

# **Internal Marketing: How Human Resource Management Influences External Marketing Success**

**Dr. Amit Singh<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Ganga Singh Chauhan<sup>2</sup>**

Associate Professor, Commerce and Management Department<sup>1</sup>

Associate Professor, Commerce and Management Department<sup>2</sup>

Madhav University, Pindwara, Sirohi, Rajasthan

**Abstract:** Internal marketing aims at considering the employees as internal customers whose satisfaction, devotion, and inspiration are decisive in determining service quality and brand delivery. Human Resource Management (HRM) is the key tool of transferring the principles of internal marketing into practice in the modern organization due to its strategic hiring procedures, ongoing training, proper performance control, and employee involvement programs. This research paper examines how internal marketing practices that are facilitated by the HRM affect the performance of external marketing, specifically customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and general market performance. The primary data were gathered using the structured surveys that were given to the staff and customers in the chosen service based organizations. The research embraces descriptive study and trend analysis in the investigation of the relationship between the HRM effectiveness and external marketing performance. The findings suggest that customer-oriented performance indicators have an excellent positive relationship with employee satisfaction. Organizations that have invested in the growth of their employees, open communication channels and the equitable reward systems have a greater level of customer satisfaction and strengthened brand loyalty. The results affirm that internal marketing, which has been strategically reinforced with HRM practices, is an important boost to external marketing. Therefore, HRM needs to be considered as an administrative role but also a strategic part of sustainable marketing performance and long-term competitiveness of the organization

**Keywords:** Internal Marketing, Human Resource Management, Employee Engagement, Customer Satisfaction, Brand Performance

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Organizations in a world where global competition is strong, technology is fast changing, and customers are growing more demanding are forced to consider new ways of exploring the old marketing strategies. As far as the external marketing is concerned, advertising campaigns, promotion strategy, and brand positioning efforts alone cannot deliver any success. In its turn, modern studies underline the role of employees to influence customer experiences and brand promises fulfillment.<sup>1</sup> Being the first-line employees and service providers, employees have a direct impact on customer attitudes towards the quality of provided services, organizational values, and brand credibility. Organizations have, therefore, shifted their focus to inside issues, and the concept of internal marketing has become a strategic requirement to the success of the outside marketing performance.

Internal marketing is the planned process of making employees a kind of internal customers, and jobs internal products, aiming at increasing employee satisfaction, motivation and commitment.<sup>2</sup> The assumption made by internal marketing is that satisfied and engaged employees will provide better service delivery, display customer-oriented conduct, and

<sup>1</sup> Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>2</sup> Berry, L. L. (1981). The employee as customer. *Journal of Retail Banking*, 3(1), 33–40.



make positive contribution to the performance of the organization.<sup>3</sup> Through internal marketing, the company is able to produce a competent workforce as well as one that is emotionally attached to the brand as the needs of the employees are matched with the organizational objectives. This consistency is especially imperative in service oriented industries, where the employee-customer interaction is the primary determinant of services.

One of the key areas of implementation of the principles of internal marketing in organizations is the Human Resource Management (HRM). The internal marketing strategies are executed through the HRM functions of recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and employee engagement as the underlying mechanisms.<sup>4</sup> Proper recruitment process would assure that the employees have not only the technical skills that would be required but also the attitude and values that would be in line with the brand identity of the organization. Training and development programs also enhance the ability of employees, who can now provide the same and quality service experience to their customers.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to this, the performance management systems also reposition the individual employee targets in the wider organizational and marketing targets. By using open appraisal system and rewarding systems, the HRM ensures the behaviors they want including customer orientation, teamwork, and service excellence are being reinforced.<sup>6</sup> Participative decision-making and open communication policies are some of the practices that allow employee engagement, leading to the feeling of belonging and commitment, which are both important elements of internal marketing success. Employees tend to become brand ambassadors when they feel that the organization appreciates the importance and well-being of its employees, which will have a positive effect on customer perceptions and loyalty.

