Identify the internal marketing dimensions focusing on employee's customer-oriented behavior in the home appliance manufacturing industry using the fuzzy Delphi

Seyed Mansour Khoshkalam Soleymandarabi[a], Mohammad Ali Nasimi[b,*], Rahmat Ali Saberi Haghayegh[c]

[a]Department of Business Management, Rasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran

[b]Department of Business Management, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran

[c]Department of Business Management, Bandar Anzali Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali, Iran

(Communicated by Ehsan Kozegar)

Abstract

Internal marketing has been developed in various forms in all types of organizations. Mainly, internal marketing has been studied as a motivational strategy in service companies. Goods manufacturing industries have not benefited much from the use of internal marketing in strengthening employees' extra-role behaviors. Customer orientation is one of the extra-role behaviors of employees, which in turn is the source of value for internal and external customers. When we follow the internal process segmentation approach, the organization is divided into a set of internal suppliers and internal customers. In this case, it becomes important to study the customer-oriented behavior of employees in the exchanges within the organization. To ensure the implementation of internal marketing in manufacturing organizations, in a way that best meets the needs of these organizations, it was necessary to conduct a study specific to manufacturing industries; a study that included the identification of internal marketing components with a customer-oriented approach. The purpose of the current research was to identify and introduce the dimensions of internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach of employees in manufacturing industries. This is sequential mixed research in the inductive paradigm that was conducted in qualitative-quantitative phases. Its purpose is practical and its nature is exploratory. The data collection of the qualitative phase was carried out during semi-structured interviews that continued until theoretical saturation, and finally 15 experts and managers of manufacturing industries and university professors in the field of management participated in it. Qualitative phase analysis was done with them analysis approach using MAXQDA software. In the quantitative part, the fuzzy Delphi questionnaire was used to reach the consensus of the expert group on the dimensions identified in the qualitative phase. The results indicate the extraction of internal marketing dimensions with a customer-oriented approach in comprehensive themes (individual factors of employees and managers, organizational factors, motivational factors) and in 9 organizational themes, 1- Demographic characteristics 2- Organizational citizenship behavior of employees and managers 3- Managers' support 4- Internal communication 5- participatory management 6- Promotion of customer-oriented culture 7- Employee job security 8- Job satisfaction 9- Appreciation and 44 basic themes.

Keywords: internal marketing, fuzzy Delphi, home appliances manufacturing industry, customer-oriented behavior

*Corresponding author
Email addresses: khoshkalamsm@gmail.com (Seyed Mansour Khoshkalam Soleymandarabi), ali_nassimi2002@yahoo.com (Mohammad Ali Nasimi), saberi118@ut.ac.ir (Rahmat Ali Saberi Haghayegh)

1 Introduction

The success of organizations depends on their ability to meet customer expectations. This rule is not limited to industry, geography, and target society, but is effective in any business field. Attention paid to customers' demands varies from one organization to another. However, managers have considered customer orientation as the main requirement for the success of organizations [25]. Organizations Depending on the type of industry, resources, and environmental conditions, choose various methods to respond to customer expectations [1]. The effectiveness of any organization depends on the power of management in using multiple management strategies [7]. These strategies and methods, in addition to facilitating organizational operations in order to meet customers' expectations, also increase the effectiveness of resources. Also, employees are the objects of internal marketing. They are the best assets of a company, and it is crucial to retain them through adopting effective human resource policies [11], especially in businesses where the overall performance is more dependent on the performance and the role of employees. In such companies, human resources are the essential element of the growth and productivity of the organization and it is the most important competitive advantage [1]. Therefore, the organisations should initially allocate its resources to provide a work environment which helps to increase quality of work life, satisfies, and retains the employees and reduce turnover rates [39].

It is clear that providing the quality expected by customers is one of the key success factors of manufacturing industries, such as the home appliances manufacturing industry. To achieve this goal, in manufacturing organizations, in addition to formulating and implementing executive methods, production instructions, and procedures, the role of employee performance in the quality of the final product is very significant. This is especially important in the prevention of non-conformities, which identifies and tracks those, requires the employees to be aware of the customer's needs, and on the other hand, it requires the employees to actively participate in this direction. It is evident that there is an extra role in addition to the standard activities of the employees. In other words, organizations should pay special attention to meeting the needs of their employees and satisfying them, and On the other hand, in order to create and continuously update the customer consciousness should pay attention to the needs of customers in internal and external exchanges.

Internal marketing, in which employees are considered as the internal customers, has been discussed in recent decades as a strategy to achieve organizational goals by satisfying employees. The implementation of internal marketing equips organizations with competencies and capabilities that will improve their performance while taking advantage of environmental opportunities [44].

2 Theoretical framework and research literature

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Fuzzy Delphi

The Delphi technique is a systematic method for gathering and integrating the informed opinions of a group of experts about a question or a specific issue. Its features are: it uses a panel of experts to collect data; It is done in writing; During it, they try to reach consensus and agreement about each idea; It guarantees the anonymity of experts; Controlled feedback is used to reach convergence or to specify the divergence of opinions; It allows the participant to revise his opinions after reading the opinions of others [26].

The fuzzy Delphi method was invented in the 1980s by Kaufman and Gupta. This technique is used to validate or screen research components. The characteristic of this method is to provide a flexible framework that covers the obstacles related to imprecision and clarity. Many problems in decision-making are related to incomplete and imprecise information. The decisions made by experts are highly subjective because the decisions are based on their individual competencies, so it is better to display the data with fuzzy numbers and use fuzzy sets to analyze experts' opinions. To determine the importance of indexes and to screen the most important identified indexes, the Delphi technique can be used with a fuzzy approach. One of the main advantages of the fuzzy Delphi technique over the traditional Delphi technique is that one round can be used to summarize and screen items.

2.1.2 Internal marketing

Internal marketing is a planned effort using a marketing-like approach to overcome organizational resistance to change and to align, motivate and inter-functionally co-ordinate and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies in order to deliver customer satisfaction through a process of creating motivated and customer orientated employees [33]. Internal marketing focuses on achieving effective internal exchanges between the organization and its employee groups as a prerequisite for successful exchanges with external markets [17]. When treated right, employees will treat your customers right [22]. Internal marketing can make people in the organization more sensitive, more capable, and more willing to understand and satisfy customer needs [38]. The implementation of internal marketing equips organizations with competencies and capabilities that will improve their performance while taking advantage of environmental opportunities [13].

2.1.3 Customer orientation

Customer orientation refers to "the sufficient understanding of one's target buyers to be able to create superior value for them continuously". It is based on a marketing concept that puts the interests of customers first. In practice, customer orientation involves all of the activities related to information generation and dissemination and appropriate responses to current and future customer needs and preferences [41]. In expressing the relationship between customer orientation and internal marketing, we can refer to the functions of internal marketing, including the development of internal customer orientation and increasing the motivation of employees to work towards a common goal [15]. Internal marketing is a critical and fundamental activity to create a customer-focused organizational culture [39].

