

Internal Marketing Perspective in Bangladeshi Organizations: Culture, Innovation and Customer Orientation

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***Abstract:** This research is an attempt to examine the influence of culture, innovativeness and performance of an organization in the customer oriented mindset of its employees. This study tried to outline key elements which have influence on customer orientation mindset among employees and based on the previous work of (Deshpande et al. 1993). A questionnaire was developed and administered to 130 respondents among which 100 responded within timeline. Multiple regression analysis was used as the statistical technique with the help of STATA 13 version software for data analysis. The study found that mentor leadership and market share are significant variables which has influence on customer orientation mindset in for-profit organizations. For non-profit organization, fast growth in the market is important to boost up the employee's customer orientation mindset.*

***Keywords:** Internal Marketing, Culture, For-profit, Non-profit, Mentor leadership, Market Share, Fast Growth.*

Introduction

In Harvard Business Review 'Selling the Brand Inside' (Mitchell 2002) argued that it is as important to market to employees as it is to customers. Internal marketing has been among the peak topics of marketing. Research has shown impact of culture on the organizational achievements. (Davis and Newstrom 2007) defines organizational culture as 'the set of assumptions, beliefs, values and norms that are shared by an organization's members'. (Heathfield 2016) says 'Culture is the work environment that you supply for your employees'. It is easily assumed that employees of an organization are directly in link with the customers/communities the organization serves. Previous research has shown that there is a direct correlation between employee loyalty and engagement and customer loyalty (Carter 2007). Culture, innovativeness and performance of an organization are supposed to influence the customer orientation mindset of the employees. (Davis and Newstrom 2007) state that

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cultures are distinctive, stable, implicit and symbolic. Different organizations possess different cultural practices. (Davis and Newstrom 2007) argued that any attempt to measure organizational culture can only be an imperfect assessment. However this study doesn't attempt to measure any organizations' culture rather wants to identify whether culture, innovativeness and performance of an organization have influence on the customer orientation. The paper also examines the difference of significant elements between for-profit and nonprofit organizations operating within Bangladesh, a developing economy in South Asian region.

Significance of the Study

The study is an addition to the existing knowledge. There has been little work on non-profit sectors. The study unleashes a true scenario of the customer orientation mindset within the organizations. Employees are the direct connections with customers/community an organization serves. Self-report to themselves should be taken as an important opinion. Culture practiced in an organization shapes the mindset of the employees and the motive of the organization as a whole. This study has identified that there are key cultural elements as well as innovativeness and performance determinants which need to be dealt with more cautiously in order to bring a more enhanced customer orientation throughout the organization. The results of this study can be more generalized as it has covered a vast range of for-profit and non-profit organizations.

Scope of the Study

The study covers previous literatures on the cultural influence, internal marketing concentration in modern marketing practices. The study has conducted employee survey on employees from almost 35-40 organizations from both non-profit and for-profit sectors operating in Bangladesh. These include many national and international organizations. The opinion of the respondents has been recorded and analyzed in this study. The study has also reviewed numerous national and international peer reviewed journals.

Literature Review

Kotler (2016) defined internal marketing as an element of holistic marketing. He elaborated the term as 'the task of hiring, training and motivating able employees who want to serve customers well'. Lusch et al. (1996) said that employees can be a source of patronage. Oluseye (2012) brought the matter in study that some scholars look at internal marketing from marketing perspective and some look at this from human resource perspective.

Arnett et.al (2007) argued that employees' attitudes and opinions about their colleagues and the work environment may make all the difference between worker's

merely doing a job and delivering exceptional guest service. Levin (2017) recommended that before practices embark on external advertising and marketing, focus should be on internal marketing. Culture is a key element in every organization which determinates the working environments and core values for the employees. Webster (1995) revealed strong relationship between marketing culture and marketing effectiveness. This study has a comparative outlook on both for-profit and non-profit organizations. Peppers and Rogers (2011) said that customers can be referred to the constituents of an organization, whether it is a business to business customers or end users customers, charitable contributor, a theme park guest and so on. In *Strategic Marketing for Non-profit organization* book Andreason and Kotler (2008) said 'In the private sector, the target audience is the customers.....Non-profits must cultivate a second target audience- those who will give the organization funding through donations or grants and contracts'. The book presented that non-profit organization has three groups of target audience – the ultimate group whose behavior the organization wants to change; volunteers who will execute the plan and move forward to make the 1st stated target audience act accordingly; and the donors – corporate officials; governments and other partners.

