



The Impact of Internal Marketing on Educators' Satisfaction and Loyalty in Private Universities

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ABSTRACT : This study examines the impact of Internal Marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty, emphasizing its role in fostering long-term customer relationships. The research addresses the extent to which Internal Marketing influences these outcomes, particularly in competitive markets. A quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was applied to analyze survey data. Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the robustness of the results. Findings indicate that Internal Marketing significantly influences both customer satisfaction and loyalty, with a stronger effect on satisfaction. These results underscore the strategic importance of Internal Marketing in enhancing customer-related outcomes. Businesses can utilize these insights to develop more effective internal marketing strategies aimed at improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Staff Satisfaction, Loyalty, Private Universities.



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INTRODUCTION

Ideally, the expectation for educators and education personnel in a university environment is that they have a high level of job satisfaction and strong loyalty to the institution where they are dedicated ([AM et al. 2022](#)). Job satisfaction is not just about feeling happy with the job, but includes various aspects that form a satisfying work experience ([Citra and Fahmi 2019](#); [Sandhi Fialy Harahap and Satria Tirtayasa 2020](#)). This includes recognition for contributions made, clear opportunities for career development and professional growth, the existence of a supportive work environment, and fair and appropriate rewards for contributions made ([Mundakir and Zainuri 2018](#); [Nurwati 2021](#)). Meanwhile, loyalty is not just a level of compliance or physical attachment to the workplace, but reflects a deep level of commitment and strong affiliation to the values and mission of the university ([Sharma and Srivastava 2018](#); [Sriyono and Lestari 2013](#); [Wilson 2019](#)). In this loyalty, there is a deep emotional attachment, as well as a willingness to contribute maximally to the success and growth of the institution.

However, in practice, several internal and external factors may affect the level of job satisfaction and loyalty of educators and education personnel at universities. These may include lack of recognition for their contributions, lack of opportunities for career development, mismatch

between organizational values and daily work experiences, and lack of effective communication between management and employees ([Chandani et al. 2016](#); [Nurul Fizia 2018](#); [Safpremi, Putri, and Ahyaruddin 2022](#)). Based on the comparison between the ideality and reality of job satisfaction and loyalty of educators and education personnel, there is an empirical and theoretical gap that needs to be explained. Empirically, there may be a difference between ideal expectations and actual experiences of employees in terms of job satisfaction and loyalty. Theoretically, this study aims to explain what factors influence this gap between ideality and reality, and how it relates to the concept of internal marketing. Addressing these challenges requires strategic interventions to bridge the gap between ideal conditions and actual workplace experiences

One promising approach to enhancing job satisfaction and loyalty in higher education institutions is internal marketing. This concept emphasizes treating employees as internal customers, ensuring that their needs and well-being are prioritized to improve service quality and institutional performance ([Setyadi, Helmi, Ismail, et al. 2022](#)). Internal marketing strategies can include fostering open communication, increasing employee participation in decision-making, and providing continuous professional development opportunities ([Katsikeas, Leonidou, and Zeriti 2020](#); [Waskito 2020](#)). When properly implemented, internal marketing can create a more supportive work environment, leading to higher job satisfaction and stronger organizational commitment.

Despite its potential, research on the impact of internal marketing on job satisfaction and loyalty in higher education remains limited, particularly in the context of private universities in South Sumatra Province. Previous studies have explored this concept in sectors such as education and Islamic banking ([Helmi et al. 2022](#); [Setyadi, Helmi, and Hidayat 2022](#)), but a specific model for private higher education institutions is still lacking. Given the growing competition among universities and the increasing demand for high-quality education services, understanding how internal marketing influences educators' job satisfaction and loyalty is essential.

This study aims to fill this research gap by quantitatively analyzing the relationship between internal marketing, job satisfaction, and loyalty among educators and education personnel in private universities in South Sumatra. The novelty of this research lies in applying an internal marketing framework to the higher education sector, offering both theoretical contributions to the literature and practical recommendations for university management. By identifying effective internal marketing strategies, this study seeks to enhance job satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately improving institutional performance and sustainability.

METHOD

This research is a survey research. This research is a form of quantitative research where researchers conduct surveys on a sample or the entire population of people to describe attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population and statistically analyze the data to describe trends in responses to questions and to test research questions or hypotheses ([Creswell and Clark 2011](#)). The survey research design used is a cross-sectional survey ([Creswell 2012](#)). Survey research where data collection activities obtained from a sample are carried out at one time and do not take a long time. The research activities were carried out by Bina Darma University,

Muhammadiyah University of Palembang, and the PalComTech Institute of Technology and Business. The research was carried out for 5 months starting from June to December 2024.

