

Research Article

Does Internal branding effect Employee Performance? An Empirical Evidence from Services Sector of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Internal branding with its divergent tools techniques and dimensions is no doubt capable of aligning and changing interests, attitudes, minds and behavior of people inside the organization. However, impact of internal branding vary according to different sectors, this study instigate the impact of internal branding in healthcare sector. Since aftermath are employees, this study investigate employees of private hospitals that are nurses both male and female of all three nursing cadre. This study target total 230 nurses from different private hospitals in Sialkot by employing convenience sample of non-probability. This study uses primary data comprises of quantitative nature and cross sectional, which is collect by the use of self-administered survey questionnaire. Inferential statistics is use on IBM SPSS Statistics 25th version and the data is analyze using Reliability, Durbin Watson, Normality, Regression and Correlation analysis. Findings reveal that internal branding brings positive variation in employee performance although the results did not provide significant affect still the relation between both variables is positive and significant. Discussions, implications and future recommendations are the bases of results this study derive.

Keywords: *Internal branding, Employee performance, Private hospital*

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of internal branding originally appeared in academic literature in 1976, narrated as communication with employees (Rafiq and Ahmed). Internal branding process originates from the corporate brand. Corporate branding referred as a communication standards and policies that are part of a planned and comprehensive strategy for the aggregate well-being of organizations collective departments and divisions (Gregory, 1999). A study conducted in Pakistan has analyzed the impact of internal branding within services employees for brand identification and loyalty, internal branding found as a positive and most effective reader among employees. This study has further argued internal branding as a unique and multifunctional concept in present business and management literature that has been receiving a great attention (Gull and Ashraf, 2012).

Internal branding consists of three main elements, while interacting with customer employees should reflect brand values, both internal and external parties should be aware of the brand promise, consistency of employee values and behaviors at all levels of organizations (Kai F and Ann M, 2007). Fact that is often times mistakenly interpreted for internal branding is that it stands for rules and regulations however, it is always not the same case actually it stands for “people” and only people (Jacobs, 2003).

However for every organization before implementing internal branding policies it is necessary to understand certain prerequisites like identifying and communicating clearly about what brand stands for and its vision also procedures for adaptation of brand values shouldn't be evaluated from employees but also from corporate management in their day to day activities within workplace. Conclusively leading employees for better service delivery requires committed managers (Holmgren, Schori and Wingard, 2003). Internal branding comprises of various factors that bind employees and those that helps them in performing according to the expectations. Managers can evaluate employee emotional and intellectual involvement in service delivery with the help of various internal branding activities (Punjaisri, Wilson, & Evanschitzky, 2009).

In order to have a strong external brand it is necessary to begin branding from the inside (Saratin and Schumann, 2006). Whatever the case the process of internal branding should make employees “live the brand” (Ind, 2007).

There are number of key tools and factors involves in internal branding face to face communication, training, newsletters, memos, notice boards, briefings and group meetings (Punjaisri, Wilson and Evanschtizky, 2008). Internal branding according to its definition means the collaboration of whole organization its internal processes, its corporate culture with the definite brand promise (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007; de Chernatony, 2001). However, the supreme goal is gaining competitive advantage and admissible long-term benefit with the help of well-crafted employees (Jacobs, 2003).

1.1 IMPORTANCE OF INTERNAL BRANDING IN GENERAL AND FOR SPECIFIC IN PAKISTAN

Irrespective of the general phenomena about private hospitals because of their trait in confidentiality, convenience, well-timed services and better capacity of understanding customers preferences needs and wants (Aljunid, 1995; Swan M, 1997). More than 40 percent of the nurses are annoyed with their jobs and more than half of them continuously prepare themselves for job change (Clarke, Sloane, Busse, & Giovannetti, 2001). Internal branding in health sector is no doubt a great and most effective step for hospitals to take because internalizing brand to employees while the treatment and delivery of services is for sure a massive achievement and of considerable importance.

