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Employees in the Information Technology and Telecommunications (IT&T) Industry: Job Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Intention to Leave
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Abstract

The Indian economy has been growing by leaps and bounds recently, with the service industry being the primary driver of this expansion. The service economy is driven mostly by the IT and IT-enabled service sectors. These two markets have certain similarities, but there are also important distinctions. And with so many women joining the workforce, diversity management in the workplace is facing new issues. High levels of work satisfaction have been linked to increased output. The intention to leave the company is lower among devoted workers, according to the research. In this research, we look at how participants' educational background and gender affect their levels of work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to leave their current positions. Convenience sampling was used to pick 313 participants from various IT and ITES companies in Delhi's National Capital Region (NCR). The findings revealed that the IT group had greater levels of turnover intent and poorer levels of work satisfaction and organizational commitment than the ITES group. The male group reported considerably greater levels of work satisfaction and lower levels of desire to leave their current position than the female group. In addition, a rise in work fulfillment led to greater dedication to the company. Finally, a combination of high work satisfaction and commitment to the company lowered employees' likelihood of leaving. Future study directions are indicated, and the results are addressed in the context of employee expectations.

Key Words :Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Turnover Intent, IT, ITES, Gender

Introduction

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment have an important bearing on turnover intent of an employee in the organization. Job satisfaction is one of the most researched and critical issues in the field of organizational behaviour. A satisfied employee brings positive affect and desirable work values leading to enhanced efficiency and productivity. Job satisfaction leads to lower absenteeism and employee turnover and also reduces hiring costs. There is evidence that increased satisfaction is related to enhanced productivity (Gruneberg, 1979; Herzberg et al., 1959; Judge et al., 2001; Schultz, 1973; Spector, 1997). A progressive organization, therefore, regularly uses satisfaction index to take corrective measures. Job satisfaction is also related to organizational commitment. Research indicates a definite association between the two. Nonetheless, there is a divided opinion about the causal relationship between them (Bateman and Strasser, 1984; Bluedorn, 1982; Dossett and Suszko, 1990; Farrell and Rusbult, 1981; Lance, 1991; Mowday et al., 1982; Vandenberg and Scarpello, 1990). Literature clearly indicates that turnover intent is an outcome of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Horn and Griffeth, 1995).

With the increasing women participation in the workforce, gender issues are now gaining greater salience. Organizational sensitivity to gender issue is likely to have significant impact on the satisfaction of employees. This article examines the impact of IT and ITES sectors and gender on job satisfaction, and organizational commitment and turnover intent. It also explores the impact of job satisfaction and job commitment on turnover intent.

The Indian IT-ITES Industries

While China has emerged as the factory of world, India is steadily but surely emerging as major hub of Information Technology. The IT and ITES industries in India are increasingly being viewed as a growth engine of the Indian economy, contributing substantially to increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), urban employment and exports. As a proportion of national GDP, the sector revenues have grown from 1.2 per cent in the financial year 1998 to an estimated 5.8 per cent in the financial year 2009.

According to the NASSCOM Indian IT-BPO Industry 2009 report, the Indian IT-BPO industry is estimated to achieve revenues of US\$ 71.7 billion in the financial year 2009, with the IT software and service industry accounting for US\$ 60 billion of revenues. Furthermore, direct employment in the sector will reach nearly 2.23 million, an addition of 226,000 employees, while indirect job creation is estimated to touch 8 million. This amounts to the net value-added by this sector, to the economy as 3.5–4.1 per cent for the financial year 2009. The sector's share of total Indian exports (merchandise plus services) has increased significantly from less than 4 per cent in 1998 to almost 16 per cent in 2008, creating employment and value addition to the national economy.

Although the IT-ITES industries are somewhat similar, yet there are certain major differences in the level of people interface, professional demands and competence of the employees. The IT sector is specifically more knowledge-oriented, may be 24×7, flexible, and requires relatively more creative solutions to the business issues. On the other hand, the ITES sector is more service-oriented, may be 24×7, rigid, stressful and relatively monotonous and repetitive.

In a nutshell, IT and ITES industries contribute significantly to the GDP and exports of India. They also conduce to greater employment generation. They have some similarities but they differ with each other in significant ways.

Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state, resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is a result of employees' perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important. In the same vein, Spector (1997) stated job satisfaction is 'the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs'. According to Luthans (1998), job satisfaction is an emotional response to a job situation, which can only be inferred, often determined by how well outcomes meet or exceed expectations. It represents several related attitudes which are most important characteristics of a job about which people have an affective response. Such characteristics include the work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision and co-workers. Past research has focused on job satisfaction from a dispositional (Arvey et al., 1989; Ilies and Judge, 2003; Stawand Ross, 1985), situational (Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Loher et al., 1985), or interactionist perspective. All perspectives have received support in the literature. We have used situational perspective on job satisfaction in the present study.

Gender and Job Satisfaction

Gilligan (1993) argued that job satisfaction is viewed differently by men and women. Campbell, Converse and Rogers (1976) stated that women have different expectations with regard to work than men. An employee has higher or lower level of job satisfaction because they have lower or higher expectations and greater or less ability to satisfy them. From this perspective, job satisfaction is seen to be an emotional response resulting from the interaction of work rewards and work values. The greater the perceived congruence between them, the greater would be the job satisfaction; the greater the perceived discrepancy, the less the satisfaction (Oshagbemi, 2000). Therefore, job satisfaction is seen by some people to be a function of what is expected and what is received. Thus, if one expects little and gets little, one will be satisfied. At the same time if one expects a lot and gets little, one will be unsatisfied. The basic argument is that although women receive less from their jobs than men do, they have lower expectations and hence feel just as satisfied as men (Al-Ajmi, 2006; Kinman, 1998). It was revealed that careers were of central importance to men but not as important to women (Kuhlen, 1963).

Studies indicating higher job satisfaction among women argue that women, compared to men, have lower expectations of the benefits they could receive from the labour market (Clark, 1997). Bartol and Wortman (1975), Clark and Oswald (1996), Hodson (1989) and Ward and Sloane (1998) found that women are more satisfied with their jobs than men due to less travel time.

On the contrary, Sousa-Poza (2000) argued that in most countries, women are less satisfied; for example, the Turkish women expressed less satisfaction with their pay and working environment, while Kuwaiti women were less satisfied because their culture negatively affects women's level of satisfaction. Hagan and Kay (1995) observed that female lawyers were more dissatisfied, the primary reason of which was lack of opportunity.

Women lawyers report similar job satisfaction as men lawyers. However, women lag behind men lawyers in rates of partnership and retention in firm setting (Hagan and Kay, 1995). They seem to be leaving law firm disproportionately more than men (Epstein et al., 1995) and are more. *Y.P.S. Kanwar, A.K. Singh and Amitabh Deo Kodwani*. likely to change their jobs in the next two years (Hagan and Kay, 1995). Opportunities for women are limited by traditional gender stereotypes (Rhode, 2000), but even then they are significantly more satisfied than men with the substance of their work (Dinovitser et al., 2004). According to Mueller and Wallace (1996), women in Canadian cities earn less, perceive fewer responsibilities and resources for advancement and as a result report more signs of depression than men (Mirowsky and Ross, 1989). On the other hand, many reporters showed no significant difference between the sexes in job satisfaction (Brush et al., 1987; Smith and Plant, 1982). According to Loscocco (1989), women value extrinsic job characteristics more and some show the opposite. Neil and Snizek (1987) stated there was no significant difference between men and women in intrinsic/extrinsic work orientations. In addition, Penley and Hawkins (1980), Brush et al. (1987) found that there was no significant difference in the level of satisfaction between men and women and that gender played no role in the level of job satisfaction.

In summary, the relationship between gender and job satisfaction is inconclusive. Some studies show that men have greater job satisfaction, while others demonstrate that men have lower job satisfaction. Additionally, some studies indicate no difference on job satisfaction between men and women. Consequently, there is a strong need to investigate the relationship between gender and job satisfaction.

