

The Effect of Internal Marketing on Organization Citizenship Behaviour among Primary School Teachers in Mersing District, Johor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the level of internal marketing activities and the level of organizational citizenship behaviour among primary schools teachers. This study also sought to identify the effect of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behaviour. Using quantitative approach participants were 280 teachers from primary schools in Mersing district, Johor, Malaysia. Participants were chosen based on cluster sampling and subsequently simple random sampling method, where data was collected using questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistic and inferential analysis. The descriptive statistic was used to determine the level of internal marketing activities and the levels of organizational citizenship behaviour. Simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The results showed the total mean scores of internal marketing ($M=4.47$, $SD=0.54$) and organizational citizenship behaviour ($M=4.57$, $SD=0.45$) were at a high level. The result from simple linear regression analysis showed internal marketing activities had a significant influence on organizational citizenship behaviour practices ($\beta=0.803$, $p<0.001$). In conclusion, the increase of internal marketing activities at school will positively increase organizational citizenship behaviour practices among teachers. In implication, the findings of this study will assist the relevant parties in planning and implementing suitable plans to empower the educational sector in Malaysia such as the implementation of effective governance system and to create harmonious workplace environment.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Organization Citizenship Behaviour, Primary School Teachers, Education, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Organizational Citizenship Behavior refers to voluntary, extra-role behaviors that employees engage in, which are not directly rewarded but contribute to the overall well-being and success of the organization (Organ, 1988). In the school context, organizational citizenship behavior manifests as behaviors such as helping colleagues, participating in school activities, volunteering for additional responsibilities, and contributing to a positive school climate (Chaudhry et al., 2020). These behaviors are essential in promoting collaboration, teamwork, and a supportive environment within schools, which directly impacts student outcomes and overall school effectiveness. Schools' success depends on the willingness of the teachers to engage in behaviours beyond the prescribed work (Somech & Ron 2007).

However, there are several challenges that hinder the effective demonstration of organization citizenship behaviour in Malaysian schools. These include high workloads, limited resources, and pressure from administrative tasks, which leave teachers with little time for extra-role behaviors (Samsudin & Ismail, 2019; Syazreen Dalina, 2021). Furthermore, the lack of formal recognition or rewards and encouragement can result in teachers feeling undervalued, reducing their motivation to engage in such behaviors (Nor Roselidyawaty,

Che Ghani & Hanzolah, 2023)). Leadership support is also crucial; in schools with strong, supportive leadership, teachers are more likely to exhibit organization citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Research indicates that teachers who feel supported by their school leadership and peers are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Ismail et al., 2022). Given this, internal marketing can play a crucial role in fostering organizational citizenship behavior by creating an environment where teachers feel valued, respected, and motivated to go beyond their formal job responsibilities. Recent studies have shown that when schools invest in professional development, offer recognition, and maintain open communication, teachers are more likely to engage in behaviors that contribute to the overall success of the school (Koh & Tan, 2020; Ismail et al., 2022).

Internal marketing is a concept that emerged from the business sector, where it is typically used to align and motivate employees to meet the goals of the organization through strategies similar to those used in external marketing (Abzari, Ghorbani, & Madani, 2011; Chiang & Liu, 2017). Internal marketing emphasizes the importance of treating employees as internal customers and engaging them through various practices, such as recognition, professional development, clear communication, and an inclusive organizational culture (Berry, 1981). The goal is to enhance employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance by ensuring that employees feel valued and supported in their roles.

In the education sector, particularly among primary school teachers, internal marketing can be an important tool to foster a positive work environment and improve organizational performance. Teachers are critical to shaping the educational experiences of students, but they are also facing mounting challenges, including heavy workloads, low salaries, limited resources, and inadequate professional development opportunities (Samsudin & Ismail, 2021). These challenges can lead to teacher burnout, job dissatisfaction, and high turnover rates, all of which have a detrimental impact on the quality of education. In light of these challenges, internal marketing is seen as a potential strategy to improve teacher engagement, motivation, and retention.

