Improving Service Quality by Using Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Iranian Evidence

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Abstract

Nowadays, with increasing service industries, service marketing and service quality have become an important challenge to organizations. The attempts of organizations in this situation are witnesses to this matter. In the past years, the organizations tried to reach service quality appropriation and satisfaction of self-external customers by concepts and approaches of external marketing. One of the important features of service is the direct interaction with customers and having customer-oriented behaviors. Furthermore, with introducing the internal marketing and the important roles of it, an internal customer of organizations, on achievement of organizational plans, was noted to internal marketing more and more than before. So, the study researchers are going to argue about internal marketing and the effect of it on organizational citizenship behaviors and service quality and the important role of it on development and improvement of service quality by using organizational citizenship behaviors. For this purpose, first the researchers have studied internal marketing and its important components and then have done the same to the other items and finally have applied a quantitative study on all of them. It should be mentioned that the researchers have employed SPSS 17.0 and Lisrel 8.54 for data analysis. The findings of the present study illustrated that there is an appropriate interaction among all the items, which has been studied here and the structural equations for the conceptual framework of this study are goodness of fit.

Keywords:

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Introduction

One of the most essential factors to realize this objective, especially in service organizations, is service quality (Salehi et al., 2009). The quality of service is dependent upon a variety of factors. A factor which may contribute to the sustainable upgrading of the service quality and faithfulness of customers is internal marketing. Internal marketing is a major activity in the development of a customer-oriented organization. The main objective of internal marketing is to promote the knowledge about internal and external customers and lift the operational obstacles which may be in the way of making the services based on values and organizational effectiveness (Christopher, 1991).

Internal marketing views the employees and jobs as internal customers and internal products, respectively (Lee and Chen, 2005). In the market-oriented literature and strategic management, more attention was paid to the external factors of an organization, although you can see today that a balance should be created between the external and internal factors, as both are critical for a strategy to be successful (Lings, 1999). Foreman and Money (1995) held that when an organization has an internal chain of supply comprising internal customers and suppliers, the organization's management ought to view the organization as a market. This means that meeting the internal customer needs will put the organization in better conditions to provide high-quality services to the external customers (Foreman and Money, 1995). Therefore, internal marketing is an important activity in the development of a customer-oriented organization.

Internal Marketing

One of the most basic definitions of the concept of internal marketing is, according to Cahill (1995), presented by Berry and Parasuraman in their book *Marketing Services*: *Competing Through Quality* (1991): "Internal marketing is attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining qualified employees through job-products that satisfy their

needs. Internal marketing is the philosophy of treating employees as customers-indeed, "wooing" employees...-and is the strategy of shaping job-products to fit human needs" (Cahill, 1995).

This definition emphasizes the importance of satisfying employees' needs in order to attract, develop, motivate and retain the best-qualified personnel, and it has a strong influx of human resource management thinking. In fact, there has been some critique put forward concerning this matter, in which a line between human resource management and marketing has been attempted to be drawn (Rafiq and Ahmed, 1993, Ballantyne, 2000).

Some definitions of the concept emphasize customer-consciousness and sales-mindedness among the personnel, such as Johnson and Seymour (1985), which argue that internal marketing activities ought to: "create an internal environment which supports customer consciousness and sales-mindedness" (Johnson and Seymour, 1985) and Grönroos' (1994) definition of the concept, which states that: "the internal market of employees is best motivated for service mindedness and customer-oriented performance by an active, marketing-like approach, where a variety of activities are used internally in an active, marketing like and coordinated way".

Other definitions of internal marketing underscore the importance of an understanding of the firm's mission and objectives among the employees, such as Johnson, Scheuing, and Gaida (1986), who define it as a: "service firm's efforts to provide all members of the organization with a clear understanding of the corporate mission and objectives and with the training, motivation, and evaluation to achieve the desired objectives". Recent definitions of the concept stress the purpose of enhancing service quality: "It is a strategy for developing relationships between staff across internal organizational boundaries. This is done so that staff autonomy and know-how may combine in opening up knowledge generating processes that challenge any internal activities that need to be changed. The purpose of this activity is to enhance the quality of external marketing relationships (Ballantyne, 2000).

