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# Employees' Attitude toward Management Commitment to Internal Marketing and the Emphasis of Managers on Informal Internal Communication in Agriculture Jihad Organization

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Received: 09 March 2019,  
Accepted: 15 September 2019

## Abstract

One of the most important factors for successful implementation of activities, maintaining status and keeping balance in an organization is human resources. The present study aims to analyze the role of informal internal staffing as a mediator in explaining the attitudes of the employees of the Agriculture Jihad Organization (AJO) of Guilan Province through the commitment of management to internal marketing. The target population of the study was composed of the employees of AJO. Simple random sampling approach was applied for choosing subjects. To test the hypotheses, structural equation modeling (SEM) and Smart PLS software were used. The results showed that due to the low commitment of management to internal marketing in the statistical society, informal relationships were hard to form between employees and management and the positive attitude toward work was at a low level. This becomes more important when the hypothesis is confirmed, but the severity of the coefficients indicates the moderate relationship between the main variables of the research.

### Keywords:

*Attitude, internal marketing, managerial commitment*

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## INTRODUCTION

Human factor in organizations and organizational activities is important to enter the realm of activities, maintain status, and promotion among active sectors (Al-Hawary et al., 2013). Some researchers including Boone and Kurtz (2013) and Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) believe that the success of an organization is the result of the combined effort of its individuals. From this viewpoint, it is important to succeed in the goals of internal marketing. Managers are working to satisfy their internal customer satisfaction to inform employees about their organizational goals. Therefore, enterprise networks can help make it the official network and the result of information and computer technology, or resulting from informal relationships rooted in the social communication of employees during organizational work. In spite of a lot of internal marketing, customer satisfaction is promoted along with improved employee productivity. Therefore, many authors have to improve their internal marketing as internal customers, first of all, they should be satisfied with their job so that they can find a positive attitude and then serve foreign customers and keep them satisfied.

Based on the research, management commitment to internal marketing and internal marketing component, including informal internal communication, is vital. In fact, all the steps that an organization takes to develop, train, and motivate its employees are within the scope of internal marketing (Chen et al., 2006). In this regard, the commitment of management to internal marketing directly affects the transparency of the role of employees and indirectly the employee's job satisfaction and commitment (Bailey et al., 2016; To et al., 2015). Marketing research supports this concept (To et al., 2015). In this paper, the effect of management commitment to internal marketing has been analyzed on the attitude of employees of the Agriculture Jihad Organization (AJO) of Guilan Province with an emphasis on informal relationships. Concepts of management commitment have

raised interests in Iran for many years, and a significant number of organizations have tried to use this concept to better manage their activities. However, there is no evidence of managers' success. According to agricultural studies conducted in Guilan Province, this is no exception. Therefore, the main issue in the present paper is whether the management commitment to internal marketing in AJO of Guilan Province affects employees' attitude to work and whether internal marketing practices, i.e., informal internal communications, affect the intensity of the impact.

The commitment of managers to internal marketing based on the general definition can directly affect employees' attitudes to be used as a very useful tool for establishing positive attitudes (Harrison et al., 2006). The directors' commitment to internal marketing is defined as the level of understanding of an organization's management team by the needs and values of employees, and employees' well-being and satisfaction are treated as internal customers (Lings & Greenley, 2010; Cascio, 2010). Job and work positive attitudes are also related to performance at work. Also, the commitment to internal marketing has a direct impact on transparency. Staff has a direct impact on employee satisfaction and employee commitment (Lings & Greenley, 2010; Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000). The commitment of managers to internal marketing through informal channels provides in-house communication between managers and staffs, which firstly provides job satisfaction and the commitment of employees, and afterward, with the emphasis on retraining, the employees' learning promotion is efficiently deployed. Once they are considered as an internal customer, foreign customers and clients will be provided with services of higher quality. Worrying about the work conditions of staff impairs the link between high-performance work systems and job satisfaction as well as emotional commitment (Wexley & Yukl, 1984).

