

An Analytical Study of Employees' Competencies and their impact on Organisational Commitment in Information Technology Companies in Chennai District

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ABSTRACT

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, IT companies face constant pressure to stay competitive. A critical factor influencing their success is the competencies of their employees, which directly affect efficiency, productivity, and innovation capacity. Organizational commitment plays a key role in employee retention, as employees who feel competent and supported are more likely to remain with their organization. This study analyzes the various competencies of employees in IT/ITES companies within Chennai District and investigates their impact on organizational commitment. This study used an analytical and causal research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate organizational dynamics in IT/ITES companies across Chennai. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed using Convenience and Purposive Sampling Methods, targeting employees with a minimum of three years of job experience. The study relied solely on primary data collection and employed statistical analyses, including Mean Analysis, Independent Sample 't' test, Correlation, and Multiple Regression, using MS Excel for data entry and SPSS for analysis. The study reveals that employees in IT companies rate their competencies higher than those in ITES companies, with a strong correlation between competencies and organizational commitment. "Analytical Skills" are the most influential predictor of commitment, while "Inter-personal Skills" have no significant impact. The study suggested that tailoring competency development programs to sector-specific needs can improve overall competency levels and organizational commitment. These findings provide valuable contributions and have practical implications for HR strategies and organizational policies in Chennai's IT/ITES industry.

Keywords: Employees' Competencies, Organisational Commitment, Technical Skills, Communication Skills, Analytical Skills, Inter-personal Skills, IT Industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, Information Technology (IT) companies are under constant pressure to maintain a competitive edge. One of the critical factors influencing the success of these organizations is the competencies of their employees. Employee competencies, encompassing a range of skills, knowledge, and abilities, are essential for achieving organizational goals, driving innovation, and maintaining high levels of productivity. Organizational commitment, defined as the psychological attachment an employee has towards their organization, is a key determinant of workforce stability, job performance, and overall organizational success.

High levels of organizational commitment are often associated with reduced turnover rates, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced organizational loyalty. In the context of IT companies in Chennai District, understanding the relationship between these competencies and organizational commitment is of paramount importance. This study aims to analyze the various competencies of employees in IT companies within Chennai District and investigate their impact on organizational commitment.

2. Statement Of Research Problem

The Information Technology (IT) sector is a cornerstone of the modern economy, characterized by rapid innovation, intense competition, and a continuous demand for skilled professionals. As IT companies strive to stay ahead, the competencies of their employees become increasingly critical to their success. However, there is a gap in understanding how specific employee competencies impact organizational

commitment, particularly within the context of IT companies in Chennai District. This lack of understanding poses several challenges.

Employee competencies directly influence the efficiency, productivity, and innovation capacity of IT companies. Technical skills ensure that employees can handle complex technological tasks, while analytical skills enable them to solve problems and make informed decisions. Strong communication and interpersonal skills facilitate teamwork and collaboration, essential for the seamless operation of IT projects. Project management skills ensure that projects are completed on time, within scope, and budget. Despite the critical role these competencies play in organizational success, the extent to which they impact organizational commitment remains unclear. This study aims to provide insights that can help organizations enhance overall performance by examining how these competencies affect organizational commitment.

High turnover rates are a significant challenge in the IT industry, leading to substantial costs associated with recruiting, onboarding, and training new employees. Organizational commitment is a key factor in employee retention, and employees who feel competent and supported in their roles are more likely to stay with their organization. Identifying which competencies are most strongly associated with organizational commitment can provide a basis for developing targeted retention strategies, yet this link is currently underexplored.

Human resource professionals need a deep understanding of the skills and competencies that drive organizational commitment to design effective training and development programs. By pinpointing the specific competencies that contribute to higher levels of commitment, this research will guide HR initiatives, ensuring they are aligned with organizational goals and employee needs. This alignment can lead to more effective training programs, better career development opportunities, and ultimately, a more committed workforce.

