

Examining the Impact of Internal Marketing Practices on Employees' Work Attitude in Higher Education Institutions

*Yogita Luthra & **B.K. Punia

Abstract

This paper comprehensively analyzed the collected data of higher education institutes concerning the influence of internal marketing practices on employees' work attitudes. The simple random sampling technique on 736 employees of Indian northern universities was studied. Firstly, this study confirmed that internal marketing practices can be measured through three variables i.e. internal communication, employee development, and empowerment as well as confirmed employees' work attitude variables i.e.: job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. The data's reliability and validity were verified through the use of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and Rho_a. This paper showed the positive influence of internal marketing variables i.e. internal communication and employee development on employees' work attitude variables and the empowerment variable has a significant impact on the job satisfaction variable of employees' work attitude. This study also showed the significant impact between the latent variables i.e. internal marketing practices and employees' work attitude.

Key Words: Internal Marketing Practices (IMP), Internal Communication (IC), Empowerment (EM), Employee Development (ED), Employees' Work Attitude (EWA), Job Satisfaction (JS), Job Involvement (JI), Organizational Commitment (OC).

Introduction

Internal marketing systematically promotes an organization's standards, objectives, and culture to its personnel to encourage a supportive and engaging workplace. The goal of any good internal marketing tactic should be to increase participation, enthusiasm, and commitment among employees of the organisation. Some examples of what can fall under this category are team-building, recognition of employees' achievements, and rewards for going above and beyond the call of duty. The demands of the organisations and the employees as individuals should inform the design of these events. The influence of internal marketing practices on employee morale and output should be carefully considered.

*Research Scholar, Haryana School of Business, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar-125001. missyogitaluthra@gmail.com

**Professor, Haryana School of Business, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar-125001. bkpunia@rediffmail.com

Employees' motivation and output can suffer, for instance, if they believe their efforts are being unacknowledged. This is why it's critical to adopt an environment that motivates employees to make a significant impact on the company's outcome (Kanyurhi and Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa,2016). Internal marketing fosters shared ownership and purpose to increase employee loyalty, engagement, and productivity. Internal marketing strategies can help businesses achieve their objectives (Akbari et al., 2017). Since a positive company culture can affect employee attitudes, job satisfaction, and performance, it is vital to have internal marketing as the center of attraction. Whereas work attitude states an employee's thoughts, feelings, and activities toward their work and employer. Employees' work attitudes impact productivity, motivation, and commitment, thus organizations must grasp it (Cherif, 2020). The impact of positive work attitude of employees helps in satisfaction in the job, teambuilding, better customer interaction, encouraging creativity in employees, and increasing productivity. Firstly, the key variables of internal marketing practices i.e. internal communication, empowerment, and employee development as well as variables of employees' work attitude are confirmed in this study: job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. Further, this study will explore how internal marketing techniques affect job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job involvement which are the variables of employees' work attitude through SmartPLS4. Lastly, this study examines how internal marketing practices affect university employees' work attitudes in the university system.

Literature Review

Impact of internal marketing practices on Employees' work attitude

The application of formal internal communication (Martin and Billy, 2015) significantly impact the occurrence of informal internal communication within the organisation. The dedication of management towards internal marketing including informal internal communication, positively impacts employee work attitudes Several marketing activities, such as customer service, employee recognition, and communication policies, help to create a positive work atmosphere and improve outcomes. One vital part of an internal marketing practice is customer service, which involves treating customers with respect and appreciation and training employees to provide exceptional service. This builds trust and loyalty among customers, which in turn increases the company's reputation. An important part of internal marketing is rewards and recognition, according to Choi and Joung (2017). A culture of gratitude and respect can be built in the workplace by publicly acknowledging and rewarding people for their efforts and commitment. As a consequence, morale and loyalty can rise, which in turn enhances productivity on the job. Employees who see their hard work rewarded are more inspired to take the initiative. The study of Engin and Akgöz (2013) showed that personnel who are satisfied with internal communication and business tactics are more