Through its own methods, including pro-

duction, dissemination of information, internal communication, and informal internal communication, internal market can help maintain and increase external marketing. Indeed, internal marketing must go ahead along with external marketing (Arnett et al, 2002).

Effective internal marketing strategies can attract and recruit good employees and maintain effective staffing. Effective employees who are content and committed to their management will be happy with their effective services in their behavior with their customers and will be loyal to customers. However, management commitment to internal marketing is also affected by some other variables. For example, the internal and external organizational communication between employees and managers can change the attitudes of employees. The internal marketing (staffing) of organizations is a reason for trust, job satisfaction, performance (Martey, 2014) and loyalty of employees. The attitude of employees such as satisfaction, commitment and their affiliation with the job and the organization is not a new phenomenon. However, theoretical studies on this concept date back to Hopk (1935). He showed that the attitude of work for each person experiences his or her personal experience at work and from work in a specific way, and satisfaction as a kind of reaction. The attitude and the extent to which people like or dislike their job are raised, and they are measured by the difference between what is expected in the future and the expected success and the success achieved. The quality of work practices has a positive impact on the attitude of employees in strategy and implementation, the creation of a quality culture in the organization through management support and commitment, and the creation of a desirable work orientation towards work. Positive progress and the attitude of employees, accountability, teamwork, and continuous improvement are matters of importance (Batista et al, 2013), the attitudes of employees in the public sector based on research

conducted, such as organizations and executive agencies, show that staff has a moderate percentage on the conscience of altruism, health, and good. They have the necessary intentions in terms of their support and management commitment. In this regard, a low level of performance, physical well-being of employees, the mental health of staff, and documents related to medical centers show this. The success of a managerial activity with the commitment of senior management is always the most important factor affecting internal marketing in the production environment (Kilburn, 2009).

There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and exterior customer satisfaction according to Mafini and Pooe (2013). Also, many functional disruptions in government agencies in different statistical societies are effective in employee job satisfaction. They include the provision of inadequate services, financial corruption, distortions within the organization of the periodic system, and organizational politics due to the lack of positive attitude (job satisfaction). In this regard, to improve the attitude of work, it is important to measure the level of job satisfaction and other attitudes among employees in each period. Pels and Grönroos (2009) showed that internal marketing was an important factor that could improve job satisfaction. It is all about what an organization is doing to promote employee training and learning. In turn, the quality of services provided to domestic and foreign customers improves their performance and achievements. In this regard, directors' commitment to internal marketing can increase organizational energy and improve staffing trends. Boone and Kurtz (2013) revealed that job satisfaction had a profound effect on managers' attention and commitment to human resources and actions related to their job attitudes. When employees have oral orifice messages to friends and acquaintances about their organization and management, they can reduce their behavior to interact with the device. If the employees are satisfied with their orga-

nization's commitment and management, the result will be reversed. Research has shown a positive and significant positive relationship between internal marketing and managers' trust, job satisfaction, and internal customer loyalty. Internal informal communication is one of the important variables that can change the impact of management commitment on employee attitudes (Hayase, 2009). The results showed a relationship between internal communication and effective employee engagement in organizational activities. Given that internal marketing involves plans to develop human resources and retrain them to promote customer orientation, customer-centered employees who use internal informal relationships and among friends and colleagues can be effective in influencing the behavior of foreign customers (Ioan & Ivana, 2011). In this regard, the most important internal marketing goals are the creation of relationships between employees spontaneously. When employees communicate informally with each other, it is anticipated that better work outcomes will be achieved to accomplish the desired goals (To et al. 2015).

