

Examining the Impact of Internal Marketing on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract

Internal marketing tries to satisfy needs of employees by considering them as the organization's internal market. According to performed researches satisfaction of the organization's employees needs in the best manner through internal marketing activities could be led to forming and improving of employees' extra-role behaviors in addition to improvement of their in-role behaviors. Organizational citizenship behaviors are one of the extra-role behaviors of employees in the organization. Thus, the present survey examines the relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior and the impact of internal marketing dimensions on the amount of appearing of employees' citizenship behavior. Population of this research includes employees of Melli Bank in Isfahan city of Iran. After sampling of 220 persons, Questionnaire is used for data collection. Two-hundred fifteen (215) returned questionnaires have been analyzed. Structural equations technique and path analysis (regression model) have been used to test hypotheses by applying of Amos Graphic software. Results showed that all five hypotheses are accepted with 95% confidence.

Keywords: Internal marketing, Organizational citizenship behavior, Internal marketing MIX

1. Introduction

Today organizations act in a dynamic, ambiguous and changeable environment. In this regard, environmental dynamics and changes have persuaded organizations to improve their performance permanently in order to keep their competitive excellence. It is evident that one of the most principal cases that is considered in evaluation of performance of each organization could be in earnings resulted from maintaining of current customers and attracting of new ones. Certainly, the key to maintain and attract new customers towards improving of organizational performance in all organizations and especially in service organizations is quality of performance of human resources of the organization. We can claim that improvement of quality of human resources' performance of the organization depends on satisfying them as internal customers of the organization. In this regard, Internal marketing is a concept that should be considered by service organizations, since by considering employees as internal customers of the organization internal marketing is a significant activity in development of a customer oriented organization and its main purpose is extending of awareness from internal customers and removing of task obstacles in the direction of organizational effectiveness. According to viewpoint of Foreman and Money (1995) each organization could be regarded as a market inside itself by conceiving of an internal supply chain including suppliers and internal customers of the organization and through this tries to improve its total performance by satisfying of its internal customers' needs. Also, researches show that satisfaction of needs of the organization's employees through internal marketing in the best manner could be led to forming and improving of employees' extra-role behaviors in addition to improvement of their in-role behavior. According to Organ et al (1983) one of the extra-role behaviors of employees in the organization is organizational citizenship behavior that

is not among formal tasks of employees but affect the organization's performance. So the relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior will be examined in this survey.

1.1 Internal marketing

The fundamental Thought of internal marketing is based on the principle that offering of effective services necessitates having motivated employees who are aware of customers (Gronrous, 1981). While employees in service organizations have the major role in attracting of customers and keeping relationship with them, according to Cooper and Cronin(2000) we can consider internal marketing as the attempt of the organization for efficient management of its human resources to offer better services to customers (Cooper and Cronin, 2000). Indeed in the heart of internal marketing there is this concept that employees form internal market of the organization. Therefore we can say that the organization can satisfy its external customers by satisfying its internal customers (Gounaris, 2010). In other words, given that nowadays human capitals are the main source of creating of sustainable value for organizations providing of their needs as internal customers of the organization is the prerequisite for final success of the organization. In fact the major emphasis of internal marketing is on the issue that the human resources of the organization should be considered as the most valuable asset of that organization (Papasolomou, 2002). Based on the concept of services marketing Kotler have stated that internal marketing must precede external marketing (Kotler, 2000).

Ahmed and Rafiq (2000, 2003, 2004) argued that the five main elements of internal marketing are identified. These are:

- (1) Employee motivation and satisfaction;
- (2) Customer orientation and customer satisfaction;
- (3) Inter-function coordination and integration;
- (4) Marketing-like approach to the above;
- (5) Implementation of specific corporate and functional strategies.

Based on these, they define internal marketing as 'a planned effort using a marketing like approach to overcome organizational resistance to change and to align, motivate and inter-functionally coordinate and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies in order to deliver customer satisfaction through a process of creating motivated and customer-orientated employees'.

The major idea of internal marketing is to apply concept of external marketing in the organization's internal market. According to this, we can propose concept of internal marketing mix. The most obvious depiction of internal marketing mix was offered by Pierce and Morgan (1991) and developed by Ahmed and Rafiq (1993). Based on Pierce and Morgan's viewpoint using of the product, price, communications and internal distribution will be leaded to facilitation of organizational change process (Piercy and Morgan, 1991).

