

*Research Paper*

## **The importance of internal marketing in achieving job satisfaction and organizational success: A study applied to Portuguese Public Administration organizations**

*Submitted on 24<sup>th</sup> november 2024*

*Accepted on 17<sup>th</sup> january 2025*

*Evaluated by a double-blind review system*

**MIGUEL ÂNGELO DA SILVA NEVES<sup>1</sup>**  
**BRUNO MIGUEL BARBOSA DE SOUSA<sup>2</sup>**  
**JOANA GONÇALVES<sup>3</sup>**  
**CLÁUDIA MIRANDA VELOSO<sup>4</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** Understand a range of aspects that affect employee relations and how internal marketing can influence organisational success and, in turn, help an organisation develop in today's competitive labour market environment

**Methodology:** The methodology adopted is entirely qualitative, based on documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews and a focus group with questions about internal marketing.

**Results:** They show that internal marketing plays an essential role in the management of human capital, namely in achieving good results for both individuals and organisations, where there is a mutual relationship.

**Research limitations:** The study makes contributions to theory and practice. However, future studies should expand on the preliminary results. The sample should be extended to provide more consistency in the results.

**Practical implications:** This research has shown that internal marketing policies have an extremely positive effect on employees, and it is therefore hoped that this study will make it more evident that there is a growing need to invest in these practices and policies, or if they already exist, to review them.

**Originality:** It is important to note that this research could serve as a starting point for further research into these issues, which could be applied to the Portuguese public sector, given that there are currently practically no studies involving internal marketing and public administration.

---

<sup>1</sup> University of Vigo, Spain and Polytechnic University of Cávado and Ave (IPCA), Portugal. mneves@ipca.pt

<sup>2</sup> Polytechnic University of Cávado and Ave (IPCA), Portugal and UNIAG. bsousa@ipca.pt

<sup>3</sup> Polytechnic University of Cávado and Ave (IPCA), Portugal. jofilipagoncalves99@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> Universidade Aberta and ESTGA, Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal and GOVCOPP. cmv@ua.pt

**Keywords:** *Human Capital, Internal Marketing, Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Organizations*

## **1. Introduction**

Internal marketing is a fundamental issue for the organizational development of any company, ultimately contributing to the optimization of organizations' human resources. The aim of this research is to study a number of aspects that affect employee relations and how internal marketing can influence organizational success and, in turn, help an organization thrive in today's competitive labour market environment.

This study shows the views of those responsible for human resources management and employees on this subject, as well as the main internal marketing actions implemented in companies. The results seem to show that internal marketing plays an essential role in human capital management, namely in achieving good results for both individuals and organisations, where a mutual relationship is inferred.

## **2. Human Resources Management in the Portuguese Public Administration**

Within a framework of multiple organisational and regulatory specificities, the public administration has added difficulties when it comes to implementing and running an individual performance appraisal system that makes it possible to work on aspects related to motivation and job satisfaction. There is a lot of subjectivity inherent in the appraisal process. One of the major limitations identified in the implementation of internal marketing in the public administration is the fact that salaries are not calculated according to the volume of sales or actual production of goods or services, salaries are categorized and salary increases are a very complex and time-consuming process, and there are no large budget gaps to incentivize civil servants (Neves et al., 2024).

The human resources management paradigm has evolved immensely in recent decades. In recent years there have been some similarities between public management and business management (Fernandes et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2024). This is due to the adoption of the new public management, which has been justified by the fact that the demands on public administration organizations are greater. They are required to become

more efficient and effective and to do so they must optimize their resources. There was also the adoption of performance evaluation models, hiring through individual employment contracts, as well as outsourcing of some of its sectors, and some financial autonomy was given, with the state assuming the role of regulator of the functioning of its organizations (Rocha, 2020).

It is important to note that in the period leading up to the crisis, there was a clear abuse of poorly structured public-private partnerships, organizations resorted to high-risk financial instruments and public services were outsourced, which contributed decisively to the management approach becoming discredited and discredited (Schmidt et al., 2017).

In an attempt to respond to the negative effects of the economic crisis, the various states opted to centralize the management of their human resources in order to combat public spending, since the public services provided by the state were the main cause of much of this spending. Portugal also adopted these budgetary restriction measures, which had an impact on human resources management (Rocha, 2020).