Messages sent apart from the organizational chart and the official and operational hierarchy in an organization are referred to as informal communication. Informal communication is used when formal communication fails to meet the requirements of the organization. Informal communication is formed and expanded according to the needs of an organization. The similarities of employees' friendship with each other, the conditions and methods created, the traditional and inadequate formal communication network and other characteristics can be effective in the formation of informal communications (Moshabbaki, 2005). In all organizations, there is informal and unstructured communication. Managers should be aware of it and of the role that sometimes plays in the organization's operations. Even unofficial communications may further contribute to the organization's formal goals (Ah-

medi, 2002). Based on this, informal internal communication is a communication whose information in the organization is based on the social relations of employees along with the relationships defined in the organizational structure. This network tells managers what employees are concerned about, what's important, and what the ambiguous issues are. Informal internal communication helps managers make the right decisions (Holmes & Marra, 2004). Of course, if formal communication is properly deployed by top executives, it can be intelligently utilized to better serve the informal internal communication that effectively addresses decision making (Fay, 2011).

Lings and Greenley (2010) and Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) have reported that informal internal communication has also been identified as one of the key elements of domestic marketing. Given that the research supports the theoretical framework of the defined variables, the model used in this research is presented as Figure 1.

The model includes employees' feelings towards their job and their desire for the additional effort through effective internal marketing methods, and the senior management team must strive to motivate and support employee services in providing services.

According to the model, the hypotheses of this study are as below:

H1: Management commitment to internal marketing has an impact on the AJO employees' attitude.

H2: The management commitment to internal marketing has an impact on informal communication among the AJO employees.

H3: Internal informal communication is affected by the commitment of management to internal marketing on the AJO employees' attitude.

The model used in this study has been adapted from To et al. (2015). In this study, it is assumed that the internal marketing management commitment affects the attitudes of the AJO employees through effective components of internal marketing of

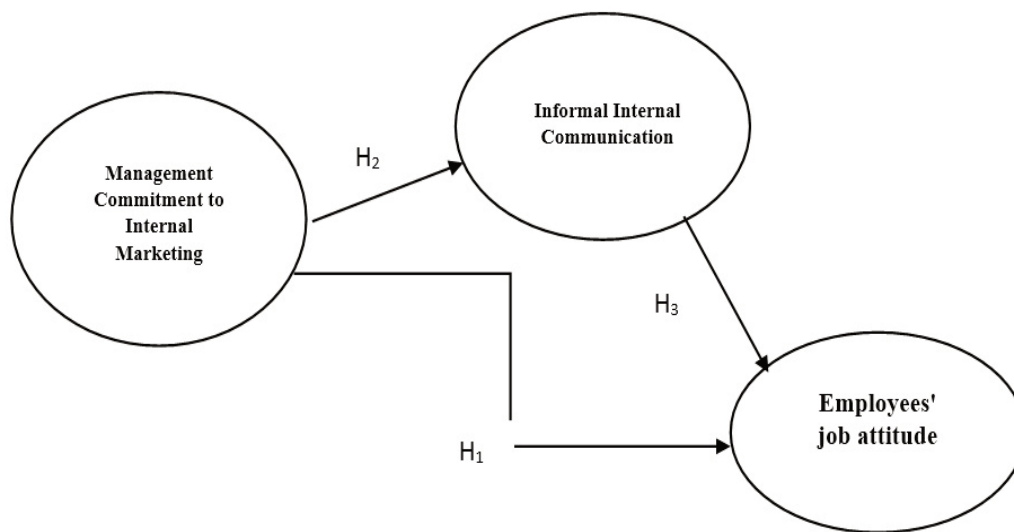


Figure 1: The conceptual model is an adaptive research

informal internal communication. The model consists of three variables: management commitment to marketing as an independent variable and employee attitude as a dependent variable. Also, informal internal communication has been introduced as an intermediary variable, which is considered a source used to improve the coordination of employee efforts and managerial decisions in achieving the predetermined goals.

### METHODOLOGY

The research used a descriptive method in which data are presented in a meaningful way to report what is without any interference or mental inference and obtain objective results from the position. All employees of Agriculture Jihad Organization (AJO) in Guilan Province were considered as the statistical population of the research. They amounted to 1338 official staff and 315 other staff members in 16 Agricultural Jihad Management in 62 county-level centers. Using Cochran's formula, the sample size was estimated to be 250 people. To ensure a high return rate, 280 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the statistical population and at the end of the study, 273 completed questionnaires were gathered and analyzed.

