

ROLE OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION PERSPECTIVES: A STUDY ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

Plethora of changes in the business environment had made it difficult for organizations to ensure that their key employees are retained. The retention strategies adopted by organizations to cope with these challenges had varied immensely making it difficult for most Human Resource (HR) professionals adopt any concrete model for retaining their talents. Over the years employee retention perspective had evolved from behavioral, individual differences and organizational predictors to contextual perspectives with people relationships gaining more importance in organizations. In this regard, social perspectives influencing employee decisions to stay with their employers started to emerge as important contextual predictors of employee retention. The present study had used employee “intention-to-stay” as the predictor of employee retention perspectives in IT organizations.

The purpose of this paper is to have an understanding of the impact of social factors on retention perspectives (“intention-to-stay”) of employees working in selected Information Technology companies in the National Capital Region of Delhi.

The research was based on descriptive design. Responses were collected from 300 employees working in software development positions in various Information Technology companies located nearby the National capital Region of Delhi. The respondents were reached on the basis of the personal contacts of the researchers. A list of probable respondents was developed and the respondents were randomly picked for the survey. The instrument “social factor-employee “intention-to-stay”” modified from studies conducted by other researchers was used to collect the responses. Data collected from the study were analyzed by using SPSS 20 and AMOS 20.

The study revealed that social factors had influences on employee “intention-to-stay”. Out of the various social factors investigated in the study, social network and team cohesiveness mediated the impact of supervisor and coworker support on employee “intention-to-stay”.

Supervisor support alone had significant influences on coworker support and employee “intention-to-stay”. The study would open up scope of further research and new avenues for HR policies that would be more employee engaging in the long run having far reaching outcomes in terms of facilitating employee job satisfaction and retention. Paper Type: Empirical

Keywords: Social factors, intention-to-stay, Employee Retention, IT Organizations, NCR of Delhi

Introduction

Over the years, retention of employees had become a major challenge for employers to sustain in the highly competitive global scenario. The Information Technology (IT) sector over the years had faced challenges to engage and retain their key employees in order to achieve sustenance and global competitiveness. The Indian IT sector had been no exception. HR heads and corporate think tanks in Indian IT companies had constantly found it difficult to manage their employees from leaving their organizations for greener pastures and prevent huge financial loss as well as loss caused by talent outflow.

Before going into a detailed understanding of the research theme, it is important for us to have an understanding of what is meant by employee retention. According to the definition prescribed by Zineldin, (2000) employee retention has been explained as the “obligation to continue to do business or exchange with a particular company on an ongoing basis”. Stauss, Chojnacki, Decker, and Hoffman (2001) on the other hand had defined employee retention as “liking, identification, commitment, trust, readiness to recommend, and repurchase intentions”.

Considering the brief argument placed above, it is well understood that retaining employees is an issue of strategic importance for HR professionals and also has immense significance from a researcher’s perspective. Employee turnover had remained an issue of strategic importance for organizations (Abelson, 1993). The importance of employee retention particularly in a turbulent business scenario can be well understood from the study conducted by Capplan and Teese (1997). This study indicated the importance of employee retention discussing issues like those of economic challenges and organizational restructuring. Rappaport, Bancroft and Okum (2003) had discussed similar opinion emphasizing the importance of retaining highly skilled employees. Mitchell, L.E., (2002) on the other hand discussed the importance of motivating and retaining employees particularly when organizations ply in an uncertain business environment. Abbasi and Hollman (2000) had discussed that attrition in organizations not only leads to a negative impact on their performance, but this also leads to poor innovation, lack of service and several operational pitfalls. This claim is further established by the findings of the study conducted by Fitz-enz (1997). Fitz-enz (1997) showed that total turnover cost for attrition was dearer to most organizations in terms of their one year’s pay and benefits packages offered to the employees. Authors like Griffeth & Hom (1995, 2000, 2001), Ramlall (2003) in this context had emphasized

the importance of employee retention as an essential way to increase the competitiveness in organizations. The study conducted by Bridges (1991) supports a similar opinion.

Rationale of the Study

Intention to leave has been identified as the best predictor of employee retention by many researchers of recent times. Maertz (1998, 2003, 2004, 2007) and his colleagues in their study indicated that “intention-to-stay” was an important predictor of employee retention perspectives as well as that of employee turnover behaviour. Previous studies conducted by researchers had mostly discussed employee retention issues in the light of employee “Job Satisfaction” and “Employee Commitment” perspectives. Turnover issues in these cases were discussed mainly in the angle of individual differences of the respondents and what kind of task or jobs they performed in their organizations. Consideration of contextual variables, personal perspectives was gradually recognized to be important in employee retention research. In this regard, while studying the contextual variables they were initially studied as (1) organizational perspectives (macro factors), (2) individual factors and lately (3) Contextual issues with such as employee-supervisor relations which off late had gathered more relevance than the organizational and individual issues pertaining to employee retention. This was perhaps the beginning of a phase in retention research where thoughts were poured in that there might be something well beyond organizational, individual issues extending to what kind of support employees received from others. This theme could well be seen in the studies conducted by Milkovich and Boudreau (1997). While exploring antecedent factors leading to employee retention, research evidence had been identified concerning: adjustment and issues with their supervisors (Pine & Gilmore, 1998); compensation and reward issues (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1997); lack of ability, skill development and change related issues pertaining to job roles as well as those in the organizational operations (Baron, Hannon & Burton, 2001). Employee oriented factors promoting career growth, specific development needs of the “knowledge-workers” (Trevor, 2001) and work-life balance perspectives (Milkovich and Boudreau, 1997) were also given due importance. Another wing of study emphasized on combining content and process models of turnover (Maertz and Campion, 2004). It is worth mentioning that Maertz and Campion (2004) many psychological antecedents like emotional (affective, moral, contractual) as well as