Although the evaluation of individual performance is not a recent topic, it is important to mention that a model has not yet been found that is capable of gathering consensus among managers and academics. Researchers are still trying to create practices and instruments that reduce subjectivity and inappropriate evaluations. In the public sector, moreover, the nature of the work is that it should be orientated towards helping the citizen fairly and impartially, rather than merely creating profit, and is therefore more focused on methods than results. Furthermore, although some of the literature suggests that performance evaluation in the public sector contributes to increased performance and income, it seems that this relationship is not so simple. However, the growing over-emphasis on evaluation techniques and performance management can go against the spirit of the civil service (Thiel et. al., 2002; Kühne & Leonardi, 2020).

On the other hand, the perception of a performance appraisal that lacks seriousness and quality generates dissatisfaction among the appraisees (Brown et al., 2010). Another undesirable effect of individual performance evaluation is that it risks encouraging an individualistic attitude in employees to the detriment of teamwork, as it is possible to achieve the objectives set without necessarily contributing to the success of the organisation. Finally, practice has shown that the introduction of performance-based pay has created a number of problems and complications (Peters & Perry, 2003; De Vries et al., 2010). As suggested by Jurkiewicz et al. (1998), incentives for good performance can

include other non-financial benefits, such as shorter working hours, better equipment and work resources and skills development. In the context of SIADAP, the fact that career progression and pay rises depend on the assessment of individual performance through quotas and, at the same time, on the existence of budgetary appropriations in the organization, could jeopardize the motivation and, consequently, the performance and productivity of Portuguese public workers.

In short, it is worth reflecting on the advantages of maintaining an individual appraisal system that has rarely proved adequate to the cultural reality of the public sector. Bearing in mind that employee motivation is essential for good performance and greater organizational involvement, consideration should be given to using an appraisal system that does not run the risk of provoking feelings of injustice in those being appraised and in which the incentives for good performance can be of a different nature and not just financial. In any case, the analysis carried out in this paper suggests the need to develop a study, yet to be done, in which the impact of applying SIADAP in the Portuguese public administration is assessed.

### **3. Methodology**

This study is based on a qualitative methodology, which materialized through the use of two techniques applied at different times: semi-structured interviews and a focus group. According to Hennink et al. (2020), qualitative methodology deals with phenomena, experiences, behaviors and relationships without resorting to the use of statistics and mathematics, so there is no work involved in processing and treating numerical data. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), qualitative research approaches are more natural, as they consider that the researcher assumes the role of interpreting the data and drawing conclusions through observation, interviews, summaries, descriptions, analyses and interpretation of phenomena.

As previously mentioned, the scope of this study is to understand how internal marketing can be related to achieving job satisfaction and organizational success in public organizations. This approach involves an intrinsic need to provide a descriptive and representational explanation of the reality of Human Resources Management in public administration institutions.

The value of qualitative study lies in the ability to provide different perspectives, Lanka et al., (2021), by providing an in-depth view, but with an interpretive and subjective approach (Barnham, 2015). Through qualitative data, it is possible to preserve the chronological flow, understand the events that led to the consequences and obtain fruitful explanations, thus having an evident quality when they are more likely to reveal unexpected discoveries and new integrations, to help researchers go beyond initial conceptions and to create or revise conceptual frameworks (Miles et al., 2014).

On the other hand, it is also necessary to take into account that this methodological option has some disadvantages such as: the intensity of the work in collecting information; frequent data overload; the integrity of the researcher; the time it takes to process and code the data; the suitability of sampling when only a few cases can be used; the generalizability of the results; the credibility and quality of the conclusions; and the usefulness of the study (Miles et al., 2014).

In addition, qualitative research adopts an inductive approach, i.e. it builds knowledge from scratch and looks for patterns based on observations (Lanka et al., 2021). This means that it uses the observations, particularities and specificities of each case as a basis for general principles. The choice of this methodology is due to the fact that the study aims to cover four public administration institutions in the district of Braga (Esposende 2000; IPCA - Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave; TUB Transportes Urbanos de Braga; EMEC - Empresa Municipal de Cultura e Educação de Barcelos, E.M.) in order to analyze, understand and identify different realities in each of the selected entities. The aim is also to respond to the need to analyze the data obtained in the study individually.

## **4. Discussion of Results**

### ***4.1. Interview Results***

The interviews were conducted with all the organizations that agreed to take part in this research. Three interviews took place face-to-face with the person in charge of human resources management, while in the case of TUB, two people took part: the person in charge of human resources management and the person in charge of the company's marketing department also took part.