### Descriptive analysis and statistical test

Descriptive statistics were used for the statistical analysis and summarize data. Inferential statistics were used to analyze the hypotheses using statistical tests. The inferential analysis was performed by using such tests as correlation coefficient, confirmatory factor analysis, model fitting test, path analysis and model using the smart PLS 2.0 software. The normal distribution of the variables was tested by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

### RESULTS

According to the results, 18.7% of respondents were female and 73.6% were male. Also, 5.5% had an undergraduate degree, 55.7% had a bachelor's degree, 28.9% had a master's degree and higher. In terms of age, 4% of respondents were under 20 years, 34.8% were between 20 and 30 years, 18.7% aged 31 to 40 years, 34.8% aged over 40, and 7.7% did not specify their age. Also, 4.8% of respondents were single, 84.2% were married, and 7.3% were unknown.

The internal marketing management commitment variable has an average of 2.81 and a standard deviation of 746.0 and a variance of 0.557 and hence it is not in the desired state in the studied sample (Table 1). The in-

formal internal communication variable has an average of 44.44 and a standard deviation of 0.771. The employees' attitude variable has a mean of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 0.782.

According to the results of the table, the factor loads and the coefficient of significance of the relationships between the variables of the research if the significance level is greater than the error value. We arrive at a zero hypothesis, and if the value of the significant level is smaller than the error value, hypothesis 1 will be accepted. Therefore, due to the abnormal distribution of variables, for the implementation of the modeling technique, the structural equations should use the least detailed calculation method, which was used in the Smart PLS 2.0 software.

To determine the validity of the internal structure of the questionnaire, the convergent validity method was used, and the reliability was determined by the two combination reliability methods and Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Convergent validity,

which shows the correlation of a structure with its own indicators, was proposed by Fornel and Larcker, which is measured by the AVE index (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). Accordingly the value of this index for each of the main variables should be more than 0.4 so that the validity of the internal structure of the questionnaire is verified. To confirm the reliability of the measurement tool, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the variables should be greater than 0.7. In addition, in order to ensure reliability, Vurtz, Lyn, and Jarskag proposed the CR criterion, which calculates the end of the variables with the correlation of their structures. The CR index should show value above 7.0 to confirm the reliability of the measurement instrument (Hair et al., 2016).

The Table 2 shows the amounts of these indicators derived from the Smart PLS software. As can be seen, these conditions are met for all the variables, proving the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument.

Table 1  
Descriptive Results of Model's Variable

| Variable                                    | Mean | SD    |
|---|------|-------|
| Management commitment to internal marketing | 2.81 | 0.746 |
| Informal internal communication             | 2.44 | 0.771 |
| Employees' job attitude                     | 2.83 | 0.782 |

Table 2  
Summary of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

| Variable                                    | Number of Q | Cronbach's alpha coefficient | CR    | AVE   | communality | R <sup>2</sup> |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------------|----------------|
| Management commitment to Internal marketing | 3           | 0.741                        | 0.852 | 0.658 | 0.658       | -              |
| Informal internal communication             | 4           | 0.837                        | 0.891 | 0.671 | 0.671       | 0.331          |
| Employees' job attitude                     | 4           | 0.821                        | 0.882 | 0.651 | 0.651       | 0.388          |

In Figures 2 and 3, the results show the significant coefficients and path coefficient for each of the main variables of the research, which is derived from the running of the model in the software. In order to investigate the refutation or confirmation of the research hypotheses, the significance of the path coefficients should be calculated from zero. For this, the coefficient of *t* was calculated by the bootstrap method at the error level of 5%. If the significance coefficient obtained is beyond the range, the hypothesis is confirmed and otherwise, it is refuted.

For the first hypothesis, there is no significant effect on the variables of attitudes among employees due to insignificance (coefficient of 0.61). So, the first hypothesis is refuted.

