
THE EFFECTS OF INTERNAL GREEN MARKETING ON JOB SATISFACTION AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES – THE CASE OF THE SERBIAN AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to examine the effects of internal green marketing (IGM) on managers' job satisfaction (JS) and organizational financial outcomes (FOs). An online survey was used to collect data. On the sample of 78 managers of medium-sized and large organizations in the Serbian agribusiness sector, using partial least squares structural equation modeling technique, the results showed that IGM positively affects managers' JS and FOs of the organizations. They also revealed that managers' JS affects FOs, but also partially mediates the link between IGM and FOs. These results emphasize the significant role of IGM in improving managers' JS and organizational FOs, but the importance of nurturing managers' JS as one of the job-related attitudes. The main contribution of this paper is the establishment of the link between these variables, as well as the testing of the assumed relationships in the agribusiness context in which the relationships between these variables have not been tested before.

Introduction

Internal green marketing (IGM) reflects the ability and willingness of employees to contribute to environmental protection and be one of the sources and drives of the organization's competitive advantage. However, implementing the IGM concept

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requires investing with patience. That is the key to this long-term process, which must simultaneously be supported by a high level of managers' awareness of the importance of adopting the IGM philosophy and its dissemination among employees, as well as a high level of their job satisfaction (JS). Therefore, researchers are beginning to pay attention to examining the relationship between IGM, (managers') JS, and financial outcomes (FOs) of the organizations (Milanović et al., 2022; Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022; Shababi, Golestani, 2022). This is of great significance, as environmentally sensitive organizations strive to balance value creation and cost reduction, integrating the principles of sustainability.

Although the relevant literature suggests that various internal and green practices can influence employees'/managers' JS (e.g. internal marketing: Bailey et al., 2016; green human resource management: Freire, Pieta, 2022; etc.), organizational performance (e.g. green marketing orientation: Chahal et al., 2014; green marketing strategy: Fraj et al., 2011; etc.) as well as environmental protection (e.g. market-oriented sustainability: Crittenden et al., 2011), the authors of this paper believe that above-mentioned variables can be affected by IGM. This is supported by the fact that the internal marketing practices can improve employees' JS, while satisfied employees can improve the level of customers' satisfaction (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003). In addition, green marketing orientation (GMO) leads to better business performance of the organization (internal green marketing orientation – IGMO is one of the GMO dimensions, Papadas et al., 2017, p. 236). Meanwhile, a positive direct effect of IGM on employees' satisfaction (Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022) and a positive direct effect of IGMO on business performance of the organization (Elshaer et al., 2024) have been empirically confirmed. Therefore, IGM has the potential to foster employees'/managers' JS and organizational FOs. However, there is a lack of studies on the effects of IGM on managers' JS and FOs of the organizations, particularly the studies on the relationship between these variables in organizations operating in the agribusiness sector, as opposed to the studies on the effects of internal marketing on employees' JS, other job-related attitudes, and performance. Therefore, this paper aims to fill the gap in the literature on IGM by examining the effects of IGM on organizational FOs with managers' JS as a mediating variable in the relationship between IGM and FOs of the organizations operating in Serbian agribusiness environment. This paper expands the knowledge about IGM and its effects on managers' JS as one of the job-related attitudes as well as on organizational FOs as one of the organizational success indicators. The results of this paper contribute to the understanding of the impact of IGM as a new marketing practice on JS and FOs. For managers of the agribusiness organizations, the results of this paper provide an insight into how to use IGM to improve JS, and thereby organizational FOs.

