

The Effect Of Internal Marketing On Job Satisfaction In Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions: Sem Approach

Endris Nuru Zeleke

Ph.D Scholar, School of Management Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, India

Dr. Bharat Bhushan Singla

Asst. Professor, School of Management Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, India

Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction in higher education institutions context. Self-administered Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data from academic staffs in Ethiopian higher education institutions to examine the effect of internal marketing on job satisfaction. A total of 525 valid responses were used for both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses for this study. Exploratory factor analysis of the study produced eight factors of internal marketing within higher education context including reward, management concern, training and development, internal market research, working conditions, leadership, internal communication and vision. The result indicated that internal marketing has significant and positive impact on job satisfaction in higher education context. This study was limited on the higher education sector and only academic staffs of public higher education institutions were participated in the study. Thus, further research should conduct by incorporate both public and private universities as well as incorporating administrative staffs in order to generalize the conceptual model of this study.

Key words: internal marketing, job satisfaction, Ethiopian higher education institutions

1. Introduction

In the era of competitions, emerging market development and rapid globalization and changing consumer preferences organizations require effective and efficient performance. Companies' demanded to shift their approach to customer-oriented approach; making customers as a center of every decision and deliver quality service is crucial to be successful. According to Abdullah (2005) service quality has been associated with profitability and it is considered as providing a competitive advantage through repeat sales producing, positive word-of mouth feedback, customer loyalty and competitive product differentiation since 1980s. Since it plays a great role in developing competitive advantage and in attracting new customers and retaining existing customers, firms should emphasize on the quality of service delivered. Therefore, in today's customer driven market, when competition is becoming stiffer day by day and changing customer requirements, one cannot think of growth and development without delivering quality service to customers. And high service quality can achieved through people in the organization (Lewis & Entwistle, 1990).

Employees are the most important resource in the organization and corporate partners who assist organizations to offer products and services for customers (Ahmad & Al-Borie, 2012) and their interactions (specially, customer contact-front line employee) with customers determined customer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Lewis & Entwistle, 1990). Since employees interact with customers, frontline employees affect level of service quality delivered (Boshoff & Tait, 1996) and are determining the degree of service quality delivered (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2003). In concrete terms the quality of service offered to customers is embedded in the quality and performance of human resource in service organizations (Bansal, Mendelson, & Sharma, 2001). Further, service quality improves when employees are able and willing to deliver the high-quality service there to customers. Hence, to improve quality of service delivered, efforts concentrated on Frontline employees should required (Boshoff & Tait, 1996). Thus, it is important that a firm create organizational environment where employees are motivated, customer-conscious through implementing adequate system in the organization that reward and motivate employees significantly, which contributes towards enhancing

service quality (Bames, Fox, & Morris, 2004)- an organizational working environment that considered employees as important resources in the organization, satisfy them, make them motivated and committed to service external customers that are outside the organization is required. Internal marketing creates a working environment that employees are encouraged to create, co-ordinate and improve the entire business (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003). It can create an organizational environment for employees where quality can be improved (Christopher, Payne, & Ballantyne, 1991).

Internal marketing can use to achieve employee commitment for the achievements of organizational goals (Ahmed & Rafiq, 1995a). It creates an internal environment wherein customer consciousness propagates between employees (Caruana & Calleya, 1998) and enhances job satisfaction among employees (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000). It also stated that internal marketing can a tool to create customer oriented and committed employees in the organizations (Ahmed & Rafiq, 1995). Internal marketing practice influenced employees' job satisfaction (Gounaris, 2008; Hwang & Der-Jang, 2005). Different studies also show a positive relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction (Chiu, Cho, & Won, 2014; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014). All the above arguments and discussions indicted that internal marketing can influence employee job satisfaction.

Most of marketing researches, especially in the area of internal marketing focused on profit oriented firms. Researches on impact of internal marketing on job in higher education setting have been conducted in different part of the world (for example Ogunnaike, Oyeniyi, & Adeniji, 2012; Salem, 2013), but there is no previous study on Ethiopian higher education setting. Hence this study proposed to evaluate impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction in Ethiopian higher education environment.