Gender and Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Mason (1995) pointed out that it is the degree to which employees believe in and accept organizational goals and desire to remain with the organization. Aven, Parker and McEvoy (1993) stated that gender and commitment are unrelated; hence, there is no difference in the commitment of men and women towards organizations. Similarly, Savincki, Cooley and Gjesvold (2003) affirmed that men and women do not differ on organizational commitment and both are equally satisfied with the company policies. Nonetheless, as men and women experience different socio-psychological realities at the workplace, they are likely to differ significantly in their organizational commitment.

Gender and Employee Turnover

In a human resource context, turnover is the rate at which an employer gains and loses employees. Simple ways to describe it are 'how long employees tend to stay' or 'the rate of traffic through the revolving door'. Turnover intent is an employee's conviction to leave his organization. Turn-over intent generally results in actual turnover. High turnover can be harmful to a company's productivity if skilled workers regularly leave the organization and the workers population contains a high percentage of novice workers. In addition, the employees who remain in the organization also experience lower satisfaction owing to turnover of their colleagues.

Epstein et al. (1995) stated that women seem to leave the firm disproportionately more than men. The main reason behind such a trend would be lower job satisfaction of women compared to that of men. Moreover, women were employed in low level services. Further Johnson and Stafford (1974) and Farber (1977) found that women were less likely to achieve given targets. Spurr (1990) gave the reason of women's dissatisfaction as the difference between employment and promotion experience of male and female lawyers. Being female strongly reduced the probability of partnership and increased the exit rates. It seems that women have to work hard to strike a balance between work and life. They probably cannot devote extra time at work. As a result, they get adverse treatment at the workplace.

Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intent

Horn and Griffeth (1995) and Maertz and Campion (1998) provide the comprehensive summaries of various theoretical frameworks of turnover. Past investigations have shown that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the antecedents of turnover intent (Horn and Griffeth, 1995).

There are numerous investigations that have studied the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Currivan, 1999). The nature of the causal relationship between job satisfaction and organization commitment is an issue that has not been resolved. The predominant view is that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organizational commitment (Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982, Mueller et al., 1994; Williams and Hazer, 1986). There is also some support for the reverse causal ordering, organizational commitment as an antecedent of job satisfaction (Vandenberg and Lance, 1992). A recent meta-analysis on turnover research indicates that organizational commitment predicts turnover better than job satisfaction (Griffeth et al., 2000). These findings suggest that job satisfaction may be a more distal variable of turnover intent than organizational commitment. Based on this finding from the meta-analysis and the dominant view in the satisfaction-commitment research, we propose that

job satisfaction is an antecedent of organizational commitment which, in turn, is turnover intent's antecedent.

Objectives of the Study and Hypotheses

In the light of above review of literature and the issues raised, the objectives of the present study are to compare job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intent, between the IT and ITES sectors and male and female groups, and to examine the impact of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on turnover intent.

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are important both for the employees and organizations. A satisfied employee demonstrates greater commitment and this leads to lower turnover of the employees. Men generally have work as a central theme in their lives. They achieve a sense of satisfaction when they do well on the job and IT Graduate/Post Graduate/MBA, while for the ITES group the average work experience was 4.20 years and qualifications were mostly Graduate/Post Graduate.

Measures

The shortened version of job satisfaction scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was used to measure job satisfaction. The organizational commitment inventory, having nine-item version, developed by Porter et al. (1974) and the turnover intent inventory, consisting of 3 items, developed by Thacher, Stepina and Boyle (2002–2003) were used. The respondents were asked to rate different items using a 6-point Likert type scale where 6 indicated 'Strongly Agree' while 1 represented 'Strongly Disagree'. Cronbach alphas for different scales are presented in Table 1. All scales had high level of internal consistency.

Table 1. Cronbach Alphas for Different Scales (N = 313)

progress in their careers. They thus get over-involved with work. Finally, the IT sector employees have better job conditions, higher compensation and more recognition at the workplace. On the other hand, the ITES sector employees have odd working hours, more pressure from customers, and lesser flexibility. Based on these observations and theoretical underpinnings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: IT group will have higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment and lesser turnover intent compared to ITES group.

H2: Male group will have greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment and lesser turnover intent compared to female group.

H3: Job Satisfaction will increase organizational commitment. **H4:** Organizational commitment will decrease turnover intent. **H5:** Job satisfaction will decrease turnover intent.