Conceptual framework and the development of hypotheses

Customer-oriented organizations are focused on meeting the needs, wants and expectations of their customers as the most important external stakeholders. Therefore, *customer orientation* is key to market outcomes, and “concurrently practicing *customer*

orientation and *employee orientation* only increases long-term financial performance” (Lee, Wei, 2023, the first page). These orientations, that is, *customer-oriented employees* are the basis of the internal marketing concept (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003). In modern conditions, organizations include an ecological dimension into their business activities in order to contribute to the environment protection, but also to achieve a competitive advantage, nurturing *customer-* and *environment orientation* among employees (the core of the IGM concept). Therefore, the IGM concept recognizes the role of employees in value creation. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of *customer-oriented employees* who are also *environmentally oriented* (employees as internal customers; employees as internal stakeholders). In line with that, Papadas et al. (2017) note that stakeholder integration is critical to an organization’s level of green marketing practices. However, concurrently practicing organization’s orientation towards different groups - customers, employees, but also the environment, as well as other stakeholders can produce different benefits and costs. Therefore, not all organizations are ready and able to balance the benefits and costs while integrating the sustainability dimension into their operations or adopting a green orientation. IGM (orientation) can be a good way to develop environmental orientation, since it refers to the environmentally oriented activities within the organization that promote environmentally friendly culture, eco-friendly practices and behaviors (Papadas et al., 2017). In addition, IGM can help ensure that all employees share the same vision and green values, since that “in general, the advancement of new ways of thinking and efforts to develop an environmental orientation throughout the firm are possible when all members of the organization share the same vision as top management” (Charter & Polonsky, 1999 as cited in Papadas et al., 2017, p. 239).

According to Qureshi and Mehraj (2022, p. 791) “...internal green marketing (IGM) is defined as the extent to which an organization involves endorsing environmental values and develops a wider corporate green culture across the organization.” As Chang (as cited in Elshare, 2024, p. 213) indicated “executive management may urge each staff member to embrace green practices and reap the rewards by using IGMO.” As a result, there could be an increase in overall employees’ satisfaction and their JS (Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022). JS is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976, p. 1304 as cited in: Judge, Klinger, 2008, p. 394). As a global concept, JS includes various facets such as the work itself, working conditions, pay, promotion, recognition, cooperation and coworkers, supervision, management (see more: Judge, Klinger, 2008, p. 395). Therefore, JS as a job-related attitude refers to the degree to which an employee (e.g. manager) is satisfied with his or her job and its facets. Successful organizations implement the motivation programs for both managers and employees in order to increase their satisfaction and improve their performance (one of them are the IGM programs). In addition to the fact that organizations strive for satisfied customers, employees and other stakeholders as well as environmental protection, they also strive to achieve high business performance, and thereby financial outcomes. Organizational FOs refer to

a set of individual outcomes such as sales and profit growth, cost reduction, market share, etc. In order to gain an insight into the relations between the observed variables (IGM, managers' JS, and organizational FOs), this paper relies on the relevant literature and rare empirical studies. Namely, employees take positive job-related attitudes in the internal marketing environment (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003), so it is expected that they will take such attitudes in the internal green marketing environment, as well. One of the positive job-related attitudes of employees or managers is job satisfaction (JS). It has been empirically confirmed that IGM affects JS (the case of consumer, industrial, and service industries: Qureshi & Mehraj, 2022). Satisfied employees achieve better performance in the internal marketing environment (Gross, Rottler, 2019). They can also affect organizational performance (Chen et al., 2015 and Shabbir, Salaria, 2014 as cited in Huang et al., 2019). Papadas et al. (2017, p. 236) state that organizations adopt the practice of green marketing to achieve better business performance, since green marketing is "an essential tool for sustainable business strategy". In line with that, it has been confirmed that IGMO affects business performance (the case of the tourism and hospitality industry: Elshaer et al., 2024). To the authors' knowledge, there are no previous studies conducted in the IGM context that examine the relationship between JS and organizational FOs. In addition, the direct effect of IGM on financial performance was rarely tested (e.g. Milanović et al., 2022). Some studies confirmed the positive indirect effect of IGM on performance. Namely, IGM affects organizational performance through competitive advantage (the case of the banking sector: Shababi, Golestani, 2022). In addition, IGM affects financial performance through organizational identification (the case of the agribusiness sector: Milanović et al. 2022). Although certain relationships between the observed variables (IGM; JS, FOs) have been confirmed, there is little research on the relationship between them, especially the research conducted in the agribusiness sector. In regard with that, the purpose of the paper is to examine the direct effect of IGM on both JS and FOs, as well as the mediating role of JS in the relationship between IGM and FOs. Finally, it is assumed that:

H1: IGM has a positive direct effect on managers' JS.