IPCA's human resources manager answered the questions in the interview script via a document, which was later sent via e-mail. This was due to a lack of time to organize a

face-to-face interview. After conducting the interviews, it became essential to analyze the information gathered in order to understand the impact that internal marketing policies had on the internal public of the different organizations. Studying factors such as motivation and job satisfaction are essential in organizational cultures. To this end, we sought to understand how managers have been implementing strategies in order to achieve organizational goals.

Regarding the importance of internal marketing in achieving job satisfaction, the interviewees' response was unanimous, all of them stating that internal marketing is essential:

E1 ‘(...) “Yes, internal marketing is fundamental to achieving job satisfaction (...)”’.

E2 ‘(...) Yes, because by communicating in an efficient, attractive and motivating way what we do and with what objectives (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) Yes, it's fundamental. I think that here at the company we try to work on internal marketing differently to external marketing, in order to achieve the desired result both internally and externally (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) Yes. What employees are looking for above all is recognition for their work (...) if the work is done with motivation, in my opinion it will be done more efficiently and there will be more success (...)’.

Of the four organizations in the study, apparently only one said it had not yet implemented an internal marketing strategy, EMEC. All the others said that internal marketing has been gradually implemented in the organizations they manage:

E1 ‘(...) Internal marketing has been implemented in our organization from my perspective in three ways: Solidarity way (...) Fraternal way (...) Binding way (...)’

E2 ‘(...) At the moment, the organization is at a point of intense growth, development and improvement of procedures (...) so it has invested a lot in internal communication through social networks and the creation of employee satisfaction mechanisms (...)’.

E4 ‘(...) in September last year a colleague was hired who is responsible for working on matters related to marketing, both internal and external. It was essential to start working on these aspects of internal marketing in a more serious way (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) Internal marketing is not applied in this organization (...)’.

The interviewees agree that this tool will lead to greater employee satisfaction, as it enables them to have better working conditions, enjoy more benefits and participate more actively in supporting the management of the organization in which they operate:

E1 ‘(...) Internal marketing can boost employee satisfaction. For this to happen, it's important for management to understand employees‘ dreams (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) when employees know to what extent they have contributed to the realization of a successful project, when they have feedback on what their input has meant (...) it positively influences their affinity and happiness in personal and professional terms (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) Another commitment has been to provide a good welcome when a new employee arrives (...) to make it easier for them to adapt to the organization (...)’.

E4 ‘(...) we are keen to involve people in all the activities that the organization promotes. This attitude will allow us to create synergies that will be carried over into the performance of the different tasks that are carried out on a daily basis (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) Although we don't apply any internal marketing strategy, I think it prevents employees from seeing work as a mere obligation to earn money, satisfaction is important because it contributes positively to employee performance (...)’.

With regard to the activities adopted by organizations to increase employee motivation, the results seem to show that not all organizations are at the same level, since they don't have the same capacity and autonomy to implement important and decisive measures for the well-being of employees and the organization: E1 ‘(...) A number of activities and ways of being have been implemented with the aim of motivating employees, such as: support for employees‘ needs; adaptability to employees‘ requests; offering a birthday, socializing once a year with everyone in the company (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) various initiatives have been launched to publicize what the institution does and what projects it is involved in, for example: publicizing mobility programs for teaching and non-teaching staff; initiatives linked to sustainability and voluntary work; defining rules for assessing the performance of employees hired under the Labor Code to promote promotion and career development (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) Here at TUB we have the TUB Staff Recreational Club, this association has played a fundamental role for the organization because it helps a lot in carrying out



measures that directly contribute to increasing employee motivation, such as each employee's birthday, Christmas dinner, celebration of themed days (...)'.

E4 '(...) a space dedicated to employees has been created where they can relax and socialize. There's a TUB newspaper where everyone can follow what's going on in the company, both digitally and on paper. We offer fruit to all employees (...)'.

E5 '(...) The organization is aware that there are some organizations that, for example, give workers a day off on their birthday, give fruit and other types of perks to workers, but due to the organization's purpose and budget restrictions, these incentives cannot be implemented. The administration used to send a birthday letter to the workers. Nowadays, sending such a letter may not have much material value, but it ends up being a symbolic act of recognition for the workers (...)'.

Asked what the main sources of job satisfaction are for their human resources, as well as the main causes of increased motivation, the respondents pointed out that the factors vary from person to person, although during the various interviews it was mentioned several times that salary increases are one of the incentives most appreciated and desired by employees. The interviewees felt that better-paid workers remain more motivated and satisfied. However, due to the nature of public organizations, salaries have to be set by law and there is no freedom to work on this issue:

E1 '(...) Salaries. However, as we are a public company, salaries are set by law and it is not possible to reward employees (...)'.