For the second hypothesis, the reliability of the sample has a positive coefficient of 0.75 and a significant coefficient of 16.03 at the

95% confidence level on the non-correlating variables of the employees. The relationship between these two variables is linear and direct. In other words, with the increase in commitment to the performance of the game, the interrelation of the non-employees in the surveyed statistical society increases. The value of this effect is 0.57, which indicates that with increasing probability of increasing the number of responses to the size of a unit by one unit, the probability of a 95% increase in non-employee communication increases by 0.57 units.

For the third hypothesis, the informal communication of employees with a coefficient of adjustment of 0.67 and a significant coefficient of 0.83 at 95% confidence level modifies the relationship between the variables of management commitment to internal marketing and employee attitude. Regarding the positive correlation coefficient,

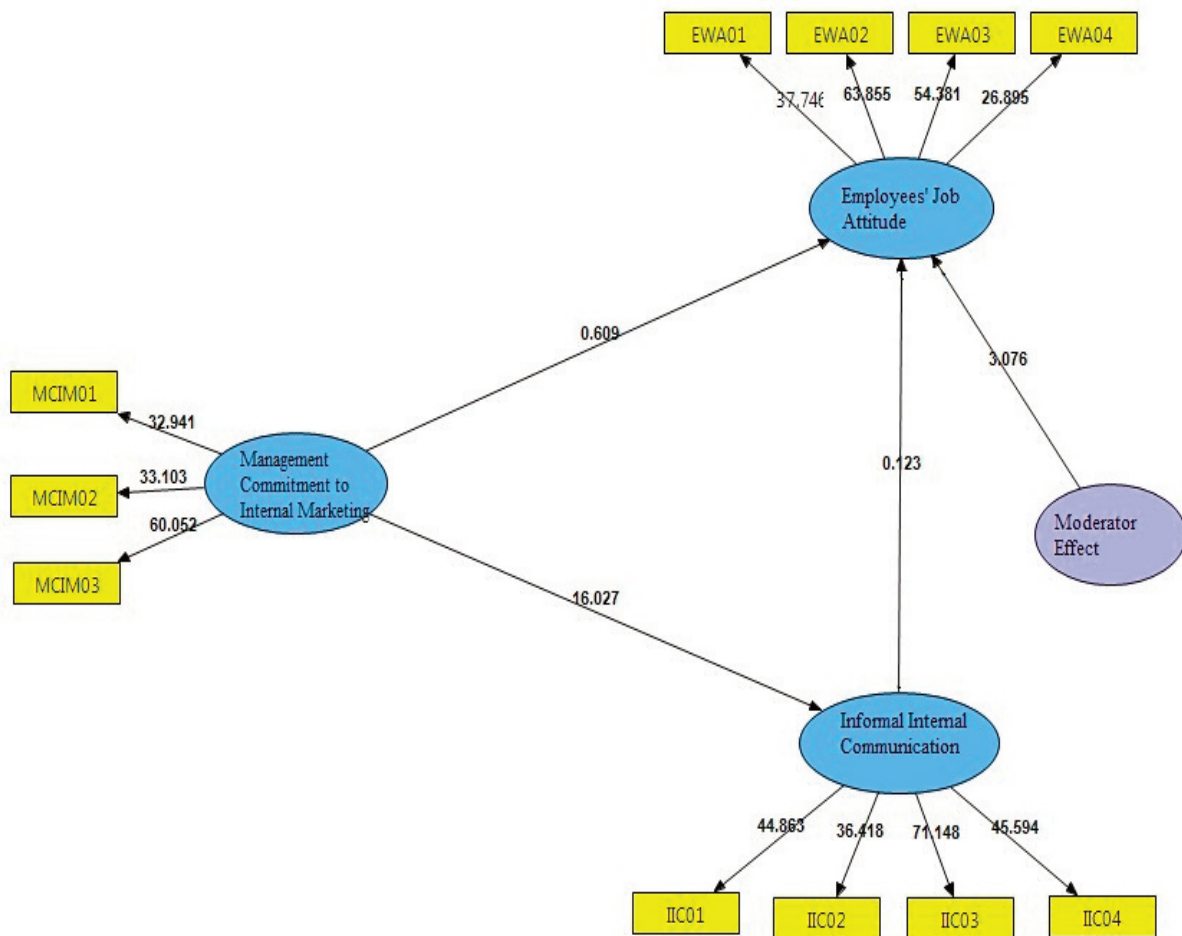


Figure 2. Factor analysis and significance coefficients of relations among research variables