H2: Managers' JS has a positive direct effect on organizational FOs.

H3a: IGM has a positive indirect effect on organizational FOs through managers' JS.

H3b: IGM has a positive direct effect on organizational FOs.

Methodology

Data collection: Data collection for testing the hypotheses in this paper was carried out by an online survey. The sample consisted of managers of medium-sized and large organizations operating in the Serbian agribusiness sector. The research was conducted in the period December 2023 - May 2024. The contacts of managers of the agribusiness sector organizations were acquired through various e-sources (*All companies in Serbia*, <https://kompanije.co.rs>; *Agriculture sphere* (<https://www.poljosfera.rs/agrosfera/adresar/>; *Best of Serbia*, <https://www.bestofserbia.rs>; etc.), as well as through personal contacts.

Sample: According to the latest data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the number of business entities in the relevant sectors in Serbia in 2021 was 1879, that is, the number of medium-sized business entities was 1508 while the number of large-sized business entities was 371 (Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 82 and 6, Manufacturing industry: 949 and 270, Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles: 477 and 95, respectively; as cited in Enterprises by size and entrepreneurs in the Republic of Serbia 2019-2021, 2023, *Table 1.1.6*). More precisely, according to the data of the Serbian Business Registers Agency, the number of medium-sized and large business entities in the agribusiness sector at the end of 2017 in the Serbia amounted to 432, of which medium-sized: 350, and large: 82 (as cited in The analysis of prospective occupations in the agro-business sector, *Table 7*). The medium-sized (50-249 employees) and large organizations (>249 employees) were selected for this research, since these organizations have a greater potential and resources for implementing IGM practices.

From 323 distributed questionnaires 78 completed questionnaires were returned (the response rate is 24.15%).

Sample structure: The sample structure is presented in *Table 1* and *Table 2*.

Table 1. Characteristics of the organizations surveyed (N=78)

<i>Size</i>	<i>%</i>
Medium	46.16
Large	53.84
<i>Sector</i>	<i>%</i>
“A” - Division 01 “Agricultural production, hunting and related service activities”	10.25
“C” - “Manufacturing” (Division C10: food products; Division C11: beverages)	71.79
“G” - Division 47 “Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles”	17.96

Source: Authors’ calculation

Table 2. The structure of the respondents in the sample (N=78)

<i>The gender distribution of the respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	35.90
Male	64.10
<i>The age distribution of the respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
<31	23.07
31-40	28.21
41-50	25.64
51-60	20.51
>60	2.57
<i>The educational distribution of the respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Secondary	10.26
Higher	89.74
<i>The position of the respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
General or executive manager	66.67
Financial manager	7.69
Marketing manager	12.82
Human resource manager	12.82

Source: Authors’ calculation

There are slightly more large-sized organizations in the sample compared to medium-sized organizations. The largest number of the organizations in the sample operates in manufacturing - Sector C (*Table 1*). The sample includes more male, managers with higher education and those whose position is general or executive manager (*Table 2*).