Objectives of the study

This study was conducted to examine the effect of internal marketing activities on organizational citizenship behavior among primary school teachers in Mersing district. The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To identify the level of internal marketing activities implemented in primary schools.
2. To identify the level of organizational citizenship behavior practices among teachers in primary schools.
3. To determine the effect of internal marketing activities on the practice of organizational citizenship behavior among teachers in primary schools.

Based on objective 3, the following hypothesis was tested in this study:

Ho: There is no significant effect of internal marketing activities on the practice of organizational citizenship behavior among teachers in primary schools.

Organization Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational citizenship behavior refers to discretionary, voluntary behaviors that employees engage in, which are not directly recognized or rewarded by the formal reward system but contribute to the overall effectiveness of an organization. These behaviors, while not part of an employee's formal job description, are crucial for promoting a positive work environment, fostering collaboration, and enhancing organizational performance. The concept of organizational citizenship behavior was introduced by Organ (1988), who identified several key dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior.

- i. **Altruism:** Voluntary behavior that benefits specific individuals within the organization, such as helping colleagues with tasks or offering emotional support during stressful times.
- ii. **Conscientiousness:** Employee behaviors that go beyond the basic requirements of the job, including punctuality, adherence to company policies, and maintaining a high standard of work.
- iii. **Sportsmanship:** Tolerating less-than-ideal situations and not complaining about minor inconveniences, reflecting a positive and cooperative attitude.
- iv. **Courtesy:** Preventive behaviors aimed at avoiding interpersonal conflicts, such as providing advance notice of schedule changes or giving colleagues a heads-up about potential issues.
- v. **Civic Virtue:** Employees' participation in activities that benefit the broader organization, such as attending meetings, volunteering for committees, or offering ideas for improvement.

Internal Marketing

Internal marketing, often considered the precursor to external marketing, involves aligning the values and goals of the organization with employees' needs and expectations. It emphasizes the importance of creating a work environment where employees are motivated, engaged, and equipped to deliver high-quality service to external customers. According to Berry (1981), internal marketing is essentially about "selling" the company's values and goals to its employees, ensuring they are enthusiastic about their roles and understand their significance in achieving organizational success.

Recent studies have expanded this definition to incorporate a broader perspective on employee well-being and organizational culture. Khan and Rehman (2020) define internal marketing as a comprehensive set of actions that an organization takes to treat employees as internal customers, with the aim of ensuring employees' satisfaction, empowerment, and development. This modern view includes organizational climate, training and development, leadership support, and communication as key components of internal marketing strategies.

Empowerment is a key component of internal marketing, which involves giving employees the authority and autonomy to make decisions related to their roles. Empowerment is linked to increased job satisfaction, higher motivation, and greater job commitment. Saleh et al. (2022) emphasized that empowering employees by providing them with decision-making power and involving them in organizational change initiatives fosters a sense of ownership, which ultimately improves performance and customer satisfaction.

Another critical component is training and development. Employee training and development ensure that employees have the skills and knowledge to perform their jobs effectively and align with the company's goals. Awan and Khalil (2020) argued that training programs not only enhance the skills of employees but also boost their confidence and job satisfaction, which are key antecedents of internal marketing success. Effective internal communication is another cornerstone of internal marketing. Communication strategies that keep employees informed about organizational goals, challenges, and changes are integral to creating a transparent and trustworthy work environment. Khan et al. (2023) found that clear and consistent communication not only helps employees understand their roles within the organization but also fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty.

Leadership support, which involves leaders demonstrating commitment to employee well-being and development, is another vital dimension of internal marketing. Gao and Tang (2021) identified that leadership that prioritizes employee development, recognizes achievements, and provides constructive feedback is closely linked to higher levels of employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in primary schools located in Mersing district, Johor. The cluster sampling technique was employed in selecting the schools and the teachers in those schools were randomly selected to

complete the questionnaires. In total there were 280 teachers involved in this study where the sample size was determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. A total of 24 items were used to measure organizational citizenship behavior. Responses were measured using a Likert scale with a rating of 1 = Never to 5 = Very often. The instrument for organizational citizenship behaviour was adapted from Podsakoff, et al. (1990). To measure internal marketing, a total of 14 items adapted from Yildiz and Kara (2017) were used. Responses in this section were measured using a Likert scale with a rating of 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree. The Cronbach's Alpha values for organizational citizenship behavior and internal marketing were 0.935 and 0.896 respectively which are higher than the recommended 0.7 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010)