2. Literature

2.1. Internal marketing

The concept of internal marketing has evolved from the original conceptualization of employee satisfying or and motivating by treating them as customers and jobs as products for improving service quality (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976; Berry, 1981; cited in Ahmed, Rafiq, & Saad, 2003). Ahmed and Rafiq (1995a) associated internal marketing with a philosophy use planned marketing-like methods in the organization in order to help realize the successful execution of marketing programmes through a process of attempting to create customer orientation and employee commitment. Internal marketing is associated a good human resource management which combined human resource and marketing to satisfy customers (Cahill, 1995). Additionally, Tsai and Tang (2008) considered internal marketing as a tool that drives service contact employees to be more willing and able to deliver a high quality of service to external customers. Cooper and Cronin (2000) view internal marketing as an effort of the organization to train and motivate its employees to provide better service. On the other hand, Wu and Lee (2011) view internal marketing related to treat employees like internal customers and create a sound work environment to nurture professionalism in employees and motivate them to achieve organizational goals.

2.2. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is highly researched topic in different situations, including in service industry. The employee will feel more responsibility to support their organization when they are satisfied with their job (Hung, 2012). It is also a concept which scholars offer different definitions and describe in different ways. Job satisfaction is an attitudinal reflection of the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs (Spector, 1997). It refers to "the individual's attitude toward the various aspects of their job as well as the job in general" (Rogers, Clow, & Kash, 1994). Job satisfaction is "an individual's general attitude toward his or her job" (Robbins, 1996). A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive attitudes toward the job; a person who is dissatisfied with his or her job holds negative attitudes about the job (Robbins, 1996). Shiu and Yu (2010) described job satisfaction as the disparity between the actual work rewards of the employees and the expected rewards which is the motivational

power of work morale. Robbins and Judge (2013) also express job satisfaction as ‘‘a positive feeling about a job, resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics.’’ On the other hand it is an evaluative state that expresses happiness with and positive feelings about one’s job (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Job satisfaction serves as a motivational tool of employees work moral and affects their genuineness and loyalty (Shiu & Yu, 2010).

2.3. Internal marketing and job satisfaction

Internal marketing is considered employees as internal customers of the organization (Greene, Walls, & Schrest, 1994) and it can be a tool for improving service contact employees’ satisfaction (Gronroos, 1990; cited in Tsai & Tang, 2008)). Gounaris (2008) proposed that internal marketing as antecedent of job satisfaction. Internal marketing is essential to firms to attract and retain qualified and committed employees (Bansal et al., 2001) as well as to create customer oriented and committed employees (Ahmed & Rafiq, 1995b) and it has been widely studied in previous researchs, including its relationship with job satisfaction which revealed positive relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction (Ahmad & Al-Borie, 2012; Chiu et al., 2014; Gounaris, 2008; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Hwang & Der-Jang, 2005; Iliopoulos & Priporas, 2011). Based on the above arguments, a conceptual framework for the study, which is shown in figure1 was developed and establishes a hypothesis to be tested.

H₁ Internal marketing has significant and positive impact on employee’s job satisfaction.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction

3. Methods

The unit of analysis in this study included only academic staffs of Ethiopian public universities and a sample of 675 academic staffs in Ethiopian public higher education institutions were surveyed but a total of 525 questionnaires were valid and used for analysis which counting around 78 % of the total sample which represents a satisfying response rate.

This study was aimed to assess the effect of internal marketing on job satisfaction in higher education institutions. To measure internal marketing both items from previous scales and new items generated were used. Eight dimensions of internal marketing were identified from literature and then items from previous scales and self developed were used to form the initial scale which was subjected to expert validation and pilot test prior the finalization of the questionnaire and the execution of the main study. Hence, in this study, strategic reward was measured using two items adapted from Foreman and Money (1995), and four items from Ahmed et al. (2003); training and development dimension was measured with two items from Conduit and Mavondo (2001) and three items from Foreman and Money (1995); internal market research was measured with adaption of five items from the work of Huang and Rundle-Thiele (2015); five items were developed through literature review to measure working conditions. Leadership dimension was measured with two items from Ahmed et al. (2003) and two items from the work of literature. Two items from Foreman and Money (1995) were used to measure vision, management concern was measure with four items from Gounaris (2008) and one

item from Lings and Greenley (2005) and internal communication was measured three self developed items. To assess relevance, appropriateness, clarity, and conciseness, wording and format of the instrument with a mix of these items, the draft instrument was administered to expert validation and pilot test. The feedback received was related to ambiguity and clarity, thus minor modifications were made through rephrasing words to ensure clarity and simplicity. Generally, to measure internal marketing a total of 35 items were used.

