

## *The Effect of Internal Marketing on Enhancing the Quality of Educational Services in Al-Mustansiriya University with the Mediating Role of Staff Motivation*

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### **Abstract**

In this study, by implementing the title of the research which is the effect of internal marketing on enhancing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriya University with the mediating role of staff motivation, the researcher attempts to answer the question: "Does internal marketing have a significant effect on enhancing the quality of educational services in the Al-Mustansiriya university with the mediating role of staff motivation? Therefore, the present research is applied in terms of purpose. The research method of the present study is descriptive and in terms of data collection is a survey-analytical research. The statistical population includes all the staff of Al-Mustansiriya University. The statistical population of this study comprises approximately 400 people. Thus, according to Cochran's formula, a statistical sample of 196 staffs was randomly selected. In order to measure internal marketing, the standard Foreman and Manny internal marketing questionnaire was used, to measure staff motivation, Hackman and Oldham questionnaire was used, and to measure the service quality, the service quality questionnaire of higher education centers was used using SERVQUAL model and then they were analyzed using structural equations modeling method and SmartPLS software. Eventually, the results indicated that internal marketing has a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriya University with the mediating role of staff motivation.

**Keywords:** Internal marketing, quality of educational services, staff motivation

## Introduction, statement of the problem and the importance of the subject

Nowadays, the threats of competitive world have made organizations pay increasing attention to their human resources as the most valuable asset of the organization. In this regard, internal marketing is a concept that can be considered by organizations because the core of the concept of internal marketing emphasizes the value of the organization's human resources and considers them as the internal customers of the organization. Internal marketing is one of the marketing topics introduced in the last two decades as methods for solving problems pertaining to staffs of organizations and providing quality services by them. Thus, whenever a customer interacts with one of the staffs of that company, this interaction positively or negatively affects their satisfaction, and staffs who have low satisfaction with the organization, ignore the goals of the organization and also will not perform their job duties and responsibilities properly in the face of foreign customers. For this reason, studying internal marketing in other dimensions revealed that internal customers or staffs directly transfer their satisfaction or dissatisfaction to the company's external customers (Jahedi, 2018).

Also, the main challenge of an organization in motivating staffs is the balance between the goals of that organization and the personal values of staffs. Undoubtedly, all challenges and behaviors are formed on the basis of motivations and goals. Motivations and goals are two key internal and external factors forcing human beings to effort. There are various definitions for motivation, according to one of these practical definitions, motivation means what makes a person do something and leads him in a certain direction. Attention to the above issues leaves no doubt that the staffs of the organization vary in terms of level, background and factors of motivation, therefore, organizations need to have different programs and tools to create and increase the motivation of their staffs. The concept of motivation and the historical course of studies conducted in this category testify its significance and key role in organizational excellence and staff satisfaction, empowerment of organizations and customer satisfaction. Thus, one of the primary tasks of managers is to motivate staffs so that their performances reach the highest possible level (ETEFA, 2019).

In today's post-competitive age, no organization can succeed without considering the needs and demands of customers and increasing their satisfaction. Recent research indicates that the effect of service quality on increasing customer loyalty and satisfaction and high sales of a service or product is greater than the effect of the characteristics of that product or service. Competitive pressure among industries has forced managers to look for solutions to maintain and enrich their competitive position. A large number of these managers decided to improve the service quality that is to differentiate the quality of goods and services, therefore, recognizing and predicting the customer needs for the firms is of particular importance. This is because the customer plays a key and pivotal factor in the survival of firms. Thus, the orientation of all goals, strategies and resources is focused on customer attraction and retention. Retaining and strengthening customers is a strategic challenge for companies that are concerned with maintaining and developing their competitive position in the market, perhaps this is why companies can no longer be indifferent to customer expectations and desires. They must focus all their activities and capabilities on customer satisfaction, because customers are the only source of return on investment. It is noteworthy that the problem of service quality arises more in organizations that do not focus on recognizing and meeting the needs and demands of customers. If the company fail to fill the gap between the level of expectations and the service quality, therefore, there will be disagreement among customers regarding the service quality (Tavakoli et al., 2017).

