An Empirical Study of Support Mechanisms for Professional Development and Their Impact on Organizational Commitment Among Employees in IT Companies in Chennai

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of support mechanisms for professional development on organisational commitment among employees in IT and ITES companies. Using primary data from 200 respondents, the research employed mean analysis, independent samples t-test, correlation, and multiple regression analysis to assess the relationship between five key support mechanisms—Organisational Support, Work Environmental Support, Job Support, Co-Workers Support, and Self-Support—and employees' organisational commitment.

The results indicate that all support mechanisms were rated above average, with Work Environmental Support being the most prevalent. Significant gender differences were observed, with male employees perceiving higher support and commitment. A strong positive correlation was found between support mechanisms and organisational commitment, and multiple regression analysis confirmed that four out of the five mechanisms significantly predicted commitment, with Self-Support emerging as the strongest contributor. The findings suggest that structured and self-driven professional development initiatives play a crucial role in fostering stronger organisational ties among IT and ITES employees.

Keywords: Support Mechanisms, Professional Development, Organisational Commitment, Organisational Support, Job Support, Self-Support.

1. INTRODUCTION

Professional development is widely acknowledged as a critical factor in enhancing employee capabilities, improving job satisfaction, and fostering long-term organizational growth (Hollar et al., 2022). In today's competitive and technology-driven work environment, especially in the IT sector, the availability of various support mechanisms plays a significant role in shaping employees' professional journeys (Zhenjing et al., 2022). This study aims to examine how different forms of support—namely organizational support, work environmental support, job support, co-worker support, and self-support—contribute to employees' professional development and influence their level of organizational commitment (Danish et al., 2013). Understanding the interplay between these support systems and employee commitment is vital for IT companies in Chennai, where talent retention and employee engagement are essential for sustaining performance and innovation. This research seeks to offer practical insights for

designing supportive workplace practices that not only enhance professional growth but also reinforce employees' dedication to their organization.

2. Statement of Research Problem

The IT sector is marked by constant technological advancements, requiring employees to regularly update their skills to remain effective in their roles. However, not all organizations provide the necessary support for this ongoing development (Beer & Mulder, 2022). In many cases, employees are left to depend on their own efforts due to the lack of structured training, limited mentoring, or inadequate workplace resources. This absence of systematic support can affect employees' enthusiasm for growth, slow down skill enhancement, and eventually weaken their attachment to the organization (Shiri et al., 2023). When employees feel unsupported in their professional journey, it can lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement at work (Allam, 2017).

In Chennai, a key center for the IT industry in India, companies face ongoing challenges such as high attrition and declining employee involvement. While professional development is often seen as a tool to address these concerns, its impact is limited if organizations do not offer meaningful and consistent support systems (Bowman et al., 2020). Workplace factors like management backing, a healthy environment, team cooperation, and opportunities for self-driven learning play a vital role in how employees experience and benefit from professional development efforts (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Without attention to these aspects, even the best-planned development strategies may fall short, making it essential to examine the real-time availability and effectiveness of such support mechanisms in the IT work setting.

3. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to assess how different support mechanisms—such as organizational, environmental, job-related, peer, and self-support—affect professional development and influence organizational commitment among IT employees in Chennai. It also examines gender-based differences in perceptions of these supports and evaluates which types of support have the strongest impact on employee commitment.

4. Review of Literature and Research Gap
4.1 Literature Review

Several studies have consistently highlighted the strong link between professional development and organisational commitment across different sectors and cultural settings. Tansky and Cohen (2001) found that when organisations invest in developing their managers, it leads to greater commitment and encourages those managers to develop others. Similarly, Bulut and Culha (2010) emphasised that organisational training, particularly avenues for promotion, played a major role in enhancing employee commitment. Selemogwe et al. (2013) demonstrated that mentoring significantly influenced organisational commitment, especially among non-academic staff. These findings were echoed by Timsal et al. (2016) and Hanaysha (2016), who found that on-the-job and formal training respectively enhanced job satisfaction and loyalty.

