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# Quality Enhancement of Internal Customers and Relationship with External Customers in Management Education: An Elucidate Study

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*Abstract-* Success of any organization lies in the Quality of Service particularly in the Management Education Service. External Customers (Students) needs are given due priority accordingly internal customers (Teachers) are engaged in service with reference to their qualities. Quality should not be static but should be dynamic which undergo continuous improvement in the internal customers' capabilities which should bring positive result in the performance of external customers. Improvement in the Quality of internal customers is necessary in the development of the future human resources.

This paper raise questions on the quality of internal customers and relationship with the quality of external customers. Primary data were collected from top 10 MESPO of Assam. The data were collected with the help of a set of two different questionnaires from 100 internal and 510 external customers of top 10 MESPO of Assam. Hypothesis established for the purpose of the study was tested with the help of both parametric and non parametric test of correlation.

*Keywords: internal marketing, external marketing, internal customers, external customers management education services providing organizations.*

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# Quality Enhancement of Internal Customers and Relationship with External Customers in Management Education: An Elucidate Study

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It was found that an attempt made by the internal customers in improving their quality by taking part in seminars, workshop, FDP programs, publication of research work, refresher course, and training in software handling etc. were very low, not up to the required standard thus does not have any relationship with the external customers. Internal Customers should understand needs of the external customers accordingly develop will have to Qualities.

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## I. Introduction

Quality of Service is the main mantra of many Management Education Service Providing Organizations to attract the External Customers (Students). Reengineering of quality is necessary to improve the quality of internal customers (Teachers) since it aims to bring dramatic improvement in the performance of internal and external customers. Improvement of the Quality of internal customers has no upper limit since they deals with the development of human resources of future. Hence, the internal customers have to continuously improve their quality to bring desired result. Internal marketing emphases best practice of quality of service which focuses on the development the quality of internal customer services. According to Hassan et al (2013), in their research found that internal marketing has direct relation with quality of services. Because, organization is conscious enough to monitor employees performance, the performers are highly rewarded, therefore internal marketing ensure quality because the employees who delivers quality service are retained by the organizations. Thus quality and internal marketing has direct relation.

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## II. Quality of Service

'Quality' comes from the Latin word 'Qualitas', which refers to the nature of a person or the nature of an object. In the past Quality meant accuracy and perfection (Al-Dararkah, 2002). Service Quality and its components are actionable in the workplace is an important endeavour that an organization should seriously execute it. This give unambiguous direction to employees improves service quality in the workplace. Fortunately, there are researchers such as Grönroos (1983), Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982), and Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (hereafter referred to as PZB) (1985) who are working to determine service quality and to provide a number of actionable tools that a marketer can use to gauge organization performance. Webster's dictionary defines quality as not only the basic character or characteristic that makes something good or bad, commendable or reprehensible, but also the degree of excellence a thing processes, or superiority. Webster's goes on to define quality control system for maintaining desired standards. The two definitions comprise the most simplistic basis for achieving quality assurance in any organization, including higher education. Obviously an organization must define itself, as through a mission statement and then set goals and objectives that will support that mission before it can hope to measure its outcome against the stated goals. This is quality assurance.

## III. Components of Service Quality

Parasurama Zeltham, I & Berry (1985) that there exist ten criteria and dimensions through which service quality can be assessed:

- *Reliability:* The ability of an organization to accurately achieve its services in the proper time and according to the promises it has made to its clients.



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- *Responsiveness:* The tendency and willingness of service providers to help clients and satisfy their needs, immediately reply to their inquiries, and solve their problems as quickly as possible.
- *Competence:* Having adequate skills and knowledge that enable the employees to perform their jobs properly.
- *Accessibility:* Providing easy access to a service in terms of location and through services provided via the telephone, the internet, or any other means of communication.
- *Courtesy:* Treating clients respectfully in a polite friendly manner, understanding their feelings, and answering their phone calls gently.
- *Communication:* This occurs through gentlemanly listening to the client conveying information to them clearly and facilitating external communication with workers.
- *Credibility:* This can be achieved through full trust and confidence in the service provider as well as his honesty and straight forwardness.
- *Security:* This depends on whether the service is free from risks and hazards, defects or doubts so that it provides bodily safety, financial security as well as privacy.
- *Understanding/Knowing the Customer:* This can be made achievable through the ability to pinpoint the customers' needs as well as understanding their individual problems.
- *Tangibility:* This includes physical aspects connected with service such as instruments and equipment, persons, physical facilities like buildings and nice decoration and other observable service facilities.

