

# Internal Branding in the Services Sector: A Conceptual Framework

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose:** Service sector is growing by leaps and bounds and is followed by an increasing competition in service companies. Internal branding is considered a new approach and has become essential in service brand building process i.e. aligning the service companies brand promise with that of employees behavior. Employees in the service organizations need to deliver the brand promise. Internal branding helps organizations to concentrate on organizational vision and values by concentrating on a coherent brand message for the overall improvement of the corporate brand identity. The objective of this paper is to evolve and propose a model of internal branding practices in service organizations leading up to brand commitment. The paper investigates whether embracing internal branding practices have the ability to influence the brand commitment of employees which in turn leads to enhanced brand performance.

**Design/Methodology:** A conceptual paper and its focus is on forming a proposition to elaborate on the basics of conceptual framework which exists around a service brand. The paper proposes a framework which revolves around an organization's internal branding practices and in turn creating brand commitment among employees. Paper refers to findings from earlier research done in various service sectors in order to build up on prior research done and prove that the elements of the proposed framework are viable in earlier cited models.

**Findings:** The study clears gap in the literature. Though there has been earlier research in this area and various aspects of this but this paper provides a broader perspective of internal branding practices in selected service sectors. This research tries to study new area of internal branding and whether it can contribute in building employee brand commitment among employees.

**Originality/value:** This study provides a new outlook of the fundamental relationships among internal branding, brand commitment and brand performance of employees in service sectors.

**Keywords:** Internal Branding, Brand Commitment, Brand Performance, Internal Communication Satisfaction

## **Introduction**

Many growing number of service organizations have adopted internal branding practices in order to enhance the employees understanding of brand promise and reduce the gap between brand promise and its delivery. The key question is whether embracing Internal branding practices influence employees brand commitment and in turn brand performance. The research

will aim to analyse whether internal branding practices in service organizations widely influence employees and their behaviour towards the organization. With an increase in the number of service organizations and many organizations adopting internal branding practices this research attempts to understand how internal branding practices are contributing towards employee and organizational growth. This study will also put forth various internal branding practices followed in service organizations. It has been observed that service industry has grown annually over the past decade and is estimated to accounts for two third of the world's total production (Rajshekhar *et al.* 2011). The progress within the service industry has contributed to a risk that services will become commodities, i.e. standardized. This has stemmed into the importance for service companies to build a strong and competitive service brand (Kimpakorn & Tocquer 2009).

Service industry can use the knowledge accumulated by consumer goods firms. But the nature of services provokes us to take a different approach especially their intangibility and the inseparability between production and consumption .To build a powerful service brand uniqueness of services is to be taken into consideration.

Branding has been around for centuries and a means of distinguishing tangible products from those of the other. But now a days branding is used to separate individuals, firms and places as well. Blumenthal, Bergstorm and Crothers (2002) argue that branding adds a higher level of emotional meaning to a product or service and thus enhances its value to customers and stakeholders.

Many companies are offering similar products with ranging quality which has paved the way for brands to act as tools for differentiation and also to help customers in their purchase decisions. Hence it has become all the more important to manage a strong and reliable brand not only externally but internally as well. Shiu and Yu (2010) have put forth that success of business organizations depends on the knowledge imparted among the employees about the organization and the employees' ability to behave out of the brand values that is straight away connected to the business performance. Hogg, Carter and Dunne (1998) have mentioned that a lot of attention is given to form and state brand values and less attention is paid to the management and delivery of the brand.

Harris and De Chernatony (2001) stated that employees are becoming central to the process of brand building. In service organizations employees are the main driving force and hence the question arises whether internal branding practices influence employees' attitude and behaviours.

Machtiger (2004) states that service companies have started realizing how crucial employees are to build a powerful service brand. Punjaisri et al. (2009) highlights that employees within a service company have a crucial role since their vital function is to deliver brand promise and fulfilling the customers' expectations. Gummesson, (1990) argues that employees become the face of the brand since they meet and assist the customers of the service company. Punjaisri et al. (2009) state that employees' attitude and behavior during the service encounter influence the customers and other stakeholders' perception about the brand and the delivery of service quality. They function as prime time marketers, since they have the potential to promote a consistent brand image (Gummesson, 1990). Employees who master this in a talented way can become one of the company's competitive advantages since their talents become hard to match by competitors (Papasolomou & Vrontis 2006; Punjaisri & Wilson 2007).