Nowadays, educational institutions and services, especially universities, play a significant role in the economic structure of each country. One strategy that can be used as a way to succeed and improve their current situation is to emphasize internal marketing and motivation and enhancing the quality of educational services. The famous and old Al-Mustansiriyah University is one of the most prestigious universities in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq. Due to having strengths such as using the latest content production technology, having experienced teachers, adequate accountability of the educational sector and having sufficient capital for educational activities and programs, etc., but having a number of weaknesses regarding the provision of services such as short working hours,

irregularity of some personnel, the service quality has faced problems. Consequently, in the present study, by implementing the title of the study which is the effect of internal marketing on increasing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriyyah University with the mediating role of staff motivation the researcher attempts to answer the question: Does internal marketing has a significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriyyah University with the mediating role of staff motivation?

## **Research literature**

### **Basic principles of internal marketing**

A number of principles are stated regarding internal marketing, mostly raised as the main criteria of internal marketing than a principle. These principles encompass the cases mentioned below. Any process originating from domestic suppliers must create value for customers in the next stages. The needs and expectations of internal customers should be related to internal suppliers (management and staff who provide services to staffs); Assessing the services provided by domestic customers requires continuous communication with domestic suppliers. Meeting or failing to meet the needs of domestic customers may be interpreted as reward and punishment. The internal marketing process aims at continuously improving the delivery of products and services at the organization level; Staffs should participate in the system performance and work with managers. All these principles represent the process of internal marketing by internal customers to external customers of the organization (Atefat Doost et al., 2013).

### **Internal Marketing Elements**

All marketing activities performed in any organization are conducted to attract, maintain and promote customer loyalty in organizations. Moreover, human resource management seeks to achieve the commitment of internal customers, job satisfaction and gaining trust in managers, which is integrated with the internal marketing activities of the organization. By and large, the main elements of internal marketing of the organization can be investigated from several different aspects.

## Staff development

One of the most important opportunities that staffs are looking for to consider you as an employer is staff development. The ability and encouragement to continue to improve your skills will help you retain and motivate your staffs. Human resource development includes opportunities such as staff training, staff professional development, performance management and development, coaching, consulting, follow-up planning, key staff identification, scholarships, and organizational development (Ahmad et al., 2019).

Human resource development entirely focuses on all aspects of developing a superior workforce so that organizations and individual staffs can achieve their work goals in customer service. Organizations have many opportunities to develop human resources or staffs inside and outside the workplace.

Human resource development can be formal, such as classroom instruction, a college course, or an effort to change organizational planning. These are just some options that you have for staff development. Formal training can add its value at your workplace. Or, human resource development can be informal, as in staff coaching by an instructor or internal training and development classes provided by internal staff or a consultant. Training more experienced staff is also recommended for staff development (Al-Belushi et al., 2017).

This is quite useful because the staffs in your organization are senior. Traditionally, executive and senior managers are resistant to training classes and conference training sessions. Healthy organizations believe in human resource development and cover all of these bases. One of the recommended options, by which organizations develop staff, is to provide internal training with internal staff or a facilitator or consultant (Alhmoud and Rjoub, 2019).

## Staff participation

Staff participation is neither an end in itself, nor a tool, as is the case in many organizations. Instead, it's a management and leadership philosophy about how more people can contribute to the continuous improvement and continued success of their work organization.

Attracting people of all sizes in all aspects of work decision-making and planning is a comprehensive recommendation for those

organizations that want to create an empowerment and continuous improvement in the workplace (Dar et al., 2014).

Such participation enhances ownership and commitment, retains your best staffs, and creates an environment where people decide to be motivated and involved. How staffs are involved in decision-making and continuous improvement activities is a strategic aspect of participation and can include the following cases: Proposed systems, production cells, work teams, continuous improvement sessions, Kaizen improvement events (continuous improvement), correctional processes and periodic discussions with the supervisor to better understand the processes of staff participation, training in team efficiency, communication and problem solving; development of reward and recognition system and often, revenue sharing from staff participation efforts (Hammond and Churchill, 2018).

### **Organizational Commitment**

As a dependent variable, organizational commitment represents a force that requires a person to stay in the organization and work with attachment to achieve the goals of the organization, i.e. organizational commitment is associated with a series of productive behaviors. A person who has a high organizational commitment stays in the organization, accepts its goals and shows great effort and even self-sacrifice to achieve those goals. The three-component model of organizational commitment has caused numerous empirical research. According to this model, organizational commitment consists of three components:

1. **Affective commitment:** This part of organizational commitment is defined as attachment to an organization that is characterized by acceptance of organizational values and also by the desire to stay in the organization.

2. **Normative or Obligatory Commitment:** Normative commitment is defined as a perceived duty to support the organization and its activities and expresses a sense of duty and obligation to remain in the organization, where people think that continuing to be active and supporting the organization is a responsibility on their shoulders (Jaworski et al., 2018).