Caruana and Calleya (1998) examined the relationship between internal processes associated with delivering customer satisfaction focusing on the relationship between the nature and extent of internal marketing and its outcome in terms of the level of organizational commitment on the part of employees. The study found significant relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment.

Andreason and Kotler (2011) argued that the size and performance of the non-profit sector is not independent from the other two sectors of the economy – government and commercial sectors.

Bangladesh Education Sector Report Review 3 (2002) report portrayed that there are following NGO's working in Bangladesh – Save the Children, Plan International, BRAC, Proshika, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, FIVDB, CMES, UCEP, Karitas, Nijarshikki have their own primary education programs. Not mentioned in this report but the latest addition in this sector are Room to Read, Teach for Bangladesh etc.

It can be seen that non-profit organizations and for profit firms are incorporated under the legal rules. Though they are in different operations but in the labor market they look for same candidate. Emenule and Heggins (2000) examined whether non-profit organizations offer fringe benefits that reflect the values of the organization. In that study it was assumed that such organizations profess several sets of values. Based on a study on four countries' (UK, US, New Zealand and Australia) senior marketing executive Norburn et al. (1990) figured it out that cultural specificity is the primary moderator of top managerial attitudes but also emphasizes that the best predictor of

marketing effectiveness is similar in all four nations – the primacy of importance of people and with quality. Carter (2017) argued that companies have invested in customer loyalty through programs, incentives, customer service operations and more but not much attention has been placed on the segment. He argued that there is a direct correlations between customer retention and employee engagement and loyalty.

Customer orientation has been given little attention for the empirical study where as it has been given great attention from marketing scholars (Deshpande et al. 1993). Another study said that discussion of customer orientation has been within the context of implementing marketing concept (Kohli and Jawroski 1990). (Day and Wensely 1988) concluded in one study that effective marketing strategy requires a balanced mix of customer and competitor analysis. (Deshpande et al. 1993) defined customer orientation as the set of beliefs that puts the customers' interest first, while not excluding those of all other stakeholders such as owners, managers, and employees, in order to develop a long term profitable enterprise. In case of a non-profit organization we can say that the culture of an organization will make it sustainable in the long run.

It is usual that whether the firm is customer oriented or not can be known from the customers. But (Bolton and Drew 1991) presented something different in their study. The study argued that there is a need to look at the firm through the eyes of customers. By doing so the organization and its employees should have some self-reports on that aspect. Customer orientation is considered as an element of corporate culture (Narver and Slater 1990).

(Deshpande and Webster 1989) defined organizational culture as 'the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand or organizational functioning and thus provide them with the norms for behavior in the organization. The study of Huff and Kelley (2005), firms that compete in the global marketplace can have sustainable advantages through building capabilities in one or more of three processes – internal, external or spanning. The study presented that four levels of measures that reflect capabilities in this process- 1. Firm's internal trust; 2. Firm's trust for external partners; 3. Customer orientation and the propensity of trust of individuals from the firm. Adu and Singh (1998) conducted a study that examined the customer orientation – performance link in small and medium sized businesses and tested for the possible effects of innovation orientation, market dynamism and competitive intensity on the degree of customer orientation among firms. The result showed that there is a positive effect of customer orientation on SME performance. The study of Williams and Attaway (1996) reported that organization culture and customer orientation directly effect relationship development. The results from 492 buyer-seller combinations proves that there is a meditational effect of customer orientation between the selling firms salespeople.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this research is to learn, create and disseminate new knowledge about internal marketing and cultural influence on the employees' customer orientation mindset. Outlining the objectives may result in the following statements -

a) General Objective:

Identifying separately the influence of culture, innovativeness and performance on the customer orientation mindset of the employees from both for-profit and non-profit organizations and based on that presenting a comparative scenario.

b) Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the key variables influencing each sectors' employees' customer orientation mindset;
2. To examine the cultural practice in various organizations;
3. To provide some recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of culture and innovation on customer orientation mindset. The study is causal in nature as the purpose of causal research is done to understand which variables are cause and which variables are effect (Malhotra and Das 2010). As noted in the literature review organizations employee can self-report to their culture and customer orientation. Hence the broad research question of this paper is whether in any organization cultural elements influences customer oriented mindset. RQs are stated below:

RQ: Do culture, innovativeness and performance of an organization influence being customer oriented. Specific components/RQs are –

- a) In a non-profit organization, do culture, innovativeness and performance of the organization influence the customer orientation in?
- b) In a for-profit organization, do culture, innovativeness and performance of the organization influence the customer orientation in?
- c) What are the differences between these two sectors in terms of significant elements?

