

Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment among IT Sector Employees: A Correlation Study

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Abstract:

The purpose of the present research was to explore the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap) and organizational commitment among employees working in the Information Technology sector. The sample consisted of 285 information technology personnel over the age of 22 from all over the world, with a minimum of two years of work experience. The majority of them were employed in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Italy, and India. Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) were the measures used to assess the concepts. The analysis was done through descriptive statistics. It was discovered that there is a significant positive correlation between total psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment. Continuance and normative commitment were found to have a significant positive correlation with hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. The affective commitment was only found to have a significant positive correlation with hope. According to the findings, psychological capital and organizational commitment may be effective approaches to achieve important outcomes in organizations. The findings can help firms and recruitment agencies improve their workers' work commitment, particularly in the IT sector, by making better policy decisions. It also offers significant advancements for psychological capital and organizational commitment research.

Key Word: Information Technology, Normative Commitment, Optimism, Organisational Commitment, Psychological Capital

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I. INTRODUCTION

Information Technology (IT) experts have become some of the most in-demand members of today's labour market as top organizations across industries seek greater adoption of digital technology. With the growing popularity of positive psychology, there is a greater emphasis on identifying and developing positive human resource qualities to manage workplace issues and improve organizational performance. In various studies on positive organizational psychology and behaviour, psychological capital and organizational commitment are the major topics. When it comes to positive organizational behaviour, even though it is based on positive psychology, it considers both the positive and negative aspects, focusing on strengthening advantages while improving weaknesses. Moreover, although psychological capital is not as tangible as other kinds of capital, it is valuable in the workplace. Thus, more research is required for finer-grained knowledge accumulation and progress as the literature and practical relevance of psychological capital and organizational commitment at work grows.

Furthermore, research has shown that psychological resource potential has a positive effect on job-related outcomes such as work engagement and organizational commitment (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). The present study aims at further exploring the relationship between Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment among IT sector employees. In terms of intra-correlations between the two dimensions, the study aims at helping the upper management, information technology professionals, and human resource practitioners increase each dimension by building and reinforcing a productive environment. It also aims at being useful to the organizations in creating an atmosphere where there is a strong sense of optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience. This will aid in the development of employees' skills.

Positive organizational behavior (POB) is an extension of the positive psychology initiative developed by Martin E.P. Seligman and earlier foundational psychologists, including Hersey et al. (Wright and Quick, 2009). Luthans (2002) defines Positive Organizational Behaviour as "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace". There is a criterion for a psychological construct to be included in POB (Luthans, 2002b). According to this criterion, for a psychological

construct to be included in POB, it must be theoretical for an evidence-based to lend itself to empirical studies, it must be positive-oriented and compatible with positive psychology, POS, and other positive research sources, it should be valid and accurately measurable, it must be available for growth and management, lastly, it must be connected to desired and observable job attitudes, habits and performance criteria (Luthans, 2002b).

POB is relevant, as it helps an individual see that they are capable of creating, relating and contributing to something greater than themselves in the workplace. Instead of concentrating on people's weaknesses, it encourages managers to draw on people's strengths, not just to concentrate on solving weaknesses.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

It is defined as a positive psychological state of development of the person, characterized by the trust (efficacy) to take on and make the requisite efforts to succeed in challenging tasks, making a constructive attribution (optimism) to succeed now and in the future, to persevere towards goals and, if possible, to redirect paths to goals (hope) to succeed, and to resolve challenges and adversity, to maintain and rebound (resilience) to achieve success (McGowan, 2020). It is closely related to improved mental well-being and the level of satisfaction with life and work. Psychological capital integrates four positive psychological resources that best fit the POB inclusion criteria i.e self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience.

Self-Efficacy is the strength of one's confidence in one's own ability. Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as the belief that one has the capabilities to execute the courses of actions required to manage prospective situations. It can be seen as the capacity to persist and the ability of an individual to excel in a task. For example, self-efficacy is directly linked to how long someone is going to adhere to an exercise routine or diet.

Hope refers to a positive motivational state derived from the combination of successful agency (willpower) and pathways (way power) (Snyder et al., 1991). It is an optimistic attitude of mind focused on the anticipation of positive results related to events and situations in one's life or in the world at large.