Descriptive statistics and simple linear regressions were used to answer the objectives. The total mean scores were interpreted as follows:

Table 1 Interpretation of Mean Scores

Levels	Range
Low	1.00 to 2.33
Moderate	2.34 to 3.66
High	3.67 to 5.00

Source: Ramlee Ismail et. al., (2016)

Assumptions for linear regression analysis, namely normality, outliers and multicollinearity were observed. Skewness and kurtosis values for all items are within ± 2 (Garson, 2012). Thus, the data of this study is normally distributed and the assumption of normality has been fulfilled. Test results on standardized z score values in this study found no value greater than ± 3 . Thus, there is no extreme values in the data (Coakes & Steed, 2003). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) results found that the tolerance value is the same as the Variance Inflation Factor value which is 1. Therefore, there is no multicollinearity problem in the data of this study (Miles & Shelvin, 2001).

RESULTS

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic profile

Demographic	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	109	38.9
Female	171	61.1
Age		
20 to 30 years	28	10
31 to 40 years	103	36.8
41 to 50 years	100	35.7
51 years and above	49	17.5
Marital status		
Single	60	21.4
Married	220	78.6
Ethnicity		
Malay	233	83.2
Chinese	27	9.6
Indian	19	6.8
Others	1	0.4

Teaching experience		
1 to 5 years	33	11.8
6 to 10 years	70	25
11 to 15 years	43	15.4
16 to 20 years	37	13.2
21 years and above	97	34.6

The results for objective one and two are shown in Table 3. The total mean scores for internal marketing is 4.47, indicating that internal marketing activities in primary schools in Mersing district are at a high level. The total mean score for organizational citizenship behavior is 4.57, indicating that organization citizenship behaviour is at high level as well.

Table 3 Total Mean Scores

Variables	Total Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Internal Marketing	4.47	0.54
Organization Citizenship Behaviour	4.57	0.45

The result for Objective 3 was explained in Table 4 and 5. The tables showed the regression result of internal marketing as an independent variable and Organization Citizenship Behaviour as a dependent variable.

Based on the Summary Model Table, the value of R Square is 0.644. This shows that 64.4 percent, more than half of the variation in organizational citizenship behavior practices is explained by Internal marketing. The ANOVA table showed the value of $F(1,278) = 503.261$ with a p-value of 0.000 which is smaller than the significance level of 0.001 ($p < 0.000$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0 : There is no significant influence of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior) is rejected.

Table 4 Results of Regression Analysis (Model Summary and ANOVA)

Model Summary dan ANOVA				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.803	0.644	0.643	6.512211
	F			Significant
	503.261 ***			0.000

Note: ***significant at $\alpha = 0.001$

Next, further observations on the output in Table 5 which is the Coefficient table shows that internal marketing has significant influence on organizational citizenship behavior when the value of p (0.000) is smaller than the value α (0.001). The standardized Beta value showed that internal marketing had a positive effect towards organization citizenship behaviour with $\beta = 0.803$, $p < 0.001$. This explains that the higher the internal marketing activities implemented in the school, the higher the teachers implement organizational citizenship behavior in the school. Therefore, H_0 that internal marketing activities have no influence on organizational citizenship behavior practices is not supported.

Table 5 Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results (Coefficients)

Model	Independent Variable	Standardized Beta	t	Significant
1	Internal Marketing	0.803	22.433	0.00

Note: Dependent variable: Organization Citizenship Behaviour

*** significant at $\alpha = 0.001$

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicate a high level of internal marketing practices in schools, which aligns with recent research emphasizing the positive impact of such practices on teacher engagement, satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Schools that prioritize internal marketing strategies such as professional development, clear communication, recognition, and fostering a supportive organizational culture are better able to create an environment where teachers feel valued and motivated to contribute beyond their formal roles. This is consistent with recent studies by Ismail et al. (2022) and Koh & Tan (2020), which highlight how strong internal marketing practices in schools lead to increased teacher morale and participation in organizational citizenship behavior.