In service industry the intangible nature of services increases the perceived risk of the customer. A customer is also unable to inspect the service before purchase .Hence a lot of emphasis is on the employee in the service industry since employee is the mediating link between the brand and the customer. Also during the process of service delivery the attitudes and the behavior of service providers may vary from one to another. Employees should behave in ways that supports the brand promise which lays great importance on internal branding.

Service firms need to build on different attributes of the employees apart from their traditional quality to stay competitive in the market place. Strong brands are required for differentiation in today's marketplace and it becomes essential to align employees with the company brand to ensure consistency in all communication externally. Forming a brand within the organization requires effectively communicating the brand to the internal stakeholders i.e. the employees, convincing them of value and its relevance and linking the other parts of the organization to deliver perfect brand essence.

De Chertnatony & Cottam have manifested that various strategies of internal branding help to align employee's behavior with the company's brand promises. Thomson et al. (1999) argues that knowledge about the brand is only valuable combined with the desire to take action. Chong (2007) lays emphasis on brand commitment and states that understanding the brand alone is not important. An understanding of the company's vision and values is essential for the employees' to be committed and to make the brand come alive through their professional behavior (Thomson *et al.* 1999; Dunn & Davis 2003).

### **Research Objective**

The major purpose of this study is to discuss internal branding and its tools and techniques/practices and their influence on employee brand commitment and brand performance in the service sector.

### **Research Gap**

The incentive for this study has come up by the clear gap in the literature. It has been found out that internal branding is a budding area and calls for research in various service sectors. Research carried out in this area is most often case study methodology which lacks empirical evidence. Various authors have depicted that as internal branding is still neglected and more research with a combination of various industries such as, IT, telecommunication, financial sector, retail, tourism, insurance etc. should be combined to get a different perspective of internal brand management which calls for further research in this area.

Pujasri et al. has also emphasised the importance of internal branding but the study has only focussed on the hotel industry in Thailand which may not be representative of all service organisations, suggesting that there is a need for researchers to extend this research into other service industries and other national cultures to enrich internal branding knowledge in the wider service sector..

### **Literature Review for Model Formation**

#### ***Internal Branding***

This section will explore and review various arguments on internal branding used currently in various organizations. From its traditional goods-centered perspective, marketing is still in its early stages of transition to service centered perspective (Vargo & Lusch 2004). This shift in the paradigm requires most firms to pursue a strategy of value addition which combines both products and services to benefit the customer. But in service organizations the role of employees at all levels has higher implications.

A brand is like a mirror of the company that reflects both tangible and intangible attributes and the external and internal dimensions of these attributes that are promised to be delivered by a firm to its target customers. Most of the marketing literature focuses on the external dimensions and neglecting the internal dimensions or the internal branding. According to the Canadian marketing association Mac Laverty, Mac Quilan and Oddie (2007) internal branding is the set of strategic processes that align and empowers employees to deliver the appropriate customer experience in a consistent fashion. These processes include, , internal communications, training support, leadership practices, reward and recognition programs, recruitment practices, decision

making power and sustainability factors. It follows that the employees know and understand thoroughly the brand values that the firm follows and apply them in their decisions in a customer-oriented way. Bergstorm, Bluementhal and Crothers (2002) argued that Internal branding is all about communicating the brand effectively to the employees, convincing them of its relevance and successfully linking every job in the organisation to deliver brand essence. Hence communication can be an important aspect of internal branding. Stershic (2006) defined it as a process of aligning day today processes, job designs, and recognition and rewards with the brand identity to drive brand results. Internal branding is a focused brand strategy that helps employees understand and integrate brand values in their respective roles to ensure that they can effectively deliver on the brand promise. Internal branding, by many, is considered as a means to create powerful corporate brands. According to De Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2003) and Vallaster (2004) internal branding assists the organization in aligning its internal process and corporate culture with those of the brand. The concept reinforces the role of services employees and notes that their views may be extremely important if the organization is to implement the most appropriate internal branding programs. The key role of internal branding is to ensure that employees transform espoused brand messages into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders. Meyer et al. (2002) and Papasolomou and Vrontis (2006) have identified that successful internal branding engenders employees' commitment to, identification with and loyalty to the brand.