Optimism is an attribution style where positive events are portrayed through personal, permanent, and pervasive causes and negative events through external, temporary, and situation-specific causes (Seligman, 2006). Being optimistic refers to attributing reasons of failure to the external, rather than the internal, like a pessimist. Optimism has a beneficial influence on physical and psychological health, which leads to academic, athletic, political, and occupational success. Pessimism is known to contribute to passivity, disappointment, social isolation, and, in its worst, depression. The POB combines the two views.

Luthans (2002) defines resilience as the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility. It is marked by patterns of positive adaptation in the sense of severe risk adversity. It can be developed in the workplace by using one's assets such as knowledge, skills, personality traits, or social relationships, to reduce and handle risks such as stress, conflict, or job insecurity (Luthans and Youssef, 2007).

These four dimensions share a sense of control, intentionality, and goal-setting. They share a positive assessment of the situation and the chances of success based on motivated effort and perseverance (Luthans et al. 2007, p. 550). For instance, the optimistic view sees the chances of success as strong. Having high efficacy helps in deliberately selecting difficult targets and being inspired to accomplish them. Hope facilitates the generation and pursuit of multiple pathways towards those goals, and resilience enables recovery from setbacks when pathways are blocked. These resources also have some differences. Hope, effectiveness, and optimistic outlook for optimism are constructive, whereas resilience and the explanatory form of optimism conceptualization are typically reactive and arise after a positive or negative condition has already occurred.

According to Luthans et al. (2006), psychological capital is a core concept that forecasts success and happiness better than all of the individual strengths that make it up. It is proposed that PsyCap challenges individuals to explore the issue of "who you are" (Luthans and Youssef, 2004) and results in a stronger self-awareness that is important to the growth of leadership (George et al., 2007).

Numerous studies (Avey, et al., 2011) have identified a strong positive relationship between PsyCap and a variety of desirable outcomes in the workplace, including job satisfaction, and organizational engagement. It has also been shown to be negatively associated with negative organizational attitudes, including negativity, anxiety, tension, and intention to make a turnover. For instance, in research by Swati Chaudhary, J.S. Bidlan, and C.R. Darolia (2015), the relationship between the psychological capital, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions of LIC employees in India was studied. The sample consisted of 124 workers. A strong link between psychological capital and work satisfaction and psychological capital and the function of turnover was found here.

Another research by Sihag, P & Sarikwal, L. (2014), focused on the relationship between PsyCap and employee engagement. The sample consisted of 420 middle-level IT professionals, working in different IT industries in India. Through regression analysis, basic descriptive analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and model fit analysis, a positive effect of PsyCap on Employee Engagement was found. It was observed that

workers with a higher level of PsyCap indicate a higher level of job participation at the workplace. Another study by Promila Agarwal (2011) researched the empirical connection between the Psychological Contract and the Indian IT Industry Organization Commitment. A correlation design was used to explain the relationship. It was found that the 'intent to remain' and the importance of the responsibilities are positively associated with the psychological contract. Thus, it highlights the significance of the psychological contract and, if overlooked, its negative impact on human resources.

Organizational Commitment

It refers to a deep conviction in and recognition of organizational values and priorities. Morrow (1993) defines organizational commitment as being characterised by attitude and behaviour. According to Morrow (1993), organizational commitment as an attitude represents emotions such as attachment, identification and devotion to the organization as an object of commitment. Another viewpoint on organizational commitment is the "exchanged-based definition" (Becker, 1960; Alluto, Hrebiniak & Alonso, 1973). This principle holds that individuals are loyal to the company in so far as they hold their positions, regardless of the challenging situations they face. However, if alternative benefits are offered, they may be able to leave the company.

The Three Components Model (Meyer and Allen's, 1990) is a widely accepted one which identifies three components i.e. affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective Commitment (AC) has consistently been found to be the most valued form of organizational commitment. It can help in understanding the emotional connection and identity of workers of an organization. It is positively correlated with work effort and efficiency, organizational citizenship activity and negatively linked to absenteeism, intention to leave, work tension, and turnover.

Continuance commitment (CC) is based on the calculation of the perceived cost of remaining v/s leaving the company and is determined by the tenure and status of the employee as an investment in the organization that may be too large for separate and financial commitments, health insurance and pensions to becoming significant "side bets." Individuals possessing a high degree of continuance commitment have elevated levels of role conflict and role uncertainty as well as low withdrawal cognitions.

Normative commitment (NC) represents the sense of duty of employees to their company. It focuses on a person's moral compass and a sense of obligation to their workplace. Such an obligation is the product of internalized normative pressure on an individual.

