

# Impact of Internal Marketing in NABH Accredited Hospitals

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**Abstract:** Internal marketing evolved through three stages of growth. Initially, it focused on employee satisfaction and motivation. Afterward, it shifted its attention to external customers, positioning internal marketing as a tool to integrate key organizational functions and strengthen customer relationships. In the third stage, internal marketing emerged as a strategic mechanism for executing broader organizational goals. It helps an organization fulfil its promise of delivering a satisfying experience to customers while also playing a key role in enhancing employee satisfaction.

NABH is a unit of QCI that maintains the standards of hospitals on the basis of patient care, infection control, patient quality, staffs (Clinical staffs and non-clinical staffs) development. In the healthcare sector, customers' (patients') expectations and customer satisfaction depend on effective and efficient services. Through frequent staff trainings and Policy development in internal marketing focuses on enhancing skills, knowledge, and delivering patient-centered care. NABH standards support this by providing guidelines to ensure the maintenance of high-quality services.

**Keywords:** Internal Marketing; Internal Customers; Patient Feedback; NABH; Quality Healthcare Services.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Every employee should begin to realize and embrace the concept of marketing within their organization. In hospitals, especially those aiming for or maintaining NABH accreditation, marketing is not limited to external promotion—it must also focus on internal customers, i.e., the employees. Internal marketing remains a crucial yet underutilized tool that needs to be effectively recognized and implemented across healthcare institutions.

The first responsibility of healthcare marketers is to understand the mission, vision, and financial standing of the organization. This foundational knowledge helps align employees with organizational goals and strategies.

The healthcare sector, especially in the context of NABH-accredited hospitals, is increasingly recognizing the importance of internal marketing as a vital tool for enhancing service quality and achieving organizational excellence. In hospitals, which is the most important Service industry, there is no direct chance to control and improve the quality of labs, departments, and equipment. It's the only way to maintain the

quality of those by motivating, educating, training and developing the employees who serve for the organization. Quality indicates not only the things (lab, equipment condition, pharmacy, laundry, canteen) but also the healthcare and non-healthcare staffs such as doctors, nurses, paramedical, administrators, housekeeping. It is a continuous and important process to maintain the standards of the hospital for getting better and effective patient care and highly patient satisfaction. The effectiveness of service delivery plays a crucial role in influencing both customer expectations and their level of satisfaction.

Furthermore, internal marketing plays a significant role in addressing core NABH focus areas such as patient safety, infection control, and continuous quality improvement. It encourages a feedback-driven culture where the quality of services is regularly evaluated through patient feedback, helping hospitals to sustain and elevate their standards.

Internal marketing focuses on treating employees as internal customers—aligning, educating, and motivating them to meet the institution's mission and objectives. When properly implemented, it not only boosts employee

satisfaction but also reflects positively on patient care and hospital performance. The impact of patient safety, infection control and quality maintain of the hospital services through the patient feedback are studied by internal marketing which NABH do focus.

## II. UNDERSTANDING INTERNAL MARKETING

Internal marketing is the strategic process of aligning an organization's workforce with its service and quality objectives. The tool that maximizes the revenue by increasing the patient visit and recruit and retain employees is internal marketing. It also enhances the quality and reduces the errors. Originally conceptualized in the 1970s to ensure consistent service quality, internal marketing works on the principle that "to have satisfied customers, the firm must first have satisfied employees." This involves applying marketing principles to internal functions such as job design, employee engagement, communication, and training.

### ➤ *Key Components of Internal Marketing Include:*

- Customer and market orientation
- Participative management approaches
- Alignment between human resource strategy and institutional goals
- Effective internal communication
- Professional development and reward systems

### ➤ *Dimensions of Internal Marketing:*

According to Internal marketing, in the same organization, every internal customer (staff) can be both a seller and a buyer of the service.

Internal marketing operates through several core dimensions:

- **Communicating Vision:** Ensuring that employees are well informed about the hospital's goals, values, and quality objectives.
- **Developing Personnel:** Offering continuous training, supervision, and resources to improve professional competence and job satisfaction.
- **Employee Motivation and Reward:** Creating systems that recognize employee contributions, thus fostering engagement and productivity.
- **Reducing Counterproductive Behaviour:** By increasing engagement, internal marketing reduces turnover intentions, absenteeism, and dissatisfaction.
- **Determination Impact:** The goal is to assess employee selection, training, motivation, empowerment, and internal communication, which contributes to enhancing the quality of healthcare services.

Through these dimensions, internal marketing becomes a mechanism not just for employee satisfaction, but also for enhancing patient experience and operational performance.

### ➤ *Relevance in NABH Accredited Hospitals:*

The National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) provides a structured framework emphasizing patient safety, service quality, and infection control. NABH Standards raise regulation to retain quality service. The implementation of NABH standards involves consistent employee training, development of policies, and promotion of patient-centred care—all of which align directly with internal marketing principles.