3- **Continuance commitment:** It is due to the perception of increasing costs lost in an organization. Lost costs are the costs of an activity or project that are not recyclable. Therefore, people with

continuance commitment will be sensitive to the increase of such costs (Kakar et al., 2017).

### **Definition of empowerment**

Empowerment is widely used in a variety of ways. Many managers in the workplace talk about empowerment, and authors and experts recommend empowerment management as the solution to many organizational problems. Empowerment has been used for many years in areas such as social work, urban redevelopment and external development. But what is empowerment? The Oxford English Dictionary defines the word empower as: giving someone the power or authority to do something, or giving the person the feeling that he or she can do more. In recent years, the use of the term in organizations has expanded so much that many authors refer to it as a healing drug and a common management slogan in the early 1990s. Shackleton (1995) defined empowerment as the "philosophy of giving more decision-making power and accountability to subordinates in the organization" (Kassa, 2015).

### **Encouragement and rewards**

Reward mechanism is one of the most important categories that can help managers to achieve the goal of the organization. Behavioral psychologists in the field of scientific psychology have long focused on maintaining, creating, and sustaining behavior consequences and its results, such as encouraging and punishing behavior to change, decrease, and increase behavior. They are doubly important for managers and leaders of various organizations, especially manufacturing and industrial enterprises, because they deal with many staffs, and certainly knowing the principles and laws governing human behavior, facilitates the achievement of human behavior for them (Sarmad, 2016).

### **Quality of educational services**

Nowadays, competition to improve service quality is recognized as a key strategic issue for organizations operating in the service sector. Organizations that achieve a higher level of service quality will have higher levels of customer satisfaction as a prerequisite for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. The service sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in the global economy and service organizations play a significant role in this growth. Service quality plays an important role in the competitive advantage of service

companies and organizations. Market-oriented mechanisms can aid in reducing the cost of services to organizations, therefore, considering customer demands and meeting it is one of the market-oriented mechanisms with a great effect on customer attraction. Simultaneously with the expansion of the commercial and economic field of the service sector, the need for quality management in this field became more and more important. However, barriers such as the temporality of the service, the inseparability of the service from the service provider and the time and place of its delivery, increased the dependence of service quality on relative and uncertain cases and therefore its measurement became much more complex (Khorshidi et al., 2014).

Service quality is a type of judgment that customers make based on their perception of the service delivery process. Accordingly, they compare their expectations with their perception of the services received. Service quality is the comparison of what the customer feels it should be, expectations (with what he has received) and perceptions. If the expectations are more than perceptions, the quality of the services received is lower from the customer's point of view and leads to his dissatisfaction (Ghandehari et al., 2014).

Service quality refers to the continuous attention of the organization to meet the needs of each and every demand of its customers. In fact, service quality is the difference between customers' expectations about the performance of the service before encountering the service and their perception of the service received. If service performance is lower than expectation, customers will underestimate quality. According to Christopher's definition, service quality to meet customer expectations is the ability of the organization to meet customer expectations or exceed their expectations. Zeithaml et al. (2003) have also defined the service quality as follows: "The degree of difference between customers' expectations or desires and their perception" (Hosseini, 2014).

### **Staff motivation**

Motivation refers to the cause or why of behavior and actions. According to John Atkinson, there is no fixed meaning to the word motivation. But psychologists believe that motivation is an intrinsic factor pushing a person's behavior in a certain direction and guiding him to choose an effort from among his voluntary efforts.



All definitions refer to motivation in some way and, in general, conceptually explain the following:

- What empowers a person's behavior.
- What drives or directs such behavior.
- How this behavior is maintained or reinforced.

Given the above, three factors play a role in creating motivation:

### 1. Needs

Need is a deficiency that is felt when there is a physiological imbalance.

That is, something inside the person that makes him work and do activity. Need is an inner state that makes a certain result seem desirable (Shahzad, 2018).

Staffs often define their needs according to the nature of their work. Often, according to this research, staffs' needs include the following four types of needs:

- a) Knowledge needs
- b) Spiritual and psychological needs
- c) Duty needs
- d) Ethical needs

### 2. Motivators

Motivators or motivations alleviate needs and are directed deficiencies.

That is, an unmet need causes tension, and this tension causes sudden impulses to be aroused within the person. These motivations are internal things that cause a person to engage in exploratory behavior in pursuit of specific goals.

### 3. Incentives

It is something outside the individual. Psychologists often call it a "stimulus" and sometimes refers to rewards that the person hopes for and his motivations are directed to them (Shahzad, 2018).

