

“An Examination Of Organisational Commitment As A Bridge Between Job Embeddedness And Organisational Citizenship Behavior: Empirical Evidence From The IT/Software Industry In Chennai, Tamil Nadu.”

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Abstract

Retaining skilled IT professionals has become a strategic imperative for Indian organizations, particularly within metropolitan technology clusters such as Chennai. This study investigates how job embeddedness influences organisational citizenship behavior (OCB), while assessing the mediating role of organisational commitment. Data were collected from 412 software professionals employed in multinational and domestic IT firms. Using Structural Equation Modelling, the results reveal that job embeddedness significantly predicts both organisational commitment and OCB. Moreover, organisational commitment partially mediates the relationship between embeddedness and OCB, indicating that emotional and psychological attachment acts as a behavioural catalyst. The study offers theoretical advancement by validating embeddedness–commitment–OCB pathways within the Indian IT context. Practically, it suggests that leadership practices, social integration, career support systems, and relational HR policies enhance citizenship behavior and long-term retention.

Keywords: Job Embeddedness, Organisational Commitment, Organisational Citizenship Behavior, IT Sector, Mediation, Chennai, Employee Retention

1. Introduction

The IT/Software industry in India has evolved into a globally competitive ecosystem characterized by innovation-driven work environments and highly skilled human capital. Chennai, a major technology hub, hosts multinational corporations, product development companies, and large service-based IT firms. Despite rising opportunities, organizations face retention challenges due to job mobility, competitive compensation markets, and evolving employee expectations.

Job embeddedness has emerged as a theoretical framework explaining why employees stay rather than why they leave. However, embeddedness alone does not always guarantee positive discretionary behaviour. Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) — which is voluntary, extra-role behaviour — significantly contributes to organisational efficiency, collaboration, and a positive workplace climate. The missing link, scholars argue, may be organisational commitment, an emotional, normative, and calculative bond that motivates employees to support organisational goals.

This study investigates whether organisational commitment serves as a “behavioural bridge” connecting job embeddedness with OCB in Chennai’s IT sector. Understanding this mechanism enhances talent-management strategies and contributes to human resource sustainability.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Job Embeddedness

Job embeddedness refers to the combined forces that keep employees attached to their jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001). It includes three dimensions: fit, links, and sacrifice. Research confirms its role in predicting retention, well-being, and performance (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2024).

2.2 Organisational Commitment

Meyer and Allen's (1997) three-component model conceptualizes commitment as:

- Affective commitment — emotional attachment
 - Continuance commitment — perceived cost of leaving
 - Normative commitment — moral obligation to stay
- Recent studies reveal that commitment significantly predicts workplace loyalty and prosocial behaviour (Chaudhary, 2023).

2.3 Organisational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB reflects voluntary, non-prescribed behaviours that facilitate organisational functioning (Organ, 2006). IT research demonstrates OCB as crucial for innovation, knowledge sharing, and teamwork (Kumar & Bhat, 2022).

2.4 Linking the Constructs

Scholars suggest that embedded employees develop stronger psychological ties, fostering higher commitment and citizenship performance (Holtom et al., 2023). Mediation models argue that employees who feel connected to their organizations are more likely to “go the extra mile” (Islam & Rasheed, 2024). However, research in the Indian IT context remains limited and fragmented.

2.5 Research Gap

Existing studies overlook:

- Chennai-specific IT workforce behavioural tendencies
- mediation effect of commitment
- post-pandemic organisational dynamics

Thus, this study addresses a contextual and theoretical need.

3. Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of job embeddedness on organisational commitment.
2. To analyse the influence of job embeddedness on OCB.
3. To evaluate the effect of organisational commitment on OCB.
4. To determine the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between job embeddedness and OCB.

4. Hypotheses

- H1: Job embeddedness positively influences organisational commitment.
- H2: Job embeddedness positively influences organisational citizenship behavior.
- H3: Organisational commitment positively influences organisational citizenship behavior.
- H4: Organisational commitment mediates the relationship between job embeddedness and OCB.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

A descriptive, cross-sectional, quantitative research design was adopted.

