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REVIEW ARTICLE

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INTERNAL MARKETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationship between internal marketing and organizational sustainability, exploring how internal marketing strategies influence the long-term sustainability of companies. The research follows a quantitative approach with a non-experimental and correlational design. A structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection, applied to a sample of employees from various organizations. Results indicate a significant positive correlation between internal marketing practices and key dimensions of organizational sustainability, such as employee engagement, corporate social responsibility, and innovation. Findings suggest that companies that invest in internal marketing strategies, such as internal communication, training, and motivation, tend to develop a greater commitment to sustainability. In conclusion, internal marketing plays a crucial role in promoting a sustainable organizational culture, demonstrating that investing in employee satisfaction and development contributes to business sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly complex and competitive organizational context, companies face the challenge of aligning their strategic objectives to ensure their long-term feasibility: to become sustainable. In this regard, internal marketing (IM) and organizational commitment (OC) emerge as fundamental tools to engage employees with the organization's culture and values, becoming key elements both internally and externally in achieving sustainability. Despite the importance of variables such as internal marketing, organizational commitment, and sustainability, the topic has not been explored in depth, leaving a gap in the literature that needs to be addressed. Internal marketing, a strategy aimed at meeting employees' needs and strengthening their commitment to organizational goals, is essential for creating an environment in which sustainable practices are understood, accepted, and shared across all hierarchical levels. This concept involves applying marketing principles toward employees, ensuring their satisfaction and well-being while guiding them toward the achievement of organizational objectives. Companies seek strategies that allow them to improve talent retention, enhance the perception of corporate identity, and ensure their sustainability. Consequently, internal marketing is considered a tool that helps strengthen organizational commitment and promote a harmonious work environment (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2020). On the other hand, organizational commitment is defined as the degree of identification and attachment an employee has with their company (Meyer & Allen, 2021) and is considered a critical factor in

organizational productivity and performance. Recent studies suggest that companies that have implemented internal marketing and professional development strategies achieve higher levels of commitment and job satisfaction (Rodríguez & Pérez, 2023). Moreover, sustainability is an equally important factor, centered on the integration of economic, environmental, and social objectives. It is within this social dimension that internal marketing and organizational sustainability combine as a response to organizations' responsibility toward their stakeholders. A key issue lies in the way these concepts interconnect to enhance business competitiveness. Some organizations perceive sustainability as an external responsibility, while internal marketing and organizational commitment are often oriented toward transactional aspects, such as incentives or training, rather than being viewed as drivers of change toward sustainability. This study aims to analyze how internal marketing can foster organizational commitment to achieve sustainability through the creation of an internal culture aligned with organizational values. Through a theoretical and empirical analysis, it seeks to answer the following questions: *Does internal marketing contribute to organizational commitment? In what ways do these two variables contribute to strengthening the sustainability strategy within organizations?* In terms of relevance, this research presents an interdisciplinary approach that connects critical areas for business success and the long-term continuity of organizations in complex environments. Likewise, the findings provide practical guidelines to support decision-making for managers and human resource

professionals seeking to integrate these two dimensions into their organizational strategy. The following section presents the theoretical framework that explores the foundations of internal marketing, organizational commitment, and organizational sustainability, followed by an empirical-methodological analysis that examines the relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment. Finally, the findings, discussion, and recommendations are presented to advance toward a comprehensive and sustainable organizational management approach.

Theoretical Framework

Internal Marketing

Internal marketing is considered a key discipline in modern organizational management, as it focuses on treating employees as “internal customers” whose satisfaction and commitment are essential to achieving organizational objectives (Grönroos, 2020). According to Kotler and Keller (2023), it creates value within organizations through effective communication directed at employees, as well as through motivation and training. The construct of internal marketing emerged in the late 1970s. Although there is evidence that the concept was employed by Sasser and Arbeit (1976), who stated that employees represent the key market in service companies, it was Berry (1981) who pioneered the introduction and development of the concept. He defined it as follows: “Employees are viewed as internal customers, and jobs as internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while serving the objectives of the organization”. In this regard, Brunh (2023) defines an internal customer as “any person within the organization who is provided with products and services by other organizational departments or by individuals working within them”.