In Pakistan, people are spending more in health care up to Rs.665billion. There are approximately 106 private hospitals in Pakistan 5344 basic health units 450 private pathological labs all of these sectors endeavor to compensate and fulfill the over increasing demand in our country in health care (Health System Profile, 2011). Its huge importance in healthcare sector is also for the original and anticipated meaning of 'care' internal branding comprises of, excessively used in treatment and delivery of services to patients in hospitals (Gapp and Merrilees, 2006). It is necessary for health care organizations to follow the core framework of relationship building commonly named as internal branding (Peltier, Pointer and Schibrowsky, 2014). Despite of the strong and powerful results internal branding creates while delivering company values to service employees (Hogg G, 1998) which in results makes employees as brand champions (Thanopoulus, 2006) there has been a dearth of understanding the role of nurses and how their commitment loyalty and happiness with the organization impacts in patient care, satisfaction and business profitability (Cooper J., 2000; Peltier J., 2003; Woods. D, 2002)

Moreover, such contribution also affects community because good health also explains how efficient and productive the society is which overall contributes to the country. Internal branding paves a way for employees by naming them internal customers, along external customers' demand for advertisements feedback and services evaluation internal customers' needs for communication should also be considered crucial by brands (Barnes, 2004). Moreover managers in health care organizations or hospitals should try to comprehend the significance of internal branding for employees because it will ultimately affects positively the end customers or patients experiences (Masri, Oetjen and Rotarius, 2011).

Health care organizations and hospitals should provide the ease of different training programs for their internal customers and guide them about services excellence, which illuminates their vision understanding and commitment towards their organizations (Tsai and Tang, 2008). One of the most important characteristics that requires internal branding is the inseparability of services form its employees because what employees are providing to its customer is a product or performance itself (Lovelock, 1983). So it becomes necessary for successful marketing that it shouldn't be implemented externally it won't be affective if not implemented properly internally (Caruana and Calleya, 1998).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This paper highlights the problem that health care providers of private organizations should trained well to recognize their organizations mission and values, health care providers are obliged by the organizations to efficiently deliver brand promise to its customers or patients. This study points out the negligence that often occurred due to the absence of effective communication, proper training and other internal branding factors among employees (Arshad and Naseer, 2016).

However management or hospital senior supervisors if focus on improving internal branding factors (training, communication, orientation, group meeting etc.) they will improve employees productivity and ultimately overall human productivity which in the end conclusively enhances the country's economic growth (Khaliq and Ahmad, 2018).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTERNAL BRANDING

For internal branding all parties matters whether external or internal all are unsettle if internal focus of organization is distort, managers of different departments should be aware of their organizations values and mission and must work accordingly in order for their subordinates to follow (Nirmai, Yajid and Khatibi, 2017). Organizations for the purpose to position everyone after one mission often uses some of internal communication tools but they are mostly futile however new approach towards social intranet enables organizations to put forward multi-dimensional communication which involves all departments their managers and subordinates to share and express their opinion openly for smooth working in organization (Natalie, Florian and Hans michael, 2014). Because the implementation of internal branding within organization is a tactical plan of action (Simi, 2014).

The concept of internal branding is the implementation of different internal brand initiatives revolves around making employees aware about brand through orientation, in order to make them committed towards brand involve them as much as organizations can by asking their opinions and appreciating them (Dr Amue, Gonewa, Dr.Asiegbu, & Ikechukwu F., 2014). Dr Amue further explains that When it comes to competing with international brands business professionals should look afar from price competition rather improves growth able competitive plan of actions within organizations and most importantly enhance the way employees deliver you brand to customers.