Internal marketing has become strategic due to the awareness of the organizations which have come to realize the interdependence of the internal and external stakeholders. Research has established that employee satisfaction is highly influenced by internal service quality and this subsequently affects customer satisfaction and retention.<sup>7</sup> According to this view of service-profit chain, investments in human capital pay off in the form of customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth and better market performance. In that regard, internal marketing, which is driven by HRM, is not a support role but a competitive advantage driver.

Although this field of study is gaining increased academic attention, a number of organizations still operate based on the perception that HRM and marketing are separate functional areas and as such, their strategies are disjointed and poor results are achieved. Such disconnection can easily create gaps between the brand promises made by the use of external marketing with the services provided by employees in reality.<sup>8</sup> Internal marketing is aimed at closing this gap; making employees know, believe, and become able to provide the brand values that are advertised in the outside world. HRM is the unifying factor that incorporates such values in the organizational culture and work practices.

This paper examines the relationship between the internal marketing, as practiced by the HRM and the external marketing success, especially in service oriented organizations. The research aims at showing the impact of internal marketing programs on enhanced customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and general performance of the market by analyzing the impact of HRM effectiveness on employee satisfaction, motivation, and engagement. The research employs descriptive and trend analysis to come up with relationships between the internal and external performance indicators by using the primary survey data gathered among the employees and customers.

This connection is particularly important to understand in the contemporary business world where intangible resources like human capital and brand image are becoming the primary determinants of organizational performance.<sup>9</sup> When HRM and internal marketing are strategically integrated in an organization, they are in a better position of providing the

<sup>3</sup> Grönroos, C. (2007). *Service management and marketing: Customer management in service competition*. John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>4</sup> Armstrong, M. (2020). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (15th ed.). Kogan Page.

<sup>5</sup> Pfeffer, J. (1998). *The human equation: Building profits by putting people first*. Harvard Business School Press.

<sup>6</sup> Dessler, G. (2020). *Human resource management* (16th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>7</sup> Heskett, J. L., Sasser, W. E., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1997). *The service profit chain*. Free Press.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmed, P. K., & Rafiq, M. (2003). Internal marketing issues and challenges. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(9), 1177-1186.

<sup>9</sup> Barney, J. B. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99-120.



same customer experiences and remaining competitive in the long-term. Thus, the paper fulfills the role of the existing literature by strengthening the HRM strategic role in internal marketing and emphasizing its direct influence on the final marketing results.<sup>10</sup>

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of internal marketing as a key process of improving employee commitment and training their behavior according to the organizational goals has been hailed as critical in the marketing and management literature books. Initial ideas of internal marketing centered on the notion of employees being treated like internal customers whose satisfaction and motivation has a direct effect on service quality and organizational performance.<sup>11</sup> This view provided the grounds to realize the internal-external connection, especially within the service-oriented sectors where there is high employee-customer contact, and the outcome is necessary.

There is an extensive amount of studies indicating that internal marketing practices have a strong positive impact on the employee commitment, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.<sup>12</sup> The commitment of employees has been found as one of the mediating variables between internal marketing programs and the results associated with customers. Employees will be more inclined to exercise discretionary effort and customer-oriented conduct when organizational support is perceived by way of proper internal policies. These behaviors would help in maintaining a stable service delivery and customer satisfaction, which strengthens the market approach of the organization.

The training and development are always emphasized as critical internal marketing tools. According to scholars, sustained competence development is not only good in improving competence of employees but also confidence in providing service excellence.<sup>13</sup> Skilled workers are more able to meet the needs of the customers, address service failures, and convey brand values. HRM also takes center stage in institutionalizing training programs so that the internal marketing campaign is systematic and strategic in line with the overall organizational goals and not fragmented and short term campaigns.