The principle of internal marketing is based on two premises. The first states that it is necessary to satisfy the needs of employees (internal customers) before those of external customers. The second indicates that the principles and strategies of marketing are similar for both internal marketing and the organization’s external marketing (Berry, Hansel & Burke, 1976). Subsequently, Berry et al. (1991) defined it as “attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining qualified employees through job products that satisfy their needs.” Rafiq and Ahmed (1993) argued that internal marketing “is the philosophy of treating employees as customers and the strategy of shaping job products to fit human needs”. Authors and researchers in this field have sought to explain the construct by developing various definitions (Berry, 1981; Gummenson (1987); Lings y Brooks, 1998; Varey y Lewis, 1999; Prasad y Steffes, 2002; Rafiq y Ahmed, 2000; Ahmed, Rafiq y Saad, 2002; Ballantyne, 2003; Mudie, 2003; Araque-Jaimes, Garrido-Pinzón, J. A., & Uribe-Rodríguez, 2017; Palomino Cortez, 2021; Rosales, 2021; Vargas y Ramírez, 2023). According to Kotler (1996), internal marketing refers to the management implemented by companies to train and motivate their employees, or “internal customers,” that is, their front-line and contact personnel, to ensure the satisfaction of external customers. From this perspective, all employees should work with a customer-oriented approach, which enables organizations to develop a high level of service.

Grönroos (1996) argues that internal marketing, when applied to human resource management, views employees as a market. This market must be understood, researched, and segmented into categories or interest groups to ultimately offer an attractive product that meets employer needs and is not merely a job position or a salary. As a result, productivity increases and aligns with the organization’s objectives. An interesting point made by Ahmed and Rafiq (2004) is that internal marketing not only focuses on motivating front-line employees but also applies to all employees within the organization. In this sense, any change in strategy represents an internal marketing effort aimed at keeping employees motivated. Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, and Schlesinger (2008) argue that internal marketing is a type of strategic management philosophy aimed at attracting, developing, and motivating employees within an organization, which creates high-quality work environments.

The literature highlights the importance and usefulness of internal marketing; however, there is no consensus on a single definition (Asif & Sargeant, 2015). In its early phase, Berry (1981) proposed considering employees as internal customers. Meanwhile, Grönroos (1990) and George (1990) offered a more complex definition, describing it as “the management of organizational human resources based on a marketing perspective.” Central ideas in the literature revolve around the effects of internal marketing on employees and organizations, both at the functional unit level and in relation to external customer satisfaction. Currently, the concept has a broader application in the field of management (Varey, 2000). Berry (1987) argues that it is an approach that guides decision-making processes, while Ahmed and Rafiq (1993) view it as a set of initiatives oriented towards internal markets. An essential element of internal marketing is precisely its focus on strengthening organizational culture. This is because a strong culture not only fosters a sense of belonging but also allows the alignment of employees’ personal values with those of the organization, facilitating more coherent performance oriented toward strategic objectives (Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Ross, 2021). Extending this idea to the context of sustainability enables the promotion of a corporate culture that values environmental care, social equity, and economic responsibility.

The Evolution of Internal Marketing

Internal marketing was originally developed in the United States by researchers whose interest focused on service companies, as a means of assessing training needs. Consequently, its origins were centered on market orientation and, specifically, on the internal market. On the one hand, the employee–organization relationship is considered, and on the other, the exchange within the supply chain, as noted by Mendoza, Hernández, and Taberno (2011). In the same study, the authors analyze the employee–organization relationship and consider the internal customer as a key factor in terms of competitive advantage, given that, similar to marketing strategy, employees acquire a product, their job, whose price corresponds to the salary they earn, while the goal is to increase motivation and productivity. Promotion, in this context, is represented by internal communication, which enables the application of marketing techniques to human talent management (Sánchez, 2008). Narver and Slater (1990) state that market-oriented organizations should emphasize the desires and needs of their customers to attract and retain them. Núñez Gorrín (2010) points out that the fundamental principle of internal marketing is the use of marketing tools to create better organizations for their internal customers and build loyalty structures resembling those developed for external customers. The literature highlights several effective strategies in the implementation of Internal Marketing, such as:

- Training and development: Training programs that provide enough knowledge for employees to assume responsibilities in the implementation of sustainable practices.
- Internal communication: The use of tools to disseminate information and knowledge about daily practices, through both traditional and digital media, to reinforce the importance of everyday work.
- Recognition and rewards: Maintaining incentive systems that generate high satisfaction levels and commitment to continuous improvement to ensure sustainable practices.
- Internal marketing is not a factor limited to motivation. It acts as a link between employees’ personal goals and the organization’s objectives and aspirations. This, in turn, helps promote sustainable values at all levels of the organization.

