The Relationship among Market Orientation, Role Stress and Organizational Citizenship Behavior on practitioners in Travel Agencies: The Moderating Effect of Internal Marketing

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Abstract:

Travel agencies play important roles as mediators between tourists and destinations. While enterprises are dedicated to satisfying with market demands and strengthening competitive advantages, they often draw up and implement multiple strategies with a view to deal with external environment changes and conflicts. Gradually, employees get stressed invisibly. Thus, it is necessary for employees to resolve the negative impacts of the pressure. Therefore, this research manly focuses on the relationship among market orientation, role stress and organizational citizenship behavior toward travel agency operations personals. Besides, it is to realize the moderating effect of internal marketing on the relationship between role stress and organizational citizenship behavior. Questionnaires will be utilized in this study and structural equation modeling (SEM) will be processed to analyze the research questions. The results will be expected that (1) market orientation is positively related to role ambiguity and role conflict; (2) for the role stress, organizational citizenship behavior is negatively related to role ambiguity and role stress; (3) a moderating effect of internal marketing on the relationship between role stress and organizational citizenship behavior.

Keyword*: Market Orientation, Role Stress, Internal Marketing, Organizational Citizenship Behavior*

I. INTRODUCTION

It's a concept for market orientation. Market orientation is a top issue for marketing field. Also, it becomes a valuable reference for enterprise. Organizations focus on collecting the needs of target consumers and information related to competitors in order to create superior customers [10], [20]. Market orientation emphasizes the importance of consumer information, competitor information and inter-functional coordination within the organizations. Enterprises should collect and share strategies

via market information and draw up responding strategies to create customer value and improve organizational performance [31], [43], [61].

On the other hand, while enterprises are devoted to satisfying market demands and strengthening competitive advantages, they have to deal with the changes in the external environment and formulate multiple strategies at the same time. However, it may lead the role ambiguity and conflict to first-line salesperson during the processes. Thus, it may bring pressure visibly on employees which mean role stress. Kahn, et al., (1964) pointed out that role stress is the external role or individual intrinsic factor. When the individual's role expectation is too much or inconsistent, it may cause psychological and physical burdens which the individual's role play and task can be achieved. The developments of human resources for travel agencies in Taiwan are behind other industries. Employees get high pressure and work in the difficult conditions. In the meanwhile, they have to face the market conditions which is highly protect traveling consumers and unable to growth in organizations [35]. Therefore, in practical if enterprises are unable to face the problems for employees' pressure, it may lead serious problems such as reduced working performance, high turnover rate, and lack of organizational support in the future.

For the practice of travel agencies, while facing with the rapid changes in the external market environment, the internal operation of the organization should simultaneously adjust the operation process and change the operational type. Nowadays, market orientation strategy is an inevitable trend, and the burden of pressure on practitioners is a common fact, which means that organizations should face up problems including how to reduce the role stress on employees and foster working performance. The past studies has been pointed out that when employees produce autonomies on innovative behaviors or some spontaneous behaviors, it will help the organizations to adapt changes in the environment and improve organizational performance, and become the success factor of the organizations [15], [19], [52]. Therefore, if the organizations can reduce the pressure on employees and enhance the spontaneous behaviors of employees, it would improve the efficiency of the enterprises and facilitate the development of the organizations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of Episode Model

In the theory of role stress, Kahn et al., (1964) proposed a theoretical framework for studying the pressure of organizational member roles - role of episode model. The role is divided into role sender and focal person. In the model, the role slender has expectations on how the focal person should play a role. At the same time, role sender will observe and feel the actual behaviors of the focal person, and