### Explaining hypotheses and conceptual model

Staffs comprise the biggest asset of an organization. Thus, the service sector must invest in training and developing its workforce to keep them up to date with the latest innovations and to have the equipment to provide quality services in a highly competitive environment. Based on the previous research, staffs who have undergone proper training have acquired new skills and knowledge, compared to their inadequately trained counterparts, in terms of

competence, security and higher confidence. Clearly, there is a positive relationship between staff growth and staff motivation. However, training enhances the spirit of the workforce, which is the most important factor in earning high profits. Staffs are motivated by learning about their roles and boundaries, as well as their expectations and gain a better understanding of how to act in different situations or conditions. Therefore, it can be inferred that:

- Staff development has a positive effect on staff motivation.

Various studies have shown that when domestic customers (staffs) work as a team, they completely satisfy foreign customers. The term internal participation by Edmondson and Moingeon (1996) meant that "team members are successful in performing behaviors to monitor performance against targets, obtain new information, test hypotheses, and create new possibilities." Another study by Drake et al. (2005) indicated that effective implementation of internal marketing can lead to better participation. In addition, participation is seen as the key to staff development, and jobs benefit from the motivation of successful team members. According to Mombi (2013), the team will have a goal and motivation to achieve the company's goals and become a more comprehensive team. Based on their findings and other studies described above, the following hypothesis will be tested.

- Participation has a positive effect on staff motivation.

Intra-organizational commitment has been described in the literature as an essential internal marketing tool. Moreover, the use of internal communication is a prerequisite for the proper functioning of the organization's internal activities. Ineffective communication may lead to misunderstandings, lack of information, lower performance and higher staff turnover. According to Pinder (2008), assigning more commitment and responsibility to staffs, expressing knowledge and also having effective communication can also motivate staffs. Managers are responsible for the basis given and the motivation created by the company. The following hypothesis is tested in this study, based on the literature findings:

- Intra-organizational commitment has a positive effect on staff motivation.

Staff empowerment plays a vital role in the service sector. Wilson et al. (2008) stated that many organizations understand that in order

to respond to the customer, staffs must be empowered to be able to meet customer requests and take appropriate action to solve unexpected problems. As the internal marketing dimension, staff empowerment is a process allowing staffs to act, behave, think and make decisions to complete their tasks. Drake (2007) stated that motivated staffs play an essential role in organizational success. In addition, past research has shown a positive relationship between perceived power and motivation. Therefore, highly motivated staffs are an important factor in the long-term success of many organizations. Since the results of these studies - findings show that the internal marketing dimensions are significantly related to staff motivation, the following hypothesis will be tested:

- Empowerment has a positive effect on staff motivation.

Implementing a reward system and fair recognition is another basic internal marketing dimension. Several researchers have studied these dimensions for several years. Studies on reward and diagnosis systems have been conducted by various researchers. The reward and recognition structure has a great effect on the behavior and organizational effectiveness of staffs. In an effort to stimulate staff creativity, many managers have used external rewards (e.g. monetary incentives) to motivate their staffs. In addition, Safiullah (2014) found that with the career advancement, income level and age, intrinsic rewards become a vital factor in staff motivation. The following hypothesis will be properly tested.