Another important aspect of internal marketing that has received a lot of literature coverage is that of employee empowerment. Empowerment facilitates the option of service employees to make decisions, become owners of service results, and be flexible when it comes to meeting customer demands.<sup>14</sup> Research findings have shown that empowered employees have better job satisfaction levels and they are more dedicated to organizational goals. HRM promotes empowerment through the development of participative structures, job roles revision, and a culture of trust and accountability.

It has also been noted that internal communication is an essential part of efficient internal marketing. Effective and open communication will make the employees aware of organizational strategies, brand promises, and performance expectations.<sup>15</sup> Good internal communication minimizes confusion, improves interdepartmental coordination and creates a feeling of purpose. Communication systems that are driven by HRM which includes performance feedback systems as well as internal branding also help in aligning as well as engaging employees.

Reward and recognition systems also enhance internal marketing effectiveness through encouraging employees to behave in ways they want. Studies have shown that equitable and performance based compensations are positive in employee morale and retention.<sup>16</sup> HRM incorporates these reward mechanisms in formal appraisal systems, where it is

<sup>10</sup> Lings, I. N., & Greenley, G. E. (2005). Measuring internal market orientation. *Journal of Service Research*, 7(3), 290–305.

<sup>11</sup> Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1991). *Marketing services: Competing through quality*. Free Press.

<sup>12</sup> Rafiq, M., & Ahmed, P. K. (2000). Advances in the internal marketing concept. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 14(6), 449–462.

<sup>13</sup> Noe, R. A. (2020). *Employee training and development* (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

<sup>14</sup> Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(5), 1442–1465.

<sup>15</sup> Welch, M., & Jackson, P. R. (2007). Rethinking internal communication. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 12(2), 177–198.

<sup>16</sup> Milkovich, G. T., Newman, J. M., & Gerhart, B. (2019). *Compensation* (13th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.



assured that the systems are consistent and long term. When staff feel equal and valued, they tend to be loyal and also be useful in their interactions with customers.

Strong relationship has also been formulated by empirical studies that exist between sound HRM practices and external marketing performance such as retaining customers, brand equity and financial performance.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of this evidence, the literature shows that there is a significant void in terms of quantitatively connecting HRM-based internal marketing practices with the particular external marketing indicators. Most of the studies only concentrate on either employee-related outcomes or customer-related outcomes. This is due to the absence of the integrated analysis that would allow having a complete picture of how internal marketing can be translated into tangible performance on the market. It is to fill this gap that the current study aims at empirically investigating the correlation between HRM-led internal marketing and external marketing success.

### **III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To examine how HRM practices can be used to enhance internal marketing.
- To determine the effect of employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.
- To investigate the pattern in the performance of the external marketing due to the enhanced HRM initiatives.

### **IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Research Design**

The research design used in the current study is descriptive and analytical in that it will examine the relationship between internal marketing practices and external marketing success in a systematic way. The descriptive design suits best because it allows the researcher to give a detailed description of actual internal marketing practices that are being practiced through Human Resource Management (HRM) and how these practices affected employee attitudes and behaviors. Simultaneously, the analytical element makes it possible to analyze the correlation between variables, including employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. This is a combination approach that helps in gaining a holistic conception of the contribution of the internal marketing brought about by HRM to the quantifiable external marketing results. It is also an ideal design in services oriented organizations in which the interactions between employees and the customers are major determinants of market performance. The combination of descriptive information and analytical critique has provided the research with the ability to be clear in presentation and at the same time rich in interpretation of the data gathered. A design of this kind also facilitates the trend and comparative analysis through quantitative instruments that will enhance the reliability and validity of the results.<sup>18</sup>

#### **4.2 Data Collection**

To collect the data on the study both primary and secondary sources were used, which guarantee a balanced and full research framework.