behavioural & moral factors were subsequently also found to be important considerations in employee retention.

As discussed earlier, contextual and organizational variables influencing employee retention were also given due importance. The evidence of the same can be identified from the studies conducted by Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, (2002), McElroy, Morrow and Rude (2001), Koys (2001), Bloom and Michel (2002), Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski and Rhoades (2002). The study conducted by Eisenberger et al (2002) identified that perceived organizational support (POS) was an important mediator in perceived supervisory support on employee turnover. Sinha, C., Sinha, R., (2012) in a recent study have discussed various organizational approaches like “competence & relationship oriented”, “scholastic & futuristic oriented” and “developmental & reward oriented” initiatives for retaining employees.

According to Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, (2000), most of prior research evidence revolved around evidences exploring employee intentions to quit. Considering this argument, it can be justified that, much less had been explored to understand the role of social antecedents influencing employee “intention-to-stay”. In-depth analysis of exclusively social factors or social antecedents has been ignored in existing management literature. A group of researchers had mostly attributed social factors influencing employee retention in the form of social support extended to employees (Lobburi, P., 2012; Karasek & Theorall, 1990; Mor, Nissly, & Levin, 2001; Um & Harison, 1998; House, 1981), social networks among people working in an organization (McPherson, Popielarz & Dribnic 1992) as well as various socialization activities and tactics followed by these organizations (Allen and Griffeth 2001; Allen, 2006). The present study considers this as a research gap and aims to explore how the social antecedents or factors influenced employee retention in organizations. The present study has been focused on the Indian Information Technology sector considering the peculiarity of high attrition figures and the involvement of highly intellectual and knowledgeable human resources.

Literature Review

Several studies have indicated that there exists intent to leave and actual turnover have strong inter-relationships between them (Price & Mueller, 1981; Bluedorn, 1982; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). In this context, it is worth mentioning that the study of March and Simon (1958) had a

noteworthy role in terms of developing conceptual frameworks and empirical models related to employee turnover. Similar contributions were made by Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, (1979); Muchinsky and Morrow, (1980); Steers and Mowday, (1981).

Recent studies on antecedents of employee turnover had been discussed by several authors like Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, (2000). Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, (2007) in another study had presented a discussion based on research findings – integrating motivational, social, and contextual work design features influencing behavior and performance. Logan (2000) indicated that employee retention is influenced by many variables like the culture of the organization, how people communicated, overall business strategy, Compensation and Reward System followed by the HR, flexibility in the job designs and schedule as well as in terms of employee career development perspectives.

Social Antecedents of Employee Retention

Although popular literature had emphasized on retention antecedents like organizational, psychological, very few had made any attempt to identify any intervening role of the social factors in employee retention. This justification can be supported by the works of Agrela, Carr, Veyra, Dunn, Ellis, Gandolfi, Gresham, King, Sims, & Troutman (2008). They indicated that various retention factors satisfying the aspirations of employees contributed to their job satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment (Boomer Authority, 2009). Although exclusive categorization of social factors in employee retention research is not available, yet evidence regarding the importance of the same could be identified from the studies conducted by several authors. Pichler, Varm & Budhwar (2012) had emphasized the importance of variables like Value Similarity, Collectivism, Social Support and Role Information as important antecedents of social categorization of expatriates working in India. In another research authors as those of Farmer, and Aguinis (1999) had come out with empirically tested model establishing the relationship between Supervisor Personal Attribute & Behavior on employee performance and behavior (in terms of perception regarding use of authority & power). The term social antecedents had been coined in various sociological research studies (Schooler, C 1972, Fox, 1992; Young, K., 1930, Butler, Doherty and Potter 2007). Most of these authors had made attempts to describe social antecedents as antecedents pertaining to the social setting of the organization influencing people behavior. The underlying review of research findings makes an

attempt to understand various variables which may were considered as important social variables in the present study.