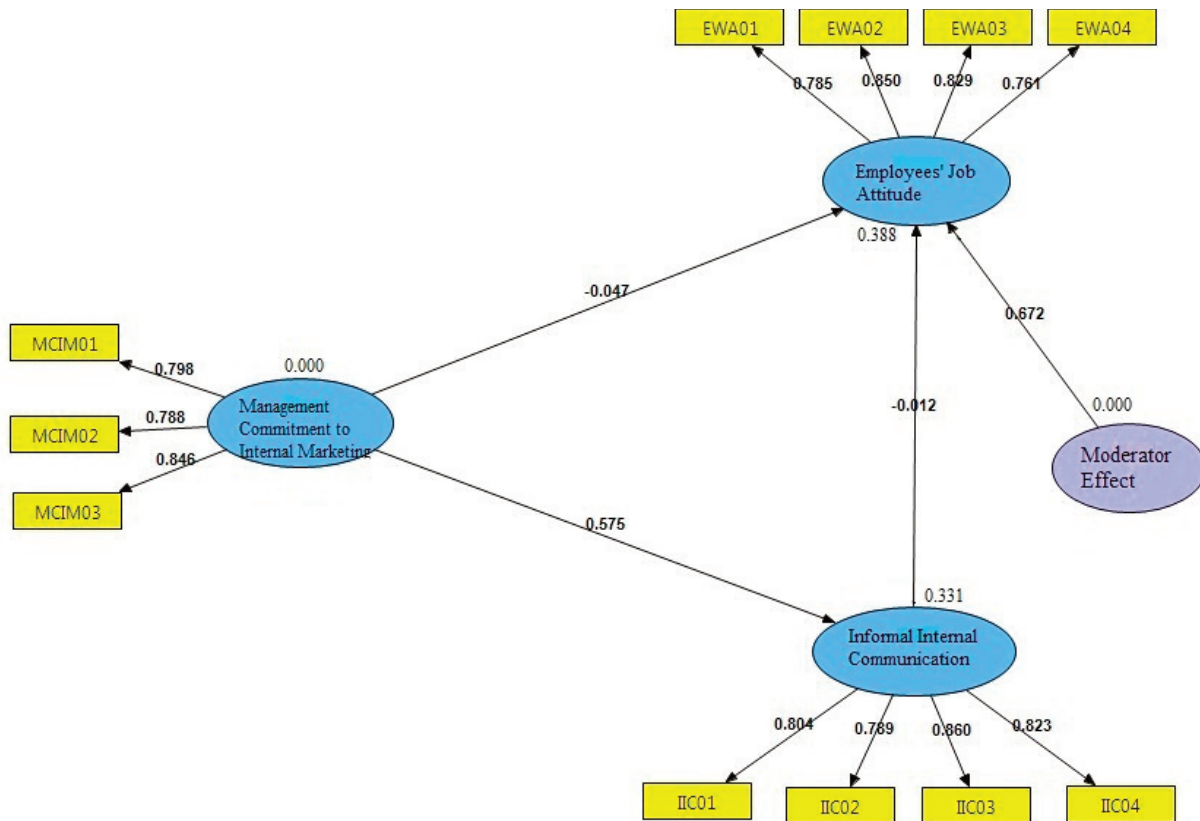


Figure 3. Path coefficients between variables and research indices

the moderating effect of informal communication on this relationship is so that with the increase in informal communication of employees, the impact of the management commitment to internal marketing on employees' attitude will be increased. Therefore, the third hypothesis is also confirmed. Now, by assuring the appropriateness of the conceptual model's measurement part, we will test the hypotheses of the research and we will examine the rejection or confirmation of them. Figures 1 and 2 show the results of sig-

nificant coefficients and path coefficient related to each of the main variables of the research, which were obtained as a result of the running of the model by the software.

