ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY OF THE INTERNAL MARKETING ELEMENTS AT FACULTY OF NURSING

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ABSTRACT

Background: The aim of this study was to assess the availability of internal marketing elements among internal customers of the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University. *Sample*: the study was carried on all available internal customers of the faculty (n=378). *Research design* A descriptive research design was utilized. *Data collection tools*: data are collected using three tools: to assess the availability of internal marketing elements for teaching staff, employees and nursing students.*Results*: revealed that the most available element of the internal marketing among teaching staff, employees and students is the communication element(76.5%, 69.1%, 72.1% retrospectively), followed by supervision (75.1%) and scientific research support among teaching staff(73.2%), supervision and safety measures among employees (67%) and supervision and achievement and rewards among students (70.7%). Whereas, the lowest available element is the benefits among teaching staff, employees and students (52.5%, 43.5%,68.2% retrospectively). *Conclusion*: availability of internal marketing elements at the faculty is moderately fulfilled. The highest mean score of it were among the teaching staff (70.6%) followed by students(69.5%) and employees (62.3%). *Recommendations:*The study recommended that academic managers have to develop an internal marketing strategy for Faculty of Nursing at Port Said University.

Key words: Internal marketing, internal customer, teaching staff, students, employees.

INTRODUCTION

Customer Satisfaction is the most important gadget which makes an organization survive and face the competition. The customers are first key persons who give the business but the internal customers are the pillars who make the business grow and prosperous (Varun & Indu, 2015).The higher education looked at importance of human capital as one that can produce graduates who have the skills and competency useful both for individual and community. In the global competition is not just how to recruit students but also how to get lecturers who have the competencies that meet the law on teachers and lecturers (Susanti et al., 2015). It is clear that any sustainable competitive advantage for universities is via the staff (Shima & George, 2014), and in organization they have been called internal marketing (Falavarjani et al., 2013).

Internal marketing concept (IM) came into existence nearly two decades ago in the academic arena, since the authors were viewed the internal marketing as a comprehensive tool to achieve customer satisfaction (Minar, Sarwari & Salam, 2008). Berry (1981) pioneered the term internal marketing and defined it as viewing employees and working staff as internal customers, and viewing jobs as internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while addressing the objectives of the organizations. While Kokemuller (2015) defined internal marketing as the way an organization promotes its values and brand internally to employees that help generate its brand value.

The goal of internal marketing is focusing attention of employees on those internal activities that need to be developed, maintained and improved for the purpose of organization performance and strengthening the organization in external market. Internal marketing is based on seeing employees as internal customers, activities and work tasks are seen as internal products aimed at offering internal products that meet needs and desires of internal and external customers to achieve organization objectives (Paliaga & Strunje, 2011).Internal marketing creates an environment that enables organizations to focus on whatever needs changing internally so they can enhance their external marketplace performance; internal marketing helps organizations deliver better customer service by aligning, coordinating, and motivating employees (Fogel, 2016). Internal marketing as having resultant effects on three major areas or components: understanding of organizational vision and values, quality delivery of external marketing as well as quality delivery of interactive marketing (Ogunnaike et al., 2012).

Placing and treating the internal customers ahead of customers is a key to attain better service quality and hence enhanced customer satisfaction with the latter leading to customer loyalty and eventually repeated purchase intention (Byju, 2013). IM does not only affect internal service quality, but also it retains the best internal customers, rewards systems, supporting and develops internal customer' skills (Hashem & AL-nsour, 2012).Internal marketing elements include the following: senior leadership and management; organizational supervision; organizational and management support; training, advancement and performance appraisal; organizational communication and coordination; empowerment; job description; strategic rewards and incentive systems; safety measures and job security (Galpin, 1997; Hogg, Carter & Dunne, 1998); Lings, 2000; Conduit & Mavondo, 2001).

1. **Senior leadership and management:**

Contribution of IM towards more effective implementation of organizational directives and strategies, acknowledging inability of bureaucratic structures to intrinsically motivate and leverage non-controllable aspects of individual employee performance (Boukis, Kaminakis, Siampos & Kostopoulos , 2015). Also, maintaining meaningful and well-considered policies and procedures is a critical component of a strong management system. They are used to establish an organization's internal controls and for ensuring compliance with regulatory standards (Compass Point Nonprofit Services, 2012).

