Identifying Internal Marketing Components and Determining Its Impact on Employee Commitment with the Mediating Role of Service Quality and the Moderating Role of Employee Cultural Alignment

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Abstract: In today's highly competitive airline market, maintaining long-term relationships with customers has become a key factor for business success. Improving and expanding internal marketing as a marketing approach fosters an organizational culture that is the most effective form of creating organizational commitment and is influenced by the quality of service delivery to customers. Accordingly, the main objective of this study was to propose a localized internal marketing model for Baghdad International Airport in Iraq and examine the effect of this variable on employee commitment in this organization. Therefore, the present study is developmental and was conducted using an exploratory-analytical approach. In the qualitative phase, the study employed the Delphi strategy, while in the quantitative phase, it used a survey strategy. The qualitative phase utilized a systematic literature review, and field data in the quantitative phase were collected through questionnaires. The study population in the first phase consisted of aviation industry experts in Iraq, while in the second phase, the population included employees of Baghdad International Airport. Analyzing the opinions of a 16-member expert panel in the qualitative phase led to the identification of five components of internal marketing: soft development, welfare system, comprehensive support, top-down communication, and bottom-up communication. In addition to the validation of this conceptual construct through survey data from a sample of 281 individuals, structural equation modeling demonstrated the significant direct impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment. Furthermore, internal marketing also had a significant effect on organizational commitment through the improvement of service quality. Moreover, the results of hierarchical regression analysis revealed that cultural alignment significantly moderates the effect of service quality on organizational commitment.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Internal Marketing, Organizational Commitment, Service Quality, Employee Cultural Alignment

1. Introduction

The aviation industry, as one of the most critical sectors of transportation, plays a significant role in various aspects of society. Examining the factors influencing loyalty and service quality in airports is of great importance. Human resources in service organizations are considered one of the most valuable assets of these organizations.

Employees are regarded as the most critical competitive advantage and a vital source in the service economy [1]. Competent and service-oriented employees are among the critical factors in such organizations, significantly affecting service quality [2]. Service-oriented organizations that pay greater attention to their employees are generally more customer-centric, achieve higher satisfaction rates, and exhibit stronger organizational commitment [3]. Employees represent the frontline between organizations and society, and internal marketing improves the performance of airports across various marketing aspects, including customer orientation, cultural, economic, and social domains.

Transportation systems play an undeniable role in economic, trade, cultural, tourism, and social development by reducing costs, travel time, transportation speed, service levels, safety, and more. Transportation's significance is evident in these areas, as inadequate transportation access can negatively impact them, reduce the quality and standard of living in society, and limit interactions among workers in transportation-related organizations [4].

Internal marketing and marketing science, in general, aim to attract and retain customers. In today's highly competitive airline market, maintaining long-term relationships with customers has become a key factor for business success [5, 6]. Enhancing and expanding internal marketing as a marketing approach fosters a culture that promotes behaviors leading to superior service provision. Internal marketing is a comprehensive managerial process that ensures all employees at all organizational levels understand and experience various processes in a unified environment while being motivated and prepared to deliver appropriate services [7-9].

The factors influencing internal marketing depend on the culture, organization, and society where employees operate. Therefore, examining internal marketing dimensions in Iraqi airports holds significant importance, and this study investigates these dimensions.

Internal marketing influences various organizational factors. Awan et al. (2015) stated that internal marketing affects citizenship behavior and satisfaction [10]. Abazari et al. (2011) noted its impact on market orientation, which leads to customer loyalty. Dehghani and Mohammadi (2022) emphasized its influence on customer-oriented behavior [11]. Similarly, Jalal (2022) highlighted the mediating role of service quality in the relationship between internal marketing and customer satisfaction. Another variable impacted by internal marketing is organizational commitment [12]. Khayyat and Ghanbari (2018) concluded that internal marketing positively affects organizational commitment and reduces turnover intention [13]. Akhoundzadeh and Sheikholeslami (2021) found that internal marketing has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment [14]. Numerous other studies have explored the positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment, identifying three key types of commitment: affective, normative, and continuance [9, 15-21]. In the aviation industry, employee commitment and retention significantly impact service quality. Employee commitment challenges in Baghdad Airport often lead to low organizational commitment and turnover, adversely affecting service quality.