Supervisor & Co-worker Support

Vincent Rousseau and Caroline Aubé (2010) had contended that employee affective commitment was significantly influenced by the support extended by their supervisors, co-worker support, as well as by the surrounding social setting influencing their performance and jobs. Other studies conducted by authors like Hutchison, (1977a, 1997b); Kottke & Sharafinski, (1988); Malatesta, (1995) had showed that significant relationships were found in between the variables namely Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Social Support received by employees. Similar findings were also established in the studies conducted by other authors such as Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, (2001); Yoon, Han, & Seo, (1996); Yoon & Lim, (1999) and Yoon & Thye, (2000). Lobburi. P. (2012) in a recent paper had pointed out that social support worked two ways, one in terms of workplace social support (i.e. in the form of supervisors & co-workers) and the other external (non-workplace) social support (eg. support provided by members of employee family, relatives and their friends) (Brough & Frame 2004). However this study was limited to organizations having collectivistic culture. The findings of the study indicated that supervisors support, co-workers support, and external social support along with organizational support had significant relationship with employee job satisfaction.

External Social Support

External Social support has been considered as an important variable influencing employee happiness in an organization. It can be described as an interactive exchange process in between people which is supported by emotional concern, support for others, instrumental assistance, and dissemination of information. Thoits (1995) had pointed out that social support played a crucial role for interpersonal relationship development among employees as well as managing stress in organizations. Authors like Broman (1993), Buunk & Shaufeli (1993) in their studies had given importance on the role of co-workers and supervisors in the organization as well as that of family members, and the society or the community at large. Baumeister & Leary (1995) in this regard, had discussed the growing relevance of social networks and attachments among the employees as important components of their motivational needs in an organization. Researchers such as

Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986) and Levinson (1965) had emphasized on the role of supervisory support as one of the most important aspects of social support in organizations. This theory was further supported by the study conducted by Remsburg, R. E., Armacost, K. A., & Bennett, R. G. (1999) and Bernotavicz, F. (1997). These authors pointed out that not only supervisor support; co-worker support also played an important role for reducing turnover intention among employees.

Social Network

Holton, Mitchell, Lee, and Eberly, (2008) were of the opinion that social networks had impacts on employee embedding similar to what was proposed by Lewin's force field theory. They further indicated social networks as clusters of linked employees within organizations. Rollag, Parise, & Cross, (2005) raised the issues of interpersonal, relational, social networks, and team dynamics for influencing employee turnover. The research conducted by Uchino(2004) emphasized the importance of social networks and job embeddedness on voluntary employee turnover. The importance of social networks in call center executives was studied by Castilla (2005). The findings of this study had shown that post-hire organizational social processes played an important role for retaining socially connected employees. The role of social networks in enhancing employee performance had been widely investigated by authors like Mehra and Brass (2001), Cross and Cummings (2004), and Podolny and Baron (1997). Research conducted by several authors like Infante, Anderson, Martin, Herington and Kin (1993), Infante, Gorden (1991) had clearly shown that social networks had important role to play in extending social support to employees. Studies conducted by Vischer (2007), McPherson, Popielarz, Drobnic (1992), Barry M, (1998) supported these assertions in the perspective from their influences upon employee job satisfaction. Social networks in organizations contributed to provide instrumental and emotional support to the employees. Research conducted by House, (1981, 2004); Karasek & Theorall, (1990); Mor Barak, Nissly, & Levin, (2001) also established the growing relevance of social support in employee work-life, job satisfaction and exhibiting commitment towards their organizations (Um & Harison, 1998). These authors further indicated in turn reduced employee turnover intention.

Team Cohesiveness

Authors like Xiao-Ping C., Naumann, S., and Schaubroeck (2005) came out with a major research finding establishing the influence of support extended by Team Leader, Procedural Justice, Team Cohesiveness and other Team Variables as important social antecedents of employee performance in teams as well as their turnover intention. Urien, B., Osca, A., & García-Salmones, L. (2017) had indicated team cohesiveness was an important social factor which is required for managing organizational as well as job performance related demands. Similar opinion had been reflected in the studies conducted by authors like Evans & Dion, (2012); Rico, R., Manzanares, M.S., Gil, F., Alcover, C. M., Tabernero, C. (2011), Smith, Arthur, Callow, Hardy, & Williams, (2013).

Based on the above literature the summated view of the understandings has been conceptualized for hypothesis development. However it is evident from above that:

- There is a gap in the existing management literature for exploring the role of supervisor support, co-worker support, external social support, social network and Team cohesiveness as antecedents of employee “intention-to-stay”.

The research question that emerge from the above understandings are:

- Do the social antecedents like supervisor support, co-worker support, external social support, social network and Team Cohesiveness have any impact on employee “intention-to-stay” in the Indian context?

The research hypothesis which could be evolved from the above research understanding and research question is as follows:

H₁ Supervisor support, co-worker support, external social support, social network and Team Cohesiveness contributed to employee “intention-to-stay”.