• **Primary Data :** Data were collected using structured questionnaires which were administered to:Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires which were designed separately to employees and customers. One hundred and twenty employees were surveyed in order to evaluate the HRM, internal marketing effectiveness, job satisfaction, and level of engagement. Further, 150 customers were interviewed in order to determine external marketing results like the perception of the quality of service, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. The questionnaires contained closed questions on a Likert scale so that they could be quantitatively analyzed.

120 (to evaluate HRM and internal marketing performance) employees.

150 customers (to determine the external marketing results)

• **Secondary Data :** Obtained through the academic journals, reports and organizational records.The secondary data were obtained using academic journals, books, research reports and organizational records to offer theoretical

<sup>17</sup> Becker, B. E., & Huselid, M. A. (1998). High performance work systems and firm performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41(1), 8-29.

<sup>18</sup> Kothari, C. R. (2019). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques* (4th ed.). New Age International.



background and contextual support to the study. The primary and secondary data will make the research strong through triangulation and confirmation of results. This method will also make sure that the empirical findings will be backed by the developed theory points of view.<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.3 Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling method was used in the study to give sufficient coverage to the various classes of respondents in the organization. The sample of the employees was separated into strata according to functional orientation into Human Resource staff, marketing staff, and frontline service employees. This methodology made sure that the policy-making and implementation as well as the customer interaction level views were captured successfully. The respondents were randomly selected to reduce selection bias and maximize the sample representativeness of each stratum. Stratified random sampling is very special in the organizational research where employees differ in their roles greatly with regard to their duties and exposure to customers. This approach enhances the precision and the external validity of the findings in the study. The sample of customers was chosen randomly among service users of the chosen organizations, which would be diversified in terms of their experience and perception.<sup>20</sup>

#### 4.4 Tools of Analysis

**Percentage Analysis :** Respondent data were summarized and interpreted in a simplified way by the analysis of percentages. It assisted in determining the overall trends, pattern of distribution, and proportional representation of responses based on HRM practices, employee satisfaction, and customer perceptions.<sup>21</sup>

**Mean Score Comparison :** The comparison of mean scores was used to measure and compare the perceptions of the employees of the various practices in internal marketing and HRM. This approach allowed determining comparatively better and worse areas having an impact on support and satisfaction levels of employees.

**Visualization of Bar Chart and Line Graph :** Quantitative data were presented in form of bar charts and line graphs. The comparison of variables was made easy using bar charts, and the time-change trends in employee engagement and the external marketing performance indicators were depicted using the line graphs.

### V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1: HRM Practices and Employee Satisfaction Scores**

HRM Practice	Mean Satisfaction Score (Out of 5)
Training & Development	4.3
Performance Appraisal	4.0
Compensation & Rewards	3.8
Internal Communication	4.5
Employee Empowerment	4.2

**Interpretation:**

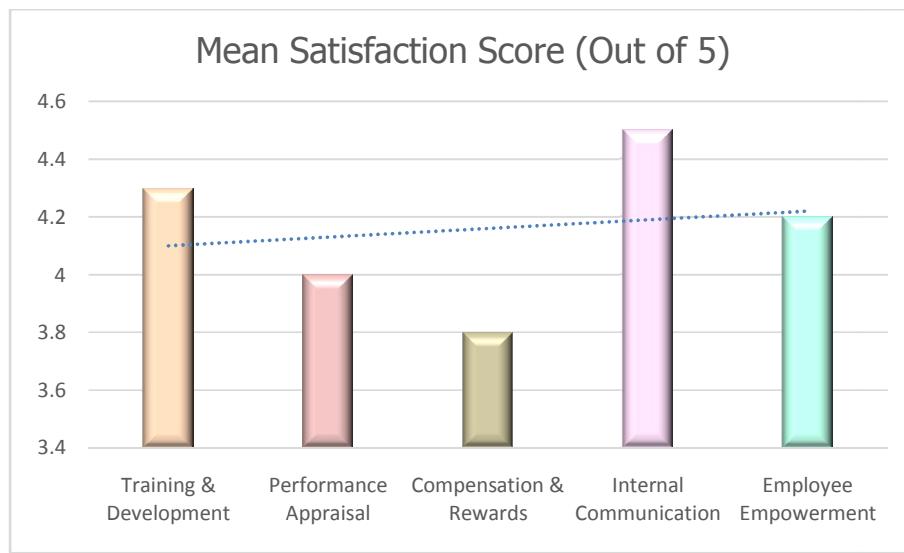
Their relevance in internal marketing effectiveness is supported by the internal communication and training coming out as the most influential factors contributing to employees satisfaction.