Organizational Commitment: Organizational commitment has been a subject of study since the 1960s, and its conceptualization and measurement have evolved significantly over time. It is a widely researched construct, particularly in the field of organizational psychology, as it has been shown to influence variables such as job performance, satisfaction, and employee turnover. In its early stages, it was conceived as a link between the employee and the organization. Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) defined it as “the relative

strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization." Initially, the focus of the study was centered on employee loyalty and their willingness to exert effort and work for the benefit of the organization. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a three-dimensional model in which commitment is measured based on three components:

- **Affective commitment:** Refers to the degree of emotional attachment that exists between the employee and the organization. The employee identifies with and becomes involved in the organization's values and goals. This type of commitment is associated with positive experiences that foster loyalty and the desire to remain in the organization.
- **Continuance commitment:** This component is based on the employee's perception of the costs associated with leaving the organization. In other words, the employee evaluates what leaving would imply, such as the loss of benefits and job stability, which influences their desire to stay in the organization.
- **Normative commitment:** Refers to the sense of obligation an employee feels to remain in the organization, based on personal or cultural values that emphasize loyalty and duty toward the company

The Meyer and Allen scale has been widely used, translated into several languages, and validated in different contexts. In Peru, a study validated this scale with a sample of 642 contact center employees and found that the two-factor model (affective and continuance commitment) showed a better fit than the original three-dimensional model (Montoya, 2023). Recent studies have used this scale to describe organizational commitment across different sectors. In Cuba, a descriptive-exploratory study applied the scale proposed by Meyer and Allen to assess commitment among employees in the healthcare sector, showing that it is useful for identifying commitment levels across the three dimensions proposed by the model (González et al., 2023). It is essential to understand the dimensions of organizational commitment, as doing so enables the development of strategies to promote talent retention and effective performance. Evidence shows that a high level of affective commitment is associated with more motivated and productive employees, while continuance commitment indicates retention due to a lack of opportunities or alternative employment options. On the other hand, normative commitment highlights the influence of ethical and cultural values on employees' loyalty to their organization.

Organizational commitment is a key construct for the development and strengthening of organizations, particularly in fields such as psychology and organizational behavior. The literature provides evidence of its significant impact on job satisfaction, performance, and employee turnover. Various theoretical models have sought to explain this phenomenon, but Meyer and Allen's (1991) model remains one of the most widely used and recognized. This model has been used in numerous studies and has been widely accepted by the scientific community because it offers a comprehensive perspective for analyzing the relationship between employees and their organization. The validation and application of this scale in different work contexts have been highly significant in the field of human resource management, as they allow for the implementation of specific strategies to strengthen each dimension and thus contribute to achieving organizational goals and overall success. However, several critiques have emerged, leading to the development of new approaches aimed at achieving a more precise understanding of the construct. Other variables such as engagement, internal marketing, organizational citizenship, and job involvement have been studied together with this construct recently. These studies have focused on understanding how OC influences factors such as performance, satisfaction, innovation, and development. The evolution of the OC construct reflects a shift toward more complex approaches that seek a deeper understanding of the relationship between employees and their organization, allowing for the development of stronger strategies that foster mutual commitment and benefit both parties. Several other theoretical models have addressed the study of organizational commitment: The Unidimensional Model by Porter, Steers, Mowday,

and Boulian (1974), developed after nearly a decade of research, proposes that commitment is the strength of employees' identification and involvement with their organization. On the other hand, the Bidimensional Model proposed by Cohen (1995) suggests two dimensions: the first involves the initial predisposition to commitment at the time of joining the organization, and the second reflects the consolidation of said commitment as an attitude developed over time. Understanding the dimensions of organizational commitment is essential for developing strategies that promote talent retention and effective performance. The Meyer and Allen model remains the most widely used due to its validation and application in diverse contexts, as it offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing the employee-organization relationship. This model enables organizations to design and manage human resource interventions that strengthen each dimension of commitment, contributing to organizational success.