2.1.4 Relationship between internal marketing and customer orientation

The relationship between internal marketing and customer orientation has existed since the beginning of the internal marketing concept. In the theoretical foundations, there is a wide range for this relationship, including customer orientation as a necessity, as one of the steps in the evolution of internal marketing, or as an outcome of internal marketing implementation. By enumerating the evolution stages of internal marketing, Bonyadi [8], introduced the customer orientation of employees as the main issue of the second stage of internal marketing implementation.

The internal market of employees is best motivated for service-mindedness, and customer-oriented behavior by an active, marketing-like approach, where marketing-like activities are used internally [17]. The internal market of employees is best motivated for service-mindedness and customer-oriented performance by an active, marketing-like approach, where a variety of activities are used internally in an active, marketing-like, and coordinated way [10]. Employees' perception of the effects of social responsibility and internal marketing as customer-oriented behavior is positively related to their work engagement. Adding the practices of social responsibility effects to internal marketing programs are likely to increase employees' anticipated work attitudes such as work engagement and subsequently positive employee job outcomes, increasing employee customer-oriented behavior [29].

Customer orientation should not be limited to those departments that are directly related to customers, but customer orientation should be considered in various business activities, including the interaction of operational staff with customers, product/service design and development, and Responding to complaints. From this point of view, customer orientation is actually the goal of organizations to pay attention to the needs, requests, and expectations of customers and then make a strong commitment to understand and fulfill them in an active way to achieve sustainable growth of the organization [25]. Employees must believe that their actions are part of a communication chain to the customer. It is not enough to have a customer relations department handle customer concerns while the rest of the company, including those who develop products, are oblivious to the people who buy those products [34].

2.1.5 Internal marketing in manufacturing industries

The pioneer researchers of internal marketing have applied this strategy in various industries in the development of theoretical foundations. Then, over time, other researchers also investigated multiple hypotheses of internal marketing in non-service areas. In the following, a lot of research was done on internal marketing in different places of the world. But all in all, the results of the research indicated that the field of manufacturing includes a small share of the studies. Of course, according to global studies, this deficiency is also evident in Iran. Of course, despite the lack of internal marketing studies in the field of manufacturing, many experts and researchers have conceptualized and developed internal marketing in these organizations. In the meantime, some studies refer to the development of the concept of internal marketing in the depth of operations of all types of organizations, including service and manufacturing, and some also refer exclusively to manufacturing organizations.

Shafiei and Mirabi [37] considered internal marketing as a prerequisite for providing suitable goods and services to customers and a factor in their satisfaction, and they believe that internal marketing creates higher productivity and appropriate interactions with customers and further improves the performance of products and services. Bonyadi et al. [8], state that the applications of internal marketing should be widely expanded in other types of organizations in addition to service organizations. They believe that internal marketing can be used to motivate employees, even those who are not in direct contact with final customers. Foreman and Money [16] have considered it a limiting idea that internal marketing should only be used in service organizations. They believe that in order for internal marketing to be useful in organizations, it should be applied in manufacturing sections too. While they expand the concept of internal marketing to different parts of the organization, they have introduced a variety of internal marketing implementation situations according to the implementing department and the target department. According to Gummesson [19], internal marketing is a strong concept not only for service companies but also for industrial companies. This is especially true for companies that supply complex equipment or systems to the consumer and commercial markets. Even in cases where the relationship between the organization's employees and customers is low, companies are looking for better ways to prepare their employees to carry out organizational changes, introducing new products and services, new technologies, new procedures, and the like. Gummesson believes that the effectiveness of internal marketing is greatly enhanced with the help of the concept of internal customers. This concept relates the actual implementation of internal marketing to face-to-face interactions on the shop floor, designers' and planners' offices, and others. He finally concludes that internal marketing is a strong concept not only for service companies but also for industrial manufacturing companies. Similarly, Greene [18], believes that internal marketing, despite being more important in the service industry, can be used in all other industries as well. According to Varey [40], Internal marketing develops the customer paradigm and ensures that quality management is not left to a separate management function and the differing perspectives on quality are rationalized by reducing departmental isolation and inter-functional conflicts by communication (i.e. information sharing and debate) and joint responsibilities to one another. This urges an explicit market focus in non-marketing functions such as manufacturing, engineering, design and finance, and the sharing of customer satisfaction goals. This is a form of "de-departmentalization" of functions and may be seen operationally in cross-functional problem-solving and briefing teams. Thus internal marketing is a means of integrating the business functions. Owusu-Frimpong and Martins [30] believe that internal marketing, as a concept, by adopting the approach of internal customers and internal suppliers, is applicable in small and medium-sized companies, both manufacturing and service. Cahill [10] emphasizes the need to pay attention to manufacturing companies in addition to service companies in internal marketing plans. He criticizes the common definitions of internal marketing and states that most definitions focus exclusively on service companies, while a comprehensive definition of internal marketing is that considers the same tasks in both types of service and manufacturing companies, because many activities in manufacturing and service companies are equally necessary. He believes that the reason for using internal marketing by companies is that the external customers of the organization should be happy to be with us and should want to continue buying our goods and services. As it is known, in addition to services, it also mentions goods.

2.2 Research literature

2.2.1 The research literature on the relationship between internal marketing and customer orientation

Dehghani Soltani and Mohammadi [13], investigated the role of internal marketing in promoting customer-oriented behavior by explaining the mediating role of emotional behaviors. The results obtained from the research showed that the value of needs, self-efficacy, deep acting, and external acting directly have a significant effect on customer-oriented behavior. Surface acting and deep acting play a mediating role in the relationship between self-efficacy and customer-oriented behavior, and deep acting plays a mediating role in the relationship between the value of needs and customer-oriented behavior. Also, the value of needs does not have a significant effect on acting. Saberi [36], conducted a study to investigate the effect of internal marketing on customer-oriented behavior through the mediation of job satisfaction and emotional commitment in public library librarians of Kerman province. The results showed that internal marketing has a significant effect on customer-oriented behavior and also has an effect on job satisfaction and emotional commitment. Job satisfaction and emotional commitment also have a significant effect on customer-oriented behavior, and finally, job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on emotional commitment. Davoudvandi [12] conducted correlational descriptive research with the title of investigating the effect of internal marketing on customer orientation in an Iranian insurance company and concluded that internal marketing and paying bonuses to employees have a positive and significant effect on customer orientation. In addition, the impact of organizational vision and also the impact of employee development on employee customer orientation was confirmed. Olorunsola [29] proposed a conceptual model that simultaneously examined the effects of corporate social responsibility as well as internal marketing on employee customer-oriented behavior. The results showed that job satisfaction consistently increases

the employees' customer-oriented behaviors. Demir [14], in research on the impact of internal marketing on customer perception in small and medium enterprises, showed that internal communication, the support of managers, and the promotion of a customer-oriented culture are the most important factors affecting customer satisfaction. Qiu [32], in response to the inadequacies and fragmentation of internal marketing literature, conducted a systematic review. Based on the analysis of 349 articles, four dimensions (internal communication, support of managers, promotion of customer-oriented culture, and job satisfaction) were identified as determining factors of internal marketing. Okunyeva [28], presented a research titled the function of internal marketing in the process of forming a customer-oriented company. The results of the study showed the effect of internal communication, promotion of customer-oriented culture, and support of managers helps to increase the customer-oriented behavior of employees.