Ahmed and Rafiq (2000) have introduced price and payments, sale promotion (education, empowerment and communications), working place or environment and process (job products) as indices of internal marketing by applying of the expression "internal marketing mix". In another study about examining of service organizations in England they have used factors like training of the human resources, empowerment, communications, team activities, employees' participation in determining of the organization's perspective as the important factors in measuring of internal marketing (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003). Galpin (1997) has done a study in Malaysia about internal marketing and has used indices of organizational plans in the form of adhocracy, strategic rewards, internal communications, education and development, selection, reward systems, empowerment and processes for measurement and evaluation of internal marketing.

Therefore by applying of 4p's of marketing in internal marketing we can explain the elements of internal marketing mix as below:

1.1.1 Product

Products in internal marketing are jobs that are necessary for changing and influencing on employees' attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, it is not possible to determine the product just from the management viewpoint and position, to perform internal marketing successfully, rather needs and conditions of employees must be considered. Applied techniques in planning of jobs are used in the determination process of the product in internal marketing (Ahmed and Rafiq, 1995). Berry and Parasuraman (1991) also describe internal marketing as the process of "attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining qualified employees through job-products that satisfy their needs. Thus, from one viewpoint we can know product in internal marketing equivalent to job products.

1.1.2 Promotion

Operationalization of the promotion element in internal marketing and internal context of the organization could be followed through studying of the manner of applying of communicative mechanisms in order to enhance knowledge, skill and awareness of employees from issues related to their jobs. Hence, we can consider promotion equal to communications that could be regarded as an effective tool in increasing of employees' awareness from what should they do, when they do and how exactly do that. In fact this factor could demonstrate the role of employees in execution of the organization's strategy (Smirich, 1983 & Turner, 1986).

1.1.3 Price

Element of price in the internal context of organization could be considered as an equivalent of employees' received values from the organization instead of their payed costs. For example, by creating of change in programs of the organization it is possible that employees are forced to perform more difficult and different activities than before (cost or the paid price on behalf of employees). Now it should be observed that employees receive what value against the paid cost. Perhaps new tasks provide an opportunity for increasing of the salary or receiving of reward or provide the possibility of job promotion in the organization for the person (Ahmed and Rafiq, 1995).

1.1.4 Place

Element of place in the internal context of organization could indicate visible and tangible and invisible and intangible aspects of the work and working environment. In other words, this factor illustrates the environment in which transactions/exchanges among the parties i.e. the organization and its employees are occurred. Therefore, this element in internal marketing is equivalent to the job place and environment of the organization that includes cultural, symbolic and metaphorical aspects of the organization in addition to physical aspects of the working environment. In such environment employees learn loyalty and following from the organization (Smirich, 1983 & Turner, 1986).

1.2 Organizational citizenship behavior

The term organizational citizenship behavior was proposed for the first time by Organ & et al in 1983. Organ defined organizational citizenship behavior as behaviors that are not among organizational formal tasks but affect organizational performance (Organ, 1988). Organizational citizenship behaviors could be defined and conceptualized through various concepts but generally is related to the group of employees' behaviors that are not dictated by means of organizational policies and job descriptions of employees (Wang & et al, 2006). Indeed these kinds of extra-role behaviors are placed versus in-role behaviors of employees that are not directed through organizational formal reward system (Erturk, 2007). So, various researchers have stated different aspects for this unit concept (extra-role behavior).

Netemeyer (1997) has stated dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior in the form of four classes of sportsmanship, civic virtue, conscientiousness and altruism.

Organ (1988) and Podsakoff et al (1990) has mentioned conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, courtesy and altruism as dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior too. According to this:

1.2.1 Altruism

Altruism is a voluntary behavior that its main purpose is to help other individuals in the organization by paying attention to organizational tasks or relations (like voluntary help to new or less experienced employees and help to employees that were absent). In fact altruism is helping to colleagues in order to complete their works under abnormal organizational conditions (George and Rino, 2006).