committed to the organisation. According to Atouba (2021), employee engagement influences organisational commitment through internal communication and job satisfaction, also the relation between burnout and job satisfaction influences the two. Internal marketing strategies include rewards and incentives, communication, administrative assistance, empowerment, and training programs that influence organisational dedication (Alshura et al., 2016). Internal communication, a variable of internal marketing tactics, affect organisational commitment, job involvement, and satisfaction (Ting, 2011). He also showed that job involvement and satisfaction somewhat moderate the relation between internal communication and organisational commitment. Ismail and Sheriff (2017) showed that IM practices such as vision, empowerment, employee development, rewards, and communication positively impact organizational commitment. In today's competitive corporate world, companies of all sizes must identify the requirement of internal marketing to maximize employee performance and success (Khan and Rasheed, 2015). Jain & Khurana (2017) showed in their study that different variables such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to stay, advocacy, pride and emotional connection affect the relation between training and advancement practices, career advancement, and employee engagement. Huang and Rundle-Thiele (2014) showed in their study that cultural fit affects employee satisfaction and internal marketing tactics, including communication, training, and market research. This can support employee involvement in their work. Hilal (2018) showed in his study that banking employees' work attitudes are favorably connected with formal and informal internal marketing communication. Bank employees like regular employee appraisals, manager engagement, identifying employee expectations, and reviewing employment quality. Informal communication also affects industrial employees' work attitudes. For banking employees, managers' identification of unusual work of workers, understanding their needs during work time, and job satisfaction are also vital. Rodrigues et. al. (2023) study showed that while IM had indirect effect on job performance, it had a favorable and direct influence on organizational commitment, trust, and job satisfaction. Organizational commitment and trust affected job performance, while job satisfaction had no impact. On the other hand, trust and OC mitigate the substantial indirect effect of job satisfaction on performance on the job. Moreira Mero et. al. (2020), the findings indicated that the internal marketing variables are significantly connected to the organizational commitment, and the internal communication variables being the variable that possesses the highest relational exponent. Qionglei et. al. (2022), showed in the study that departmental internal market orientation (IMO) is vital for interdepartmental cooperation. IMO increases interdepartmental connectivity, decreases conflict, and enhances employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction affects corporate performance directly and mediates interdepartmental relationships. Laschinger et. al. (2009), the study showed that organisations that promote empowerment tend to have greater levels of job involvement. Worley et. al. (1992), study showed

that increased employee empowerment is positively correlated with higher levels of employee satisfaction and a greater chance of delivering exceptional service to customers. Rafiq and Ahmed, (2000); Boshoff and Allen, (2000) stated that empowerment is an important variable of internal marketing that significantly impacts employee job satisfaction. According to Alnidawi et. al. (2021), power, self-determination, knowledge, and work impact are dimensions of empowerment that have a positive significant impact on organisational commitment.

Research objectives

1. To study the impact of internal marketing variables on employees' work attitude variables.
2. To study the impact of internal marketing practices on employees' work attitudes.

Hypotheses of the study

1. Internal marketing variables have a significant impact on employees' work attitude variables.
2. Internal marketing practices have a significant impact on employees' work attitude.

Research Methodology

The data was gathered from the public and private higher education organisation in northern India. A random sample of 920 questionnaires was sent to a representative sample of the population to collect data with an 80% response rate. The authors themselves developed the scale of internal marketing variables i.e. the internal Communication, Employee Development and empowerment scales, and the job satisfaction scale of employees' attitude was also developed by authors themselves, while Kanungo's (1982) job involvement scale and Mowday et al. (1979) organizational commitment scale were used to analyse employees' attitude, with eight and nine statements respectively taken with loading greater than 0.5. The questionnaire had three parts. First, the first part of the questionnaire asks about demographic variables such as age, qualification, marital status, total experience, etc. Internal marketing practices questions are in the second part. The final part questionnaire concluded with employees' work attitude questions. Smart-PLS4 analyzed data using SEM. The survey questions use a 5-point Likert scale (5 "strongly disagree," 1 "strongly agree").

Results

Data Analysis: Confirming Internal Marketing Practices and Employees' Work Attitude First-Order Indicators

Researchers have utilized exploratory factor analysis to minimize data and uncover the fundamental patterns within observed internal marketing practices (IMP) and employees' work attitude (EWA) variables. The principal objective of data reduction was to extract the key variables representing internal marketing practices and employees' work attitude. The measurement scale employed in this

study to assess both the construct consisted of twenty-three and seventeen observed statements respectively. The KMO test value (0.907) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity's significant result ($p \leq .000$), with an approximate chi-square value of 12906.451 and 325 degrees of freedom confirmed the sampling adequacy and presence of significant correlations within the dataset, respectively as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.907
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square Sphericity		12906.451
	Df	325
	Sig.	.000

Both latent variables Internal Marketing Practices and Employees' Work Attitude underwent two rounds of validation process. Internal Communication, Empowerment, and Employee Development were the three first-order reflective indications of IMP, and Job Involvement, Job Satisfaction, and Organisational Commitment were three first-order reflective indications of EWA, that were validated in the first stage. Stage two involved validating IMP and EWA as a second-order reflective construct containing their respective first-order reflecting indicators.