then evaluate to see if they meet their expectations. After evaluation, the role expectation is given to the focal person through formal or informal ways, and affects the desired performance of the focal person. If the role sender's expectations conflict or blur, the focal person will produce role ambiguity or role conflicts objectively. Under such the expectation, it is kind of pressure for focal person and affect the behaviors in the process. When focal person faces with pressure, some response strategies may be used to relief, but if these pressures cannot be adjusted or resolved, the symptoms in psychological, physical or behavioral symptoms will be formed. When focal person does the reactions to the stress, the role sender will evaluate subjectively and adjust the role expectation based on the results. And then pass it to focal person which forms the interaction process between two. There are three factors that may affect the process by role sender. First, organizational factors include organizational structure, role requirements, job traits, the actual environment, and organizational tasks, which will affect the role expectation by role sender. Second is the "personality trait factor", including the personal motivation, needs, values, habits, abilities, ages, seniorities, education, genders, marital status, etc. of the focal person which will affect the role sender ;the third one is the "interpersonal relationship factor", which refers to the relationship between the role sender and focal person, including the type of communication, the degree of interdependence, the frequency of interaction, emotional relationship and mutual feedback and participation. Those will affect the role sender, and thus change the ways of delivering the messages, and also affect the focal person's subjective perception of receiving the messages. Therefore, focal person will change the reaction in receiving the messages. When the focal person's working performance is lower than the role sender's expectations or unclear, the focal person will create the role stress. The role stress of employees refers to the pressure from different ways to accumulate their expectations of behavior." Employees have psychological effects when facing with role stress, whereas moderate pressure appropriately can stimulate personal potential, improve responsiveness and job performance. However, excessive pressure may lead to behaviors that are not conducive to the organizations, such as reducing performance, job burnout, turnover, etc., and therefore managements should pay much attention about role stress.

In the environment of travel agencies, role sender (enterprise or superiors, etc.) and focal person (individuals) exist the factors of role stress. When enterprises adopt market orientation strategies in order to meet market demand and maintain competitiveness, employees who perform tasks should have expectations about how to play the role, observe their behavior and evaluate them whether they meet expectations. This may affect the individual's performance of expected behavior. If the strategies are conflict and blurred, employees will have role ambiguous or conflicts. So, this kind of task means

exerting pressure upon employees.

Market orientation and role stress

The past research has shown that in the prospective views of competitive strength, market orientation was regarded as the most effective way to maintain long-term and mutually beneficial relationships among customers. Market orientation understands the customer needs, competitors' actions and technological innovations and also brings the strength of competitive [56]. Customer orientation refers to the organizations fully understand the target markets about the unique value of the products in the customer's mind and to predict the changes in customer needs [10], [20].The role stress is divided into two categories: objective fact and subjective experience. The objective fact is that the environment in the organization has certain factors that are not conducive to the role which leads to the bad characteristics; and the subjective experience is the factor produced by the individual of the role, including self-experience, psychological experience, personality traits, etc. Those may cause the negative views of the environment. The role stress consists of role conflict and role ambiguity. Role conflicts comes from two or more rules to be against which means under the condition of individual time, resources, abilities or values, if there are inconsistencies between some standards, norms and expectations formulated by the role senders. Role conflicts may arise [27].

Some research pointed out that there is a negative relationship between customer orientation and role conflict. However, with the changes in the social environment, low-cost carrier and hotel comparison websites arise. The travel agencies have highly homogeneity. The practitioners utilize the price as one of the competition strategy. Therefore, it may formulate the price orientation for customers in tourism markets. The tendency to obtain high-quality goods in low prices, even for the same industry, is to reduce costs through low prices. When customer orientation is high in company, practitioners faces a variety of requirements from customers such as low prices and must meet the customer's expectations in products. At the same time, company's regulations and personal performance will take into consideration. It may lead to inconsistencies; that is, role conflict. On the other hand, nowadays information technology and life are inseparable. Telecommunication software is often used to communicate with customers or provide information. If customers have problems after work, practitioners still need to solve customers' problems. The application of the network makes the communication between the customer and the salesman easier and faster, but it also causes the worries of the salesperson high working hours and affect daily life [64], and the role conflict will rise. This research assumes that the highly customer orientation in enterprise may lead the higher role conflict. The research hypothesis is as follows.

H1: Customer orientation is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies.

Competitor orientation refers to the organizations understand the competitors' strengths and weaknesses within short-term and potential competitors' long-term strategies and capabilities. Competitor orientation means understanding its strengths and weaknesses in the short term, as well as the capabilities and strategies of potential competitors [10], [20]. Siguaw, Brown and Robert (1994) argued that a highly market orientation will result in lower role conflicts. So it can be inferred that a high degree of competitor orientation will reduce role conflicts.