1.2.2 Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship has been defined as the ability of the employee to adapt himself to difficulties of the working environment without objection or formal and verbal complaint (Kernodel, 2007). Under such conditions employees are able to tolerate difficulties of the working environment without complaint and objection by developing of sportsmanship (Namm, 2003). This aspect of organizational citizenship behavior is helpful especially for managers in that by showing of sportsmanship on behalf of subordinates they are no longer forced to allocate too much time to respond to subordinates' complaints (Rich, 1999), because viewpoint of employees is based on not complaining from the occurred difficulties and problems in the working environment of the organization (Bell and Menguk, 2002).

1.2.3 Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is a voluntary behavior to help the organization that employees go beyond the minimum intended necessities of their tasks (Castro, 2004). Organ has called this aspect of organizational citizenship behavior as organizational Compliance that includes cases such as severe following from organizational rules so that the individual acts to his duties in a desirable manner even in cases that no one supervises him (Namm, 2003). Organ (1988) believes that individuals with progressive organizational citizenship behavior continue their work at the worst conditions and even in the state of illness and inability which shows their high working Conscientiousness.

1.2.4 Civic virtue

Civic virtue is the tendency towards participation and Responsibility in organizational life and also creating of a suitable image from the organization (Organ, Podsakoff and McKenzi, 2006). Civic virtue includes behaviors such as taking part in extracurricular and additional activities when such presence is not necessary, supporting development and the represented changes by managers of the organization and intention to study books, magazines and increasing of public information (Organ, 1988).

1.2.5 Courtesy

Courtesy are voluntary behaviors that prevent problems resulted from working with others. This aspect states the manner of behavior of individuals with colleagues, supervisors and customers of the organization. Those individuals that behave with others courtly try to prevent tensions and working problems with others (Bell and Menguk, 2002).

1.3 Internal marketing and OCB

We have not found researches with the same topic with this work to present more Explanation about the relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior. But, given to the related performed researches, we have described this relationship. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) defined internal marketing as the process of "attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining qualified employees through job-products that satisfy their needs. This process could be leaded to forming and improving of employees' extra-role behaviors in addition to improvement of their in-role behaviors (Seyed Javadin et al 2010). Seyed Javadin et al (2010) have examined the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the relationship between internal marketing and quality of services in Tehran Gas Company. Results of research show the positive and significant impact of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior in the above company. Also Bansal et al (2001) have claimed that internal marketing can influences external marketing outcomes through OCBs. Souchon and Lings (2001) believe that the adoption of internal marketing practices has had an impact on citizenship behavior and employee retention. In this regard this work also examined the impact of internal marketing dimensions on OCB in addition to examining the impact of internal marketing on OCB.

Given to the research literature and since internal marketing has a significant impact on appearing of organizational citizenship behaviors according to performed researches, the recommended model of research will be in the form of the figure 1.

2. Research hypotheses

- a. Internal marketing influences organizational citizenship behavior.
- b. Job products influences organizational citizenship behavior.
- c. Employees' received values from the organization instead of their payed costs (price) influences organizational citizenship behavior.
- d. Job place and environment influences organizational citizenship behavior.
- e. Communications influences organizational citizenship behavior.

3. Research methodology

Structural equations model and path analysis (regression model) are used to analyze the collected data by means of Amos Graphic software.

3.1 Population and sample

Statistical population of this survey includes all employees of Melli Bank in Isfahan city of Iran. Two-hundred twenty (220) persons were selected as sample. Two-hundred fifteen (215) returned questionnaires were analyzed.

3.2 Measures

Ahmed and Rafiq's (1993) questionnaire has been used in this survey to measure internal marketing and OCBs were measured with the scales taken from Podsakoff et al. (1990). All scales employed in this study were measured on five -point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

4. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

4.1 Reliability of the questionnaire

In order to determine reliability of the questionnaire we used cronbach alpha coefficient method. Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated based on SPSS software which was equal to 0.85 for the whole questionnaire. Given that alpha coefficient higher than 0.70 is acceptable in human science researches, thus reliability of the questionnaire is evaluated to be good.

4.2 Validity of the questionnaire

Content validity of the questionnaire has been confirmed through specialists' viewpoint. Also, confirmatory factor analysis has been performed to determine validity of designed scales and measure latent variables by means of Amos Graphic software. Therefore, confirmatory factor models were fitted firstly so that results of suitability of model fit indices and significance of factor loads related to each question could be used to confirm validity of questionnaire. General fit indices of the measurement models and deleted questions because of insignificance of their factor loads are represented in table 1.