On the other hand to measure employee job satisfaction scale of Johlke and Duhan (2000) was used. In full-scale survey data were collected from academic staffs of nine Ethiopian higher education institutions. All items of internal marketing and job satisfaction were measured using 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree=1” to “strongly agree=5” with 3 neutral.

4. Data analysis and discussion

The analysis of the data involved two phases. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) employed structural equation model (SEM) were conducted on the first and second stage of the analysis respectively. For employ exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, separate sample is required (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014). Therefore, the total sample was randomly split into two sub-samples; sub-sample one and sub-sample two. There are varying opinions among writers concerning how large the sample size should be for conducting EFA. For this study rule of thumb guidelines suggested by Hair et al. (2014) were considered. They recommended that sample sizes should be 100 or greater and they recommended that five observations per variable, which means that five participants are required for each variable for conducting factor analysis. Hence, sub-sample which contains 175 cases and the other sub-sample which contains case of 350 were used for exploratory factor analysis and for confirmatory analysis. EFA was conducted to identify the broader underlying dimensions of internal marketing and to refine the scale of internal marketing. Where CFA was conducted to test measurement model properties (model fitness, the reliability and validity) and structural model was employed to examine the structural model and test the hypothesis of the study.

4.1. Demographic profiles of respondents

The demographic profiles of all respondents participated in this study described in terms of age, gender, work experience and designation. Respondents ages were distributed into different age categories; of which the category ranging from age 20-30years old constitute 48.2 % which is the highest percentage; followed by the category ranging from age 31-40 years old, 41-50 years old and the age category above 50 years old which were constitute 44.9%, 6.7% and 0.2% % respectively. Hence, the majority of respondents' ages were between 20-30years old. The majority of academic staffs' respondents were male, representing 84.2%, while females staffs respondents were constitute 15.8 %. Regarding work experience of study respondents, a high percentage of respondents constitute 49.1 % who have work experience between 1-5 years. Other 32.6% responds have work experience between 6-10 years, 9.3% respondents have work experience above 10 years and the rest 9.0 % respondents have work experience less than 1 year. Regarding to respondents' designation 68.0 % of them were lecturers, 11.6 % of them assistant professors and 0.8 % of them were associate professors, where as the rest 19.6% of respondents were assistant lecturers.

4.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) v.23 was used to conduct EFA. An addition to the sample size, to assess suitability of the data at hand for factor analysis tests, including Bartlett's test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of measure of sampling adequacy were also considered. The KMO index values between 0 and 1 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be significant ($p < .05$) for conducting factor analysis. In this study statistical value for KMO and Bartlett's Test were 0.897 and 0.000 respectively, which achieve the recommended value and revealed that the data at

hand were suitable for factor analysis. And the overall Cronbach's Alpha value of internal marketing was 0.953 indicated the scale is reliable.

Principal components analysis, which is the most common used approach was used in this study to extract or identify factors or dimensions and VARIMAX rotation, which is most widely used an orthogonal approach was used as a rotation method for interpretation. Multiple criteria were used for determine numbers of factors retained. Hair et al. (2014) recommended use multiple criteria for determining numbers of factors retained and identify items included in the final factor solution as recommended by Hair et al. (2014). In this study Kaiser's criteria / eigenvalue rule was employed to determine numbers of factors retained for internal marketing and the result indicted eight factors have eigenvalue value greater than one, which were retained. This is similar to priori criterion method is where the researcher determined how many factors to be retained before the factor analysis conducted and instructs the computer to generate numbers of factors extracted, that is eight factors.

Items with factor loading below the cutoff value of 0.5, those with significant loadings on two or more factors (cross-loading and those with low communalities (< 0.5) were subjected to deletion. Evaluate the first factor matrix indicted an item has insignificant factor loading which is below the cutoff value of 0.5 which is eliminated for further analysis and second EFA was conducted and produced a better well defend eight factor structure/factor model with a total of 34 items and 8 of the factors that depicted in table 1 which all had significant loadings, no items has communality less than the required level (0.5) and no cross loading. Generally, the final factor structure produced eight factors of internal marketing within higher education which coincided with those identified from the literature and accounted for 74.342 % in the data. The eight factors of internal marketing identified through EFA named as reward, management concern, training and development, internal market research, working conditions, leadership, internal communication and vision.