<sup>19</sup> Malhotra, N. K. (2020). *Marketing research: An applied orientation* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>20</sup> Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>21</sup> Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.





**Bar Chart : Mean Satisfaction Score (Out of 5)**

The bar chart is a representation of the level of satisfaction of the employees under five key HRM practices; Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation and Rewards, Internal Communication, and Employee Empowerment. The horizontal axis will indicate various HRM practices whereas the vertical axis will indicate the mean on a scale of five score of satisfaction. The highest satisfaction score is presented by the Internal Communication (4.5), and then by the Training and Development (4.3) and Employee Empowerment (4.2). Performance Appraisal demonstrates a moderate level of satisfaction (4.0) and the lowest score is registered in Compensation and Rewards (3.8). In general, the chart demonstrates that communication and skill development programs are more important in increasing employee satisfaction than monetary rewards.

**Table 2: Employee Satisfaction vs Customer Satisfaction**

Employee Satisfaction Level	Customer Satisfaction Index (%)
Low	62
Moderate	74
High	88

Table shows a clear customer satisfaction progress depending on varying levels of employee satisfaction. When customer satisfaction is low, the index of satisfaction by the employees is 62, which means that the effectiveness of the services is limited. Customer satisfaction at moderate level of employee satisfaction level increases to 74 and it indicates better service interactions. The peak level of employee satisfaction scores 88 customer satisfaction index, which points to a high positive relationship between internal customer satisfaction and external customer performance.





**Bar Chart : Customer Satisfaction Index (%)**

**Interpretation:**

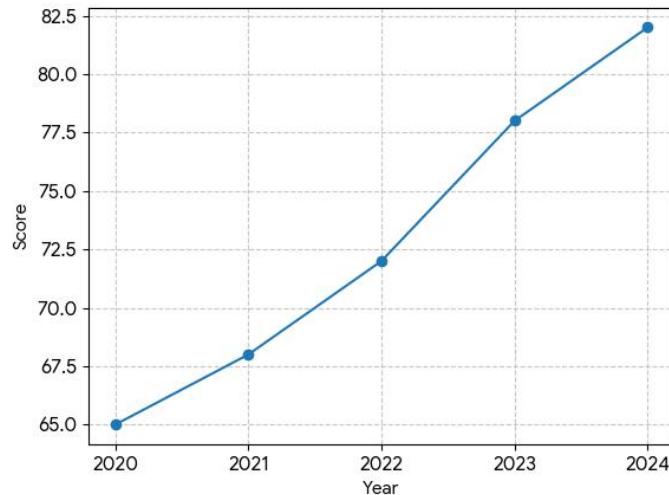
The tabulated data is also supported graphically by the bar chart that shows an upward trend of customer satisfaction with growth in employee satisfaction. With every consecutive bar, there is a significant increase, culminated by the trend line that is on the rise and dotted. This trend proves that an increase in employee satisfaction can contribute substantially to the customer experience, which explains the importance of internal marketing HRM in facilitating the best external marketing results.