Internal marketing can also impact service quality, a crucial aspect of the aviation industry. Evaluating and improving service quality in airports is essential for customer retention and global market competition [22]. Previous research indicates that poor service quality in airports, such as inadequate employee performance or subpar airport services, results in customer dissatisfaction and negative publicity [23]. Service quality encompasses operational, technological, and spatial aspects, all of which must be adequately addressed (Aroumal et al., 2020). Internal marketing motivates employees to improve their performance, addressing customer dissatisfaction.

This study seeks to identify the dimensions of internal marketing in Baghdad Airport and its impact on organizational commitment, focusing on the mediating role of service quality and the moderating role of cultural alignment.

Baghdad Airport is an international hub where employees interact with diverse individuals from Iraq and abroad. Employees must understand cultural sensitivities and encode their communication effectively, using appropriate words, images, and gestures to satisfy customers. Despite its significance, the researcher found that Baghdad Airport lacks a coherent internal marketing program, resulting in challenges in employee commitment. Low organizational commitment leads to customer dissatisfaction and poor service quality. Establishing a robust internal marketing program can enhance employee commitment and service quality. This study aims to identify internal marketing components in Baghdad Airport and assess their impact on organizational commitment, with service quality as a mediator and cultural alignment as a moderator.

2. Methodology

The present study is categorized as developmental research in terms of its orientation, with a pragmatist paradigm. This approach seeks to both understand how individuals interpret and assign meaning to phenomena around them (qualitative research) and examine the impact of those meanings in practice (quantitative research). The qualitative analysis strategy in this study involves systematic literature review and the Delphi panel method, utilizing identified experts. The quantitative analysis strategy employs a survey method, and the quantitative data were analyzed using structural equation modeling and hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

The study population for the qualitative phase consisted of experts in Iraq's airport industry with direct experience in internal marketing concepts, who met the following three criteria: 1) holding a doctoral degree in transportation or related fields, 2) possessing at least 10 years of senior management experience, and 3) having specialized knowledge of human resource management concepts. The qualitative sample size was determined to be 16 individuals based on the judgmental sampling method and the principle of theoretical saturation.

In the quantitative phase, the study population included 1,900 employees of Baghdad International Airport, from which a random sample was selected. The sample size was determined to be 280 individuals based on the final number of questionnaire indicators (56) and using the formula for estimating sample size in structural equation modeling ($5Q < n < 15Q$).

Qualitative data were collected through a systematic literature review, aligned with the Delphi process and the prerequisites of the survey method. In other words, the qualitative phase utilized library research of academic sources. In the quantitative phase, data were collected using a questionnaire, which included both standard and researcher-developed instruments.

The qualitative phase of this study developed a 28-item tool to measure internal marketing. Service quality was assessed using a 7-item questionnaire by Arasli et al. (2005). Cultural alignment was measured using a 9-item questionnaire by Rangarajan et al. (2004), and organizational commitment was evaluated using a 12-item questionnaire by Meyer and Allen (1991).

The study ensured the credibility of the qualitative content analysis at the final stage of the systematic review by evaluating and validating the extracted indicators for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The validity of the quantitative data was confirmed by examining construct validity, and its reliability was verified through standard measures.

3. Findings and Results

The first requirement for conducting a systematic review was selecting relevant keywords. These keywords had to comprehensively cover all existing studies on the topic while also enabling the elimination of irrelevant studies during the filtering process. For this purpose, a combination of individual and compound keywords such as "internal branding," "internal communication," "internal marketing," and "employee communication" were used to extract related studies from the literature.

To summarize the extracted studies, two key criteria were prioritized: (1) the credibility of the research (based on the journal's reputation and the number of citations it received) and (2) the research context (emphasizing service organizations). Based on these criteria, 351 studies were initially identified. Studies that either lacked sufficient credibility or had a research context significantly different from the current study were excluded. The final sample consisted of 159 studies.