Internal branding is considered as a means of creating powerful brands and attainment of competitive advantage through people in the organization. When employees are equipped to deal with the customers in a better fashion, it means enhanced brand image and profits. Internal branding practices carried out in a company ensures intellectual and emotional commitment to the brand.

Einwiller and Will (2002) argued that internal branding as an activity enables disparate organizations to come together and 'speak with one voice' has resonance in the current research context. This lays emphasis on various departments coming together and getting a similar brand message across among employees. The conceptualization of the internal branding process as a two way communications process is also highlighted for successful internal branding. According to Mahnert & Torres (2007) three core principles are emphasized which lead to the conceptualization of Internal branding. Firstly, that committed employees reflect and deliver desired brand values to consumers. Secondly, that effective communication results in the brand promise being realized both internally and externally, and thirdly, that internal branding needs to permeate all levels of the organization to align the behavior and attitudes of management and staff.

The above definitions and discussion implies that Success of the service brand largely depends on the behaviour of the employees since they represent the brand while interacting with the customer. According to Henkel et al. (2007) and Schultz (2005) brand oriented behaviour of employees is the outcome of brand knowledge and is essential to create a more consistent and unique brand communication in the service industry.

Internal branding is as important as external branding and in service organizations there is a close encounter between the contact employees and the customers due to which aligning the brand values of employees with the organization is a pre requisite (Punjaisri & Wilson 2011). Keller (2007) argues that a brand is used by a company to differentiate its products and services from its competitors. Schultz and de Chernatony (2002) argue that the success of branding depends largely on employee's behavior in delivering the brand promise to external stakeholders. De Chernatony and Segal Horn (2003) suggest that a service brand is successful only when its employees believe in the organizational brand vision and values, adhere to them and act in coherence with them.

Internal branding is implemented in various service sectors e.g. Hotels (Punjaisri and Wilson 2009, 2011), hospitals (Gapp and Merrilees 2006), airlines (Chong 2007), financial service organizations (de Chernatony and Cottam 2006) and service call centers (Burmann and König 2011). According to Aurand et al. (2005) internal branding is aligning employees' behaviour with the brand values by educating them about the brand values. Burmann and König (2011) state that employees play an important role in building the brand. They further add that communicating brand messages via training activities, communication media and leaders can motivate and encourage the employees and they also feel a part of the brand. These brand-oriented communication activities prove more powerful than empowering employees or promotional prospects. Burman and Zeplin (2005) argue that leaders also influence internal branding by persuading employees to support the brand. Vallaster and de Chernatony (2006) argue that leaders facilitate behavioural changes consistent with the desired brand and also are responsible for driving corporate's brand identity among the employees. The study emphasizes that the influence of leaders can build employee actions to go even beyond the representative roles assigned by their organization.

In service sector internal branding pays particular consideration to the role of customer-contact employees (e.g., Gapp & Merrilees 2006; Punjaisri & Wilson 2011). A study of internal branding in hotel industry by Punjaisri and Wilson (2006, 2011) states that communicating the brand via various communication activities or through training creates a positive impact on the attitude and behavior of employees and thus facilitates effective delivery of brand promise. The study found out that various internal branding activities (group meetings, training programs, daily briefing) instill in employees a sense of belonging to the brand and aligns the delivery of the brand with the brand promise.

A study in the healthcare sector by Gapp and Merrilees (2006) found out that internal branding activities have a positive influence on employee behavior. Brand values must be communicated in a very simplified and convincing manner to the employees so that they believe and start incorporating them in their behavior.

This discussion above implies that internal branding is implemented in service organizations to communicate and make the employees aware of the brand values of the organization. Internal branding brings a great deal of change in employee behaviors and helps in aligning them with the brand values of their organizations.

### **Research Proposition and the Rationale**

In this section of the paper are outlined the constructs and the paths which we will undertake to investigate and come up with a conceptual framework leading to brand commitment, when an organization takes up internal branding practices. Thus each proposition and the rationale behind it is put forth.