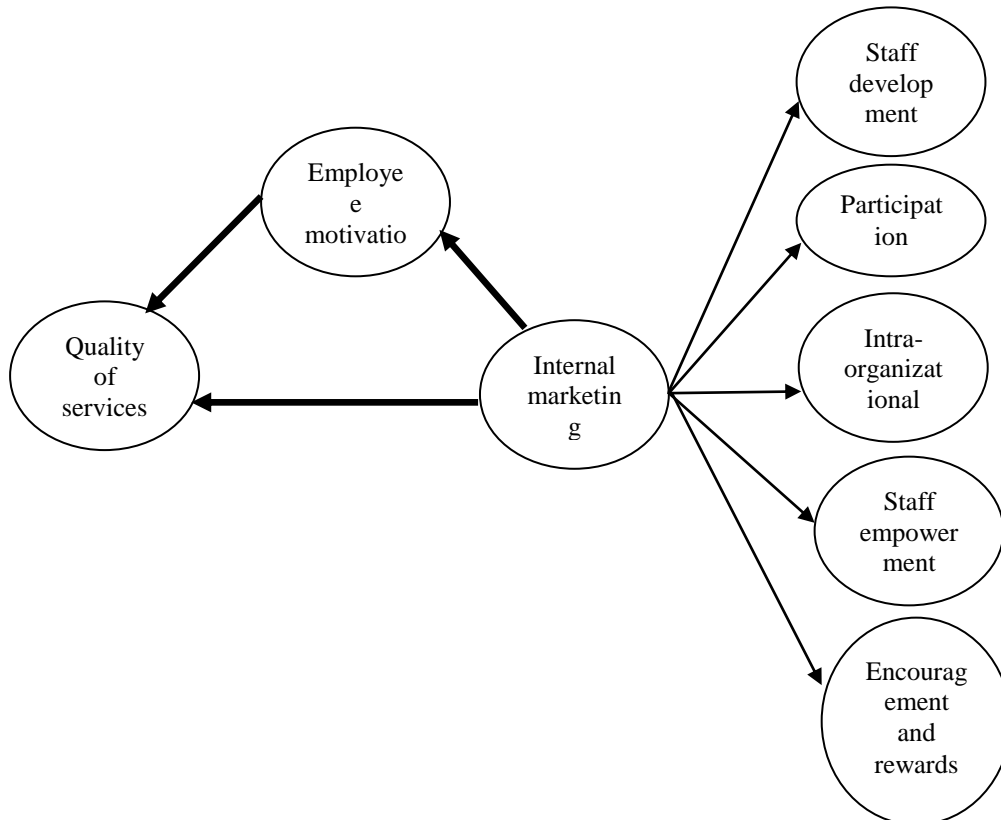
- Motivations and rewards have a positive effect on staff motivation.

Dar et al. (2014) found that staff motivation is one of the most important factors that can mediate the relationship between post-selection human resource management methods and organizational performance. In addition, and according to their study, staff motivation mediates the relationship between service quality and staff intention to stay in the organization. Motivation is considered as one of the basic foundations for improving staff retention and is the main tool for the quality of the services provided. The following hypotheses were based on the proposed research model.

1. Internal marketing positively and significantly affects increasing the quality of services with the mediating role of the motivation of staffs.

2. Internal marketing positively and significantly affects increasing the quality of services.
3. Internal marketing positively and significantly affects staff motivation.
4. Staff motivation positively and significantly affects increasing the quality of services.

Based on the mentioned cases, the conceptual model of the present study is taken from two models evaluated by researchers named Ozgit and Abu Melhem (2019) and Alghamdi (2016). In the study of Ozgit and Abu Melhem (2019), the effect of internal marketing and staff motivation has been studied, and in the study of Alghamdi (2016), the effect of internal marketing on the quality of educational services has been studied. Now, this study intends to use the above two models to investigate the effect of internal marketing on increasing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriyah University with the mediating role of staff motivation.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual model of the research taken from the model of Ozgit and Abu Melhem (2019) and Alghamdi (2016)

## Research methodology

The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive in terms of method. All the staff of Al- Mustansiriyah University comprise the statistical population of this study, which is approximately 400 people. Thus, the statistical sample in this study, according to Cochran's formula numbered 196 staff members who were randomly selected. In order to measure internal marketing, the Foreman and Money's standard internal marketing questionnaire was used and the Hackman and Oldham questionnaire was used to measure staff motivation. To assess the quality of services, a questionnaire to assess the quality of services in higher education centers will be used using the SERVQUAL model. After developing the initial framework, factor analysis was done to obtain the construct validity. Considering that the variables of this research are Cronbach's alpha coefficient and above 0.7, it can be said that the tool has good reliability. Then, all hypotheses were tested and analyzed using structural equation modeling technique and smartPLS software.

## Research Findings

In order to determine the validity of the measures in the PLS method, their factor load was used. This criterion shows the correlation of these measures in the relevant construct. The minimum acceptable value for the factor load of each criterion was 0.4 and the measures whose factor load is less than this value should be excluded from the test process. Table 1 indicates the factor load for the measures of the present study.