Additionally, 30 indicators were identified and ranked from highest to lowest frequency (Table 1). These indicators were deemed relevant to the specific context of Iraq's service organizations and were presented to the Delphi panel for further evaluation. Indicators with a frequency of one were excluded due to their lack of repetition in the literature. The remaining indicators were further analyzed using the Delphi process to construct components and conceptualize "internal marketing."

Table 1. Results of Systematic Literature Review

No.	Extracted Indicator	Frequency
1	Designing performance evaluation and team-oriented reward systems	20
2	Providing career advancement opportunities for employees	19
3	Continuous investment in employees' knowledge and skill development	18
4	Providing attractive physical conditions (office, tools, equipment)	17
5	Maintaining appropriate workload and supporting employees	17
6	Providing credible and achievable visions to employees	16
7	Providing sufficient feedback from supervisors on employees' performance	15
8	Implementing an internal communication program for all employees	14
9	Fulfilling basic needs (salary, insurance, job benefits) for employees	14
10	Involving employees in decision-making processes	13
11	Ensuring job security for employees	13
12	Talking to employees to identify their problems	11
13	Emphasizing organizational communication with employees	10
14	Continuously soliciting suggestions from employees	10
15	Collecting data related to employee complaints	10
16	Increasing organizational flexibility to meet employees' diverse needs	9
17	Conducting periodic employee surveys to evaluate job quality	9
18	Treating all employees fairly and equally	8
19	Supervisors effectively sharing information with employees	8
20	Focusing organizational efforts on employee development	7
21	Collecting employee feedback across organizational units	7
22	Properly training employees for service-related tasks	7
23	Supporting employees in improving communication skills aligned with organizational goals	6
24	Explaining the "why" of tasks, not just the "how," to employees	5
25	Clearly stating supervisor expectations from employees	5
26	Highlighting the importance of employees' service roles	5
27	Creating open and transparent communication channels for employees	4
28	Enhancing employee capabilities alongside training	3
29	Using employee data to improve job and organizational well-being	3
30	Ensuring easy access to managers for employees	3

The Delphi method was used to finalize and validate the localized internal marketing components for Iraq's service sector and determine the importance of each component. The Delphi process was completed in three rounds, summarized as follows:

First Round:

The objective was to identify meaningful indicators and extract expert suggestions. Indicators deemed irrelevant to the study were excluded. Two indicators, "emphasis on organizational communication with employees" and "fair and equal treatment of employees," were removed due to having agreement ratios below 0.50 (0.37 and 0.43, respectively). No new indicators were proposed, leaving 28 indicators for further analysis.

Second Round:

Experts were asked to rate the importance of each indicator using a 5-point Likert scale. Kendall's W statistic was used to assess the consistency of responses, yielding a value of 0.45 with a significance level of 0.000 (Table 2). This confirmed the validity of the extracted indicators for internal marketing.

Table 2. Kendall's W in the Second Round of Delphi

Participants	Kendall's W	Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	Sig.
16	0.447	193.167	27	0.000

Third Round:

The confirmed indicators underwent content analysis and were categorized into five main components: "Soft Development," "Welfare System," "Comprehensive Support," "Top-down Communication," and "Bottom-up Communication." These components were named based on the core themes of the indicators.

Each component contained between 5 and 7 indicators (Table 3). A single-sample sign test with a critical value of 3 confirmed expert agreement on the naming and categorization of indicators. All indicators had a significance level of 0.000, confirming their validity. The finalized results were used to design a researcher-developed questionnaire for assessing "internal marketing."

Table 3. Validation of Internal Marketing Components in the Third Round of Delphi

Component	Indicator	Count
Soft Development	Continuous investment in knowledge and skill development	6
	Focus on employee development	
	Proper training for service tasks	
	Teaching the "why" of tasks, not just the "how"	
	Enhancing employee capabilities alongside training	
	Highlighting the importance of service roles	
Welfare System	Providing attractive physical conditions	5
	Fulfilling basic needs (salary, insurance, benefits)	
	Ensuring job security	
	Offering career advancement opportunities	
	Using employee data to improve job and organizational well-being	
Comprehensive Support	Maintaining appropriate workload and support	5
	Increasing organizational flexibility for diverse needs	
	Supporting employees to improve communication skills	
	Easy access to management	