Measurement scales: IGM is the first construct in this research. IGM refers to the level to which an organization advocates and endorses green, eco or environmental values and develops organizational green culture (adapting to Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022). This research used 15-items from Qureshi and Mehraj (2022, *Table 3*): green internal communication (5 items; GIC4 is GIC3, GIC5 is GIC4 and GIC6 is GIC5, green skill development (five items; GSD), and green rewards (five items; GRs). JS is the second construct in this research. JS is defined as the level to which managers are satisfied with the job and its facets (the job itself, freedom in the workplace, the activities that the work offers, opportunities to interact with others, etc.). A low level of JS can increase employees' intentions to leave their current job, especially when another job opportunity is presented to them (King, Grace, 2010 as cited in Huang et al., 2019). Therefore, it is vital to measure JS. Managers' JS as a reflective construct was measured by five items (the scale from Huang et al., 2019, *Table 3*). The respondents (managers) were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements (offered in the survey) regarding IGM and JS (a scale of 1 i.e. strongly disagree to 5 i.e. strongly agree). FOs refer to the financial success and effectiveness of the organization in achieving its financial goals and objectives (adapting to Zsidó, 2015 as cited in Elshaire et al., 2024). It involves various indicators such as sales growth, organization's profitability, organization's economic results, profit before tax, and market share (Morgan et al., 2004 as cited in Papadas et al., 2019, *Table 2*). Measuring FOs helps identify areas and activities that the organization needs to improve. A subjective measure of FOs is still used in many studies. In line with that, a subjective measure of FOs was used in this paper. This paper adopted the 5-item scale of FOs proposed by Morgan et al., 2004 (as cited in Papadas et al., 2019, *Table 2*). Namely, the indicator „organization's economic results“ was excluded while the indicator „costs reduction,“ is included in this research. The managers were asked to rate the level of sales growth (FOs1), the level of profitability growth (FOs2), the level of costs reduction (FOs3); the level of profit before tax growth (FOs4) as well as the level of market share growth (FOs5) that were achieved in 2022 (1 – not achieved at all, 5 – fully achieved).

Data analysis: For testing the hypotheses, partial least squares structural equation modeling technique (PLS-SEM) was used. The calculations were done in SmartPLS 4.1.0.4. software. Following suggestions in the literature, a two-step procedure (Hair et al., 2017), and the disjoint two-stage approach (Becker et al., 2012; Sarstedt et al., 2019) were applied. The obtained results are presented below.

Results

Measurement model assessment: Factor analysis (PLS algorithm function) was conducted in order to assess reliability and validity of measurement scales. Summarized results from both stages of the disjoint two-stage approach are given in *Table 3* alongside descriptive statistics for all indicators used in the research.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics, reliability and convergent validity

Constructs and their indicators	Mean	St. Dev.	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
<i>IGM (second-order refl. con.)</i>	3.424	0.023		<i>0.902</i>	<i>0.938</i>	<i>0.835</i>
GIC (first-order reflective con.)	3.719	0.087	<i>0.909</i>	0.935	0.951	0.796
GIC1	4.103	0.988	0.872			
GIC2	3.923	1.078	0.941			
GIC3	3.667	1.077	0.840			
GIC4	3.795	1.049	0.936			
GIC5	3.821	1.225	0.866			
GSD (first-order reflective con.)	3.549	0.087	<i>0.913</i>	0.886	0.917	0.689
GSD1	3.333	1.124	0.880			
GSD2	3.641	1.032	0.838			
GSD3	3.974	1.006	0.691			
GSD4	3.692	0.971	0.856			
GSD5	3.103	1.180	0.872			
GRs (first-order reflective con.)	3.005	0.047	<i>0.920</i>	0.941	0.956	0.813
GRs1	3.026	1.238	0.937			
GRs2	3.051	1.205	0.965			
GRs3	3,000	1,206	0.925			
GRs4	2.256	1.156	0.866			
GRs5	3.692	1.120	0.807			
Managers' JS (reflective const.)	4.400	0.089		0.832	0.882	0.600
JS1	4.385	0.649	0.760			
JS2	4.321	0.747	0.842			
JS3	4.603	0.671	0.777			
JS4	4.423	0.730	0.821			
JS5	4.269	0.878	0.661			
Organ. FOs (reflective const.)	4.077	0.118		0.820	0.877	0.595
FOs1	4.256	0.904	0.844			
FOs2	4.077	1.125	0.875			
FOs3	3.872	0.972	0.597			
FOs4	3.872	1.049	0.874			
FOs5	4.308	0.827	0.616			

*Note: Italics were used for the values obtained in the second stage of the disjoint two-stage approach

Source: Authors' calculation

Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Ch. Alpha), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) were used in order to assess internal consistency and reliability of measurement scales, since all constructs in the model were reflective. All factor loadings were above 0.5 as it is recommended in literature (Hair et al., 2014). Thus, reliability was established. Internal consistency was also established since Ch. Alpha and CR were above 0.7 (Churchill, 1979; Diamantopoulos et al., 2012). CR values were above 0.7, AVE values were above 0.5, and CR values were greater than AVE values for all constructs in the tested model (Fornell, Larker, 1981) showing that there were no convergent validity issues.

Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio is presented in *Table 4*.

Table 4. HTMT ratio

	FOs	GIC	GRs	GSD	IGM
GIC	0.488				
GRs	0.468	0.843			
GSD	0.612	0.765	0.801		
IGM	<i>0.568</i>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
JS	0.813	0.400	0.362	0.545	<i>0.474</i>

*Note: Italics were used for the values obtained in the second stage of the disjoint two-stage approach

Source: Authors' calculation

Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio was used for the assessment of discriminant validity following suggestions of Henseler et al. (2015). HTMT values were lower than 0.9 for all constructs in the model (see *Table 4*). Thus, discriminant validity was established.

Structural model assessment: In order to ensure that collinearity was not an issue, VIF values were observed, and they were lower than 3 for both exogenous constructs in the model ($VIF_{IGM}=1.222$; $VIF_{JS}=1.222$) as it is suggested in literature (Hair et al., 2017).

The quality of the structural model was assessed based on coefficient of determination (R^2) and Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value (Geisser, 1974; Shmueli, Koppius, 2011; Stone, 1974). The results showed that more than 50% of the variance in FOs was explained by independent variables in the model ($R^2_{FOs}=0.508$). R^2 for the dependent variable JS was 0.182. These results are considered good in social sciences research (Falk, Miller, 1992). In order to calculate Q^2 , PLSpredict procedure was used (number of folds=10). Values of Q^2 for all dependent variables were above zero ($Q^2_{FOs}=0.224$; $Q^2_{JS}=0.156$) as it is required in literature (Hair et al., 2019).

For testing the hypotheses, the bootstrap procedure was used (5,000 subsamples; BCa method; two-tailed t-test; 5% significance level). The obtained results are presented in *Table 5*.

Table 5. Testing of the hypotheses

Hypotheses	β coefficient	t-values	p-values	Supported
H1: IGM -> JS	0.437	5.576	0.000	yes
H2: JS -> FOs	0.537	3.785	0.000	yes
H3a: IGM -> JS -> FOs	0.240	2.643	0.008	yes
H3b: IGM -> FOs	0.275	2.391	0.017	yes

Source: Authors' calculation

Based on the obtained results (*Table 5*), the first hypothesis (H1) was confirmed showing that IGM has a positive impact on managers' JS ($\beta=0.437$; $p < 0.001$). The second hypothesis suggested that managers' JS had a positive effect on organizational FOs (H2) which was also confirmed by the results ($\beta=0.537$; $p < 0.001$). The analysis affirmed that there is a positive and direct relationship between IGM and organizational FOs ($\beta=0.275$; $p < 0.05$). However, there is also an indirect effect of IGM on organizational FOs through managers' JS ($\beta=0.240$; $p < 0.05$). The mediation of the managers' JS variable is partial, since both direct and indirect effects were shown to be positive and statistically significant. All of this led to the confirmation of the third hypothesis (H3a and H3b).

Additionally, to uncover if the effects in the proposed model were meaningful, Cohen's f^2 values (Cohen, 1988) were observed. The results showed that all effects were meaningful. The effect of IGM on organizational FOs appeared to be small but meaningful ($f^2=0.124$). The effect of IGM on managers' JS was medium in size ($f^2=0.222$), and the effect of managers' JS on organizational FOs was large ($f^2=0.508$).

Discussion

By adopting and implementing IGM, organizations can more easily create an internal culture based on green values and sustainability, thereby improving job-related attitudes of managers and other employees, as well as organizational performance (financial and non-financial performance, especially marketing and environmental performance, etc.). Regarding the direct relationship between IGM and organizational FOs in the agribusiness sector organizations, there is a lack of the studies on this topic. However, some studies (e.g. Milanović et al., 2022) highlight the potential of the indirect relationship between these variables in the agribusiness sector. Similarly, the studies that have examined the relationship between IGM and JS (e.g. Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022) as well as the relationship between JS and organizational FOs in the IGM context, especially in the organizations operating in the agribusiness sector, are scarce. Therefore, the obtained results in this paper are significant.

