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**OVERVIEW OF EFFECT OF INTERNAL RELATIONSHIP MARKETING ON
NURSES' JOB SATISFACTION (CASE STUDY: PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN ABADAN
COUNTY)**

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ABSTRACT

The present research aims to examine effect of internal relationship marketing on nurses' job satisfaction. The present research is considered as an applied research type in sake of aim, categorized as a descriptive survey in sake of nature. The statistical population (340) consists of all the nurses working at public hospitals (Ayatollah Taleghani, Imam Khomeini, Hefdah Shahrivar, Shahid Beheshti). Using Morgan table, 180 individuals have been selected among the statistical population as the sample group. Cluster sampling has been used as the sampling method. Data collection instruments include Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969), Relationship Marketing Inventory (duboisi, 2005) edited by Abbasi (2003). The obtained results indicated that there is a significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and Nature of work, supervision, staff, salaries, promotion (progression) and the Workplace.

Keywords: Marketing, Internal Relationship Marketing, Job Satisfaction

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The extent to which an attention has been paid to marketing has been regarded as an infrastructure for marketing at any business. Internal marketing has been regarded as one of the issues at marketing that was proposed as a strategy to resolve problems pertaining to the staffs within organization and provide high-quality services by Berry (1981) in 30 years ago. The common view among internal marketing scholars lies on this fact that service staffs' satisfaction has been essential to provide high-quality services, and as the result staffs are targeted at internal marketing activities (Lings & Greenley, 2010). Organizations face more than one market, assuming success as a function of organization's ability in effective relationship management. According to Reinoso's theories, staffs are assumed as a company's internal customers, and their satisfaction represents an image of the satisfaction by the foreign customers. According to the studies pertaining to marketing, internal marketing implies a concept which puts an emphasis on staffs and their satisfaction (Bellou & Andronikidis, 2008). Marketing has not been just considered out of the organization but also inside it, and not just in domestic markets but also international markets (Lings, 2004). Marketing is more

likely attributed to a strategic approach that can raise improvement of organizational performance. This can be also used in service organizations, because they face fundamental changes (Lytle & Timmermaun, 2006). Manpower implies an intellectual agent that can raise a strong and dynamic organization by optimal use of rest of resources. It is obvious that the motivated staff can change his/her workplace through his/her experiences and will in favor the community. Meeting staff's satisfaction in the issues pertaining to human resources is of a great important, that it has an unavoidable effect in efficiency of staffs working in the organizations (Reisi Ardali Gholamali, 2004). If the manpower does not enjoy an acceptable job satisfaction, rest of activities within organization will not be beneficial (Amozade, 2006). Hence, recognizing the factors which raise job satisfaction is a necessity that can intervene in rise of organizational productivity. Smith, Kendall, and Hulin found five fundamental dimensions including nature of job, salaries, wages, the opportunities for progress, and promotion at job as the most important factors affecting the person's feeling to their jobs (Hazavei, 2007). Low job satisfaction raises anti-social behaviors such as defective products, poor service,

absenteeism, resign, early retirement, emotional detachment and depersonalization. Further, nurses' job dissatisfaction can threaten their mental and physical health, affecting nurses' performance toward patients (Mir Molaei, 2005). Stephen P. Robbins believes that job satisfaction implies a person's general attitude towards his job. Hence, a person whose job satisfaction is in a high level will have a positive attitude towards his job and vice versa (Ebadi, 2010). Nurses are those ones who heal their patients, yet they might not be satisfied with their job, and their tension and dissatisfaction will degrade if this goes on. Job satisfaction in nurses has been regarded as a complicated phenomenon that will affect their job performance. According to the studies by Pelosi et al. (1999) regarding the job satisfaction among the nurses at critical care and general units in Italian hospitals, the results indicated that satisfaction comes to realize at intensive units (Pelosi et al. 1999).

Relationship with staffs for long-term success at any organization is critical in health care unit, in order that a committed staff is widely relied on the world health community, because maintenance of nurses in the line of shortage of number of nurses is of a great importance (World Health Organization, 2008). Hospitals

including private and public hospitals have been developed for a large extent in recent years, and their numbers have increased within cities, customers and their needs have been more complicated, and their needs and expectations have changed, and ultimately diversity of services provided by the hospitals have also increased. In this competitive space, hospitals must differentiate themselves from the rest of hospitals via a certain way, that providing high-quality services is one of the most important strategies to acquire competitive advantage. Quality of services encompasses numerous advantages for service hospitals including hospitals. Quality of services results in customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, increase of market share, customer retention, acquisition of new customers, and improvement in productivity, performance and profitability (Kazazi et al. 2010). Yet, to have high quality at hospitals, considering the factors such as training the employees in line with empowerment, motivation and sense of competition, job security, information sharing, decreasing the class gap among the staffs is required to raise job satisfaction among the personnel working in hospital aiming at increasing effectiveness and improvement of performance. With regard to an organization which directly deals with

patients' life and faces numerous stressful agents, it is asked to which extent effects of internal marketing can raise satisfaction among the nurses?. This question will be discussed in this study.