E2 '(...) There are many factors that we believe underlie job satisfaction, such as factors associated with remuneration, opportunities for promotion and recognition or policies to promote work-life balance; on the other hand, factors that are more associated with the person themselves (...) At first, remuneration incentives and more attractive financial compensation policies are the most valued by employees (...)'.

E4 '(...) In my opinion, what underpins job satisfaction is for employees to feel that they are at the center of management's attention, to feel that they are listened to, that their needs are met and resolved. If this happens, it will obviously have a positive impact on employees' lives and improve their performance and commitment to the institution (...) Inevitably, another much-desired benefit is salary increases, but due to the nature of our organization, this is not possible (...)'.



E5 ‘(...) I think the most important thing for an employee to be satisfied in their job is to feel recognized (...) We can never overlook the fact that money is also important for job satisfaction (...)’.

However, in addition to the remuneration aspect, it seems that there are other, non-remunerative factors that are appreciated by employees, such as a good working environment, balance between professional and personal life, recognition for the work carried out and the possibility of career progression, it was also mentioned that people's needs are not the same and that these vary as time goes by:

E1 ‘(...) Each person is their own person, their needs are different (...) What they are most looking for is adaptability to the situations that arise in their lives, such as providing greater support for a family member (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) providing a good working environment, ensuring good working conditions, recognizing the work done, rewarding and rewarding the quality and effort shown in carrying out the duties (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) it's important to mention that TUB has established many partnerships with external organizations, has a launderette and when an employee is a parent they receive a baby kit with various aids, these incentives are highly valued by our employees (...)’.

E4 ‘(...) I believe that the stimuli most requested by our employees are those related to the balance between personal and professional life (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) Another aspect that employees would welcome would be more flexible working (...)’.

The managers were also asked about the main factors that lead to dissatisfaction at work, and the following were highlighted: the poor working environment, a lack of understanding on the part of managers, no opportunities for career progression, a lack of balance between personal and professional life, a lack of recognition and low salaries:

E1 ‘(...) Unflexible leadership, low salaries, poor working environment, and failure to reconcile personal and professional life (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) poor pay, lack of promotion opportunities, lack of recognition and no policies to promote work-life balance (...)’.

E3 '(...) it's essentially that there are workers who are not on the same level. (...) we have a situation that we are trying to resolve, at the moment we have two labor regimes, with different conditions, and what we are trying to establish with a new Company Agreement Regime to guarantee more equality (...)'

E5 '(...) The lack of recognition from management and the poor working environment towards colleagues and the various sectors of the organization (...)'

One theme explored in the interviews was how new labor market trends are analyzed and implemented in the organizations where they work. From the answers to this question, we can conclude that organizations are not all on the same level and that once again they don't have the same tools to be able to implement emerging trends:

E1 '(...) We try to analyze what is being done well in the market and adapt it to our reality (...)'

E2 '(...) In this respect, we confess that, at the level of the public organization where we work, we try to update our knowledge and training in order to adapt to new trends (...)'

E3 '(...) Yes, as I've already mentioned, we try to adopt teleworking in order to make life easier for our workers (...)'

E4 '(...) In my opinion, a fundamental aspect for the future of the organization will be the adoption of the new company agreement, which includes aspects more closely linked to equality at work (...)'

E5 '(...) After identifying the limitations mentioned above, we try to do what we can (...)'

When asked whether it is more difficult to apply internal marketing in public organizations, the answer was common to all those interviewed, citing budget restrictions, scarcity of resources, excessive demands/bureaucracy, constant legislative changes and the lack of human capital with the necessary qualifications as the main obstacles to implementation:

E1 '(...) Clearly, just look at the issue of salaries, we can't keep up with the private market. (...)'

E2 '(...) Yes, for the reasons already mentioned, budget restrictions, constant legislative changes and the demands of bureaucracy. (...)'

E3 '(...) Yes without a doubt, given all the constraints to which they are subject. (...)'

E5 ‘(...) Yes, due to the fact that there aren't always enough qualified staff in organizations to develop this area, but mainly due to the budgetary restrictions that greatly limit the development of this area (...)’.

Regarding the degree/level of implementation of internal marketing in the public sector compared to the private sector, the interviewees indicated that public organizations are already starting to work on these aspects related to improving the satisfaction of their human capital, although they are still at a very embryonic stage and there is still a long way to go before they can achieve the desired results:

E1 ‘(...) There are grey areas, so in my view there is still a lot to be done in these areas (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) It's a process that's still at a very early stage, but it's been promoted through listening to people and internal discussion in all the departments (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) I think that public organizations in general still don't value these aspects (...) Even so, in my opinion, internal marketing can only be implemented if the organizations' administrations really want to implement a strategy (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) In general we don't see much work done on internal marketing in public organizations (...)’.