The population of this study is all Educators and Education Personnel and academics of Bina Darma University, Muhammadiyah University of Palembang, and the PalComTech Institute of Technology and Business. The basis that will be used by researchers in determining the sample size is theoretical references and considerations of the analysis tools to be used. As mentioned by [Hair \(2017\)](#) that the sample size for research generally uses a sample size of 30 to 500 people can be said to be sufficient ([Hair et al. 2022](#)). It is planned for data analysis in this study to use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). For the purposes of data analysis tools with SEM, researchers can use samples between 100 and 400 people, or by considering the number of indicators used in the study ([AM et al. 2022](#)). The provisions for the number of samples based on indicators have also been written by several experts who state that research samples can be set at 5 to 10 times the indicators ([Hair et al. 2019](#)). In the previous section it has been explained that this study involves 3 variables or constructs which in total there are 17 indicators. Thus the number of samples taken for this study was 170 respondents (i.e. 17 x 10). After the number of samples is determined, the next step is to determine how the samples are taken from the population. Sampling is done by probability, namely by Simple Random Sampling

Data will be collected using interview, questionnaire and observation techniques. Questionnaires are often also referred to as questionnaires. This technique is a series or list of questions or statements that are arranged systematically, then sent to be filled out by respondents. The type of questionnaire used in this study is a closed questionnaire with the type of scale used is a Likert scale.

Table 1. Research Instruments

Variables	Question
Internal Marketing	My communication with fellow members of the institution is well facilitated.
	The institution utilizes all existing resources optimally
	I feel that the institution carries out awards/compensation fairly.
	The institution provides ample opportunities to obtain training in accordance with my competencies.
	I can easily follow the organizational culture
Satisfaction	I can carry out all tasks assigned to me with pleasure
	I really support the monitoring system for what I do at work.
	The condition of the workspace/environment is in accordance with my expectations.
	I am happy because the institution gives me the opportunity to continue developing my career.
	I am grateful that I can carry out my duties well as a mandate that I have to carry out
Loyalty	I am happy to have a good relationship with the entire academic community.
	I have always complied with all the regulations set by the institution
	I am aware of the high responsibility to the institution

My collaboration with my colleagues went well
I consider the institution to be mine and I must continue to develop it.
I hope to work in this institution until I finish my term of service.
Even though I have retired, I remain loyal to help this institution as much as I can.

The model in this study can be said to be quite complex because it involves two endogenous variables whose positions are mediators; therefore data analysis will be carried out in two stages, namely descriptive analysis and inferential analysis ([AM et al. 2023](#)). Descriptive analysis is an analysis carried out on research data by providing an in-depth description (description), so that the research data has an important meaning for the development of theory and for practical interests. The more detailed the description is, the more complete the picture of the research data will be. What is certain is that in this descriptive analysis, no testing is carried out on the research data. Inferential analysis is an analysis carried out to test the hypothesis proposed in the study, as well as to answer research questions ([Rahayu et al. 2025](#)). In research that uses a complex causality model, data analysis cannot be carried out using linear regression, but using SEM, because SEM is a development of linear regression analysis that involves many complex variables. In accordance with the theoretical model developed in this study, the appropriate statistical analysis tool is to use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM is a statistical tool used to solve multilevel models simultaneously that cannot be solved by linear regression equations simultaneously ([Kline 2011](#)). SEM is calculated based on variance analysis through a covariance matrix whose results are more precise compared to the use of linear regression analysis using SEM ([Maruyama 1998](#)).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model

Convergent Validity

Outer model testing is the initial step in structural model analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of each indicator used in the study. One of the methods used in this test is convergent validity, which measures the extent to which indicators designed to measure a construct are highly correlated with each other ([Anwar et al. 2024](#)). Convergent validity is evaluated based on the *loading factor value* of each indicator against the latent variable being measured. In general, a *loading factor value* above 0.7 is considered to meet the convergent validity criteria ([Setyadi, Helmi, and Hidayat 2022](#)). The following is a table of convergent validity test results for each indicator in the research variables.