Top-down Communication	Designing performance evaluation systems	5
	Providing credible and achievable visions	
	Effective supervisor communication	
	Clear expression of supervisor expectations	
	Providing sufficient feedback to employees	
Bottom-up Communication	Implementing an internal communication program	7
	Involving employees in decision-making	
	Identifying employee problems through dialogue	
	Continuously soliciting employee suggestions	
	Collecting employee complaints data	
	Conducting periodic employee surveys	
	Gathering feedback across organizational units	
	Creating open and transparent communication channels	

The finalized components and indicators will form the foundation for developing and validating the "internal marketing" construct in the context of Iraq's service sector.

Data collected from 281 respondents showed that the majority, 191 individuals (68%), were male. Most respondents, 77 individuals (27.4%), were aged between 31 and 40 years. Additionally, 87 respondents, representing the majority (approximately 31%), had 16 to 20 years of work experience.

Before evaluating the structural model, it was necessary to assess the significance of the factor loadings of the questionnaire indicators in predicting the corresponding items (Table 4). As shown in the table, the factor loadings of all indicators in the estimated models exceeded 0.50, indicating adequate loading values. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs or factors were greater than 0.50, demonstrating an acceptable level of correlation between the indicators and their respective constructs. This confirms the convergent validity of the collected data for the indicators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The criterion for the significance of the indicators was that their t-values exceeded 1.96. All indicators had t-values greater than this threshold, meaning none were excluded from the analysis. The reliability coefficients for the variables, as assessed after validity checks, are also reported in the table. Since Cronbach's alpha values for all variables exceeded 0.80, the data demonstrate ideal reliability, confirming their trustworthiness. Overall, the precision and accuracy of the survey data were validated, forming the basis for modeling and hypothesis testing.

Table 4. Validation of Survey Data

Indicator	Variable	Component	Factor Loading	t-value	AVE	Alpha	Fit Indices
i1	Internal Marketing	Soft Development	0.889	-	0.842	0.938	CMIN = 817.363, DF = 340, CMIN/DF = 2.404, CFI = 0.935, PGFI = 0.703, RMR = 0.043, RMSEA = 0.071
i2			0.916	24.25			
i3			0.943	26.20			
i4			0.928	25.04			
i5			0.918	24.40			
i6			0.914	24.07			
i7		Welfare System	0.816	-	0.619		
i8			0.738	13.52			
i9			0.799	15.04			
i10			0.742	13.63			
i11			0.835	15.97			
i12		Comprehensive Support	0.859	-	0.783		
i13			0.887	20.36			

i14			0.925	22.13		
i15			0.875	19.83		
i16			0.879	20.02		
i17		Top-down Communication	0.815	-	0.699	
i18			0.865	17.24		
i19			0.883	17.78		
i20			0.849	16.79		
i21			0.764	14.45		
i22		Bottom-up Communication	0.806	-	0.542	
i23			0.777	14.61		
i24			0.719	13.20		
i25			0.768	14.40		
i26			0.820	15.76		
i27			0.722	13.27		
i28			0.876	17.30		
i29	Service Quality	-	0.859	-	0.960	CMIN = 52.142, DF = 14, CMIN/DF = 3.724, CFI = 0.982, PGFI = 0.773, RMR = 0.017, RMSEA = 0.099
i30			0.835	18.38		
i31			0.864	19.58		
i32			0.881	20.35		
i33			0.904	21.44		
i34			0.908	21.61		
i35			0.909	21.66		
i36	Cultural Alignment	Employee Relations	0.762	-	0.645	0.882	CMIN = 81.101, DF = 24, CMIN/DF = 3.379, CFI = 0.955, PGFI = 0.701, RMR = 0.051, RMSEA = 0.092
i37			0.876	14.03		
i38			0.767	12.65		
i39		Organizational Climate	0.669	-	0.515	
i40			0.701	9.25		
i41			0.780	9.71		
i42		Empowerment	0.869	-	0.685	
i43			0.845	16.65		
i44			0.766	14.66		
i45	Organizational Commitment	Affective Commitment	0.799	-	0.665	0.913	CMIN = 117.441, DF = 51, CMIN/DF = 2.303, CFI = 0.932, PGFI = 0.610, RMR = 0.038, RMSEA = 0.068
i46			0.828	15.13		
i47			0.860	15.81		
i48			0.733	12.99		
i49		Continuance Commitment	0.746	-	0.677	
i50			0.822	13.79		
i51			0.868	14.58		
i52			0.851	14.30		
i53		Normative Commitment	0.691	-	0.520	
i54			0.808	11.39		
i55			0.671	9.83		
i56			0.707	10.28		