2. **Supervision:**

Supervision is an activity undertaken by someone occupying a formal role within an organization that has (more or less) explicit expectations and accountabilities to both the person being supervised, and the organization which provides the context for the supervisory relationship (Swanson &Watt, 2011). Supervision can occur in a variety of contexts: supervision of service delivery by supervisees, administrative supervision, supervision of research activities conducted by supervisees, and supervision of individuals mandated by regulatory entities related to disciplinary actions (Chair, Doll, Ellis, Goodyear, Kaslow, McCutcheon, ……., 2014).

3. **Organizational and Management Support:**

To provide support is fundamental if a productive and satisfied staff member is needed. Staff members should be treated as assets, with respect and caring (Nagy & Vilela, 2015). IM can be a promoter which establishes an attractive workplace for internal customers.

Management tools for creating a satisfied environment by marketing approaches include: give priority employees in the organization; develop a career widely as a product; strong communication as a major source of satisfaction; improve team working and collaborative activities; provide scholarships and funding for training and research (Isfahani et al., 2012; Susanti et al., 2015).

4. **Training, Advancement and Performance Appraisal:**

Training both physically, socially, intellectually and mentally are very essential in facilitating not only the level of productivity but also the development of personnel in any organization (Olaniyan & Ojo, 2008). IM focused on continuous improvement of internal customers and their understanding of the organization for which they work will be decisive in the creation of highly competitive and advanced organizations (Paliaga & Strunje, 2011). Although it is expensive for the organization to spend the money on their internal customers but this investment is positive for the organizations to hold the place in the market (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013).

5. **Organizational Communication:**

It is important for the internal communication process to be part of the organizational culture and entrenched in its values (Shima & George, 2014).Furthermore, staff awareness of organizational vision, mission and goals would also increase their involvement in management, fostering feelings of belongingness. Above all else, managers' understanding and knowledge of internal marketing is a determining factor in the practice of these activities (Gezen, Akinci, EsatoElu, Parsons & Sarp, 2007).

6. **Empowerment:**Many service organizations are attempting to implement the concept of internal marketing. In doing so, organizations have to take cognizance of the need to empower internal customers in order to put such an idea into practice (Papasolomou, 2006).

7. **Job description:**

Job descriptions prevent lawsuits and increase productivity, It clarify and enhance communication between employer and internal customers, and they are critical in supporting nearly every employment action (Kratt, 2015).A good job description functions as a foundation for developing interview questions, carrying out performance evaluations, and setting goals, salary increases, and growth paths. It should be used by

both employee and manager as a tool for establishing development goals (Kratt, 2015; Ojimba, 2016).

8. Strategic Rewards and Incentive Systems:

Undoubtedly, organizations may improve or change their reward systems and put more efficient and effective ones to survive in today's environment (Güngor, 2011). For maximum effectiveness, IM programs should be tightly integrated with overall strategy and reward systems, especially with respect to compensation (Tsai & Wu, 2011).

9. Health and Safety Measures:

A safe and healthy workplace does not happen by chance or guesswork (Safe Work Australia, 2011). School action for safety and health (SASH) (2010) added that having an effective health and safety program can help educational institutions to prevent injuries and illnesses among their internal customers.Proper implementation of internal marketing practices results into satisfied faculty member who perform well and want to stay with the university resulting also into competitive advantage (Shabbir & Salaria, 2014)

Significance of the Study

The universities of every country reflect an image of that country through their quality of educational standard. It attracts at national level and foreign investment and thus it generates economic activity. An important implication for practitioners is that internal customers satisfaction is an important (internal) marketing priority and consequently. Furthermore, it promotes economy through generating profits(Shabbir & Salaria, 2014). As a result of this great effect of internal marketing, this study is geared to study the availability of internal marketing elements among internal customers in academic field.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

To assess the availability of internal marketing elements among internal customers of the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University.