#### ***Proposition 1: Internal communication satisfaction positively influences brand commitment.***

Communication is equally essential to the employees who deliver the brand promise. Effective brand communications result in the brand promise being realized both internally and externally. De Chernatony & Segal-Horn (2003) emphasize the importance of effective communication of the service vision, the brand promise and consumer expectations to staff for successful brand building. Brand promises are delivered to the customers in the moment of truth interactions. This effectively results in a staff 'buy in' to the corporate brand (Vallaster & De Chernatony 2005; Thomson & Hecker 2000; Thomson et al. 1999), or staff 'living the brand' (Hankinson 2004), both indicators of commitment to the brand.

According to Witt & Rode (2005); Bergstrom et al. (2002) in services context internal brand building among staff is equally important to external brand building among customers. Hence communication with the staff is equally essential as communication with the customers. It is

argued that such a balanced internal/external orientation is strategically more effective than a singularly and marketing oriented external focus (Wong and Saunders 1993; Lings 1999). As noted in The New York Times (25 July 2001): “*Companies have become painfully aware that sending the right message to their employees is just as important as making a good impression with customers, vendors and investors.* Within the services literature, it is mentioned that effective internal and external communication leads to the formation of strong and successful corporate brands. In a pure services context, the rationale for this view rests with the need for congruency between the externally communicated brand promises with the internally generated customer experiences. Internal communication satisfaction plays a huge role in the employee morale and performance. Employees who are satisfied enough with the communication aspect feel a part of the organization, contribute more and have a say in the organization. Employee brand commitment is an effort with everyone from person at the bottom level to the top management in the organization to realize its goals and achievements and is influenced by internal communication satisfaction. Internal communication satisfaction is associated with how well our personal expectation of communication at work are in line with work performance (Hamilton 1987). Various communication satisfaction constructs such as relationship to superiors, communication top down and bottom up, organization integration, media quality and horizontal integration influence employee brand commitment.

***Proposition 2: Exposure to customer and market related information positively influences/builds brand commitment***

King and Grace (2008) argued that organizations give employees the opportunity to be exposed to customer and market related information, whether that is in the form of customer feedback, customer initiatives employed by the organization or competitors activities. Customer and market related information helps the employees to deal with the customers efficiently and also helps in brand positioning. Customer feedback in service organizations is of utmost importance to the employees in further improving the service process. Also being aware of the competitor activities gives an edge to the employees and helps in brand differentiation. Employees who lack customer or market information are unable to carry out their roles and responsibilities properly. Employees who are exposed to customer and market related information are more confident and exhibit higher levels of commitment.

***Proposition 3: Brand training positively influences brand commitment***

De Chernatony et al. (2006) argue that HR plays a vital role in the internal branding process regarding recruitment and training of employees. Marketing and HR together train employees in such a manner that they know how to carry out the jobs assigned to them perfectly and without any ambiguity. Aurand et al. (2005) laid emphasis that HR should be aware of the brand values so that they can spread them amongst employees. King and Grace (2006) argued that training programmes can be used as a tool for internal branding and brand aware workforce can bring brand to life. They stated that training programmes teaches employees how to carry out their specific roles and how to be customer focused. They further argued that training can reduce role ambiguity among employees and in turn enhance employee brand commitment. De Chernatony & Cottam (2006) also acknowledged that training programmes train the employees how to be customer focused. In the services context customer experience is of utmost importance. So it is essential to give a unique experience to customers so that they remain glued to the organization. Punjaisri et al. (2009) also suggest that training programs can enhance general skills to carry out the daily work as well as brand-specific skills in order to improve employees’ ability to deliver the brand promise. Brand centered training enhances employee brand commitment and in turn employee brand performance

***Proposition 4: Brand Leadership positively influences brand commitment***

Great leaders make great paths for people and employees to enjoy their journey of corporate success. According to Wallace et al. (2011) great leadership is crucial for all service firms in order to achieve on-brand behaviour. They further argue that there is consensus among authors that management should act as role models to create brand commitment of employees and that it is vital that the behaviour and communication of managers is brand congruent, otherwise it might have a negative impact on employees commitment to the brand (Burmam & Zeplin 2005; Vallaster & de Chernatony 2005; de Chernatony et al. 2006; de Chernatony & Cottam 2006; King & Grace 2006; Henkel et al. 2007; King 2010). Henkel et al. (2007) suggested that top management should work side by side with employees on a regular basis to display their brand commitment. Leadership plays a vital role in determining employee brand commitment as leaders act as role models for the employees. Effective leadership influences brand commitment and acts as a role model by communicating brand values. Burmann & Zeplin (2005) argue that this type of transformational leadership will be more likely to increase employee commitment based on identification with the brand rather than compliance requirements.