**Table 3: Trend in External Marketing Performance (2020–2024)**

Year	Employee Engagement Score	Brand Loyalty Index
2020	65	60
2021	68	64
2022	72	70
2023	78	76
2024	82	81

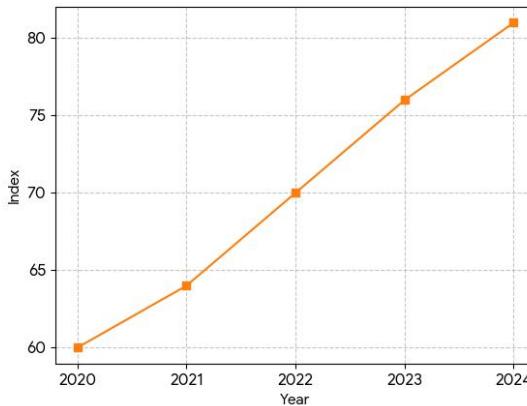
As shown in the table, employee engagement scores and the brand loyalty index showed a steady increasing pattern between 2020 and 2024. There is an upward trend in employee engagement as it stands at 65 in 2020 and 82 in 2024, which means that there is a consistent improvement in HRM and internal marketing efforts. In line with this, the brand loyalty index increases to 81 in the same period as the customer loyalty increases to 60, indicating a more enthusiastic customer loyalty and repeat business. The trend of both indicators is similar, which means that there exists a positive correlation between employee engagement and brand loyalty. The more engaged employees are, the more they can offer quality service and promote the brand that increases customer loyalty and trust. Altogether, the statistics outline how employee engagement sustained over a long period influences the enhancement of the external marketing performance.





**Graph : Employee Engagement Score**

The line graph shows that the scores related to employee engagement are gradually and steadily increasing during the five-year period between 2020 and 2024. Since it started at an average of 65 in 2020, the engagement indicates a slow increase to 68 in 2021 and an increase to 72 in 2022. The stronger growth is noted between 2022 and 2023 when the score is 78, which implies the success of HRM and internal marketing efforts in this time. The highest level of employee engagement is achieved in 2024, which means that there are long-term organizational strategies aimed at developing, communicating, and empowering employees. In general, the graph shows that the trend is substantial, indicating that the regular investment in HRM practices promotes the enhancement of employee engagement in the long run.



**Graph : Brand Loyalty Index**

The second line graph represents the trend in brand loyalty index between 2020 and 2024, which has shown a steady upward trend in all the years. Beginning at an index of 60 in 2020, brand loyalty grows at a modest pace up to 64 in 2021 and 70 in 2022. There is a significant change between 2022 and 2023, as the index increases to 76, which shows more customer trust and customer behavior of buying again. Brand loyalty is intended to be high in 2024, 81, which indicates the overall effect of enhancing the quality of the services and experience of the customers. The graph brings out an evident correlation between reinforced internal practices and increased external brand commitment.

## VI. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The study findings demonstrate that the internal marketing practices brought about by the HRM have a strong positive relationship to the external marketing success. The increases in the customer satisfaction and brand loyalty are linked



with the higher levels of employee satisfaction and engagement. The data analysis has shown that effective training, internal communication, and employee empowerment have a significant role to play in employee engagement which in turn leads to improvement in service quality. Trend analysis also indicates that as employee engagement is sustained in the long run, brand loyalty will continuously increase. On the whole, the results justify the claim that the greatest external marketing performance is attained in organizations that invest strategically in the HRM practices of internal marketing, which substantiates the paramount role of human capital in generating sustainable competitive advantage. The results prove that there is a strong positive correlation between the HRM practices and external marketing success. Companies that invest in training, communication and empowerment develop motivated employees that provide excellent service experiences. This improves customer satisfaction, brand loyalty as well as aiding long-term performance in the market. The trend analysis also proves that the long-term HRM work leads to the cumulative benefits in external marketing but not in the short-term.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

The current research highlights the importance of internal marketing as a vital means to attain the sustainable external marketing success with the focus on Human Resource Management (HRM) as the key mechanism to realize the potential of the internal marketing. The results indicate clearly that with the employees being treated as the internal customers, they play a crucial role in determining the quality of the service, customer satisfaction as well as the brand loyalty. The training and development, performance appraisal, internal communication, and employee empowerment were practices of HRM that were identified to play a fundamental role in employee satisfaction and employee engagement. These internal results in their turn transformed into the better customer perception and enhanced the external marketing performance.