In sum, these definitions indicate that internal marketing is a philosophy for the management of comparatively large service organizations, where the employees are viewed as a customer market and

with the overall objective of enhancing the service quality.

Grönroos (1996) has expressed the dimensions of internal marketing as follows:

1) Interactive Communication (with the overall objective of changing attitudes),
2) Sales Assistance (e.g. pamphlets, slideshows),
3) Non-Interactive Communication (e.g. advertisement, pamphlets, wall calendars),
4) Price (salary levels and fringe benefits are directly comparable with the price of a particular service),
5) Accessibility (flexible working hours, geographical location of place of work),
6) Support Service Activities (e.g. meals and day nursery free of charge).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Scholars hold different views with respect to the dimensionality of OCB. Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) conceptualized OCB with two dimensions as altruism (behavior targeted specifically at helping individuals) and generalized compliance (behavior reflecting compliance with general rules, norms, and expectations). Later Organ (1988) identified five dimensions belonging to OCBs that the researchers in this article have divided in two categories that three dimensions relate to non-visual and virtual factors that are invisible and non-physical and the two other factors are visible and physical that are called visual factors.

Non-Visual and Virtual Factors

1) Altruism: helping an individual coworker on a task.
2) Courtesy: alerting others in the organization about changes that may affect their work.
3) Conscientiousness: carrying out one's duties beyond the minimum requirements.

1) Visual Factors
2) Sportsmanship: refraining from complaining about trivial matters.
3) Civic virtue: participating in the governance of the organization.

More recent conceptualizations of OCB offer slightly different

categorizations. Largely based on Organ's (1988) five-dimension taxonomy, Williams and Anderson (1991) proposed a two-dimensional conceptualization of OCB: OCB-I (behaviors directed toward individuals; comprising altruism and courtesy) and OCB-O (behaviors directed toward organization; comprising the remaining three dimensions in Organ's (1988) conceptualization). Some scholars also have utilized a one-dimensional or overall OCB measure in their research (e.g., Decktop, Mangel, & Cirka, 1999). A most recent meta-analysis conducted by Hoffman, Blair, Meriac, and Woehr (2007) suggested that "current operationalizations of OCB are best viewed as indicators of a general OCB factor ..., there is likely little to be gained through the use of separate dimensional measures as opposed to an overall composite measure" (p. 562). A similar conclusion was reached by a previous meta-analysis (LePine, Erez, and Johnson, 2002).

Service Quality

Clearly, from the best value perspective, the measurement of service quality in the service sector should take into account customer expectations of service as well as perceptions of service. However, as Robinson (1999) concludes: "It is apparent that there is little consensus of opinion and much disagreement about how to measure service quality". One service quality measurement model that has been extensively applied is the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1985, 1986, 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1994), Zeithaml and Berry (1991, 1993). SERVQUAL as the most often used approach for measuring service quality has been to compare customers' expectations before a service encounter and their perceptions of the actual service delivered (Gronroos, 1982, Lewis and Booms, 1983, Parasuraman and Zeithaml 1985). The SERVQUAL instrument has been the predominant method used to measure consumers' perceptions of service quality. It has five generic dimensions or factors and they are stated as follows (Van Iwaarden et al., 2003):

1) Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.
2) Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
3) Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

4) Assurance: (including competence, courtesy, credibility and security). Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
5) Empathy: (Including access, communication, understanding the customer). Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

In the SERVQUAL instrument, twenty two statements measure the performance across these five dimensions, using a seven-point Likert scale measuring both customer expectations and perceptions (Gabbie and O'neill, 1996). It is important to note that without adequate information on both the quality of services expected and perceptions of services received then feedback from customer surveys can be highly misleading from both a policy and an operational perspective. In the following, the application of SERVQUAL approach is more specified with an example in a catering company.