It seems that the limited resources of the public administration (central and local government) mean that these organizations find it very difficult to keep up with new market trends and thus end up losing competitiveness to the private sector. With very small budgets, they are often forced to make choices that don't always favor improving human resource management practices. They sometimes find it very difficult to retain their human resources, as they are attracted to the private sector:

E1 ‘(...) Clearly, (...) It often leads to losing the best professionals (...)’.

E2 ‘(...) budget restrictions, constant legislative changes and demands in terms of bureaucracy (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) has experienced great difficulties in retaining its human resources (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) this is essentially due to the fact that there are financial and digital resources that allow this area to evolve (...)’.

Another aspect under analysis was to study the professional background of the organisations' human resources managers in order to understand how this background influenced/impacted their work. The results seem to show that most of the interviewees had little professional experience before taking up their current position. And another point that can be drawn is that most of the participants' past experiences were in the public sector:

E1 '(...) I've always had immense satisfaction in everything I've done throughout my life. I learnt to read people's needs and desires (...)'

E2 '(...) Experience and knowledge of various and different realities are essential to being able to better understand and deal with employees' expectations, desires and concerns (...)'

E3 '(...) As I mentioned earlier, the experience I had in the past wasn't very positive in terms of internal marketing and so I didn't take anything with me that I could apply (...)'

E4 '(...) I had a very positive experience in the private sector, in a company where there was already concern about these concepts, which gave me more freedom and confidence to implement certain measures here in the organization (...)'

E5 '(...) Personally, I don't have much professional experience in my past. Before working at EMEC I only worked for one company, and that was a short time. And the jobs I've done don't match the tasks I'm doing here (...)'

The last theme analysis in the interviews was to identify what the future prospects would be for job satisfaction in the medium and long term. There was agreement among the interviewees.

The main trends pointed to were the adoption of teleworking, a greater concern for issues related to work-life balance on the part of organizations in general, more frequent team building activities and, finally, analyzing the updating of salaries with greater attention and importance:

E1 '(...) It's mainly about updating the information we have with what's done differently in the market, such as benchmarking. Finally, the aspect that really needs to be reviewed in public organizations is salaries, because with the challenges that lie ahead it will be extremely difficult to maintain and attract human capital (...)'

E2 ‘(...) Satisfaction involves implementing measures to guarantee a better working environment, more dialogue and support for employees, recognition of the work done and rewarding merit, promoting management based on setting realistic and concrete targets and results indicators (...)’.

E3 ‘(...) as far as public organizations are concerned, they will gradually have to implement measures that already exist in the private sector in order to retain workers (...)’.

E4 ‘(...) In my opinion, the future will involve reinforcing the work of better including people in the organization, so that they are more involved. In this way, I think there will be a focus on team building activities, greater support in managing the expectations of employees and the organization (...)’.

E1 ‘(...) Yes, I agree with my colleague, and as far as public organizations are concerned, they will gradually have to implement measures that already exist in the private sector in order to retain workers (...)’.

E5 ‘(...) I think the future will force organizations to acquire more digital media, they'll have to have a stronger IT presence so that people can still carry out their tasks (...) organizations will have to be open to concepts related to making work more flexible (...)’.

#### ***4.2. Focus Group Results***

The focus group was held with six employees from the various organizations that took part in the interviews. However, given that not all organizations are the same size and have the same availability, representation was not uniform. Esposende 2000 and EMEC were represented by one member each. IPCA and TUB were represented by two people. The format adopted was digital in order to make it easier for the participants to reconcile their schedules, as well as to avoid travelling which could cause constraints on their professional agendas.

Before the focus group was held, the following objectives were defined in advance:

- To understand the degree of agreement with what was said by the heads of the organizations about which factors lead to job satisfaction and greater motivation;
- To understand the degree of agreement regarding the difficulty public administration organizations have in implementing Internal Marketing;

- To identify whether there is a conciliation of opinions on what they consider to be the new labor trends;
- To understand how employees perceive the internal marketing policies adopted by the organizations where they work.

All the participants in the focus group agreed that internal marketing is a fundamental instrument for increasing organizational commitment and for achieving strategic alignment between management and employees. They said that only in this way will organizations be able to achieve their objectives.