Further contributions from African and Asian contexts reinforced these conclusions. Linda Quagraine et al. (2019) reported that career development support significantly influenced commitment among Ghanaian police personnel, though perceived support remained low. Rawashdeh and Tamimi (2019) found that employees' perception of training availability increased their commitment while lowering their turnover

intentions. Wu and Liu (2022) confirmed that support for career development reduced turnover intentions through the mediation of organisational commitment. In addition, studies by Ferdiana et al. (2023) and Touni (2023) highlighted that career development and organisational support positively influenced employee retention and commitment in academic settings.

More recent studies extended this understanding. Lisa Philip (2024) affirmed a strong positive relationship between perceived organisational support and commitment among IT employees, stressing the need for a supportive environment. Jiaqi Fan and Yuan-Cheng (2025) showed that organisational commitment significantly boosted teachers' professional development, with occupational well-being acting as a partial mediator. Makumbe et al. (2025) concluded that in family-owned businesses, organisational commitment partly mediated the relationship between succession planning and business performance. Collectively, these studies underline the pivotal role of professional development, mentoring, and support systems in building a committed workforce.

4.2 Research Gap

Although several studies have explored the relationship between professional development and organizational commitment across various sectors, most of them have focused on isolated factors such as training, mentoring, or perceived organizational support. Limited research has examined this relationship holistically by incorporating multiple aspects of career development and considering their combined influence on commitment. Moreover, the majority of existing literature is concentrated in healthcare, education, and security sectors in specific regions, leaving a gap in understanding how these dynamics operate in other professional settings such as private or IT sectors. There is also insufficient attention given to the contextual and demographic differences that might moderate this relationship. These gaps highlight the need for comprehensive, context-specific studies that evaluate the influence of diverse professional development practices on organizational commitment across varied organizational environments.

5. Conceptual Framework

5.1 Support Mechanisms for Professional Development

Support mechanisms for professional development refer to the various forms of assistance, guidance, and resources provided to employees to help them enhance their skills, knowledge, and overall career growth (Shiri et al., 2023). These supports can come from different sources within the organization, including management, peers, job-related structures, and the work environment itself. When these mechanisms are effectively implemented, they foster a culture of learning and encourage employees to continuously improve (Kim & Jung, 2022). This, in turn, contributes to increased job satisfaction, better performance, and personal fulfilment (Radu, 2023).

In a professional setting, five key types of support mechanisms are often considered vital: organizational support, work environmental support, job support, co-workers' support, and self-support (Martins et al., 2024). Organizational support includes leadership involvement, access to training programs, and growth opportunities (Maan et al., 2020). Work environmental support refers to having the necessary tools, infrastructure, and a culture that promotes learning (Naz et al., 2020). Job support relates to clear roles, feedback, and structured tasks that aid learning on the job (Lecca et al., 2020). Co-worker support involves peer learning and team collaboration, while self-support emphasizes an individual's motivation and responsibility to develop professionally (Darke et al., 2024). Together, these mechanisms help create a strong foundation for employee development (Arulsamy et al., 2023).

5.2 Organisational Commitment

Organizational commitment is the emotional and psychological attachment an employee feels toward their workplace (Meyer & Allen, 1997). It reflects the level of dedication and loyalty an employee has to the organization's goals and values (Stark et al., 2025). A committed employee is more likely to stay with the company, perform consistently, and contribute positively to its overall success. This form of commitment is shaped by various factors including leadership behavior, workplace environment, job satisfaction, and growth opportunities (Zhenjing et al., 2022).

There are different forms of organizational commitment, such as affective commitment (emotional attachment), continuance commitment (perceived cost of leaving), and normative commitment which is a sense of obligation to stay. (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In the context of professional development, when employees receive consistent and meaningful support for their growth, they are more likely to feel valued and engaged. This increases their sense of belonging and responsibility toward the organization (Affum-Osei et al., 2015). Therefore, effective support mechanisms not only enhance skill development but also strengthen the commitment of employees, which is crucial for organizational stability and long-term success (Modise, 2023).

6. Research Methodology

This research followed an exploratory and cross-sectional design to understand the issue in detail. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to collect and interpret the data effectively. The primary data collection was carried out using the survey method. Respondents were chosen using purposive sampling, ensuring that only those with at least two years of work experience were included in the study. A total of 200 employees from IT and ITES companies located in the Chennai district participated by responding to a structured questionnaire.