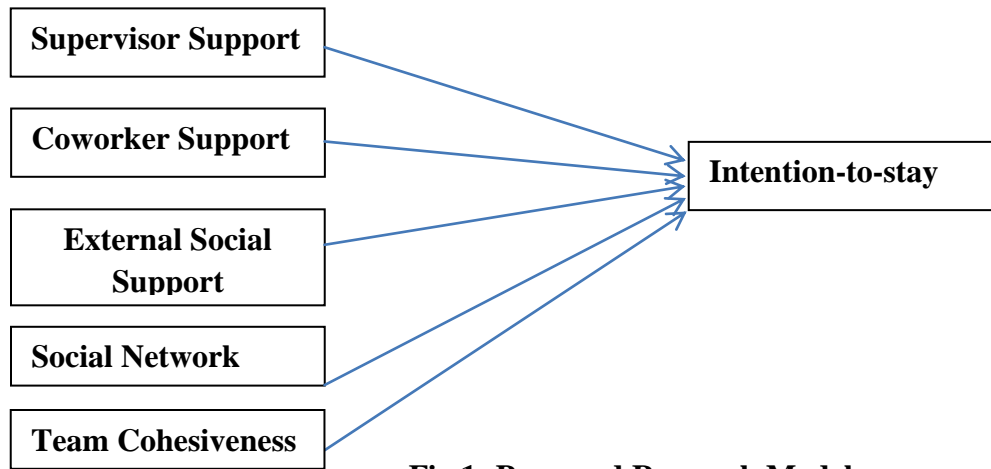


Fig 1: Proposed Research Model

Research Methodology

The researchers used the descriptive research design for planning and collecting data. Responses were received from 300 employees working in Software Development designations in Information Technology (IT) organizations (located in and around the NCR). The respondents were contacted by the researchers using their social network contacts. The respondents were randomly picked from a list of probable candidates prepared in advance. Data collected from the study were analyzed by using SPSS 20 and AMOS 20 applications.

The Research Instrument

The instrument used was aimed to identify respondent opinion on their “intention-to-stay” consisting of 5 measure items and 25 other questions (5 measures for each construct or variable) pertaining to 5 constructs (variables) namely, Supervisor Support, Co-worker Support, External Social support, Social network, and team cohesiveness. The measures for the above construct items were presented by using a Likert scale was used for collecting the respondent opinion.

Measures for study

Supervisor Support. The supervisor support scale was modified from the scale previously developed by Fukui, S., Rapp, C.A., Goscha, R., Marty, D., Ezell, M. (2014) which used sub scales like emotional support, goal achievement and personal development. Inputs were also

taken from the research of Eisenberger, R., Rhoades, L., (2002), Dawley, D. D., Andrews, M. C., & Bucklew, N. S. (2007) and Kalidass, A., & Bahron, A., (2015).

Co-worker Support. The measures for the construct coworker support were developed on the basis of prior studies conducted by O'Driscoll, M. P. (2000) and O'Driscoll, M. P., Brough, P., & Kalliath, T. J. (2004).

External Social Support. The present study developed the measures for the construct External social support on the basis of the inputs from the scale developed by Sherbourne, C. D., & Stewart, A. L. (1991).

Social Network. The social network scale was modified with inputs from the Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS-6)] developed by Lubben, J., Blozik, E., Gillmann, G., Iliffe, S., von Renteln Kruse, W., Beck, J. C., & Stuck, A. E. (2006) and also from the study conducted by Moynihan, D.P, Pandey, S.K., (2008).

Team Cohesiveness. The Team cohesiveness scale was modified from the inputs of the research conducted by Henry, K.B., Arrow, H., Carini, B., (1999) who developed the "Group Identity" Scale.

Intention-to-stay. This scale was modified on the basis of the Michigan Organizational Assessment instrument developed by Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, D., Klesh, J. (1979); Seashore, S.E., Lawler, E.E., Mirvis, P., Cammann, C. (1982). Further modifications of the scale was done using the Lyons' "Intention to Quit (Leave) scale" (Lyons, T.F., (1971).

Data Analysis

Respondent Profile

The respondents consisted of a mix of male and female employees. 78 % male respondents belonged to the single category and 22% of them were married. Regarding the females, 43% of them were single and 57% of the females were married. Out of the male respondents, 69% were of the age category 21-25 years 31% were of the age category of 26-30 years. Regarding the female respondents, 42% were of the age-category 21-25 years. 58% females belonged to the age category of 26-30 years.

Data Validation & Descriptive Statistics

Cronbach's alpha score was computed for each construct for having an understanding of their reliability for further data analysis. Table 1 reveals that Cronbach's Alpha scores of all the constructs were well above 0.7, indicating that they were highly reliable for further analysis.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics & Cronbach's Alpha Scores of the Measures for Each Construct