Significance of research

With regard to modern knowledge and service economy, the organizations require acquiring a sustainable competitive advantage to assure from their competition. Today, competitive advantage has been grounded on intangible assets such as human capital. This is tangible especially at the hospitals. Human capital has been regarded as the critical agent contributing to acquisition of competitive advantage at hospitals and medical centers. As the result, hospitals and medical centers must put their efforts on development and enhancement of an organizational culture which prioritize the internal customers' satisfaction likewise the clients' satisfaction. Hence, to have high-quality services at hospitals and satisfy the clients, the staffs must be committed to the organizational aims and visions. Nowadays, concerning the idea and concept of internal marketing, importance and role of internal customers have been clarified at success of internal

marketing programs. Indeed, quality of services and manpower is assumed as the major source for competitive advantage at hospitals and medical centers. Providing high-quality services is a fundamental strategy for their survival. Staffs' activities at these centers associate to the clients. These activities are assumed as the critical agents in development of effective relationships with patients. Hence, staffs' skills, attitudes and behavior are of importance, because of a huge impact on providing high-quality services which are corresponded to the standards and criteria. Hence, job satisfaction is one of the major components in supply of high quality services. With regard to direct effect of internal marketing on staff's performance, the study concerning the effect of internal marketing components on nurses' job satisfaction at hospitals and medical centers is of importance.

Conceptual model of research

In this study, the relationship between relationship marketing and job satisfaction that evaluates six kinds of happiness including nature of work, supervision, staff, salaries, promotion (progression) and the workplace.

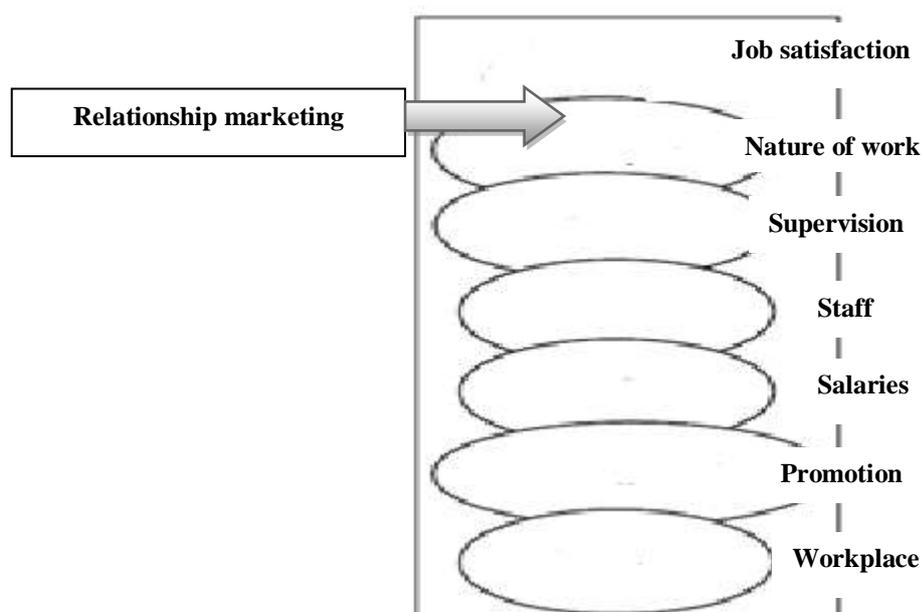


Figure 1: Conceptual model of research

Hypotheses of research

Primary hypothesis

- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' job satisfaction

Secondary hypotheses

- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' nature of work
- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' supervision
- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' staff
- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' salaries
- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' promotion
- Internal relationship marketing affects nurses' workplace

LITERATURE REVIEW

Younesi fard *et al.*, (2012) conducted a study entitled "the significance of components of internal marketing and

their effects on development of quality of services at Afshar Hospital – Yazd". Obtained results concerning the direct relationship between internal marketing and personnel's commitment and satisfaction indicated that the organization should have paid attention to staffs' performance especially their organizational satisfaction through an emphasis on aspects of internal marketing (Younesi fard et al. 2012).

Saeidi & Sarmad (2011) conducted a study entitled "overview of effect of internal marketing on market-orientation and performance of service organizations (case study: branches of Refah bank)". Finding of research indicated positive effect of internal marketing on organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, market-orientation and organizational performance. Further,

organizational commitment has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior (Saeidi, 2012).