Method

Sample

The respondents were selected using convenience sampling from six different organizations of the IT and ITES industries, hailing from the National Capital Region, Delhi,

Job Satisfaction	0.71	6		
Organizational Commitment			0.82	9
Turnover Intent			0.85	3

Source: Authors' own.

Results

Various statistical analyses were performed to test the different hypotheses. The results of the study are presented in three subsections. The first section shows t-test results. The second section describes correlation results, while the third section presents regression results.

T-test Results

Table 2 reveals that IT and ITES groups significantly differed on all the three dimensions, i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intent. The ITES group was significantly higher than the IT group on job

Table 2. Comparison of IT and ITES Groups on Different Variables

India. The total respondents from both the sectors were 313, including 218 male and 95 female respondents. The number of respondents in the IT group was 191, including 153 male and 38 female respondents. The total number of Variables Sector

IT (N = 191)		ITES (N = 122)	
Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.

t-value

respondents from the ITES group was 122, including 65 male and 57 female respondents.

The average age of all the respondents was 28.53 years. It was 29.95 years for the IT group and 26.30 years for the ITES group. The average work experience of the IT group was 6.80 years and their qualifications were generally

Job Satisfaction	22.55	4.28	24.31	5.78	-3.10 ^{□□}
Organizational Commitment	36.40	8.10	42.25	9.28	-5.89 ^{□□}
Turnover Intent	9.40	3.31	8.04	4.61	3.04 ^{□□}

Source: Authors' own.

Note: ^{□□}p [□] 0.01.

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satisfaction and organizational commitment and lower on turnover intent. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not accepted.

Table 3 shows the comparison of male and female groups on different variables. The male respondents were significantly higher on job satisfaction and turnover intent compared to the female respondents. However, there is no significant difference on organizational commitment between the two groups. Hypothesis 2 is therefore partially accepted.

Correlation Results

Table 4 shows the relationships among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intent. The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment was positive, indicating that greater the job satisfaction, greater would be the organizational commitment. However, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were negatively related to turnover intent, thus an increase in job satisfaction and organizational commitment leads to lower turnover. The pattern of relationships was similar for the IT and ITES sectors (see Tables 4, 5 and 6). Thus, Hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 are accepted.

Regression Results

Stepwise regression was performed to establish the relationship of job satisfaction, organizational commitment with turnover intent for the total sample (N = 313). Table 7 shows that organizational commitment entered the equation explaining 22.3 per cent of the variance, while both organizational commitment and job satisfaction together explained 25.7 per cent of the variance in turnover intent.

Table 3: Comparison of Male and Female Groups on Different Variables

Sex

Variables

Male (N = 218)		Female (N = 95)		<i>t</i> -value
Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	

Job Satisfaction	23.64	4.81	22.30	5.27	2.20
Organizational Commitment	38.86	8.42	38.26	10.31	0.54
Turnover Intent	8.48	3.64	9.78	4.39	–

2.73

Source: Authors' own.

Note: $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$.

Table 4. Inter-variable Correlations among Different Variables for the Total Sample (N = 313)

Variables	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intent
Job Satisfaction	–		
Organizational Commitment	0.58	–	
Turnover Intent	-0.43	-0.48	–

Source: Authors' own.

Note: $p < 0.01$.

Table 5. Inter-variable Correlations among Different Variables for the IT Sector (N = 191)

Variables	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intent
Job Satisfaction	–		
Organizational Commitment	0.66	–	
Turnover Intent	-0.24	-0.41	–

Source: Authors' own.

Note: $p < 0.01$.

Table 6. Inter-variable Correlations among Different Variables for the ITES Sector (N = 122)

Variables	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intent
Job Satisfaction	–		
Organizational Commitment	0.47	–	
Turnover Intent	-0.56	-0.50	–

Source: Authors' own.

Note: $p < 0.01$.

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Table 7. Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction as Predictors of Turnover Intent for the Total Sample (N = 313)

Model	Variables	Adjusted R Square	Beta Value Standardized	t-value	F-value
1	Organizational Commitment	0.22	-0.48	-9.52	90.70
2	Organizational Commitment	0.26	-0.34	-5.65	94.95
3	Job satisfaction		-0.23	-3.89	

Source: Authors' own.

