

**THE MEDIATING ROLE OF INTERNAL MARKET ORIENTATION ON  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY  
AND JOB SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF TURKISH HOTEL  
COMPANIES**

*ALGILANAN HİZMET KALİTESİ VE İŞ TATMİNİ İLİŞKİSİNDE İÇSEL PAZAR  
ODAKLILIĞIN ARACILIK ETKİSİ: TÜRK OTELLERİ ÖRNEĞİ*

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study is to determine whether service quality perceptions of hotel employees affect their work job satisfaction and to reveal whether internal market orientation has an intermediary role in this interaction. The population of the research is “All employees working in hotels with tourism establishment certificates which were operating in Turkey throughout the month of June 2019”. Data obtained from AKTOB – Association of Mediterranean Tourism, were used to determine the population size of the research. Within the scope of the data obtained, the size of the population was set as 315.513 people. Since it was not possible for the population, random sampling was used. In sampling, out of random sampling methods, the “field sampling method” was adopted. For this study, a test model has been developed and a survey has been conducted on 303 employees. In this study, internal market orientation was researched by using the structural equation model by associating the perceived service quality and job satisfaction. The most striking result of the study is the high causality impact of internal market orientation on job satisfaction. Employees, who feel that they are being cared about more in terms of internal market orientation, will have higher job satisfaction and high corporate loyalty. As a result of the Sobel Test, which was carried out to support the result regarding the mediation effect, also shows that the mediation effect is significant.

**Key Words:** Internal market orientation, perceived service quality, job satisfaction, hotel industry, Turkey.

**ÖZ:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki otel işletmesi çalışanlarının hizmet kalitesi algılamalarının iş tatminlerini etkileyip etkilemediğini tespit etmek ve bu etkileşimde içsel pazar odaklılığın aracılık rolü olup olmadığını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmanın evrenini "2019 Haziran ayı süresince Türkiye'de faaliyet gösteren turizm işletme belgeli otellerde çalışantüm çalışanlar" oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın evren büyüklüğünün belirlenmesinde AKTOB – Akdeniz Turistik Otelciler ve İşletmeciler Birliği'nden alınan veriler kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler kapsamında evrenin büyüklüğü 315.513 kişi olarak tespit edilmiştir. Evrenin tümüne ulaşmak mümkün olmadığından örnekleme yoluna gidilmiştir.

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Örneklemede tesadüfî örnekleme yöntemlerinden “alanlara göre örnekleme yöntemi” kullanılmıştır. Önerilen model 303 otel çalışanı üzerinde test edilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi’nin (YEM) kullanıldığı bu araştırma sonucunda, algılanan hizmet kalitesinin iş tatmini üzerinde etkisi olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Aynı zamanda, içsel pazar odaklılığın algılanan hizmet kalitesi ve iş tatmini arasındaki ilişki üzerinde kısmi (partial) bağdaştırıcı etkisi olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Analiz sonucunda aracılık etkisine ilişkin sonucu desteklemek amacıyla gerçekleştirilen Sobel Testi de aracılık etkisinin anlamlı olduğunu göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İçsel pazar odaklılık, algılanan hizmet kalitesi, iş tatmini, otelcilik sektörü, Türkiye

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Internal market orientation is a kind of internal marketing-focused approaches that are applied directly towards employees to encourage them to show better performance in line with the objectives of the establishment (Lings & Greenley, 2010). Internal market orientation covers recruiting the right people (Öztürk, 2003; Nikbin et al., 2010; Ene, 2013), training by which the employees can improve their skills (Öztürk, 2003; Candan & Çekmecelioğlu, 2009; Nikbin et al., 2010; Ene, 2013; Kozak et al., 2014; Özdemir, 2014; Ergün & Boz, 2017), empowering them by delegating authority (Öztürk, 2003; Candan & Çekmecelioğlu, 2009; Nikbin et al., 2010; Kozak et al., 2014), and rewarding them with both material incentives like bonuses and immaterial incentives like setting up an employee of the month (Öztürk, 2003; Nikbin et al., 2010; Kozak et al., 2014; Özdemir, 2014; Ergün & Boz, 2017). Since the service quality gains asignificant competitive advantage, especially in labor-intensive industries (Gil et al., 2006; Keshavarz & Jamshidi, 2018: 220), employees who are in face-to-face contact with customers are seen as an essential human capital for organizations (Adomaitiene & Slatkevičienė, 2008: 157). An increase in satisfaction levels of customers and employees (i.e., the internal customers) are directly proportional. Thus, it is vital for managers to create an organizational culture that will enable employees’ satisfaction by improving working conditions through organization policies, team works, effective training, and rewards (Demirel, 2009). Personnel’s job satisfaction has particular importance in tourism establishments where fare-to-face relations with customers are at the forefront. Data obtained from previous researches show that job satisfaction in the tourism industry reduces leave of employment and supports improvements in the hotels’ overall performance (Israeli & Barkan, 2003: 25).