When asked how they think internal marketing has been applied in some way in the organizations where they work, it seems that the participants' answers differ from each other, given that the organizations do not have the same level of implementation. It is clear that TUB has a more developed level of implementation than the other organizations.

When asked how internal marketing could boost employee satisfaction, all said that yes, internal marketing plays a decisive role, as it will lead to greater recognition of the work done by employees, boost the quality of relations between colleagues and improve working conditions.

With regard to the main reasons that lead to job satisfaction, the participants said that the answer to this question essentially involves carrying out the activities and tasks that they enjoy, having a good relationship with their work colleagues so that they can work as a team. Being aware of what the organization expects from each worker and, finally, showing recognition and consideration for the work that has been done by the worker.

They also mentioned that satisfied and motivated workers enjoy doing their jobs and this will make a decisive contribution to greater productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, thus benefiting organizations as they are able to offer better services, which will naturally please the organization's clients/users.

One topic addressed in the focus group was how they consider the new labour market trends to have been implemented in the organizations where they work. It was pointed out that organizations have been using digital means (e.g. meetings via the Teams platform) and in some positions have adopted teleworking in order to allow greater flexibility for the worker.

With regard to the benefits that have been implemented by the organizations, the following stand out: a slight improvement in salaries in recent years, work has been done on issues related to the bonds of friendship and sharing between work colleagues, certain members of the focus group also mentioned that in the organization where they work they can enjoy their birthday with their family and friends since the organization where they work makes that day free.

With regard to some aspects that can generate job dissatisfaction and discomfort, and which was highlighted through the focus group, was the fact that some participants indicated that in their organizations communication doesn't work in the best way, causing employees in some situations to be negatively surprised by certain decisions that are implemented, since they had no knowledge of them and were not taken into account before they were adopted.

### ***4.3. Comparison of Interview Results vs Focus Group***

In general, the results obtained both in the interviews and in the focus group are very similar, i.e. there is a certain complementarity at times, and there are no major disagreements between the two moments of information gathering in this research.

It can be said that the vision of those responsible for human resources management and the employees of the different organizations that took part in the study is homogeneous. At various points, there was a certain balance of perceptions and a high degree of agreement between the answers collected from the various players. All those involved agree that internal marketing is fundamental to the success of the various organizations, given that this mechanism fosters greater satisfaction and motivation among internal customers, who are the employees, which will translate into better services and perhaps greater satisfaction among external customers.

It is clear that the level of implementation of internal marketing strategies between the organizations is not the same, with TUB standing out from the rest. EMEC has not yet implemented any internal marketing strategy. This phenomenon could be related to the size of the different organizations and their financial capacity. Larger organizations have bigger budgets and are therefore able to implement strategies and stimuli that are more tailored to their realities.



With regard to the factors of satisfaction/dissatisfaction on the part of the employees, once again there is a balance between the interviewees and the participants in the focus group, all of whom believe that these vary from employee to employee. The main factors of satisfaction were: good salaries; the opportunity for career growth and promotion; recognition for the work carried out in organizations; reconciling/adapting personal and professional life; good relationships with work colleagues; doing jobs you enjoy; knowing what the organization expects of each worker.

The main factors that lead to dissatisfaction are: leadership that is not very flexible; low salaries; lack of opportunities for promotion and career growth; a bad working environment among colleagues and/or managers; the performance assessment adopted (SIADAP), which is time-consuming and does not always have clear criteria on how the assessment is processed, generating distrust and discrediting the assessments that are made.

As has already been discussed throughout the study, it is important to note whether there is a reconciliation between what the interviewees and focus group participants consider to be the new trends in the labor market. Once again, there was a consensus of opinions about what is being developed and about the future of the labor market. The main important aspects mentioned were: the use of digital media to help workers carry out their jobs, the adoption of teleworking and greater flexibility between workers' personal and professional lives.

Regarding the implementation of internal marketing strategies in the public sector, everyone agrees that it is extremely difficult to implement them in a planned and structured way, due to the fact that they are dependent on funding from the central or local administration. Therefore, due to the current state of the Portuguese public administration, it is extremely difficult to channel funds to work on these labor issues. It's extremely important to note that the main source of funding for the public administration is the taxes that citizens pay every month, so it doesn't look good in the eyes of the general population to bet on this type of mechanism to incentivize public administration workers, and there is a feeling of injustice. Finally, the last important aspect to confront is the fact that the interviewees, like the focus group participants, have not had much professional experience in the past beyond the position they currently hold, so they have not received much input for their current positions.