Measures	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	Construct
SS1	300	3.90	.781	.846	Supervisor Support
SS2	300	3.67	.891		
SS3	300	3.86	.842		
SS4	300	3.52	1.005		
SS5	300	3.41	.987		
CS1	300	4.16	.708	.981	Co-Worker Support
CS2	300	4.03	.728		
CS3	300	4.09	.676		
CS4	300	3.99	.741		
CS5	300	3.77	.829		
ES1	300	3.45	1.085	.749	External Social Support
ES2	300	3.72	.904		
ES3	300	3.63	.917		
ES4	300	3.99	.821		
ES5	300	4.04	.654		
TC1	300	3.77	.772	.779	Team Cohesiveness
TC2	300	3.36	1.026		
TC3	300	3.75	.746		
TC4	300	3.78	.733		
TC5	300	3.82	.639		
SN1	300	3.89	.739	.869	Social Network
SN2	300	4.04	.626		
SN3	300	3.82	.875		
SN4	300	3.80	.849		
SN5	300	3.77	.807		
ITS1	300	3.38	1.124	.861	Intention-to-
ITS2	300	3.34	1.143		

ITS3	300	3.41	1.078		stay
ITS4	300	3.69	.891		
ITS5	300	3.79	.807		

Exploratory Factor Analysis

In order to have an understanding of the measures valid for in-depth analysis and deletion of items with low factor loadings exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was done. Table 2 illustrates the KMO and Barlett's Test results of sampling adequacy. The KMO score of .859 acceptable value for sampling adequacy for factor analysis.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.859
Approx. Chi-Square		3726.648
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	435
	Sig.	.000

Barlett test was also found to be significant depicting that the variables are correlated highly enough to go for factor analysis. Factor component extraction used through principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation was used in order to understand the underlying orientation of the 30 items (measures) used in the instrument. Table 3 depicts the measure items pertaining to the respective constructs.

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
SS1			.828			
SS2			.882			
SS3			.776			
SS4			.792			
SS5			.583			
CS1	.809					
CS2						
CS3	.825					
CS4						
CS5	.845					

ES1						.732
ES2						.674
ES3						.716
ES4						
ES5						
SN1						
SN2						
SN3			.825			
SN4			.827			
SN5			.714			
TC1						
TC2						
TC3					.789	
TC4					.616	
TC5					.728	
ITS1						.861
ITS2						
ITS3						.796
ITS4						
ITS5						.884

Note. Loadings <.60 were omitted; Extraction Method used: Principal Axis Factoring

The rotated factors having loadings less than 0.6 not considered for further confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS.

The factors explored through EFA were as follows:

- All the measures for the construct Supervisor support namely, SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5 were important.
- For the construct Co-worker Support, the measures CS1, CS3, CS5 were contributing to explain the factor.
- The measures ES1, ES2, ES3 were important factors for the construct external social support.
- The measures SN3, SN4, SN5 were contributing more to the factor social network
- The measures TC3, TC4, TC5 were important for the construct Team Cohesiveness
- For the construct “intention-to-stay”, the measures ITS1, ITS3, ITS5 were important.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The above measures contributing to the respective constructs were fed for Confirmatory factor Analysis (CFA) using AMOS 20 and for assessing the construct validity (Fig 1) each construct was correlated with one another.

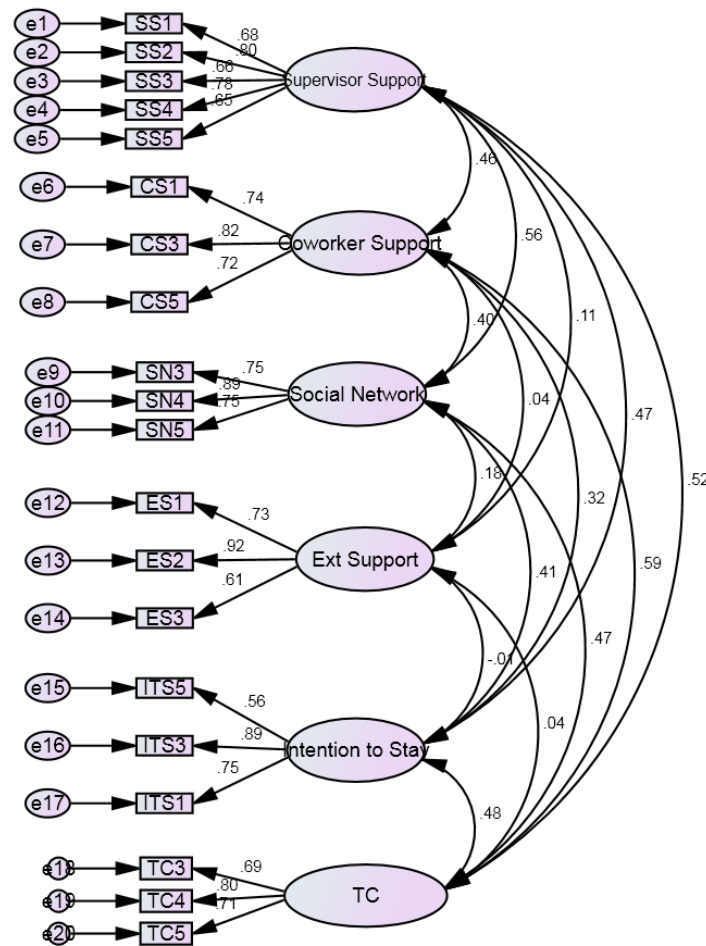


Fig 1: Confirmatory factor Analysis and Model Development using AMOS 20

The estimates of standardized regression and correlation of the construct items (derived from AMOS outputs) were fed into the MS Excel Statistical Tool package tool developed by Gaskin, J., (2016) for computing the AVE & MSV scores (Lowry, P. B., Gaskin, J., 2014) of the six constructs.