Organizational Sustainability: Organizational sustainability is a relatively new concept with increasing importance in organizations seeking development and long-term continuity in complex environments. According to Elkington (2018), sustainability is based on the triple bottom line approach, which emphasizes the creation of economic, social, and environmental values. In this sense, the goal is to balance these three dimensions to ensure viability. From an economic perspective, sustainability is a business model that seeks to optimize resources by reducing costs through practices such as energy efficiency and circular economy (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2020). In the social sphere, it focuses on employee well-being, workplace equity, and the positive impact that organizations generate in local communities. Regarding the environmental dimension, it includes initiatives such as reducing carbon emissions, responsible waste management, and using renewable energy sources (Porter & Kramer, 2021). This approach offers a strategic vision of how companies can integrate sustainability into their business models. The concept of shared value suggests that companies implementing sustainable practices not only create benefits for society but also enhance their own competitiveness by improving reputation, reducing risks, and attracting new markets. The relationship between internal marketing and organizational sustainability is founded on the importance of creating shared value and aligning personal and organizational goals.

The former serves as a bridge that enables the internalization of sustainable values within the organizational culture, fostering a genuine commitment among employees toward this philosophy (Carrasco & Buendía, 2021). Nguyen and Pham (2022) describe the importance of communication and awareness within the functions of internal marketing. Awareness of the impact of business actions on social and environmental issues can be achieved through internal campaigns, workshops, and training programs aimed at ensuring that employees understand and support sustainable initiatives. Adopting sustainable practices requires profound changes in organizational culture; therefore, it must begin with managing internal audiences (Grönroos, 2020). Internal marketing facilitates this process through daily practices that inspire employees to act as agents of change. In addition, it is crucial to empower employees by providing them with tools, knowledge, and sustainable initiatives (Gholami, 2021). Through internal marketing strategies, organizations can identify and develop internal leaders who promote more sustainable business models (López & Cabrales, 2020). Empirical evidence derived from these studies shows that internal marketing and sustainability enhance performance and strengthen the organization's ability to attract and retain talent, which are key elements for surviving in a complex and highly competitive environment.

METHODS

This causal study follows a quantitative methodology based on variable measurement and statistical analysis, allowing for the identification of behavioral patterns that support the proposed hypothesis. It applies a deductive and empirical approach to examine reality from an objective standpoint (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2010). Regarding scope, the study focuses primarily on

human capital management and is presented from a functionalist organizational perspective. Accordingly, the information gathered is considered from an organizational standpoint, based on the perceptions of managers, executives, or business owners of the companies under study. At the same time, it is an empirical investigation, as the units of analysis are companies that are currently in operation. Data were collected through a survey and analyzed using multivariate statistical analysis to test the research hypotheses, providing a structural overview of the organizational context in Aguascalientes. The sample consisted of companies from the state of Aguascalientes, surveyed with a questionnaire employed in previous studies to assess the influence of variables on the adoption and implementation of internal marketing strategies. The research is cross-sectional, conducted during the first six months of 2024, and explanatory in nature, as it seeks to explain the relationship between the study variables and the underlying causes of the phenomenon. An exhaustive review of the literature was conducted to identify organizational challenges, which allowed to establish the research hypotheses that guided the empirical work.

Conducted across the 11 municipalities that comprise the state of Aguascalientes, the research included: Aguascalientes, Asientos, Cosío, Jesús María, Pabellón de Arteaga, Rincón de Romos, San José de Gracia, San Francisco de los Romo, El Llano, and Tepezalá. Two scales were used to collect the data: Internal Marketing (Lings, 2005) and Organizational Commitment (Allen & Meyer, adapted version by Arciniega & González, 2006). The scale used to measure internal marketing is based on the model proposed by Lings and Greenley (2005), which has also been employed by other key authors in this field, such as Lings (2005), Gounaris (2005), Sanzo, García, and Trespalacios (2007), and García, Álvarez, and Santos (2011). Its original version consisted of 42 items and emerged as an alternative approach to internal market orientation. Additionally, it has been tested in different contexts, demonstrating both validity and reliability. Reliability has been sought through exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, used to simplify the instrument and reduce it from 42 to 16 items. The instrument uses a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Meyer and Allen's (1997) proposed model was used to measure organizational commitment, as it is considered the dominant framework in the literature and encompasses three dimensions to assess the construct. The sampling units consisted of companies located in the state of Aguascalientes with more than 10 and fewer than 250 employees, that is, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Ideally, these companies had formal departmental structures and operated within the industrial, commercial, or service sectors. According to data retrieved from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, November 2023), the National Statistical Directory of Economic Units (DENUE), which was used for the selection of the companies, estimates a total of 3,653 units. The sample size was determined using a stratified sampling calculation (n/N), which established the number of companies surveyed based on their size (number of employees). As a result, a representative sample of 347 companies located in the state of Aguascalientes was selected. Analytical techniques implemented in this research include Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess the impact and relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment. The model fit was evaluated, followed by a description of the results obtained within this specific context. Additionally, an exhaustive literature review was conducted to determine whether these practices are related to organizational sustainability.

