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Internal Marketing and Intention to Quit: The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This paper aimed to study the impact of internal marketing (IM) on employee's intention to quit (IQ) with the mediating role of organizational commitment (OC).

Methodology: Using data of 387 employees of private Banking Sector of Pakistan, the hypotheses of the study were tested using AMOS software. Correlation and regression analysis were used to test the direct and mediating relation between different variables of the study.

Findings: The results found that IM negatively affects employee's IQ. Similarly, OC also has a negative effect on employee's IQ. The mediation results showed that OC significantly mediated the relation between IM and IQ. Managers can utalize these results to mitigate employee's IQ in their respective organizations. Policy makers need to pay attention to improve their IM practices but also need to create an environment to develop OC in their employees to retain good employees. These findings were extracted from the data collected from the banking sector; however, these findings can also be generalized to other organizations/ sectors.

Conclusion: It is concluded from the results of this study that IM practices result in improving employees' OC which ultimately reduces the employees' IQ. Therefore, top management can focus on improving the employees' OC to mitigate employees' turnover, retain valuable employees and thus reduce the cost of hiring and training new employees.

Keywords: Intention to Quit, Internal Marketing, Internal Communication, Organizational Commitment, Banking Sector

Introduction

Intention to quit is an important concern, particularly in the area of human resource management. The ratio of employees quitting a workforce and are substituted by new ones is termed as the employee turnover. In a number of countries, employee turnover is considers a major concern for the human resource managers.

The matter of quitting job by employees has become a dynamic issue for the higher management of any organization. Quitting job, either for better opportunities elsewhere or due to conflict with management,

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have negative consequences for organizations. On one hand such organizations lose the skilled workforce, while on the other hand it increases the cost of recruitment and training of new employees. Therefore, employee's turnover has a direct as well as indirect impact on organization's performance. The emphasis is placed on the ways and means through which employee's intention to quit can be reduced. A large body of literature is available regarding how to reduce the employee's intention to quit the job (Ahmad, & Begum, 2023). Quitting the job by a skilled employee has adverse effect on organizational performance; therefore it is essential to identify and realize the possible methods that reduce employee's intention to quit (Brown, *et al.*, 2020).

Butenko, et al., (2022) stated that employee's turnover is not only the loss of experts and experienced employees, but also increases the cost of hiring and training new employees in the organization. Employees are the best asset for any organization; when employee's intention to guit the job increases it affects organization's output and creditability (Said, & El-Shafei, 2021). Employee's turnover on frequent basis can not only effect adversely on organization present performance but also affect the future performance (Rashid, Gul, & Khalid, 2018). Previous studies find that employee's turnover has an adverse effect on perceived performance (Jung et al. 2021). It is one of the major problems for management when their efficient employees leave the job (Rakhra, 2018). Management must adopt some measures to retain employees in the organization (Papa, 2020). In this study it is analyzed to find out the impact of internal marketing on intention to quit with the mediating role of employee's organizational commitment. This study provides important insight to human resource managers to decrease intention to quit in their employees and as a consequence reduce turnover frequency in their organizations through adopting effective internal marketing applications and mediating role of organizational commitment. According to Lin, & Huang (2021) turnover is one of the major challenges faced by modern day organizations. Saputro et al, (2020) stated that turnover increases the demands and workloads of remaining employees, which may cause burnout, and subsequently even greater turnover.

The results of this study are significant to senior management to understand, analyze and visualize that how to retain employees in their respective organizations. HR managers would understand the role of internal marketing and organization commitment in mitigating employee's intention to quit the job. Using the findings of this research study they would be able to formulate effective policies to retained valuable employees of their organizations and thus reduce the cost of hirings and traings of the new employees.