For data analysis, both descriptive (Percentage and Mean analysis) and inferential statistical tools were used. Descriptive statistics helped in summarizing the demographic and support-related responses. To test the research hypotheses, independent sample t-tests were used to compare differences between groups, while correlation analysis helped measure the association between variables. Further, multiple regression analysis was applied to evaluate how different types of professional development support influenced the level of organisational commitment among the selected employees.

7. Data Analysis and Results

7.1 Demographic and Job Profile of IT Employees – Percentage Analysis

The demographic and job profile of the 200 IT and ITES employees surveyed reveals a fairly balanced representation of gender, with 53% male and 47% female respondents. A significant majority (72%) fall within the age group of 19 to 35 years, indicating a predominantly young workforce. More than half of the respondents (55%) are married.

Table 1 Demographic and Job Profile of IT Employees (Sample Size = 200)

VARIABLES	OPTIONS	FREQUENCIES	(%)
Gender	Male	106	53.00
	Female	94	47.00
Age	19 – 35 Years	Open ended	72.00
	36 - 52 Years	Question	28.00

Marital Status	Married	110	55.00
	Unmarried	90	45.00
Qualification	School/Diploma	54	27.00
	UG / PG	118	59.00
	Professional	28	14.00
Monthly Salary (INR)	Upto Rs.50,000	120	60.00
	Rs.50,001 – Rs.1,00,000	44	22.00
	Above Rs.1,00,000	36	18.00
Type of Company	IT	82	41.00
	ITES	118	59.00
Job Experience	2 – 5 Years	42	42.00
	6 – 10 Years	32	32.00
	Above 10 Years	26	26.00

Source: Primary Data

In terms of education, most employees (59%) hold undergraduate or postgraduate degrees, while 27% have a school-level or diploma qualification, and only 14% possess professional qualifications. With regard to income, 60% of the participants earn up to Rs.50,000 per month, while 22% earn between Rs.50,001 and Rs.1,00,000, and 18% earn above Rs.1,00,000. A higher proportion of employees (59%) are from ITES companies, while 41% are from IT firms. Regarding work experience, 42% of the respondents have 2–5 years of experience, followed by 32% with 6–10 years, and 26% with over 10 years of experience. These details provide a clear view of the workforce composition in terms of age, education, income, company type, and experience.

7.2 Support Mechanisms for Professional Development of IT Employees – Mean Analysis

Fifteen Questions relating to five Supports available for Professional Development (3 questions for each aspect) based on 5-point Likert scale, (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) were given in the questionnaire. Employees' perception on these supports is measured by using Mean Analysis under descriptive statistics.

Table 2 Support Mechanisms for Professional Development of IT Employees – Mean Analysis Descriptive Statistics

VARIABLES	N	Mean	SD
Organizational Support	200	10.59	2.652
Work Environmental Support	200	10.68	2.558
Job Support	200	10.42	2.836
Co-Workers Support	200	10.55	2.455
Self-Support	200	10.52	2.668
Support Mechanisms for Professional Development of IT Employees	**200**	**52.76**	**12.067**

Source: Primary Data

Based on the mean scores, it is evident that among the different forms of support, Work Environmental Support received the highest level of agreement from employees (M = 10.68), indicating it as the most prominent support available for professional development. In contrast, Job Support recorded the lowest

mean score (M = 10.42), suggesting it is the least available or least perceived support among the five dimensions. All the support mechanisms recorded mean values above 10 out of a possible 15, indicating that employees generally hold a positive perception of the professional development supports offered.

The overall mean score across all five support dimensions stands at 52.76 out of 75, translating to approximately 70.35%, which further confirms that the majority of employees perceive the support mechanisms in their IT/ITES organizations to be above an average level. This reflects a fairly encouraging environment where development resources and supportive practices are actively contributing to employee growth, though some areas—such as job-specific support—may require further attention and enhancement.