Testing of reliability was the initial step in validating the first-order indications, According to the reliability test results shown in Table 2, the total Cronbach alpha and the values of all the individual variable scales significantly surpassed the mandatory standards of 0.70. Table 2 also shows the convergent validity through AVE values, which are more than the threshold values of 0.5.

Table 2. Factor Loading, Cronbachs Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE of First-order variables scale

Model Construct	Code	Loadings	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
	ED1	0.766	0.88	0.907	0.583
	ED2	0.803			
	ED3	0.824			

Employee Development	ED4	0.628			
	ED5	0.780			
	ED6	0.773			
	ED7	0.755			
Empowerment	EM1	0.783	0.881	0.908	0.587
	EM2	0.824			
	EM3	0.827			
	EM4	0.792			
	EM5	0.816			
	EM6	0.670			
	EM7	0.625			
Internal Communication	IC1	0.687	0.907	0.924	0.574
	IC12	0.784			
	IC13	0.735			
	IC2	0.761			
	IC3	0.718			
	IC4	0.720			
	IC5	0.827			
	IC6	0.784			
	IC7	0.795			
Job Involvement	J11	0.812	0.856	0.896	0.634
	J12	0.826			
	J13	0.844			
	J14	0.717			
	J15	0.775			
Job Satisfaction	JS10	0.626	0.791	0.858	0.554
	JS12	0.573			
	JS5	0.859			
	JS7	0.810			
	JS8	0.810			
Organisational Commitment	OC1	0.618	0.878	0.906	0.581
	OC2	0.800			
	OC3	0.839			
	OC4	0.825			

	OC6	0.759			
	OC7	0.760			
	OC9	0.708			

Discriminant validity was evaluated by the Fornell-Larcker criterion using Smart PLS (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results of the analysis shown in Table 3 demonstrate that all the variables have adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3. First-order reflective variables-fornell-larcker criterion

	ED	EM	IC	JI	JS	OC
ED	0.763					
EM	0.730	0.766				
IC	0.683	0.740	0.758			
JI	0.420	0.382	0.421	0.796		
JS	0.612	0.579	0.607	0.399	0.744	
OC	0.606	0.548	0.575	0.592	0.613	0.762