Litrature Review

This study is based on social exchange theory; employees socially and economically compare themselves within and outside the organization. According to Blau, (1964) social exchange theory is ideal for understanding society as a sequence of connections between people that are founded on expectation of rewards and punishments. Wang and Hou (2015) expalian this view that our interactions are determined by the rewards or punishments that we expect to receive from others, which we evaluate using a cost-benefit analysis model. Wickert, *et al.*, (2016) observed that people who are engaged in dealings with others are realistically looking to increase their profits. Similarly, the case in employee and employer relationships both are taking advantage of maximizing profits. Employee intends to leave current job if he perceives that social, economic, and psychological traits of their dealings are not in his favor that allows him to think about alternative sources. Social exchange theory advocates that employees are continuously involve in mutual exchanges with organizations and management (Masterson *et al.*, 2000). If employees get advantages in these exchanges, they are probable to continue associations with the management and organization. If employees feel that they are not benefiting with this exchange they intend to quit their job and hence the organization.

Modau, et al., (2018) state that intention to quit is an employee's own expected probability that he or she has a plan/ intent to leave the current organization forever in the near future. Intention to quit denotes to employee's tendency to leave the organization. It may be for developmental purpose where an employee is leaving the current job for better opportunity. On the other hand, intention to quit the job may arise due

to conflict with the current organization/ management. Some authosr classify the actual turnover as voluntary and nonvoluntary turnover from the perspective of organization. Lee (2018) stated that voluntary turnover is very expensive and harmful to an organization. Such turnover is often the result of intention to quit due conflict from the employee perspective. Individuals first assess their prsent job, capability, experience, job satisfaction or dissatisfaction based on their work. If employee is dissatisfied, then it generates the beliefs about quitting, i.e. the intention to quit (Kurniawaty, *et al*, 2019). Therefore, how to mitigate the employee intention to quit due to conflict, which is frequently the common reason for voluntary turnover, is the primary focus of this study.

Internal Marketing and Employee's Intention to Quit

Frye *et al*, (2020) state that internal marketing practices in an organization can effectively decrease employee's turnover and thus can save expenditures on hiring and training new employees. First, an organization must establish the idea of internal marketing in the organization's values, and allocate it within the organizational environment and culture via employee's attitudes. Later, the organization must deal with employee's training design, encouragement, support, authorization to make choices, better communication, and inspiration to come up with new ideas and beliefs, and measurements to solve organizational issues. Turnover rate could be improved if this phase of improving and strengthening the internal marketing plan achieves its purpose (Kim, *et al.*, 2016).

Internal Marketing

Berry (1981) stated that "workers as client" idea in internal marketing is similar to the outer customers. Therefore, internet customers' needs are to be fulfilled by their organizations. The sense of this realization is that by satisfying the requirements of in-house customers, an organization must be in a better position to carry out better quality services to the outer customers. Consistency in this is the theory that satisfies employee desires increase worker motivation and retention. As an implication, the greater is the amount of staff member's satisfaction, the higher is the opportunity of producing external contentment and faithfulness. Regarding internal marketing (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003) state that organizations must be distinctive that they focus on the significance of the individuals within and outside the organization. In this way, internal marketing supports the individual into a combined unit. Internal marketing is valuable in increasing organization's effectiveness and developing competencies by motivating human resource (Kim, *et al.*, 2016). Internal marketing is recognized as an important approach to prepare organizations with proficiencies and capabilities (Abzari, *et al.*, 2011). Internal marketing programs are significant antecedents of organization development indicators and they include service quality, *turnover rate*, customer conscious employees, and organizational commitment (Kim, *et al.*, 2015).

Hypothesis1: Internal marketing has a significant impact on intention to quit

Oganizational Commitment

Alzubi (2018) stated that organizational commitment has been recognized as an opposite to retaining and is a good forecaster of real turnover behavior. Frontline employees in services organizations are the main representative of the organizations. They interact effectively and with positive manners with customers when they are well committed having self-confidence and positive attitude (Woodside *et al.*, 1989). These employees have an impact on the delivery of service and this have a major influence on the performance of an organization (Ostroff, 1993). Unzicker *et al.* (2000) are of the view that organization commitment is the comparative strong point of employee's recognition with his organization's objectives, its ideas and beliefs to be simulated in worker's service delivery. Employee understands about organization's targets and importance of these targets is called organizational commitment (Mowday *et al.*, 2013). Similarly Joung, *et al.*, (2015) stated that the reason of accepting internal marketing in the organizations is to assure employees that the administration is concerned and aware of their problems. A number of researchers explained a positive and successful impact of the implementation of internal marketing on employee's attitudes regarding the organization including the professional participation and satisfaction, and

organizational obligation (Chang & Chang, 2007; Ting, 2011). Internal marketing normally has a positive impact on employee's commitment with organization alon with job satisfaction (Ting, 2011).