For the NABH implementation, which improvements are required through Internal marketing, those are:

- Staff communication skills
- Patient education
- Information on medication and discharge
- Responsiveness and empathy in care delivery
- Overall patient satisfaction in both OPD and IPD settings

These improvements underscore how internal marketing—through consistent staff development and internal communication—plays a critical role in translating accreditation standards into everyday hospital practice. Implementation of NABH Standards leads to a high quality of service. So, the level of satisfactory patients is the largest beneficiary of the implemented NABH Standards.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

As per the WHO (World Health Organization), service quality (NABH) is: "conformity to standards and the right direction in a safe and socially acceptable manner at an acceptable cost, resulting in significant impacts on morbidity, mortality, disability, and malnutrition" (Sultan 2012, p. 84)

Healthcare is inherently people-centric. Satisfied employees are more productive in serving the organization. Frontline staff, including doctors, nurses, and support personnel, are in direct and continuous contact with patients. When these employees feel valued, well-informed, and motivated, their behaviour reflects positively in patient interactions. Studies confirm that these types of healthcare workers are more compassionate, attentive, and effective—leading to better service quality and improved health outcomes. Their main aim is to satisfy the customers-patients.

The dimensions: communication, responsibility, development, empathy, and proximity empathy are chosen to provide a holistic and comprehensive approach, namely "health service quality". This includes effective and efficient healthcare services, operational performance towards the employees as well as patient satisfaction and institutional trust.

Internal marketing helps create a workplace culture where employees feel empowered and aligned with the hospital's mission. This directly impacts:

- Reduced turnover and absenteeism to give the patient care.

- Increase attraction of the organization for the customers-patients.
- Better teamwork and collaboration for touch the organization goal.
- Higher compliance with protocols to maintain the decorum.

- Superior patient-centred care.

These key elements give better patients experience in NABH Accredited hospitals.

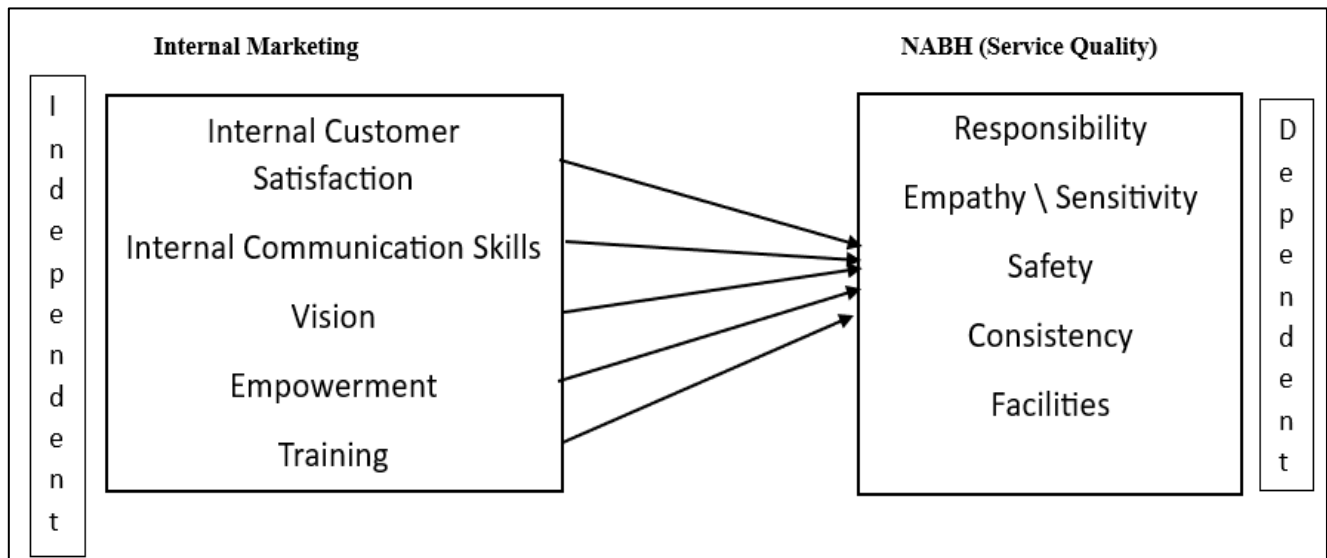


Fig 1 Cognitive Model of this Study

#### ➤ Strategic Implications:

In a NABH-accredited environment, internal marketing acts as a bridge between institutional policies and ground-level service delivery. It ensures that:

- Accreditation standards are internalized by staff.
- Employee development supports organizational goals.
- Internal communication aligns with quality improvement strategies.
- Patients ultimately benefit from a seamless, consistent, and high-quality experience.

Thus, internal marketing is not just a supportive function but a **strategic necessity** for any hospital striving for NABH accreditation and sustained quality improvement.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Internal marketing in NABH-accredited hospitals is more than just a human resource strategy—it is a critical enabler of healthcare quality. By recognizing employees as internal customers and investing in their development, communication, and motivation, hospitals can improve patient satisfaction, increase operational efficiency, and enhance overall institutional performance.

This study aimed to explore how employees view the internal service quality in healthcare services and to determine whether there is a connection between quality and job satisfaction.

Findings indicated that the implementation of NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers) standards, noticeable improvement in patient

experience, particularly in how staff interacted with patients and communicated. This suggests that structured guidelines and following clear rules and improving how staff talk and behave with patients can make hospital services much better.

In today's healthcare environment, where patient expectations are high and competition is increasing, internal marketing offers a practical and powerful approach to achieving service excellence and fulfilling the core objectives of NABH accreditation.

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