Singh (2010) studied about SERVQUAL and model of service quality gaps and presented a framework for determining and prioritizing critical factors from faculty perspective in higher education. Outcomes of the study outlined the major gaps of expectations and perceptions of the faculty of higher education, therefore, give a framework for prioritizing critical factors to close the gap. Va-Hzquez, RodrmHguez-Del, Ma-DmHaz and Ruiz (2001) studied about service quality in supermarket retailing through identifying critical service experiences. This research attempts to clarify and extend the conceptualization and measurement of service quality in the retail environment. The review of the retail and service quality literatures and the findings from a qualitative study conducted by the authors reveal that service quality in retail companies adopting the commercial format of supermarkets has a four factor structure (physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction and policies). Various models were tested by means of confirmatory factor analysis and a measurement scale was proposed. We conclude the paper with an importance-performance analysis, a summary of the main results of the study and directions for future research. Landrum, Prybutok, Zhang & Peak (2009) studied measuring IS system service quality with SERVQUAL as users' perceptions of relative importance of the five SERVPERF dimensions. This research concluded that (1) companies that

provide client services and (2) designers of information systems that interface with users should emphasize responsiveness and reliability; in cases of limited user resources, responsiveness and reliability should be emphasized over other SERVPERF performance dimensions. Also, the other result of this study illustrated that the use of SERVPERF is nuanced and moderating influences may affect measurement results.

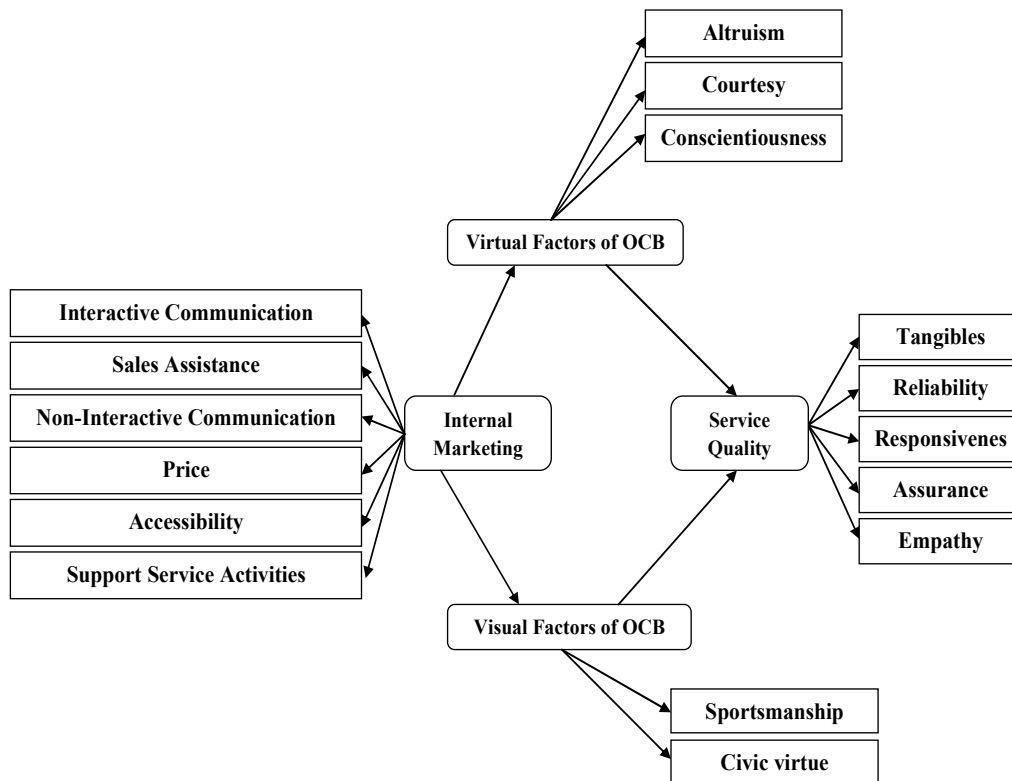According to the above contexts, it can be said that the conceptual framework of the present study is as follows:

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Present Study

Hee Yoon and Suh (2003) considered organizational citizenship behaviors and service quality as external effectiveness of contact employees and the empirical results show that contact employees' job satisfaction and trust in manager are significantly related to OCB and their