Internal Marketing and Oganizational Commitment

Ramalho *et al.* (2018) explained that the organization commitment is particularly significant for keeping a respectable association among employees and their organization. Employing internal marketing applications can be valuable approach to enhance employee's organizational commitment (Yu *et al.*, 2019). Frye *et al.* (2020) explained that those employees who are presenting better internal marketing services are likely to attain a better level of organizational commitment. In the casino perception, Back *et al.* (2011) observed that internal service quality can boost job satisfaction of casino employee's that can lead to greater organizational commitment. The internal communication is a vital internal marketing application to attain a significant effect on casino employees' commitment to organization by permitting them to express their real ideas easily and giving suitable information. International communication, generally, states to an organization's actions or struggles to part, convey and share the information, thoughts, beliefs, and spirits between employees to accomplish organization's goals (Back *et al.*, 2011). Chiu, *et al.*, (2014) conclude that the fruitful execution of internal marketing applications in any organization will enhance employee's job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2: Internal marketing has a significant impact on organizational commitment.

Oganizational Commitment and Employee's Intention to Quit

According to Yao *et al.* (2019) the importance of organizational commitment is primarily dependent on how to retain employee in the organization in long term. Furthermore, the organizational commitment hypothesized three elements of strong and negative impacts known as affective, continuance and normative commitment that affect turnover intention of employee (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Tett and Meyer (1993) used meta analytics to analyze this affect. Their study verified a strong and negative connection between employee's turnover intention and organizational commitment. Furthermore, earlier empirical research analyses also observed a significant effect of organization commitment on turnover intention (Kim & Brymer, 2011).

Hypothesis3: Organizational commitment has a significant impact on employee intention to quit

Internal Marketing, Organizational Commitment and Intention to Quit

Khatri, Fern and Budhwar (2001) state that turnover intentions can usually be applied in the management study instead of real turnover, because the latter is under the effects of irrelevant issues, such as accessibility of alternative jobs. Intentions of quitting from job are high through employee turnover, while the actual turnover might be lower. In this situation, low employment turnover could disguise the impacts of poor practices at managerial level. Furthermore, Jensen, *et al.*, (2013) stated that intention to quit from a job is frequently related with undesirable employee behaviors like absence, delay tactics, and unauthorized breaks (Gould-Williams, *et al.*, 2013). In order to decrease high turnover rate among service quality providers, marketing-oriented tactics have been proposed (Lee, *et al.* 2011). The core objective of internal marketing is helping in-side customers of organization to improve their job satisfaction and augment their commitment with organization. That is, it must encourage job performing ability and simplify his ability to achieve the goals set by the organization for successful career path (Chang & Chang, 2007). Internal marketing is highly linked with job satisfaction, organizational commitment (OC) and turnover intention (Chang & Chang, 2007; Lee, *et al.*, 2011).

Hypothesis 4: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between internal marketing and intention to quit

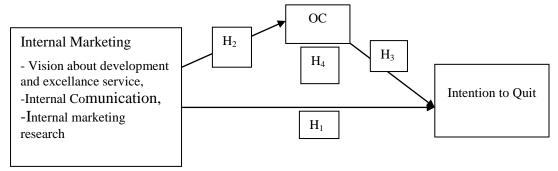


Figure 1: Research Model

Data and Methodology

A quantitative methodology is adopted for the current research. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire from the lower and middle level employees of private banking sector. The present research is a micro level research where it is targeted to measure the effect of internal marketing on employee intention to quit the job with the mediating effect of organization commitment at individual employee level. Employees of private banks, as a service sector, are considered suitable for collecting the primary data. Apart from demographic variables, all other variables, dependent, independent and mediating used in this questionnaire survey were measured with a 5 points Likert's scale.