3. Literature Reviews And Research Gap

Recent studies have explored various dimensions of organizational commitment and its drivers within organizational contexts. Giovanni and Passarelli (2010) investigated the correlation between skills, task discretion, and hierarchical positions in organizations, finding that higher levels of skills and task discretion are positively associated with advanced hierarchical roles. However, they noted variability in how skills development impacts organizational commitment across different organizational levels.

Yadav, Khanna et al. (2019) examined the influence of quality of work life (QWL) on organizational commitment (OC) within the IT sector. Their research highlighted a significant positive relationship between QWL and OC, indicating that a supportive work environment enhances organizational commitment and positively impacts financial metrics like revenue per employee. Choiriyah et al. (2019) conducted a case study on competence, organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and employee performance. They found that while competence did not directly influence work satisfaction, it significantly boosted employee performance. Organizational commitment emerged as a strong predictor of enhanced work satisfaction and improved employee performance, underscoring its pivotal role in organizational outcomes.

Zakir Marzuki, Nasir, Muslim A Djalil & Faisal (2020) explored competence, organizational commitment, workload, and their effects on employee engagement and performance. Their study revealed that competence, organizational commitment, and workload collectively contribute to employee engagement. They highlighted the mediating role of job satisfaction in amplifying these factors' impact on employee engagement and subsequent performance outcomes. Indra Artati, Mahfud Nurnajamuddin et al. (2024) investigated the direct effects of commitment and competency on job satisfaction and employee performance. Their research found significant positive effects of commitment on job satisfaction and competency on both job satisfaction and performance, emphasizing the importance of these factors in organizational settings.

The present study reveals a significant research gap concerning the intricate relationship between competencies and organizational commitment within Information Technology (IT) companies located in Chennai District. While existing literature provides foundational insights, there is a clear need for further exploration into how specific competencies, such as technical skills and analytical abilities, uniquely impact organizational commitment within the specialized operational environment of IT companies in Chennai District. Addressing these gaps will enhance our understanding of the complex dynamics between competencies and organizational commitment, providing valuable insights for HR strategies and organizational development initiatives tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities faced by IT companies in Chennai District.

4. Conceptual Framework

4.1 Employees' Competencies

Employees' competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that individuals possess and apply in their work roles. These competencies are critical for performing job tasks effectively, contributing to organizational goals, and achieving professional success. Sanghi (2007) states that "competence means a skill and standard of performance achievement, while 'competency' refers to the behavior to be achieved."

According to Boyatzis (1982, p. 23), "Competencies are specific personal qualities that are causally related to effective and/or superior performance." In the words of Spencer and Spencer (1993), "Employees' competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that individuals possess and apply in their work roles." Competencies can range from technical skills specific to a job function (e.g., programming languages for a software developer) to broader skills like communication and leadership abilities. Employee competencies play a crucial role in shaping organizational commitment. In this study, the following major competencies of employees with respect to IT Industry are taken into consideration for analysis.

Technical Skills

Employees who possess strong technical skills are often more confident and capable in their roles. This competence can lead to higher job satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment, fostering affective commitment—emotional attachment to the organization. Moreover, organizations that invest in developing technical competencies signal a commitment to their employees' professional growth, enhancing employees' commitment in return.

Analytical Skills

Analytical skills enable employees to solve problems effectively and make informed decisions. When employees feel empowered to contribute meaningfully to organizational success through their analytical abilities, they are likely to develop a sense of affective commitment. Their ability to address challenges and drive solutions enhances their engagement and dedication to the organization.

Communication Skills

Effective communication is crucial for building relationships, resolving conflicts, and collaborating effectively within teams. "Communication skills are the abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information" (Gamble & Gamble, 2013). Employees with strong communication skills are better able to connect with colleagues, supervisors, and stakeholders, fostering a positive work environment. This positive environment contributes to affective commitment as employees feel valued and supported in their roles.