Table 4: Evaluation of Construct Convergent and Divergent Validity

	C R	A V E	M S V	Max R(H)	IT S	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	SocialN etwork	ExtSu pport	T C
ITS	0.784	0.556	0.232	0.849	0.746					
Supervisor Support	0.840	0.514	0.315	0.851	0.467	0.717				
Coworker Support	0.805	0.580	0.349	0.814	0.316	0.460	0.762			
SocialNetw ork	0.841	0.640	0.315	0.862	0.411	0.561	0.401	0.800		
ExtSupport t	0.801	0.580	0.031	0.873	0.010	0.105	0.041	0.176	0.762	
TC	0.780	0.542	0.349	0.789	0.482	0.516	0.591	0.471	0.038	0.736

Table 4 shows that all the constructs had AVE scores well above the standard 0.5 depicting adequate Convergent validity. Since the MSV scores of each construct were less than their AVE scores, it can be said that they had adequate discriminant validity. In order to assess the model fit acceptance of the empirical model, the model fit indices were computed using AMOS outputs. Table 5 indicates that, the model had adequate Goodness-of-fit Index (GFI) and Root Mean Square Error of approximation (RMSEA) scores of 0.903 and 0.055 respectively as acceptable “Absolute Fit Measures” (Byrne, B.M., 2001). Apart from these indices Comparative Fit Index (CFI) score of 0.943 indicates adequate model fit (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black 1998). Normed chi-square score of 1.674 was also found to be well above the acceptable value.

Table 5: CFA: Model Fit Summary

Fit Indices	RMR	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	Normed λ^2 (CMIN/df)
Default model	.046	.903	.943	.055	1.674

Hypothesis Testing

For testing the hypothesis, the variables supervisor support, coworker support, external social support, social network and Team cohesiveness were fed as latent (independent) variables and “intention-to-stay” was fed as the observed (dependent) variable for model development (Fig 2).

It is clear from the regression estimates (as shown in the table 6.1) that, out of the independent variables, supervisor support (Std β = 0.25, $P < 0.05$) and Team Cohesiveness (Std β = 0.307, $P < 0.05$) had significant relationships with employee “intention-to-stay”. The other variables namely Co-worker Support, External Social Support and Social Network did not have significant relationship with “intention-to-stay”, which indicated partial acceptance of the hypothesis.

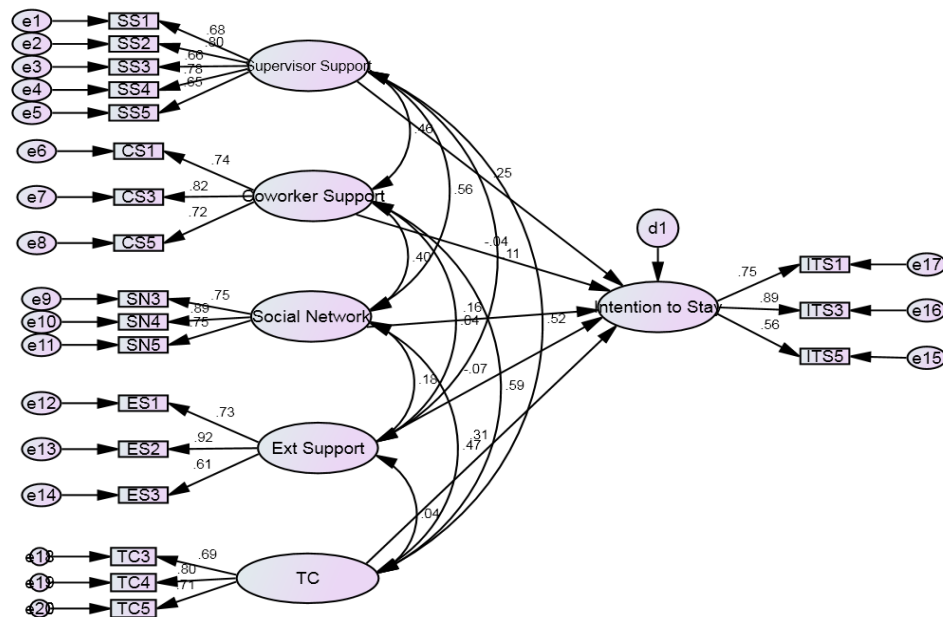


Fig 2: Testing of Hypothesis by the Empirical Model

Table 6.1: Regression Estimates

Particulars	Estimate	Std β	S.E.	C.R.	P
ITS <--- SupervisorSupport	.322	.246	.136	2.371	.018
ITS <--- CoworkerSupport	-.054	-.039	.141	-.386	.700
ITS <--- SocialNetwork	.217	.157	.131	1.658	.097
ITS <--- ExtSupport	-.111	-.074	.106	-1.045	.296