The dependent variable in this study Customer orientation in the employee mindset (Deshpande et al. 1993); independent variables are family orientation, dynamic and entrepreneurial, mentor leadership, innovation and risk taking, commitment, tasks and goal accomplishment, human resource, growth and acquisition of new resources, first mover in the market, market share, fast growth (Deshpande et al. 1993). The questionnaire had three sections -a) Demographic information; b) Cultural elements; c) Innovativeness and performance. There are all total 20 questions - 14 fixed alternative and 6 open ended. In section b and c all questions are generated with five point likert scale.

Hypotheses

These hypotheses are developed for two separate sectors *i.e.* for-profit and non-profit to see significant elements in each sector. There are ten hypotheses for each sector and denoted with H₁...H₁₀ and H₁₁...H₂₀ for non-profit and for-profit organizations respectively.

<i>Non-profit</i>	<i>For-profit</i>
H ₁ : Family orientation of the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₁ : Family orientation of the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₂ : Dynamic and entrepreneurial orientation of the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₂ : Dynamic and entrepreneurial orientation of the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₃ : Mentoring leadership style of the head/ team leader influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₃ : Mentoring leadership style of the head/ team leader influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₄ : Commitment to innovation and development in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₄ : Commitment to innovation and development in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₅ : Goal and data driven approach in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₅ : Goal and data driven approach in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₆ : Human resource emphasize in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₆ : Human resource emphasize in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₇ : Emphasize on growth and acquisition of new resources in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a non-profit organization.	H ₁₇ : Emphasize on growth and acquisition of new resources in the organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization.
H ₈ : First to bring a solution in the market influences employees' customer orientation mindset in non-profit organization.	H ₁₈ : First to bring a solution in the market influences employees' customer orientation mindset in for-profit organization.
H ₉ : Holding market share influences employees' customer orientation mindset in non-profit organization.	H ₁₉ : Holding market share influences employees' customer orientation mindset in for-profit organization.
H ₁₀ : Fast growth of organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in non-profit organization.	H ₂₀ : Fast growth of organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in for-profit organization.

Table: Hypothesis Development

Two sources of data have been used to conduct this research. These are- primary sources: employee survey; secondary sources: various books, articles, peer reviewed journal, annual reports of the organization, website and Google.

Malhotra and Das (2011) defined target population as “the collection of elements or objects that possess the information sought by the researcher and about which inferences are to be made. This study collected data from those respondents who fulfilled three basic requirements – 1) Age range (18-50); 2) Has to be an employee of a non-profit or for profit organization; 3) Must be working in that organization at least for one month. (Malhotra and Dash 2010) said ‘Determining the sample size is complex and it involves several qualitative and quantitative considerations.’ It is also said by them that average sample size of the relevant studies influence the sample size to be taken. There is very little research on the topic and particularly no research has been conducted in our country. Because of this, as a rule of thumb the sample size is 100. The sampling design is presented with the following table –

Sampling design

- *Population: The employees of the non-profit and for profit organizations in Bangladesh.*
- *Sampling technique: Convenience sampling method.*
- *Sampling Unit : Non-profit (15 organizations); For-profit (20 organizations)*
- *Sample Size: The sample size is 100* (Non-profit 50; For-profit-50)*

Table: Sampling Design

Single cross sectional design was used which means only one sample of respondents were drawn from the target population (Malhotra and Das 2010). E-mail survey (Malhotra and Dash 2010) was used to collect data from the respondents. This method is used due to convenience of having communication with the organization member. Questionnaire was administered among 130 respondents approximately. Among which 100 of them has responded within timeline. Data were collected from 9th to 19th of August, 2017. Multiple Regression analysis was used to analyze data. STATA 13 version of software was used to analyze the data. There have been two dataset for non-profit and for-profit organization and were analyzed separately.

