

The Investigation on the Internal Marketing Practicing of the International Tourism Hotel Chains

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ABSTRACT

This investigation explores the relationship among employee's perception in the managerial system of the internal marketing, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior of Taiwan International Hotel Industry. Internal marketing of service employee is a key instrument of hospitality to practice its service strategies. Otherwise, organizational citizenship behavior is the best manifestation to improve a company's employee's organizational commitment.

The result shows that the international hotel industry can enhance employees' internal marketing perception and organizational commitment and this situation will directly affect the citizenship behaviors of employee organizations. Meanwhile, employees within various regions also show significant variance in employees' perception about internal marketing. Thus, focusing on various employees, it hereby design the internal marketing plans featured with variances so that it is available to enhance employees' organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational commitment of and the system of internal marketing in the employees' have, the more organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of international tourism hotels.

Keywords: *Internal Marketing ; Organizational Commitment ; Organizational Citizenship Behavior*

INTRODUCTION

Within the era of 21st century, corporations are released from the constraints of geography and time due to globalization. Information technology (IT) triggers the operation of commercial environment heading forward to the quick pace society, especially on the service industry. Business operation has dramatically viewed innovation as the unchangeable survival motto. Thus, the conventional rigid and unchangeable management strategies is no more an elixir to cure business organizations from crisis, on the other hand, corporations actually need a curing medicine available for quick adaptability to the shifting changes of geography and time. In addition, Charles Handy (2002) used to mention from "The Elephant and the Flea" that full-time employees of large firms should be replaced by the atypical flea-like workers. Under the entrepreneur climate with numerous innovative concepts promoted violently and executed, the accompanying problems should be the ways for firms how to previously introduce the strategic vision of external customers into the internal members, who serve direct service provision or the first line of service givers for products or service, so that they can fully understand the strategic contexts and implementation guidelines combined within the critical moment in touch with customers. In view of this situation, numerous scholars concentrate efforts on the research fields about service industries so that it will good for quality improvement, customer satisfaction and subsequent relevant issues about relevant service industries.

The industries featured with service provision mostly trend to provide customers with intangible product contexts, and transmit the service ideals established by firms through the interaction is executed between the first line service givers and customers. Thus, regarding the service firms, aside from improving their own professional techniques and capabilities, their behaviors and manners within the direct service touch shall directly affect the perception about service and firm images. If firms intend to implement effective marketing for service products, the administrators shall previously creating an active and harmonious organizational environment within organizations and devote a series of marketing-like

approaches to encourage employees to vest with the internal marketing concepts of service awareness and customer orientation.

According to the issues about the said internal marketing, all researches propose the importance for firms to include the management concepts about internal marketing with the necessity and plausibility to introduce into the organizational operation. The said situation cannot only positively affect employees' organizational intention and work performance but also further improve some relevant results like better service quality for external customers, higher customer satisfaction and more reliable customer loyalty. Furthermore, from local and international researches we can find that firms' internal marketing actions or promoting process shall affect employees' organizational citizenship behavior or customer orientation action through some intermediary variables and the said intermediary variables include work satisfaction, organizational reliance, organizational commitment, authorization, behavior performance, employees' education and training or business culture. Within this research, the organizational commitment of organizational layers shall be viewed as the intermediary variables to explore the influence between organizational internal marketing and organizational citizenship behaviors.

THEORETICAL FRAME

Internal marketing

The idea of internal marketing originates from service industries. Among the knowledge of most people, marketing means the concept mainly promoting products to customers. However, it is unavailable for service industries to improve service quality simply through conventional methods; it actually requires the first line service givers to play the determinant role to improve customer satisfaction by means of direct touch interaction. (Kang, 2001). Thus, for the past few years, the marketing ideas and issues have been extended from conventional tangible products to intangible service. The customer objectives marketing are also extended from external customers to firms or internal customers (employees of firms) within organizations.

There are numerous scholars who generally suppose that business organizations can adopt the method of internal marketing to propagate organizational management strategies and cultivate employees with the consciousness and attitude to maintain organizational image. Johnson (1986) proposes the internal marketing is adopted by service industries to allow employees with clear knowledge about their organizational mission, goals and vision so that the said employees can offer their best effort. Also, through employees' education, training, encouragement and performance appraisal, it is available to reach organizational expectation. Piercy and Morgan (1991) propose that the internal marketing is a type of strategic measure aimed to coordinate with the external marketing projects of firms. Entrepreneur who is through internal marketing, propagate the relevant marketing contexts and implementation ways to the units and employees within the business organizations. Based on aforesaid mention, for the said internal marketing, Gronroos (1994) proposes a new definition that through aggressive, initiative, marketing-like actions and integral coordination, it can allow employees receive the best encouragement in developing service consciousness and work satisfaction.

