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Impact of Internal Marketing on Organizational Commitment among Executive Employees in Ship Building and Repair Industry in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Attracting employees and getting them to commit to the organizational goals and objectives are major issues today. This study aims to evaluate the impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment in the shipbuilding and ship repair industry in Sri Lanka. This research is conducted using positivism philosophy under a deductive approach. The data for this quantitative study is collected through a structured questionnaire. Data is analyzed through regression analysis. The findings reveal that internal marketing has a strong correlation with the employees' organizational commitment. As the major findings, it is found upon the selected internal marketing dimensions that are internal communication, rewards, training & development, have a positive impact on organizational commitment while employee empowerment has less effect on employee behavior. The results will help the management in the context of raising awareness in internal marketing.

Keywords: *Internal Marketing, Organizational Commitment, Ship Repair, Shipbuilding, Sri Lanka*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of internal marketing is developed from studies about service quality and service offering mechanisms. Initially, internal marketing is proposed as a solution for the challenge of consistently delivering high-quality service (, 2000; Chang & Chang, 2009; Narteh, 2012, Rafiq & Ahmed). Coper and Cronin (2000) consider internal marketing as an attempt of organization to achieve better service through education, rewards and general human resource management. As Berry and Parasuraman (1991) argue, the commitment of the internal customer is critical for the survival and growth of the enterprise. Further, Chang & Chang (2009) believe that jobs are internal products, especially in-service sections that satisfy employees' needs and demands and recognise the organization's purposes. Therefore, employees are considered as primary customers of the organization.

A generally agreed model on internal marketing dimensions is not yet concluded. Numbers of scholars argue on their suggested dimensions. Berry and Parasuraman (2004) found that internal marketing scopes attract, motivate, develop, and retain employees. Gummesson (1991) considered communication, training and development, and information as internal marketing perspectives, while Varey (1995) defines motivation and training are major concerns in internal marketing. Ahmed. Rafiq and saad (2003) also suggested strategic rewards, internal communications, training and development, inter-functional coordination, incentive systems, and empowerment. Chang and Chang (2007) proposed administrative support, internal communication, training and development as internal marketing dimensions. Performance initiatives and appraisals were also identified as internal marketing dimensions (Tsai & Tang, 2008). Kokubun (2019) takes internal communication, training, and internal market research as internal marketing dimensions for their studies. Coper and Cronin take vision, development, and rewards as internal marketing dimensions. Narteh (2012) presents internal marketing as a construct composed of four dimensions as empowerment, reward system, communication and training & development.

The successful application of internal marketing makes positive employee attitudes towards their work, including organizational commitment, job involvement, work motivation and job satisfaction (Tasi and Tang, 2008). The positive effect of internal marketing means that employees do the maximum satisfying the needs and wants of external customers (Berry, 1981). On the other hand, lack of commitment from employees can be harmful to the organization, resulting in poorer performance. He, Murrmann & Perdue (2010) have suggested that internal marketing could be the answer to gaining employee commitment, succeeding where traditional internal communications programmers have failed.

Different researchers have defined employee commitment differently (He, Murrman & Perdue, 2010; Nartey, 2012). Noe et al. (2006) describes employee commitment as the intensity of an employee's affinity to and participation in an organisation. He, Murrmann & Perdue (2010) say employee commitment is the psychological and emotional attachment of an employee to his organisation, accepting the goals and values of the organisation, and delivering high-quality service to satisfy and retain customers. Narteh (2012) describes employee commitment as a felt state of employee attachment to their organisations, including their willingness to internalise their values and abide by their rules and regulations.