Impact Of IMP Variables On EWA Variables

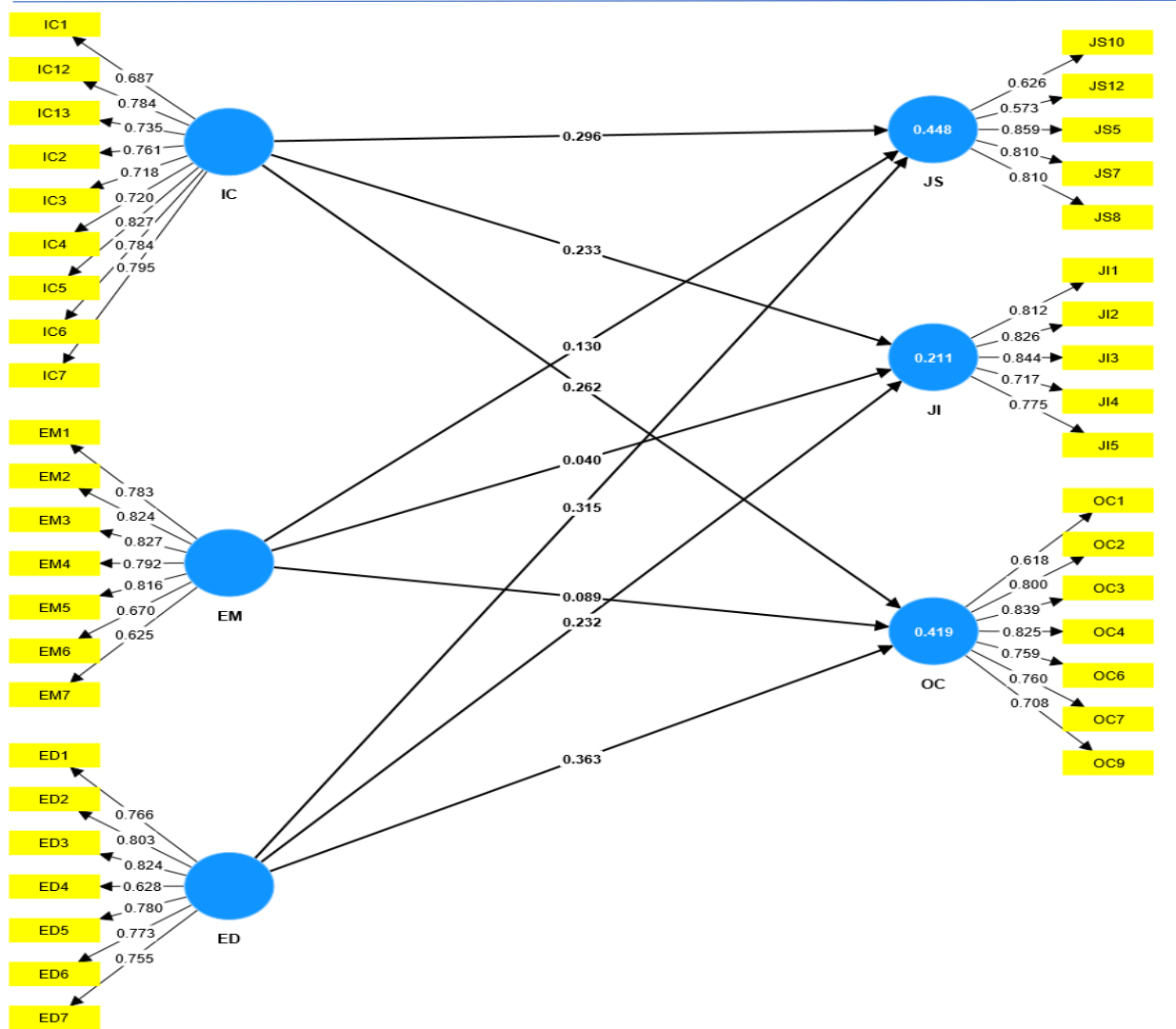


Figure1. IMPACT OF IMP VARIABLES ON EWA VARIABLES

Figure 1 shows statistically significant relation between dimensions of IMP and EWA. As internal communication has the strongest significant effect on job satisfaction (0.296), followed by organisational commitment (0.262) and job involvement (0.233). empowerment has also a significant impact on job satisfaction but an insignificant impact on organisational commitment (0.089), and job involvement (0.040). Employee development also has a significant effect on organisational commitment (0.363), job satisfaction (0.315), and job involvement (0.232). the figure also shows that all the variables of IMP combinedly explained 44.8% of the variance in job satisfaction, and 21.1% of variance in job involvement, 41.9% of variance in organisational commitment.

Higher order construct

Validating Reflective-Reflective Higher Order Construct- Internal Marketing Practices and Employees' Work Attitude

Internal Marketing Practices (IMP) and Employees' Work Attitude (EWA) are the higher order construct. Employee Development, Internal Communication, and Empowerment are lower-order constructs for IMP, while Job Involvement, Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction are lower-order constructs for Employees' Work Attitude measuring the Reflective-Reflective higher-order construct in the study. To determine higher-order construct authenticity, factor loading, reliability, and validity were tested. All IMP and EWA indicators have factor loadings above 50 shown in Table 4. No statements were eliminated from factor loadings. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and Rho_a measured the reliability and validity of the constructs. All statistics for the higher-order construct were more than 0.700, indicating good reliability in Table 4 (Henseler et al., 2016). Convergent validity was acknowledged because the higher-order construct AVE exceeded 50. Comparing the latent construct's correlation with the square root of AVE measured discriminant validity demonstrated in Table 5. The square root of AVE is greater than the other constructs' correlation. So, both higher-order constructs also have discriminant validity.

Table 4. Factor Loadings, Reliability, and AVE Of Higher Order Construct

		Employee	Internal	Cronbach	Rho_a	Composit	
		s' Work	Marketin	's Alpha		e	
		Attitude	g			Reliabilit	AVE
Internal	Marketing						
Practices	ED		0.896	0.884	0.885	0.928	0.812
	EM		0.910				
	IC		0.897				
Employees'	Work						
Attitude	JI	0.746		0.775	0.803	0.868	0.689
	JS	0.842					
	OC	0.895					

Table 5. Discriminant Validity- Fornell & Larcker Criterion

	Employees' Work Attitude	Internal Marketing Practices
Employees' Work Attitude	0.830	
Internal Marketing Practices	0.720	0.901

Structural Model or Hypothesis Testing

After conducting an assessment of the reliability and validity of the measurement model, it becomes mandatory to proceed with the evaluation of the outcomes of the structural model. This evaluation entails examining the presence of multicollinearity, also determining the path coefficient significance.