Table 2. Convergent Validity

Variable	Internal Marketing	Satisfaction	Loyalty
EJ1		0.923	
EJ2		0.933	
EJ3		0.949	
EL1			0.882

EL2	0.974
EL3	0.948
IM1	0.787
IM2	0.841
IM3	0.859
IM4	0.883
IM5	0.892
IM6	0.853

Based on the convergent validity table above, the loading factor value for each indicator shows quite good results, with most values exceeding the threshold of 0.7. This indicates that the indicators used have met the convergent validity criteria. In detail, the indicators in the Internal Marketing variable (IM1 to IM6) have loading factor values ranging from 0.787 to 0.892, while the indicators in the Satisfaction variable (EJ1 to EJ3) show very high values, namely between 0.923 to 0.949. Likewise, the indicators in the Loyalty variable (EL1 to EL3) also have high loading factor values, namely above 0.882. These results indicate that all indicators can represent each construct well, so it can be concluded that the convergent validity in this study is met. The next step is to conduct reliability testing to ensure data consistency.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity testing is an important part of *outer model testing* which aims to ensure that constructs in the model can be clearly distinguished from each other. Discriminant validity measures the extent to which different constructs are not too highly correlated with each other. One way to evaluate discriminant validity is to compare the square root of the *average variance extracted* (AVE) for each construct with the correlation between other constructs. Discriminant validity is met if the square root of the AVE for each construct is greater than the correlation between the construct and other constructs. The following are the results of the discriminant validity test presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Variable	Internal Marketing	Satisfaction	Loyalty
Internal Marketing	0.853		
Satisfaction	0.933	0.935	
Loyalty	0.774	0.749	0.936

Based on Table 3, the discriminant validity for all constructs in the model has been tested. The values on the diagonal of the table, which show the square root of AVE for each construct, are greater than the correlation values between other constructs, which are shown outside the diagonal. The **Internal Marketing construct** has a square root of AVE of 0.853, which is higher than the correlation with the **Satisfaction construct** (0.933) and **Loyalty** (0.774), indicating quite good discriminant validity. The **Satisfaction construct** also meets the criteria for discriminant validity, with a square root of AVE of 0.935, greater than its correlation with **Internal Marketing** (0.933) and **Loyalty** (0.749). Likewise, the **Loyalty construct** has a square root of AVE of 0.936, which

is greater than its correlation with **Internal Marketing** (0.774) and **Satisfaction** (0.749). These results indicate that each construct in the model can be clearly distinguished from each other, so that the discriminant validity in this model has been met. Thus, the model can be continued to the next stage of analysis because each construct has been proven to measure a different concept clearly.

Construct Reliability and Validity Test

Construct reliability and validity testing is an important step in model analysis to ensure that the constructs used have internal consistency and are able to measure the desired concept accurately (Helmi, Setyadi, et al. 2025; Helmi, Sofyan, et al. 2025). This test involves several main indicators, namely the Cronbach's Alpha value, rho_A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Cronbach's Alpha is used to measure internal consistency between indicators in one construct, with values above 0.7 considered adequate. rho_A and Composite Reliability are used to measure the overall reliability of the construct, where values above 0.7 indicate good reliability. Meanwhile, the AVE value measures convergent validity, with values above 0.5 indicating that the construct can explain more than 50% of the variance of its indicators. The following are the results of the *construct reliability and validity tests* in this study, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Construct Reliability and Validity Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Internal Marketing	0.925	0.93	0.941	0.728
Satisfaction	0.928	0.93	0.954	0.875
Loyalty	0.928	0.93	0.955	0.876

Based on Table 4, the test results show that all constructs meet the criteria for adequate reliability and validity. The Cronbach's Alpha value for each construct is above 0.7, with the highest value in the Satisfaction and Loyalty constructs (0.928), and the Internal Marketing construct is slightly lower (0.925). This indicates very good internal consistency in all constructs. The rho_A value for all constructs is 0.93, which also meets the reliability criteria. In addition, the Composite Reliability value for each construct exceeds 0.9, with the highest value in Loyalty (0.955), which indicates very high reliability in each construct. In terms of validity, the AVE value for all constructs exceeds the threshold of 0.5, with the highest value in the Loyalty (0.876) and Satisfaction (0.875) constructs, and Internal Marketing (0.728). This shows that more than 50% of the indicator variance can be explained by each construct, so that the convergent validity for all constructs is met. Overall, these results indicate that all constructs in the study have very good reliability and validity. Thus, this model can be relied on for further analysis and hypothesis testing.