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence are essential for fostering positive relationships and collaboration. "Interpersonal skills refer to the ability to communicate, interact, and work effectively with others." (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 2003)

Employees who excel in interpersonal skills are more likely to feel a sense of camaraderie and mutual support within their teams, enhancing their affective commitment to the organization. Strong interpersonal relationships also reduce turnover intentions by creating a supportive work environment.

Project Management Skills

Project management skills are critical for executing tasks efficiently, meeting deadlines, and achieving project goals. Employees who demonstrate proficiency in project management are often more organized and capable of handling complex responsibilities. This competence contributes to continuance commitment as employees recognize the investment made in their development and the costs associated with leaving the organization. Additionally, successful project outcomes contribute to organizational success, reinforcing normative commitment based on shared goals and achievements.

On the whole, employees' competencies directly influence their commitment to the organization through various mechanisms. Technical, analytical, communication, interpersonal, and project management skills collectively contribute to employees' job satisfaction, engagement, and alignment with organizational goals. Organizations that prioritize the development of these competencies not only enhance individual performance but also cultivate a more committed workforce, ultimately contributing to organizational success and sustainability.

4.2 Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty that employees feel towards their organization. According to Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982), "Organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees identify with an organization and are willing to exert extra effort on its behalf." Organizational commitment is the extent to which employees feel dedicated to their organization and its goals. Organizational commitment is a multidimensional concept that influences employee behavior, job satisfaction, and organizational outcomes.

According to Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly and Konopaske (2008), "Organizational Commitment is a feeling of identification, involvement, and loyalty expressed by employees towards the organization." It encompasses three components namely, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Normative Commitment. Affective commitment emphasizes emotional attachment and identification with the organization ((Meyer & Allen, 1991), while continuance commitment focuses on perceived costs associated with leaving (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment underscores employees' sense of moral obligation and duty towards their organization and it refers to a feeling of obligation to remain with an organization." (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

Together, these dimensions contribute to employees' overall commitment levels, affecting their engagement, retention, and contribution to organizational success. High levels of organizational commitment are associated with greater job satisfaction, increased motivation, lower turnover intentions, and greater effort and performance at work. Employees who are committed to their organization are more likely to contribute positively to its success and longevity.

5. Methodology Adopted

This study adopted an analytical and causal research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate organizational dynamics within IT/ITES companies across Chennai. A total of 150 questionnaires were circulated among employees, utilizing a combination of Convenience and Purposive Sampling Methods due to the absence of a precise population frame of IT/ITES employees. Participants were selected based on having a minimum of three years of job experience in their current roles. The study relied solely on primary data collection. Statistical analyses, including Mean Analysis, Independent Sample 't' test, Correlation, and Multiple Regression, were conducted using MS Excel for data entry and SPSS for comprehensive data analysis.

6. Data Analysis And Results

6.1 Employees' Competencies - Mean Analysis

Fifteen questions relating to the Five Competencies of Employees (3 questions for each Competency) based on five-point Likert scale, (Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)) were given in the questionnaire. Employees' perception on these Competencies (Skills) were measured by applying descriptive (Mean) analysis.

Table 1. Employees' Competencies In It/Ites Companies Descriptive Analysis

Employees' Competencies	N	Mean	SD
Technical Skills	150	11.86	3.235
Analytical Skills	150	12.03	2.756
Communication Skills	150	10.36	3.777
Inter-personal Skills	150	10.11	4.003
Project Management Skills	150	11.52	3.541
EMPLOYEES' COMPETENCIES IN IT/ITES COMPANIES	150	55.88	5.987

Source: Primary Data

From the above table, it is inferred that employees have strongly perceived on all the five skills/competencies. Out of five competencies, employees have perceived more on "Analytical Skills" (M = 12.03) than other competencies and have perceived lesser on "Inter-personal Skills" (M = 10.11) than others.

It is also inferred that the employees' perception on the various competencies in IT/ITES Companies is above the average level since the all the Mean values are above 10 (two-third or 67%) out of 15. The Overall Mean Score of the employees' perception on the various competencies in IT/ITES Companies is 55.88 which is 74.51% (i.e., 55.88 / 75 x 100). This indicates that the overall employees' perception on the various competencies in IT/ITES Companies is above 74% in Chennai.