To check for multicollinearity, Table 6 shows how to get the variance inflation value (VIF) from the scores of the predictor constructs in each structure model regression. There is no multicollinearity in the data because all of the VIF values are less than 3.

Table 6. Multicollinearity of Structural Model

	VIF
ED	2.370
EM	2.800
IC	2.445
JI	1.546
JS	1.606
OC	2.080

Relationship between IMP and EWA

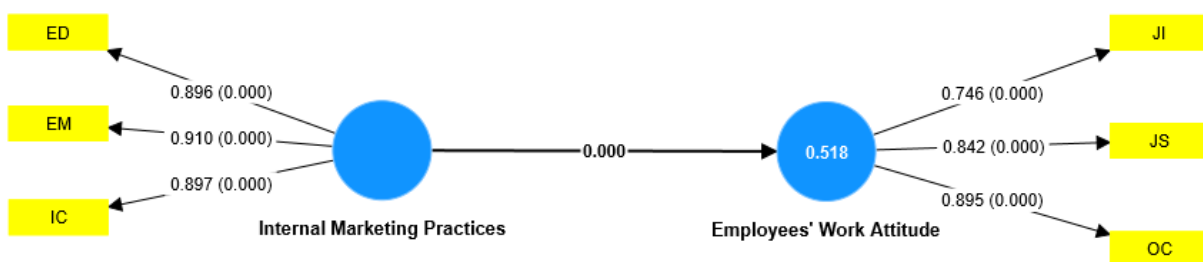


Fig. 2 Relationship between IMP and EWA

Here, the relationship between Internal Marketing Practices and Employees' Work Attitude is significant. As the p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 it shows that there is a significant impact of internal marketing practices on employees' work attitude as shown in Figure 2. So the hypothesis of IMP having a significantly positive impact on EWA is accepted here as the p-value is less than 0.05. The indicators of Internal Marketing Practices i.e. ED, EM, and IC significantly reflect the construct of it i.e. Internal Marketing Practices, and also the JI, JS, and OC, the indicators of Employees' Work Attitude, are significantly reflecting its construct in both Figure 2 and Table 7.

Table 7. t statistics and p-value

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P valu es
ED <- Internal Marketing Practices	0.896	0.896	0.009	9.852	0
EM <- Internal Marketing Practices	0.91	0.91	0.008	7.628	0
IC <- Internal Marketing Practices	0.897	0.896	0.01	8.49	0
JI <- Employees' Work Attitude	0.746	0.745	0.031	8.969	0
JS <- Employees' Work Attitude	0.842	0.842	0.013	10.845	0
OC <- Employees' Work Attitude	0.895	0.894	0.009	8.715	0

As Table 7 shows, a t-value of 1.96 (determined by dividing the original sample by the standard deviation) indicated that all three IMP indicators (ED, EM, and IC) have a significant relationship with internal marketing practices; the p-value is less than 0.05 further supports this relation. Similarly, all three EWA indicators (JS, JI, and OC) have a significant relationship with employees' work attitude.

Conclusions

It has been recognized through this work that both IMP and EWA are second-order reflective constructs, and that both of these constructs are composed of three first-order reflective variables. Internal Communications, Employee Development, and Empowerment are the three multi-item components that can be used to measure the 23 items that frame the measurement instrument for IMP, as confirmed by the study. Job Involvement, Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction are the three multi-item components used in the 17 items that frame the evaluation instrument for EWA. In addition, all of the first-order variables of IMP and EWA, that verified the constructs were strongly relevant to one another, showing a high level of reliability, and showed strong integration for the overall scale.

All the parameters of EWA appear to be positively impacted by the first-order indicators of IMP, which are considered to be valid and reliable. These variables include employee development scale and internal communication. On the other hand, empowerment only impacted on job satisfaction. It showed the partial rejection of the first hypothesis. This study also revealed that IMP had a significant effect on EWA in northern Indian universities. This showed the acceptance of the second hypothesis.