2.2.2 The research literature on the implementation of internal marketing in manufacturing industries

Despite the lack of internal marketing studies in manufacturing industries, there have been researchers who have developed internal marketing conceptual models in manufacturing industries in the past. Lean [23], showed that internal marketing in manufacturing industries leads to market orientation due to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Minar [24] concluded that applying the concept of internal marketing in industrial equipment manufacturing industries can make significant improvements in the organization's inter-functional coordination, in order to overcome the problems of lack of integration and to create inter-functional understanding. Following Wu [42] conclude that internal marketing in product-related services in manufacturing industries has a positive effect on job satisfaction, customer orientation, and organizational performance. Ali [3] showed that internal marketing is very important in manufacturing industries that depend on human resources. Saad [35] showed that internal marketing in manufacturing organizations is significantly related to the effectiveness of external marketing. Ali concluded that internal marketing is a suitable strategy for large manufacturing companies and the implementation of internal marketing methods leads to an increase in customer orientation and as a result the effectiveness of activities related to the product, pricing, promotional activities, and distribution activities. Prasad and Nandi [31], concluded that the use of internal marketing in non-service organizations, including manufacturing companies, will be desirable to achieve customer satisfaction.

Nasre Esfahani [27], in descriptive-pragmatic research in the home appliances manufacturing industry, showed that internal marketing includes: price; product; promotion; location. And it affects organizational innovation as well as employees' self-efficacy, and finally, the mediating role of employees' self-efficacy in the relationship between internal marketing and organizational innovation was confirmed.

Atefatdoost et al. [5], in descriptive-pragmatic research in the steel production industry, showed that internal marketing (vision; staff development; bonuses) has a positive effect on the performance of the organization both directly and indirectly. He showed that in an indirect case, it has a positive effect through the mediation role of both employees' organizational commitment and organizational entrepreneurship.

Akbari et al. [2], conducted a study with the aim of investigating the relationship between transformational leadership, internal marketing, and entrepreneurial orientation in the oil production industry. Using structural equation modeling, he showed that transformational leadership is effective on entrepreneurial orientation, transformational leadership is effective on internal marketing, and internal marketing is effective on entrepreneurial orientation. Also, internal marketing is less effective as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and entrepreneurial orientation.

Basirat et al. [6], in descriptive-pragmatic research in the oil and gas production industry, using structural equations, showed that internal marketing (training and development; empowerment; motivation; reward; communication) both directly and indirectly by mediating entrepreneurial tendencies, it has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

Imani et al. [21], by developing a conceptual model and empirically examining showed a specific relationship between internal marketing (training and development, empowerment, motivation, and reward, communication) with the performance of employees in the oil production industry. And he identified the mediating role of organizational innovation.

The implementation of internal marketing in organizations has many results, based on the existing research literature; manufacturing organizations are not exempt from this rule. By considering the requirements of theoretical foundations, including paying attention to the approach of internal suppliers and customers who are along the organizational value chain, the internal marketing strategy can be implemented in the processes and intra-organizational exchanges of manufacturing industries. Of course, we need more studies to identify the dimensions of internal marketing for manufacturing industries and the customer-oriented nature of production employees. Internal marketing emphasizes the importance of the role of employees in advancing organizational goals in order to meet the needs of

customers. The use of internal marketing in organizations leads to the use of employees' extra-role behaviors (specifically, the customer-oriented behavior of employees) to prevent production non-conformities. This, in turn, causes the identification, tracking, and preventive elimination of non-conformities by using the awareness and motivation of employees to actively participate and play extra roles. According to the research literature, we found that there are few studies on internal marketing in manufacturing industries [43]. Especially, no significant study was found in the field of internal marketing in manufacturing industries with a customer-oriented approach. Therefore, the problem of the current research is to identify and introduce internal marketing components with regard to the customer-oriented approach of employees in manufacturing industries and specifically the home appliance manufacturing industry and related industries. Considering the dispersion of theoretical topics and the weakness of previous studies in presenting the internal marketing model specific to manufacturing industries, in this research we identified the components of internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach of employees in manufacturing industries.

3 Methodology

This research has been a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative), exploratory research based on the grounded theory approach with the theme analysis model of Braun and Clarke [9]. The research tool in the qualitative step was a semi-structured interview. The participants of the qualitative phase were theoretical and experimental experts. The most important criterion in the selection of participants was their experience and expertise in the field of internal marketing and manufacturing industries. For this purpose, in this research, adapted from Amraee and Azar [4], the participants included theoretical experts and experimental experts. Theoretical experts were university professors and marketing researchers who had opinions in the field of internal marketing and had research records in this field. Experienced experts including senior managers, middle managers, heads, and experts in the home appliances manufacturing industry with the related characteristics (education related to the research topic; More than 5 years of work experience in selected manufacturing industries; thorough knowledge of marketing; interested in participating in research and expressing opinions and experiences). In this way, 15 people were selected as a sample by using the snowball technique and reaching theoretical saturation. In qualitative step analysis, AXIAL AND SELECTIVE CODING based on the grounded theory approach with Braun and Clarke [9] theme analysis model was used in MAXQDA 10 software. In the explanation of theme analysis, it should be said that it involves a process of going back and forth between the stages and it should be done over time, which means that the researcher collects and analyzes data over time. The six steps of theme analysis, with the approach of Braun and Clarke [9], are as follows:

Step 1. Familiarity with data

In order for the researcher to get to know the depth and scope of the content of the data, it is necessary to immerse himself in them to some extent. Immersion in data usually includes frequent reading of data and active reading of data (i.e. searching for meanings and patterns).

Step 2. Creating initial codes

The second stage begins when the researcher has read the data and become familiar with them. This step includes creating primary codes from the data. Codes introduce a feature of the data that seems interesting to the analyst. The coded data are different from the units of analysis (subjects). Coding can be done manually or through software programs.

Step 3. Search for optional codes

This step includes categorizing different codes in the form of selective codes and arranging all coded data summaries. In fact, the researcher starts analyzing his codes and considers how different codes can be combined to create a general theme. At this stage, researchers discarded incomplete or unrelated codes as well as duplicate codes to reach this number of selective codes.

Step 4. The formation of sub-themes

The fourth stage begins when the researcher creates a set of themes and reviews them. This stage includes the two stages of reviewing and refining and shaping the sub-themes. The first stage includes a review at the level of coded summaries. In the second stage, the validity of the sub-themes in relation to the data set is considered.

Step 5. Defining and naming the main themes

The fifth stage starts when there is a satisfactory picture of the themes. In this stage, the researcher defines and revises the main themes presented for analysis, then analyzes the data inside them. By defining and reviewing, the nature of what a theme discusses is determined and it is determined which aspect of data each main theme contains.

In this research, theme analysis has been done on the basis of dividing themes into basic, organized, and inclusive themes.

Step 6. Preparation the report

The sixth stage begins when the researcher has a set of main themes that are completely abstract and in accordance with the underlying structures of the research. This stage includes the final analysis and report writing. which will be presented at the end of the research. MAXQDA 10 software was used in this section.

As mentioned, in the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Interview questions included:

- What is your definition of internal marketing according to the customer-oriented approach of employees?