Findings and Analysis

Findings are listed in the table below:

Non- Profit		For- Profit	
Model Fitness: F - Test: 4.33; $\alpha = .01$; $R^2 = .5146$; Adjusted $R^2 = .3901$		Model Fitness: F - Test: 5.43; $\alpha = .01$; $R^2 = .5821$; Adjusted $R^2 = .4701$	
H ₁	Failed to accept	H ₁₁	Failed to accept
H ₂	Failed to accept	H ₁₂	Failed to accept
H ₃	Failed to accept	H₁₃*	Accepted
H ₄	Failed to accept	H ₁₄	Failed to accept
H ₅	Failed to accept	H ₁₅	Failed to accept
H ₆	Failed to accept	H ₁₆	Failed to accept
H ₇	Failed to accept	H ₁₇	Failed to accept
H ₈	Failed to accept	H ₁₈	Failed to accept
H ₉	Failed to accept	H₁₉*	Accepted
H ₁₀ *	Accepted	H ₂₀	Failed to accept

Table: Findings

**Accepted hypothesis; results are attached in appendix.*

The study has identified that for this sample (in non-profit organizations) only 'fast growth' is a significant variable which influences customer orientation mindset. The critical t-value is 2.17 which is greater than the calculated t value 2.021. This study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that fast growth of organization influences employees' customer orientation mindset in non-profit organization. This is significant at $\alpha = .05$. The value of coefficient determines that if 1% change is happened in this variable, 28.5% variation will occur in customer orientation mindset. So the non-profit organizations better clearly communicate to their employees that the organization is growing faster relative to its competitors. This inspires the employees to become more customer oriented. But for the for-profit sector the study has identified two significant variables – mentor leadership and market share. For *mentor leadership*, the critical t-value is 2.90 which is greater than the calculated t-value 2.021. So this study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that mentoring leadership style of the head/ team leader

influences employees' customer orientation mindset in a for-profit organization. This is significant at $\alpha = .05$. The value of coefficient implies that 1% change in mentor leadership will bring 32% variation in the customer orientation mindset. For *market share*, the critical t-value is 2.06 which is less than the calculated t value 2.021. Therefore this study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis that holding market share influences employees' customer orientation mindset in non-profit organization. This is significant at $\alpha = .05$. The value of coefficient implies that 1% change in this variable will bring 25 % variation in the customer oriented mindset. For profit organizations should put more emphasize on mentor leadership. If the leader or head of the organization is considered as a mentor by the employees, it may result in a more customer oriented mindset of the employees. It has been also identified that the model is better fit for the for-profit organizations than non-profit organizations.

Recommendations

According to this study and its findings, following recommendations are provided for the non-profit and for-profit organization:

Non-profit organizations

1. As the finding shows, non-profit organization should focus more on the growth of the organization.
2. The community that is served by the organization should be more closely introduced with the employees;
3. A sense of possibility that 'Our organization is serving a large community and can serve even larger community if employees are devoted to the purpose' can bring and hold customer orientation mindset among the employees.

For-profit organizations

1. For-profit organizations should focus more on the mentor leadership and market share.
2. Head/ leader of the organization or team should be more cooperative and a mentor figure to its employees; to whom employees can present their problems. The person should also be responsible for bringing the group of customer close to the employee group so that the customers are well known by the employee.
3. If employees more closely know the customers, it will ultimately create a better opportunity for the company to create a more customized offerings for the customers which is supposed to maximize the profit for the company.

Conclusions

The study reveals a new consequence for both for-profit and non-profit sectors. In our country research is not a focus especially in non-profit organization and their functions has been always undermined for research purpose though much research has been conducted on for-profit organizations. There are certain limitations attributable to this study. The statistical significance is not properly obtained. There have been time and budgetary constraints. This study has covered few samples which do not properly represent the entire target population. Also as a sampling method, convenience technique has been used. That is not a probability sampling technique and ultimately lowers the chances of having the right sample as the respondents. The result is not reliable fully to be applied by any single organization. More variables could be included in the model and unnecessary variables should have been omitted in order to a better adjusted r-squared value. If the research has been followed by some qualitative research to unleash the significant variables' impact, it will be more helpful for the organization. Also there can be some sampling errors due to which proper scenario of the problem has not been obtained. If it is done for any particular organization, more reliable result could have been obtained for that particular organization. Non-profit organizations stand for certain purposes which are usually some social causes. If any organization is about to bring a solution to any organization, it first needs to create the mindset among employees that this organization stands for this particular reason. Customer oriented mindset is deeply influenced by the culture of the organization as proved in previous studies as well as in this study. Further research should be conducted in future to cover this issue.