Because there is no clear model for internal marketing, most local and international scholars adopt experimental methods to find out the variables existing between internal marketing and customer satisfaction. Ahmed and Rafiq (2003), focusing the future issues and challenges for internal marketing, propose relevant research directions separately including internal marketing, together with (1) the relationship between employees' satisfaction and work performance, (2) organizational cross-department functions, (3) internal relationship, (4) challenge and integration, focusing and the creation for alliance strategies, and (5) strategic alliance. Kelley (1990) implements a research with the experimental subjects from banks and also indicates the relationship between employees' work satisfaction and customer orientation is quite weak and this situation reveals that there must be some other important factors existing between internal marketing and customer orientation. Carruna and Calleya (1998) suggest that organizational commitment is the important intermediary variable existing between internal marketing and customer satisfaction. From the research, the results prove that about the influence of internal marketing affected on organizational commitment, it shall bring about more significant influence on emotional layers and weaker relationship influence on behavioral layers. Wu and Zhou (2001) implement the management application research about internal marketing with experimental subjects of various hospital

nursing staffs in Kaohsiung areas. From the research, they find the factors of work nature and inter-personal interaction within the said internal marketing actually because positive influence on the organization commitment of nursing staffs.

Organizational Commitment

For the past few years, the issues relevant to organizational commitment has been the researching focus. Also, there are numerous researches made by scholars through various theoretical foundations and academic sects and there various definitions proposed in accordance with different research goals. Generally, employees with high organizational commitment cause positive influence on tenures or work performance (Johnston, Parasuraman, Futrell and Black, 1990; Mackaie, Podsakff and Ahearne, 1998). Namely, most scholars focus on the key factors about organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is a type of attitude and the attitude cannot only affect employees' organizational involvement and involvement strength (Steer, 1977) but also denote the linkage between members and organizations. The phrase of organizational commitment is firstly originated from Becker (1960) and the said commitment is applied to the research about organizational behavior. It proposes that organizational commitment is a type of continuation of behavior. Therefore, the organizational commitment had been the topic highly emphasized by scholars of organization management science, the public agencies and private organizations.

Organizational commitment is a type of social system energy involvement and willingness of loyalty; the individual personality systems are attached to the self-performance of social relationship (Kanter, 1968). Poter and Smith (1970) propose that organizational commitment means the representation of relative strength for a given individual's identification and involvement inclination toward a specific organization including (1) the acceptance intention for organizational goals and values, (2) the willingness to strive for organizational benefit, and (3) the strong desire to maintain organizational membership. Thus, organizational commitment means a type of positively aggressive attitude toward organizational commitment, the identification of organizational goals, and delightful working atmosphere of organizational members. It also represents the idea that work is a part of individual life and conscious organization means a type of belonging sense of loyalty and emotional. Thus, it means the internal attitude for lifelong stay within the said organization.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Due to the uncertainty of business management climate increasingly, the suggestion of firms' re-engineering and restructuring are prevalent everywhere. This situation drives firms to emphasize the spontaneously innovative behaviors of employees. Meanwhile, the mutual collaboration among employees is also underscored. Some extra-role behaviors like aggressive coordination to complete tasks is also the concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and this concept plays a quite important role among modern firms.

Actually, within the domain of organizational behaviors during the early stages, there was no phrase like Organizational Citizenship Behavior. The said concept is firstly proposed by Bernard (1938) and he indicates organizations mean a type of collaboration groups and organizational members are willing to contribute their effort to firms. Also, the said willingness shall at least conform to the role playing definition given by organizations. The said concept has proposed the meaning of collaboration and aggressive offering to organizations and also fully complete the tasks assigned by organizations. Thereafter, Katz (1964) in his book titled "The Motivational Basis of Organizational Behavior", the described organizational inter-personal relationship is closest to the concept of organizational citizenship behaviors. He contends that to keep organizational effective operation and improve effectiveness, organizational employees shall necessarily pose three types of behaviors as follows: (1) Organizational members shall be further introduced to stay within the system. (2) Organizational members shall necessarily implement the tasks of role playing by means of reliable measures. (3) Organizational members shall necessarily develop and exceed the assigned behaviors and also materialize the organizational goals with innovative and spontaneous actions.

Moreover, the so called spontaneous behaviors of organizational membership, in view of transcending the norms of formal roles, was known as the "extra-role behavior" in the early stages so that it can be clearly discerned from the in-role behavior listed within organizational task manuals or other formal norms. In addition, Bateman and Organ (1983) formally refer to the spontaneous behaviors among organizational employees and pro-social behaviors irrelevant to formal organization codes as the "citizenship behavior".

Knowing from aforesaid relevant research papers, local and international scholars adopt various layers of variables to explore the said organizational citizenship behaviors and make surveys about key or major variables to affect employees' organization citizenship behaviors. However, till now, there is no way available to reach any common concepts or models for further researching proof.

