

Philosophies from Indian Mythological Characters in Modern Day Internal Marketing: A Case Study on Shree Krishna

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ABSTRACT

One of the most commonly used terms in today's management scenario is Internal Marketing. It aims at treating the employees of an organisation as internal customers. Though the term and its concept are very recent, yet this study attempts to relate this concept with the activities of Shree Krishna as described in the Mahabharata and Shreemad Bhagawad Gita. The study analyses the character and activities of Shree Krishna in the epic Mahabharata, as a continuous user of Internal Marketing strategies who with his excellence, intelligence and a clear idea of the same sets an example for the modern day managers. The study highlights the fact that the then user of Internal Marketing did not know that he is actually boosting the art of hiring, training and motivating but he used the aspects of the same for maintaining efficient and effective human resources for achieving the goals and objectives.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Shree Krishna, Arjuna, the Mahabharata, the Shreemad Bhagawad Gita.

INTRODUCTION:

Internal Marketing:

Internal Marketing means treating the employees as customers and satisfying their needs and wants through proper motivation and reward system to attain desirable results. INTERNAL MARKETING is basically promoting a firm and its product(s) or product lines to its employees. It is a very recent term that has considerably been gaining attention since the last two decades. K.P.M Byju (2013), in his study describes that though some authors like Gronroos (1990), Vary (2001) and Tsai (2008) argue it to be a subsidiary of Human Resource Management, yet it is considered that internal marketing is very essential in order to build a competitive advantage in the business world.

The term internal marketing was first coined in the 1970's and subsequently was being analysed by different authors from time to time. ELSamen Amjad Abu & Alshurideh Muhammad (2012) mentions that Berry L.L in 1984 stated internal marketing as, "The Employees as Customers." They further added that various authors from time to time have defined internal marketing from different perspectives v.i.z Kotler & Armstrong (1991) defined internal marketing as "the building of customer orientation among employees by training and motivating both customers-contact and support staff to work as a team". They also forwarded the view of Vasconcelos (2007) that argued that the external marketing strategies will only be successful if the internal marketing strategies are adequate. This can be done by developing relationships with the employees as customers and satisfying their needs and wants and in turn motivate them to deliver better performances.

Therefore, internal marketing is mainly concerned with –

- a) Hiring
- b) Training and development
- c) Motivation and Rewards

However, internal marketing is not only an amalgamation of the above three stated activities. It is a broad area that also includes various other aspects as well. For a successful internal marketing, the following habits are to be adapted by an organisation-

- a) Effective internal communication between the various departments.
- b) Effective support system like databases, information system etc.
- c) Providing healthy working environment to the employees.
- d) Promoting the art of creativity among the employees and designing newer ways to achieve the objectives to create newness in the job.

A profile of Shree Krishna and his role in the study:

Narayana (2011) in his book mentions the following verse-

*“Vaasudeva Sutam Devam, Kamsa-Chanura Maradanam
Devaki Paramaanandam Krishnam Vande Jagad Gurum”*

The verse explains Shree Krishna as the son of Vasudeva who killed Kamsa (Krishna's maternal uncle) and Chanura that gave Internal Marketing pleasure to his mother Devaki. He is in-fact stated as the universal teacher.

According to the article written by Subhamoy Das (2017), Krishna is considered as an incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu. Das (2017) describes that when the atrocities of the cruel kings were at its zenith, mother Earth prayed to Lord Brahma for help. Brahma in turn requested Vishnu, the supreme God to look into the matter and thereby Vishnu assured Brahma that he would soon take birth on earth as a human and punish the wrong doers. The article highlights one of such cruel king to be Kamsa-the king of Mathura. It adds the story of the day when Kamsa's sister Devaki got married to Vasudeva, he heard a voice from the sky declaring that Devaki's eighth son would kill Kamsa. Kamsa was shocked to hear the celestial announcement and was about to kill Devaki when Vasudeva pleaded Internal Marketing not to kill his wife and promised to give him their eighth son. Kamsa however did not take any chance and captured both of them. The story continues when in prison, Devaki's all the six sons were killed by Kamsa. However, the seventh son was miraculously transferred to the womb of Rohini (the previous wife of Vasudeva) who did not have any children. Das (2017) states that before the birth of the eighth child, lord Vishnu appeared before them and said that he soon take birth as their child and asked Vasudeva to carry him to the house of the cowherd chief Nanda in Gokula and exchange it with the baby girl that Yashoda (wife of Nanda) has given birth to and give the baby to Kamsa as their eighth child. The plan worked accordingly and Krishna was thus raised in the foster home of Nanda and Yashoda. (Das, 2017)

(In later phases of the story, Kamsa was killed by Krishna.)