Measures

Appropriate scales are adapted from prevous studies to collect the data of all variables included in the prensent study. For the dimensions of internal marketing, e.g. Vision about development and excellence service (VDES) scale developed by Tsai & Tang (2008) and Tsai & Wu (2011); internal communication (IC) scale developed by Huang, & Rundle-Thiele (2014) and Kim, *et al.*, (2016); and internal market (IM) scale developed by Huang, & Rundle-Thiele (2014). There are six items in VDES, eight items in IC, and six itmes in IM scale. The reliability, measured with Cronbach's alpha, for VDES scale is 0.69, IC is 0.74, and IMR is 0.76. Furthermore, OC is measured by using the seven items scale adapted from Kim, *et al.*, (2016). The Cronbach's alpha value for this scale is 0.80. Finally, the scale for measuring the intention to quit (IQ) is adapted from Kim, & Min-Park (2014) and the Cronbach's alpha value for IQC is 0.84. All these values are well above the minimum acceptable value of 0.60 (Peters, 2014).

Sample

A total of 609 questionnaires are distributed to the target population i.e employees of private banking sector. Out of these, 474 are returned by the concerned respondents. Therefore, a 77.83% response rate is recorded which is highly satisfactory in social sciences (Groves, 2006). Out of 474 returened questionnaires, 51 are incomplete while 36 questionnaires are discarded due to outliers leaving a useable sample of 387 respondents. Therefore, the useable response rate is 63.54%, which is considered a very good final response rate. Details of the sample and their demographic statistics are provided in table Annex. A. Top level management is not part of the target population of the study due to the nature of the study.

Table 1: Demographic detail of sample

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	272	70%	70
Gender	Female	115		100
	Intermediate	6	1.6%	1.6
Ovalification	Bachelor	179	46.3%	47.8
Qualification	Master	182	47%	94.8
	MS/M.Phil/PhD	20	5.2%	100
	Below 5 Years	195	50.4%	50.4
E	5-10 Years	140	36.2%	86.6
Experience	11-15 Years	41	10.6%	97.2
	Above 15 Years	11	2.8%	100
	Total Sample	387		

Furthermore, the mean, standard deviation (SD), minimum, maximum, skewness, kurtosis and correlations of variables are provided in table 2.

Results and Findings

As predicted, internal marketing and IQ are negatively related to each other and it is statistically significant (β = -.325, p < .01) as reported in Table 3 as well as in Figure 2. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported at a 99% confidence interval. So without mediation effect, the relation between indepent and dependent variable is significant. IM and OC (β = .813, p < .01) are significantly positively related with each other which support H₂ of this study. OC and IQ (β = -.336, p < .01) are negatively related with each other and the value is also statistically significant. This supports H₃ of the research model.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and correlation coefficients

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Statistics			Correlations	
					Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3
IM	3.67	0.46	2.00	5.00	-0.58	0.48	1.00		
OC	3.73	0.58	2.00	5.00	-0.40	-0.04	0.560**	1.00	
IQ	2.44	0.73	1.00	5.00	-0.16	-0.28	-0.548**	-0.496**	1.00

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

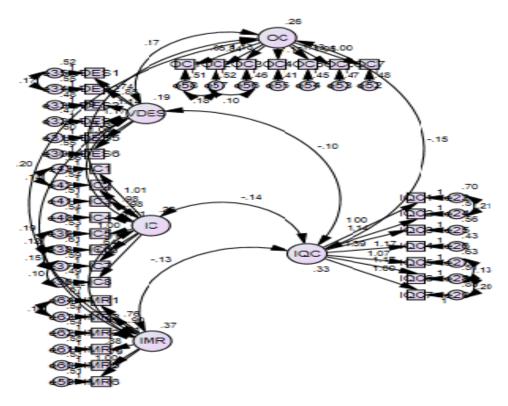


Fig. 2: The results of confirmatory factor analysis estimated through AMOS

Table 3: Regression analysis

	Beta Est	C E	C D			
	Unstandardized	Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	p-value	
IM → IQ	325	207	.095	-3.413	***	
$IM \rightarrow OC$.813	.655	.048	17.014	***	
OC →IQ	336	267	.077	-4.389	***	