Table 1 exploratory factor analysis of internal marketing dimensions (The clear factor structure)

Item	Component								Communality
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
IM1	.701								.743
IM2	.710								.680
IM3	.758								.706
IM4	.819								.782
IM6	.808								.728
IM7	.688								.615
IM8				.760					.657
IM9				.751					.705
IM10				.614					.622
IM11				.774					.722
IM12				.557					.566
IM13			.673						.646
IM14			.773						.726

IM15			.799						.709
IM16			.806						.737
IM17			.668						.598
IM18					.725				.750
IM19					.749				.798
IM20					.780				.834
IM22					.757				.759
IM23						.728			.818
IM23						.754			.814
IM24						.666			.718
IM25						.642			.715
IM26								.729	.766
IM27								.765	.790
IM28		.759							.778
IM29		.770							.822
IM30		.834							.834
IM31		.848							.838
IM32		.811							.849
IM33							.674		.724
IM34							.796		.879
IM35							.773		.849
Eigenvalues	13.452	2.479	2.173	2.131	1.704	1.224	1.080	1.034	
Percentage of variance	39.564	7.292	6.392	6.267	5.011	3.599	3.175	3.042	
Cumulative % of variance	39.564	46.856	53.249	59.516	64.527	68.126	71.301	74.342	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Note: IM1-IM35= items of internal marketing

4.2. Measurement model and structural model evaluation

Both the measurement model and the structural model were tested. AMOS statistical package was used to evaluate measurement models and the structural model of this study. In this study internal marketing was measured by 34 items under eight factors, while job satisfaction was measured with

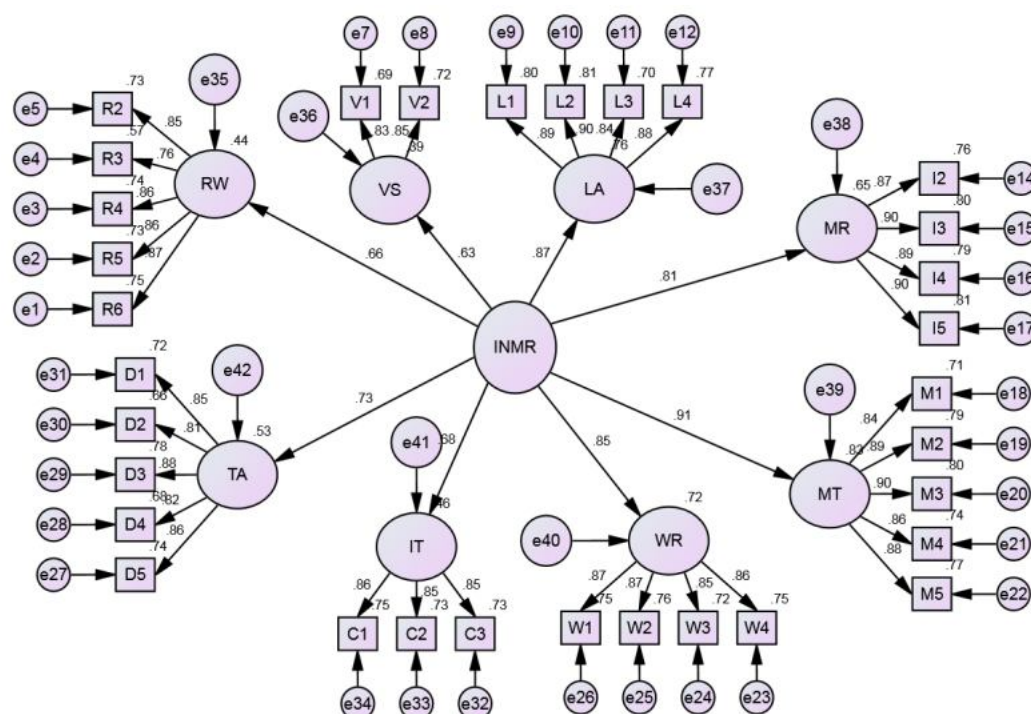
five items. Fit indices values generated from CFA were examined to confirm whether the second order model of internal marketing and the first order of job satisfaction model are fit to the data or not, or whether any adjustment required enhancing the fits.