In this study, internal market orientation was examined using the structural equation model by associating the perceived service quality and job satisfaction. The impact of internal service quality perception on job satisfaction and the intermediary role of internal market orientation thereon have been sought. The literature review revealed some findings regarding the relationship between perceived service quality, internal market orientation, and job satisfaction. However, no study was encountered

that is dealing with the intermediary role of internal market orientation. Most of the studies, which considered said variables together, examined the impact of internal market orientation on the perceived service quality. This study, where we have approached the subject from another perspective, suggests that the service quality the employees perceive may also have an impact on their perception towards the internal market orientation that is being applied in the establishment. Hence, it has been hypothesized that the employees who regard the service quality in the establishment as “high” may also have a positive perception towards internal market orientation practices and that these positive perceptions will have a positive impact on the satisfaction they feel about their job.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Internal Market Orientation (IMO)**

Although the internal market orientation is a philosophy under the internal marketing approach, it is reviewed in a broader frame since it encompasses satisfying the demands and needs of employees (Lings & Greenley, 2005; Gounaris et al., 2010; Sanchez-Hernandez & Miranda, 2011; Giannopoulos & Avlonitis, 2014). There will be employees with higher job satisfaction in the organizations that can motivate their employees within the scope of internal market orientation (Salem, 2013; Shamsudin et al. 2015). In internal market orientation based on mutual trust, when the employees feel confident that their organizations will keep employee-related promises, the quality of the service provided by them increases (Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016). The job satisfaction felt by employees in the service sector who are in direct communication with customers’ affects employees’ loyalty to the organization, their motivation, and the service quality perception of the customer they serve (Lings, 2004). Internal market orientation basically has three objectives. These objectives are to increase (i) the motivation of employees (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991), (ii) the satisfaction of employees (Nikbin et al., 2010; Lings & Greenley, 2010; Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016), and (iii) employees’ loyalty to the organization (Farzad et al., 2008; Nikbin et al., 2010; Gounaris et al., 2010; Lings & Greenley, 2010; Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016). Satisfied employees, whose demands and needs are met and who feel they are being appreciated and have high motivation, are not often seen to be looking for a new job (Lings & Greenley, 2005; Candan & Çekmecelioğlu, 2009). Besides, these employees give better service to customers (Tortosa et al., 2009; Gounaris et al., 2010). Thus, it would not be wrong to say that internal market orientation proposes a win-win approach where all parties likely to win (Lings & Greenley, 2010; Ene, 2013).

Lings & Greenly (2005) analyzed internal market orientation in five dimensions: (a) formal written information generation, (b) formal face-to-face information generation, (c) informal information generation, (d) information dissemination, and (e) responsiveness. Formal approaches regarding the information

generation arise in two ways: written media use (for example, interview forms and job satisfaction surveys) and formal face-to-face interactions (for instance, interviews, evaluations, and meetings). Like in external market researches, these two information generation methods are supplementary; they ensure identifying the underlying issues and concerns of the employees through surveys, questionnaires, and face to face interviews, which are responded anonymously. The physical closeness of the managers and field staff provides a space for informal daily and face-to-face interactions, offering additional opportunities for information generation. In the internal market, formal and informal communication, and accordingly, formal and informal information on employees' demands and needs occur independently and simultaneously. In such a case, increasing the use of formal surveys and focus groups will not cause a decrease in informal face-to-face interaction between managers and field employees. Information dissemination is an important prerequisite in aligning the attitudes and behaviors of employees with the goals of the institution. Internal communication is essential during this course. Close-up physical relationships between managers and employees increase opportunities for this type of communication and provide a chance to gather information about the wishes and needs of employees as well as spreading information. Responsiveness, the last dimension of IMO, has to do with responding to the information generated about the demands and needs of employees. This information may be related to the work, incentives, salaries, bonus programs, management attitude, training, social factors, which are designed to meet the needs of the employees. One of the most suggested uses of the IMO information is to meet the needs of employees and thus to satisfy and motivate them. However, Tortosa, Moliner & Sanchez (2009) combined IMO's five dimensions that Lings and Greenley developed, with the dimensions of formal written information generation and formal face-to-face information generation, and used them as one dimension under formal information generation, thereby decreasing them to a total of 4 dimensions.

## **2.2. Perceived (Internal) Service Quality (PSQ)**

Service quality is generally described as meeting the needs and expectations of customers (Podnar & Golob, 2010: 1775; Priporas et al. 2017; Osarenkhoe et al. 2017), and is treated as a decision on general perfection of a service interaction or superiority (Tsai & Tang, 2008: 1118; Korda & Milfelner, 2009). Since customers expect high-quality services and are willing to pay high prices to obtain this quality, service quality is of capital importance for many customers (Kyoonyoo & Ah Park, 2007: 908). While the external service quality is described as the service quality that customers expect, internal service quality must be offered to employees who offer high-quality service to customers (Varey, 1995: 42) since it has a significant impact on the external service quality and the financial performance of the organization (Di