Study Objectives:

1. Assess the availability of internal marketing elements among the teaching staff at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University.

2. Identify the availability of internal marketing elements among employees at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University.

3. Assess the availability of internal marketing elements among students at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University.

SUBJECTS AND METHOD:

Study Design & Setting

A descriptive research design was used, carried out at the Faculty of Nursing in Port Said University.

Study Sample

The study populations have included all available internal customers of the faculty (n=378), They divided into three groups:Teaching staff (n=59) included (assistant professor (1), lecturers(26), assistant lecturers (14) and demonstrators (18), administrative staff (employees) (n=68), and nursing students from second, third, and fourth academic years, in addition to the internship students (n=251), after exclusion of the pilot study (n=41) from the entire sample size, with one year experiences at least in the studied faculty.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION: Data were collected by three questionnaire sheets to assess the availability of internal marketing elements among internal customers of the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University. Internal marketing questionnaire was developed by *Hussein (2009)* based on *Clark (1998); Elsayed (2005).* There were some modifications done by the researcher in the light of literature review (Accreditation of Institutions of Higher Education for the Arab Republic of Egypt Guide, 2009) through adding items in different dimensions describing more details about support, empowerment, safety measures, communication, reward and benefits system and training.

Tool (1):Internal Marketing among Nursing Teaching Staff: A questionnaire sheet was used to assess the availability of internal marketing elements among the teaching staff at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University.*This tool was divided into two parts:*Personal and job characteristics part, and Internal Marketing Elements among Nursing Teaching Staff, It was composed of 174 items under 12 dimensions, as following: policy and administration, salary and benefits, supervision, communication, training and advancement, job description, achievement and rewards, institutional

support, safety measures, scientific research support, administrative support and recognition, and empowerment.

Tool (2):*Internal Marketing among Employees:* A questionnaire sheet was used to assess the availability of internal marketing elements among the employees at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University.*This tool was divided into two parts:* Personal and Job Characteristics Part *and* IM Elements among Faculty of Nursing Employees*,* It was composed of 133 items under 11 dimensions, as following: policy and administration, benefits, supervision, communication, training and advancement, job description, achievement and rewards, institutional support,, safety measures, administrative support and recognition and empowerment.

Tool (3):*Internal Marketing among Faculty of Nursing Students:* A questionnaire sheet was used to assess the availability of internal marketing elements among the students at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University.*This tool was divided into two parts:*Personal and Job Characteristics Part *and* Internal Marketing Elements among Nursing Students*,* It was composed of 173 items under 10 dimensions, as following: policy and administration, benefits, supervision, communication, training and advancement, achievement and rewards, administrative support and recognition, Institutional support, safety measures, and empowerment**.**

Tool Content Validity and Reliability:

The Structured Interviewing Questionnairewas tested for content validity by a panel ofeleven experts in the field of community health nursing and public health medicine. The reliability was assured by calculating cronbach's alpha coefficients for each factor, it was high (0.88).

Pilot study:

 A pilot study was undertaken before starting the data collection. It was carried out on 41studied personnel *(9 teaching staff, 11 employees and 31 students).* It was conducted at the time from 15th April 2015 to 14May 2015. The purpose was to test the applicability and the feasibility of the study tools. Also, it served to estimate the time needed to complete the data collection. In addition to find out any obstacles and problems that might interfere with data collection. The subjects included in the pilot study were excluded from the study subjects. The final form of the tool was formulated and the time needed for completing them was determined.

Administrative and Ethical Considerations:

An official permission was obtained from the Faculty of Nursing to obtain the authorization for data collection. The aim of the study was explained to every internal customer before participation, and voluntary participation was emphasized and an oral consent was obtained.

Statistical Analysis

Data entry and statistical analysis were done using statistical package of social science (SPSS) version 16.0. Data were presented using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages for determining the means the standard deviations and correlations for internal marketing elements for the teaching staff, employees and students at faculty of nursing in Port Said University.