**Table1.** Factor loads in the measurement model

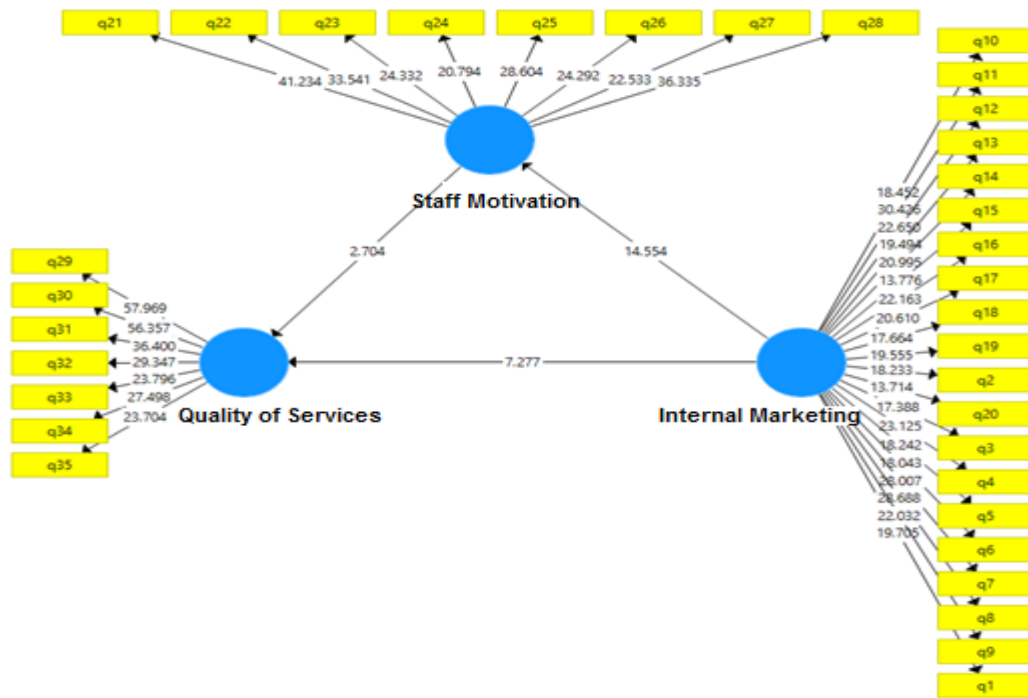
No.	code	Internal Marketing	Staff Motivation	Quality of Services
1	IM	0.713		
2		0.705		
3		0.685		
4		0.737		
5		0.685		
6		0.718		
7		0.750		
8		0.787		
9		0.746		
10		0.705		
11		0.806		
12		0.721		
13		0.728		
14		0.743		
15		0.655		
16		0.727		
17		0.725		
18		0.687		
19		0.706		
20		0.650		
21	Em		0.850	
22			0.795	
23			0.793	
24			0.789	
25			0.798	
26			0.790	
27			0.765	
28			0.800	
29	Qs			0.874
30				0.880
31				0.839
32				0.827
33				0.783
34				0.806
35				0.778

Table 2 shows the factor load for the sub-measures of the present study

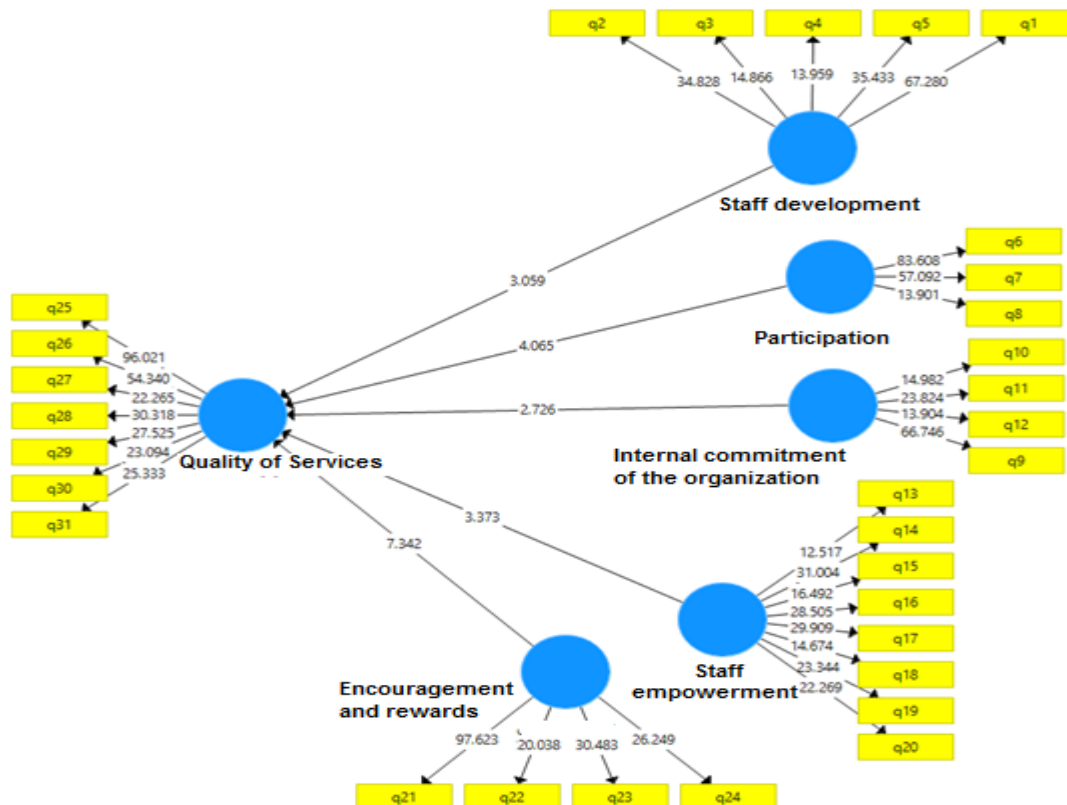
**Table. 2** Factor loads in the measurement model