According to research, organizational commitment has a major influence on a company's success because a highly committed employee identifies with the company's aims and values, has a stronger desire to belong to it, and is ready to go above and beyond their essential work tasks.

Organizational commitment has been studied in various ways. A study by Singh and Gupta (2015) focused on quantifying the relationship between age, which is linked to work experience and organizational commitment. It was conducted using a cross-sectional, survey-based method with respondents consisting of 500 workers from 13 organizations in India. It was discovered that while workers displayed higher levels of commitment based on professional affiliation and loyalty, there are substantial gaps between generations as to how these affiliations are viewed. Older workers appeared to be at the highest degree of AC. The youngest category was the lowest in AC but higher in NC. Another study by Messner (2013) focused on identifying the connection between OC and organizational culture among Indian IT service providers due to the loss of knowledge caused by high turnover rates in their offshore delivery factories. Respondents were presented with an online questionnaire. It was found that as an organization's ethical culture strengthened, employees' sense of pride, engagement and active support contributed to greater organizational commitment.

Furthermore, the conceptualization of organizational commitment has various benefits which are evident from a study by Stallworth (2004), which looked at the benefit of the conceptualization of organizational commitment, using a multidimensional approach to accounting and looked at the varied set of antecedent variables relevant to each dimension. It was observed that AC is usually higher when there is equity in the assignment of overtime, the level of socialisation with supervisors, the standing with colleagues, the probability of advancement, and when the mentor is demonstrating AC to the organization. Other working relationships, such as teams or associations, may also affect organizational commitment.

Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment

The various aspects of PsyCap have been shown to have a strong association with organizational commitment (Luthans, Norman, Avolio & Avey, 2008). A study by Jain et al. (2017) found that psychological capital is positively related to organizational commitment. The positive correlation was believed to be because employees with a high level of self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience are more likely to have cognitive and behavioural characteristics of higher self-confidence, more resiliency to adverse situations, optimism in the face of difficult situations, and hence more commitment to their organization.

Another study by Etebarian, Tavakoli, and Abzari's (2012) found a positive and significant relationship between psychological capital and affective commitment. The research by Jain et al. (2017) indicated that the relationship between psychological capital and organizational commitment can be because psychological capital is more of a personal resource that can be used to improve attitudinal outcomes such as organizational commitment. Their research has shown that organizational commitment is associated with self-efficacy and hope.

Moreover, Luthans et al. (2005) found in a study entitled "the relationship between psychological capital and the performance of Chinese workers" that the three types of positive psychological behaviour, hope, optimism and resilience, were positively associated with their work. Another study by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2005), found a correlation between optimism and commitment. Sinha et al. (2002) also analysed the relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment and found that organizational commitment is positively connected to self-efficacy.

The Present Study

The use of computers to generate, process, store, and share various types of electronic data and information is known as information technology (IT). Computer networking, broadcasting, systems design, and information dissemination technologies such as television, as well as other equipment needed in the process, are all included in the IT sector. It has evolved as a vehicle for social and economic development and is still increasingly expanding. Information Technology (IT) experts have become some of the most in-demand members of today's labour market as top organizations across industries seek greater adoption of digital technology. For instance, the United States is the world's largest tech market, accounting for 33% of the total in 2021.

The present study seeks to understand the relationship between Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment among IT sector employees. Furthermore, it is important to note that in an era of global competition and dynamic environments, the work lives of employees are transformed by economic, social and technological changes (Yu et al., 2019). Thus, the current environment has caused many employees to be pessimistic due to the uncertainty surrounding job security because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus had a significant impact on many IT companies, causing millions of people to lose their jobs and thousands of enterprises to close their doors. However, it is still one of the few sectors in the world that have remained operational and active throughout the pandemic by enabling its remote workforce.

Objectives

- To explore the relationship between psychological capital and organizational commitment in IT sector employees.

Hypothesis

1. There will be a significant correlation between the total score of psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment in IT sector employees.
2. There will be a significant correlation between dimensions of psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment.

II. METHOD

Sample

The total sample consisted of 285 Information Technology (IT) sector employees from all over the world. A large percentage of them were working in The United Kingdom, The United States of America, Canada, Italy, and India. The inclusion criteria were that the participants should be currently working in the IT Sector and have a minimum working experience in their current organization of 2 years. The minimum age for the sample was 22 years. Most of the participants were between the age range of 31 to 35 years, had 6 to 7 years of experience in their current organization, and worked in a private organization. Table 1 provides an additional description of the sample.