Krishna has been depicted as a lover, a protector, a leader, a strategist, a manager and a philosopher thereby making him a supreme teacher by all aspects in the four phases of his life covered by four books v.i.z.

Sri Garga Samhita SrInternal Marketingad Bhagavatam
Sri Mahaabharatam Sri Gopaala Sahasanaam

Shree Krishna's philosophies, teachings and strategies have always been considered of vital importance in Hinduism. The greatest of all teachings of Shree Krishna is the Shreemad Bhagawad Gita which he deliberated during the Mahabharata when Arjuna faces dilemma regarding how to fight his relatives in the battle of Kurukshetra. It is during the deliberation of the Bhagawad Gita; Krishna's words are being considered as the words from the God himself and are therefore considered as the best guide book for one's life.

Different people have different notions about Shree Krishna. Some people term him as a saviour whereas some term him as a politician; some term him as God whereas some term him as a management expert.

But in this study, Shree Krishna is considered as an INTERNAL MARKETING Manager who has very efficiently performed all the functions of an INTERNAL MARKETING manager. He made strategies to achieve his objectives and ultimately with intelligence, presence of mind, faith in people and knowledge succeeded in his plans.

Shree Krishna in Chapter 4, Verse no. 8 of the Bhagawad Gita said,

*“Paritranaya Saadhunam, Vinaashaya cha dushkritam
Dharmasansthananaye, sambhabami yuge yuge” (Hazarika, 2009)*

It means that whenever the saints would be tortured and the atrocities of the evil would rise; I would come to establish ethics on earth from time to time.

So, it can be interpreted that Krishna had three basic objectives-

- a) To do good with people.
- b) To discourage wrong practices.
- c) To establish ethical policies

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study deals to achieve three basic objectives which can be enumerated as-

- 1) To analyse the character of Shree Krishna as an INTERNAL MARKETING manager.
- 2) To discuss and relate the strategies and principles adopted by Shree Krishna with modern Internal Marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The methodology adopted for the study is both descriptive and analytical. The study is based on the historical literature based on the contents from the Mahabharata, Shreemad Bhagawad Gita and related stories. Ten popular stories and teachings relating to Shree Krishna has been purposively selected which are further dealt as situation analyses.

On the other hand, the part relating to Internal Marketing is based on the views of various authors and management thinkers available in existing literature. Thus, the study is based on secondary information available in literature both ancient and modern.

The selected cases are explained with the help of content analysis method relating these with the modern internal marketing strategies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Internal Marketing is a very recent concept in the field of marketing. It came into discussion about four decades back. There has been very less number of studies done in this area of marketing. This study is thereby an attempt to provide an insight into this area of marketing and analyse it as a part and parcel of every organisation which contributes significantly for the organisation's survival and sustenance.

The study advocates the fact that Internal Marketing, though a very new concept, yet its existence can be dated years back. The study tries to relate the past with the present.

CASE STUDIES BASED ON THE ACTIVITIES OF SHREE KRISHNA:

Situation:

Narayana (2011) states that in the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata when Krishna appeared for the first Internal Marketing in the Swayambar of Draupadi, the Mahabharata describes it as-

*“Tatprekshya Karma AtInternal Marketinganushya Buddhi
Jishnuh Sa Hi Braaturachintya Karmaa,
Daamodaro Bhraataram Ugra Veeryam
Haalaayudham Vaakyam Idam Babhaashe”
(M.B. I.189.19)*

When Krishna sees Arjuna disguised as a Brahmin in the groom selection ceremony called Swayambar of Draupadi, successful in hitting the fish hanging above by looking only at its image in the water below, all other kings and princes protested as he being a Brahmin he was not supposed to take part among the Kshyatria. Nobody recognized Arjuna and other Pandavas but Krishna with his sharp observation and intellectual power identified Arjuna and the Pandavas.