- In your opinion, what are the components of internal marketing according to the customer-oriented approach of employees?

- In your opinion, what factors affect internal marketing according to the customer-oriented approach of employees?

- In your opinion, what are the obstacles and barriers of internal marketing with regard to the customer-oriented approach of employees?

All the interviewees were assured that the confidentiality of the answers will be fully respected and their opinions will be used only in line with the research objectives and only the researcher will have access to this information. In order to validate the process of coding and quality control in the qualitative part, dimensions, and components of internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach, Cohen's Kappa coefficient index was used. To increase the validity of the research in the qualitative phase, adherence to the principles of qualitative research implementation (continuous and long-term involvement; continuous observation; progressive mentality) and in the quantitative phase, the review of the results by colleagues was used.

Regarding the quantitative part, it is necessary to explain that in the first stage of the fuzzy Delphi technique questionnaire using a 7-point scale (very low to very high) based on the components extracted from the qualitative step, and then using a modified item questionnaire The results of the first phase of fuzzy Delphi were used. In short, the steps of implementing fuzzy Delphi are as follows [20]:

- Identifying the appropriate spectrum for the fuzzification of verbal expressions

- Fuzzy summation of fuzzified values

- De-fuzzification of values

- Select the acceptance criteria and then filter the values

After fuzzification of the experts' point of view, triangular fuzzy numbers are summarized by a definite value that is related to the best average, this operation is called defuzzification.

4 Data analysis and findings

According to the findings, 47% of the experts had a master's degree, and 53% had a doctorate. 13% of the interviewees had a work experience between 1 and 10 years, 54% had a work experience between 11 and 20 years, and 33% had a work experience of more than 20 years. 93% of them were men and 7% were women. The interview data were analyzed in six steps as follows:

The first step - getting to know the data: the first step in any qualitative analysis is reading and re-reading the contents; In this research, after the audio interviews were conducted and converted into text, they were analyzed and re-read to gain familiarity with the data. Getting to know the data was achieved by studying and writing the statements obtained from the interviews.

Second step - creating initial codes (first level): In this stage, the researchers started to organize the data with a meaningful and systematic method and with open coding. This means that there were no predetermined codes; Rather, as they did through the coding process, they have continuously developed and modified the codes. Coding reduces large amounts of data into small meaningful chunks. In each section, the data related to the research problem

or interesting were coded (not all pieces of text were coded). At this stage, 213 initial codes were obtained from the interviews.

The third step - searching for themes: In this stage, the researcher decides which first-level codes to put in a category or theme so that they have a correct semantic relationship. At this stage, the researchers removed the incomplete or unrelated and repetitive codes in order to specify selective codes. In the following, 44 selective codes were obtained by the researchers.

The fourth step - the formation of sub-themes: in the conducted research, some of the examined concepts were clearly placed in a basic theme; For example, there were several concepts (codes) that were related to communication and what the experts said about the status and conditions of internal communication of managers, they were gathered in a sub-theme called internal communication. Table 1 shows how the data related to each theme were identified.

Table 1: Creating internal marketing sub-themes with the customer-oriented approach

Sub-themes	Basic theme
Demographic characteristics	gender
	age
	education
	work experience
	Organizational level
Organizational citizenship behavior (employees and managers)	Follow organizational rules and regulations
	Accepting the job description and aligning with human resources policies
	Organizational loyalty
	Supporting the organization's identity
	Respecting organizational issues
	Voluntarily accepting additional roles
	Being punctual in organizational matters
	Ability to tolerate unavoidable distressing situations
Management support	Supplying job fulfillment resources
	Provide career guidance to employees
	Resolve job conflicts
	Responding to family requests of employees
Internal communication	Physical presence of managers
	Face-to-face communication with employees
	Holding Meetings
	Conduct correspondence
Participatory Management	Team activities
	Using the suggestion system
	Employee survey
Promoting the customer-oriented culture	Promote and disseminate information about the positive outcomes of customer orientation
	Explicit customer-oriented training (seminars and conferences, etc.)
	Implicit customer-oriented training (preparation and distribution of catalogs or brochures, etc.)
	Interaction and two-way communication with the customer
Job security for employees	Job flexibility to work with different management attitudes
	Choosing an organization that fits the individual's organizational culture
	Strong work relationships with superiors
	No complaints and frequent dissatisfaction
	Focus on job results
	Correct advice to superiors
	Thorough knowledge of HR laws
Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction about payments
	job improvement
	Interested in the nature of work
	Suitable work environment
	Welfare facilities
Appreciation	encouragement
	Attention to interpersonal respect
	To fulfill expectations
	Consult with staff

The fifth step - defining and naming the main themes: in this stage, after obtaining a satisfactory image of the codings, the researcher analyzes, defines, and revises the main themes of the research. The main themes are named based on the content of the theme and according to the opinion of the researcher. At this stage, finally, after going

back and forth among the sub-themes, 3 main themes were finally identified, with the help of which the research can be explained.

Table 2: Creating main themes for internal marketing with the customer-oriented approach

Main themes	Sub-themes
Individual factors (employees and managers)	Demographic characteristics
	Organizational citizenship behavior (employees and managers)
Organizational factors	Management support
	Internal communication
	Participatory Management
	Promoting the customer-oriented culture
Motivational factors	Job security for employees
	Job Satisfaction
	Appreciation

The sixth step - preparation of the report: this stage includes the final analysis and writing the report. It is worth mentioning that all the analysis steps were done with the help of MAXQDA software. Finally, after completing the above steps, the graphic report of the MAXQDA software including comprehensive and organizing themes can be seen in Figure 1.

Cohen's Kappa coefficient index was used to validate the coding process and quality control in the qualitative part of identifying dimensions and components of internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach. To do this, an expert in relation to the research topic, who was not aware of the coding done, was asked to re-code and categorize the themes. Then, using SPSS software, the themes provided by the researcher were compared with the themes provided by the expert. The similarity and closeness of the codes of these two researchers show the high agreement between the two coding processes and express their reliability. As shown below, the value of Cohen's Kappa coefficient index was calculated as 0.897, which according to Table 3, is at the level of excellent agreement.

Table 3: Status of Cohen's Kappa coefficient index and the results of agreement coefficient statistic

Statistical results (Cohen's kappa agreement coefficient)		The numerical value of the Kappa coefficient index	Agreement status
Value	0.897	Less than 0	Weak
		0 - 0.2	Unimportant
Number of samples	44	0.21 - 0.4	Medium
		0.41 - 0.6	Appropriate
Meaningful	0.0003	0.61 - 0.8	Valuable
		0.81 - 1.00	Excellent

As stated, in this research, to increase the validity, all the primary codes were reviewed by the researcher at the end of the coding of each interview and reached the main themes, and in addition, the extracted codes were re-validated by the colleagues. Also, the report related to the first-level codes related to four interviews was approved through face-to-face reference to the participants. In addition, to check the verifiability in the final stage, the classes obtained were given to three of the primary interviewees for review and confirmation, and also the complete text of the four primary interviews implemented with open coding was presented and commented to four members of the academic staff. Their approval was received in order to implement and correctly code the concepts, which helped a lot in this process.