Although Powpaka (2006) didn't find that competitor orientation has a major impact on role conflicts. However, the competition in the travel agencies in Taiwan is fierce, and competitors' strategies have emerged from time to time. Therefore, the competitor orientation strategy of the travel agencies is a difficult for objective views, but how employees can obtain competitor information, and then share and discuss strategies should depend on personal experiences, abilities, time cost. Travel agencies in Taiwan have high turnover, lack of staff training and many newcomers lack of work experience. With a view to understand the competitor's messages and respond quickly and share it, employees may not be able to achieve the expectations of the role sender due to the factors such as abilities and time permission. And it creates role conflicts. Therefore, the highly competitor orientation in the travel agencies has, the higher the role conflict. The research hypothesis is as follows.

H2: Competitor orientation is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies.

Inter-functional coordination refers to coordinate the use of organizational resources in order to create better customer value [10], [20]. If the value chain of the enterprise can provide value to customers, any department in the enterprise will be able to create value for serving customers [54]. Powpaka (2006) aimed at the female employees in the service industry in Thailand showed that inter-functional coordination had a negative impact on role ambiguity, but had no impact on the role of banking employees. In many travel agencies in Taiwan, informationization has gradually increased, and internal communication has been implemented and shared quickly. The departmentalization and strategic planning have also changed the way of single role to be executed tasks in the past. The working procedures are closely to each department. Therefore, employees in each department should coordinate with each other in completing a service process, understanding the strategies, and sharing resources so that all departments can clearly understand their job responsibilities and expectations from role sender. As a result, there are many human factors in the travel agencies in Taiwan. In the process of interaction with salesperson and other departments, although there are resource sharing and

strategic discussions, the principles of enterprise are stick to subjective facts. In the past, research revealed that the job design of employees usually requires a certain degree of flexibility [21]. Thus, as a salesperson needs to interact with customers in flexibility and subjective ways, the role conflict will arise. Therefore, the higher the inter-functional coordination, the higher the role conflict may be caused. The research hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

H3: Inter-functional coordination is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies.

Role ambiguity is the lack of explicit authorization or instruction by the focal person to their job responsibilities and powers. They fail to obtain clear role expectations and make it impossible to perform role behavior [57]. Role ambiguity means lack of personal information. There are three factors as follows. First, the message of the role expectation is not sufficient; second, the way to fulfill the role expectations is not clear enough; third, role behavior is not obvious [65]. For example, first-line employees who are not aware of the role responsibilities and performance standards of service providers and multi-role employees in the same organization may get pressures due to role ambiguity. When the company adopts customer orientation, it will not obviously cause the role ambiguity [43]. Although there is a negative relationship between customer orientation and role ambiguity [59], from another perspective, employees may feel pressure when they are uncertain [5].

The labors of working place for salesperson in travel agencies are diversity and complex. They must have high professional competence to be competent, and the accumulation of experience is relatively important for workplace. It is necessary to constantly adapt to the needs of customers to make changes, and if the salespersons make mistakes, they must spend more time and money to make up for it, which also causes pressure on employees in travel agencies [64]. The salesperson is responsible for individual stuff related to travel activities. They must understand and have the ability to how to integrate it into another knowledge output. Each individual activity is a commercial activity [10]. Therefore, some studies in the past found that the uncertainty of the task leads to the incompleteness of the message, which will lead to an increase in the insecurity of individual work and lead to the emergence of role ambiguity [62]. Therefore, this research proposes the hypothesis as follows.

H4: Customer orientation is positively correlated between role ambiguity toward travel agencies.

H5: Competitor orientation is positively correlated between role ambiguity toward travel agencies.

In the practice of travel agencies, due to the human factors in the coordination process between

departments, all departments have their own positions. Therefore, while performing tasks, salesperson often cannot understand the work expectations given by various departments, and lots of expectations will be produced. Employees may be confused about the direction of the task. For example, some departments expect the standardized working, while some departments require to achieve the targets and flexible. Tosi, Rizzo and Carroll (1994) pointed out that when they cannot confirm the expectations from others, they may vague due to insufficient information on the job targets, and may also result in social-emotional ambiguity due to the role expectations for individual and the unclear results. Therefore, this research proposes the hypothesis as follows.