4.2.1. Scale reliability and validity

Content validity of instruments checked and evaluated by experts. Validity of the measurement model depends on evidence of acceptable level of goodness-of-fit for the measurement model and result specific evidence of construct validity (Hair et al., 2014). And using three to four fit indices provides sufficient evidence of model fit (Hair et al., 2014). Fit indices values generated from CFA including Normed Chi-square (χ^2/df), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), CFI and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were examined to assess the fit of the internal marketing and job satisfaction constructs of the data. GFI and CFI values range between 0 to 1 and its values' greater than 0.90 typically considered good and reasonable fit (Hair et al., 2014). A value less than 0.3 considered as cut-off-value for χ^2/df , whereas Value of RMSEA below 0.08 an indication of good fit.

Cronbach's alpha was used to measure internal consistency reliability. Additionally, average variance extracted (AVE), size of factor loadings and constructs reliability (CR) values were examined to measure the convergent validity in the study. Standardized loading estimates 0.5 or higher and ideally 0.7 or higher, AVE values 0.5 or greater and CR value 0.7 or higher is an indication of adequate convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014).

The initial second order measurement model of internal marketing fitness indices values for χ^2/df , GFI, CFI and RMSEA are 1.456, 0.891, 0.978 and 0.036 respectively. The result indicated except GFI the other fitness indexes met the required level. This required examination of factor loading and modification indexes which indicate a pair of items which is redundant in the model. Factor loading of strategic reward, training and development, internal market research, working conditions, leadership, vision, management concern and internal communication sub-constructs are 0.66, 0.73, 0.81, 0.85, 0.87, 0.63, 0.91 and 0.68 respectively which is above 0.6. Additionally all items has a factor loading above 0.6 (above the threshold value). While inspection of Modification Indexes (MI) indicted two MI values are considered high since the values are greater than 15. IM value of 33.566 is the correlated error between e4 and e6 (that is, between item 1 and 3 of strategic reward dimension) where as a value of 17.634 is correlated error between e13 and e15 (that is, between item 3 and 1 of internal marketing research factor). This caused the measurement model poor fit. Hence, two items were deleted; one from factor strategic reward factor and one internal marketing research factor and run the new measurement model. The revised model was generated satisfactory values of all goodness-of-fit indices (see table 2). That is, within the recommended range of acceptability.



INMR=internal marketing

RW=reward

TA= training and development

IT = internal communication

VS=vision

WR=working condition

MG=Management concern

MR=internal marketing research

LA=leadership

Figure 2. Internal marketing measurement model

Fitness indices for internal marketing construct indicated in table 2 and Fit indices values of χ^2/df and RMSEA are 1.346 and 0.031 respectively which achieved the required level. Additionally GFI and CFI are 0.906 and 0.984 respectively, which fell around the desired level of 0.90, indicating that the model of internal marketing is representative of the observed data. Generally, all the fitness index values met the required value and indicated a satisfactory level of fit to all goodness-of-fit indices which indicated the model of internal marketing is fit to the data at hand. The result of factor loadings of dimensions of internal marketing and items of the dimensions were above 0.5 (see figure 2) and all AVE and CR values are above their threshold values (see table 3) which demonstrate evidence of convergent validity.

Table 2. Fit indices values

Measures	Index values			
	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Internal marketing	1.346	0.906	0.984	0.031
Job satisfaction	2.207	0.994	0.995	0.059

Over all measurement model	1.910	0.958	0.976	0.051
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The result of fitness indices, AVE, CR, Cronbach's alpha and factor loading values revealed that measures of internal marketing construct is reliable and valid for further analysis.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha coefficient, average variance extracted (AVE) and Composite reliability (CR)

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha >=0.7	AVE>=0.5	CR>=0.7
Internal marketing	0.968	0.599	0.922
strategic reward	0.922	0.707	0.923
Development	0.925	0.713	0.925
internal market research	0.937	0.792	0.938
working conditions	0.921	0.744	0.921
Leadership	0.930	0.771	0.931
Vision	0.828	0.706	0.827
management concern	0.942	0.764	0.942
internal communication	0.892	0.728	0.889
Job satisfaction	0.798	0.518	0.807