Field Work:

After obtaining the official permission to conduct the study and after finalization of tools, the investigator met with the internal customers individually and explained to them the purpose of the study, the consent of each one were obtained before their participation. Data collection period extended three months from the beginning of May to the end of June 2015. Time needed for filling Questionnaire ranged from 20 to 30 minutes.

RESULTS:

PART I: Internal Marketing among Nursing Teaching Staff

Table (1): Personal and job characteristics of the teaching staff at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University. It was found that the mean age of the teaching staff was 32.9 years; the majority of the teaching staff were females (98.3%); three quarters of the teaching staff was married (76.3%); they are presented from six different scientific departments; less than half of the studied teaching staff were lecturers (44.1%); the mean years of experience among nursing teaching staff was 9.8 years.

Table (2): The availability of internal marketing elements among the teaching staff at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University. It was found that more than two thirds (70.6%) of the teaching staff was agree that the elements of internal marketing are applied in the faculty.Slightly more than half of teaching staff (52.5%) was agree that the salary and benefits that are produced by the faculty satisfy their needs. While more than three quarters of them (76.5%) was agreed about the communication in the faculty.

PART II: Internal Marketing among Employees

Table (3): Personal and job characteristics of the employees at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University. It was found that the mean age of the employees was 38.7 years; most of the employees (70.6%) were females**;** 72.1% of them were married; they are presented ten different departments, 39.7% of the studied employees were 1st degree of job rank; 11.8% have administrative positions; the experience duration means of employees participants was 13.1 years.

Table (4): The availability of internal marketing elements among employees at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University. It was found that 62.3% of the employees were agreeing that the elements of IM are applied in the faculty.Only 43.5% was agreeing that the salary and benefits that are produced by the faculty satisfy their needs. While more than two third of them (69.1%) was agreed about the communication in the faculty.

PART III: Internal Marketing among Nursing Students

Table (5): Personal characteristics of the students at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University. It was found that mean age of students was 21.5 years; 62.9% of students were females: they are presented three different academic years in addition to internship year.

Table (6): The availability of internal marketing elements among the students at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University. It was found that 69.5% of students were agreeing that elements of IM are applied in faculty.While more than two third (68.2%) of students was agreeing that benefits that are produced by faculty satisfy their needs. And 72.1% of them were agreeing about communication in faculty.

Table (1): Personal and job characteristics of the teaching staff at Port Said' faculty of nursing.

Personal and job characteristics	teaching staff (n=59)	
	No.	**%**
Personal characteristics		
Age (years) Min-Max	23.0-50.0	
Mean±SD	32.9±7.2	
GenderMale	1	1.7
Female	58	98.3
Marital status Single	11	18.6
Married	45	76.3
Divorced	3	5.1
Occupational characteristics		
SpecialtyNursing Administration	7	11.9
Obstetrics and gynecology nursing	14	23.7
Pediatrics nursing	8	13.6
Community health nursing	8	13.6
Medical and surgical nursing	18	30.5
Psychiatry nursing	4	6.8
Academic rank Demonstrator	18	30.5
Assistant lecturer	14	23.7
Lecturer	26	44.1
Assistant professor	1	1.7
Duration of experience (years) Min-Max	1.0-25.0	
Mean±SD	9.8±6.9	

Table (2): All elements of internal marketing among teaching staff at Port Said' faculty of nursing.

Elements	teaching staff (n=59)		
	Min	*Max*	*Mean±SD*
Policy and administration	42.0	98.0	72.0±11.4
Salary and benefits	20.0	78.2	52.5±11.9
Supervision	40.0	100.0	75.1±13.4
Communication	26.7	100.0	76.5±13.2
Training and advancement	26.7	100.0	72.8±16.8
job description	20.0	100.0	72.9±16.9
Achievement and rewards	32.0	98.0	63.9±14.9
Institutional support	30.0	100.0	70.9±13.7
Safety measures	32.7	100.0	72.1±13.7
Scientific research support	26.5	100.0	73.2±13.6
Administrative support and recognition	28.6	100.0	71.9±15.4
Empowerment	28.5	100.0	68.7±15.6
Total score (%): Mean±SD			70.6±12.1

Table (3): Personal and job characteristicsof the employees at Port Said' faculty of nursing.