Xie, 2005; Yoldemir, 2015; Manav, 2017). Service quality begins to improve only when the employees are willing to offer high-quality service the customers need. This will can be met when the employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs and ensure team spirit and when organizations keep the promises they give to them (Gounaris et al. 2003). Organizations are able to ensure that the employees become aware of their service quality by giving various training to, or rewarding them for improving their skills (Tsai & Tang, 2008). An employee who knows his/her service quality is expected to give higher quality service to his/her customer as well. Slatten (2009) indicates that the service quality provided by employees can be measured in four different ways: employee self-evaluation, evaluations by other colleagues, evaluations by managers, and evaluation by customers. Indeed, internal service quality depends on determining and meeting employees' demands, needs, and problems through the mutual dialog of the employees, managers, and all departments of an organization (Di Xie, 2005). Tsai & Tang (2008) examine the correlation between internal marketing and service quality. This research results indicate that service quality affects customer behaviors (like organizational commitment) that contribute to organizations' ability to ensure competitive advantage, supporting their hypothesis. The authors proved that three internal marketing implementations (service training programs, performance incentives, and vision about excellence service) have various impacts on the improvement of service quality.

### **2.3. Job satisfaction (JS)**

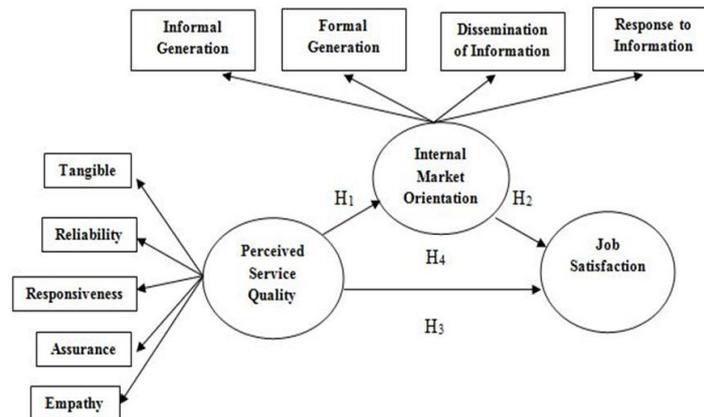
Job satisfaction denominated as employee satisfaction can be described as "satisfactory or positive emotional state resulting from an evaluation of an individual's work or working experience" (Locke, 1976: 1300 – quoted by; Tortosa, Moliner & Sanchez, 2009: 1440; Usta, 2009). Robbins & Coulter (1996) describe job satisfaction as the general attitude of an employee towards his/her job, while Davis & Newstrom (1989) emphasize that job satisfaction is a cluster composed of all positive and negative feelings about, subjective thoughts of and attitudes towards the job. Negative feelings mean job dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is handled in two dimensions; internal satisfaction as the emotional satisfaction level that the job creates in employees and external satisfaction that indirectly occurs due to working atmosphere, high salary, and rewards (Yıldız, 2011). Smith et al. (1969), propose that job satisfaction has five dimensions: satisfaction by the job, satisfaction by the salary, satisfaction by promotion and rewards, satisfaction by the management, and satisfaction by the colleagues.

Job satisfaction is considered as the fundamental determinant of a company's profit and growth. As known, job satisfaction drives efficiency and customer satisfaction, and satisfied and motivated employees generate high-quality service, increasing loyal customers to establishments (Eskildsen & Dahlgard, 2000: 1081-1082). Herzberg et al. (1959) argued that the physical environment, together

with social and personal factors, affect job satisfaction. They have classified the physical environment as working conditions and safety; social factors as employees' sense of belonging to their workplace; personal factors as the employees' attachment to their workplace and leadership they perceive (i.e., behaviors of the managers). Kong et al. (2018), influenced by the study of Herzberg et al., identified the factors affecting job satisfaction in the four groups of personal, organizational, social, familial, and psychological factors. Vijajikumar & Vivek (2018), on the other hand, classified them in their study as career development, salaries and rewards, work safety as well as a working environment.

### 3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

Related studies has been reviewed before the conceptual model was created, and the gaps within the literature have been tried to be identified. It is also noted how often job satisfaction-related variables are examined in field studies. In this respect, limited number of studies analyzing the mediation effect of internal market orientation has been encountered in researches examining the possible relationship between perceived service quality and job satisfaction. The conceptual model was created based on the statistical evidence of perceived service quality, internal market orientation, and job satisfaction, both in theory and obtained in previous studies. The model, which covers all related variables within the framework of the main purpose of the research, is given in Figure 1. The model identifies PSQ as an independent variable, JS as a dependent variable, and IMO as an intermediary variable, and hypotheses were developed in a way to represent causal interactions between these variables.