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to understand whether the implementation of internal marketing strategies in public organizations is fundamental and efficient for the management of human resources and organizational success. As this research has shown, internal marketing is an extremely important tool for better management of human capital in organizations, and unfortunately it is a subject that, although it has gained some dimension in recent decades, is still neglected by some organizations. It was essential to study various organizations in order to understand the perceptions of managers and employees. In a world that is constantly being updated, it is essential for organizations to make a constant effort to adapt in order to maintain their levels of success, otherwise they will be overtaken by the competition. It has been shown that practically all organizations already have some orientation towards working on aspects related to internal marketing, but there is still a long way to go, given the fact that there are various obstacles to its implementation that do not exist in the private sector, for example. It's important to identify which tools are best suited to each organization, and to understand that each individual has different ambitions and needs, which requires a climate of great organizational flexibility.

Internal marketing implemented effectively by organizations generates wellbeing at various levels: motivational, behavioral and physical. However, although it is a single term, each company has its own definition of the concept of internal marketing and works with it differently, depending on its needs and the personalities of its employees. It can therefore be understood that it is a very general and broad term, which can be interpreted in different ways by organizations and the study carried out proves this.

Organizations that provide more benefits for their employees are able to achieve higher job satisfaction values, which will therefore bring various advantages to the organization, including employee loyalty to the organization. A sense of sharing is built up between the organization and the employee and both parties will be more satisfied and motivated. This satisfaction will make organizations stronger, as employees are more motivated and are able to provide better quality services in the course of their work. As a result, consumers/users will be more satisfied with the organization's performance, and there will be greater awareness of these organizations.

Job satisfaction also makes employees feel good, as they are recognized by the organizations where they work, which is a relevant reason for them to stay with the organization where they work, thus helping to combat organizational turnover. Subsequently, they can look forward to progressing in their careers, thus helping them to remain in the various organizations, which will lead to greater organizational stability, proving beneficial for achieving the previously defined objectives.

However, it is important to point out that internal marketing is handled differently in public entities than in private organizations, according to the participants in this research. These differences are associated with the fact that public organizations are dependent on funding from the central or local government. This nuance is essentially due to the fact that resources are limited and thus condition the actions of managers, who have to choose where they should or should not invest their resources. This selection sometimes means that measures related to internal marketing strategies take a back seat (e.g. salary increases, better reconciliation of family and professional life, creation of activities valued and desired by employees).

Inevitably, one aspect that needs to be kept in mind is that the actions of public bodies are governed by compliance with a great deal of associated legislation, which is an obstacle to implementing policies that boost job satisfaction and organizational success. It is also worth mentioning that due to the high level of legislation and associated bureaucracy, the system is slower, and its realization takes significantly longer to achieve, compared to the private sector. This study proved the criticism of Merton's theory of bureaucracy, which argued that there is no such thing as a completely rational organization. At the same time, inflexibility lacks the depth and efficiency described by Weber. The excess of formalism, documents and paperwork leads bureaucracy fatally towards inefficiency.

Furthermore, it's important to note that employees don't just value aspects related to salaries, but also everything that helps to make their lives easier. Organizations are required to adapt and modernize so that these needs can be met assertively. The type of leadership adopted by managers is another factor appreciated by employees. Leaders who are more open to suggestions and proposals made by their human resources achieve better results, mainly due to the increase in motivation on the part of those they lead, which translates into greater commitment.

Regarding benefits, it was noted that these are generally granted merely with the aim of making employees more satisfied and motivated, and therefore more productive. Perhaps

this is not the most appropriate view, because employee benefits should not only be given as a way of bringing a return. It would be important for concerns about employees to take on other dimensions, of a more human nature, and not just as a means of achieving greater production.

The development of technology and globalization have given rise to new challenges that different organizations must be able to meet. It is crucial to invest in measures to encourage the development of emotional intelligence and a balance between the personal and professional lives of all employees. It was also noted that for workers to be able to perform well in their jobs, they must be emotionally well and feel that the organization where they work is sensitive to their personal issues, such as family support and incentives to take courses and training in order to increase their qualifications (e.g. bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, English courses, among others).

Organizations generally don't have internal strategy planning, which is why it would be necessary to make up for this shortcoming. Given the importance that people have in organizations, planning is required to ensure better applicability and adoption of the tools that are going to be used, which will then be evaluated by the human resources teams in order to understand the effects of these actions. Feedback must be collected more regularly, because human capital is also a very important target audience. Regular, individual feedback must be collected so that all employees have the opportunity to express their opinions and make suggestions for improvement. With this, the organization can see if it needs to align guidelines or if it is on the right track, and if necessary, adjust its strategy according to the feedback received.