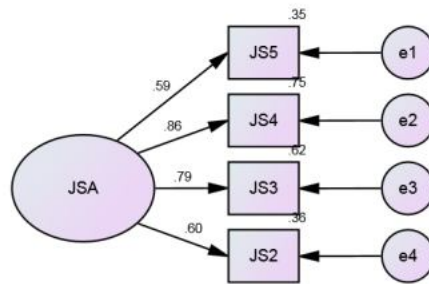
$$AVE = \sum K^2 / n$$

$$CR = (\sum K)^2 / [(\sum K)^2 + (\sum 1 - K^2)]$$

K = Factor loading of every item

n = Number of items in a model

On the other hand the first result of CFA process for job satisfaction construct not generated a satisfactory level of fit to goodness-of-fit indices values of $\chi^2/df=11.092$ and RMSEA =0.170 which demanded to evaluate modification indices and its value between item six and item seven of job satisfaction construct was 45.278 which indicted redundant items exist in the construct which caused the measurement model poor fit. Therefore, for better improvement in the model item one which has low factor loading was deleted and run the new measurement model. The final job satisfaction measurement model produced a satisfactory level of fit to all goodness-of-fit indices ($\chi^2/df=2.207$, GFI=0.994, CFI=0.995 and RMSEA= 0.059).



JSA = job satisfaction

Figure 3. Job satisfaction measurement model

The value of standard regression weight for the job satisfaction construct is between 0.59 and 0.86 which is above the cut-off-value 0.5 as well as the AVE and CR values of the job satisfaction construct are 0.518 and 0.807 which are above cut-off value 0.5 and 0.6 respectively which is indicated adequate convergent validity of the construct. All these evidences support the convergent validity.

Additionally, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the average variance extracted (AVE) and Composite reliability (CR) values were examined to assess reliability of the two measures of the study. All these values of the two measures achieved the required levels (see table 3). Thus, these results exhibit good reliability and validity of measurements. The correlation between internal marketing and job satisfaction is 0.363 and the AVE of the constructs is greater than the squared correlation (0.132). Thus, there is no problem with discriminant validity of the measurement model of the study.

Table 4 Squared correlations and average variance extracted (AVE)

	Internal marketing	Job satisfaction
Internal marketing	0.599	
Job satisfaction	0.132	0.518

Note: the boldface values in the boxes are AVE values

In addition to individual measurement model evaluation, the overall measurement model of the study was evaluated. Internal marketing items were parceled into their respective dimension for overall model evaluation. A parcel is "a total score across a set of homogeneous items with a Likert-type scale" (Kline, 2011). Parcels are specified as continuous indicators of the underline latent variables in measurement model (CFA) and in structural model (Kline, 2011,p.180). Thus, to measure the overall model of the study, internal marketing items parceled in to their respective factors after evaluating the construct with the full set of items as recommended by Hair et al. (2014). Generally, to evaluate the overall measurement model of the study internal marketing parceled items in their respective dimensions and job satisfaction construct were covering each other and subjected to CFA to evaluate to evaluate overall measurement model of the study.

The result of CFA generated a satisfactory level of fit to all goodness-of-fit indices (χ^2/df is 1.910, GFI=0.958, CFI=0.976 and RMSEA= 0.051) for pooled measurement model (table 2).

4.3.Effect of internal marketing on job satisfaction

The theoretical framework of this study indicted causal relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction. The structural model of this study, which measuring impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction evaluated against goodness-of-fit statistics and the result indicated that all fit measures attained the recommended target values($\chi^2/df= 1.910$, $GFI=0.958$, $CFI=0.976$ and $RMSEA= 0.051$).