In the qualitative phase, the dimensions and final components of the research were identified. Based on the expert interviews conducted, a total of 56 initial items were identified. Dimensions (3 dimensions), components (9 components), and indexes (44 indexes) effective in internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach were identified. In the quantitative phase, items were screened and evaluated to determine the importance of each item according to the opinion of experts using a questionnaire using the fuzzy Delphi method. In this study, triangular fuzzy numbers were used to fuzzify the experts' points of view. Due to the large amount of information, the importance of a number of items according to the opinion of experts was presented in Table 4.

For de-fuzzification, values greater than 0.7 were accepted and any index with a score lower than 0.7 was rejected. The fuzzy average and de-fuzzification outputs of the importance of each of the dimensions and components affecting internal marketing with a customer-oriented approach are presented in Table 5.

Based on the obtained results, all 3 dimensions and 9 core codes, and 44 indexes were approved, the experts reached a consensus, and the components remained in the final results of the research.
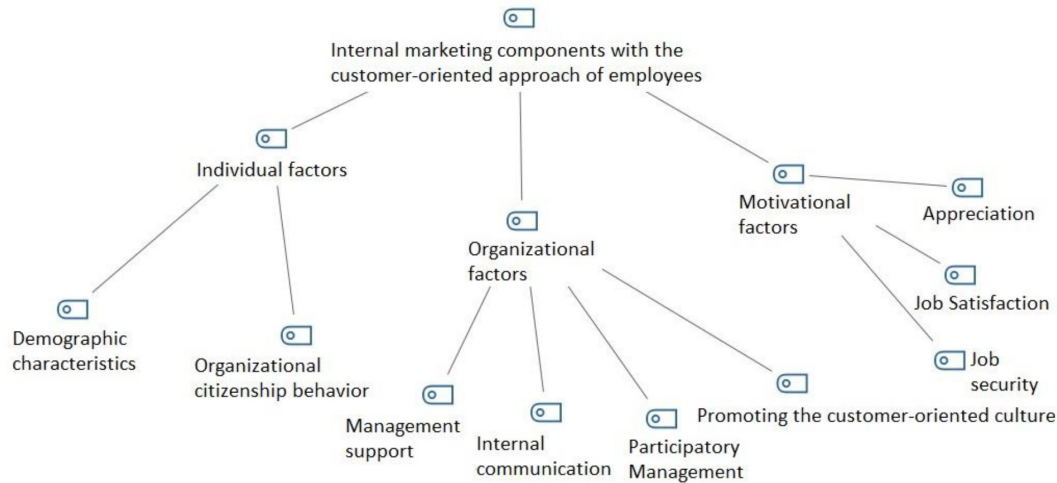
Figure 1: Internal marketing components with the customer-oriented approach of employees in manufacturing industries

Table 4: Fuzzification of experts' views for each of the initial items

No. Initial items	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	...	Expert 15
1	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(1, 1, 0.9)	...	(1, 0.9, 0.75)
2	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	...	(1, 0.9, 0.75)
3	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(0.75, 0.5, 0.3)	...	(1, 1, 0.9)
4	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)	(1, 1, 0.9)	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)	...	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)
5	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)	(0.75, 0.5, 0.3)	(1, 1, 0.9)	...	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)
6	(1, 0.9, 0.75)	(0.75, 0.5, 0.3)	(0.9, 0.75, 0.5)	(0.75, 0.5, 0.3)	...	(1, 1, 0.9)

Table 5: The results of the screening of dimensions, components, and indexes

	Lower limit	Probable value	Upper limit	Fuzzy average	Definite value	Result
Dimensions						
Individual factors (employees and managers)	0.85	0.96	0.99	(0.851, 0.958, 0.993)	0.94	Accepted
Organizational factors	0.82	0.95	0.99	(0.819, 0.948, 0.992)	0.92	Accepted
Motivational factors	0.77	0.92	0.98	(0.772, 0.915, 0.978)	0.89	Accepted
Components						
Demographic characteristics	0.68	0.84	0.93	(0.677, 0.836, 0.925)	0.81	Accepted
Organizational citizenship behavior (employees and managers)	0.70	0.86	0.95	(0.965, 0.855, 0.945)	0.83	Accepted
Management support	0.74	0.89	0.96	(0.737, 0.887, 0.962)	0.86	Accepted
Internal communication	0.73	0.88	0.96	(0.731, 0.883, 0.960)	0.86	Accepted
Participatory Management	0.71	0.86	0.95	(0.706, 0.862, 0.945)	0.84	Accepted
Promoting the customer-oriented culture	0.73	0.88	0.95	(0.727, 0.878, 0.953)	0.83	Accepted
Job security for employees	0.69	0.86	0.95	(0.693, 0.860, 0.951)	0.84	Accepted
Job Satisfaction	0.67	0.83	0.92	(0.671, 0.828, 0.923)	0.81	Accepted
Appreciation	0.96	0.88	0.74	(0.737, 0.883, 0.962)	0.86	Accepted
Indexes						
gender	0.75	0.89	0.96	(0.747, 0.893, 0.963)	0.87	Accepted
age	0.66	0.82	0.92	(0.661, 0.818, 0.921)	0.80	Accepted
education	0.66	0.83	0.94	(0.657, 0.827, 0.937)	0.81	Accepted
work experience	0.78	0.90	0.96	(0.776, 0.903, 0.957)	0.88	Accepted
Organizational level	0.76	0.90	0.97	(0.755, 0.895, 0.965)	0.87	Accepted
Follow organizational rules and regulations	0.67	0.83	0.92	(0.672, 0.827, 0.916)	0.81	Accepted
Accepting the job description and aligning with human resources policies	0.75	0.90	0.97	(0.748, 0.897, 0.967)	0.87	Accepted
Organizational loyalty	0.72	0.88	0.96	(0.716, 0.880, 0.963)	0.85	Accepted
Supporting the organization's identity	0.65	0.82	0.92	(0.645, 0.815, 0.922)	0.79	Accepted
Respecting organizational issues	0.72	0.88	0.97	(0.717, 0.880, 0.968)	0.86	Accepted
Voluntarily accepting additional roles	0.74	0.89	0.97	(0.763, 0.892, 0.968)	0.87	Accepted
Being punctual in organizational matters	0.72	0.87	0.95	(0.715, 0.873, 0.953)	0.85	Accepted