Analysis:

The case can be highlighted with the angle of hiring. It focuses that an internal marketing manager should have a sharp observation and intellectual power to identify the potential employees who could contribute to their fullest to the organisation's success.

Situation:

Krishna in the Shreemad Bhagawad Gita Chapter IV, Verse number 34 said-

*“Tadviddi Prani Paatena, Pariprashnena Sevayaa
Upedekshshyanti Te Gnaanam, Gnaani Naa Tattva Darshina”*

(Narayana , 2011)

During the war of Kurukshetra when Krishna was trying to motivate Arjuna, he was in the opinion that the teacher should be a knowledgeable person who has enough experience who has good communication skills. He should teach his students by approaching them with respect and courtesy i.e. in the same manner that he wants to be treated by them. (Narayana, 2011)

Analysis:

It can be interpreted that the internal marketing manager should possess the requisite qualities if he wants to excel in the art of hiring, training and motivation. Any employee would feel more loyal towards his manager if he is treated with dignity and respect. Following these principles would lead to lesser employee turnover thereby leading to better performance.

Situation:

Shakuni once played the strategy of sending sage Durvasa to meet the Pandavas in the forest. It was quite sure for him that when the Pandavas would fail to provide proper food to him Internal Marketing due to poverty, it would offend Durvasa and would in turn curse the Pandavas. Krishna when knew of the incident, he immediately offered the Pandavas the ‘Akshaya Patra’- the vessel that produced continuous food in order to save them from the plight.

Analysis:

This case can be analysed in light of trust gaining. It is the first and foremost duty of any internal marketing manager to gain the trust of the employees. It is only when the employees have enough trust on their manager; they would work their heart and soul for the benefit of the organisation. Krishna knew it very well beforehand that it is only the Pandavas who could stand on the side of ethics and do well to mankind by winning the probable war that was going to initiate between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. He therefore did not lose the opportunity to win the trust of the Pandavas and therefore helped them at their Internal Marketing of need. It also depicts that if a manager stands for his employees at their Internal Marketing of need, the employees would trust on the manager as their companion and not only as a superior. In other words, it would develop smooth superior-subordinate relationship which is very essential for better Human Resource Management.

Situation:

Shree Krishna in Chapter 3, Verse 20 of the Bhagawad Gita says,

*“Lokasangrah Mevappi
Sampashyan kantu Mahashi”*

(Hazarika, 2009)

It means one should do his/her work considering the good of people.

Analysis:

Any organisation is owned by people, run by people and is made for people. When the organisation hires any employee its main objective is to fulfil the good interests of the owners of the organisation. When the employees are being trained, the main objective is to let them perform better so that their work can satisfy the needs of the customers and when the employees are being motivated, the main objective is to do well with them and satisfy their wants. As all the three aspects are to be performed by an internal marketing manager. It is suggested that the activities of hiring, training and motivating are to be done keeping in mind welfare of the people concerned. Shree Krishna has succeeded in achieving the ultimate goals of his life because he performed all these activities with the only intension of welfare of the people. He believed that when people around him are happy, they would contribute to their fullest; and when people contribute to their fullest, success is imminent.

Situation:

Shree Krishna in Chapter 14, verse 13 in the Bhagawad Gita said,

*“Aprakashuh prabrittishyo
Pramado moh awo sow
Tatsyutani jaayante
Wibridde kurunandan”* (Hazarika, 2009)

Shree Krishna opines Arjuna that routine works tend to be boring thereby making the person less productive. Therefore, in order to reenergize oneself, one must come out of one's comfort zone and learn new things.

Analysis:

This is a case of training. Being an internal marketing manager, Krishna opined that it is quite obvious that employees get less productive if they continuously perform the same job for a longer period of time. Their work becomes monotonous and lethargic. It becomes necessary for the organisation to pull them out of their comfort zone and teach them new things. In other words, it becomes necessary for the organisation to train the employees from time to time in order to continuously improve their level of productivity.