Mattinen, (2015) Applying internal branding in service brand always leads to affirmative results as employee behavior and their perception of brand is crucial while communicating with employees. In this case, if communication is follow up by different strong branding techniques that makes employee motivate for efficiently deliver what brand actually stands to or the promises brand oath to deliver will surely results in loyal and satisfied customers that conclusively escalate profits of business. Organization should always consider aligning employee perceptions with organization missions and goals, organizations can perform that by enhancing the skills of employee or by providing them certain skills that grace their perceptions for your organization same goes with knowledge and different attitudes that may vary from employee to employee (Diep & Stedt, 2015). Organizations can position them all accordingly for better performance. However one main challenge is while working in multinational companies not only employee perceptions vary but also ethnicity, religion, race and cultural backgrounds managers should be subtle while designing and implementing brand values because of the sensitivity of employee differences to keep them motivated and committed for organization mission delivery (Juskiw, 2017).

Internal branding to be successful must and always require commitment and congruency between department managers and the alluring qualities of brand leaders within an organization that helps in constructing brand habitant behavior not for employee but for whole organization brightening all stakeholders (Siziba, 2015). Liu, CHapleo and KO, (2015) Explains further that attaching employee emotionally can be done effortlessly by connecting the interests of all stakeholders within an organization this conclusively will result in such service delivery that peer exactly to what a brand promises to deliver. (Hayford, 2016)The main purpose of businesses are to attract and retain as many customers as they can in order to gain competitive advantage (Naeem, & Sami, 2020). it happens in educational sector whether private or public are competing against each other on the basis of effective branding, only strong inside out view of such institute attract profits. Hasni, Salo and Naeem, (2018) Argue that in order to have positive customer response or increase profits it is necessary to have firm internal loyalty among employees only that can attract and forever retain worthy customers.

2.2 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Companies are recognize by the number of employees they retain and the specific attitudes and behavior employees develop for their organizations. A good and acceptable leadership enhance the employee commitment and improve their performance (Usmani, Sami, Baig, & Irfan, 2019; Razzaq, Sami, Sib-tul-Manum, & Hammad, 2020). Internal constructing tools brand uses which revolve around internal and multi department communication among employee shapes certain firm attitudes and behaves that make employees committed towards brand (Anwar, Tawab, Kinza, & Sami, 2020), helps them in identifying their role, increase their knowledge about what the brand promises to its customers which conclusively makes them committed towards brand (Erkmen, 2018). Muda, Rafiki and Harahap, (2014) All organization set some objectives in order to survive in intense competitive environment or else they might face the prospect of closing the whole business. They Further suggests that the merit to success can achieve by manager only if they nurture the performance of

employees by fueling them with every day motivation, releasing their stress and communicating effectively with them. Different branding efforts organizations take like creating an open culture, friendly environment, and realizing the human factor during the dispersal of brand related knowledge would benefit organizations in long run by widening employee-based profitability (King, 2010). Further, add in employee based brand profitability that employees are the most precious property organizations have and underrating them is futile as they have the greatest share in company triumph (Amir and Imran, 2013). Business domain of any organization is fleeting because people, measure and process always require effective Band-Aids to cope up and modify organization hurdle, the best step an organization should take for employee dedication is to design knowledge formation, knowledge warehouse and splitting of it among other members to dynamically deal with fluctuation of environment (Bataineh and Alfalah, 2015). Moreover, organizations can easily expand employee based brand profitability if they are allow to have authority and power of making decisions according to their own choices in organization interest (Mokhtar, Altaf and Hasmini, 2018). Ashraf, Khalid and Maqsood, (2011). Even in Pakistan, it is getting crucial day by day to consider such drive for employees (Garas, Mahran and Mohammed, 2017). Because making employees motivate to engross in activities that develop brand parallelism conduct among them and engaging them in brand constructing activities will officially result in such recognition and faith that with their behavior. (Raj, 2018) Every stakeholder of brand feels honorable and appreciated. It is not wrong to say that taking certain steps in favor of your internal customers will make them committed towards your brand and may be recognize as brand conqueror(Diamantopoulos, 2014).