Ability to tolerate unavoidable distressing situations	0.70	0.87	0.96	(0.701, 0.867, 0.957)	0.84	Accepted
Supplying job fulfillment resources	0.75	0.89	0.96	(0.747, 0893, 0.963)	0.87	Accepted
Provide career guidance to employees	0.78	0.92	0.98	(0.776, 0.917, 0.978)	0.89	Accepted
Resolve job conflicts	0.77	0.92	0.98	(0.767, 0.915, 0.980)	0.89	Accepted
Responding to family requests of employees	0.72	0.88	0.96	(0.716, 0.880, 0.963)	0.85	Accepted
Physical presence of managers	0.74	0.90	0.98	(0.743, 0.900, 0.975)	0.87	Accepted
Face-to-face communication with employees	0.69	0.85	0.95	(0.691, 0.848, 0.946)	0.83	Accepted
Holding Meetings	0.72	0.88	0.97	(0.716, 0.878, 0.971)	0.86	Accepted
Conduct correspondence	0.77	0.92	0.98	(0.772, 0.915, 0.978)	0.89	Accepted
Team activities	0.75	0.90	0.96	(0.752, 0.897, 0.962)	0.87	Accepted
Using the suggestion system	0.75	0.89	0.96	(0.751, 0.893, 0.958)	0.87	Accepted
Employee survey	0.71	0.85	0.94	(0.706, 0.850, 0.936)	0.83	Accepted
Promote and disseminate information about the positive outcomes of customer orientation	0.77	0.91	0.97	(0.771, 0.905, 0.971)	0.88	Accepted
Explicit customer-oriented training (seminars and conferences, etc.)	0.63	0.87	0.91	(0.633, 0.796, 0.906)	0.78	Accepted
Implicit customer-oriented training (preparation and distribution of catalogs or brochures, etc.)	0.72	0.87	0.96	(0.716, 0.870, 0.960)	0.85	Accepted
Interaction and two-way communication with the customer	0.68	0.84	0.93	(0.681, 0.835, 0.962)	0.81	Accepted
Job flexibility to work with different management attitudes	0.68	0.84	0.94	(0.677, 0.843, 0.942)	0.82	Accepted
Choosing an organization that fits the individual's organizational culture	0.71	0.87	0.96	(0.711, 0.871, 0.955)	0.85	Accepted
Strong work relationships with superiors	0.60	0.79	0.91	(0.603, 0.768, 0.907)	0.77	Accepted
No complaints and frequent dissatisfaction	0.77	0.92	0.98	(0.772, 0.915, 0.978)	0.89	Accepted
Focus on job results	0.72	0.88	0.97	(0.716, 0.878, 0.971)	0.86	Accepted
Correct advice to superiors	0.72	0.88	0.97	(0.717, 0.880, 0.968)	0.86	Accepted
Thorough knowledge of HR laws	0.74	0.89	0.97	(0.736, 0.892, 0.968)	0.87	Accepted
Satisfaction about payments	0.72	0.87	0.95	(0.715, 0.873, 0.953)	0.85	Accepted
job improvement	0.75	0.89	0.96	(0.743, 0.893, 0.963)	0.87	Accepted
Interested in the nature of work	0.74	0.89	0.97	(0.743, 0.887, 0.965)	0.87	Accepted
Suitable work environment	0.71	0.87	0.95	(0.707, 0.866, 0.948)	0.84	Accepted
Welfare facilities	0.69	0.85	0.95	(0.691, 0.848, 0.946)	0.83	Accepted
encouragement	0.72	0.88	0.97	(0.716, 0.878, 0.971)	0.86	Accepted
Attention to interpersonal respect	0.70	0.92	0.98	(0.700, 0.915, 0.978)	0.89	Accepted
to fulfill expectations	0.75	0.90	0.96	(0.752, 0.897, 0.962)	0.87	Accepted
Consult with staff	0.84	0.96	1.00	(0.840, 0.963, 0.997)	0.94	Accepted

5 Conclusions

In this research, after analyzing the data using the theme analysis method and conducting interviews with experts, the dimensions of internal marketing in three dimensions (individual factors of employees and managers; organizational factors; motivational factors) and in the form of 9 organizing themes (demographic characteristics; organizational citizenship behavior of employees and managers; managers' support; internal communication; participatory management; promotion of customer-oriented culture; job security for employees; job satisfaction; appreciation) were identified. Due to the lack of research literature for some cases including demographics, participatory management, and appreciation, the results can be introduced as the innovations of this research. In addition to that, the lacks of internal marketing studies in manufacturing industries as well as the lack of internal marketing studies with a customer-oriented approach of employees in these industries were other innovative aspects of this research.

Individual factors of employees and managers have two components: demographic characteristics and organizational citizenship behavior of employees and managers. The concept of internal marketing is closely related to human resources and the social context within organizations, and naturally, the implementation of internal marketing in organizations has many results in the field of human resources. The marketing department of the organization alone and with the participation of a small number of people in the organization cannot achieve effective customer orientation. Effective customer orientation requires that each employee has an eye on the market. Employees must believe that their actions are part of a chain of communication with the customer. It is not enough for the customer relations department to address the customer's concerns while the rest of the organization, including the production staff, is indifferent to the consumers of the product. Paying less attention to the employees working in the internal processes of manufacturing companies causes the lack of expansion of the concept and scope of application of internal marketing in the organization's value chain. The need for internal marketing lies in the fact that it provides a clear picture of how a person or group can make an effective contribution to the quality experienced by the customer, even if that person or group does not have direct contact with the customer. Professional employees in the organization's internal environment can effectively market their services by considering management expectations in the decision-making process and adjusting approaches to meet or exceed existing expectations. Managers who interact with other departments in a wide range of jobs and through human resources can effectively market their activities in the organization by understanding internal decision-making processes and responding to internal expectations. Today, organizations are trying to make maximum use of human resource capacities with the approach of strategic resource management. Organizational citizenship behavior, in which human resources are emphasized as the most valuable factor in creating differentiation, is discussed today in the management of organizational behavior and is associated with the concept of extra-role behavior of employees. Extra-role behavior in intra-organizational and extra-organizational exchanges plays an important role in transforming the traditional environment of manufacturing companies into a dynamic and efficient environment. In this way, organizations should provide conditions so that employees willingly serve the goals of the organization beyond the official organizational duties and beyond the requirements of their roles. Extra-role behavior is individual and voluntary behavior that is not directly in the framework of the organization's official reward systems, but its establishment can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational functions. The emergence of extra-role behaviors in employees can become an important act in producing value in internal and external exchanges and act as a key lever in the success of these organizations. Internal marketing creates unique abilities and the ability to use these skills and abilities in employees, which in turn increases the efforts of employees to innovate in different aspects of product, process, and other issues. The results found in this research about the organizational citizenship behavior of employees and managers are consistent with the research of Okunyeva [28], Dehghani Soltani and Mohammadi [13].