In order to investigate the rejection or confirmation of research hypotheses, the path coefficients should be significantly different from zero. For this purpose, the coefficient *t* was by the bootstrap method calculated at the error level of 5%. Table 3 summarizes the results of testing research hypotheses.

Table 3  
Results of Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis  | Path coefficient | t-value | Result    |
|---|------------------|---------|-----------|
| Management commitment to internal marketing has an impact on the attitude of employees of AJO Guilan Province         | 0.61             | -       | Confirmed |
| Management commitment to internal marketing has an impact on Guilan Province.   | 0.57             | 16.03   | Confirmed |
| the employees' informal internal communication Agriculture Jihad confirmed employees' informal internal communication | 0.67             | 3.08    | Confirmed |

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The commitment of management to internal marketing increases the positive attitude of employees. Also, the attitude of employees is an important factor for people's attachment to the organization. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the level of efficiency and effectiveness of an organization, increase the attitude of employees, and especially improve their job satisfaction for managers of the organization. Based on the results of the present research, all activities should be carried out within the framework of management commitment, which includes managers' attitude towards employee satisfaction, the understanding of the relationship between employee satisfaction as internal customers and external customer satisfaction. In addition, the organization should prove its support by showing its concern about the welfare of the employees. With regard to the test results, the following hypotheses can be considered:

A) With the increase in managerial commitment to internal marketing, employees' attitudes were increased in the surveyed statistical society.

B) With the increase in management commitment to internal marketing, the informal internal communication of employees in the statistical society was increased.

C) By entering the internal informal link in the model, the impact of management commitment on internal marketing, employee representation is different.

Based on the results of studies on job satisfaction, job satisfaction highlights the improvement of job performance and, in line with improving job performance, shows that positive attitude is one of the things that the improvement Findings show that the level of performance is also increased (Derakhshide & Ansari, 2015).

Therefore, the results of analyzing the hypothesized relationships between the effect of management commitment to internal marketing, including informal internal communication and employee attitudes, have been

confirmed. Employees have high formal communication with managers. The official relationship between managers and employees is important, but the result of this study reveals that managers should effectively use informal communication channels because through these channels, employees feel better. Find out about their organization and top managers. Intermediate managers, on the other hand, have more employees than senior managers in promoting organizational culture to employees. If this support is created within the framework of the commitment of managers, managers can improve employee attitudes by creating effective working systems with high performance in their work environment. It seems that by encouraging widespread behavioral lines or allowing more employees to use their skills, managers can significantly improve employee attitudes more than encouraging employees to acquire a variety of skills.

This study examined the environmental impact of the relationship between managerial commitment to internal marketing, informal internal communication, and work attitudes in the statistical society. The following suggestions can be drawn from the results of testing hypotheses:

Superior management in the organization will improve the attitude of the staff. Considering staff as the most important source of the organization. Staff is also evaluated according to their wishes.

In this regard, it can be concluded that management should regularly ask employees about their work relationship so that they obtain information about the business. They should also interact directly with employees to understand their satisfaction. Also, to understand the employees' expectations on a regular basis, they should continuously evaluate the quality of the work of the staff.

Among the important issues in the statistical society are the lack of employees' belief in the effects of internal marketing in the organization, as well as their lack of belief in the impact of such research on the site. This

could be due to the inefficient organization structure. It seems that understanding the relationship between the impact on management and the attitude of the organization's employees can allocate resources and develop appropriate ways to more effectively align the values of employees and organization.

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**How to cite this article:**

Azadedel, M., & Shokri, M. (2019). Employees' attitude toward management commitment to internal marketing and the emphasis of managers on informal internal communication in Agriculture Jihad Organization. *International Journal of Agricultural Management and Development*, 9(3), 273-283.

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