**Figure 1.** The conceptual model of the research

Sukanthasirikul & Trongpanich (2013) analyzed the relative importance of internal market orientation and service quality affecting service performance in their studies. The results of their studies demonstrate that there is a reliable and positive

relationship between perceived service quality and internal market orientation. Similarly, Opoku et al. (2008) indicate that internal marketing activities under internal market orientation are in a positive interaction with service quality, supporting Ling's approach (1999) that service quality will increase thanks to internal market orientation. The main finding of the Kyoon Yoo & Ah Park's (2007) research is that internal market orientation is a critical element for increasing service quality. According to the authors, it is possible to manage the perceived service quality with proper attention to the employees. Slatten (2009) has conducted researches between two types of managerial implementations ("reward" and "support"), two types of emotional satisfaction ("positive" and "negative") and the service quality employees perceive. In the study, it has been shown that managerial reward and managerial support have a direct relationship with both positive and negative feelings and also with service quality perceived by the employees. Mainly, positive and negative feelings are directly related to the service quality employees perceive. Moreover, it is asserted that emotional satisfaction partially intermediates the relationship between managerial (reward and support) implementations and the service quality perceived by employees. This finding supports Tsai & Tang's (2008) finding that employees' service quality will increase with reward systems, an internal market orientation implementation. A similar result is also seen in Usta's (2009) study. According to the results that the researcher placed emphasis on, there is a meaningful relationship between the employees' internal marketing perception and service quality perception, and job satisfaction has a full intermediary effect in this relationship. In one of research with the result that perceived service quality affects information exchange of the management with the employees (Raju et al., 1995), it is emphasized that perceived service quality is also related to the workforce circulation and feelings of the employees towards the establishment (Raju et al., 1995) although it is not known whether information exchange is one of the elements of internal market orientation (Gounaris, 2006). In another study that examines the subject from another perspective, it is observed that service quality perception affects employees' internal market orientation indirectly and causes an establishment to obtain competitive advantage (Sittimalakorn & Hart, 2004: 251).

***H<sub>1</sub>: Perceived service quality has a statistically significant effect on internal market orientation.***

While employees' job satisfaction is the interim goal of an internal marketing program, customer satisfaction continues to be the end goal (Gounaris, Vassilikopoulou & Chatzipanagiotou, 2010: 1668). Establishments with internal market orientation have a higher possibility to understand the needs and requirements of its employees and to consider them as internal customers. Internal market-oriented establishments contribute to an increase in employee satisfaction by establishing communications for organizational purposes and identifying the role of

their employees and improving the working environment (Jyoti & Sharma, 2012: 299). In their study on measuring the impact of internal market orientation on employee satisfaction, Tortosa-Edoi et al. (2010) suggest that internal market orientation perceived by the employees has a direct, positive, and meaningful effect on job satisfaction. The research by Lings & Greenley (2005) aiming to show the relationship between internal market orientation and employees' job satisfaction revealed that employees who have effective communication with the management would have higher job satisfaction, thereby creating an impact on their daily attitudes and behaviors which will affect customer satisfaction. In another study, Tortosa-Edoi et al. (2009) examined internal market orientation within the scope of job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The results indicate that internal market orientation affects personnel satisfaction, service quality perceived by the customer, and customer satisfaction. Jyoti & Sharma (2012) have designed a model that shows the direct structural relation of internal market orientation between its role in work performance and customer satisfaction and accordingly, job satisfaction. In their studies, they reached findings that suggest that internal market orientation creates higher job satisfaction. Different researches, which indicate the internal market orientation and job satisfaction have a similar tendency, also support this relation (Hwang & Chi, 2005; Chang & Chang, 2007; Nikbin et al., 2010; Salem, 2013; Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016; Yarımoğlu & Ersönmez, 2017; Ergün & Boz, 2017). In particular, according to the results presented by Yarımoğlu and Ersönmez, internal market orientation implementations in lodging industry affect the factors of salary, promotion, management, feeling of appreciation, and colleagues among the job satisfaction dimensions,

***H<sub>2</sub>: Internal market orientation has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction.***

The more an employee is satisfied with his/her job, the more likely he/she is to remain in his/her job and the less likely to leave the job (He et al., 2010: 37). When there is job satisfaction, employees will present high-quality service to satisfy customers. In this case, it is mentioned that job satisfaction may somehow have a "self-sustainable effect" regarding business performance (Bakhare Sinha, 2011: 48). Moreover, when the employees perceive that the outputs (like rewards, promotion, and salary increase) that they will obtain from their working places are more than the efforts they make, they will take the responsibility to increase the quality of the service they offer (Zaman et al., 2012: 80). He et al. (2010) investigate the relationship between service quality perceived by employees and job satisfaction within the frame of empowerment of the employees. The results show that there is a positive correlation between the service quality perceived by employees and job satisfaction. According to the motivation theory, employees get motivated to show good performance and become satisfied with their work when they are rewarded with

both internal and external incentives. However, the results revealed that money is not the most powerful motivation instrument. Employees are motivated more with feelings and emotions like success, work pleasure, sense of belonging, autonomy, and personal development. Similarly, Bakhere Sinha (2011) analyzed the relationship between job satisfaction, service quality, customer satisfaction, and company profitability. According to the results, job satisfaction is a fundamental factor in increasing employees' service quality and customer satisfaction. Results obtained from previous researches show that employees who are satisfied with their jobs have more sense of belonging to the organizations where they work and give higher quality service (Slatten, 2009; Usta, 2009; Nikbin, 2010; Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016). When an employer offers appropriate working conditions that satisfy employees, the employees tend to show extra effort to give a high level of service quality. By basing on the theory of equality in social transformation, it is proposed that the satisfaction of employees causes higher service quality (Bakhere Sinha, 2011: 45). Similarly, job dissatisfaction leads to a decrease in service quality and performance (Kong et al., 2018).