As discussed above, many scholars have highlighted the importance of researching internal marketing effects for organizational commitment in the global service and production sector. The shipbuilding and repair industry is an entirely globalized sector. Shipbuilding is defined as a synthesis industry that commonly produces a single product at once, rarely into serial production, with a high unitary value and a long construction period. Both shipbuilding and repair industries are very sensitive to the economic cycle and are subject to high international competition (Blanco et al., 2014). World GDP growth and seaborne trade growth (including shipbuilding and repair industry) are directly related. (Blanco et al., 2014) As an exporter in Sri Lanka shipbuilding and repair industry, following the same, contributing more than 13 billion rupees to Sri Lankan GDP (Colombo Dockyard PLC, Annual Report 2018). Sri Lanka also stands as a global competitor in the shipbuilding and repair industry. Sri Lanka makes various vessels such as cable laying ships, supply vessels, firefighting vessels, pilot vessels, anchor handling tugs, cargo barges, passenger vessels… etc. Sir Lanka operates graving dry-docks with a maximum capacity of 125,000 Dwt and extensive repair berth facilities (Colombo Dockyard PLC, Annual Report 2018). The market situation of both the shipbuilding and ship repair industry depends on global financial status. Significantly shipbuilding industry is affected by the global economic status (Blanco et al., 2014). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the internal marketing effects on employee organizational commitment in this industry.

Shipbuilding and repair are among the most hazardous industries in the world. Common reasons for occupational accidents are high elevation, toxic, flammable and explosive materials, fire, moving machinery, dangerous gases, work on/close to haphazard established heavy structures, misuse or failure of equipment, poor ergonomics, untidiness, poor illumination, exposure to general hazards including electricity, and inadequate protective clothing (Krstev et al., 2006; Barlas, 2012). Therefore, all the industry employees expect a high level of professionalism and commitment to achieve organisational targets and safety. Shipbuilding and repair are highly technical and complex processes requiring a much-skilled workforce, including graduated/experienced engineers in 14 various disciplines, experienced technicians, certified welders, trained riggers and fitters…etc. The professionals such as marine engineers, maritime logistics and logistics engineers in shipbuilding and repair have high demand in the industry. (Babakus, 2003). There is a high demand for these skilled professionals even from other sectors with less hazardous environments. Therefore, getting their entire contribution to the organization while keeping long term employment is a challenge. Therefore, examining internal marketing effects on employee organizational commitment in this industry is essential.

The major issue of internal marketing literature is the lack of general agreement on internal marketing dimensions (Ahmed et al., 2003). To reduce the matter, Berry and Parasuraman (2004), Gummesson (1991), Varey (1995), Ahmed et al. (2003), Chang and Chang (2007), (Tsai & Tang, 2008) propose several models as internal marketing dimensions. However, there are several arguments on internal marketing dimensions, and researchers could not systematically organise these factors. Moreover, most of the researchers believe the internal marketing dimensions and the effect of each dimension on any other variable vary from industry to industry. Therefore, though the internal marketing dimensions are not entirely defined, scholars are verifying the effect of developed arguing models of internal marketing with their desired variables in various industries. Especially dimensions of internal marketing in the hospitality industry (Abzari, Ghorbani & Madani, 2011; Braimah 2016), banking industry (Calleya & Caruana, 1998; Bailey et al., 2016; Narteh 2012), higher educational institutions (Suleiman. & Mohammad, 2011) and sport and leisure services sector (Chiu et al., 2019) have already been discussed. Therefore, there is a potential opportunity to research a globalized service or production industry in developing countries. The shipbuilding and ship repair industry in Sri Lanka is a good option for the opportunity in that sense. In this setting, the purpose of this study is to examine the impact of internal marketing dimensions towards and measure the effective level of each internal marketing dimension towards the employee organizational commitment in the shipbuilding and repair industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Internal Marketing

Internal marketing can be defined as a promotion campaign of communicating a company's vision, mission and objectives, to employees in the organization. Internal marketing is initially introduced as a human resource management practice. With the development of the concept, it is developed as a marketing element as well. Therefore, internal marketing is considered as a key essential element out of four elements in holistic marketing philosophy. Other than that, under the relationship-mediated theory of internal marketing, internal marketing is considered a mediator in the relationship between organization and customers. Because of the importance of the concept of internal marketing, it is rapidly developed and enriched with management and marketing concepts. Currently, internal marketing is considered a strategic operation that combines marketing and human resource management for employees to provide better service quality to customers (Zain, Ishak. & Ghani, 2009).). The importance of internal marketing is that it is a tool that can positively influence employees to gain quality and efficient service or product. Furthermore, it is proven that there is an impact on employee behaviour, including employee commitment to the organization due to internal marketing. Therefore, it is important to study further the effects of internal marketing on organizational commitment.