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Appendix

A. Results:

A1: Regression analysis of Non-profit organizations

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs =	50
Model	19.2359098	10	1.92359098	F(10, 39) =	4.13
Residual	18.1440902	39	.465233082	Prob > F =	0.0006
				R-squared =	0.5146
				Adj R-squared =	0.3901
Total	37.38	49	.762857143	Root MSE =	.68208

Ibelieveourorganizationexist	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
Myorganizationisaveryperson	-.0384478	.1420574	-0.27	0.788	-.325786 .2488905
Myorganizationisaverydynami	-.0964766	.1483653	-0.65	0.519	-.3965737 .2036205
Theheadleaderofmyteamorgan	.0630739	.0990445	0.64	0.528	-.1372625 .2634103
Thegluethatholdsmymorganizat	.2404993	.1786279	1.35	0.186	-.1208098 .6018083
Westicktogetheraswebelieve	.2681769	.1525451	1.76	0.087	-.0403747 .5767286
Myorganizationemphasizesonhu	-.0250624	.1565894	-0.16	0.874	-.3417943 .2916695
Myorganizationemphasizesgrowt	.0809992	.1611912	0.50	0.618	-.2450408 .4070393
Wearefirstinthemarketcommu	-.0066797	.1176957	-0.06	0.955	-.2447418 .2313823
RelativetoourNGOsbusinesss	-.1029359	.0825857	-1.25	0.220	-.2699813 .0641094
Relativetoourbusinessslarge	.2853011	.1316272	2.17	0.036	.0190599 .5515423
_cons	1.475317	.6134919	2.40	0.021	.2344126 2.716221

A2: Regression analysis of For-profit organizations

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs =	50
Model	42.7925271	10	4.27925271	F(10, 39) =	5.43
Residual	30.7274729	39	.787883919	Prob > F =	0.0001
				R-squared =	0.5821
				Adj R-squared =	0.4749
Total	73.52	49	1.50040816	Root MSE =	.88763

Ibelieveourorganizationexist	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
Myorganizationisaveryperson	-.0771447	.1406082	-0.55	0.586	-.3615516 .2072622
Myorganizationisaverydynami	-.0334699	.1472044	-0.23	0.821	-.3312189 .264279
Theheadleaderofmyteamorgan	.3275338	.1131266	2.90	0.006	.0987137 .556354
Thegluethatholdsmymorganizat	.0882118	.184065	0.48	0.634	-.2840949 .4605184
Westicktogetheraswebelieve	.061927	.2011334	0.31	0.760	-.3449037 .4687576
Myorganizationemphasizesonhu	.1354488	.232538	0.58	0.564	-.3349036 .6058013
Myorganizationemphasizesgrowt	.2204986	.2517289	0.88	0.386	-.2886711 .7296683
Wearefirstinthemarketcommu	.1086307	.1278495	0.85	0.401	-.1499693 .3672307
RelativetoourNGOsbusinesss	.2569902	.1246259	2.06	0.046	.0049105 .5090699
Relativetoourbusinessslarge	.2572004	.1491468	1.72	0.093	-.0444775 .5588783
_cons	-1.249477	.7556082	-1.65	0.106	-2.777839 .2788845

B. Items:

1. “My organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.”
2. “My organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial space. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.”
3. “The head/leader of my team/organization is generally considered to be a mentor by me.”
4. “The glue that holds my organization together is commitment to innovation and development.”
5. “We stick together as we believe and emphasize on being goal and data driven.”
6. “My organization emphasizes on human resources (employees and their skills). We feel that solidarity and morale are important in the enterprise.”
7. “My organization emphasizes growth and acquiring new resources (skills and knowledge from diverse sector and community). We feel that readiness to meet new challenges is important.”
8. “I believe our organization exists to serve our customers/buyers/ target audience(underserved children, disengaged/dissociated youth, low income school community.)”
9. “We are first in the market/community with new products/ ideas (solutions to crisis)/services.”
10. “Relative to our NGOs (business’s) largest competitor (for-profit or not for-profit entity leading the respective sectors) we are smaller in size (i.e serving a smaller community/market; holding the minimum market/community share).”
11. “Relative to our business's largest competitor (for-profit or non-profit entity leading the respective sectors), we are growing faster.”