active engagement in OCB has a positive relationship with the perception of service quality. Although there is a significant common method factor possibly influencing the strength of the relationship, this factor did not affect the overall pattern of significant relationships. Another notable finding indicates that, unlike a global OCB measure, path estimates in the relationships of job satisfaction and trust to OCB variables are not similar and suggest that the multiple facets of OCBs provide more detailed information than a global OCB. Also, Bell and Menguc (2002) investigated the employee-organization relationship, organizational citizenship behaviors, and superior service quality. This study proposes a model of customer-contact service employee management that examines organizational citizenship behaviors as critical links between aspects of the employee-organization relationship (perceived organizational support, organizational identification) and customers' perceptions of service quality. In addition, it investigates the role of job autonomy in providing the necessary behavioral discretion for employees to be able to perform citizenship behaviors. The hypothesized model was partially supported. Theoretical and managerial implications are explored. George (1990) stdied internal marketing and organizational behavior as a partnership in developing customer-conscious employees at every level and stated internal marketing is the best approach for establishing a service orientation as the organizational imperative. Internal marketing focuses on achieving effective internal exchanges between the organization and its employee groups as a prerequisite for successful exchanges with external markets. Contributions from organizational behavior that enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of internal marketing programs are examined. Ideas such as relationship marketing, all employees as "part-time marketers," and internal customers are considered from the perspective of organizational behavior. Rego and Cunha (2008) examined organizational citizenship behaviors and effectiveness through an empirical study in two small insurance companies. The study relates six dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) at the branch level with several indicators of the effectiveness of thirty eight branches of two insurance companies. Results suggest that the branches where employees display more OCB are the most effective. These findings are discussed in the context of a scarcity of empirical studies on the topic, despite researchers' assumption that OCB enhances team and organizational effectiveness.

Hypotheses of the Study

As the present study was going to review the relationship between internal marketing and service quality considering the organizational citizenship behaviors and how to promote service quality by internal marketing, so according to the above context and subject, the hypothesizes of the study are as follows:

1) There is a significant relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behaviors and its visual and virtual dimensions.

2) There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behaviors and its visual and virtual dimensions and service quality.

3) The regression equation of service quality on dimensions of internal marketing is significant.

4) The model used in this article according to the data collected is goodness of fit.

Methodology

This study was a survey research. The sample size of the study is one hundred seventy nine which were selected from Soozan industrial group. Soozan industrial group was established in 1977 at Northwest of Iran and started its activity with producing rice cookers. In 1985 it manufactured different models of stove under the name of Jahan Afroz Azar. In 1985 it has been certified by Gas Standard in Azerbaijan for the first time and increased its production. In 1993 it produced space heaters, water heaters and air conditioners in different models and in 1994 it has been awarded Standard certificate for producing tankless water heater for the first time in Iran. Nowadays, with three hundred and fifty qualified employees, more than four hundred after-sales service stations and modern technology, it has become one of the leading manufacturers of home appliances which export its products to all over the world.

Data for this study were collected by organizational citizenship behaviors questionnaires that were designed by DiPaola, Tarter and Hoy (2004). It contains sixteen items and it has five dimensions namely: altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, sportsmanship and civic virtue. The reliability

of this questionnaire was reported 0.91. Also, service quality questionnaire was designed by Van Iwaarden et al. (2003). It contains twenty two items and it has five dimensions namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The reliability of this questionnaire was reported 0.861. Likewise, internal marketing questionnaire was designed by the researchers. It contains twenty eight items and it has six dimensions namely: interactive communication, sales assistance, non-interactive communication, price, accessibility, and support service activities. The reliability of this questionnaire was reported 0.832. Both are in five-point Likert scale ranging from "I strongly disagree" to "I strongly agree". Data analysis was carried out by using the statistical program packages SPSS 17.0, Amos 16.0.1 and Lisrel 8.54. Among the respondent, 81% were male and 19% female and more than 43% of respondents had bachelor and master degrees.

Results

The Pearson correlation for the study variables is given in Table 1. Internal marketing and its dimensions were correlated with visual and virtual variables of OCB. Dimensions of internal marketing and itself were significantly related to visual and virtual variables of OCB. The results of Table 1 illustrates that there is a positive relationship between all the items.

Table 1 shows Pearson correlation coefficient between internal marketing and visual and virtual variables of OCB (n=179).