The first result of the conducted research showed that IGM positively affects the level of managers' JS (H1) which is in line with the finding reported by Qureshi and Mehraj (2022). Namely, it has been confirmed that IGM affects managers' JS in medium-sized and large agribusiness organizations, similar to the effect of IGM on employees' JS in the consumer, industrial and service industries (Qureshi, Mehraj, 2022). This result is supported by the

fact that the internal marketing practice leads to satisfied employees (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003), since previous studies on the relationship between IGM and JS are rare, while such studies in the agribusiness sector are lacking. Therefore, this result fills the gap in the relevant literature regarding the relationship between IGM and JS, and emphasizes the importance of examining the role of IGM in improving JS and other job-related attitudes.

Managers in Serbian agribusiness sector organizations that adopted the IGM concept developed a positive job-related attitude, that is, they are satisfied with their job. Managers reciprocated to their organizations by demonstrating a higher level of JS since their organizations supported them with IGM activities. In order to encourage managers' JS, these organizations make efforts in the internal green communication (IGC) activities, the green training and education programs (GSD), and the green rewards programs (GRs). As a result, satisfied managers enjoy their jobs more, and stay with their organizations longer. Then they are more satisfied with the job itself, freedom in the workplace, the activities that the work offers, opportunities to interact with others, etc. Relying on this finding and the theory of internal marketing (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003), it is expected that a higher level of managers' JS will influence a higher level of employees' JS in the IGM environment of Serbian agribusiness sector organizations. Having in mind the above, it is advisable to constantly increase managers' JS (in this case of the agribusiness sector organizations), which can be achieved by paying more attention to the IGM practice.

The second result showed that managers' JS contributes to the improvement of FOs of Serbian agribusiness organizations (H2). The result is consistent with the view of some researchers on the relationship between JS, job performance and organizational performance (Chen et al., 2015 and Shabbir, Salaria, 2014 as cited in Huang et al., 2019), since according to the authors' knowledge, there are no previous studies have tested the relationship between JS and organizational FOs in the IGM environment. The confirmed relationship between these variables in this research is based on the principles of internal marketing theory (Ahmed, Rafiq, 2003). Namely, a higher level of JS makes managers more motivated to perform better, to achieve better job performance, which can ultimately contribute to achieving better FOs. In line with that, this result fills the gap in the relevant literature regarding the relationship between JS and organizational FOs, and highlights the importance of JS in improving FOs and other organizational performance.

When Serbian agribusiness organizations pay attention to managers' JS, they achieve better FOs. In order to encourage sales growth, profitability, cost reduction, pre-tax profit growth, and market share growth, these organizations make efforts to improve managers' JS, as well as all facets of their job. It is expected that the achieved FOs of Serbian agribusiness organizations will affect the improvement of the overall organizational performance. Having in mind the above, one of the ways to improve organizational FOs (in this case in the agribusiness sector organizations) is to understand the importance of managers' JS, since the results in this paper revealed that the effect of managers' JS on organizational FOs was large ($f^2 = 0.508$).

The third result of this paper confirmed the indirect effect of IGM on organizational FOs through managers' JS (H3a). The mediating role of managers' JS in this research is partial (both direct and indirect effects were shown to be positive and statistically significant). To date, the examination of this relationship in the context of IGM, as well as in the agribusiness sector, has not been carried out.

Managers supported by IGM activities are more satisfied, and then they are more motivated to perform better, to achieve better job performance and, finally, to contribute more to FOs. This result fills the gap in the relevant literature regarding the mediating role of job-related attitudes (e.g. JS) in the relationship between IGM and FOs. It highlights the importance of examining IGM programs and activities that effectively improve managers' JS and other job-related attitudes, since satisfied managers become more willing to perform better and contribute more to FOs and other organizational performances (environmental performance, as well).