Implications

Organizations, particularly those within the university system, have the opportunity to enhance their internal marketing procedures by using the findings of this study. Primarily by emphasizing internal communication and employee development, organizations can effectively improve employee satisfaction, thus resulting in heightened productivity and employee retention. This information can be used by organizations to optimize their internal marketing practices to effectively cater to the distinct necessities and expectations of various employee groups. Gaining insight into the determinants that influence organizational commitment is of paramount importance in the context of recruitment and retention endeavors. Organizations can use this knowledge to effectively attract and retain talented employees, especially within the highly competitive academic sector. In order to cultivate a constructive work environment and foster a positive employee disposition, it is advisable for firms to consider the adoption of periodic assessments pertaining to their internal marketing strategies. Feedback mechanisms and continuous improvement initiatives are important for firms to effectively respond to evolving employee demands and expectations. The implementation of employee development programs has the potential to deliver favorable outcomes in terms of employees' work attitude. It is suggested that organizations invest resources towards training and development activities that are in line with the needs of their employees. The implementation of IM practices has a substantial impact on the development and formation of organizational culture. This study showed the vital of cultivating a culture that promotes open communication and professional growth to improve work attitudes and overall organizational performance. In brief, this research offers vital findings regarding the correlation between internal marketing practices and employees' work attitudes. It contributes to both theoretical knowledge and practical recommendations for establishments, specifically those within the university sector, seeking to cultivate a work environment that is featured by enhanced positivity and productivity.

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16	I feel free to discuss my issues with my head of department.
17	University website is regularly updated.
18	I regularly explore employee portal for new information about the University.
19	It is easy to share our opinion in official meetings.
20	The meetings happen whenever needed.
21	Each employee of the University has an access to the written message like memo/reports/employees handbooks/University publications.
22	It is easy to get information on recent issues related to my University bulletins.
23	There are telephones provided to each employee to communicate with other employees about University information.
24	There is no problem in signals of telephone lines in my University.
25	It is easy to communicate through emails as my University provides good wifi facility.
26	I can get information of my University through emails also.
	Empowerment
27	I feel satisfy to share my views to my manager.
28	My suggestions and opinions are valued by University officials
29	I feel satisfy for contributing in decisions-making process of my University.
30	My University uses employees' feedback to make continuous improvement.
31	I feel empowered owing to continuous flow of information in the University.
32	I take informed decision.
33	I easily get information about various activities undergoing in the university.
34	I am satisfied with my contribution in achieving My department's goal.
	Employees' Development
35	I am satisfied with my achievement from last three years.
36	My University provides me support and resources to accomplish my professional goals.
37	I feel motivated to achieve higher goals.
38	I feel satisfied that my personal and professional goals help me to improve my performance in my current job.
39	My University provides the training session for the self-development of employees.
40	All employees in the training session get the appropriate time for learning the new skills.
41	Regular workshop helps employees for their development.

42	My University is always ready to adopt new strategies that is helpful for the development of employees.
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PART-3: Employees' Work Attitude

No.	Statements
	Job Satisfaction
1	I feel attached to my existing job.
2	I do my work with full enthusiasm.
3	I feel free to share my job-related problems with my head of department.
4	There is a pleasant working environment in my university.
5	My efforts are always adequately appreciated by my seniors.
6	I could complete my work within office working hours.
7	My University offers a decent salary.
8	Adequate grievance redressal mechanism is available to resolve employee's grievances.
9	Adequate growth and career opportunities are available for the employees.
10	My senior approves my leaves on all critical moments.
11	My job profile is exciting and challenging.
12	I have cordial relationship with my colleagues.
13	I am planning to leave my job.
14	My senior does not treat me well.
15	I have to commute a very long distance to reach my office.
	Job Involvement
16	The most important things that happen to me involve my present job.
17	To me, my job is only a small part of who I am.
18	I am very much involved personally in my job.
19	I live, eat and breathe my job.
20	Most of my interests are centred around my job.
21	I have very strong tie with my present job which would be very difficult to break.
22	Usually I feel detached from my job.
23	Most of my personal life goals are job-oriented.
24	I consider my job to be very central to my existence.

25	I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time.
	Organisational Commitment
26	I am willing to put in a great deal of efforts beyond that normally expected in order to help this University be successful.
27	I talk up this University to my friends as a great organisation to work for.
28	I feel very little loyalty to this University.
29	I would accept almost any type of job assignment to keep working for this University.
30	I find that my values and University's values are very similar.
31	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this University.
32	I could just as well be working for a different University as long as the types of work were similar. .
33	This University really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
34	It would take very little changes in my present circumstances to cause me leave this University.
35	I am extremely glad that I choose this University to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined.
36	There's no too much gained by sticking with this University indefinitely.
37	Often, I find it difficult to agree with this University's policies on important matters relating to its employees.
38	I really care about the fate of this University.
39	For me this is the best of all possible University for which to work.
40	Deciding to work for this University was a definite mistake on my part.