Situation:

Narayana (2011) in his book mentions Verse No. 72 from Chapter 4 of the Mahabharata as-

*“Prati Guhya Cha Taam Paarthah
Purskriya Janaardanam
Vivaaham Kaarayaamaasa”.*

At the end of the incognito phase of the Pandavas, Uttara, the princess of Matsya kingdom was married to Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna. The marriage was conducted in the presence of Shree Krishna. Krishna brought lot of wealth as gifts for the couple. He did so because he knew that the Pandavas had no cash, no wealth or assets except their clothes with them and they would require a lot of money to conduct the marriage.

Analysis:

The case enlightens the fact that with the right men and right strategy and right inputs, it is possible to gain profitability. In referred context, the right man is Krishna, the right strategy is his anticipation regarding organising capital to carry the business, inputs are the wealth and profitability is the ultimate support from the Matsya kingdom. Krishna therefore being the right internal marketing manager planned the right strategy to invest in the right human resource to get the right profitability in the future.

Situation:

When Arjuna and Duryodhana both went to seek help from Krishna for his support in the battle of Kurukshetra, Krishna was asleep. Duryodhana was the first to reach Krishna's cabin. Being an egoist, he was reluctant to wait near his feet and sad beside his head and waited for him to wake up. After some time, Arjuna arrived. He was humble and decided to wait near the feet of Krishna. When Krishna woke up, he saw Arjuna first. When both of them spoke that both of them wanted Krishna's support in the battle, Krishna said that both of them were dear to him. So he suggested that he shall provide his entire army to one of them and would give his moral support to another. However, he shall not pickup a single weapon in the entire battle. Being Arjuna the first he saw, he gave him the first chance to choose. Arjuna, immediately chose Krishna's moral support. Duryodhana was very happy at this and considered Arjuna as a fool and went back Hastinapur happily with Krishna's army.

Analysis:

This case depicts the fact that an internal marketing manager cannot openly take sides. But he should know it very well that he should encourage only those employees who has potential to work for the betterment of the organisation by supporting the ethical principles. He should be calculative in nature and projective too. He knew it very well that Arjuna was humble, wise and ethical whereas Duryodhana was an egoist and was unethical. Therefore, Krishna knew that the Arjuna would surely choose for his moral support and would not demand for manpower. And the final outcome was victory of the Pandavas in the war because of the expert managerial advices from Krishna.

Situation:

When Balrama wanted Duryodhana to marry his and Krishna's sister Subhadra, Krishna did not want so to happen, because he knew it was a strategy of Shakuni and Duryodhana to ally Balrama and gain his support along with Krishna's. He therefore asked Arjuna to abduct Subhadra in his chariot and marry her. He also asked Subhadra to hold the reins of the chariot so that it did not seem like abduction.

Analysis:

This case is a motivational strategy by Krishna in support of ethics by giving his sister off for marriage to Arjuna. He knew that Arjuna loved Subhadra. So, Krishna fulfilled his want because he knew that this would be an ethical job for the well being of mankind and would also motivate him to achieve his objectives. On the other hand, Krishna also considered Subhadra's perception about the marriage and conducts it as per her will to satisfy her. He therefore asked her to hold the reins of the chariot to portray her acceptance of the incident.

In present day scenario, if we consider Krishna as the manager, Arjuna as the employee who needs to be motivated, Marriage as the means to get motivated and Subhadra as the customer, things seem to get set in their places. In other words, the internal marketing manager motivated his employee by the means provided keeping in mind customer perception thereby leading to customer satisfaction.

Situation:

When Arjuna and Krishna helped Agni to burn down the Khandava forest; the wife of snake Takshaka died in the fire. Their son Aswasena somehow escaped from the fire. He was burning in revenge when one day he got the opportunity to kill Arjuna and Krishna in the battle of Kurukshetra when Arjuna was fighting Karna. He emerged from the earth and entered Karna's quiver and took form of an arrow which was shot by Karna to kill Arjuna. Seeing the incoming threat Krishna pushed the chariot one foot beneath the ground with his feet. The arrow hit Arjuna's crown and saved his life.