Independent Sample 'T' Test - Analysis

H₀: There is no significant difference between the Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to the perception on the major Competencies in their organizations.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference between Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to the perception on the major Competencies in their organizations.

Table 2. Type Of Company - Employees' Competencies

VARIABLE	TYPE OF COMPANY						t - value	p - value
	IT			ITES				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Employees' Competencies	71	56.17	3.775	79	54.35	4.549	4.896	0.000**

Source: Primary Data (** 1% Level of Significance)

As the *P* value (0.000) is lesser than Sig. Value (0.01) in the above Employees' Competencies Mean score, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. Based on the mean scores of the perception on the various employees' competencies in IT/ITES Companies, it can be inferred that the Mean Score of the employees belong to IT companies ($M = 56.17$) is more than the employees belong to ITES Companies ($M = 54.35$). This indicates that the employees belong to IT Companies have perceived more competencies than their counter-part. Hence, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to the perception on the major Competencies in their organizations.

6.2 Impact Of Employees' Competencies On Organisational Commitment In It Industry In Chennai

Independent Sample 'T' Test - Analysis

H₀: There is no significant difference between the Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to Organizational Commitment due to the impact of Competencies in their organizations.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference between Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to the Organizational Commitment due to the impact of Competencies in their organizations.

Table 3. Type Of Company - Organisational Commitment

VARIABLE	TYPE OF COMPANY						t - value	p - value
	IT			ITES				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Organizational Commitment	71	20.89	2.587	79	18.23	3.780	4.103	0.000**

Source: Primary Data
(** 1% Level of Significance)

As the *P* value (0.000) is lesser than Sig. Value (0.01) in the above Organizational Commitment due to the impact of Employees' Competencies Mean score, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. Based on the mean scores of the Organizational Commitment due to the impact of Employees' Competencies in IT/ITES Companies, it can be inferred that the Mean Score of the employees belong to IT Companies ($M = 20.89$) is more than the employees belong to ITES Companies ($M = 18.23$). This indicates that the employees belong to IT Companies have more organizational commitment due to the impact of employees' competencies than the employees belong to ITES Companies. Hence, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the Employees of IT and ITES Companies with respect to the Organizational Commitment due to the impact of Competencies in their organizations.

Correlation Analysis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Employees' Competencies and Organizational Commitment in IT/ITES Companies.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between Employees' Competencies and Organizational Commitment in IT/ITES Companies.

Table 4. Relationship Between Employees' Competencies And Organisational Commitment Of It/Ites Employees

Variable	N	'R' Value	P Value	Relations hip	Remarks	
					Significant	Result
Employees' Competencies - Organizational Commitment	150	0.722**	0.000	Positive	Significant	REJECTED

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As the P value (0.000) is lesser than Sig. Value (0.001) in the above relationship, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. There is a high positive and significant correlation ($r = 0.722$) between Employees' Competencies and Organizational Commitment in IT/ITES Companies. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Employees' Competencies and Organizational Commitment in IT/ITES Companies.

Multiple Regression Analysis

H_0 : Employees' Competencies have no significant influence on Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies.

Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to examine the influence of Employees' Competencies on Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies. This analysis is carried out to determine the best linear combination of Employees' Competencies (Independent Variable) for predicting "Organizational Commitment" (Dependent Variable) of employees working in IT/ITES Companies.

Table 5. Impact Of Employees' Competencies On Organisational Commitment of It/Ites Employees Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-.754	2.486		-.436	.698
	Technical Skills	.754	.182	.222	4.652	.000**
	Analytical Skills	1.115	.166	.395	5.337	.000**
	Communication Skills	.542	.193	.165	3.110	.009**
	Inter-personal Skills	.122	.217	.073	1.754	.175
	Project Management Skills	.452	.212	.160	2.743	.013*

Dependent Variable: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT OF IT/ITES EMPLOYEES

This combination of four out of five independent variables (Employees' Competencies) significantly predicts the dependent variable i.e., Organizational Commitment of employees, $F(5, 144) = 375.486$, $p = .000$ which is lesser than .001 (Sig. Value 2-tailed) and Adjusted R Square = 0.713.