***H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived service quality has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction.***

***H<sub>4</sub>: Internal market orientation moderates the relationship between perceived service quality and job satisfaction.***

#### 4. METHOD

The research objective is to examine the causal relationship of the perception of internal market orientation in the context of the impact of perceived service quality on job satisfaction. In this respect, the study has investigated whether the perception of internal market orientation has an intermediary role in the effect of the service quality, perceived by the employees of the lodging establishments operating in the tourism sector, on job satisfaction. The research design has a theoretical and empirical basis. It is observed that there are studies that contain speculative explanations obtained during the literature review on PSQ, IMO, and JS concepts. However, no study that examines the causal relations of PSQ perceptions on both IMO and JS has been encountered.

The population of the research is "All employees working in hotels with tourism establishment certificates which were operating in Turkey throughout the month of June 2019." Data obtained from AKTOB – Association of Mediterranean Tourism, were used to determine the population size of the research. Within the scope of the data obtained, the size of the population was set as 315.513 people (aktob.org.tr). As a result of the calculations made to determine the sample size, the sample size to be reached was determined as 384. Since it was not possible for the population, random sampling was used. In sampling, out of random sampling methods, the "field sampling method" was adopted. Respectively, geographical

regions, cities, and hotel establishments from which the data gathered were determined through a lottery method, and then questions were posed to employees working in these hotels. The four and five star hotels numbers were used according to Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey's official web site. There is a total of 1489 4- and 5-star hotels. In the first stage of sampling, 2 regions (Central Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia) were determined by lot among 7 geographical regions. In the second stage, 5 cities (Eskişehir, Kilis, Adıyaman, Siirt, Aksaray) were selected by lot among 22 cities in the mentioned regions. Surveys were sent to all 4 and 5 star hotels in 5 cities.

During the survey, participants were asked to answer 52 questions. Out of these questions, 8 of them, which were prepared by using a nominal scale, aimed to measure the socio-demographical features of the participants. The remaining 44 questions were prepared by the 5-point Likert Scale. Out of the distributed 500 survey forms, 303 of them were fully responded and were considered in the evaluation. Due to the return of only 303 of the 500 questionnaires distributed, the minimum sample size could not be reached. However, according to the generally accepted view in the literature, it is stated that the fit indices are fixed after the sample size of 300 in the studies using the structural equation model (Sayın ve Gelbal, 2016). For this reason, it was found appropriate to perform the analyzes with a sample size of 303. Previously developed scales related to the subject, which were tested for their validity and reliability, were chosen in determining the scales to be used for the research. Three different scales were used in the research to measure the dependent and independent variables used in the developed model.

**Perceived Service Quality Scale (PSQ)** has been borrowed from the study titled "How to Improve Service Quality: Internal Marketing as a Determining Factor" by Tsai, Y. & Tang, T. W. (2008). The scale consists of 22 statements and 5 dimensions. These dimensions are as follows: tangible (4 statements), reliability (5 statements), responsiveness (4 statements), assurance (4 statements) and empathy (5 statements). **Internal Market Orientation Scale (IMO)** has been borrowed from the study titled "Internal Market Orientation and Its Influence on Organizational Performance" by Tortosa, V., Moliner M. A. & Sanchez, J. (2009) (This scale has been developed by adapting from Lings and Greenley's (2005) IMO dimensions). The scale consists of 16 statements and 4 dimensions. These dimensions are as follows: informal generation (4 statements), formal generation (3 statements), dissemination of information (4 statements), and response to information (5 statements). **Job Satisfaction Scale (JS)** has been borrowed from the study titled "Internal Market Orientation and Its Influence on Organizational Performance" by Tortosa, V., Moliner M. A. & Sanchez, J. (2009). The scale consists of 6 statements and a single dimension.

All three scales have been used after they were adapted to the Turkish in line with the scope of the study and after necessary checks and edits have been done by linguists. According to Cronbach’s Alpha Test results done for the reliability of the scale questions, reliability parameters of the scale questions were as follows: 920 for the Internal Market Orientation Scale; 885 for the Internal Service Quality Scale; and 837 for the Job Satisfaction Scale. Cronbach’s Alpha value of all the statements (44 pieces) was calculated as 922. Therefore, it was observed that the reliability of the scales was “high.”