Model Estimate

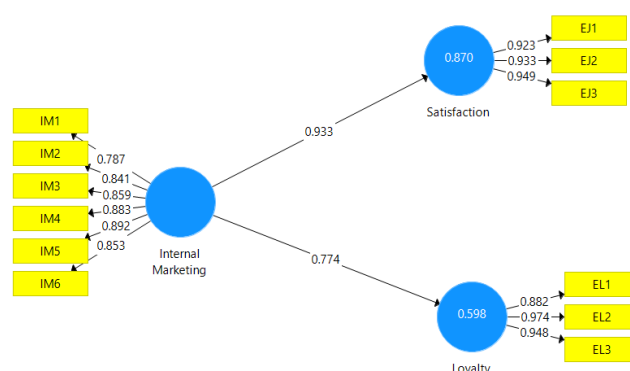


Figure 1. Model Estimation

Inner Model

Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

inner model test aims to evaluate the structural relationship between constructs in the research model. One aspect analyzed is *collinearity statistics* using the *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) value. This test is important to detect potential multicollinearity problems, namely conditions in which there is a very high relationship between indicators in a particular construct, which can affect the validity of the analysis results. In general, VIF values below 5 are considered safe, while values above 5 may indicate multicollinearity that needs attention. The following is Table 5 which presents the results of the *collinearity statistics* (VIF) analysis for each indicator in this study.

Table 5. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

Variable Code	VIF	Variable Code	VIF
IM1	3,044	EJ1	3.163
IM2	3,505	EJ2	3.924
IM3	3.481	EJ3	4,512
IM4	3.835	EL1	2,649
IM5	4.020	EL2	13,362
IM6	2.625	EL3	10,364

Based on Table 5, the VIF values for most indicators are below the threshold of 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not a major problem in the model. However, there are several indicators with quite high VIF values, especially in EL2 (13,362) and EL3 (10,364), which exceed the recommended threshold. This indicates the potential for significant multicollinearity in both indicators.

Indicators IM1 to IM6 have VIF values ranging from 2,625 to 4,020, indicating that multicollinearity in the Internal Marketing construct is still within reasonable limits. Likewise, indicators EJ1 to EJ3 in the Satisfaction construct have VIF values between 3,163 to 4,512, which are still considered acceptable even though they are close to the upper limit.

However, in the Loyalty construct, the EL2 and EL3 indicators show very high VIF values (13.362 and 10.364), which can affect the stability of the model. This requires special attention, and it is

recommended to take mitigation steps such as eliminating or revising these indicators to reduce the effects of multicollinearity.

Overall, most of the indicators in this model have VIF values that meet the criteria, so multicollinearity is not a major problem. However, improvements to indicators with high VIF values need to be made so that the model can produce more accurate and reliable analysis results.

R Square

R Square testing is an important step in evaluating *the inner model* to assess how much the endogenous construct can be explained by the exogenous construct in the research model. The *R Square value* reflects the predictive power of the model, where the higher the *R Square value*, the greater the variance of the endogenous construct that can be explained by the exogenous construct. In general, an *R Square value* of 0.75 is considered strong, 0.50 is considered moderate, and 0.25 is considered weak. In addition, *Adjusted R Square* is also presented to provide adjustments to the number of variables in the model. The following are the results of the *R Square test for the Loyalty and Satisfaction constructs*, as presented in Table 6.

Table 6. R Square

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Loyalty	0.598	0.590
Satisfaction	0.870	0.867

Based on Table 6, the analysis results show that the *R Square value* for the Loyalty construct is 0.598, which indicates that 59.8% of the variance of the Loyalty construct can be explained by the independent variables in the model. This value is included in the moderate category, which means that the independent construct has a significant influence on Loyalty.

Meanwhile, the *R Square value* for the Satisfaction construct is 0.870, indicating that 87% of the variance in Satisfaction can be explained by the independent variable. This value is in the very strong category, indicating that the independent construct is able to explain almost all of the variance in the Satisfaction construct well.

In addition, the *Adjusted R Square values* for Loyalty (0.590) and Satisfaction (0.867) are close to their respective *R Square values*, indicating that the model does not experience overfitting even though there are several variables in the analysis.

Overall, the test results show that the model has good predictive power, especially in the Satisfaction construct which has a very high *R Square value*. Meanwhile, the Loyalty construct also has quite significant predictive power, although it is in the moderate category. With these results, the model can be considered to have good ability to explain the relationship between the variables analyzed.