The marketing concept starts with a well-defined market, focuses on customer needs, and integrates all the marketing activities that affect the customers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). If employees do not have precise information regarding the product, it is useless to convince the customers to purchase it. That means to enable the understanding level of the development among the employees, necessary training is essential. Also, sometimes employees do not feel good about work scope or are not satisfied with given responsibilities. Then the same can be identified through this approach, and some level of motivation and training can be given to overcome the situation. Therefore, internal marketing is an essential holistic marketing character prevalent at all levels of the organization. Treating employees as internal customers is crucial as they can satisfy external customers accordingly. Creating a motivating working environment ensures employees provide better service to their external customers as without helping internal customers, it cannot satisfy external customers. Therefore, it is important to study further internal marketing and its impact on the employees, organization, and commitment of employees towards the organization.

Dwairi, Bhuian & Jurkus (2007) introduces the relationship-mediated theory of internal marketing through their studies. There, it is described the structural relationships through which internal marketing can create value for an organization, its customers and its employees. According to the scholar's argument, internal marketing involves a relationship-mediated approach, where planned phases of learning activity in volunteer groups produce new knowledge critical to improving the external market performance. Therefore, in his study, internal marketing is defined as a relationship development strategy. The mentioned knowledge exchanges patterns within organizations are hierarchical, inter-functional and networked. A four-phase internal marketing cycle, such as energizing, codebreaking, authorizing and diffusing, is shown that taps into the knowledge exchange patterns. Five key propositions were explained as a supportive factor to the definition of internal marketing as a relationship development strategy. They are; (1) Relationship development begins with exchanges of mutual value between participants, (2) Internal marketing requires a process of learning activity, (3) Relationship development mediates between learning activity, and knowledge renewal, (4) Knowledge renewal is the purpose of internal marketing, (5) Internal marketing gains legitimacy through external market relevance. According to the theory, a mediator's importance and critical role in the relationship between organization and customers is shown.

2.2. Organizationl Commitment

Proctor & Doukakis (2003). have conceptualised organizational commitment as a unidimensional construct and proposed the organizational commitment questionnaire to measure itHe et al. (2010) also describes employee commitment as employees' psychological attachment to an organization. According to the scholars, as they explained, such employees represent the goals and values of the organization, are emotionally attached to the organization, want to develop with the organization, and deliver high-quality service to satisfy customers. Meanwhile, scholars like Jo and Shim (2005); Martensen & Gronholdt (2006). also view employee commitment as a psychological state that characterizes employees' relationship with the organization. Present studies on employee commitment define employee commitment as a felt state of employees' attachment to their organizations, including their willingness to internalize the organisation's values and desire to stay with the rules and regulations in the organization. In addition, employees committed to the organization usually are willing to exert extra effort towards achieving corporate goals and objectives. As per Kaner (2014), employee commitment is generally measured by job performance and the frequency of leaving or staying in the organization. Scholars (Kline, 2011) have estimated employee commitment from three perspectives: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Scholars like Dixit & Bhati (2012); Narteh (2012) also conducted their studies upon the developed above perspectives. The exact measurement of employee commitment is used in this study as well. The most popular theory which describes/ relate to organizational commitment is the Three-Component Model (TCM) introduced by Mishara (2009). In the model, the physiological attachment of an employee to the organization, in other words, organizational commitment is described using three perspectives such as affective, normative and continuance commitment. There, affective commitment is the affection for the employee towards the organization and the employment; continuance commitment is the fear towards the employee to make the company lose, and normative commitment is the sense of employee obligation to stay in the organization.