Out of five independent variables (employees' Competencies), "Analytical Skills" (0.395) is the strongest influencing competency which predicting dependent variable - Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies. The beta weights suggest that the "Analytical Skills" only contribute most (0.395) to Organizational Commitment of employees. From the unstandardized coefficient, it is found that the one unit increase in the "Analytical Skills" would increase the Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies by 1.115 units. Technical Skills (0.222), Communication Skills (0.165) and Project Management Skills (0.160) also strongly predict the Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies but lesser than "Analytical Skills". However, "Inter-personal Skills" (0.073) did not significantly influence the Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies. Hence, it is concluded that Employees' Competencies have significant influence on Organizational Commitment of employees working in IT/ITES Companies.

7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study reveals that employees in IT/ITES companies perceive all five competencies strongly, with "Analytical Skills" rated the highest and "Inter-personal Skills" the lowest. Overall, employees' perception of competencies is above average, indicating a high perception level. The overall mean score shows a

strong perception of competencies in the sector. Employees in IT companies rate their competencies higher than those in ITES companies, indicating a statistically significant difference. Similarly, organizational commitment influenced by competencies is higher in IT companies compared to ITES companies, suggesting another significant difference.

There is a high positive correlation between employees' competencies and organizational commitment. Multiple regression analysis shows that four out of five competencies significantly predict organizational commitment, with "Analytical Skills" being the most influential predictor. Other competencies, such as Technical Skills, Communication Skills, and Project Management Skills, also significantly predict organizational commitment, whereas "Inter-personal Skills" do not. Overall, employees' competencies significantly impact organizational commitment in IT/ITES companies.

8. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, IT/ITES companies should focus on enhancing "Inter-personal Skills" among employees, as this was rated the lowest among the competencies. Implementing targeted training programs, workshops, and team-building activities can help improve these skills. Encouraging a collaborative work environment and providing opportunities for employees to engage in interpersonal interactions can also be beneficial. Since "Analytical Skills" emerged as the most influential predictor of organizational commitment, companies should continue to invest in developing these skills through advanced training, certifications, and real-world problem-solving opportunities. Enhancing analytical capabilities will not only boost organizational commitment but also improve overall job performance. Additionally, companies should address the significant differences in perceived competencies and organizational commitment between IT and ITES employees. Tailoring competency development programs to meet the specific needs of each sector can help bridge this gap. For ITES companies, focusing on technical skills, communication skills, and project management skills can enhance employee perceptions and commitment. Organizations should also foster a supportive work environment that values and recognizes employee contributions, as this will further strengthen organizational commitment. Regular feedback mechanisms, career development opportunities, and recognition programs can enhance employee engagement and satisfaction, ultimately leading to a more committed and productive workforce.

9. CONCLUSION

Employees' competencies are essential as they significantly enhance performance, enabling individuals to execute tasks effectively and efficiently, leading to increased productivity and better quality of work. Competencies also foster adaptability and innovation, crucial in the rapidly evolving IT/ITES sector, where employees need to keep pace with new technologies, processes, and market demands. Moreover, competencies contribute to employee engagement and satisfaction, as individuals who feel competent in their roles are more likely to be motivated, committed, and loyal to their organization. This study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of employees regarding competencies in IT/ITES companies and their impact on organizational commitment. This study contributes and highlights the critical role of the specific competencies play in fostering organizational commitment within the IT/ITES sector. This study underscores the importance of continuous investment in employee skill development as a strategy for enhancing organizational commitment. The findings of this study offer practical implications for HR strategies and organizational policies aimed at boosting employee commitment, satisfaction, and overall performance in Chennai's IT/ITES industry. This, in turn, is expected to lead to improved organizational performance, reduced attrition rates, and a more committed and dedicated workforce.

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