No.	code	Staff development	participation	Internal commitment of the organization	Staff empowerment	Encouragement and rewards	Quality of Services
1	SD	0.822					
2		0.850					
3		0.756					
4		0.750					
5		0.711					
6	P		0.918				
7			0.897				
8			0.586				
9	I-OC			0.839			
10				0.767			
11				0.789			
12				0.776			
13	Em				0.692		
14					0.671		
15					0.693		
16					0.794		
17					0.754		
18					0.672		
19					0.741		
20					0.667		
21	ER					0.935	
22						0.917	
23						0.845	
24						0.830	
25	Qs						0.779
26							0.810
27							0.760
28							0.805
29							0.760
30	Qs						0.731
31							0.593

Based on the data analysis algorithm in PLS, after examining the fit of the measurement model, it is time to investigate the fit of the structural model of the research. The numerical value in the equations represents the t-value statistic, which is in fact the main criterion for confirming or rejecting the hypotheses. Thus, the t-statistic should be greater than 1.96. According to the model description, the main hypotheses for the t-statistic are shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Structure model output in SmartPLS software  
The numerical value in the equations represents the t-value statistic, which is in fact the main criterion for confirming or rejecting the hypotheses. Thus, the t-statistic should be greater than 1.96. According to the model description, the main hypotheses for the t-statistic are shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Structure model output in SmartPLS software



## Discussion and conclusion of the results of the hypotheses

The present study aims at providing evidence for a possible relationship between internal marketing, quality of educational services, and motivation among the staff of Al-Mustansiriyah University. To accomplish this goal, 4 main hypotheses and 5 sub-hypotheses were raised, which have been measured and examined. In order to test these hypotheses by asking the necessary questions and presenting a measurement questionnaire, these results were generally obtained.

The value of  $z = 2.658$  was obtained which is more than 1.96. Consequently, internal marketing has a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services in Al-Mustansiriyah University with the mediating role of staff motivation. Therefore, the first main hypothesis of the research is accepted. Service quality is one of the important factors in attracting and retaining customers in organizations. Rapid changes in the business environment and competitive environment have doubled the need to pay attention to customer satisfaction and improved service quality as an essential tool to increase market share and profitability in organizations. In fact, promoting internal marketing at Al-Mustansiriyah University can have a beneficial effect on areas such as improving staff motivation and the quality of university services in the minds of students, staff loyalty, meeting their needs and increasing market share, so that it is considered as a premise to gain satisfaction and retain valuable staffs.

The path coefficient is equal to 0.510 which is a positive value and the absolute value of  $t$  is equal to 7.277. As a result, internal marketing has a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services at Al-Mustansiriyah University. Therefore, the second main hypothesis of the research is accepted. It can be argued that the actions taken by Al-Mustansiriyah University in Iraq regarding internal marketing, which includes the promotion of goals, missions, and services for its staffs, will have a positive effect on the training services provided by the staff.

The path coefficient is equal to 0.654 which is a positive value and the absolute value of  $t$  is equal to 14.554. As a result, internal marketing has a positive and significant effect on staff motivation at Al-Mustansiriyah University. Therefore, the third main hypothesis

of the research is accepted and it can be argued that internal marketing and attention to it in Al-Mustansiriyah University increases the motivation of staff to create an internal organizational commitment and motivation to complete activities related to staff work.