F Square

F Square test is used to evaluate the effect size of the independent variable on the dependent variable in a structural model (Hadi et al. 2022; Haryanto et al. 2023). This test aims to assess how much the independent variable contributes to explaining the variability in the dependent variable. The *F Square value* is interpreted as follows: 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a medium effect, and 0.35 indicates a large effect. In other words, the higher the *F Square value*, the greater the influence or contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable. The following are the results of the *F Square* analysis shown in the following table.

Table 7. F Square

Variable	Loyalty	Satisfaction
Internal Marketing	1.49	6,697

Based on table 7 *F Square*, the Internal Marketing variable has an *F Square value* of 1.49 on the Loyalty variable, which shows a very large effect. This indicates that Internal Marketing makes a significant contribution in explaining the Loyalty variable in the model.

In addition, for the Satisfaction variable, the *F Square value* for Internal Marketing is 6.697, which also shows a very large effect. This value indicates that Internal Marketing has a very strong influence on Satisfaction, making it one of the key factors in explaining the variability in the variable.

Overall, the results of the analysis show that Internal Marketing has a large effect on both Loyalty and Satisfaction, with a more dominant influence on Satisfaction. This finding confirms the importance of Internal Marketing as a strategic variable in the model, which makes a significant contribution to the dependent variables analyzed. Thus, Internal Marketing deserves to be the main focus in implementing strategies aimed at increasing Loyalty and Satisfaction.

Hypothesis Proof

Hypothesis verification is an important step in *inner model analysis* to test the relationship between variables in the research model. This process is done by evaluating the *Path Coefficient*, *T Statistics*, and *P Values*. The *Path Coefficient value* indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, where a positive value indicates a unidirectional relationship. *T Statistics* is used to measure the statistical significance of the relationship, with values above 1.96 at a significance level of 5% considered significant. Meanwhile, *P Values* indicate the probability level of the relationship occurring by chance, with values below 0.05 considered significant. The following are the results of hypothesis testing in Table 8.

Table 8. Hypothesis Proof

Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values
Internal Marketing -> Loyalty	10,623	0.000
Internal Marketing -> Satisfaction	45,581	0.000

Based on Table 8, the test results show that the relationship between Internal Marketing and Loyalty has a *Path Coefficient value* of 10.623, with *T Statistics* far above the threshold of 1.96, which is 10.623, and *P Values* of 0.000, which is far below 0.05 (Am and Setiawati 2023). This shows that Internal Marketing has a statistically significant effect on Loyalty.

Furthermore, the relationship between Internal Marketing and Satisfaction has a *Path Coefficient value* of 45.581, with *T Statistics* of 45.581, which is also far above the threshold of 1.96, and *P Values* of 0.000. These results indicate that Internal Marketing has a very significant influence on Satisfaction.

Overall, the results of the hypothesis testing indicate that Internal Marketing has a significant effect on both dependent variables, namely Loyalty and Satisfaction, with a stronger effect on Satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis in this research model is proven, and Internal Marketing can be considered a key factor that significantly influences Loyalty and Satisfaction. This finding provides important implications for strategic decision making to improve both variables.

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical evidence on the impact of Internal Marketing on Job Satisfaction and Loyalty among educators in private universities in South Sumatra. The findings indicate that Internal Marketing has a significant influence on both variables, with a stronger impact on Job Satisfaction. This highlights the importance of well-structured internal marketing strategies in fostering a positive work environment, enhancing employee satisfaction, and strengthening institutional loyalty.

From a policy perspective, these findings suggest that university administrators and policymakers should prioritize internal marketing initiatives, such as improving communication channels, providing career development opportunities, and fostering an inclusive institutional culture. Implementing these strategies can enhance job satisfaction and employee commitment, ultimately leading to better institutional performance and sustainability.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to establish causal relationships. Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to better capture the dynamic nature of internal marketing effects over time. Second, the study is focused on private universities in South Sumatra, which may limit its generalizability to other educational institutions or regions. Expanding the scope to include public universities or institutions from different cultural contexts could provide broader insights. Third, potential multicollinearity issues in certain indicators, as reflected by high VIF values, suggest the need for further refinement in measurement instruments to improve reliability and accuracy in future studies.

These limitations highlight areas for further research, particularly in exploring alternative internal marketing strategies, examining mediating or moderating variables such as organizational culture, and conducting comparative studies across industries. By addressing these aspects, future research can build upon the findings of this study and provide deeper insights into the role of internal marketing in enhancing employee satisfaction and loyalty in various organizational settings.

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