The following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Internal marketing has a direct and positive impact on organizational commitment.

Data were analyzed using SPSS 24 and SPSS AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures; Arbuckle, 1997). These software tools enabled

the processing and interpretation of the collected data, allowing for the verification or rejection of the proposed hypothesis. The analysis ultimately provided evidence to draw meaningful conclusions and deepen the understanding of the topic.

RESULTS

Reliability and Validity for Internal Marketing: Internal marketing is constituted by three dimensions: information generation, information dissemination, and response to information. Figure 1 illustrates the model of this construct and its structure, which provides the foundation for collecting data used in the reliability and validity analyses. Figure 1 shows that each item belongs to the dimension it measures. The scale is composed of 16 items grouped into three dimensions: the first, information generation (6 items); the second, information dissemination (4 items); and the third, information response (6 items). Cronbach's alpha test was applied using the SPSS 24 software package and used to verify that each construct measures what it is intended to measure and to identify factors that do not represent a significant value (Bontis, 2000). The alpha coefficient should be 0.7 or higher (Bontis, 2000; George & Mallery, 2003). The results for each dimension are presented in Table 1 (Internal Marketing) and Table 2 (Organizational Commitment). The responses provided the following results:

The reliability values established through Cronbach's alpha (α), shown in Table 1, are above .8, which exceeds the standard set by Hair (1999) and are considered good to excellent according to Bontis (2000) and George and Malery (2003). Therefore, it can be determined that the scale demonstrates internal consistency, presenting an α value of .904. It is important to note that this scale is being tested for the first time in the local context (the state of Aguascalientes). According to Malhotra (2004), an acceptable alpha value for a scale tested for the first time is .60. Considering this observation, it can be concluded that each item in the internal marketing scale measures what it is intended to measure, appropriately complementing each dimension. Considering each dimension (information generation about the internal market, information dissemination, and response to information), the Cronbach's alpha analysis exceeds .8, which is regarded as good according to Bontis (2000) and George and Malery (2003). Therefore, each item adequately represents the dimension to which it belongs.

Reliability Test for Internal Marketing (Convergent Validity): Factor loadings obtained for this construct in each dimension exceed the value indicated by Bagozzi and Yi (1984), which should be above 0.60 or 0.70 as recommended by Hair et al. (1998) and Anderson and Gerbing (1988). Therefore, it is possible to establish convergent validity for this model. Regarding the values obtained for the compositoreliability index (CRI), which can be higher than 0.60 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1998) or above 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), as well as for the average variance extracted (AVE), whose value should exceed 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), the results meet the recommended thresholds. It can be determined that, for the construct of internal marketing across its three dimensions, the values are higher than .70, as established by Fornell and Larcker (1981); therefore, they are considered reliable. With values above .80 for the CRI and CFI, respectively, the model demonstrates an adequate goodness of fit. The extracted variance test for internal marketing was conducted to determine discriminant validity. The values for each dimension (information generation, information dissemination, and information response) meet the criterion established for the AVE, indicating high internal consistency. The table presents the construct validity, with the diagonal showing the AVE value for each dimension. The correlations below the diagonal should be less than one to indicate acceptable variance (Anderson & Gerbing, 1998). Moreover, the correlations above the diagonal should be lower than the diagonal values (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Meeting these conditions indicates that the model has a good fit. As shown in Table 2, the values below the diagonal in all relationships among the three dimensions do not reach 1, indicating that there is no covariance

Table1. CFA Estimates for Internal Marketing

Variable	Item	Standardized Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability Index (CRI)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Information generation	GEN1	.750 ***	.868	.878	.790
	GEN2	.704 ***			
	GEN3	.797 ***			
	GEN4	.912 ***			
	GEN5	.986 ***			
	GEN6	.949 ***			
Information dissemination	DIS1	.827 ***	.931	.908	.773
	DIS2	.888 ***			
	DIS3	.852 ***			
	DIS4	.805 ***			
Information response	RESP1	.766 ***	.889	.901	.706
	RESP2	.797 ***			
	RESP3	.814 ***			
	RESP4	.756 ***			
	RESP5	.739 ***			
	RESP6	.957 ***			