***Proposition 5: Rewards, recognition and work environment positively influence brand commitment***

Work environment describes various factors as relationships with colleagues and leaders, recognition schemes, and perceived autonomy. If the relationships with colleagues and leaders are conducive, employees sense a greater level of commitment which in turn results in enhanced productivity. Recognition schemes incorporate a sense of pride among the employees. According to Pujaisri and Wilson (2007) rewards and recognition schemes can boost motivation and commitment.

Autonomy refers to the decision making power an employee has while carrying out day today job responsibilities. When employees feel that they get support from their colleagues and management through recognition schemes and certain degrees of perceived autonomy, they believe that they “can deliver the brand promise effectively and efficiently”.

**Brand Commitment**

Employees’ organizational commitment concept can be traced back to the early 1970s (Porter et al. 1974). However, in recent years authors have started to use the terms organizational commitment and brand commitment interchangeably (Kimpakorn & Tocquer 2009; 2010; Wallace et al. 2011). This can be exemplified by Burmann & Zeplin (2005) who states that: “*the brand commitment construct as the authors understand it is synonymous with organizational commitment, which is generally defined as a psychological bond between the employee and the organization*”.

Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) defined employee brand commitment as, “the degree to which employees identify and are involved with their service brand, are willing to exert additional efforts to achieve the goals of the brand and are interested in remaining with the service organization.” When employees are involved with their organization they can go that extra mile and ensure customer satisfaction and customer delight. Brand commitment has three components as affective, normative and continuance. *Normative commitment* is, as the term implies, closely related to company and social norms as perceived by the employee (Allen & Meyer 1990, Meyer & Allen 1991). Commitment is here seen as a result of the employee’s perceived need to abide by rules and social conduct that is in line with the company goals. *Continuance commitment* refers to the effect of perceived costs of leaving the organization and the perceived profit of staying with the organization (Allen & Meyer 1990, Meyer & Allen 1991; Cohen 1999).

According to Balmer (2001) there is a need for total commitment across all employees of an organization if they want to be truly differentiated and successful. Pujaisri and Wilson (2007) state that internal branding strives for a shared understanding of brand values across the organization and has a positive influence on brand commitment. Thomson et al. (1999) argue that committed employees can better fulfil the brand promise because of their emotional attachment to the brand.

***Proposition 6: Brand commitment influences brand performance***

Brand performance depicts how fruitful a brand is in the market .It gives a greater picture of various vital accomplishments of a brand. Employee's commitment in turn influences brand performance which in turn leads to better customer retention. Sharma and Kamalabhan (2012) argued that employees deliver the brand promise in a consistent manner. Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) argued that employee attitudes influence employee brand performance. Their study also put forth that employee attitudes are essential and play a great role in the organizational productivity and success. De Cheratony (2002) stated that living the brand or being the brand are the outcomes of employee brand attitudes.

**The Conceptual Framework and Path Diagram of the Study**

Bringing together all the 6 propositions we present below the proposed model of influence of internal branding on brand commitment and the subsequent impact of brand commitment on brand performance. Our 6 propositions are linked in the paths shown below