This is supported by the empirical data of the study which showed that there is a high positive correlation between customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. The organizations that had better employee engagement always registered better brand loyalty and performance in the market in the long-term. Trend analysis also indicated that long-term gains are the long-term benefits of HRM-sustained internal marketing efforts as opposed to short-term returns, which adds weight to the strategic relevance of human capital development. The positive linear correlation between employee engagement and brand loyalty indicates the interdependence of organizational performance at internal level and market performance at external level.

The paper also emphasizes that events of integrating HRM and marketing functions should be considered and not viewed as different areas. Having HRM policies in synchronization with marketing goals makes the employees more likely to accomplish the promises on the brands, and create consistency between the internal values and external communication. This conformity makes the organization credible and builds customer trust.

To sum up, strategic HRM practices along with internal marketing are not only a supportive process but also a crucial source of competitive advantage. Employee satisfaction and engagement have to be the priority of organizations pursuing sustainable growth as the part of their marketing strategy. Through this, they will be able to record improved customer satisfaction, built brand loyalty and overall success of an organization throughout the competitive business environment.

Investigations can employ larger samples in the future, compare the sectors, or apply more sophisticated statistical procedures, including regression or structural equation modeling to shed more light on the internal-external marketing relationships.

## **VIII. SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Suggestions:**

- **Combine HRM and Marketing Strategy :** HRM policies should be strongly entrenched in the general marketing strategies of organizations so that employees are well informed of the values of the brands and customer expectations. By making recruitment, training, and performance assessment goals congruent with marketing, the employees will regularly deliver the promises of the brand and create better customer experiences.



- **Enhance Training and Development Programs** : To enhance competency of employees and their confidence, continuous training and skill development programs must be emphasized. Properly developed training programs allow the employees to react to the customer needs effectively, address the service problems, and ensure the quality of the offered services, thus shaping the customer satisfaction and brand loyalty positively.
- **Improve Internal Processes of Communication** : Organizations ought to develop clear and bilateral communication in an organization. Frequent feedbacks, information sharing, and organizational goal concreteness have been identified to mitigate misunderstandings, greater involvement of employees and a sense of belonging which eventually translates into better service delivery and customer perceptions.
- **Encourage Employee Empowerment and participation** : Motivation and accountability can be greatly boosted by encouraging employee empowerment by means of participative decision-making and autonomy in the delivery of the services. With empowerment, employees will be more willing to own customer problems, offer personalized services and help in achieving positive customer experience and the performance of the organization.
- **Connect Rewards and Service and Engagement Outcomes** : The system of performance appraisal and reward should be planned to be able to recognize not only productivity but also service quality and behavior focused on customers. The correlation of incentives with the results of employee engagement and customer satisfaction will encourage the employees to ensure that the service level remains high and enable the company to continue the effective external marketing activities.

#### **Recommendations**

- **Strategic Internal Marketing Framework** : An internal marketing framework, assisted by the HRM policies, should be formally adopted in the organizations. This strategy will guarantee a systematic involvement of employees, uniform service provision and adjustment between organizational values and external brand vows.
- **Invest in Ongoing Employee Engagement Activities** : The management ought to invest in the continuous employee engagement programs like skill development, feedback programs as well as recognition program. Continuity in the engagement process will ensure that employees will remain motivated, turnover will be minimized, and customer satisfaction will be enhanced in the long-run.
- **Apply Data-based HRM and Marketing Integration** : Data analytics should also be used to analyze employee satisfaction and customer feedback reports on a periodic basis by the organization. The combination of HRM and marketing data allows making informed decisions, improving it at the right moment, and assessing the role of internal marketing in the performance of external marketing.

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