2.3 INTERNAL BRANDING AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Muriuki, Maru and Kosgei, (2016) provides empirical evidence in their study that through internal branding there is not any suspicion for remarkable impact it produces on employee performance further investigates the determinants of performance by concluding that internal branding makes employee committed towards their organizations which helps them in executing better presentation for company customers and make customers devoted along comprehensive organizational achievement. Amir and Imran, (2013) One of the most important factor for the cause of developing employees into well organized and best in their behavior and performance is to provide influential training programs (Singh and Itam, 2017). Mwenje, (2015) Such actions will make employees involved within organization the more tangled they are with the help of internal branding initiatives the more exceptional experiences they provide for customers. (OLannye & A.P, 2016) Employee experience different levels of commitments strongly or partially all of them are effected through internal branding because they helps in achieving favorable performance outcomes.

Yang, Wan and Wu, (2015) Argues in their study that internal branding should make employee committed to their organization because only the level of commitment they have for their organizations will determine the behavior they present ahead customers. Palouzian and Hosseini, (2016) further, add on important note that employee commitment for their organization, faithfulness and sense of inseparability all are connect with the experience they execute while providing services to their customers. Terglav, (2017) In addition, with no doubt internal branding, can help organizations and leaders for attaining such satisfactory results from employee while performing their tasks.

According to Bendixen and Michael, (2015) few resources are spent by organizations on building employee internally which results in unsatisfactory service execution, employees are initial and most trustworthy promoters of brand giving them ease, making them devote and engaging them for their long-term belongingness with organization can be influence through internal branding. Liu, Ko and Chapleo, (2017) further, adds that if internal branding endeavor in building employee according to brand is successful this will result in making employee capable of turning brand agreements for their customers in to actuality. Bojarskyte, (2017) with the help of communicating effectively with employees, managers can with no difficulty engage employees with organization mission and preserve their efforts.

2.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Does internal branding influence the employee performance of nurses in Private Hospitals of Sialkot?

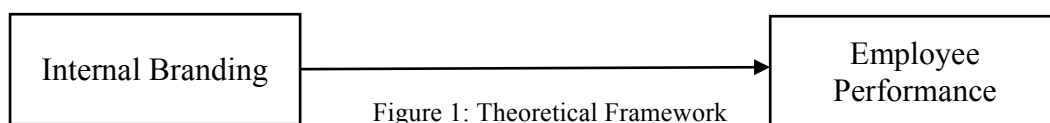
2.5 HYPOTHESES

H1: There is a significant positive impact of internal branding on employee performance.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework begins with theory of Organizational commitment, the instigator of this theory (Meyer and Allen, 1991) they suggests three types of organizational commitment. The very first type named by them as Affective commitment evaluates how much an organization employee is emotionally attach, level of identification and intensity of involvement within the organization. Normative commitment of this theory mirror the force employee perceive to linger because of organizational accountability. Continuance commitment express the burden employees will bear for abandoning organization.

(Khan & Zia ud Din, 2007; Memari, Mahdiah, & Marnani, 2013) Inquire the relationship among types of organizational commitment that comprises of how much employees identify organization values mission, are they emotionally attach and involve within, didn't they feel any burden of responsibilities and leaving the firm with their whole conduct or performance for organization. (O.O, A.J., & S.M, 2014; Riaz Khan, Ziauddin, Jam, & Ramay, 2010) Conducted same research about impact of organizational commitment levels on employee performance within an organization and discover the positive impact organizational commitment and its level have on employee performance. Figure 1 shows the theoratical framework of this research paper.



3 Research Methodology

3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY & APPROACH

After viewing and understanding the background of philosophy, it is good to consider that Positivist philosophy is use in this research about investigating the “Impact of internal branding on employee’s performance” in Private hospitals of Sialkot region. In case of our study, deductive research suits best because this approach starts by building or constructing a theory according to the research topic and after that follows a research method to test our research theory (Ragab and Arisha, 2018).

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

In case of this research titled as impact of internal branding on employee performance in private hospitals of Sialkot region survey strategy is being used because the nature or design of the study is quantitative and for the primary collection of data the best suitable among them all was survey strategy.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

In this research as the purpose is explanatory and two variables namely internal branding and employee performance are being investigated self-administrated questionnaire are regulated to nurses by hand in approximately 10 private hospitals of Sialkot region.