Table 1, which is given below, includes information such as participants’ gender, age, marital status, income, work experience, professional position. Data on Table 1 show that the average income of the survey participants is low. The number of employees in the establishment working in low-level positions was high, and their working period in their establishment is generally short.

**Table 1:** Participants’ Socio-Demographic Attributes

<b>Gender</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	127	42	Single	130	%42.9
Male	176	58	Married	173	%57.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>%100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>%100</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
18-25	69	22.77	1000-1500 ₺	15	4.96
26-35	94	31.02	1501-2500 ₺	187	61.71
36-45	74	24.43	2501-3500 ₺	79	26.07
46 and over	66	21.78	3500 ₺ and over	22	7.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>%100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>%100</b>

Before the conceptual model was tested, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were performed on each and every one of internal market orientation, perceived service quality, and job satisfaction scales used in the research, and variables under the scales were examined theoretically in terms of reliability and compatibility. Variables that showed negative variance, and exceed standard parameters (too close to 1.00), or that produce a big standard error were checked (Hair et al., 2010). Measurement errors were thus calculated; covariance was created by also considering a speculative structure among some observed variables. Besides, some variables, which have low regression weight, which cause multi connections in modification indexes, and which have high standardized residual errors, have been excluded from the analyses. Furthermore, factor scores of latent variables were used for a more simple and valid estimation due to such reasons that the number of observed variables is high, that internal market orientation scale consists of four sub-dimensions, that the perceived service quality scale consists of five sub-dimensions, and that the assumed structural equation model is complex. Factor scores used in this estimation method, which is described as regression (structural regression) and conducted with factor scores instead of simultaneous structural equations, have been

obtained from the remaining variables observed as a result of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) (Unurlu & Uca, 2017).

Table 2 shows the standard coefficient, CR, AVE ve Cronbachs Alpha values of remaining variables following the confirmatory factor analyses. All the variables have been confirmed to be higher than these critical values given as references.

**Table 2:** Reliability and validity of the scales

Constructs and Variables after CFA	Std. Coefficient	CR	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
<b>INTERNAL MARKET ORIENTATION</b>				
<b>Informal generation</b>				
1. In this office, they try to find out what employees want.	0.73	0.806	0.511	0.819
2. In this office, when an employee is not acting normally, the managers try to find out if they have a problem.	0.69			
3. In this office, they try to find out the employees' true feelings about their work.	0.80			
4. In this office, the managers often talk to the employees to ask about aspects of their work.	0.63			
<b>Formal generation</b>				
1. In this office, there are regular meetings between managers and employees to discuss matters that the employees wish to address.	0.75	0.791	0.558	0.796
2. In this office, the managers meet with employees at least once a year to discuss the employees' future expectations regarding their work.	0.75			
3. In this office, the managers meet with the employees to try to find out everything that makes them feel satisfied with their work.	0.74			
<b>PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY</b>				
<b>Tangible</b>				
1. Our hotel has up-to-date equipment.	0.73	0.808	0.577	0.711
2. The physical facilities of the hotel are visually appealing.	0.71			
3. We are well-dressed and appear neat.	0.80			
4. The appearance of the physical facilities of the hotel is in keeping with the type of services provided.	0.63			
<b>Reliability</b>				
1. I will finish the assignment in the requested time.	0.73	0.787	0.553	0.705
2. When customers have problems, I am sympathetic and reassuring.	0.75			
3. I always do everything right the first time.	0.75			
<b>3. Responsiveness</b>				
1. I provide prompt service to my customers.	0.80	0.833	0.626	0.702
2. I am always willing to help customers.	0.84			
3. I respond to customers' requests promptly.	0.73			
<b>4. Assurance</b>				
1. Customers can trust me.	0.74	0.800	0.518	0.734
2. Customers feel safe in their interactions with me.	0.85			
3. I serve my customers in a good manner.	0.81			
4. I get adequate support from the hotel to do my jobs well.	0.38			
<b>JOB SATISFACTION</b>				
1. I feel that my work is valuable contact personnel.	0.75	0.809	0.517	0.870
2. In my job, I feel that I am doing something that is worthwhile.	0.70			

3. I feel that my work is interesting.	0.81			
4. I feel that my work satisfies me.	0.60			

Two models to determine the intermediary effects of internal market orientation between perceived service quality and job satisfaction were created in the research. In the first model, the relationship between perceived service quality and job satisfaction, in the second model, the intermediary effect of internal market orientation was examined. Baron & Kenny (1986: 1176) based the formation of intermediary effect on some requirements:

1. There must be a statistically meaningful relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable,
2. There must be a statistically meaningful relationship between the independent variable and the intermediary variable,
3. There must be a statistically meaningful relationship between the intermediary variable and the dependent variable, and
4. When the intermediary variable is included in the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, this relationship must become statistically meaningless (full mediation), or the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable must become less than before (partial mediation).

In the first model, the condition of a significant relationship between the independent variable (perceived service quality) and the dependent variable (job satisfaction), which is one of the mediation conditions of Baron and Kenny (1986), was checked, while in the second model, after the intermediary variable (internal market orientation) was included in the first model, it was checked whether the second, the third and the fourth conditions were met. Relationships between the variables were analyzed in the research by using the structural equation modeling test.