2.3. Internal Marketing and Organizational Commitment

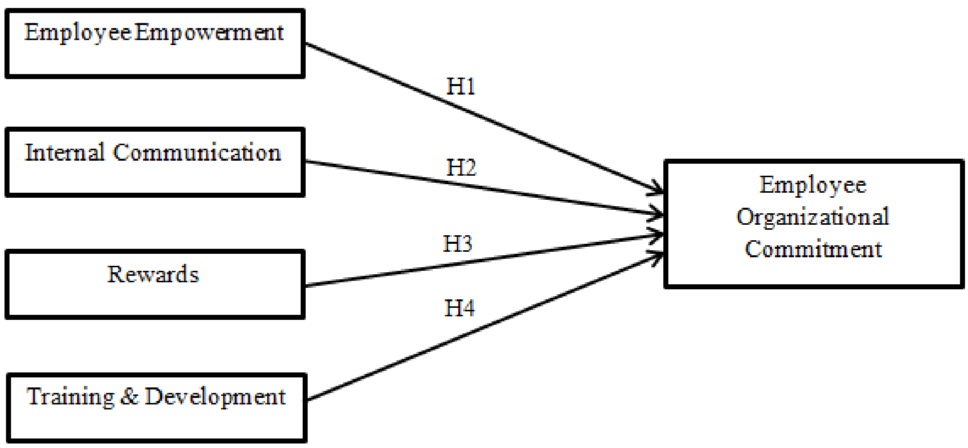
The internal marketing concept is to make employees feel that organization management cares about them and their needs. The successful application of the idea is translated into positive employee attitudes towards their work, including organizational commitment, job involvement, work motivation and job satisfaction (Tasi and Tang, 2008). There is empirical support for a significant relationship between internal marketing and consumer satisfaction (Dixit & Bhati, 2012). The subsequent positive impact of internal marketing will gain maximum employee input to satisfy external customers' needs better and wants (Berry 1981, Narteh 2012). On the other hand, lack of commitment from employees can be harmful to an organization, resulting in poor performance and efficiency arising due to inferior service offerings and higher costs. Kline (2011) has suggested that internal marketing could be the answer to gaining employee commitment when the traditional internal communications programs have failed. Mishara (2009) highlight the importance of motivated employees, arguing that it leads to a "cycle of success". The cycle of success results from increased awareness of employees' roles in customer satisfaction, the integration of employees into winning teams and a concentration on quality as the core of service. However, these authors discuss a "cycle of failure'' as well. The cycle of failure results from management toleration of dissatisfaction among employees involved in high contact situations. This ignored behaviour of management towards the employee dissatisfaction leads to high levels of turnover that in return leads to a deterioration of service quality and, ultimately, long-run decline of the organization. Therefore, it seems that there is a significant relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment. He, Murrmann, & Perdue (2010) suggest further research to further extend understanding of internal marketing dimensions as mixed evidence is available in the literature. Therefore, scholars are encouraged to conduct other studies on the relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment as internal marketing dimensions are not yet generally agreed upon, and the association results vary upon the study's industry.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study aimes to examine the impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment among executive employees in the shipbuilding and repair industry in Sri Lanka. So, it is mainly a correlational study that focuses on testing hypotheses supported by the previous literature. Accordingly, this research is conducted on positivism philosophy under deductive approach. Data for this quantitative, cross-sectional study was collected through a structured questionnaire.