3.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling technique is bifurcated by studies into two main parts that is probability and non-probability. Both probability and non-probability are further categorized in to different sampling techniques like simple random, stratified and cluster for probability and purposive, convenience sampling for non-probability (Greener,2018). In case of academic research convenience technique of non-probability sampling method is more suitable because of the ease it provide, researcher does not have to select respondents statistically rather selecting respondents is entirely based on his or her own choice (Ragab and Arisha, 2018). Convenience sampling because of the ease it provides for the respondents is suitable for this research of internal branding impact on employee performance in Sialkot region.

3.5 POPULATION & SAMPLE

The target population of this study is Nurses both male and female of different private hospitals in Sialkot region. Only those who work for any private organization in part time or full are studied those who perform as a practitioners or in public organizations did not fill or respond to the questionnaire regulated. All three cadre of

nursing that involves Midwife, BSN degree holder or General nursing inquired for this research. As the target population of this research are nurses' sample of 230 questionnaires handedly provided to them under the supervision of hospitals medical superintendents or administration officers.

3.6 RESEARCH TOOL

Self-administrated questionnaire distributed for the collection of primary data to hospital staff, however the research tool or questionnaire was adapted from the research of (Pujnaisri and Wilson, 2011) for measuring internal branding and (Wijesundera, 2018) for measuring employee performance.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Data analysis performed mechanically by using (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social science software program. Depending upon the data normality few parametric techniques was analyzed which involves Demographics of the study, Linear Regression Analysis for mutual relationship of variables as well as the direction of relationship. In order to check the mutual relationship between variables and its dimension Bivariate Correlation Analysis is perform.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Respondent's gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	female	151	65.7	65.7	65.7
	Male	78	33.9	33.9	99.6
	3.00	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	230	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Respondent's qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	fsc(pre medical)	70	30.4	30.4	30.4
	Matric	62	27.0	27.0	57.4
	nurse midwife diploma	69	30.0	30.0	87.4
	generic bsn degree	29	12.6	12.6	100.0
	Total	230	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.711	.712	2

To examine the content validity of our research questionnaire in order to have satisfactory reliability the questionnaire is modify and evaluate. For reliability of our measure Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of both dependent and independent variable is obtain. The results of Cronbach's Alpha reliability closer they are to 0.1 the greater the internal consistency of the items. As shown above the results are above 0.70 so there is satisfactory inter-item correlation among variables. (Palouzian and Hosseini, Review the Effect of Internal branding on Brand Performance in Shopping centers in Tehran)

Table 4: Data Normality

	Statistic	Std. Error
Skewness	.181	.160
Kurtosis	.684	.320

Data Normality test is perform to test the normality of the data by using Skewness and kurtosis to derive the z value which is obtained by dividing the skew value with its standard error. The Z score shouldn't be more than

3.29 (2.1 & 1.1) otherwise the null hypothesis is reject and it is declare that distribution of the sample is non normal. However, in this case distribution of the sample is normal because both values 2.1 & 1.1 is less than 3.29 (Kim).

4.2 PEARSON CORRELATION

Table 5: Correlations

		Internal branding	Employee performance
Internal branding	Pearson Correlation	1	.552**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	230	230
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.552**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	230	230

Correlation is significant at the 0.01

Pearson correlation matrix apply for interval scaled variables is shown above. The results of Person correlation matrix ($r=+1$, $\text{sig}< 0.05$, $N=230$) indicates that employee performance is significant and positively related to internal branding also variation in internal branding explains 100% variation in employee performance. It is also important to consider that no correlation exceeds 0.59 if it is 0.75 or above the validity of the measures is in doubt. (Sekaran)

Table 6: Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Durbin-Watson
1	.552a	.305	.302	1.376

4.3 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

To test hypothesis bivariate regression analysis is perform by regressing the independent variable internal branding against dependent variable employee performance. The value of Adjusted R square 0.305 more than 30% is explain as a positive variation in level of internal branding (Gull and Ashraf, Impact of internal branding on service Employees Quality Commitment, 2012)