Table 1: Sample Description

Category	Sample Split (n=285)	
Gender	Male	137
	Female	100
Educational Qualification	Prefer not to say	48
	Undergraduate Degree	80
	Graduate Degree	152
	Doctorate Degree	53

Measures

The Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) Psychological Capital Questionnaire was used to measure the Psychological Capital (PsyCap) construct. It is a 24-items questionnaire, but for the present study, a 12-item PCQ was used in which the 12 items are taken from the 24-items version, which was distributed among four subscales i.e. self-efficacy (3-items), hope (4-items), optimism (2-items) and resilience (3-items). Responses were reported via a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). All items were positively worded. The three-component questionnaire of commitment developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) was used as a measure of Organizational Commitment. There are 18-items in the questionnaire, 6 items for the 3 dimensions. The responses were elicited through a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Procedure

Various studies of Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment were reviewed before the conduction of the research. Based on those reviews, two hypotheses were formulated. First, that there will be a significant correlation between total scores of Psychological Capital and dimensions of Organizational Commitment. Second, that there will be a significant correlation among the variables of psychological capital and organizational commitment in the IT sector employees.

The participants working in the IT sector were contacted through various social media platforms. The purposive sampling method was used and the data was collected through a survey created on Google form which included the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Avolio, and Avey, 2007) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Allen and Meyer, 1970). The participants were first asked to fill an informed consent form, attached in the Google form itself. Throughout the procedure, their anonymity was maintained and directions were given for their convenience.

For the analyses, first, the responses were segregated based on the different variables of PsyCap and organizational commitment. A 6-point and a 7-point Likert scale were later used for scoring them. Reverse scoring was done wherever required. Once all the responses were scored, the raw score related to the variables were calculated. The data was later entered into computer software (SPSS) and analyzed using Pearson r correlation. The mean and standard deviation of the data was also calculated. Lastly, a detailed discussion was written based on the analysed data.

Data Analysis

The data was computed in excel and analyzed using Pearson’s correlation in SPSS. SPSS stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. It is a software program that provides sophisticated statistical analysis. Pearson’s correlation coefficient developed by Karl Pearson is a test statistic that determines the relationship between two continuous variables. It also measures the strength and direction of their relationship on at least an interval scale. Since it is based on the method of covariance, it is considered the best method of calculating their relation. A Pearson r correlation value greater than 0 indicates a positive association and less than 0 indicates a negative association. The degree of correlation is said to be perfect if the Pearson r is near ± 1 . This suggests that as one variable increases, the other variable tends to also increase (if positive) or decrease (if negative). A correlation value of zero suggests that there is no correlation.

III. RESULTS

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants on variables of Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Total PsyCap	43.52	9.24
Affective Commitment	24.18	4.95
Continuance Commitment	23.44	5.79
Normative Commitment	24	5.21
Hope	14.78	3.94
Efficacy	10.09	3.50
Resilience	10.97	2.80
Optimism	7.67	2.50

Table 3: Correlations amongst Total Psychological Capital and Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

	TOTPSYCAP	CC	AC	NC
TOTPSYCAP	1	.427**	.117*	.296**
CC		1	-0.010	.497**
AC			1	0.068
NC				1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 4: Correlations amongst Dimensions among Psychological Capital and Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

	CC	AC	NC	Hope	Efficacy	Resilience	Optimism
CC	1	-0.010	.497**	.317**	.332**	.360**	.210**
AC		1	0.068	.156**	0.046	0.102	0.008
NC			1	.218**	.159**	.283**	.211**
Hope				1	.374**	.493**	.201**
Efficacy					1	.537**	.268**
Resilience						1	.205**
Optimism							1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study is to explore the relationship between psychological capital and organizational commitment in IT sector employees. Specifically, the study aims to find the correlation between total psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment. It also seeks to find the correlation between the dimensions of psychological capital i.e self-efficacy, hope, resilience, optimism, and the dimensions of organizational commitment i.e affective, continuance, and normative commitment.