METHODOLOGY

According to this research that focus on employees from international tourism hotels in Taiwan with their conscious internal marketing as the independent variable, organizational commitment as the intermediary variable and organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable so the research theoretical structure is thus formed. Also, through factor analysis, we analyze and induce the dimensional factors of research variables and the results are shown as figure 1.

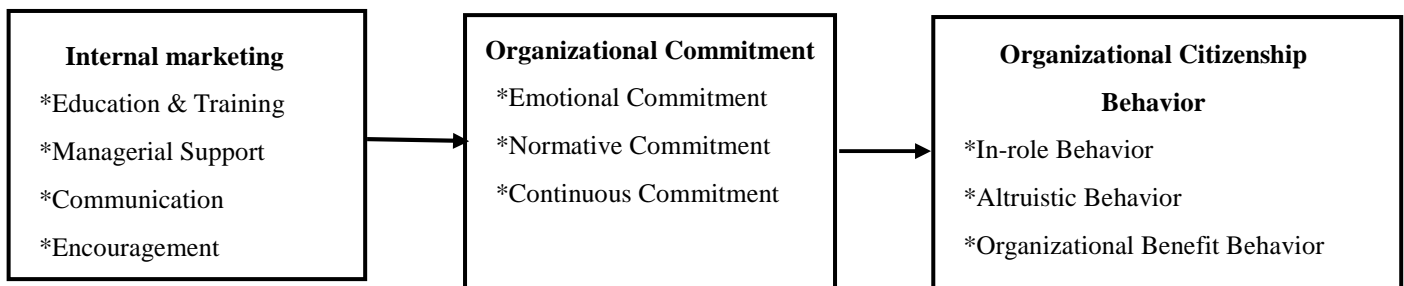


Figure 1 Framework of this Research

Research Hypothesis

After reference through aforesaid scientific researches and the confirmation for this research structure, we hereby propose the hypotheses as below:

- H1 : Employees' internal marketing awareness cause significant positive influence on organizational commitment.
- H2 : Employees' internal marketing awareness cause significant positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviors.
- H3 : Employees' organizational commitment cause significant positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviors.
- H4 : When employees' internal marketing awareness affects organizational citizenship behaviors; organizational commitment comes with significant intermediary effect.

RESULTS

This part is aimed to describe the experimental survey results. This investigation separately adopt the descriptive statistic analysis to delineate the distribution of valid samples, mean values and standard deviations of variables, variance analysis and multiple regression analysis to explore and understand the experimental results detailed as below:

The experimental subjects for this research are focused on Evergreen and Landis hotel chains which separately distributed in the northern, middle and southern parts in Taiwan. First, the study implements randomly sampling from various layers and there are totally 300 hotel employees surveyed with 196 valid replies received (valid receipt rated at 65.33%). Therefore, knowing from the sampling distribution, most international tourism hotel employees are featured with service seniority below 3 years (over 50%). It is obvious that the employees from international tourism hotels cannot stay long at their jobs. Thus, hotel management layers shall put more effort to implement internal marketing and improve employees' coherence toward organizations.

Examining the Internal Marketing Direct Effects

The Effects of Internal Marketing Awareness Exerted on Organizational Commitment

The results in Table 1 show the regression analysis of 3 variables for international tourism hotel employees' internal marketing awareness onto organizational commitment. Model 1, 2 and 3 indicate R² values for internal marketing awareness onto emotional commitment, normative commitment and continuous commitment are separately 0.437, 0.246 and 0.268 and all values suggest the fact whenever the degree of employees' internal marketing is higher, the said 3 variables covered by organizational commitment are also higher.

Table 1 The Regression Analysis for Internal Marketing Awareness onto Organizational Commitment

Explanatory Variable	Organizational Commitment		
	Emotional Commitment (Model 1)	Normative Commitment (Model 2)	Continuous Commitment (Model 3)
Constant			
Constant	1.001*	2.532*	.699*
Education Training	.223*	.100*	.422*
Management Support	.100*	.204*	.108
Encouragement	.397*	.255*	.195
Communication	.275*	.233*	.257*
F	150.834*	63.264*	71.093*
R ²	.437	.246	.268

N=196; * p < .05

The Influence of Internal Marketing Exerted on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Model 4, 7 and 10 within Table 2 means the regression analysis results of international tourism hotel employees' internal marketing awareness onto organizational citizenship behavior. Results indicate the explanatory strength (R²) for internal marketing awareness onto in-role behaviors, altruistic behaviors and organizational benefit behaviors are separately 0.122, 0.218 and 0.390 with the significant overall modal influence well shown (F values are separately 26.978, 124.238 and 32.453).