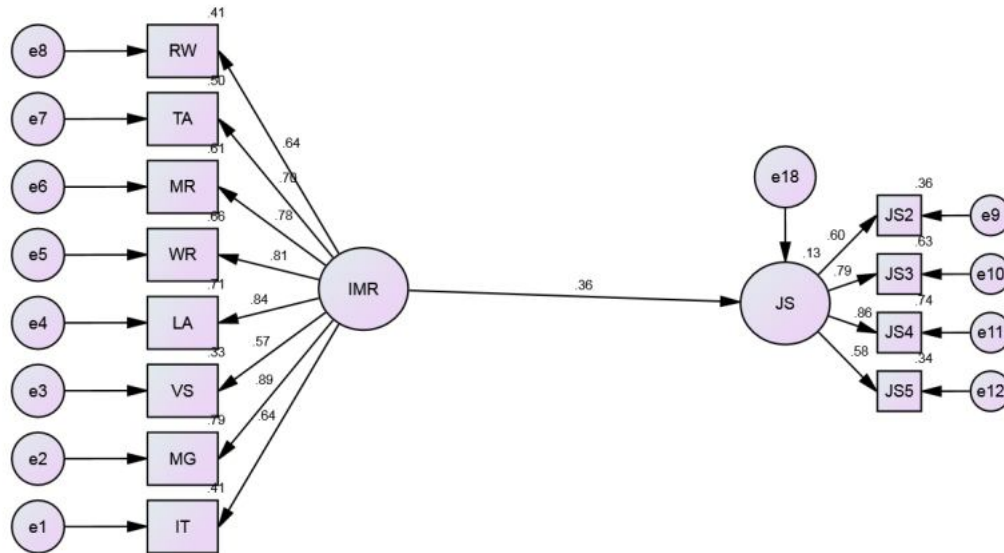


Figure 4. Structural model for relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction

The above figure 4 demonstrated path coefficients to examine the hypothesis of the study (that is internal marketing has positive impact on job satisfaction). The result indicated that the path coefficient of internal marketing to job satisfaction was significant ($\beta = 0.36$; $t=5.606$; $p<0.001$). Thus, the hypothesis of significant and positive impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction is supported. This indicates that internal marketing practice by universities led towards satisfying employees with their job. And it concluded that internal marketing has an impact on job satisfaction.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction, in the context of Ethiopian higher education institutions. The result supports the hypothesis of the study and is consistent with previous findings (Chiu et al., 2014; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Hung, 2012; Ogunnaike et al., 2012; Salem, 2013; Shiu & Yu, 2010). Huang and Rundle-Thiele (2014) found a positive relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction in tourism and hospitality sector. Another empirical investigation in non-life insurance industry in Taiwan revealed that internal marketing affects positively employees' job satisfaction (Shiu & Yu, 2010). Conducted a study on in the context of the sports service industry, Taipei City also found internal marketing has a positive influence on job satisfaction among employees (Chiu et al., 2014).

In relation education sector, a study conducted in a Nigerian university environment on internal marketing practices and its relationship with job satisfaction indicted a strong and positive relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction (Ogunnaike et al., 2012). A study conducted at a University setting in Malaysia also indicated internal market impact on employees' job satisfaction (Salem, 2013). There was also a significant relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction, in a study conducted on "effect of internal marketing on the job satisfaction of primary school teachers and the effectiveness of primary schools" in Central Taiwan primary schools setting (Hung, 2012).

This finding also proofed proposition of internal marketing which used it in the organization in that will enhance job satisfaction among employees (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000). This finding related to the fundamental concept of internal marketing satisfied employees to have satisfied customers (Caruana & Calleya, 1998) and internal marketing can use to enhance employee satisfaction (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000). This implies that successful implementation of internal marketing in an organization can enhance employee job satisfaction.

6. Management implications

The finding indicated that internal marketing is the fundamental tool for achieving employee satisfaction. Hence, employing of an internal marketing approach would create satisfied customer-contact employees. Through finding of this study the effect of internal marketing on job satisfaction can be better understood in the context of higher education institutions. This implies that managements of higher education institutions should implement internal marketing practices and consciously evaluate it for better improvement of employee job satisfaction. Continuously assessing internal marketing practices is essential for improving employee satisfaction which motivate them to service customers satisfactorily in higher education institutions. Therefore, the managements of the institutions should pay significantly more attention to their academic staffs by implementing effective internal marketing activities and the examining of the internal marketing practice allows higher education institutions to enhance their internal service offered to employees which contribute to employee job satisfaction and quality of service offered to external customers.

7. Limitations and future research

Prior research investigated internal marketing and job satisfaction was not in Ethiopian higher education sector. This study used data only from academic staffs of public higher education institutions. Thus, further research should conduct by incorporating administrative staffs in order to generalize the conceptual model of this study. And it would be meaningful to compare the relationships between academic staffs and administrative staffs in the future. Moreover, future studies might also required in both public and private universities for more generalization of the findings about the higher education institutions. Additionally, this study also concentrated only on the effects of internal marketing on job satisfaction. Therefore, other variables like organizational commitment mediation effect of internal marketing on job satisfaction could also be investigated.

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