Organizational factors include managers' support, internal communication, participatory management, and promotion of customer-oriented culture. Internal marketing ensures that every department and every person in the organization will act both as a supplier and as a customer, and in this way, it causes the employees to work together in the best way. It causes employees to support the company's strategies and goals. There are few managers who spend enough time communicating with employees in order to establish a company-customer relationship. In this case, the maximum organizational task of each employee, instead of participating to strengthen the value chain, will be to do normal organizational work. Each employee of the organization has the potential to be an ambassador for the company's products. On the other hand, he can be just a part of an effort that is so far removed from the main responsibilities of the organization that he may not care much whether someone likes the result of his work or not. Realization of the first option requires an effort to include every employee in the value chain. This requires that everyone, from senior management to others, be convinced that they are part of a valuable investment and are evaluated based on the level of customer satisfaction of the company. This challenge is done by internal marketing. The overall participation of employees in determining their role in customer satisfaction will force them to identify their customers. In this way, there will be several customers for the employees. The other part of the chain can also include a group of employees who take over the production of another unit and add something to it, or check its errors. In the end, there is a final customer who buys the final product. Therefore, when defining the role of employees, attention should be paid to both internal and external customers. In addition to identifying their customers, employees should also be aware of the benefits of the products offered by the company. Employees should know how the results of their efforts are placed in the distribution channels so that they can be more sensitive to the impact of their actions on customer satisfaction. For example, in industrial marketing, employees who visit their customers' production lines and see how their product is incorporated into operations will return to the company with a clearer understanding of the purpose of their work. Employees should have a comprehensive picture of production and distribution instead of myopia in their personal duties. Extending the concept of internal marketing to intra-organizational exchanges introduces the first principle of implementing the concept of internal marketing as follows: each process receives inputs from internal suppliers

(previous operations), then works on inputs, and adds value to it. Finally, it turns inputs into outputs for the internal customer. Training and development of employees in the framework of internal marketing should be to create customer orientation among employees of all levels of the organization. Training is more important for employees who do not have face-to-face roles with customers. In such job situations, the effect of an individual's organizational activities on customer satisfaction is not easily visible and direct. Internal marketing is a suitable strategy for large manufacturing companies and the implementation of internal marketing increases customer orientation, which in turn increases the effectiveness of activities in terms of product, price, promotion, and distribution. Applying the concept of internal marketing in industrial equipment manufacturing industries can have significant improvements in the inter-functional coordination of the organization, in order to overcome the problems of lack of integration and be effective for creating inter-functional understanding. Internal marketing is very important in those manufacturing industries that depend on human resources. The first requirement for the success of internal marketing is clear communication about how everyone is involved in the customer relationship chain. The second is establishing that employees can participate in the definition of guidelines with their creative suggestions. And the third is to create clear evidence that employees are rewarded in different ways for their participation in these matters. Employees must be aware of the image of the product in the mind of the consumer. The point is that all employees must have a sufficient understanding of the benefits provided by each specific product and their role in the process of providing those benefits. The results found in this research about the support of managers are consistent with the research of Okunyeva [28], Qiu et al. [32], and Demir [14]. Also, the results found in this research about internal communication are consistent with the research of Okunyeva [28], Qiu et al. [32], and Demir [14]. Also, the results found in this research regarding the promotion of customer-oriented culture are consistent with the research of Okunyeva [28], Qiu et al. [32], Demir [14], and Davoudvandi [12].

Motivational factors include job security, job satisfaction, and appreciation. The application of internal marketing is wider than motivating employees to be aware of the customer. Rather, it can be used to motivate all employees, in addition to customer contact point employees. Internal marketing is a planned effort to overcome organizational resistance to change and to align, motivate and inter-functionally coordinate and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies. Any change in organizational strategies is likely to require an internal marketing effort to overcome organizational inertia and to motivate employees to develop the necessary behaviors. In addition, since some strategies (including marketing) probably involve several functional areas of the organization, it requires cross-functional integration. In other words, participants in the implementation of internal marketing include all employees who in some way are likely to influence the customer's perception. Marketing success can depend on employees who are away from the excitement of formulating strategies. For example, marketing success depends on service engineers, customer service staff, production staff, customer-related financial staff, and sales staff. The internal marketing mechanism directly and positively affects the market orientation behavior and consequently the customer orientation of all employees. Market orientation factors are influenced by internal marketing mechanisms such as communication, motivation, reward, and management support and affect customer orientation and inter-functional coordination. The results found in this research about job security are consistent with the research of Dehghani Soltani and Mohammadi [13]. Also, the results found in this research about job satisfaction are consistent with the research of Qiu et al. [32], Olorunsola et al. [29], and Saberi et al. [36].

The recommendations of this research can be listed as follows: Organizations should continuously collect internal marketing data to ensure employees follow up on their needs and desires. It is suggested that managers use decentralization mechanisms to involve employees in decision-making processes and give them the necessary authority. In this way, managers should encourage employees to provide constructive suggestions to advance affairs and achieve goals, which can happen in the form of a system of suggestions or by holding periodic official meetings or even informal meetings. The role of the organization in creating and strengthening citizenship behavior on the part of employees should not be ignored. Organizations encourage employees to perform extra-role behavior by creating a safe environment away from destructive and stressful competition, as well as by holding organizational citizenship behavior training courses. Of course, rewarding the extra-role behavior of employees strengthens these behaviors in the organization. The development of internal marketing needs to provide suitable conditions for it. It is suggested that training, empowerment, vision presentation, and appropriate rewards are used to establish internal marketing. The establishment of mechanized information systems within the organization is recommended to inform the various employees of the organization about the needs of both internal and external customers in order to ensure regular updating of all employees' information about customers. Also, according to the limitations of this research, the issue of explaining the role of motivational factors according to the position of employees in the value chain and their physical distance from customers, as well as according to the organizational culture, is suggested for future research.

References

[1] M. Ajalli, M.M. Mozaffari, and H. Tolouei, *Impact review SHRM on Innovation performance by mediating role of innovation capability*, J. Strat. Manage. Stud. **13** (2022), no. 51, 245–264.

[2] M. Akbari, S. Imani, M. Ghobadnezhad, and R. Rahimi, *Relationship between transformational leadership, internal marketing and entrepreneurial orientation (The case of: National Iranian South Oil Company)*, J. Entrepr. Dev. **8** (2015), no. 3, 571–590.

[3] J. Ali, M.A. Ahmed, M. Shaharyar, M. Haseeb, and R. Zahoor, *The impact of internal marketing on the employee's retention in Sialkot industries*, Int. J. Acad. Res. Bus. Soc. Sci. 4 (2014), no. 9, 478.

[4] H. Amraee and A. Azar, *Providing an effective model for monitoring and evaluating public sector financial performance in performance-based budgeting*, Financ. Account. Audit. Res. **13** (2022), no. 4 (52), 53–86.

[5] A. Atefatdoost, A.A. Khaef Elahi, A.A. Fani, and H. Danaee Fard, *Studying the effect of internal marketing on organizational performance with considering the role of organizational commitment and organizational entrepreneurship as intermediary variables (case study: Mobarakeh steel company)*, J. Bus. Manage. **5** (2014), no. 4, 21–42.

[6] M. Basirat, S. Imani, M. Zeranejad and A. Dehghan Najmabadi, *Evaluating the mediatory effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment (case study: headquarter offices of Aghajari oil and gas operating company)*, Product. Manage. (Beyond Management) **8** (2015), no. 32, 147–169.

[7] J. Beikzad and M. Taghi Soltani, *Strategic planning and management in the public sector*, J. Account. Manage. Vis. **5** (2023), no. 70, 50–66.

[8] A. Bonyadi Naeini, M.H. Kamfirooziand, and M. Dehghan Mashtani, *Surveying the effect of internal marketing and internal branding on service quality (Case study: A server company)*, J. Market. Manage. **9** (2014), no. 25, 83–99.

[9] V. Braun and V. Clarke, *Using thematic analysis in psychology*, Qualit. Res. Psycho. **3** (2006), no. 2, 77–101.

[10] D.J. Cahill, *The managerial implications of the learning organization: a new tool for internal marketing*, J. Serv. Market. **9** (1995), no. 4, 43–51.