The Influence of Organizational Commitment Exerted on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Model 5, 8 and 11 in Table 2 means the regression analysis for international tourism employees' organizational commitment awareness onto organizational citizenship behaviors. Results show that the explanatory strength (R²) of employees' organizational commitment awareness onto in-role behaviors, altruistic behaviors and organizational benefit behaviors are separately 0.180, 0.517 and 0.580 with the significant overall modal influence well shown (F values are separately 31.859, 155.558 and 160.745).

The Influence of Internal Marketing Exerted on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors through Organizational Commitment

To sum up above mention, international tourism hotel employees' awareness sentiment toward internal marketing shall affect the organizational commitment of hotels and the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. Also, it indicates that organizational commitment comes with the intermediary effect on internal marketing and organizational commitment behaviors.

Table 2 Regression Analysis of Internal Marketing, Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Explanatory Variable	In-role Behavior			Altruistic Behavior			Organizational Benefit Behavior		
	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Constant	2.646*	1.789*	1.698*	1.658	.717*	.572*	1.339*	.151	1.959*
Encouragement	.180*		.125*	.364*		.220*	.048		.451*
Education Training	.135*		.058	.144*		.303	.318*		.656*
Communication	.140*		-.031	.135*		-.024	.089*		.160*
Management Support	.121*		-.033	.118*		-.014	.023		.095
Emotional Commitment		.080	.095		.384*	.329*		.214*	.507*
Normative Commitment		.394*	.346*		.207*	.095*		.290*	-.103*
Continuous Commitment		.093*	.015		.254*	.255*		.201*	.160*
F	26.978*	31.859*	20.509*	124.238*	155.558	105.269*	32.453*	160.745*	92.251*
R ²	.122	.180	.199	.218	.517	.560	.390	.580	.590
ΔR ²	-----	-----	.077+	-----	-----	.170++	-----	-----	.01+++

N=196; * P<.05 + compared with model 4 ++ compared with model 7 +++ compared with model 10

DISCUSSION

Focusing on aforesaid experimental analysis results, we hereby propose our conclusion and suggestion as follows.

Research Conclusion

Within this research, we adopt the experimental subjects with employees from 3 international tourism hotel groups in Taiwan. This research is aimed to explore the relationship among internal marketing awareness, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors implemented by international tourism hotels. Our major research findings are described as below.

Employees with various internal marketing awareness responses cause significant variance to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors

About the demonstration of organizational commitment, employees depend on management support and encouragement more than the methods of education training and communication so that it is available to reach emotional and normative commitment of organizations. However, about the demonstration of continuous commitment within organizations, it is supposed to replace education training with encouragement. In addition, about organizational citizenship behaviors, employees cause significant influence to replace education training with management support, communication or encouragement for the purpose of demonstrating in-role behaviors and organizational benefit behaviors. About the demonstration of altruistic behaviors, employees incline to replace education training with encouragement mainly.

The internal marketing awareness of employees from various regions causes significant variance to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors.

About the organizational citizenship behaviors of employees from northern regions, they incline to prefer education training more than encouragement and management support. Or they incline to communication more than management support so that it is available to reach organizational citizenship behaviors. However, it exists in no significant variance to organizational commitment. About the organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees from the southern and middle regions in Taiwan, both parts of them incline to management support more than encouragement with much more variance than that of education training and communication.

Organizational Commitment Causes Significant Intermediary Effect on Internal Marketing and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors of Employees

The international tourism hotel employees come with significant major and intermediary influence of internal

marketing and organizational commitment separately exerted onto in-role behaviors, altruistic behaviors and organizational benefit behaviors. It indicates that international tourism hotel employees' behavioral performance toward internal marketing and organizational citizenship behaviors is caused by the intermediary influence of organizational commitment.

The Inspiration of Practical Management Affairs

- (1) Whenever the international tourism hotels are implementing international marketing, they should emphasize more flexible and humane management support and encouragement to replace conventional rigidly education training and routine communication. It means the internal marketing has converted strategies and systems into the core concepts to meet employees' demands. Through intangible conversion effect, this conversion shall make employees show their sincere organizational commitment so that they can express the attitude of organizational citizenship behaviors beneficial for organizational operation and survival.
- (2) The internal marketing of employees from northern hotels cause no significant influence on organizational commitment but incline to education training and communication more than management support and encouragement to affect the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. We deduce that this is situation is arisen from the temporarily short service periods of northern hotel employees and they show no significant loyalty. Most surveyed employees are trainees with the experimental results quite different from hotel employees from middle and southern regions in Taiwan.
- (3) The international tourism hotels can design the promoting programs for internal marketing through 4 variables, namely education training, management support, encouragement and communication. Thus, it is available to improve employee's emotional, normative and continuous commitment toward organizations. Especially, it is required to propose adequate adjustment and implementation focusing on internal marketing and people should do their best to get rid of conventionally rigid forms but deal with problems in a more flexible, humane and divergent perspective.

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