7.3 Support Mechanisms for Professional Development of IT Employees – Independent Sample 't' Test Analysis

H_0: There is no significant difference between the Male and Female Employees with respect to the Support Mechanisms for Professional Development in IT Industry.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference between the Male and Female Employees with respect to the Support Mechanisms for Professional Development in IT Industry.

Table 3 Gender – Support Mechanisms for Professional Development

VARIABLES	Gender – Professional Development Supports						t - value	p - value
	MALE			FEMALE				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Organizational Support	106	11.46	2.52	94	9.60	2.45	3.757	0.000**
Work Env. Support	106	11.48	2.51	94	9.79	2.32	3.465	0.001**
Job Support	106	11.26	2.42	94	9.72	2.25	3.233	0.002**
Co-Workers Support	106	11.09	2.82	94	9.66	2.68	2.597	0.011*
Self-Support	106	11.21	2.58	94	9.76	2.57	2.831	0.006**
Support Mechanisms for Professional Development	**106**	**56.51**	**11.65**	**94**	**48.53**	**11.20**	**3.488**	**0.001**

Source: Primary Data

(** 1% and * 5% Level of Significance)

The results indicate that all p-values are below the significance levels of 0.01 and 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses. This confirms a statistically significant difference between male and female employees in their perception of support mechanisms for professional development in IT/ITES companies. The overall mean score for male respondents (M = 56.51) is notably higher than that of female respondents (M = 48.53), suggesting that men perceive greater access to or availability of developmental support.

Among the various types of support, both male and female employees rated Work Environmental Support the highest, though males reported a higher mean (M = 11.48) compared to females (M = 9.79). These findings highlight a gender-based variation in perceived access to professional development supports, with

male employees reporting consistently higher scores across all dimensions. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender differences do exist in how support mechanisms are experienced within IT/ITES workplaces.

7.4 Organisational Commitment of Employees due to Supports Mechanisms available for Professional Development - Independent Sample 't' Test Analysis

H_0: There is no significant difference between the between the Male and Female Employees with respect to Organisational Commitment due to Supports Mechanisms available for Professional Development.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to examine whether male and female employees differ significantly in their level of organisational commitment as influenced by the support mechanisms available for professional development.

Table 4 Gender – Organisational Commitment of Employees

| VARIABLE | GENDER | | | | | | t - value | p – value |
| | MALE | | | FEMALE | | | | |
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Organisational Commitment of Employees due to Professional Development	106	21.86	5.694	94	19.95	7.854	4.564	0.000 **

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

The results from the independent-samples t-test reveal a statistically significant difference between male and female employees in terms of organisational commitment influenced by support mechanisms for professional development. Male employees reported a higher mean score (M = 21.86, SD = 5.694) compared to their female counterparts (M = 19.95, SD = 7.854). The t-value of 4.564 and a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 1% level of significance, indicate that this difference is not due to chance. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender has a significant impact on how employees perceive and respond to the support mechanisms available for professional development, with male employees showing a greater level of organisational commitment in IT and ITES companies.

7.5 Relationship between Support Mechanisms for Professional Development and Organisational Commitment of IT Employees – Correlation Analysis

H_0: There is no significant relationship between the Support Mechanisms for Professional Development and Organisational Commitment of IT Employees.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to identify and explain the relationship between the Support Mechanisms for Professional Development and Organisational Commitment of IT Employees.

Table 5 Relationship between Support Mechanisms for Professional Development and Organisational Commitment

| VARIABLE | N | 'r' VALUE | P - VALUE | RELATIONSHIP | REMARKS | |
					SIGNIFICANT	RESULT
Support Mechanisms for	200	0.888**	0.000	Positive	Significant	Rejected

Prof. Development and Organisational Commitment						

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

The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between support mechanisms for professional development and organisational commitment among IT and ITES employees. With a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.888$ and a p-value of 0.000, which is significant at the 0.01 level, the results indicate that as the availability and effectiveness of support mechanisms increase, employees' commitment to their organisation also rises. Since the p-value is well below the threshold, the null hypothesis is rejected. This confirms that professional development supports play a crucial role in enhancing organisational commitment in the workplace.