Table 1. The results of Pearson correlation coefficient between internal marketing and visual and virtual variables of OCB

Correlations							
	Interactive Communication	Sales Assistance	Non-Interactive Communication	Price	Accessibility	Support Service Activities	Internal Marketing
Virtual OCB	0.282^{**}	0.375^{**}	0.193^{**}	0.345^{**}	0.210^{**}	0.092	0.347^{**}
	0.000	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.005	0.220	0.000
Visual OCB	0.382^{**}	0.392^{**}	0.198^{**}	0.499^{**}	0.203^{**}	0.060	0.400^{**}
	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000	0.007	0.425	0.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

The Pearson correlation for the study variables is given in Table 2. Service quality and its dimensions were correlated with visual and virtual variables of OCB. Dimensions of service quality and itself were significantly related to visual and virtual variables of OCB. The results of Table 2 illustrates that there is a positive relationship between all the items.

Table 2. The Pearson correlation coefficient between service quality and visual and virtual variables of OCB

Correlations						
	Tangibles	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy	Service Quality
Virtual OCB	0.447^{**}	0.429^{**}	0.498^{**}	0.293^{**}	0.387^{**}	0.621^{**}
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Visual OCB	0.687^{**}	0.685^{**}	0.619^{**}	0.233^{**}	0.542^{**}	0.847^{**}
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Table 3. Model summery of regression of internal marketing and service quality

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.781^a	0.610	0.597	0.23882

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interactive Communication, Sales Assistance, Non-Interactive Communication, Price, Accessibility, and Support Service Activities

As seen, the significant predictor (interactive communication, sales assistance, non-interactive communication, price, accessibility, and support service activities) has determined 61.0% of the variance of service quality as, it was expected to predict creating depending on internal marketing and its dimensions, P-variable regression was applied, internal marketing as predictor variable and service quality as dependent variable were analyzed.

Data of Tables 4 and 5 illustrated that internal marketing and its dimensions predicts the service quality eventually as each increase or decrease in dimensions of internal marketing causes the same change in service quality.

Table 4. ANOVA of internal marketing and service quality

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	15.366	6	2.561	44.900	0.000[a]
Residual	9.810	172	0.057	-	-
Total	25.176	178	-	-	-

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interactive Communication, Sales Assistance, Non-Interactive Communication, Price, Accessibility, and Support Service Activities

b. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

Table 5. Regression analysis to predict internal marketing and its dimension effects on the service quality

Predictor Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.234	0.127	-	9.724	0.000
Interactive Communication	-0.553	0.071	-1.014	-7.758	0.000
Sales Assistance	0.254	0.040	0.440	6.412	0.000
Non-Interactive Communication	-0.007	0.037	-0.011	-0.193	0.847
Price	0.865	0.080	1.319	10.797	0.000
Accessibility	0.020	0.032	0.034	0.625	0.532
Support Service Activities	0.000	0.030	0.000	-0.018	0.986

As seen, price has satisfied the entrance criterion of the regression and entered as a first important predictor (beta= 0.1.319). In second step sales assistance has satisfied the entrance criterion of the regression and entered as a second important predictor (beta= 0.440). In Third step interactive communication has satisfied the entrance criterion of the regression and entered as a third important predictor (beta= -1.014). However, other dimensions of internal marketing namely: non-interactive communication, accessibility and support service activities could not satisfy the entrance criterion of the regression, and then regression equation of service quality on internal marketing and its dimensions is as follows:

service quality = 1.319 (price) + 0.440 (sales Assistance) + (-1.014) (interactive communication).