Note: $p < 0.01$.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study clearly shows that there is a positive association between job satisfaction and organizational commitment in both IT and ITES sectors. It demonstrates that a satisfied employee will demonstrate greater commitment to the organization. Further, both factors are negatively related to turnover intent. This is in consonance with previous findings which have reported that job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intention (Curry, 1999; Griffith et al., 2000) and organizational commitment is negatively related to intention to quit (Horn and Griffith, 1995; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). Organizations therefore need to take steps to ensure enhancement of job satisfaction and organizational commitment to retain their employees.

A comparison of the two sectors, i.e., IT and ITES shows that job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the ITES sector are significantly higher compared to the IT sector, hence resulting in higher turnover in the IT sector relatively. Thus our Hypothesis 1 is rejected. Such phenomenon can be understood in terms of the reality of the IT sector which is highly competitive and where the projects are time bound. The employees in the IT sector are highly qualified and expectations are high compared to the ITES sector which requires monotonous repetitive functions to be executed day after day, and the qualification levels being relatively low and hence expectations. The IT sector may have much higher expectations from their organizations. When those expectations are not met, they experience lower job satisfaction and exhibit lower organizational commitment.

In the ITES sector, the Front Line Employees (FLEs) are the principle interface between service providers and customers in many firms. They play a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2006). The role demands routine, scripted interactions that are continuously and automatically distributed to them by the technology. These interactions occur under an extreme emotional demand of reconciling the need to maintain a friendly manner with customers (Holman, 2003; Mahesh and Kasturi, 2006; Siong et al., 2006) with the strict job demands of meeting call centre quotas (e.g., frequency and duration of calls).

Such conditions generate highly demanding, repetitive and stressful work environment. Thus, one can argue that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are more influenced by perceptions and interpretations than by objective conditions. Individuals with tougher and more taxing conditions may not be adversely affected by them. It is also a plausible explanation that organizations prepare the ITES employees well to cope with rigid, demanding and stressful situations. They are trained to face such situations with poise and emotional stability. So they are not overwhelmed and are thus satisfied. Another equally plausible explanation for this phenomenon is that the two groups might have totally different reference groups for comparison. The IT group may compare itself against a managerial group, while the ITES group may compare itself against a low skill, low salary group. Future research needs to examine these theoretical possibilities and take steps to decipher the underlying dynamics of job satisfaction and organizational commitment amongst the employees of IT and ITES sectors.

The study also shows that male employees are more satisfied compared to their female counterparts. Thus our Hypothesis 2 is accepted. The female employees with family responsibilities, conflicting roles, mobility constraints, etc., do find it difficult to manage the family and job responsibilities together, leading to lower satisfaction and hence, they might have higher turnover intent. Work-life balance is certainly more important for women than for men. Although family structure, sex roles and societal expectations are undergoing important changes, still women have the primary responsibility for family and the upbringing of children in the Indian society. Family friendly policies are likely to enhance job satisfaction among employees, especially among women employees. There is evidence to show that family friendly policies increase job satisfaction and decrease turnover intent (Bilal et al., 2010).

Regression analysis reveals that while job satisfaction and organizational commitment do contribute to turnover intent, the latter is the dominant factor. This is in line with the literature on turnover research (Griffith et al., 2000) which states that organizational commitment predicts turnover better than job satisfaction.

The present study has implications for the development of management systems to monitor the satisfaction and commitment of employees. This can be done through a variety of measures, such as satisfaction index, climate survey and exit interview. Line managers should be rewarded for creating satisfying and empowering people at the work-place. Effective line managers know well that they are required to work on task accomplishment and people satisfaction simultaneously. They cannot afford to achieve one at the cost of the other.

The future research should examine our hypothetical model in other industries such as banking, retail and manufacturing. Age is an important factor that needs further investigation to comprehend the relationship of job satisfaction and organizational commitment with turnover intent. Organizational and personal antecedents of job satisfaction and organizational commitment also need to be understood. The dynamic nature of job satisfaction and organizational commitment and their impact on turnover intent needs longitudinal enquiry. Such understanding will assist line managers as well as HR managers in monitoring and managing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

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