Suppose it is turned to the discussion of conceptualization of the current study, as it is expected in research objectives. In that case, it mainly investigates the impact/relationships among internal marketing dimensions and organizational behaviour. Further, according to the existing literature, especially following Narteh's (2012) findings, in this study, internal communication, rewards, employee empowerment and training & development are taken as the internal marketing dimensions. These are considered independent variables in the research. Employee organizational commitment is the dependent variable in the study. According to scholars (Kline 2011), organizational commitment can be further discussed, standing on three perspectives: affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Based on the existing literature mentioned above, the following hypotheses can be proposed for this study: H1: Employee empowerment positively impact organizational commitment H2: Internal communication positively impact organizational commitment H3: Rewards positively impact organizational commitment H4: Training and development positively impact on organizational commitment

Following Narteh (2012), this study endorses the perspective of internal marketing. Internal marketing is a process using human resources management and marketing management principles to orient employees towards delivering service quality to satisfy and retain external customers. Furthermore, dimensions of internal marketing are identified as internal communication, rewards, employee empowerment and training & development. Empowerment has been identified as an act, a process and a psychological state (Martensen & Gronholdt, 2006). It refers to a situation where employees are allowed the will and discretion to make decisions about routine job-related activities (Braimah, 2016) with minimal restrain. Rewards are identified as a liberal fringe benefit gave by an organization motivating or encouraging the employees on desired actions. Communication is the process of exchanging ideas which a communicator transmits stimuli to modify the behaviour of other individuals (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Training equips employees with the relevant skills and knowledge to perform their current role functions while development programmes aim to provide staff to perform higher jobs involving more responsibilities (Braimah, 2016). As mentioned above, the study's dependent variable, employee organisational commitment is identified as a combination of three perspectives: normative commitment, continuance commitment, and affective commitment. Normative commitment is recognised as an obligation-based commitment, which denotes the feelings of obligations and loyalty towards the organization (Swailes, 2002). Continuance of employee commitment is referred to the perceived costs an individual associates with leaving an organization (Chang and Chang, 2007) Affective commitment is referred to as an attitudinal commitment, which is based upon the acceptance and belief of an employee in the goals and values of an organization (Swailes, 2002).

The following table (Table 1) elaborates how each construct is operationalized and measured using appropriate questions based on relevant factors.

Table 1: Operationalization Table

Concept	Variable	Measurement Indicator	Source
Internal Marketing	Employee empowerment	1. Encouragement 2. Self-confidence 3. Trust 4. Decision-making freedom	Rafiq and Ahmed (2000); Ahmed and Rafi q (2003); Seibert et al. (2004); Foley (2008).
	Internal communication	1. Communication strategies 2. Communication channels 3. Interpersonal communication	Ahmed and Rafi q (2003); Gounaris (2008b)
	Rewards	1. Competitive salaries	Cichy et al. (2009);

		2. Fringe benefits	Zain et al. (2009);
		3. Appreciation	Awwad and Agti (2011).
	Training & Development	1. Training programmes	Waris (2005);
		2. On job experience	Martensen and Grønholdt (2006);
		3. Applicability of training to job	Gounaris (2008a).
Employee Organizational Commitment	Normative	1. Caring of firm's future	Yousef (2003);
		2. Carrier growth	Chang and Chang (2009)
		3. Loyalty	Narteh(2012);
	Continuance	1. Sharing experience	Bailey et al. (2016).
		2. Emotional attachment	
	Affective	1. Willingness to serve	
		2. Attendance	

In this research, the population includes executive employees of the shipbuilding and repair industry. In Sri Lanka, the shipbuilding and repair industry is not a vastly spread business. Currently, there is only one player actively doing large-scale shipbuilding and repair operations, though a small scale few players run boat repair and building business. Though there are few players in the industry, more than 13 billion rupees contribute to the country's GDP. Therefore, executive employees in the Sri Lankan shipbuilding and repair industry's major business player (Colombo Dockyard PLC) are selected as the population. One hundred eighty-seven executive employees work in a selected population. For the sample size calculation, a reputed software (G-power) support is taken. Accordingly, it is calculated the sample size is 80.