The agribusiness organizations and their managers should be aware of the advantages of the adopting and implementing IGM and its potential in improving JS and then FOs. In order to encourage their managers to be more engaged in achieving FOs, Serbian agribusiness organizations should measure and monitor managers' JS and motivate them to perform better in the interest of their organization.

The fourth result confirmed the direct effect of IGM on FOs of Serbian agribusiness organizations (H3b). This result is in line with the results of previous studies, although Elshaer et al. (2024) tested the direct effect of IGMO on business performance, while Metta (2024, p. 5) suggests that organizations that "possess a strong internal green marketing orientation see an upward trend in terms of market share" (as one of the indicator of FOs). However, a recent study has shown that the direct relationship between these variables in Serbian agribusiness organizations has not been confirmed (Milanović et al., 2022). The authors of this paper assume that some of the reasons may be that the testing of the relationship between IGM and financial performance was conducted on a modest sample of small, medium and large organizations, and that financial performance was observed through three indicators (sales, costs, profit). However, relying on this finding and the facts in the IGMO theory (Papadas et al., 2017), it is expected that IGM will affect FOs of Serbian agribusiness organizations. Having in mind the above, the implementation of the IGM in these organizations becomes significant. IGM can contribute to the achievement of FOs, because its effect on FOs is significant, although small ($f^2=0.124$). In line with that, this result fills the gap in the relevant literature regarding the relationship between IGM and organizational FOs, and highlights the importance of IGM practice in improving FOs and other organizational performance.

Finally, in addition to the mentioned effects of IGM that confirmed in this paper, IGM is expected to contribute to the implementation of the strategic dimension of GMO, having in mind the fact that "the effective implementation of strategic green marketing activity appears to depend upon the support of internal green marketing actions" (Papadas et al., 2017, p. 244).

Conclusion

Achieving a high level of satisfaction of all the organization's stakeholders, on the one hand, and high organizational performance (financial and non-financial performance), on the other, is a challenge faced by organizations, and the one which is not easy to overcome. Effective overcoming of the mentioned challenge is achieved by the organizations whose employees are *customer-* and *environment-oriented*. It is assumed that these organizations take advantage of IGM. Therefore, this paper examined the relationships between IGM, managers' JS, and organizational FOs in Serbian agribusiness sector organizations. The main contribution of this paper is the establishment of the relationships between these variables, as well as the testing of the assumed relationships in the agribusiness sector context in which the relationships between these variables have not been tested before.

The results of this paper showed that there is a positive and statistically significant direct effect of IGM on managers' JS and organizational FOs, as well as a positive and statistically significant direct effect of managers' JS on organizational FOs. They also showed that there is a positive and statistically significant indirect effect of IGM on organizational FOs through managers' JS. The results emphasize the relevance of adopting and implementing the IGM concept in the agribusiness sector, especially in its medium-sized and large organizations. In addition, these organizations should pay attention to managers' JS.

This paper enhances the knowledge on IGM and its effects on managers' JS as one of job-related attitudes, as well as on organizational FOs as one of the organizational success indicators. These results are significant for researchers in the field of internal (green) marketing, (financial) management, organizational behavior, and human resource management. They contribute to the understanding of the impact of IGM as a new marketing practice on JS and FOs. To date, the relationship between the above-mentioned variables in the agribusiness context has not been tested. For managers of the agribusiness organizations, the results of this paper provide insights into how to use IGM to improve JS, and thereby organizational FOs. This provides them an insight into IGM-driven JS and FOs.

The fact that the results of this paper refer to medium-sized and large organizations operating in the Serbian agribusiness sector may limit the generalization of their results. However, the authors of this paper believe that the IGM implementation is more likely in medium-sized and large organizations. In addition, the responses of the managers in this research may be biased, although it is important how they assess the level of IGM implementation in their organizations, what their attitudes are about IGM as an internal green practice and its effects on job-related attitudes and financial performance. Perhaps a longitudinal type of study could be conducted in order to assess the effects of the IGM program on managers' and employees' job-related attitudes as well as financial performance.

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Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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