After confirming the validity and reliability of the data, the structural models were estimated to test the hypotheses. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to evaluate direct and mediating hypotheses

(Figure 1). The models were assessed for goodness-of-fit using fit indices. Acceptable fit indices validated the structural models, allowing examination of the relationships within them.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the moderating hypothesis. The estimation and evaluation steps for the three models, along with hypothesis testing results, are detailed below.

Table 5. Model Fit Results

Fit Index	Acceptable Value	Main Model	Mediation Model
Degrees of Freedom (DF)	-	15	87
Chi-Square (χ^2)	$2df \leq \chi^2 \leq 3df$	44.537	234.999
Normalized Chi-Square (χ^2/df)	< 5	2.969	2.701
Parsimonious Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)	> 0.50	0.516	0.655
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.80	0.963	0.951
Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	< 0.10	0.046	0.073
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.10	0.084	0.078

Values for χ^2/df below 5 are considered acceptable, while values below 3 are deemed satisfactory. The χ^2/df values for the research models were 2.96 and 2.70, respectively. A PGFI value above 0.50 indicates a good model fit; the PGFI values for the models were 0.516 and 0.655. Similarly, CFI values above 0.80 are acceptable, with the models achieving 0.963 and 0.951, respectively. Acceptable models should have RMSEA and RMR values below 0.10, and the models achieved RMR values of 0.046 and 0.073 and RMSEA values of 0.084 and 0.078.

Based on these results, hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested.

- **H1:** Internal marketing significantly influenced organizational commitment with a coefficient of 0.35 (t = 3.19). Since the t-value exceeded 1.96, this hypothesis was confirmed.
- **H2:** Internal marketing significantly impacted service quality with a coefficient of 0.43 (t = 3.76), confirming the related hypothesis.
- **H3:** Service quality significantly influenced organizational commitment with a coefficient of 0.49 (t = 6.81), confirming this hypothesis.

To test the mediation hypothesis, the bootstrap technique was employed. The indirect effect coefficient, obtained by multiplying the direct path coefficients (0.43 × 0.49), was calculated as 0.20. Given the t-value of 3.83, which exceeds the critical value of 1.96, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the 95% confidence level, confirming the mediation hypothesis. It is important to note that in the mediation model (Figure 1), the direct effect of internal marketing on organizational commitment becomes non-significant, indicating that service quality fully mediates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

To test the moderation hypothesis, a moderated regression analysis was conducted based on the nature of the variables. In this method, independent and moderator variables were first standardized and entered as predictors. In the second step, an interaction variable (the product of the independent variable and the moderator) was added. The standardized beta coefficient of the interaction variable indicates the strength of the moderating effect (Table 6). The significance of the change in the F-statistic confirms the presence of a moderating variable. The ANOVA table also shows that both the main and moderated regression models are significant, allowing for the evaluation of the moderation hypothesis.