Personal and job characteristics	employees(n=68)	
	No.	%
Personal characteristics		
Age (years):Min-Max	22.0-58.0	
Mean±SD	38.7±10.2	
Gender:Male	20	29.4
Female	48	70.6
Marital status:Single	13	19.1
Married	49	72.1
Divorced/widow	6	8.8
Occupational characteristics		
Specialty: Technical affair	31	45.6
Purchase affair	10	14.7
Administrative affair	3	4.4
Youth care affair	2	2.9
Postgraduate affair	2	2.9
Library	3	4.4
Financial affairs	6	8.8
Stores	1	1.5
Undergraduate affairs	7	10.3
Salaries	3	4.4
job rank:1st degree	27	39.7
2nd degree	11	16.2
3rd degree	21	30.9
4th degree or more	9	13.2
Administrative position:Absent	60	88.2
Present	8	11.8
Duration of experience (years): 1-	31	45.6
10-	19	27.9
20-<30	18	26.5
Min-Max	1.0-29.0	
Mean±SD	13.1±8.4	

Table (4): All elements of internal marketing among employees at Port Said' faculty of nursing.

Elements	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean±SD*
Policy and administration	35.6	95.6	63.4±12.4
Salary and benefits	20.0	80.0	43.5±15.7
Supervision	28.6	100.0	67.8±14.9
Communication	25.7	100.0	69.1±11.9
Training and advancement	26.7	100.0	60.6±15.4
job description	28.0	100.0	64.0±15.3
Achievement and rewards	22.0	100.0	56.6±14.3
Institutional support	20.0	100.0	66.8±13.4
Safety measures	32.7	100.0	67.1±13.7
Administrative support and recognition	20.0	100.0	66.5±15.4
Empowerment	20.0	100.0	60.4±14.4
Total score (%): Mean±SD			62.3±11.4

Table (5): Personal characteristics of students at faculty of nursing in Port Said University.

Personal characteristics	Students (n=251)	
	No.	**%**
Personal characteristics		
Age (years):Min-Max	19.0-24.0	
Mean±SD	21.5±1.1	
Gender: Male	93	37.1
Female	158	62.9
Academic year:2nd	102	40.6
3rd	61	24.3
4th	59	23.5
Internship year	29	11.6

Table (6): All elements of internal marketing among students at Port Said' Faculty of Nursing.

Elements	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean±SD*
Policy and administration	22.2	100.0	70.5±19.3
Benefits	28.0	100.0	68.2±20.1
Supervision	24.4	100.0	70.7±18.6
Communication	20.0	100.0	72.1±18.0
Training and advancement	20.0	100.0	69.8±19.7
Achievement and rewards	20.0	100.0	70.7±19.4
Institutional support	20.0	100.0	68.7±20.2
Safety measures	20.0	100.0	68.5±20.8
Administrative support and recognition	20.0	100.0	68.5±21.4
. Empowerment	20.0	100.0	69.2±20.8
Total score (%): Mean±SD			69.5±18.6

DISCUSSION:

A better understanding of internal marketing and the study of its prevalence in Universities would go a long way in ensuring efficient delivery of services (Qayum & Sahaf, 2013). Internal marketing allows organizations to establish an organizational vision for managers, provide training and development for internal customers, enhance motivation, inspiration, retain internal customers, and tightly integrated with overall strategy and reward systems, especially with respect to compensation (Tsai & Wu, 2011). So, this study was conducted to assessing the availability of internal marketing elements among teaching staff, employees and students at the Faculty of Nursing, Port Said University.