H6: Inter-functional coordination is positively correlated between role ambiguity toward travel agencies

Role stress and organizational citizenship

In the past studies, Brief, Schuler and Van Sell (1981) argued that role conflicts and role ambiguity are the reasons for decreasing work efficiency, increasing psychological stress and resigning the job. Role ambiguity and role conflict also have a significant impact on task performance [50]. Chang (2003) also pointed out that role ambiguity is negatively correlated with job performance. The higher the role ambiguity has, the worse the performance for employees. But the role conflict and performance have a positive relationship, the higher the role conflict, the better the performance. Chen (2013) found in the study of international tourism hotel staff that role stress has a significant impact on organizational commitment. Organizational commitments have an impact on organizational citizenship behavior. Lee (2011) pointed out that the role stress of the teachers and administrative work of the New Taipei City Elementary schools will negatively affect organizational commitment. Organizational commitment has an influential relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Above all, some research results propose that role stress has a negative impact on employee behavior. From the cognitive theory, one's psychology will affect ones behavior. In past studies had shown that role stress is significantly negatively correlated with organizational citizenship behavior [34], [48], [68]. Studies have also shown that employees are more likely to demonstrate organizational citizenship when they feel low stress [8], [20], [37].

Role stress will reduce organizational citizenship behavior. In the travel agencies, if employees cannot clearly understand their job responsibilities, personal authority, and role sender's expectations, they will have role conflicts which will have a negative impact on psychology and lead to reduce spontaneous behavior. Therefore, this study infer that the higher the role conflict of employees will lead to lower organizational citizenship behavior, so this study proposes the following research hypothesis:

H7: The role conflict has a negatively impact on organizational citizenship behavior toward the travel agency operations personal.

When employees lack of sufficient information and do not play the proper role, they will have a role ambiguity [22]. The markets of travel agencies are changing will be affected by many external environmental factors. If employees are unable to obtain sufficient job information, the role may be ambiguity and their organizational citizenship behavior may be reduced. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed in this study:

H8: The role ambiguity has a negatively impact on organizational citizenship behavior toward the travel agency operations personal.

The moderating effect of internal marketing

Organizational citizenship behavior has recently been emphasized by enterprises. Many studies in the past mentioned that when employees produce autonomous innovation behaviors or some spontaneous behaviors, they help organizations adapt the changes of the environment and foster organizational efficiency. That is a success factor of organizations [15]. But, if the employees are pressured by relevant things, it will lead to decrease organizational citizenship behavior. The past research showed that role stress is significantly negatively correlated with organizational citizenship behavior [68]. Compo et al. (2014) pointed out that investing in employees' capacity resources and improving internal management processes will help improve the quality and service in enterprises. While serving contacts among customers, service providers and companies, they may be exist conflicts. Without carefully designing work, employees stress and lack of productivity may occur [14]. In practical, there are multi-dimensional enterprises strategies in travel agencies and travel agency operations personal plays may roles. He/she may be part of a product (service), part of a service delivery system, consultant or marketing server. Such diverse roles may increase the possibilities that role stress will occur which may affect the poor performance of employee's behaviors.

Lin (2001) pointed out the impact of role stress on the relationship between internal marketing and customer orientation for employee's behavior. The study showed that internal marketing and role stress have a negative relationship which means the higher the internal marketing of the organization, the lower the role stress.

It can be seen that internal marketing will effectively moderate the role stress on employees. Foreman and Money (1995) pointed out that internal marketing refers to employee's wishes for providing services, development and rewards for organizations. It can create employees' working value. Ieong and Lam (2016) mentioned that employees' behavioral attitudes are affected by internal

service quality and most of the impact comes from the degree of internal marketing. Organ and Ryan (1995) also found that the awareness organization for employees should support and motivate and it is helpful to foster organizational citizenship behavior, And the use of internal marketing can also enhance employees' ability related to customer orientation. Therefore, in the agencies, when employees get stressed and lower the organizational citizenship behavior, internal marketing can be the moderating effect via providing vision, development and rewards in order to lower the role stress for employees. Through the awareness of internal marketing strategies will increase the organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed in this study.

H9: a moderating effect of internal marketing on the relationship between role ambiguity and organizational citizenship behavior in travel agencies. H10: a moderating effect of internal marketing on the relationship between role conflict and organizational citizenship behavior in travel agencies.