**Figure 2:** Test result of the first model

Outcomes shown in Figure 2 have been obtained following the analyses. Compatibility indexes calculated as a result of the model test are shown in Table 3. Following the examination of the compatibility indexes, it is observed that the values

ensure good compatibility criteria; in other words, the model is compatible with the data.

**Table 3:** Fit indices of the first model

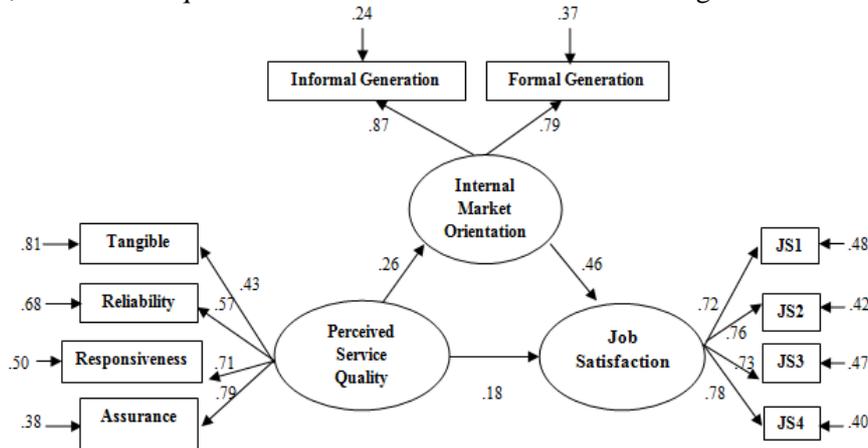
Chosen Criterion	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	Value of Model
$\chi^2$ (CMIN)	-	-	<b>47.36</b>
$\chi^2/df$ (CMIN/df)	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	<b>2.49</b>
GFI	$\geq 0.90$	0.89-0.85	<b>0.96</b>
CFI	$\geq 0.97$	$\geq 0.95$	<b>0.98</b>
RMSEA	$\leq 0.05$	0.06-0.08	<b>0.070</b>
NFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.94-0.90	<b>0.97</b>
RMR	$\leq 0.05$	0.06-0.08	<b>0.020</b>
IFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.94-0.90	<b>0.98</b>

Beta, standard error, and t values of the path reaching from the independent variable of internal service quality to job satisfaction are shown in Table 4. According to the obtained findings, perceived service quality establishes a meaningful effect on job satisfaction. Thus, the first requirement for intermediary effect has been met.

**Table 4:** Path coefficients of the first model

Path	Standardize B	Standard Error	R <sup>2</sup>	t Value
Job Satisfaction ← Perceived Service Quality	0.61	0.63	0.37	7.14

In the second model shown in Figure 3, job satisfaction has been considered as a dependent variable, while perceived service quality as an independent, and internal market orientation as an intermediary variable. The existence of second, third, and fourth requirements was examined under these settings.



**Figure 3:** Test result of the second model

Compatibility indexes, which were calculated following the test of the model shown in Figure 3, demonstrate that the model is within acceptable limits (Table 5).

**Table 5:** Fit indices of the second model

Chosen Criterion	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	Value of Model
$\chi^2$ (CMIN)	-	-	84.03
$\chi^2/df$ (CMIN/df)	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	2.62
GFI	$\geq 0.90$	0.89-0.85	<b>0.95</b>
CFI	$\geq 0.97$	$\geq 0.95$	<b>0.96</b>
RMSEA	$\leq 0.05$	0.06-0.08	<b>0.073</b>
NFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.94-0.90	<b>0.94</b>
RMR	$\leq 0.05$	0.06-0.08	<b>0.054</b>
IFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.94-0.90	<b>0.96</b>

Table 6 shows the standardized beta, standard error, and t values for the paths indicated in the model.

**Table 6:** Path coefficients of the second model

Path	Standardize $\beta$	StandardError	R <sup>2</sup>	t Value
Internal Market Orientation ← Perceived Service Quality	0.26	0.93	0.070	3.69
Job Satisfaction ← Internal Market Orientation	0.46	0.72	0.28	5.86
Job Satisfaction ← Perceived Service Quality	0.18			2.60

According to these findings, perceived service quality variable affects internal market orientation meaningfully, and internal market orientation has a meaningful effect on job satisfaction (standardized  $\beta = .46$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Besides, when internal market orientation is included in the model, the impact of perceived service quality ( $\beta = .18$ ;  $p < .05$ ) on job satisfaction has decreased, meaning that internal market orientation has a partial mediation variable role on perceived service quality's effect on job satisfaction. In the case of partial mediation, the intermediary variable cannot fully measure the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. The relationship between the dependent and independent variables will continue its relevance; however, there will be some decrease in the level of relevance. To build a full intermediary construct, tests like the Sobel (most preferred), Aroian, and Goodman tests (Sobel, 1982) must determine a decrease in the variance explained by the independent variable. At this juncture, the last process which must be performed is to test whether the change, which occurred in the impact of perceived service quality on job satisfaction, is meaningful or not.