## IV. Review of Literature

According to Philip et al (1997) "Quality is conformance to requirements". In the same direction Parasuraman and Berry (1991) defines "Quality is exceeding what customers expect from the service". In addition to these, Garvin (1984) defines, "Quality can be defined from different prospective-user based, product based, manufacturing based, value based and transcendent view". Service organizations therefore evaluate certain components of a service to determine its quality. According to Gronroos (2001) any service has two important components-functional and technical. The functional component involves interaction between the customers and the service personnel. The technical component refers to the output of the service operation. According to Parasuraman and Berry (1991) service quality is determined by customers using various criteria like credibility, security access, communication, tangibility, responsiveness, competence, reliability, etc. Thus the quality indeed will have to be measured for business success. Hassan et al (2013) emphases on internal marketing for quality service in their research. Even Cronin et al (1992) measure the service quality in terms of service output in their research. Thus, Quality of Service must be one of the components of internal marketing. On the other hand, various research work under taken by various author advocates that Internal Marketing brings better performance on employees. The article by Tim R.V. Davis examines the impact of consultative and participative styles of management on internal marketing which increase employee involvement in reaching decisions, making commitments and taking action. David Ballantyne explores the structural relationships through which internal marketing can create value for an organization, its customers and its employees. Marelise Pitt, Johan Bruwer, Deon Nel and Paul Berthon state that internal marketing is a critical issue facing marketing professions, human resources and other executives. They argue that if poor service is provided between employees it is unlikely that good service will ultimately be provided to the external customer.

### *a) Literature Gap*

This literature review shows that sufficient amount of research work is done on internal marketing in different field of corporate business. But no research work had been done in the context of improvement of quality of internal customers and the relationship with external customers in management education service providing organization in Assam.

## V. Need/Importance of the Study

The main objective of this study is to understand the relationship between the improvement of the quality of internal customer and external customers. This paper believes that improvement in the quality in many areas of education service by internal customers may have a direct relationship with external customers. When internal customers fail to produce good quality external customers, become liabilities rather than employable human resources in the society.

## VI. Statement of the Problem

According to Sheela Singh et al. (2013), the variation in terms of academic, administrative and financial arrangement in the India Higher Educational Institutions fail to provide quality service the external customers. Gandhi. M. M, (2013) in his research paper pointed out that 'Mushroom growth of universities and colleges has been the main cause of lack of quality in Management Education. This paper attempt to study on the improvement of quality of internal customer and the relationship with external customers is a need of an hour since the internal customers put all efforts not only to develop them but also to develop external customers.



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When the internal customers learn new knowledge through training it will be shared with the external customers. The new knowledge enable the external customer perform well in their studies.

## VII. Objective of the Study

Given the survey of literature and scope, the objective established for the purpose of the study is:

To ascertain relationship between 'The improvement of quality of Internal Customers' in one hand and "Relationship with External Customers' on the other hand.

*Hypotheses*

Given the objective, the following working hypothesis considered for the study:

$H_0$: The improvements in the quality of Internal Customers' and the relationship with the external customers' have inverse relationship.

## VIII. Research Methodology

Primary data with help of a set of two different questionnaires from 100 internal and 510 external customers of top 10 MESPO of Assam was collected. The values are allotted for strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree in the order of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively in the 5 point scale. The samples were as follows:

*Table 1:* Sample Selected

| S. No. | Name of the Institutes | Teachers | Students |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Bosco Institute of Management | 10 | 40 |
| 2 | Royal School of Management | 10 | 60 |
| 3 | Guwahati University | 5 | 63 |
| 4 | Dibrugrah University | 11 | 50 |
| 5 | Assam Kaziranga University | 12 | 53 |
| 6 | Tezpur University | 10 | 40 |
| 7 | Assam Institute of Management | 10 | 56 |
| 8 | Girijananda Chowdhury Institute of Management | 9 | 38 |
| 9 | North Eastern Regional Institute of Management | 18 | 70 |
| 10 | Assam University | 5 | 40 |
| | Total | 100 | 510 |

*Source: Survey*

*a) Latent Variable Considered for the Study*

(a) 'Improvement of quality of Internal Customers' - This variable has been considered to measure the degree of Degree or intensity of improvement of quality of Internal Customers as perceived by internal customers in the 'Management Education Service Providing Organizations'.