The reliability and validity of the data set is analysed. In other words, it is the ability of the data to be used repeatedly. Through Cronbach's Alpha, it is measured. To interpret the output, the rule of George and Mallery (2003) was followed. Upon that, Cronbach's Alpha should be more than 0.7 to accept the variable using, and all the variables' Cronbach's Alpha values were more than 0.7. Validity indicates how well a method, technique, or test measures some measurable thing, and it is about the accuracy of a measure. There are four levels of analysis to examine validity: criterion validity, content validity, discriminant validity, and convergent validity.

Criterion validity discusses what criteria is used to test the variable. Here the variables are selected upon the literature of reputed scholars (Narteh, 2012). The meaning of Content validity is that it extends to the items on a test representing the entire domain that will be measured. The indicators of the variables were also selected in the literature. Therefore, the variables and their indicators can be taken as valid to a considerable extend. Discriminant validity is demonstrated by measures of constructs that theoretically should not be highly related to each other. That means they should not be positively correlated to each other. Convergent validity refers to the degree to which two measures of constructs theoretically should be related. The scale used in this study was already used in several works of literature, as mentioned earlier. Most of the questions are also standard questions used previously and accepted by other scholars. So, we can decide that questionnaire is considerably soot with the factors we need to measure. In this study, factor analysis was conducted as evidence to verify discriminant and convergent validity.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Out of all the potential respondents randomly, 94 respondents were requested online to fill the questionnaire. Out of them, upon the request, duly filled 87 responses were received back. Before the analysis, received data was checked and undergone through a pre-preparation process. Data must be screened to ensure usability, reliability, and validity to verify the expected results. In data screening, mainly, it is a concern with the data source, missing values and data outliers. All the data sources are acceptable as it was pre-planned to whom the questionnaire had been forwarded. Data outliers were identified and removed. Unusually data outliers can be seen at mid-point and extreme ends. They were sorted, identified and rejected. As the survey was done in an online system, it is initially planned not to miss data by filling the questionnaire. The respondent can submit the answered questionnaire only by answering all the questions. Therefore, there is no missed data in the set.

Before analysing the relationship between independent and dependent variables, it is required to analysis the background of the data set. Demography variable related questions in the questionnaire provide the raw data for this analysis. Analysis of sample profile was done through frequency analysis of each demographic question. The results of the demographic factors are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Profile

Demographic Factors	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	7	8.8
	Male	73	91.3
Experience	Less than 5 years	48	60
	6 years - 10 years	21	26.3
	11 years - 20 years	6	7.5
	20 years - 30 years	5	6.3
Job field	Engineering	68	85
	Accounting	6	7.5
	HRM	5	6.3
	Marketing	1	1.3
Qualification	Masters	6	7.5
	Degree	68	85
	Diploma	6	7.5
Marital Status	Single	25	31.3
	Engaged	6	7.5
	Married	49	61.3

These demographic data indicate that most of these employees are young, married, highly educated executive groups. Over 65% of employees are degree qualified. However, 48% of employees are less than five years experienced. The majority of the sample is male and it's the nature of the industry. Further, because of the younger age, they may be less responsible in general. Regarding the employee category, over 68% are engineers.

4.1. Test of Assumptions

Normality tests is used to determine if the data set is normally distributed. To ensure the normality of data, univariate normality is tested for all the data items and after that for all the variables. To verify the normality, Skewness Index and Kurtosis Index was calculated as follows.

Table 3: Skewness & Kurtosis Index

	Emp	**ICom**	**Rew**	**TnD**	**OrgCom**
Skewness Index	-1.865	1.345	-0.136	0.232	-1.977
Kurtosis Index	1.633653	1.233385	-2.16034	-2.63836	0.708279

Note. Emp - Employee empowerment, ICom - Internal communication, Rew – Rewards, TnD - Training & Development, OrgCom - Employee Organizational Commitment

The other most crucial assumption of multivariate analysis is the linearity of the data set (Hair et al, 2011). The linearity test aims to determine the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable is linear or not. This assumption asserts that there is a straight-line relationship between every two variables. Therefore, all the data items in the data set were examined for linearity using the scatter plots. If it is drawn like a straight line having equally distributed plots, it can be concluded that data set is linear.