III. METHOD

This research manly focuses on the relationship among market orientation, role stress and organizational citizenship behavior. Also, it talks about the moderating effect of internal marketing between role stress and organizational citizenship behavior.
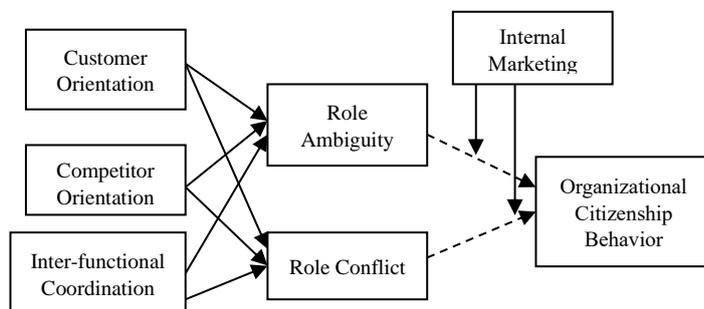
Research Framework

More than 70% of Taiwan's travel agencies are distributed in the municipality, Therefore, the target samples are salespersons of travel agencies in the North (Taipei, New Taipei), Central (Taichung), and South (Tainan, Kaohsiung) regions of Taiwan.In the concept of market orientation, inter-functional coordination is to understand the impacts on the strategies among departments of the organizations. Therefore, the salespersons in travel agencies which working contents include international business and departments belong to Class-A travel agencies and consolidated travel agencies are target participants. This study adopts stratified random sampling. Based on the statistics of the Tourism

Bureau of the Ministry in Taiwan on November 2017, the numbers of Class-A travel agencies and consolidated travel agencies are 3,612 (N=3,612). Therefore, the sample ratio of this study is 0.1 (n/N=0.1). Therefore, 370 questionnaires will be issued in this study to investigate the practitioners in Taiwan. It is to investigate under the market orientation strategy, the impact on the relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior. In this study, Cronbach's α will be used to measure the consistence of each scale. To verify the reliability of each dependent variable, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be utilized to this study. In this study, the structural equation model (SEM) is to test the CFA of each scale. SEM is used to verify the relationship between cause and effect. There are four variables in this model, including two latent variables and two observed variables. The latent variables refer to hypothesis constructs that cannot be directly observed or measured in the social sciences, such as personality, intelligence, and attitude. On the other hand, if it can be directly measured or observed, it is called an observation variable or a manifest variable. Questionnaire or measurement scales can be assessed. This research uses these methods to construct validity analysis and model fit to examine the consistence of each dimension structure.

IV. EXPECTED RESULT

In the market orientation and role stress, the market orientation strategy may impose pressure on the travel agency operations personal. In terms of customer orientation, the price of tourism goods is M-shaped, and the products and services are highly homogenous. The price competition strategy has become the normal. Therefore, customers tend to obtain high quality products at low prices with price sensitivity. In practical, when customer orientation is high in enterprises, the travel agency operations personal should face various requirements such as asking for the low price and must meet the customer's price expectations. Also, they need to take company's relevant regulations and individual performance factors, etc. into consideration. Role conflicts may rise. On the other hand, nowadays information technology and life are inseparable. Telecommunication software is often used to communicate with customers or provide information. If customers have problems after work, practitioners still need to solve customers' problems. The application of the network makes the communication between the customer and the salesman easier and faster, but it also causes the worries of the salesperson high working hours and affect daily life [64], and the role conflict will rise. The expected results assume that customer orientation is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies (H1).

In such a fierce competition of travel agencies in Taiwan, competitor orientation strategy often seeks new changes which can enhance competitive advantages. It also makes it difficult for

competitors to obtain information. Therefore, the competitor orientation strategy of the travel agencies is hard to be objective. However, how employees can obtain competitors' information, then share and discuss strategies, it depends on personal experience and ability and time cost. Travel agencies in Taiwan have high turnover, lack of staff training and many newcomers lack of work experience. With a view to understand the competitor's messages and respond quickly and share it, employees may not be able to achieve the expectations of the role sender due to the factors such as abilities and time permission. And it creates role conflicts. Therefore, the expected results show that competitor orientation is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies (H2).