Particulars	Estimate	Std β	S.E.	C.R.	P
ITS <--- TC	.569	.307	.206	2.757	.006

Table 6.2 : Covariance Estimates

Particulars	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SupervisorSupport <--> CoworkerSupport	.175	.038	4.611	***
SupervisorSupport <--> SocialNetwork	.218	.041	5.303	***
SupervisorSupport <--> ExtSupport	.037	.028	1.328	.184
CoworkerSupport <--> SocialNetwork	.145	.033	4.322	***
CoworkerSupport <--> ExtSupport	.014	.026	.517	.605
SocialNetwork <--> ExtSupport	.060	.028	2.124	.434
SupervisorSupport <--> TC	.149	.030	5.017	***
CoworkerSupport <--> TC	.158	.029	5.455	***
SocialNetwork <--> TC	.129	.027	4.830	***
ExtSupport <--> TC	.010	.021	.467	.640

Table 6.2 reveals that the variable External Social Support did not have any significant interrelationship with other independent variables like supervisor support, Coworker Support, social network and Team Cohesiveness. Further Table 6.1 also indicated that external social support did not have any significant relationship with employee “intention-to-stay” (Std β = -.074, $P > 0.05$). Hence the variable External Social Support was ignored during the further steps for developing the structured equation model.

Structured Equation Model (SEM)

Based on the inputs evaluated from CFA estimates as seen in Table 6.1 & 6.2 as well as ignoring the construct External Social Support, the other constructs satisfying significant relationships were fed into a structured equation model (SEM) as depicted in Fig 3.

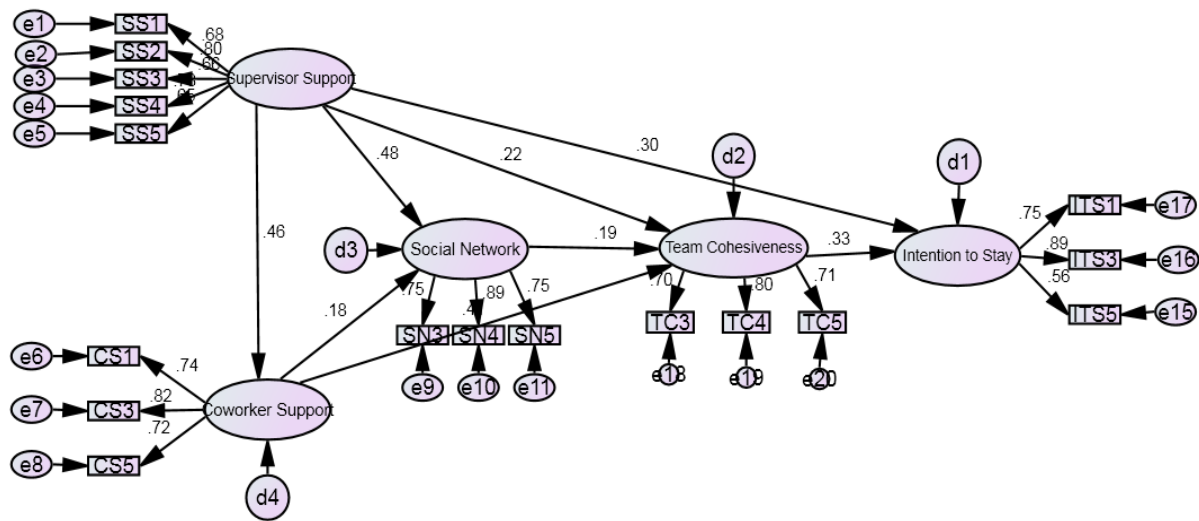


Fig 3: Empirically Tested Model

Table 7: Regression Estimates for the Empirically Tested Model

Particulars			Estimate	Std β	S.E.	C.R.	P
CoworkerSupport	<---	SupervisorSupport	.427	.460	.083	5.117	***
SocialNetwork	<---	CoworkerSupport	.183	.180	.084	2.172	.030
SocialNetwork	<---	SupervisorSupport	.456	.483	.089	5.125	***
TC	<---	CoworkerSupport	.314	.414	.069	4.580	***
TC	<---	SupervisorSupport	.153	.217	.068	2.260	.024
TC	<---	SocialNetwork	.142	.190	.068	2.083	.032
ITS	<---	TC	.609	.328	.174	3.502	***
ITS	<---	SupervisorSupport	.398	.304	.127	3.140	.002

Table 7 shows that, Team Cohesiveness has emerged as a major mediating factor influencing employee “intention-to-stay” (Std β = 0.33, $P < 0.05$) whether it was from the perspective of supervisor support (Std β = 0.22, $P < 0.05$) or from the perspective of co-worker support (Std β = 0.41, $P < 0.05$) or from the perspective of social network (Std β = 0.19, $P < 0.05$). The model further established the significant relationship between supervisor support and coworker support (Std β = 0.46, $P < 0.05$).