[11] Q. Chen, R. Huang, K.Y. Pak, and B. Hou, *Internal marketing, employee satisfaction and cultural congruence of Gulf airlines*, Tourism Rev. **76** (2021), no. 6, 1214–1227.

[12] M. Davoudvandi, *Investigating the effect of internal marketing on customer orientation in Iran insurance company*, Second Int. Conf. Indu. Manag. Eengin., 2014.

[13] M. Dehghani Soltani and E. Mohammadi, *The role of internal marketing on customer-oriented behavior promotion of hostlers by clarifying mediating role of emotional behaviors (case study: international airlines hostesses)*, J. Int. Bus. Administr. **5** (2022), no. 2, 225–244.

[14] A. Demir, *Impact of internal marketing on the customer perceptions in SMEs*, Int. J. Serv. Oper. Manage. **42** (2022), no. 3, 379–396.

[15] S. Finney and M. Scherrebeck-Hansen, *Internal marketing as a change management tool: A case study in rebranding*, J. Market. Commun. **16** (2010), no. 5, 325–344.

[16] S.K. Foreman and A.H. Money, *Internal marketing: concepts, measurement and application*, J. Market. Manage. **11** (1995), no. 8, 755–768.

[17] W.R. George, *Internal marketing and organizational behavior: A partnership in developing customer-conscious employees at every level*, J. Bus. Res. **20** (1990), no. 1, 63–70.

[18] W.E. Greene, G.D. Walls and L.J. Schrest, *Internal marketing: the key to external marketing success*, J. Serv. Market. **8** (1994), no. 4, 5–13.

[19] E. Gummesson, *Using internal marketing to develop a new culture—the case of Ericsson quality*, J. Bus. Ind. Market. **2** (1987), no. 3, 23–28.

[20] A. Habibi, S. Izadyar and A. Sarafrazi, *Fuzzy Multi-Criteria Decision Making*, (First edition), Rasht: Katibeh-e-

Guil Publications, 2013.

[21] S. Imani, P. Foroudi, N. Seyyedamiri, and N. Dehghani, *Improving employees' performance through internal marketing and organizational learning: Mediating role of organizational innovation in an emerging market*, Cogent. Bus. Manage. **7** (2020), no. 1.

[22] W.B. Joseph, *Internal marketing builds service quality*, J. Health Care Market. **16** (1996), no. 1, 54–59.

[23] C.P. Lean, *The relationship between internal marketing, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and market orientation: a study on manufacturing companies in northern region of Malaysia*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Master of Business Administration, 2005.

[24] T.A. Minar, S. Sarwari and M. Salam, *Internal marketing: a strategic tool to achieve inter-functional co-ordination in the context of a manufacturer of industrial equipment*, Daffodil Int. Univ. J. Bus. Econ. **3** (2008), no. 1, 173–187.

[25] N. Mohammadesmaeili, *Identifying the customer focused culture mechanisms in organization*, Public Manage. Res. **11** (2018), no. 39, 249–273.

[26] P. Mousavi, R. Yousefi Zenouz, and A. Hassanpoor, *Identifying organizational information security risks using fuzzy Delphi*, J. Inf. Technol. Manage. **7** (2015), no. 1, 163–184.

[27] A. Nasre Esfahani, Z. Amiri, and M. Farrokhi, *The effect of internal marketing on the organizational innovation with the mediating role of staff self-efficacy (Emersan company as a case study)*, J. Entrepr. Dev. **6** (2013), no. 3, 27–45.

[28] O. Okunyeva, *The function of internal marketing in the process of formation of a customer-centric company*, Eastern Eur. Bus. Econ. J. **4** (2018), no. 2, 97–131.

[29] V.O. Olorunsola, M.B. Saydam, O.A. Ogunmokun, and A. Ozturen, *Service beyond the status quo: the ripple effect of corporate social responsibility and internal marketing on employee's customer-oriented behavior*, Int. J. Bank Market. **40** (2022), no. 4, 820–841.

[30] N. Owusu-Frimpong and A. Martins, *Adoption and implementation of internal marketing systems by Ghanaian small-and medium-sized enterprises*, J. Afr. Bus. **11** (2010), no. 1, 26–48.

[31] S. Prasad and S. Nandi, *Internal marketing in manufacturing organizations: An exploratory study*, Int. J. Manage. Dev. Stud. **6** (2017), no. 10, 70–82.

[32] J. Qiu, A. Boukis and C. Storey, *Internal marketing: a systematic review*, J. Market. Theory Practice **30** (2022), no. 1, 53–67.

[33] M. Rafiq and P.K. Ahmed, *Advances in the internal marketing concept: definition, synthesis and extension*, J. Serv. Market. **14** (2000), no. 6, 449–462.

[34] K.K. Reardon and B. Enis, *Communication forum: establishing a companywide customer orientation through persuasive internal marketing*, Manag. Commun. Quart. **3** (1990), no. 3, 376–387.

[35] N.M. Saad, S.H. Hassanand L.M. Shya, *Revisiting the relationship between internal marketing and external marketing: The role of customer orientation*, J. Dev. Areas **49** (2015), no. 3, 249–262.

[36] M.K. Saberi, N. Soltani Nejad, A.A. Rashid, and J. Mazloom, *The role of job attachment and emotional commitment as a mediator between internal marketing and customer-oriented behavior of librarians in public libraries*, Res. Inf. Sci. **24** (2018), no. 1 (92), 81–102.

[37] A. Shafiei and V.R. Mirabi, *Investigating factors affecting brand equity with respect to mediating role of productivity in major steel companies*, J. Product. Manage. **12** (2018), no. 46, 233–260.

[38] S.B. Sunardi and C. Veronica, *Mediating role of organizational commitment on the relationship between internal marketing and marketing performance*, Int. J. Psycho. Rehabil. **24** (2020), no. 2.

[39] S.B. Taştan and S.M.M. Davoudi, *Investigating the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between internal marketing and job performance: A research within services industry*, Middle East J. Manage. **7** (2020), no. 5, 492–517.

[40] R.J. Varey, *Internal marketing: a review and some interdisciplinary research challenges*, Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manage. **6** (1995), no. 1, 40–63.

[41] Q. Wang, X. Zhao and C. Voss, *Customer orientation and innovation: a comparative study of manufacturing and service firms*, J. Product. Econ. **171** (2016), no. 2, 221–230.

[42] W.Y. Wu, C.C. Tsai, and C.S. Fu, *The relationships among internal marketing, job satisfaction, relationship marketing, customer orientation, and organizational performance: An empirical study of TFT-LCD companies in Taiwan*, Human Factors Ergonom. Manufactur. Service Ind. **23** (2013), no. 5, 436–449.

[43] H. Yu-Ting, *Internal marketing and internal customer: a review, reconceptualization, and extension*, J. Rel. Market. 19 (2019), no. 3, 1–17.

[44] S. Zarinjoi Alvar, M. Mahmoudi Maymand, E. Albo Naimi, and M. Samiei Nasr, *Designing and explaining the internal marketing model of Iran free zones*, New Market. Res. J. **8** (2018), no. 2, 181–198.