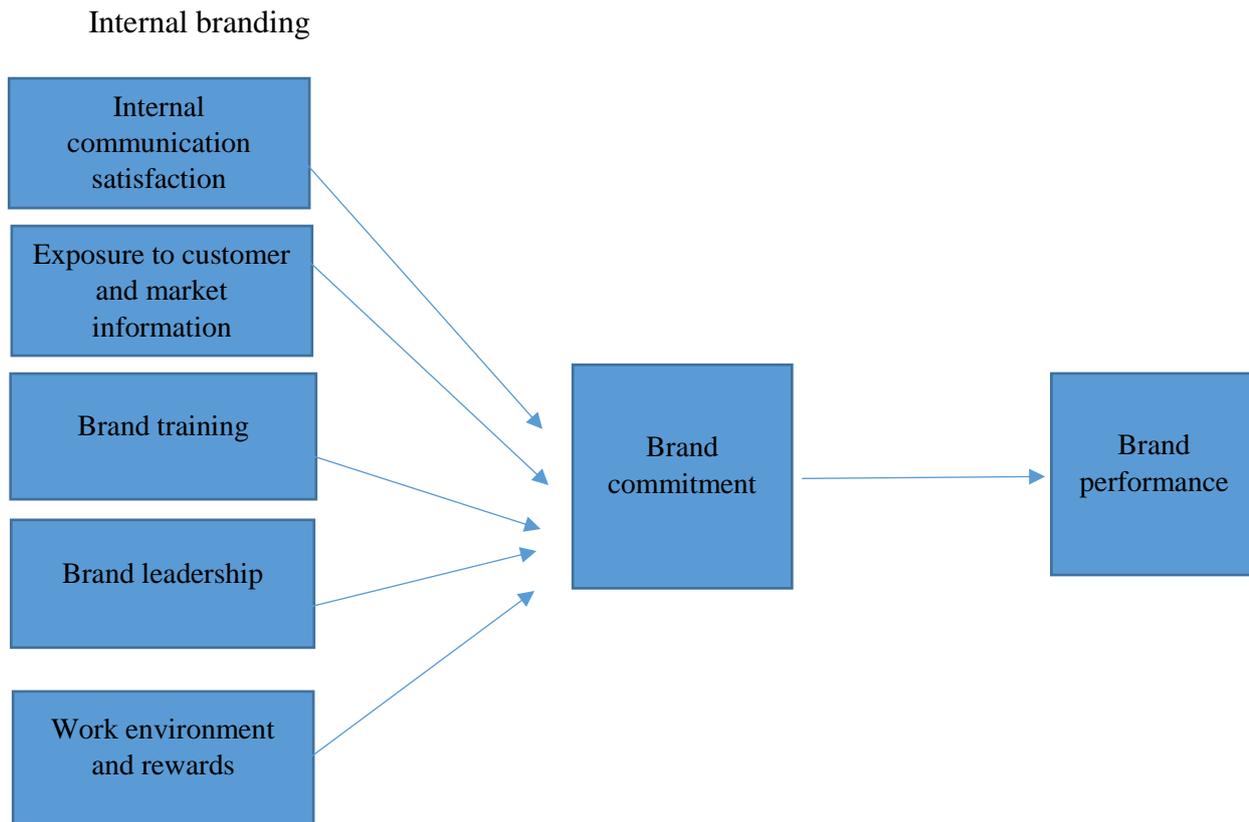


Figure 1: Proposed Model

- P1: Internal communication satisfaction positively influences brand commitment.*  
*P2: Exposure to customer and market information positively influences brand commitment*  
*P3: Brand training positively influences brand commitment*  
*P4: Brand leadership positively influences brand commitment*  
*P5: Rewards, recognition and work environment positively influences brand commitment*  
*P6: Brand commitment positively influences brand performance.*

This is proposed as an empirical study and the design of this study is descriptive with a structured questionnaire, across a cross sectional study of people's response to internal branding programmes and communication satisfaction in various service organizations. The research is approached with the objective of finding and confirming best practices that could be adopted by various organizations to manage internal branding. The nature of the topic of our research requires gathering experience and viewpoints held by employees of various service organizations within the context of internal branding which can influence employees to commit to the brand.

For the primary data collection, the researchers will use primary data collection methods which include surveys whereas secondary research will provide analysis of literature and research which will help in building the research. Research variables contain multiple items which need to be measured and analyses to check out the relationships between each of the various variables. All the constructs which the researcher attempts to measure are linked to questions in the survey which provide marketing metrics for each construct. The equations and the relationships fit the statistical analysis well.

The measurement of each scale which will help us to test the theory behind are given below:

1. Internal communication satisfaction

- a- Relationship to supervisor
- b- Top management communication
- c- Bottom up communication
- d- Horizontal communication
- e- Media quality
- f- Organization Integration

2. Exposure to customer and market information

- 1. I am aware of the new clients approached, targeted or on board
- 2. I am aware of the customers' feedback
- 3. I am aware of various customer initiatives e.g. promotional schemes etc.
- 4. I am aware of competitor's activities and products.