In order to have an understanding of the relationships between the constructs, data imputation was done using AMOS 20 and the imputed data were used to refine the model as depicted in Fig 4. The fit indices for the model (based on data imputation) depicted in Table 8 shows acceptance of the empirically tested model.

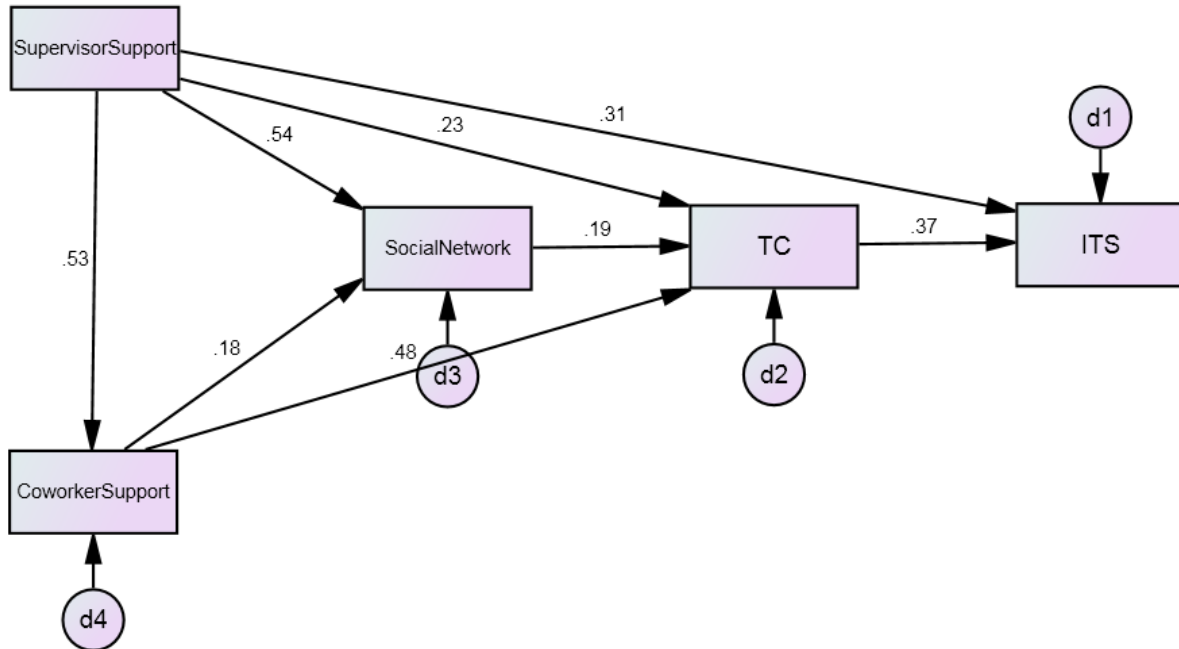


Fig 4: The Empirically Analyzed Model Based on Data Imputation

Table 8: CFA: Model Fit Summary

Fit Indices	RMR	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	Normed χ^2 (CMIN/df)
Default model	.006	.996	.999	.007	1.012

Discussions

Based on the above findings, several issues pertaining to employee retention can be identified. The first conclusion that could be drawn regarding the present study is that the causal social factors behind employee “intention-to-stay” in the Information Technology organizations are diverse and complex in nature. The study had partially established the relationship between the

investigated social factors and “intention-to-stay”, showing that only supervisor support and team cohesiveness had significant relationships with “intention-to-stay”. Team cohesiveness and social network emerged as mediating factors for supervisor and coworker support influencing employee “intention-to-stay”.

Limitations

One of the important limitations for the study was that all respondents were contacted informally using social networks. Secondly in order to understand the relationship between the social variables and employee opinion regarding their “intention-to-stay” only the opinion of some employees working in selected IT organizations were considered instead of having a cross section of respondents and even those representing the top management of the organizations to which they were belonging.

Practical Implications

Inspite of the aforesaid limitations the present study had opened the scope of emphasizing spotlight on social variables as an important causal factor influencing employee retention studies. Previous studies had mostly emphasized on psychological and organizational issues predominantly and turning the spotlight on social factors would enable HR professionals and industry captains emphasize more attention on the individual and social needs of the employees which had been predominantly ignored by prior researchers. This would eventually open up new avenues of HR policies that would be more employees engaging in the long run having far reaching outcomes in terms of facilitating employee job satisfaction and retention.

Conclusion

The study had revealed that employee “intention-to-stay” in Information Technology companies in and around the National Capital Region of Delhi is influenced by social factors like supervisor support and team cohesiveness. As team cohesiveness and social network emerged as mediating antecedent influencing “intention-to-stay” from the perspectives of supervisor support and co-worker support, it is essential for the organizations to facilitate social ties and team cohesiveness at the workplace. For foster such social ties and mutual interdependence, supervisor support and co-worker support needed to be escalated for enhancing employee retention in organizations.

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