The high level of internal marketing observed in this study reflects the growing recognition among educational administrators of the need to treat teachers as internal customers, thus enhancing both individual and collective outcomes within schools. These findings suggest that when schools effectively implement internal marketing, teachers are more likely to demonstrate greater job satisfaction and commitment, which in turn improves school climate and overall educational performance. Furthermore, this supports the argument that investing in internal marketing practices is critical for fostering a motivated and engaged teaching workforce, particularly in the face of challenges such as teacher burnout and high turnover rates (Samsudin & Ismail, 2021).

The findings of this study reveal a high level of organizational citizenship behavior among teachers in the schools surveyed, which underscores the positive impact of a supportive work environment and strong school leadership. Teachers who engage in organizational citizenship behavior such as assisting colleagues, volunteering for school events, and contributing to a positive school climate are vital to fostering collaboration and improving overall school performance. This aligns with recent research by Chaudhry et al. (2020) and Ismail et al. (2022), which demonstrated that schools that promote a culture of teamwork, mutual respect, and open communication experience higher levels of organizational citizenship behavior among staff.

The high levels of organizational citizenship behavior observed in this study suggest that when teachers feel empowered, recognized, and supported by their school leadership and peers, they are more likely to go above and beyond their formal responsibilities. This contributes not only to a more positive work environment but also to better student outcomes and school effectiveness. The results highlight the importance of cultivating an organizational culture that encourages organizational citizenship behavior, as these behaviors have been shown to enhance teacher collaboration, reduce turnover, and improve overall school performance (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

The findings of this research indicate a significant positive effect between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior among primary school teachers. The results of this study are consistent with recent research that has established a positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior in various organizational contexts, including education (Ismail et al., 2022; Koh & Tan, 2020). Internal marketing strategies, such as recognition programs, career development opportunities, and creating a supportive organizational culture, have been shown to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment. Furthermore, the results support earlier findings by Bakker and Bal (2010), who demonstrated that when teachers in educational settings are provided with supportive leadership, recognition, and professional development opportunities, their engagement in organizational citizenship behavior increases. This study extends these findings by demonstrating the relevance of Internal marketing in fostering organizational citizenship behavior specifically in Malaysian primary schools, where teacher motivation and retention are significant concerns (Alam, 2021).

The positive effect of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior in this study has several important implications for school administrators and policymakers. First, the results suggest that schools

should place a stronger emphasis on developing and implementing internal marketing strategies to improve teacher satisfaction and engagement. This can include creating recognition programs that celebrate teachers' contributions, offering regular feedback, providing career development opportunities, and ensuring a supportive work environment.

Given the challenges faced by Malaysian primary schools, such as high teacher turnover and burnout (Samsudin & Ismail, 2021), it is essential that educational leaders recognize the importance of internal marketing in reducing these issues. By fostering an organizational culture where teachers feel supported and valued, schools can enhance teachers' commitment, reduce turnover rates, and increase the likelihood of teachers engaging in organizational citizenship behavior

Additionally, the findings suggest that internal marketing should not be viewed as a one-time initiative but as an ongoing process that requires continuous attention and improvement. Schools that regularly assess the needs of their teachers, provide opportunities for professional development, and maintain open lines of communication are more likely to see sustained improvements in both and organizational citizenship behavior overall school performance (Ismail et al., 2022).

Future Directions

This research investigates the effect of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior. Future research should explore the potential mediators of this relationship. Other factors such as teacher stress, leadership style, or workload that might influence organization citizenship behaviour could be considered. It would also be beneficial for future research to examine the specific internal marketing practices such as training, recognition that are most effective in encouraging organization citizenship behaviour. The sample for this research consists only primary school teachers in one district, thus generalizability of the finding may be limited. Future studies could be improved by broadening the sample to include teachers from more regions or schools at different levels such as secondary schools for more generalizable results.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide strong evidence that internal marketing significantly affect organizational citizenship behavior among primary school teachers in Malaysia. Effective internal marketing strategies, such as teacher recognition, professional development, and fostering a supportive organizational culture, not only enhance teachers' job satisfaction but also motivate them to engage in behaviors that contribute to the success of the school. The results have important implications for educational administrators, suggesting that investing in internal marketing practices can help create a more positive and collaborative school environment, reduce turnover, and improve overall school performance.

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