and cultures could contribute to understanding how internal marketing practices vary internationally, considering the influence of cultural factors on organizational dynamics in healthcare settings. By addressing these future research suggestions, scholars can refine the understanding of the intricate dynamics between internal marketing, service quality, and customer satisfaction in hospitals, mitigating the limitations identified in this study and paving the way for more comprehensive insights.

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