The first hypothesis was that there will be a significant correlation between the total score of psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment in IT sector employees. As can be seen from Table 3, a significant positive correlation was found between the two. The total score of psychological capital was found to have a significant positive correlation with affective commitment ($r=.117^*$, $p<.05$), normative commitment ($r=.296^{**}$, $p<.01$), and continuance commitment ($r=.427^{**}$, $p<.01$). The significance levels indicate that the results were not due to chance factors. Hence, the hypothesis can be accepted. The results could be so because a resilient and optimistic individual in the face of adversity, responds calmly and with positive feelings, instead of reacting violently. Positive outcomes in terms of greater organizational commitment are driven by an individual's ability to successfully cope with stress and thrive in adversity.

The second hypothesis was that there will be a significant correlation between dimensions of psychological capital and dimensions of organizational commitment. As can be seen from Table 4, this hypothesis can be accepted. Our analysis showed that hope has a significant positive correlation with all three dimensions of organizational commitment. It has a significant positive correlation with continuance commitment ($r=.317^{**}$, $p<.01$), affective commitment ($r=.156^{**}$, $p<.01$), and normative commitment ($r=.218^{**}$, $p<.01$). This could be because hopeful individuals are resilient, have the will to battle, accomplish positive goals, and overcome illnesses. Thus, they tend to stay committed to their organization.

Efficacy was found to have a significant positive correlation with all dimensions of organizational commitment except affective commitment. It has a significant positive correlation with continuance commitment ($r=.332^{**}$, $p<.01$), as well as with normative commitment ($r=.159^{**}$, $p<.01$). This could be because people with high self-efficacy tend to engage more in their jobs and complete their assignments as they are confident in their capabilities. Hence, they are more committed. When it comes to resilience, it was found to have a significant positive correlation with only continuance ($r=.360^{**}$, $p<.01$) and normative commitment ($r=.283^{**}$, $p<.01$). Lastly, optimism was also found to have a significant positive correlation with only continuance ($r=.210^{**}$, $p<.01$) and normative commitment ($r=.211^{**}$, $p<.01$). Since all of these correlations are significant at both .01 and 0.05 levels of significance, it can be deduced that the results were not due to chance factors.

The results of the present study are supported by the research findings of (Jain et al., 2017) which studied the relationship between psychological capital and organizational commitment with a sample of 147 middle-level managers, working in public and private banks. The study suggests that the significant positive correlation between psychological capital and organizational commitment can be because employees with a high level of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are more likely to have cognitive and behavioral characteristics of higher self-confidence, more resiliency to adverse situations, optimism in the face of difficult situations, and hence more commitment to their organization.

Another research by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2005) found a dependency relationship between optimism and commitment. Lastly, research by Sinha, Talwar, and Rajpal (2002) studied the relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment and also found that organizational commitment is positively related to self-efficacy. Therefore, the results of the present study are well supported by other research studies and are not due to chance factors.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study explored the relationship between Psychological Capital and Organizational Commitment among IT sector employees. The findings showed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the total score of Psychological Capital and all three dimensions of Organizational Commitment. It was also discovered that most of the dimensions of Psychological Capital have a significant positive relationship with most of the dimensions of Organizational Commitment. We can thus infer that employees who represent psychological capital are confident in their abilities to contribute to the company's strategy and goals. When confronted with adversity, they maintain a positive attitude and drive to overcome issues and move forward. Hence, they tend to be more committed to their organization. Moreover, since the sample was collected from personnel working in various countries, our results may be able to represent and be useful to most of the IT sector across the globe.

The present study also suggests that by focusing on the dimensions of psychological capital, organizations and recruitment agencies can enhance their employees' work commitment, especially in the IT sector by making better choices while adopting policies. It also offers significant advancements for psychological capital and organizational commitment research. The findings of this study would be useful to upper management, information technology professionals, human resource practitioners, and organizations who are making efforts to keep their employees satisfied and happy, by creating an atmosphere where workers have a strong sense of optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience. This will aid in the development of employees' skills. Thus, PsyCap and organizational commitment may be valuable ways to drive important outcomes in organizations.

Since the current study was limited to information technology organizations, the results might not be applicable to other kinds of industry. Thus, future research might include individuals from other professions, working at various levels of the employee hierarchy, to better understand the link between psychological capital and organizational commitment in diverse sectors. The use of self-reported questionnaires is another drawback of the research. When people report on their own experiences, they are often prejudiced which can jeopardize the data's credibility and legitimacy. The questions' phrasing may also be ambiguous or have multiple meanings depending on the subject. Thus, a longitudinal design may be used in future studies to assess the relationships between the variables of the research.

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