Regarding the total availability of total internal marketing elements at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University, the findings indicated that availability of internal marketing elements among teaching staff is the highest total of availability, followed by students and employees. Also, the finding revealed that the communication element is the highest one among all internal customers (teaching staff, employees and students), followed by supervision and scientific research support among teaching staff, supervision and safety measures among employees and supervision and achievement and rewards among students. This finding supported byTsai (2014) who concluded that communication channels between the managers and staff should be strengthened to clearly convey the vision and goals to frontline employees.And Falender and Shafranske (2012) who clarified that organization has to establish the supervisory relationship by satisfying the roles, tasks, responsibilities of supervisee and supervisor. This may be due to the advanced method of teaching that the faculty use, which help in increasing the availability of communication and supervision elements. Also,Chepkwony and Oloko (2014)concluded that management should ensure that reward system is effective enough and competitive to influence internal customers to work harder

Whereas, the lowest total of availability element of internal marketing among all internal customers of the faculty is the benefits. This may be due to limited resources of the small and newly Port Said University lead to low level of benefits.The current study findings indicated that the majority of teaching staff and employees stated that the faculty administration does not provide a nursery in the faculty, no means of transportations for teaching staff and no opportunity for foreign secondment for employees, which about half of the students of the faculty asserted that faculty administration provides means of transportations, housing of expats, place for students break as cafeteria. This finding is in congruent with Chepkwony and Oloko (2014) who recommended that internal customer's benefits is not competitive enough. While, Ramos (2015) stated that organizations should update internal customer' fringe benefits to keep abreast with the current trends on internal customer needs and motivation. This would mean that Port Said faculty of nursing need to develop new forms of benefits to increase level of satisfaction of the internal customers.

In general, understanding internal customers' wants and needs and selling internally responsibility goals would make external efforts in developing a responsible strategy much more likely to succeed (Sanchez-Hernandez & Grayson, 2012). So finally,managers need to be more proactive trying to introduce the marketing function in human capital issues. Understanding internal customers' wants and needs and selling internally responsibility goals would make external efforts in developing a responsible strategy much more likely to succeed (Sanchez-Hernandez & Grayson, 2012).

CONCLUSION:

It was concluded that availability of internal marketing elements at the faculty of nursing, Port Said University is moderately fulfilled. The highest mean score of internal marketing availability was among the teaching staff followed by students and employees. The most available element of the internal marketing among the three categories (teaching staff, employees and students) is the communication element, followed by supervision and scientific research support among teaching staff, supervision and safety measures among employees and supervision followed by achievement and rewards among students. Whereas, the lowest available element is the benefits among teaching staff, employees and students.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The faculty administration has to develop an internal marketing strategy and take needed measures towards increasing the availability of internal marketing elements among their internal customers (teaching staff, employees and students) through: improving all attributes of benefits, pay, rewards, empowerment, support, and training and safety measures. And energize all attributes of supervision and communication. Also faculty administration has to regularly assess the availability of internal marketing elements among their internal customers.

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التسويق الداخلي لكلية التمريض بجامعة بورسعيد

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الخلاصة

هدف الدراسة هو تقييم مدى اتاحية عناصر التسويق الداخلي بكلية التمريض /جامعة بورسعيد. وقد أجريت دراسة وصفية شارك فيها جميع المتاح من هيئة التدريس وموظفين وطلاب الكلية خلال العام الدراسي 2016/2014، ولقد شارك فى البحث عدد 378 يمثلون الفئات الثلاث ، تم استخدام ثلاثة استبيانات لقياس مدى توافر عناصر التسويق الداخلي بين أعضاء هيئة التدريس وموظفين وطلاب الكلية. ولقد كشفت النتائج عن أكثر عناصرالتسويق الداخلي إتاحة بين أعضاء هيئة التدريس والموظفين والطلاب هو التواصل، يليه الإشراف ودعم البحث العلمي بين هيئة التدريس، والإشراف والسلامة المهنية بين الموظفين، والإشراف ومستوى الإنجاز والمكافآت بين طلاب الكلية. فى حين أن المنافع كانت الأقل إتاحة لكل من هيئة التدريس والموظفين والطلاب. نستخلص من الدراسة أن مدى اتاحة عناصر التسويق الداخلى فى كلية التمريض بجامعة بورسعيد هى متواضعة. و لذلك يوصى بأنه يجب على قيادات الكلية العمل على اعداد استراتيجية للتسويق الداخلي بالكلية.

الكلمات المرشدة :التسويق الداخلي، المستهلك الداخلي، الهيئة التدريسية، الطلاب، الموظفين