As shown, the moderation coefficient for cultural alignment is 0.21. Since its significance level (0.000) is smaller than 0.05, the moderation hypothesis is confirmed. Overall, the conceptual model of the study was validated as initially hypothesized.
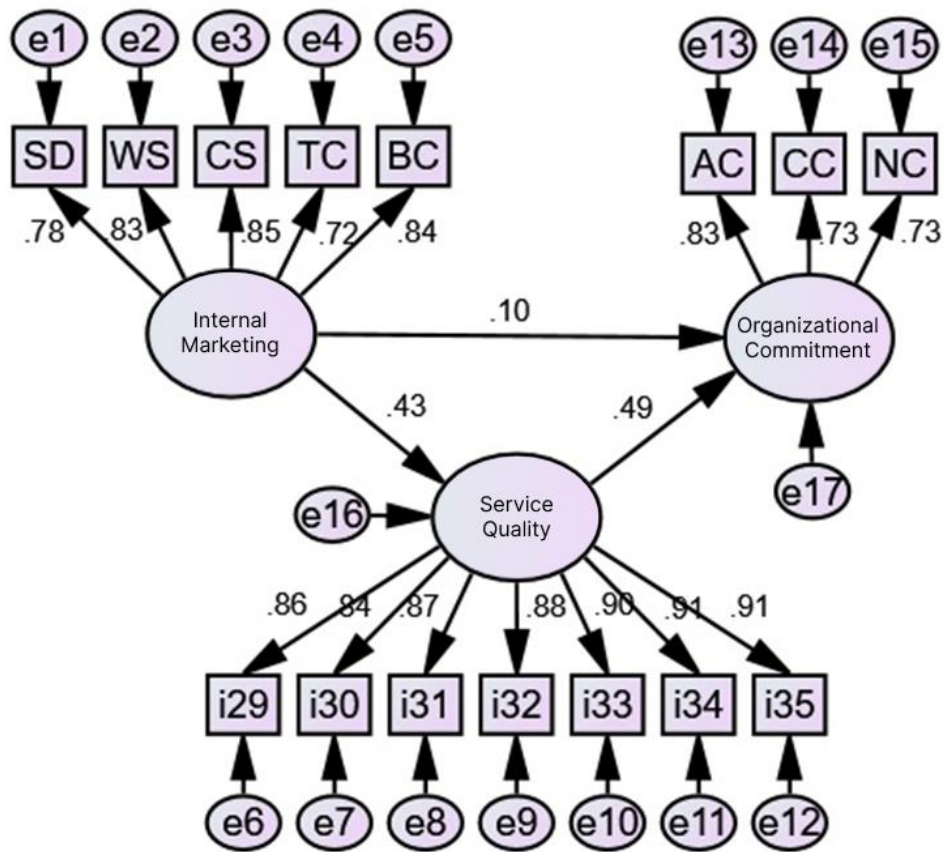
Figure 1. Final Model of the Study

Table 6. Results of the Moderation Analysis for Cultural Alignment

Step	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	β	sig	R²	R² Change	F Change	Sig. F Change	F	sig
1	Independent Variable	Commitment	0.352	0.000	0.304	0.304	60.616	0.000	60.616	0.000
	Moderator Variable		0.309	0.000						
2	Independent Variable	Commitment	0.391	0.000	0.344	0.040	16.819	0.000	48.316	0.000
	Moderator Variable		0.352	0.000						
	Independent Variable × Moderator		0.211	0.000						

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The qualitative phase of the study identified and validated five components of internal marketing: soft development, welfare system, comprehensive support, top-down communication, and bottom-up communication. The quantitative phase confirmed the direct, mediating, and moderating hypotheses. Therefore, the primary objective of the study—conceptualizing internal marketing within Iraq's aviation industry and examining its mechanisms of influence on organizational commitment—was achieved. However, comparisons with Persian studies are limited as most have not identified internal marketing dimensions and components but have instead focused on its outcomes.

A review of domestic studies reveals that most have used survey-based approaches. Few studies have taken an exploratory approach within a mixed-methods design to examine internal marketing components in specific

contexts. For example, studies [24, 25] used systematic review processes, but their research was limited to library-based approaches. Other studies, such as Banshi et al. (2019), examined internal marketing from a specific value system perspective, such as the Islamic viewpoint [26]. Additionally, studies like Zarrin Jouye Alvar et al. (2018) focused on internal marketing processes rather than identifying and validating localized components [27]. This gap extends to international studies, where similar research has primarily explored either factors influencing internal marketing [28] or its outcomes [29]. Thus, this study is novel in identifying internal marketing components for a service organization with culturally diverse customers.