χ^2 (df) = 240.153 (94); RMSEA = 0.061; NFI = .928; CFI = .955. Significant values: * = $p < 0.1$; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.001$.
Source: Developed by the author based on reliability test results.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity for Internal Marketing

	Information generation	Information dissemination	Information response
Information generation	.790	.0178	.0284
Information dissemination	.272- .632	.773	.0367
Information response	.196- .479	.169- .334	.706

Source: Developed by the author based on the validity test results.

Table3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Estimates for Organizational Commitment

Variable	Item	Standardized Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability Index	Average Variance Extracted
Affective Commitment	CA1	.793 ***	.805	.929	.746
	CA2	.877 ***			
	CA3	.842 ***			
	CA4	.709 ***			
	CA5	.839 ***			
	CA6	.749 ***			
Normative Commitment	CN1	.784 ***	.777	.814	.696
	CN2	.772 ***			
	CN3	.788 ***			
	CN4	.857 ***			
	CN5	.668 ***			
	CN6	.701 ***			
Continuance Commitment	CC1	.779 ***	.861	.904	.702
	CC2	.881 ***			
	CC3	.793 ***			
	CC4	.827 ***			
	CC5	.731 ***			
	CC6	.868 ***			

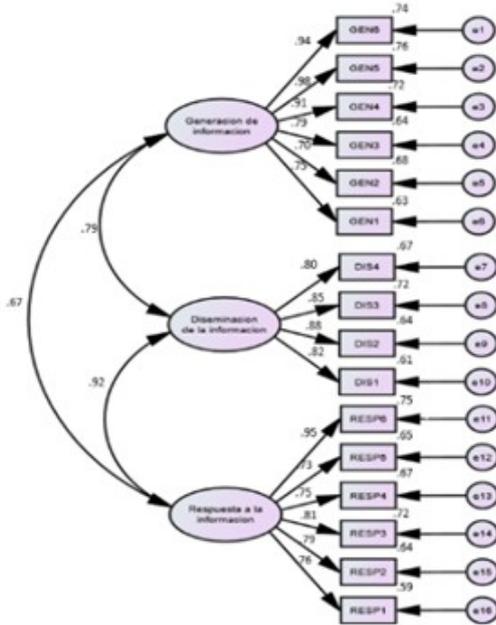
χ^2 (df) = 364.2 (127); RMSEA = .068; NFI = .928; CFI = .955. Significant values: * = $p < .1$; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .001$.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity for Organizational Commitment

	Information Generation	Information Dissemination	Information Response
Affective Commitment	.746	.0169	.084
Normative Commitment	.196- .523	.696	.067
Continuance Commitment	.158- .371	.123- .367	.702

Source: Developed by the author based on the validity test results

between them: each variable measures what it is intended to measure. Regarding the values above the diagonal, all are lower than the AVE corresponding to each dimension. Therefore, when analyzed both horizontally and vertically, the results demonstrate independence among the dimensions, showing that they do not exert influence on one another.

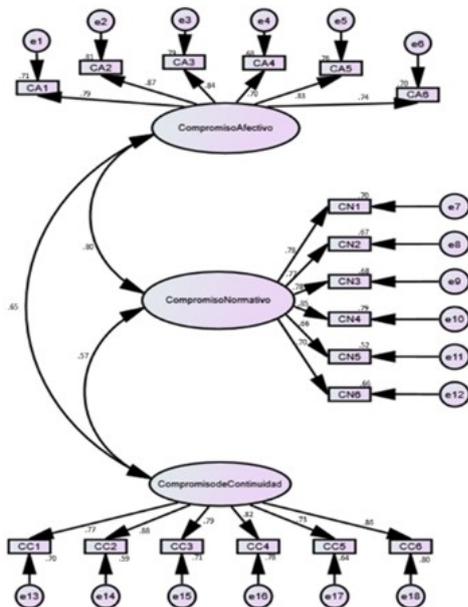


Source: Developed by the author based on statistical data

Figure 1. Diagram for Internal Marketing with Factor Loadings

Figure 1 presents the path diagram obtained from the statistical analysis conducted with AMOS. The ovals represent the dimensions of the scale, while the correlations are shown as curved bidirectional arrows, with their corresponding values displayed alongside them. On the other side, the factor loadings are represented by diagonal arrows extending from each dimension to the items (rectangles), which include their respective R² values. Finally, the measurement errors are depicted as circles connected to each item by straight arrows.