Some of the most important results obtained from the represented information in the table 1 are as below:

- a) Amount of P-value for all measurement models is higher than 0.05 that show acceptability of CMIN for measurement models. Also, amount of CMIN/ DF is in acceptable limit in all measurement models.
- b) The acceptable amount for goodness of fit index (GFI) is higher than 0.9 that as it is observed in table-1 this amount is acceptable for all measurement models.
- c) Absolute fit index of RMR that is based on the residual matrix analysis is lower than 0.05 for all models, this amount is acceptable too and again confirms appropriate fit of the model by collected data.
- d) Comparative fit index of CFI that illustrates the capability of the model in keeping aloof from an independence model and getting closer to saturated model is larger than 0.9 and acceptable for measurement models.
- e) Parsimony index of RMSEA for all measurement models is lower than 0.08 and shows suitability of measurement models. Index of PCLOSE has been higher than 0.05 in all measurement models which shows acceptability of RMSEA index for measurement models.

As a result, general indices of models demonstrate acceptability of measurement models' totality. In addition to general indices, significance of factor loads has been examined too given to the amount of the partial index **p-value** and the related **C.R.** Those questions that their significance didn't accept were omitted; their results are shown in table 1.

5. Data analysis and results

5.1 Model fit

Given that structural equations model has been used to test the first hypothesis of research, the research model must be fitted first before testing of this hypothesis. General indices of the model fit are showed in table 2.

General indices of the model fit show a desirable condition. One of the most important indices is **CMIN (χ^2)**. Totally, basis of calculation of **CMIN** is the difference existing among observed and reproduced co-variance matrices so that whatever the existing amounts in cells of these two matrices are closer to each other, amounts of the residual matrix arising from difference of these two matrices become closer to zero and this will be led to reduction of **CMIN**. Thus, amount of the model's **CMIN** shows the insignificant difference statistically among observed and reproduced co-variance matrices given that amount of **P** is higher than 0.05. Also amount of goodness of fit index (GFI) that is placed in the acceptable limit is higher than .9 and shows insignificant difference statistically between these two matrices. Root Mean Squared Residual index (RMR) is at an acceptable level which illustrates suitable fit of the model. Comparative indices of CFI and NFI are equal to 0.971 and 0.952 and since these indices are based on comparison of the default model with the independence model, results reveal the capability of the model in keeping aloof from an independence model and getting closer to saturated model. Index of root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is lower than 0.05 and acceptable. Also amount of

PCLOSE is 0.073 and higher than 0.05 which shows that amount of index of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is acceptable. Finally, we can conclude that data support the model well.

5.2 Hypotheses Test

5.2.1 Hypothesis 1

After examining of the model fit indices, research hypotheses are tested. Partial indices of **C.R.** and **p-value** are used to test hypotheses. In order to support the hypothesis based on the significance level 0.05 the **C.R.** should be more than 1.96 and **p-value** less than 0.05. Results are shown in the table 3.

Given that the related **C.R.** is higher than 1.96 we can conclude that the hypothesis 1 is supported with 0.95 confidence and p-value is less than 0.05 too. Figure 2 shows structural equations model related to testing of this hypothesis.

5.2.2 Testing of hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5

Path analysis model (regression model) was used for testing of hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5. Here model fit indices must be studied too, before examining of acceptance or rejection of hypotheses but because regression models are among the saturated models, determination coefficient (R^2) of the model is examined in such models instead of model fit indices. Determination coefficient (R^2) of the model is equal to 0.65 which shows that 69 percent of variation of organizational citizenship behavior is explained by the regression model. Now amount of the **C.R.** and **p-value** related to each hypothesis should be studied to examine acceptance or rejection of hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5. Results are shown in table 4.

Examining of the information in table 4 states that hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5 are supported with 95% confidence, because amount of the **C.R.** related to all four hypotheses is higher than 1.96 based on the significance level 0.05 and amount of **p-value** is less than 0.05. The figure 3 shows regression model of research.