**Table 7:** The result of Sobel, Aroian ve Goodman Tests

	Test Statistic	Std. Error	P value
<b>Sobel Test</b>	3.20910939	0.0862769	0.00133147
<b>Aroian Test</b>	3.17576642	0.08718273	0.00149441
<b>Goodman Test</b>	3.24352513	0.08536145	0.0011806

Following the analyses, Sobel, Aroian and Goodman tests were applied to support the conclusion related to the mediation effect (Table 3). Sobel Test results also show that the intermediary impact ( $z=3,209$ ,  $p=0.00131 < 0.05$ ) is meaningful. This result reveals that perceived service quality affects job satisfaction with the mediation of the internal market orientation variable. Thus, all the H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub> ve H<sub>4</sub> hypotheses have been accepted within the scope of the related models.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research has attempted to measure the extent to which the perceived service quality of the hotel employees affects job satisfaction, concluding that the perceived service quality directly affects job satisfaction. Internal market orientation, which has a partial intermediary effect on the relationship between perceived service quality and job satisfaction, is also included in the obtained results. The occurrence of this intermediary effect as partial intermediation gives the opinion that internal market orientation implementations will bring positive results in hotel establishments on their employees' job satisfaction. This indicates the impact of internal market orientation in hotel establishments on the employees. In other words, where hotel employees have a perception that they work in a working environment, where participative management concept reigns, where communication channels are open and used actively, and where tangible and intangible motivation elements are often used, there is intensive information flow, and the job satisfaction of the employees will be much higher. Moreover, employees, whose perception of service quality is high, will also have a more positive perspective towards implementations related to internal market orientation, will be more willing to participate in these implementations with more positive perceptions.

As a result, it is believed that all kinds of implementations of hotel establishments to satisfy their employees, continuous improvements in all their departments, improving their physical equipment, and trying to improve their service quality will provide them with significant opportunities. The most striking result of the study is the high causality impact of internal market orientation on job satisfaction. Employees, who feel that they are being cared about more in terms of internal market orientation, will have higher job satisfaction, high corporate loyalty, and accordingly, these positive developments will increase customer satisfaction. Although findings obtained in the research has been consistent with the previous studies (for example, those of Eskildsen & Dahlgaard, 2000; Sukanthasirikul & Trongpanich, 2013; Opoku et al., 2008; Lings, 1999; Kyoon Yoo & Ah Park, 2007; Tsai & Tang, 2008; Usta, 2009; Jyoti & Sharma, 2012; Gounaris, 2008; Tortosa-Edoi et al., 2010; Greenley, 2005; Jyoti & Sharma, 2012; Hwang & Chi, 2005; Chang & Chang, 2007; Nikbin et al., 2010; Salem, 2013; Ruiz-Alba & Soares, 2016; Yarimoğlu & Ersönmez, 2017; Ergün & Boz, 2017; He, Murrmann & Perdue, 2010; Tortosa, Moliner & Sanchez, 2009; Bakhere Sinha, 2011), the importance of internal market orientation in ensuring job satisfaction has been underlined again in a different way. Internal market orientation is a critical element for increasing employees' perceived service quality. Managing perceived service quality is possible by addressing the employees appropriately. In other words, managing perceived service quality with internal market orientation practices, such as giving

the training to improve their skills and establishing a common understanding within the organization, will increase job satisfaction.

According to research findings show that IMO has a partial intermediary effect on the impact of service quality perceptions of hotel employees on their job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be said that IMO plays an important role in the job satisfaction of the hotel employees. Since internal market orientation facilitates the implementation of internal marketing strategies, it provides a more efficient and satisfactory service to customers, thus increasing the competitiveness of establishments (Gounaris, 2006). Therefore, IMO's dimensions must be paid attention to and implemented in lodging establishments. Lodging management must find communication ways to obtain written and verbal, formal and informal information by which they can understand the wishes, expectations, problems and concerns of their employees. The closer the management gets to their employees, the more likely they will have a chance to gather and expand information about their wishes and needs. Moreover, they must show an effort to meet these wishes and needs of employees. In particular, incentives, salaries, bonuses, and training to be given in various topics, providing social opportunities, feedback on their performance have an important role in meeting their needs. Suggestions for future studies are as follows:

1. In the study, causal relationships of perceived service quality and internal market orientation on job satisfaction have been taken as bases. Future studies, however, can be based on the effects of these variables on establishment performance criteria.

2. It is thought that being applied to the employees operating in different business lines of the tourism industry, this research, which has targeted the employees of hotel establishments with tourism business licenses, can be used for comparison purposes.

3. It is believed that intermediary and regulatory effects of variables like employees' personal values and motivations can also be examined in exploring the correlation between perceived service quality and job satisfaction of the model.

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