Multicollinearity This is about the relationship among independent variables. Here it is checked whether there is a significant relationship between independent and independent variables. Through correlation table and collinearity diagnosis, multicollinearity can be verified. According to Hair et al. (2010), if multicollinearity exists with the variables in the study, the results will be misleading due to the inflation of standard errors. According to Field (2009) correlation value shown in the table 4 should be in between +1 and -1. Correlation between independent and independent variables should be less than 0.7, and correlation between independent and dependent variables should be greater than 0.3 to verify a satisfactory relationship in the data set. It can be seen that the same condition is satisfied in table .4. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance statistics are used to make collinearity diagnoses. The generally accepted threshold level of VIF is 10 (O'Brien, 2007), and the tolerance value should be closer to 1 (Field, 2009). Here, it can be seen in Table 5 that both conditions are satisfied. Therefore, it can be concluded that this study is free of multicollinearity.

Table 4: Correlation statistics

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Employee empowerment	1				
2. Internal communication	.345**	1			
3. Rewards	.399**	.113	1		
4. Training & Development	-.003	.123	-.313**	1	
5. Emp. Org. Commitment	.339	.306	.558**	-.326**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: VIF and tolerance values

	Tolerance	VIF
Employee empowerment	.743	1.346
Internal communication	.865	1.156
Rewards	.743	1.345
Training & Development	.942	1.150

Dependent Variable: Employee Organizational Commitment

In this study, the graphical approach is used to measure homoscedasticity. According to Gary and Peter (2003), the residual pots are examined to see whether the graphs funnel out, indicating homoscedasticity. The residual plots drawn to observe linearity were used for this purpose too. In the graphs drawn for the current study, no such funnelling was observed. Therefore, the data is complied with homoscedastic assumption.

4.2. Hypotheses Testing

The testing hypothesis is the core of any study. Hypothesis testing is used to assess the plausibility of the proposed hypotheses by using sample data. The test provides evidence concerning the plausibility of the hypotheses, given the data. Here we did a statistical analysis of hypotheses as they had already fulfilled the eligibility requirements for statistical hypotheses testing. As this study has more than one independent variable, we used multiple regression analysis methods. To test the relationship between the dimensions of internal marketing and employee organizational commitment among executive employees in the shipbuilding and ship repair industry in Sri Lanka, above mentioned multiple regression analysis was performed. Employee organizational commitment was used as the dependent variable, while the dimensions of internal marketing were used as the independent variables. For the computation, the software; SPSS version 20 was used. The output summary of the analysis can be shown as follows in Table 6

Table 6: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B		
Employee empowerment	0.1210	1.1050	0.2730
Internal communication	0.4430	4.1490	0.0000
Rewards	0.8100	8.6700	0.0000
Training & Development	0.2040	2.6860	0.0090

a. Dependent Variable: Employee organizational commitment

In the above summary table, the β values (standard coefficient values) in regression are the estimated coefficients of the explanatory variables indicating a change on response variable caused by a unit change of respective explanatory variable keeping all the other explanatory variables unchanged. The significant value (Sig) in the table denotes the significance of the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. As per generally agreed terms, if the sig. Value is less than 0.05 (at the level of 95%), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Testing the hypothesis 1;

H1: Employee empowerment positively impact on organizational commitment

Firstly, it can be selected the first hypothesis based on the independent variable; employee empowerment. Therefore, the standardized coefficient value; (β) (0.1210) is positive, indicating a positive relationship between employee empowerment and organizational commitment. But the significant value of employee empowerment is not in the acceptable range. That means the impact is insignificant. Therefore, upon the statistical results, hypothesis *(H1)* can be rejected.