In many travel agencies in Taiwan, informationization has gradually increased, and internal communication has been implemented and shared quickly. The departmentalization and strategic planning have also changed the way of single role to be executed tasks in the past. The working procedures are closely to each department. Therefore, employees in each department should coordinate with each other in completing a service process, understanding the strategies, and sharing resources so that all departments can clearly understand their job responsibilities and expectations from role sender. As a result, there are many human factors in the travel agencies in Taiwan. In the process of interaction with salesperson and other departments, although there are resources sharing and strategic discussions, the principles of enterprise are stick to subjective facts. In the past, research revealed that the job design of employees usually requires a certain degree of flexibility [21]. Thus, as a salesperson needs to interact with customers in flexibility and subjective ways, the role conflict will arise. The expected results revels that inter-functional coordination is positively correlated between role conflicts toward travel agencies (H3).

The labors of working place for salesperson in travel agencies are diversity and complex. They must have high professional competence to be competent, and the accumulations of experience are relatively important for workplace. It is necessary to constantly adapt to the needs of customers to make changes, and if the salespersons make mistakes, they must spend more time and money to make up for it, which also causes pressure on employees in travel agencies [64]. The salesperson is responsible for individual stuff related to travel activities. They must understand and have the ability to how to integrate it into another knowledge output. Each individual activity is a commercial activity [11]. Therefore, some studies in the past found that the uncertainty of the task leads to the incompleteness of the message, which will lead to an increase in the insecurity of individual work and lead to the emergence of role ambiguity [62].

The traveling consumer behavior is unpredictable, and the competitors' strategies are constantly evolving. It is not easy for enterprises to have clear strategies to reflect the current market situation.

The information received by employees is mostly conceptual. In the operation, they still have to rely on personal experience and accumulate experience when the vague message and the expectation will be uncertain. It may lead role ambiguity for employees.

On the other hand, due to the coordination and cooperation process among various departments, for organizational culture and human factors, each department has its own position. Therefore, when performing tasks for salesperson, they cannot understand the expectations given by each department. Employees may be confused about the task-oriented when lots of expectation will be produced. Some departments expect work standardization, while some departments require performance to achieve flexibility. Tosi, Rizzo and Carroll (1994) pointed out that when they cannot confirm the expectations from others, they may vague due to insufficient information on the job targets, and may also result in social-emotional ambiguity due to the role expectations for individual and the unclear results. Therefore, market orientation is positively correlated between role ambiguity (H4; H5; H6).

When role stress arises in travel agency operations personal, it may lower the organizational citizenship behavior. It would be a negative impact. Most of the studies showed that role stress will lower organizational citizenship behavior for employees. With rapidly changes in travel agencies markets, it will be affected by external environmental factors. If employees do not have sufficient job information, they may have role ambiguity and thus reduce their organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, the results of the study is expected that the role conflict and role ambiguity have a negatively impact on organizational citizenship behavior toward the travel agency operations personal (H7; H8).

As above mentioned, there is a negatively impact on role stress and organizational citizenship behavior toward the travel agency operations personal. The higher the role ambiguity and role conflict for practitioners, the lower the organizational citizenship behavior on employees. With internal marketing strategy, it is to improve employees' awareness of the company's own identity and solve this problem. If the stress can be reduced through some mechanisms, the organizational citizenship behavior should be avoided decrease. In practical, there are multi-dimensional enterprises strategies in travel agencies and travel agency operations personal plays may roles. He/she may be part of a product (service), part of a service delivery system, consultant or marketing server. With such a diversity role, they feel physically and psychologically close to customers, managers and other employees. It may lead ambiguity for market strategy and internal conflicts for employees by crossing lines. It may increase the possibilities of role stress. Such diverse roles may increase the possibilities that role stress will occur which may affect the poor performance of employee's behaviors. Therefore, in the agencies, when employees get stressed and lower the organizational citizenship behavior,

internal marketing can be the moderating effect via providing vision, development and rewards in order to lower the role stress for employees. Through the awareness of internal marketing strategies will increase the organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, the expected results show that a moderating effect of internal marketing on the relationship between role stress (role conflict and role ambiguity) and organizational citizenship behavior (H9; H10).

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