Durbin Watson

The Durbin Watson range of this research is 1.376. If the value if Durbin Watson is close to 2 (1.376) it indicates that there is no auto correlation problem and the study is cross sectional (Suki, Ramayah and Suki, 2008)

Table 7: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.704	.096		7.364	.000
	Internal branding	.565	.056	.552	10.002	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The coefficients tables of bivariate regression tells how much influence independent variable internal branding have will have in the variance of dependent variable employee performance. The standardized coefficients Beta in the coefficient table shows the positive value of 0.552 which explains that employee performance can be increased by the implication of internal branding tools also the significance level is ($\text{sig}<0.005$) which shows that independent variable internal branding is significant (Sekaran, 2006).

5 Conclusions

This study about internal branding impact on employee performance is carry out to analyze the crucial importance and the remarkable impact it can or certainly makes on employee performance. As the tools and techniques of internal branding are mean to structure employee performance according to the values, mission and promises of organizations. Many organizations uses few of them in the name of communication and training. This study for that purpose is to analyze how much employees are aware of their rights within organization and what are the multiple steps taken by organizations in that case. As employees shape organizations how much awareness they have about their rights and what footsteps, organization take to make them assured of that. Internal branding tools like (training, communication, briefing, meetings) are consider as a whole in this study to instigate its effect on the neglected employee in our society, Nurses both male and female of private hospitals in Sialkot.

The Pearson correlation of our findings provides very strong and positive and correlations between employee performance and internal branding. There is no doubt in saying that if internal branding or its tools are implement within organization they will certainly positively affect employee performance. The study of (Muriuki, Maru and Kosgei, 2016) presented same findings between both variables despite of some cultural, geographical and location differences.

Bivariate Regression analysis is perform by regressing the independent variable against dependent variable. Results produced by this analysis confirm that there is a positive variation between both variables although the significance level requires more work, hypothesis develop to test the results matches with the results of (Gull and Ashraf, Impact of internal branding on service Employees Quality Commitment). If more dimensions of internal branding or maybe each dimension is study individually, results may occur more than satisfactory or significant to make a strong impact. However, other results perform provide satisfactory results like the reliability of our data shows significant result as Cronbach's Alpha matches with the study of (Palouzian and Hosseini, Review the Effect of Internal branding on Brand Performance in Shopping centers in Tehran). Lastly, there is still more space to look for changing statistical methods may provide different results but still the impact internal branding leaves is exceptional on employee performance.

5.1 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of our study suggests that hospital supervisors, administrators or medical superintendents should consider working for employees rights so that they didn't have to monitor what their employees says behind their back because that is what tells how your organizations is inside out. Besides telling them only about their duties, managers should consider communicating transparency, organization mission and values. One most important factor is that hospital supervisors should work on their mission statements and specially expecting only results from employee, should provide them opportunity to write down their own statements and align that according to the organizations mission and values. The most ethical advantage this make is that every person will be aware of their organization mission and managers did not have to oversee their every single words or actions.

Moreover, if employee needs and rights are recognize it will surely influence macro environment of our society, positive mindset of employees will lead to positive results on customers. Organizations will lead towards profit by following internal branding techniques on internal customers. Hospital supervisors should give more attention on improving and innovating branding techniques for their internal customers because in the end they are the ones who matters the most. Working on or for people will always beneficial because changing and making them understanding about themselves or for people welfare will impact the whole society because a single spark organization make will light every corner around them and more.

5.2 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

May use greater sample size in different geographical location and multiple countries. Probability Techniques of sampling may differ the interpretation of results researcher should adopt different methodology to further instigate this topic.

Other concepts of internal branding should also be investigate for generalizability and support of our findings. Furthermore, the relationship should be test with different mediating and moderating factors.

Researchers should also like to consider instigating the use of social networking tools for enhancing employee communication and removing hurdles that create multi department barrier.

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