Yektayar (2012) in her thesis entitled "overview of the relationship between brand personality and customers' loyalty at sector of household goods" indicated that significance of brand and its effect had been constantly increasing at the sale of products, that awareness from brand personality and its dimensions is of importance due to its influence on satisfaction, perceived value and customers' loyalty. Results of research indicated that there is a significant relationship between personality of the brands under study and customers' loyalty (Yektayar, 2012).

Salar(2012) conducted a study entitled "overview of CRM position in relationship marketing", in which he addressed importance of customer relationship management and mentioned relationship marketing as a means to acquire competitive advantage. Obtained results indicated that the transactions emphasized on effect of marketing mix elements have directed towards relationship marketing and customer relationship management (Salar, 2012).

Bagheri et al.(2011) in their study on systematic investigation into the factors affecting nurses' job satisfaction concluded

that it can improve nurses' job satisfaction through focusing on factors affecting nurses' job satisfaction and resolving deficiencies through enhancing the freedom of action among nurses, removing stressful agents in nursing, collaboration between physician and nurse, improving communications among the nurses, organizing nursing profession, improving payment system(Bagheri, 2011).

Amirkabiri(2011) in a study entitled "effect of internal marketing activities on elements of organizational commitment" regarding related works indicated that organizational commitment affects organizational and individual performance(Amirkabiri, 2011).

Tabatabaei Hanzaei(2010) conducted a study entitled "overview of the relationship between internal marketing and quality of services(case study: bank Keshavarzi)" aiming at recognizing effect of internal marketing actions on quality of services. Results of this study indicated that internal marketing actions regarding a conceptual model improve quality of services (Tabatabaei Hanzaei, 2010).

Baradaran(2009) conducted a study entitled "overview of factors affecting customer loyalty(case study: bank Tejarat)" aiming at investigating factors affecting customers' loyalty in bank Tejarat. Results indicated that there are a

variety of factors which highlight customer loyalty (Baradaran, 2009).

Nategh(2009) conducted a study entitled "development of bank club: a competitive means to acquire customers' loyalty" concerning importance of relationship marketing investigated importance and advantage of loyalty programs at companies. In this study, with regard to a practical framework to develop bank club, several guidelines have been proposed to implement this competitive means at Iranian banks (Nategh, 2009).

Ranjbarian(2008) conducted a study entitled "relationship marketing as an approach to improve customer satisfaction" via multivariate regression method. Results of this study indicated that priorities , eligibility (0.253) , communications (0.204) , trust (0.136) and conflict management (0.095) affected customer satisfaction at services of bank Saman, yet relationship commitment has not had a significant relationship with their satisfaction(Ranjbarian, 2008).

Amir shahi(2006) conducted a study entitled "identification of barriers and restrictions in implementation of relationship marketing at public insurance companies across Iran" aiming at recognizing barriers and restrictions in implementation of relationship marketing at public insurance companies across Iran.

In this study, in addition to introducing the aforementioned factors, a new model for barriers to employing relationship marketing at public insurance companies across Iran has been proposed (Amir shahi, 2006).

Haghighi(2003)conducted a study at bank Melat across Tehran, that the results from this study indicated that quality of services and customers' expectations among all five process dimensions fall far from the customers' perceptions from bank's performance; in other words, there is a significant relationship between process dimensions and satisfaction and loyalty(Haghighi, 2003).

Amirian zade(1997) conducted a study to examine the relationship between organizational atmosphere at schools and instructors' job satisfaction across Shiraz. In this study, a variety of organizational atmosphere have been specified, under which the relationship between a variety of atmospheres and instructors' job satisfaction as well as comparison of extent of job satisfaction in instructors was examined. This study has been conducted among 500 instructors in Shiraz (Amirian zade, 1996, p. 10).

Saatchi (1994) conducted a study entitled "overview of the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health of military and civilian personnel at Iran army" and

concluded that the more staffs' job satisfaction increases, their mental health also increases.

Virgent and his colleague (2010) in their studies on job resilience among nurses concluded that resilience at nurses' program increase their ability to build balance and job and family commitments and provide a revenue well suited for them, whereby this resilience grants control to the nurses for control over emotional and medical requirements and interactions at their job (quoted from Kabiri, 1999).

Line and colleagues (2009) in their studies on job resilience among nurses across European countries concluded that the nurses with high concern on lack of authority to control their job program more likely tend to leave their job (quoted from Kabiri, 1999).

According to the results of studies by Peltier et al.(2008), it can perceive that social bonds have more effect on job satisfaction than financial bonds, deducing that the more work environment improves, job satisfaction and job support increase among nurses(quoted from Kabiri, 1999).

Sargent & Hannum(2003) investigated job satisfaction among nurses in China, that the obtained results indicated that communications and school environment affect their satisfaction. With regard to the

comparison of this study with rest of studies, it was specified that more educated instructors have less job satisfaction. Further, paying salary relates to instructors' satisfaction. Hence, economic progress cannot help for resolving problems.