Reliability and Validity for Organizational Commitment: The construct of organizational commitment comprises three dimensions: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment, each consisting of six items.



Source: Developed by the author based on Allen & Meyer (1997).

Figure 2. Path Diagram for Organizational Commitment

Figure 2 graphically illustrates the structure of this construct and the method used to obtain information for this variable. As shown, the model includes three dimensions and a total of 18 items. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values were obtained based on the analysis of survey responses. The reliability and validity analyses provided the following results:

The reliability values established by Cronbach's alpha (α) shown in Table 3 are above .7, exceeding the threshold proposed by Hair (1999), and are considered good according to Bontis (2000) and George & Mallery (2003). Therefore, the scale demonstrates internal consistency, with an α value of .815. This result indicates that, for the organizational commitment scale, each item effectively measures what it is intended to, accurately representing its corresponding dimension. Considering each dimension individually, the Cronbach's alpha values for affective commitment and normative commitment exceed .8, which is regarded as good reliability (Bontis, 2000; George & Mallery, 2003). Thus, each item adequately explains its respective dimension. Although the alpha value for continuance commitment is .7, it still meets the reliability condition (Bontis, 2000). The convergent validity test, based on the analysis of factor loadings for each dimension, shows that for affective commitment, the values range from .709 to .877, all exceeding the .60 threshold proposed by Bagozzi and Yi (1984). For normative commitment, the factor loadings range from .668 to .857, also meeting the criterion established by Bagozzi and Yi (1984). Similarly, for continuance commitment, the factor loadings are above .731. Therefore, all dimensions of this construct meet the criteria established by Hair (1999) and Bagozzi and Yi (1984).

To determine discriminant validity, the dimensions of organizational commitment were analyzed to verify whether they measure what they are intended to measure. The analysis is shown in Table 3, where the values on the diagonal correspond to the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while the values below the diagonal represent the lower and upper limits of the covariances between dimensions. According to the criterion established by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the value of 1 must not appear to indicate that there is covariance between them. For the coefficients located above the diagonal, which refer to the squared covariance data, the criterion establishes that they must be lower, both horizontally and vertically, than the AVE to determine the model's fit (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The lower part shows the lower and upper values of the covariance between the dimensions, where the value of 1 should not appear. The values above the diagonal (squared covariance values) are all lower than the AVE, both horizontally and vertically, which indicates that the dimensions do not influence one another and measure what they are intended to measure. As shown in the table, the data located below the diagonal do not reach the value of 1; therefore, each dimension measures what it should, and there is no covariance among them.

CONCLUSION

The results provide evidence allowing us to conclude that the statistical validation of the models used to measure internal marketing and organizational commitment offers strong support for the validity of the scales previously applied in other research contexts. Internal marketing is a key tool for strengthening organizational commitment, which in turn leads to sustainability. This study confirms the findings of previous research indicating that organizations that develop and implement internal marketing strategies foster a stronger sense of belonging and identification among employees, which positively impacts other important indicators such as lower staff turnover and higher productivity. Regarding organizational commitment, it can be confirmed that affective commitment is the most relevant dimension for fostering a culture of sustainability. Employees who are emotionally invested in their organization are more likely to adopt sustainable practices. The analysis of the data shows that the development and implementation of internal marketing strategies are not only important and have an influence on job satisfaction, but also contribute to integrating sustainable values into the organization's

culture. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that IM is a key element in human talent management and in the creation of a strong corporate identity.

In addition, internal communication is essential for the development of modern organizations, along with the empowerment of employees in terms of their perception and implementation of sustainability. However, despite the evidence of its benefits, some companies still consider internal marketing a secondary aspect. Therefore, it is suggested to develop IM programs tailored to the company's needs and culture in order to promote sustainable practices through actions that encourage employee participation. Nonetheless, regular assessments of the impact of IM, organizational commitment, and sustainable practices are necessary to adjust the strategy according to the needs and results obtained through those assessments. The constructs examined in this research are key aspects of business competitiveness. Organizations must face the challenges of their environment by developing comprehensive strategies that strengthen the sense of belonging and align their culture with sustainability and employee well-being.

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