(b) 'Relationship with external customers' - This variable has been considered to measure the degree of Degree or intensity of Relationship between external customers and the internal customers as perceived by the External customers of the 'Management Education Service Providing Organizations'.

## IX. Results and Discussion

Improvement in the quality of internal customers and relationship with the external customers.

*Table 2:* Data Generation

| Name of Institute | Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers | Degree of Relationship with External Customers as perceived Students |
|---|---|---|
| AIM | 6.30 | 59.46 |
| AU | 1.56 | 49.10 |
| DBIM | 3.36 | 49.60 |
| DU | 3.44 | 49.44 |
| GIMT | 6.40 | 57.84 |
| GU | 4.25 | 52.87 |
| KU | 3.83 | 58.33 |
| NERIM | 5.91 | 56.75 |
| RSM | 6.90 | 57.80 |
| TU | 6.30 | 58.18 |

*Source: Based on Survey Data*



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The association between the variable and related data are tested with the help of z-test.

$P > 0.05$ Accept

$P < 0.05$ Reject

*Table 3:* Z-Test: Two Sample for Means

| | Quality of Internal Customers | Relationship with External Customers |
|---|---|---|
| Mean | 5.95 | 55.54705882 |
| Known Variance | 19.017 | 79.136 |
| Observations | 100 | 510 |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0 | |
| z | -84.39823097 | |
| z Critical two-tail | 1.959963985 | |

*Compiled from Survey Data*

1.96 = 1.96, calculated p value is equal to table value, thus there is a relationship between Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) and the Quality of External Customers (Students). The further analysis attempt to finds the level of relationship between these two variables.

The measure of correlation [both Parametric / Non Parametric] between the variable and related data are tested.

*Table 4:* Pearson Correlations

| | | Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers | Degree of Relationship with External Customers as perceived Students |
|---|---|---|---|
| Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .836** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .003 |
| | N | 10 | 10 |
| Degree of Relationship with External Customers (as perceived Students) | Pearson Correlation | .836** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | |
| | N | 10 | 10 |

*Source: Based on Survey Data*

*Table 5:* Spearman's rho Correlations

| | | | Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers | Degree of Relationship with External Customers as perceived Students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .663* |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .037 |
| | | N | 10 | 10 |
| | Degree of Relationship with External Customers (as perceived Students) | Correlation Coefficient | .663* | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .037 | . |
| | | N | 10 | 10 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

*Source: Based on Survey Data*

From the above Table No 3 & 4 it is disseminate that there exists low relationship between Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers and Degree of Relationship with External Customers as perceived by the students.

## X. Findings

From the above it can be inferred that the relationship between [a] Degree of Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) as perceived by Teachers and [b] Degree of Relationship with External Customers (as perceived Students) is very low. In other words, Quality of Internal Customers (Teachers) does not lead to better Relationship with External Customers. Thus, the improvements in the quality of Internal Customers' and the relationship with the external customers' have inverse relationship between them.



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## XI. Recommendations/Suggestions

This is indicative of the fact that Interactive marketing dimension in respect of Management Education Service providing organization is in neglected dimension. Thus internal customers continuously should arrange the seminar, workshop, FDP programs, refresher course, training in software handling etc. to students and the significance of improving the quality in them associated with profession should be elucidated.

## XII. Limitations

This research paper did not collect any feedback from the students and internal customers of Management Institutions which are not practicing internal marketing components are taken for the study. Internal Customers too have not made any comment on improving the quality in them.

## XIII. Conclusions

Quality of Service must directly like with the improvement of the quality of internal customers which should bring positive relationship with the external customers. Thus internal customers continuously should arrange the seminar, workshop, FDP programs, refresher course, training in software handling etc. to students and the significance of improving the quality in them associated with profession should be elucidated.

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