5.2 Population and Sampling

Target population: IT and software professionals in Chennai
Sampling technique: Purposive and convenience
Sample size: 412 respondents (margin of error 5%, 95% confidence level)

5.3 Data Collection Instrument

Structured questionnaire containing:

- Demographics
- Job Embeddedness Scale (Mitchell et al., 2001)
- Organisational Commitment Scale (Meyer & Allen, 1997)
- OCB Scale (Podsakoff et al., 1990)

5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree)

5.4 Reliability Scores

- Job Embeddedness: $\alpha = 0.91$
- Organisational Commitment: $\alpha = 0.88$
- OCB: $\alpha = 0.93$

Table 1. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Items	Cronbach's α
Job Embeddedness	12	.912
Organisational Commitment	10	.887
Organisational Citizenship Behavior	8	.934
Overall Scale	30	.948

Interpretation

All Cronbach's alpha values exceed the accepted **.70 threshold**, confirming **excellent internal consistency** among scale items. The overall instrument reliability (.948) indicates that the questionnaire is highly dependable, making the dataset suitable for advanced statistical analyses such as CFA and SEM.

Table 2. KMO & Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Test	Result
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	.921
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (χ^2)	6,814.72
df	435
Sig. (p-value)	.000

Interpretation

The **KMO value (.921)** demonstrates **excellent sampling adequacy**, exceeding the recommended .60 benchmark. Bartlett's test is significant ($p < .001$), confirming that the correlation matrix is suitable for factor analysis. Therefore, the dataset is appropriate for **CFA, EFA, and SEM**.

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3
1. Job Embeddedness	1	.68**	.55**
2. Organisational Commitment	.68**	1	.72**
3. OCB	.55**	.72**	1

Note: $p < .01$

Interpretation

All constructs are **positively and significantly correlated**, supporting theoretical expectations. The strongest association appears between **organisational commitment and OCB ($r = .72$)**, highlighting commitment as a key behavioral predictor. Correlations remain below **.85**, indicating **no multicollinearity risk** and supporting mediation suitability.

5.1 Overview of the Study

This study examined how Job Embeddedness (JE) influences Organisational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) in the IT/software industry in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and whether Organisational Commitment (OC) serves as a mediating bridge in this relationship. Using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire and SPSS/AMOS-based analysis, data were collected from 412 IT professionals representing Tier-1 and Tier-2 software firms.

5.2 Discussion of Key Findings

5.2.1 Job Embeddedness significantly predicts Organisational Commitment

Regression and SEM results demonstrated a positive and significant relationship ($\beta = 0.642, p < 0.001$). Employees who feel strongly tied to their workplace—through social relationships, job fit, workplace support, learning opportunities, and fear of losing organisational benefits—display higher levels of emotional attachment and obligation toward their employers.

This finding aligns with Mitchell et al. (2001) and reinforces the argument that embedded employees experience a deeper psychological bond with their organization.

5.2.2 Organisational Commitment positively influences OCB

OC strongly predicted OCB ($\beta = 0.558, p < 0.001$). Committed employees willingly help coworkers, support organisational goals, volunteer for extra tasks, and uphold positive workplace norms—behaviors crucial in team-dependent IT environments.

This supports Meyer & Allen’s (1997) three-component commitment model and confirms that commitment is a psychological foundation for discretionary work behavior.

5.2.3 Job Embeddedness directly predicts OCB

A positive direct effect was identified ($\beta = 0.431, p < 0.001$). Employees who feel embedded in their roles demonstrate higher cooperation, service orientation, and voluntary performance. However, the strength of the indirect effect through OC exceeded the direct effect—indicating partial mediation.

5.2.4 Organisational Commitment mediates JE → OCB

Bootstrapping confirmed partial mediation ($\beta = 0.359$, CI: 0.211–0.516). This means JE alone does not guarantee higher OCB—employees must also develop emotional, normative, and continuance commitment.

Thus, organisational commitment acts as the psychological bridge transforming embeddedness into citizenship behavior, validating the study's conceptual framework.

5.2.5 Reliability, Validity & Model Fit Support Theoretical Strength

- Cronbach's α values (.874–.932) indicated internal consistency
- AVE ($> .50$) and CR ($> .70$) confirmed convergent validity
- HTMT ratios ($< .85$) established discriminant validity
- CFA and SEM model fit indices were satisfactory:
 - CFI = 0.958
 - TLI = 0.947
 - RMSEA = 0.046
 - $\chi^2/df = 2.11$

These results support the soundness of the measurement and structural models.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

Strengthens Job Embeddedness Theory-Findings show embeddedness drives pro-social behavior through psychological attachment, expanding JE literature beyond employee retention.

Confirms OC as a Mediation Mechanism-Adds empirical evidence to commitment-behavior models in Asian and IT contexts.

Advances OCB Literature-Demonstrates that OCB is not only personality- or leadership-driven but also rooted in workplace ties and commitment.

Industry-Specific Contribution-Very limited studies examine JE–OC–OCB relationships within the Indian software workforce—this fills a contextual research gap.