In accordance with Byrne (1998), a ratio of X2 to DF of less than

three was generally considered an indicator of good model fit, and a ratio of less than five was considered acceptable. An adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) of more than 0.90, a root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) of less than 0.08, and a root-mean-square residual (RMR) of less than 0.045 and a normal fit index (NFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) of more than 0.90 were considered indicators of "good fit". Given their complementary features all four indexes were used to evaluate the path model. In this model, we use an abbreviation of both of the criteria's dimensions (ALT = Altruism, CON = Conscientiousness, CUN = Courtesy, SPO = Sportsmanship, CVI = Civic Virtue, TAN = Tangibles, REL = Reliability, RES = Responsiveness, ASS = Assurance, EMP = Empathy, INT = Interactive Communication, SAS = Sales Assistance, NIN = Non-Interactive Communication, COM = Cost and Price, and ACC = Accessibility and Support Service Activities).
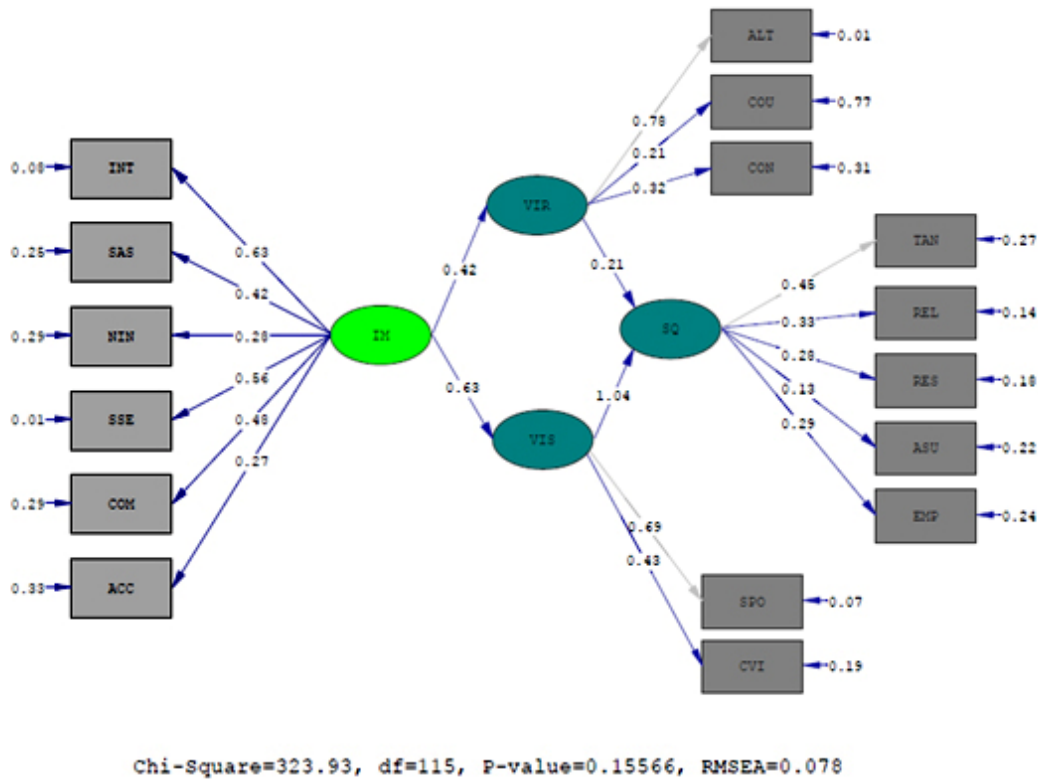

Chi-Square=323.93, df=115, P-value=0.15566, RMSEA=0.078

Figure 2. Structural equation modeling (Standard solution)

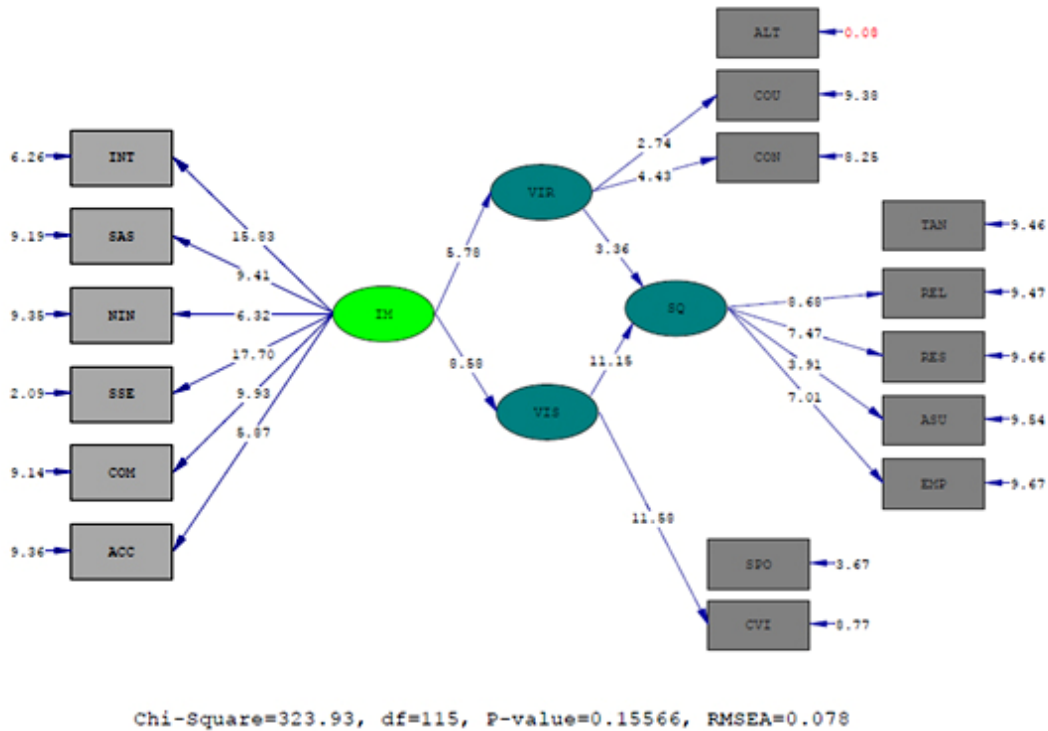Chi-Square=323.93, df=115, P-value=0.15566, RMSEA=0.078