The path coefficient is 0.201 which is a positive value and the absolute value of t statistic is equal to 2.704. As a result, staff motivation has a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services at Al-Mustansiriyah University. Therefore, the fourth main hypothesis of the research is accepted and it can be argued that by promoting and improving the motivation of staffs at Al-Mustansiriyah University, quality is what the staff want and their perceptions and expectations are the main determinants of quality and appropriate quality and satisfaction is defined as the level of service that meets the expectations of students because understanding the difference between student expectations and the performance of the educational organization in providing services shows the extent to which the services provided by an organization meet the needs and expectations of students.

The path coefficient is equal to 0.133 which is a positive value and the absolute value of t statistic is equal to 3.059. As a result, staff development has a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services at Al-Mustansiriyah University. Therefore, the first sub-hypothesis of the research is accepted and it can be argued that in a developed global economy, the creation and development of knowledge is one of the important factors in achieving global competitive advantage. Generally, training and developing staffs is related to recognizing and solving problems, making the necessary changes in the processes and methods of work and after-sales service of products. Based on research, it has been determined that investing in development will have tangible results, which will include improving attitudes, increasing skills related to improving service quality, and staff satisfaction and loyalty at Al-Mustansiriya University.

The path coefficient is equal to 0.142 which is a positive value and the absolute value of t is equal to 4.065. Therefore, the second sub-hypothesis of the research is accepted and one of the important ways to improve the quality of services in organizations and

companies is their staffs, only satisfied staffs can keep customers satisfied. In general, one of the most important factors in providing desirable services to customers is to create customer-oriented thinking in staffs. This is achieved when the organization or company considers internal marketing factors. Internal marketing is the recruitment, development, motivation and continuity of staff quality through the job as a product and the satisfaction of their needs. That is, internal marketing philosophy is the common relationship between customers and staffs (internal customers) of the organization. In other words, internal marketing is cognitive academic, scientific and commercial in the field of improving the level of customer and staff satisfaction. This branch of marketing science is influenced by quality management and service marketing, which emphasizes the importance of creating quality in the whole service delivery process, which can be emerged as a value chain and a tool for developing service quality and inter-organizational and external interactions at Al-Mustansiriya University. Therefore, the purpose of internal marketing is to ensure satisfaction among the organization's staffs and develop the quality of products and services in order to achieve the satisfaction of the organization's external customers.

The path coefficient is 0.210 which is a positive value and the absolute value of the t-statistic is 2.726. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research is accepted and it can be argued that the links that staffs make with themselves and other people in their workplace, i.e. in Al-Mustansiriya University, that this concept is different in terms of type and purpose and has different types of continuance, normality and affective can lead to improving the quality of educational services of this university in terms of staff.

The path coefficient is 0.106 which is a positive value and the absolute value of the t-statistic is 3.373. Therefore, the fourth sub-hypothesis of the research is accepted and it can be argued that not only the needs of customers but also the needs of staffs should be considered. According to researchers, recognizing needs will lead to the production of appropriate expectations and, consequently, the customer satisfaction and ultimately continuous customer loyalty. This is because in service organizations, staffs have a key role in attracting customers and establishing relationships with them.

Therefore, in this regard, organizations need to develop organizational empowerments to provide high quality products and services. The staff of Al-Mustansiriyah University plays a key role as the organization's internal customers. Therefore, attracting the development, motivation and quantitative and qualitative improvement of value creation empowerment, continuous improvement of service delivery to them and raising the quality of work as a product and their participation in the processes with the help of management can guide the organization to provide a high level of service quality. Consequently, it will increase the level of satisfaction among students.

The path coefficient is 0.350, which is a positive value and the absolute value of the t-statistic is 2.550. Therefore, the fifth sub-hypothesis of the research is accepted and it can be argued that providing salaries and benefits above the industry average and paying in proportion to performance and productivity is one of the methods of applying incentives and rewards. Based on the studies, it has been determined that the staffs of companies with above-average salaries and benefits have higher levels of satisfaction and commitment to the organization. Therefore, encouragement and reward have a positive and significant effect on increasing the quality of educational services at Al-Mustansiriyah University.

### **Research Suggestions**

In this section, regarding the limitations, possible shortcomings and experiences of this study and according to the guidelines that this study provides to guide future studies, research suggestions are presented that can be a guide for future researchers.

- Future studies can compare the conceptual model of research in several different industries.
- In future research, it is better to use a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative). In fact, most of the variables used in this study were used in previous studies, and this does not seem to be enough. Therefore, after extracting important factors from the literature, it is better to use methods such as Delphi to find the most important factors.
- It is also suggested that some variables be used as modulators, such as organizational culture to moderate the relationship between variables.

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