3. Brand leadership

- 1. My manager(s) regularly works along with me and my colleagues in the daily work
- 2. My manager(s) acts as a role model in my daily work
- 3. I get rewarded when I perform as per expectations of top leadership
- 4. I am allowed to take initiatives while taking care of customers
- 5. I am encouraged by my managers to make own decisions regarding the daily work within the framework of organization policies.

4. Brand Training

- 1. My organization conducts training sessions and provides instructions about how should I carry out my work role
- 2. I receive training/instructions about how should I treat customers
- 3. I receive training /instructions about how to be customer focused
- 4. This organization conducts orientation programmes and provides information about how to fulfill the brand promise.
- 5. I like the orientation kit/brand manuals of this organization
- 6 I am clearly informed of the organization's brand mission in the group meetings
- 7. I clearly understand my role in relation to the brand mission after attending group meetings

5. Work environment and rewards and recognition

- 1. I am rewarded for good work by this organization
- 2. I get fair recognition for performing my job properly
- 3. I often get rewarded appropriately for my exceptional work.
- 4. There exists cordial relationships between leaders and peers in this organization

6. Brand commitment

- 1. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization
- 2. I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this org
- 3. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
- 4. This is the best organization to work for
- 5. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization
- 6. I am happy that I chose this organization over others to work for

7. I am willing to put in great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization to be successful
8. I feel a strong sense of belonging with this organization
9. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

#### 7. Brand Performance

1. The quality level of my services meets the brand standards of this organization
2. I can successfully fulfill responsibilities specified in my job description
3. I always handle customer specific requests within a standard set for the brand
4. I effectively fulfill the promise that the brand has with its customers

This research topic will analyze various relationships between variables by factor analysis and regression model which will help in throwing light on various aspects of internal branding in service sector.

### **Conclusion**

Internal branding is the essence of service sector and is highly acknowledged now a days. Internal branding is essential and a building block for an organization where employees are the main focal point and a major contributory factor for the overall growth and development of an organization. Internal branding helps in contemplating employees state of mind and thus aligns their practices with the brand, comprehending brand values to make them enjoy the privilege of living in brand reality (Kotler and Heskett 1992). When one imbibes brand value and is able to furnish it he/she will be able to provide a brand guarantee and experience to the people adequately (Cushen 2009). Internal branding is the essential prerequisite for attitudinal and behavioral adjustments in organizations and proves to be effective for brand sustainability and survival over longer haul (Burmah and Zeplin 2005). Meanwhile empirical gaps have been highlighted referring to services sector including financial and information technology, where branding stimulus influence brand evaluations including brand trust (Dissanayake 2015; Dissanayake & Ismail 2015). Thus service sector comes under focus to be surveyed under branding.

In this paper a few practices are recommended which are essential in disguising the brand value among employees. Present day organizations rely a lot how they co-make with the employees and thus enhance organization productivity. Internal branding in present scenario is an essential instrument in attitudinal and behavioral adjustments in the organizations and thus in turn essential for brand survival and sustainability in the long run.

### ***Theoretical and Managerial Implications***

This paper contends that how internal branding practices in service sector can bring a major continual evolution in the organizations and in employee brand behavior as well. An internal brand creation involves three stages: learning it, believing it. Living it; these attributes are aimed at Top level management, customer facing employees and internal brand ambassadors and incorporated across the organizations. This paper has developed deeper understanding of internal branding practices. Managers can get takeaways that Powerful brands need to be build inside out. A clear and motivating internal brand will provide direction and motivation to create a forward moving brand that will not tamper with the customer promise.

### ***Suggestions for Future Studies***

This study focusses on the internal branding practices carried out in the selected service sectors. It is therefore recommended that similar research can be replicated in various organizations and sectors to get another perspective and check the consistency of research also. Since this

study focusses on only selected service sectors, it gives a scope to explore other service sectors as well as manufacturing sectors which calls for further research in this area. The scope of further research lies in the empirical studies to be carried out in service sector as a lot of research in internal branding lacks empirical evidence.

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