Figure 3. Structural equation modeling (T-value)

Table 6. Model summary of goodness of fit statistics

Chi-square	DF	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	NNFI	CFI	IFI	RMR
323.93	115	0.078	0.91	0.87	0.93	0.94	0.95	0.95	0.043

The data of Figures 2 and 3 as well as Table 6 illustrated that the exploratory model, including all hypothesized variables provided an adequate fit (X2 = 323.93; DF = 115; p = 0.15566; a ratio of X2 to DF of less than 3; goodness of fit index [GFI] = 0.91; adjusted goodness-of-fit index [AGFI] = 0.87; root-mean-square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.078 and [RMR] = 0.043) for the data and indicated that the relationship between internal marketing and service quality by OCB. According to the data, these figures and Table 6 are respectively structural equation modeling (estimate state and t-value) and the model summary of goodness of fit statistics. All the data above are in conformity with Byrne's (1998) procedures.

Discussion

Based on the data of first and second hypotheses analysis, it can be said that, there are third major conclusions about this hypothesis and that can be taken as follows; firstly, the relationship between the organizational citizenship behavior and service quality. The findings showed that the OCB's visual and virtual variables have the positive and significant influences on service quality. The second conclusion is there are positive significant relationships among internal marketing and OCB's visual and virtual variables and it means, increasing or decreasing in the internal marketing causes to increase or decrease OCB, and it approves that there are relationships between all the variables of this study. According to the findings, there are relationships between internal marketing and OCB variables and also there is a relationship between OCB and service quality, then it can be said that there is a relationship between internal marketing and service quality indirectly. Furthermore, according to the results of Table 3, it can be concluded that significant predictor variables (interactive communication, sales assistance, non-interactive communication, price, accessibility, and support service activities) is 61.0 % of the variance of service quality. Furthermore, according to results Table 4, it can be stated that the regression model of the present study is acceptable and the internal marketing can be calculated by increasing or decreasing the service quality. Likewise, Table 5 showed that the price is more significant than others. This means that present organizations should pay attention to other dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviors such as price item. Because, when we make a good internal marketing then we can promote all items or dimensions of service quality. So, the result of Table 2, 3 which represents the third hypothesis of the study is acceptable. Also, Table 6 and Figures 2 and 3 indicated that the relationship between internal marketing and service quality by OCB is approvable, because a ratio of chi-square to *DF* was less than 3, and goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was more than 0.90, a root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) was less than 0.08, and root mean square residual (RMR) was less than 0.045 and a normal fit index (NFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) were more than 0.90, that all of them were considered that the model of this study is "good fit", and it is the acceptable model. So, the result of Table 6 and Figures 2 and 3 can express that the fourth hypothesis of the study is acceptable. The findings of the present study are confirmed with the

studies about OCB, internal marketing and service quality by Hee Yoon and Suh (2003), Bell and Menguc (2002), George (1990) and Rego and Cunha (2008). According to the findings of this study, all organizations should change their internal marketing activities to promote this item for increasing OCB and service quality, but for such activities, the organizations must do them based on an appropriate system, and it is impossible, unless the organizations pay attention to the objectives of the organization and costumer's satisfaction. By this way, the organization could produce products and services with high quality.

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