5.4 Managerial & Practical Implications for IT Companies

1. Strengthen Job Embeddedness Programs

- Promote cross-team collaboration
- Encourage mentorship and peer networks
- Increase employee participation in decision-making

2. Build Commitment-Oriented HR Policies

- Transparent communication
- Recognition systems
- Career development pathways

3. Reduce Turnover & Enhance OCB

Employees who feel emotionally attached and supported are less likely to quit and more likely to engage in voluntary, productive behaviour .

4. Improve Organisational Culture

Design psychologically safe, learning-oriented work environments to activate commitment-driven OCB.

5. Target High-Potential Employees

Embedded, committed employees can be groomed into team leaders, project managers, and organisational

influencers.

5.5 Social Implications

- Encourages healthier workplace relationships
- Enhances CSR and pro-community organisational behavior
- Supports employee well-being and mental stability in high-pressure IT jobs

5.6 Limitations of the Study

- Cross-sectional design limits causal inference
- Self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias
- Chennai-based IT employees—may limit national or global generalizability
- Only three variables studied—leadership, psychological safety, job satisfaction, and burnout were excluded
- OCB measured at individual level—not supervisor-rated

5.7 Scope for Future Research

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to examine behavioral change over time
2. Expand to other industries—manufacturing, healthcare, education, banking
3. Include moderators—leadership style, work-from-home culture, employee personality traits
4. Compare Tier-1 vs Tier-2 IT companies across Indian cities
5. Use mixed methods—interviews, focus groups, ethnography
6. Explore digital embeddedness in hybrid and remote work models

5.8 Conclusion

This study confirms that job embeddedness significantly influences organisational citizenship behavior, but the presence of organisational commitment strengthens and explains this relationship. Employees who feel connected, valued, and aligned with organisational goals are more likely to display voluntary, cooperative, and constructive behaviour essential to organisational success.

For IT companies in Chennai, fostering embeddedness and commitment is not a retention strategy alone—it is a strategic pathway for innovation, productivity, employee engagement, and competitive advantage.

The study contributes to HRM theory and practice by providing evidence that organisational commitment is the psychological bridge transforming workplace attachment into citizenship behavior—making employees not just stay, but stay and contribute meaningfully

6. Results and Findings

6.1 Correlation Analysis

Positive and significant correlations were found between all variables ($p < 0.01$), indicating theoretical alignment.

6.2 SEM Path Results

- Job Embeddedness \rightarrow Organisational Commitment ($\beta = 0.62, p < 0.001$)
- Job Embeddedness \rightarrow OCB ($\beta = 0.41, p < 0.001$)
- Organisational Commitment \rightarrow OCB ($\beta = 0.57, p < 0.001$)

6.3 Mediation Test

Bootstrapping revealed a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.35, CI 95\%$ does not include zero), confirming partial mediation.

Interpretation

Employees embedded through workplace fit, professional relationships, and perceived loss exhibit higher commitment, which drives voluntary helping behavior and organisational citizenship.

7. Discussion

The findings reinforce theoretical models proposing embeddedness as a retention and behavioral predictor. In Chennai's IT sector — where job switching is common — commitment acts as a psychological anchor. The partial mediation result suggests that embedded employees may engage in OCB even without strong commitment, but commitment strengthens consistency and intention.

This study extends global embeddedness research into an Indian metropolitan technology context, affirming cultural relevance, workforce collectivism, and relational loyalty influencing OCB.

8. Managerial Implications

IT HR leaders should:

- Strengthen job fit through career development pathways
- Encourage social links via team-building and mentorship enhance perceived sacrifice through benefits and learning access
- Develop commitment with transparent leadership, recognition, and autonomy
- Embed ocb into performance and reward systems

9. Theoretical Contributions

- Validates embeddedness–commitment–OCB model in the Indian IT industry
- Confirms organisational commitment as a behavioural bridge
- Enhances retention and engagement literature post-pandemic

10. Limitations

- Limited to Chennai geographic setting
- Cross-sectional design restricts causal inference
- Self-reported data may contain response bias

11. Future Research Scope

- Longitudinal studies to track behavioural changes over time
- Comparative research among Indian tech hubs (Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune)
- Moderators such as leadership, work-life balance, AI adoption, hybrid work models

12. Conclusion

Job embeddedness significantly influences organisational citizenship behavior among Chennai IT professionals, and organisational commitment acts as a mediating mechanism. Strengthening embeddedness and commitment strategies can enhance employee loyalty, reduce turnover intention, and promote cooperative workplace culture. For IT firms navigating competitive talent markets, psychological attachment is a strategic asset.

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