One shortcoming that was noticeable in the different organizations was a lack of communication. Communication is an essential tool in internal marketing. It is therefore crucial that managers take greater care in the way information is passed on, bearing in mind that it must respect the pillars of communication (clear, appropriate, explicit, bidirectional and strategic).

In order for internal marketing to be as successful as it should be, it is crucial to invest in benchmarking practices, as this will allow organizations to create a cycle of continuous improvement in their internal operations in terms of their processes and procedures, which can lead to greater efficiency and productivity. In this way, organizations can become more efficient, and performance costs tend to be lower because losses in processes are reduced, leading to greater optimization of all operations and resources, especially human

resources. The practice of benchmarking is little used by public administration organizations, as can be seen in this study.

## References

- Barnham, C. (2015). Quantitative and Qualitative Research: Perceptual Foundations. *International Journal of Market Research*, Vol. 57, N.º 6, pp. 837-854 <https://doi.org/10.2501/IJMR-2015-070>
- Brown, D. M., Apostolidis, C., Dey, B. L., Singh, P., Thrassou, A., Kretsos, L., & Babu, M. M. (2024). Sustainability starts from within: A critical analysis of internal marketing in supporting sustainable value co-creation in B2B organisations. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 117, 14-27.
- Brown, M., Hyatt, D. e Benson, J. (2010). Consequences of the performance appraisal experience. *Personnel Review*, Vol. 39, N.º 3, pp. 375-396 <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483481011030557>
- De Vries, R. E., Bakker-Pieper, A. e Oostenveld, W. (2010). Leadership = Communication? The Relations of Leaders' Communication Styles with Leadership Styles, Knowledge Sharing and Leadership Outcomes. *J Bus Psychol*, Vol. 25, N.º 3, pp. 367-380 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-009-9140-2>
- Fernandes, M. L.; Sousa, B. B. & Veloso, C. M. (2023). O Endomarketing na Gestão do Capital Humano: Perspetiva preliminar no contexto do Quadrilátero Urbano do Minho (Portugal). *European Journal of Applied Business and Management*, 9(3), 92-114. <https://doi.org/10.58869/EJABM005>
- Hennink, M., Hutter, I. e Bailey A. (2020). *Qualitative Research Methods (2ª Edição)*. Sage Publications, Inc
- Jurkiewicz, C. L., Massey, T. K. e Brown R. G. (1998). Motivation in Public and Private Organizations: A Comparative Study. *Public Productivity & Management Review*, Vol. 21, N.º 3, pp. 230-250 <http://doi.org/10.2307/3380856>
- Kühne, O. e Leonardi, L. (2020). *Ralf Dahrendorf: Between Social Theory and Political Practice (1ª Edição)* Springer Nature
- Lanka, E., Lanka, S., Rostron, A. e Singh, P. (2021). Why we need qualitative research in management studies. *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, Vol. 25, N.º 2 <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-7849rac2021200297.en>
- Lincoln, Y. S. e Guba E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry (1ª Edição)*. Sage Publications, Inc
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M. e Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A Methods Sourcebook (3ª Edição)*. Sage Publications, Inc
- Neves, M. S., Gonçalves, J. S., Sousa, B. B., & Veloso, C. M. (2024). The Importance of Internal Marketing in Achieving Job Satisfaction and Organizational Success. In C. Popescu, J. Martínez-Falcó, B. Marco-Lajara, E. Sánchez-García, & L. Millán-Tudela (Eds.), *Building Sustainable Human Resources Management Practices for Businesses* (pp. 254-274). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-1994-9.ch016>
- Peters, B. G. e Perry, J. (2003). *Handbook of Public Administration (1ª Edição)*. Sage Publications, Inc <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608214>
- Rocha, J. A. O. (2020). Nova Gestão de Recursos Humanos na Administração Pública Portuguesa. *Journal of Political Science*, Vol.22, pp.50-58
- Schmidt, J. E.T., Groeneveld, S. M. e Van de Walle, S. (2017). A Change Management Perspective on Public Sector Cutback Management: Towards a Framework for Analysis. *Public Management Review*, Vol.19, N.º10, pp. 1538-1555
- Thiel, S. V. e Leeuw, F. L. (2002). The performance Paradox in the Public Sector. *Productivity in Review*, Vol. 25, N.º 3, pp. 267-281