Coefficients that are shown on the arrows connecting independent variables to the dependent variable of research, illustrate standard regression coefficients. According to standard regression coefficients we can compare impact level of independent variables on dependent variable. Thus, variable of job place and environment has the highest impact with impact coefficient of 0.42 and variable of communications has the lowest impact with impact coefficient of 0.10 on the dependent variable, i.e. organizational citizenship behavior. It means that one unit variation in the variable of job place and environment is led to 0.42 units of variation in organizational citizenship behavior variable and one unit variation in the communications variable is led to 0.10 units of variation in organizational citizenship behavior variable.

6. Conclusion

Principal concept of internal marketing is behaving with employees as internal customers of the organization and its purpose is to provide job conditions conforming to needs of employees. According to performed researches (based on Ting (2011)) this issue could be led to employees' job satisfaction. On the other hand according to research of Seyed Javadin & et al (2010) by receiving of suitable services from the organization, employees intend to make up for that services and try to give an appropriate response towards the received services by appearing of extra-role behaviors in addition to perform their in-role behaviors. Also, Bansal & et al (2001) argue that activities of internal marketing are led to appearing of organizational citizenship behaviors of internal customers of the organization and it could be effective in attracting of external customers' satisfaction from the organization. In fact affect of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior of employees could be considered rational based on performed researches. Accordingly the present research, examined the relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior through structural equations model. Based on obtained results and according to research literature and also studying of performed researches' record related to the subject, positive impact of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior has been confirmed as expected. Similarly, results obtained from exploring of the impact of each dimension of internal marketing on organizational citizenship behavior have been accepted with various degrees of affect, so that dimension of job place and environment have the highest impact and dimension of communications has the lowest impact on appearing of citizenship behaviors in the organization under study. According to results of this research organizations can increase organizational citizenship behavior among their employees through improving of internal marketing activities and enhance their performance by this.

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Table 1. General fit indices of the measurement models and deleted questions because of insignificance of their factor loads

	DF	CMIN	CMIN/DF	P	GFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA	PCLOSE	Related questions	Deleted questions
Altruism	2	2.755	1.377	.252	.994	.998	.031	.042	.422	31,35,36,43	---
Civic virtue	2	4.649	2.324	.098	.989	.911	.053	.079	.223	26,28,29,40	---
Courtesy	2	2.716	1.358	.257	.994	.984	.047	.041	.428	41,42,44,45	---
Sportsmanship	2	4.700	2.350	.095	.990	.995	.019	.079	.219	30,32,38,39	---
Conscientiousness	2	2.558	1.279	.278	.994	.999	.014	.036	.451	27,33,34,37	---
Price	9	21.105	2.345	.068	.973	.962	.035	.043	.271	1-7	3
Job products	5	8.308	1.662	.14	.985	.941	.051	.056	.37	8 - 15	12,13,14
Job place and environment	2	3.722	1.861	.101	.956	.962	.046	.048	.341	21-25	22
Communications	2	4.761	2.380	.093	.989	.940	.048	.080	.214	16-20	19
OCB	5	8.810	1.762	.089	.967	.946	.035	.046	.321		
IM	2	4.462	2.231	.123	.957	.965	.044	.037	.143		

Table 2. General indices fit of final structural equations model

index	DF	CMIN	CMIN/DF	P	GFI	CFI	NFI	RMR	RMSEA	PCLOSE
amount	24	46.313	1.929	.082	.957	.971	.952	.016	.046	.073