Table 4 reports the mediation results of the model. The direct effect of IM on IQ is $\beta = -.325$ which is statiscally significant at p < .01. The results further show the direct effect IM on OC is $\beta = .813$ which is also statiscally significant at p < .01. The direct effect of OC on IQ is $\beta = -.336$ which is statiscally significant at p < .01. Futhermore the results in the mediation table show that OC partially mediates the relation between IM and IQ. The mediation effect is significant as the indirect effect ($\beta = -.175$, p < .01) of IM on IQ. Therefore, in the total effect of IM on IQ, $\beta = -.382$, p < .01, the direct effect is $\beta = -.207$, p < .01 and idirect effect is $\beta = -.175$, p < .01. As both direct and indirect effects are still statisitically significant therefore there is a partial mediation effect of OC int the relation of IM and IQ.

Table 4: Direct, indirect and total effect model of mediation analysis

_	Direct Effect		Indirect Ef	fect	Total Effe	ct
	IM	OC	IM	OC	IM	OC
OC	.655	.000	.000	.000	.655	.000
	(.000)					
IQ	207	267	175	.000	382	267
	(.000)	(.000.)	(.000.)		(.000.)	(.000.)

Discussion

The main purpose of the research is to investigate the relationship between an internal marketing and employee's intention to quit the job with the mediating effect of organizational commitment. From the study it is predicted, as H₂ that internal marketing is positively related to organization commitment. This hypothesis is supported by the findings of the current study, based on the data collected from lower and middle level managers of private banking sector. The findings of the current study are in accordance with the findings of Abzari, et al., (2011), Kanyurhi, et al., (2016) and Kim, et al., (2016). OC has significant negative impact on intention to quit, which supports H₃ i.e. the impact is negative as predicted as well as statistically significant. The historical studies also show both negative and statistically significant relation between OC and intention to quit (Park, & Jung, 2015 and Kang, et al., 2015). Moreover, internal marketing has significant negative impact on intention to quit the job which supports H₁. The direct, indirect and total effects are reported in table 4 of the study. Finally, the findings indicate that OC mediates the relation between internal marketing and intention to quit, which supports H₄ of this study. As the results in table 3 are still significant in the presences of OC i.e. the impact of IM on intention to quit is still sigfinicant but its beta coeeficient has descreased from -0.382 to -0.207. These results are in accordance with the findings of Kim, et al., (2016), Lee, & Jung, (2013), and Yoon, & Lee, (2007). Based on these findings it is concluded that internal marketing applications are good for for retaining employees as better IM negatively affect IQ thus reducing the probability of losing good employees. But when IM activities inculcate OC in employees then its impact on IQ becomes even more distinct as indicated by the mediation role of OC between IM and IO. Thus IM activities become more effective when these are designed in such a way to inculcate OC in the employees. As the current study uses internal relations, work life balance and health & safety as the three diemsions of IM therefore, it is concluded that these activities develop OC which in return mitigates employee intention to quit.

Conclusion

Current research supports the "Social Exchange Theory" that when employees, being important stakeholders of an organization, receive favorable treatment from seniors (IM), in exchange they show higher organizational commitment (OC), which ultimately results in low turnover intention/intention to quit. These findings are significant for the top management of an organization. They can design IM applications in such a way to improve OC in their employees. Through this combination of IM and OC they can mitigate their amployee's intention to quit.

Contribution of this paper in the form of theoretic, methodological, management and strategy making suggestions with restrictions present in current study are clarified. In a nutshell, current study observed the role of IM approaches and its significance in improving employees' OC, which in turn, reduces turnover intention. The advantages of IM are presented in this study through the regular support of banks in supporting cost-effective progress sustained by theoretic and realistic proof. Consequently, planned execution of IM applications in banks could create a transformation to the stability of banks in long term.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declared no conflict of interest.

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