Laschiger et al.(2001) in their studies on job support and its effect on nurses' job satisfaction perceived that work environment with higher access to information, support and possibility for education and progress improves job satisfaction in nurses by the passage of time. Job opportunities raise professional progress in the person, linking to satisfaction and job commitment (quoted from Kabiri, 1999).

Urden(1999) examined effect of dimensions of organizational atmosphere on extent of job satisfaction among nurses. Findings of their study indicated that there is a significant relationship between five dimensions of organizational atmosphere and job satisfaction.

Susan Black (1997) in her study indicated that staffs' job satisfaction raises effectiveness and productivity at organization. Further, the agents including nature of work, colleagues, opportunities for promotion, wages and benefits affect staffs' job satisfaction.

McMahon & Cooworkes(1997) examined work environment and its relationship with six dimensions of job satisfaction among a sample group consisting of 344 individuals, concluded that there is an effective relationship between organizational atmosphere and dimensions of job satisfaction.

Wallace & Wiz (1995) in a study on transformational management, organizational culture and job satisfaction in Sports Organizations in Canada, concluded that the managers with higher score at transformational dimension have higher scores for organizational culture governing organization and staffs' job satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

As the library and field methods have been used in this study, it can say that the present research has been considered as an applied research type in sake of aim, and a descriptive survey in sake of research method.

statistical population

The statistical population (340) consists of all the nurses working at public hospitals(Ayatollah Taleghani, Imam Khomeini, Hefdah Shahrivar, Shahid Beheshti).

Sampling method and sample size

Using Morgan table, 180 individuals have been selected among the statistical population as the sample group.

Data collection method

In this study, field method has been used to collect data to give a response to the questions, and library methods have been used to formulate hypotheses and represent an early model.

Data collection instruments

Data collection instruments include Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969), Relationship Marketing Inventory (dubois, 2005) edited by Abbasi (2003).

Data analysis instruments

In this study, the data were analyzed using Pearson correlation test and regression analysis, that the conclusion was proposed concerning the proposed hypotheses. Data from this study have been analyzed using software SPSS.

FINDINGS Of Research

130 and 210 individuals among 340 respondents are male and female, respectively; further, 89.1% and 10.9% of the respondents have bachelor and master degree, respectively. 32.3%, 41.6% and 26.1% of the individuals are in the age group under 25, 26-35 and above 36 years old. Status of the respondents in sake of job satisfaction indicated that most of the respondents had satisfaction at high level.

Further, with regard to ranking the mean of each of effective components in job satisfaction, it was specified that maximum and minimum rank has been given to salary and colleagues. To elaborate descriptive findings of research, it can say that findings of the present research indicated that the nurses have been satisfied with their job as they had selected their job with the background in their mind. Minimum rank has been given to salary that this result is inconsistent with the results of study by Foroughi et al (Foroughi, 2007). Further, results of the present research are consistent with the results of study by Mir Molaei et al. who conducted a study entitled "midwifery's job satisfaction". They deduced that there is not a significant relationship between job satisfaction and individual characteristics including age, gender, marital status and work experience.

CONCLUSION

The first hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and nurses' nature of work. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation($r=0.214$, $p=0.030$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' nature of work. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The second hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and nurses' supervision. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation($r=0.079$, $p=0.428$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' supervision. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The third hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and nurses' staff. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation($r=0.087$, $p=0.38$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' staff. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The fourth hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and nurses' salaries. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation($r=0.079$, $p=0.728$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' salaries. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The fifth hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship

marketing and nurses' promotion. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation ($r=0.135$, $p=0.175$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' promotion. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The sixth hypothesis: obtained results indicated that there is significant relationship between internal relationship marketing and nurses' workplace. Further, this relation enjoys a direct strong correlation ($r=0.129$, $p=0.181$, $sig=0.05$). Obtained result indicated that internal relationship marketing has a positive significant effect on nurses' workplace. Hence, this hypothesis is confirmed.

SUGGESTIONS

-with regard to importance, extensiveness and diversity at nursing services under the current circumstances, it is suggested investigating this issue in rest of health care centers across the country.

-with regard to native measures, it is suggested investigating each of these measures in other service sectors including insurance, tourism and medical services so as to provide an accurate image from the status of those agents in the considered organization or company.

-it is suggested using further dimensions of internal marketing and market-orientation

in designing the used scaled for agents of this research.

-further, it is suggested determining and measuring the differences from demographic characteristics.

-as the market-orientation is influenced of various internal and external factors; such factors have been recognized as the agents contributing to market-orientation. Therefore, it is suggested using these factors in next research.

-further, it is suggested using further intervention variables and elaborating their effect.

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