Unlike domestic studies, which have neither explored internal marketing components within a mixed-methods framework nor examined its outcomes via structural modeling, a relatively similar international study by Suryati et al. (2022) identified three aspects of internal marketing—internal market participation, commitment, and research—and examined its impact on change management [30]. However, no mixed-methods study evaluating the impact of internal marketing on service quality and organizational commitment was found. This research addressed that gap by evaluating the direct and indirect effects of internal marketing on the organizational commitment of Baghdad Airport employees. Furthermore, variables such as employee service quality (or employees' perceptions of their ability to deliver high-quality services) and cultural alignment have rarely been studied. This study also addressed these gaps by explaining the mediating role of employee service quality and the moderating role of cultural alignment through an integrated theoretical framework combining relational marketing and social exchange theories. Unlike previous studies, which were predominantly based on single theories, this study integrated theories to identify localized internal marketing components and establish its direct, indirect, and moderated relationships with organizational commitment.

Based on the qualitative findings, managers are advised to implement internal marketing comprehensively, focusing on all its components—soft development, welfare system, comprehensive support, top-down communication, and bottom-up communication. This organizational orientation should simultaneously influence job skills, individual capabilities, operational processes, behavioral habits, and communication channels. Otherwise, genuine internal marketing will not occur. Furthermore, since "bottom-up communication" is conceptually broader and addresses a critical challenge in public sector organizations, managers should prioritize its indicators initially to foster employee trust in the system. Additionally, public and service sector managers in Iraq can use the localized internal marketing model for designing training programs, aligning human resource strategies with corporate strategies, and creating performance evaluation metrics for supervisors.

Quantitative findings indicated that internal marketing significantly impacts organizational commitment. Therefore, the identified components can be leveraged to enhance internal branding and improve employer brand perception, ultimately improving employees' attitudinal and perceptual organizational commitment. Managers should integrate internal marketing indicators into the design or redesign of other organizational systems, such as training, suggestions and complaints, workforce development, and performance evaluation. This approach will ensure that employee-focused activities permeate human resource processes, maximizing the impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment.

Given the confirmed indirect effect of internal marketing on organizational commitment, managers should link internal marketing activities—such as creating a favorable work environment, training and development, employee empowerment, and competitive compensation—to employee service quality. By improving internal marketing components, employees will deliver higher-quality services, which in turn will enhance their organizational commitment through a cycle of motivation and improved performance.

The moderating role of cultural alignment suggests that organizational units responsible for designing and implementing internal marketing indicators should closely collaborate with human resource departments to improve employee selection and placement. Employees interacting directly with customers should exhibit the highest cultural alignment with the majority of airport visitors. This alignment between culture and service enhances employees' capacity for organizational commitment. Additionally, organizations that are more flexible in adopting cultural values are better positioned to deliver superior services. Thus, selecting experienced human resource managers for recruitment and placement decisions can ensure cultural adaptability is integrated into human resource policies. This flexibility enables quick adaptation of employees, attitudes, and processes in low-alignment scenarios, improving employee-customer interactions, services, and organizational commitment.

In light of research limitations, several recommendations are provided for future studies. Since ranking the identified components of internal marketing was not an objective of this study, their specific impacts on organizational commitment were not assessed. Future researchers could conduct statistical tests to prioritize internal marketing components and clarify their roles within Iraq's service organizations. Additionally, future studies could evaluate the individual effects of these components on organizational commitment, helping Baghdad Airport managers prioritize actions and investments related to internal marketing.

Since this study examined cultural alignment as a moderating variable, it provided limited insights into its potential facilitating role. Future researchers could explore its concurrent mediating role based on organizational culture and capability theories to expand the proposed conceptual model.

Like any study, this research has limitations that may affect the generalizability of its findings and the scope of its recommendations. One major limitation is the specific research context. While efforts were made to address this by systematically reviewing the literature and consulting industry experts, the study's focus on Baghdad Airport may limit its applicability to other types of organizations. Another limitation is the reliance on questionnaires and self-reported data instead of objective measurements of individual and organizational variables. Additionally, the extensive number of indicators (28) used in the conceptual model may have influenced the quality of participant responses. Nevertheless, validation procedures applied in both the qualitative and quantitative phases ensured the reliability of the survey and field data.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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