Analysis:

An internal marketing manager also plays the duty to protect his employees from external threats. Competitors often try either to attract the competitive employees from other organisations or try to destroy their career in order to play a win game by pushing them to conspiracies. It is the duty of the internal marketing manager to effectively train and motivate the employees and also keep a track of the external threats so that his employees are on a safer side.

FINDINGS:

The major findings of the study are-

- 1) The origin of Internal Marketing can be dated back to history where an informal practice of it is evident.
- 2) The theories of internal marketing that were framed in the late century were seemed to be practiced thousands of years ago.
- 3) The main objective of Internal Marketing was always to boost the art of hiring, training and motivating effective and efficient employees to reap the best out of them.
- 4) Internal Marketing always focused on ethical principles and was meant mainly for guiding and developing the employees in a positive direction.

CONCLUSION:

Though it is widely accepted that INTERNAL MARKETING is a concept which is very new that came into existence only a few decades back, yet it can be deciphered from the study that its practice is as old as 3228 B.C (Krishna date of birth, n.d.). The cases illustrated in the study successfully relate the activities of Shree Krishna to the modern day practices which prove the previous statement.

The study proves it very well that in every tactic of Shree Krishna was focused upon how to achieve his goal by satisfying the needs of his followers, especially Arjuna. He managed himself well between the activities of hiring, training and motivating his employee. This aspect helps us in confirming our first objective to be fulfilled.

The study constantly depicts how the strategies applied by Shree Krishna are relevant in real business scenario in day to day life. Every business house, in order to climb the ladder of success more or less follows the same principles and strategies once Shree Krishna suggested. The study proves with the various examples that his techniques of achieving success are not age old or out of date. They are in-fact very advanced techniques of gaining a competitive advantage. Therefore, it states our second objective of the relevancy of Shree Krishna's strategies to be effective in present day time to be fulfilled.

Shree Krishna was a perfect user of INTERNAL MARKETING strategies who had all the qualities that any user of INTERNAL MARKETING should have. One of the most significant quality he had was that he did not confine himself to the internal environment only but was aware of the external environment as well that made him more adaptable to the changing scenario. Case number 9 is the best analysis for the point. Analysis of these cases helps us to decipher that INTERNAL MARKETING is such a concept that helps to effectively relate itself to various other aspects of marketing fulfilling the 3rd objective of the study.

In a nutshell, we can sum up from the study that effective INTERNAL MARKETING is a two way process i.e. merely hard work on the part of the INTERNAL MARKETING manager would not serve the purpose but effective participation is also required from the part of the employees. When both of the INTERNAL MARKETING manager and the employees come together for the growth of the organisation, success is for sure.

NOTES:

- 1) **Adi Parva:** It is the first book out of the collection of eighteen books of the Mahabharata.
- 2) **Bheesma:** The eldest son of King Shantanu and the eldest brother of Dhritarashtra and Pandu.
- 3) **Brahma:** The deity who is considered to be the creator of the universe.
- 4) **Brahmin:** The priestly class in Hinduism.
- 5) **Chaanura:** A huge wrestler employed by King Kamsa to kill Shree Krishna who was in turn he who got killed by Krishna.
- 6) **Corporate spying:** Act of gathering information-some legal whereas some may not; of the employees and company without their knowledge or consent.
- 7) **Devaki:** The biological mother of Shree Krishna.
- 8) **Duryodhana:** The eldest of the Kaurava brothers and son of the blind king Dhritarashtra.
- 9) **Gandharvas:** They are male nature spirits who are skilled classical singers in the court of Gods according to Hinduism and Buddhism.
- 10) **Kshyatria:** The warrior class in Hinduism.
- 11) **Shreemad Bhagawad Gita:** It is a set of narrative framework of the discussion between Arjuna and Shree Krishna in the battle of Kurukshetra. It is a part of the Hindu epic Mahabharata which consists of 700 verses.
- 12) **Swayambar:** A competition where the bride as the option to choose her groom from the bravest.
- 13) **Vasudeva:** The biological father of Shree Krishna.
- 14) **Vishnu:** The deity who is considered to be the preserver of the universe.
- 15) **Yashoda:** The foster mother of Shree Krishna.

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