Testing hypothesis 2;

H2: Internal communication positively impact on organizational commitment

Standardized coefficient values; (β) (0.4430) is positive here. That means there is a positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee organizational commitment. The significant value of internal communication is acceptable (Sig=0.000<0.05) Therefore, there is an impact of internal communication towards employee organizational commitment. The hypothesis*(H2)* cannot be rejected.

Testing hypothesis 3;

H3: Rewards positively impact on organizational commitment

Standardized coefficient values; β (0.895) is positive here. That indicates a positive relationship between rewards and employee organizational commitment. The significant value of internal communication is acceptable (Sig=0.000<0.05). Therefore, there is an impact of rewards on employee organizational commitment. The hypothesis (*H3*) cannot be rejected.

Testing the hypothesis 4;

H4: Training and development positively impact on organizational commitment

The standardized coefficient values (β) (0.204) are positive here. That indicates a positive relationship between training & development and employee organizational commitment. Furthermore, the significant value of internal communication is acceptable (Sig=0.009<0.05), which means there is an impact of training & development towards employee organizational commitment. Therefore, the hypothesis (*H4*) cannot be rejected.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study is another attempt to verify the impact of internal marketing on organizational behaviour in the Sri Lankan context. The study is primarily conducted based on the shipbuilding and repair industry. Four hypotheses have been proposed, and all of them are discussed separately. The demographic variables were already analysed at the initial stage. First, it seems that employee empowerment has less impact on organizational behaviour. The reason may be the unhappiness to take over the responsibilities coming with the empowerment. It should be discussed further in a separate study. Second, internal communication positively impacts employee organizational commitment, and this finding complies with previous researches (Nazir et al., 2016). Third, rewards have a positive effect on organizational commitment. It is much clear that almost all the employees do the job for getting some salary or benefits. Similar evidence was found in literature as Nazi et al (2016), Kokubun (2019) revealed that extrinsic, social and intrinsic rewards were significantly related to affective and normative commitment. Finally, training and development have a positive impact on organizational commitment. The reason maybe it gives some added value to the employee. This finding also complies with prior literature as many researchers found that training and development have a substantial impact on employees' affective and normative commitment (Nazi et al., 2016, Kokubun 2019). Especially Narteh (2012), which is the most similar study to this study, takes different outcomes rather than what this is taken. The reason may be the various industries or any other controlling variable. However, as previous scholars have done, this study highlighted the importance of internal marketing towards organizational commitment (Kokubun, 2019).

6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Internal marketing dimensions are not yet totally defined. There are several suggestions for the dimensions. Here it is used one of them suggested by Narteh (2012). Theoretically, the current study improves the conceptualization and application of internal marketing in the shipbuilding and repair industry. Few non-engineering pieces of research were conducted based on the shipbuilding and ship repair industry. This study helps to fill that gap of application based on the selected industry shipbuilding and ship repair. The internal marketing dimensions used in the study are an important contribution to the literature because it enriches the undefined scope of literature in internal marketing. Organizational commitment is already defined, and this study helps to confirm the same.

The research outcome is much essential to the industry level administrators to increase the employee organizational commitment. Through the result, it is clearly shown the factors that can make an influence the organizational commitment. Therefore, decision-makers can make their decisions based on what is discussed here. It may save the cost of the organization and improve the productivity of the organization. Especially for the high-risk jobs related organizations, such as shipbuilding and repair, can apply the findings to reduce the turnover

While the study found some interesting results and makes an essential contribution to the internal marketing and organizational commitment literature, there are latent limitations worth noting. Quantitative studies, specifically standard questionnaires which usually limits the collecting views about information outside asked questions. With the limited time, accessibility to the persons, and financial limitations standard questionnaire is the best option. But it limits the people who face the questionnaire. If they are given the freedom to express their concerns, a much-detailed actual figure comes out. This research focuses on the relationship between marketing and employee organizational commitment among executive employees in the shipbuilding and repair industry in Sir Lanka. Future studies can be conducted based on another industry, in another country and for non-executive employees.

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