7.6 Impact of Support Mechanisms for Professional Development on Organisational Commitment of IT Employees – Multiple Regression Analysis

H_0: Support Mechanisms for Professional Development have no significant impact on Organisational Commitment of IT Employees.

Multiple regression analysis is used to assess how strongly a group of independent variables collectively influence a single dependent variable, particularly when all variables are measured on an interval or ratio scale. In this study, multiple regression was applied to identify the most effective combination of support mechanisms—namely organizational support, work environmental support, job support, co-workers support, and self-support—for predicting the level of organisational commitment among IT employees.

Table 6 Impact of Support Mechanisms for Professional Development on Organisational Commitment of IT Employees Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.728	.569		3.036	.003
	Organizational Support	.327	.130	.227	2.520	.013*
	Work Environmental Support	.347	.153	.232	2.276	.025*
	Job Support	.116	.111	.075	1.047	.298
	Co-Workers Support	.288	.093	.214	3.088	.003**
	Self-Support	**.403**	**.096**	**.281**	**4.192**	**.000****

Dependent Variable: Organisational Commitment (**1% and *5% Level of Significance)

The results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that four out of the five support mechanisms for professional development significantly contribute to predicting the dependent variable—organisational commitment. The model produced an F-value of 174.294 with a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.001 level, confirming the statistical significance of the overall model and leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.897 suggests that approximately 90% of the variation in organisational commitment is explained by the combined effect of the support mechanisms, indicating a strong predictive relationship.

Among the five predictors, Self-Support emerged as the most influential factor, with a standardized beta value of 0.281, suggesting it contributes the highest (28%) to the prediction of organisational commitment. The unstandardized coefficient shows that for every one-unit increase in self-support, the level of organisational commitment rises by 0.403 units. Organizational Support (0.227), Work Environmental Support (0.232), and Co-Workers Support (0.214) also have significant positive effects, though to a lesser extent. In contrast, Job Support, with a beta value of 0.075 and a p-value of 0.298, was found to be statistically insignificant. Overall, the findings confirm that support mechanisms for professional development—particularly self-driven initiatives—have a meaningful and positive impact on organisational commitment among IT employees.

8. Discussion of the Results

The analysis reveals that professional development supports positively influence organisational commitment among IT and ITES employees. Mean scores indicate that all support mechanisms were perceived above average, with Work Environmental Support being the most prominent. Gender-based analysis through t-test showed that male employees reported significantly higher levels of perceived support and commitment than their female counterparts. Correlation results confirmed a strong positive association between support mechanisms and organisational commitment. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis highlighted that four of the five support factors significantly predicted organisational commitment, with Self-Support being the strongest contributor. Overall, the findings emphasize that both institutional and individual-level support systems play a key role in enhancing employee commitment.

9. Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that IT and ITES companies strengthen their support mechanisms for professional development to further enhance employee organisational commitment. Special focus should be given to improving Job Support, as it was rated lowest among the available supports. Organisations should also adopt more inclusive strategies to address the perceived gender gap in access to development opportunities, ensuring equitable support for both male and female employees. Encouraging self-directed learning and providing structured platforms for career advancement can significantly improve commitment levels. Additionally, creating a positive and enabling work environment, fostering peer support, and offering continuous organisational backing will collectively contribute to higher employee retention and long-term engagement.

10. Conclusion

In today's dynamic work environment, professional development has become a crucial element in fostering employee engagement and long-term organisational commitment. Particularly in IT and ITES sectors, where talent retention and continuous skill enhancement are essential, structured support mechanisms play a vital role in shaping employees' attitudes toward their organisation. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on how various forms of support—ranging from organisational and environmental to peer and self-driven initiatives—collectively influence employees' sense of commitment. It also highlights gender-based differences in perception, offering valuable insights for HR policies aiming at inclusive professional growth opportunities.

Although the study focused on a specific region and sector, its findings offer useful insights for HR strategies. Future research may consider other industries or incorporate qualitative approaches for

additional perspectives. The study highlights the vital role of professional development support mechanisms in enhancing organisational commitment among IT and ITES employees. These insights can help organisations strengthen their employee engagement and retention strategies.

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