Table 3. Result of test of hypothesis 1

	Estimate	C.R.	P
OCB<---IM	.69	5.106	***

Table 4. Result of test of hypotheses 2,3,4,5

	C.R.	P
OCB<---COMMUNICATIONS	5.425	***
OCB<---PRICE	10.766	***
OCB<---PRODUCT	17.897	***
OCB<---PLACE	14.260	***

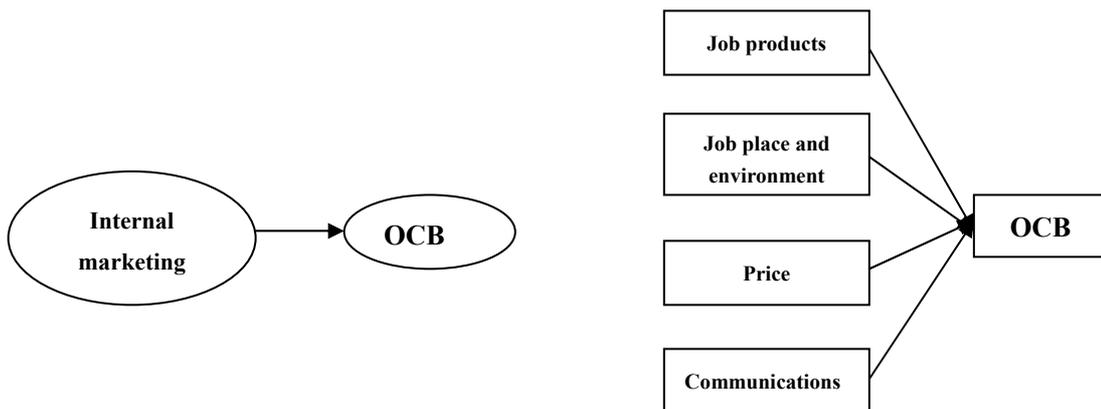


Figure 1. Conceptual model of research

Note: Price = employees' received values from the organization instead of their payed costs

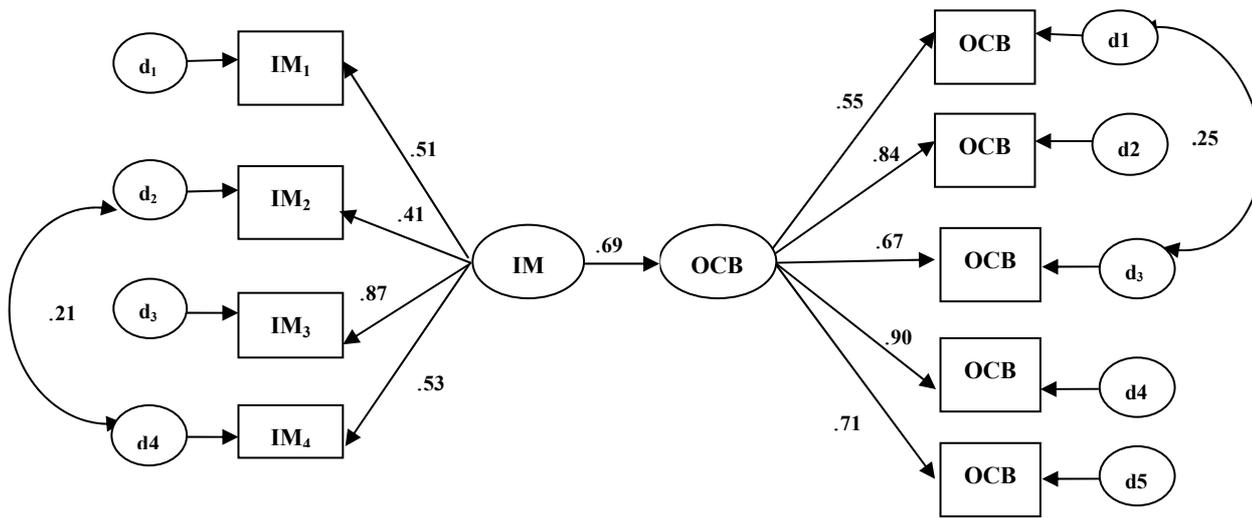


Figure 2. Final structural equations model

Note: OCB1=Altruism, OCB2=Conscientiousness, OCB3=Civic virtue, OCB4=Sportsmanship, OCB5=Courtesy, IM1=Job products, IM2=Job place and environment, IM3=Communications, IM4=Price, Price=employees' received values from the organization instead of their payed costs

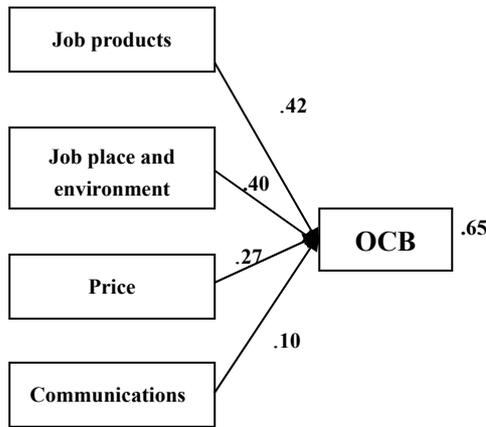


Figure 3. Result of regression model

Note: Price=employees' received values from the organization instead of their payed costs