



## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT- A STUDY AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF IT COMPANIES IN CHENNAI, INDIA

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### **Abstract**

*This paper explores the relationship between demographic variables (age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current tenure and total experience) and the organizational commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment) based on a cross-sectional survey of 516 employees of 37 Information Technology (IT) companies in Chennai, India. The results show significant relationship between the two sets of variables. The findings of the study add new knowledge in the field of organisational commitment which can be used to enhance management practices for the retention of key employees in the software industry.*

**Keywords:** *Demographic Variables, Organisational Commitment, IT Companies.*

### **Introduction**

Organisational commitment is one of the important variables in the study of organisational behaviour and human resource management. Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) have defined organisational commitment thus- "*Organisational commitment is the extent of employees' willingness to exert their effort for the organisation's success and the degree of fit between the employees' values and the organisation values*". Initially, organisational commitment was considered as one-dimensional (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982) and later Meyer and Allen (1984) made distinction between affective and continuance commitment. However, Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer and Allen (1991) have classified organisational commitment into three different dimensions such as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The Affective commitment represents an emotional attachment to, identify with, involvement in the organisation, continuance commitment is indicative of the perceived costs allied with leaving the organisation, and normative commitment reflects a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation, which has echoed by Meyer, Stanley, Herskovits and Topolnytsky (2002).

The empirical research on organisational commitment can be traced back to the study of Becker's (1960) side-bet theory of commitment and to the study on organisational commitment and job satisfaction as a determinant of employee turnover by Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian's (1974). Later, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) developed an instrument called the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and they statistically tested the reliability and validity of the instrument, since, it has been used to study the organisational commitment by the researchers.

The expertise and specialised knowledge are increasingly important to corporate performance (Bell, 1973). One of the important areas of discussion on expertise and knowledge workers is the commitment of knowledge workers to the organisation *vis-à-vis* their occupations (Zuboff, 1988; Kanter, 1993; Alvesson, 2000). In the IT industry, ample job opportunities are available for more qualified employees and therefore, they may have low level of organisational commitment. Similarly, IT employees with higher incomes, higher current tenure and higher total experience hold higher positions in the organisation, and as they have more outside opportunities, they are likely to have poor organisational commitment compared to younger and less experienced employees.

Upholding employees' organisational commitment is an increasingly significant challenge in the Information Technology (IT) industry. In the new era, knowledge workers are in a quest to satisfy their own needs and demands leading to growing concern among IT companies to maintain job satisfaction and organisational commitment of employees (Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane, & Ferreira, 2011). The knowledge workers' commitment has become a key concern owing to increasing importance of intellectual and human capital to the corporation's functioning and services provision. The present study is undertaken with a view to understand the relationships between the demographic characteristics of the intellectual capital and their organisational commitment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Demographic factors have been studied for a long time as a determinant of employees' behaviour (Atchley, 1975; Riley, 1987; Lawrence, 1988; Mottaz, 1988; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to Lawrence, (1988), there are two approaches - the normative and demographic. The normative approach examines the relationship between the age norms and behaviour, whereas, the demographic approach studies the age distribution and behaviour. In both the cases, the employees' life is divided into age groups. The changes in age norms and social structure redirect age related behaviour (Riley, 1987). The other demographic factors such as marital status, qualification, position, current and total experience are positively related to the age of the employees; logically, with the increase in the age of age of the employees, their social status, qualification and experience also increases.

Becker's (1960) side-bet theory suggests that the commitment is an output of a process of side-bet, where employees capitalise in their organisation and put side-bet by risking something they value: however, the side-bet increases the employees' organisational commitment. According to side-bet theory, age is directly related to organisational commitment- the older employees are more committed than younger ones, even when other attributes and abilities are held constant. The side-bet theory further proposes inverse relationship between educational qualification and organisational commitment; it is due to the scarcity of career opportunities for employees with lower levels of education. Side-bet theory further suggests that the married men may be more committed to their organisation; this is due to their responsibility towards the family and fear of losing the engagement in the employing organisation. According to the side-bet theory, the higher the salary, higher would be the commitment; those with a higher salary may lose more when they leave the job and, therefore, more likely to stay with their organisations. The side-bet theory suggests that the total experience of employee has strong positive relationship with organisational commitment, due to the belief that the engagements are related with seniority and experience. The Becker's (1960) side-bet theory was tested by Ritzer and Trice (1969); Alutto, Hrebiniak, and Alonso (1973), and Cohen and Lowenberg (1990); however, they partially supported the theory.

The previous studies show that the demographic variables are associated with the organisational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Khatri, Fern, & Budhwar, 2001; Namasivayam & Zhao, 2007). The demographic factors such as age, sex, tenure and education were found to be related to commitment; however, the relations were neither strong nor consistent (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to Meyer and Allen, (1984) the older employees achieve better positions in an organisation; therefore, they have more satisfaction with their job and become more committed to their organisation, whereas, the age has stronger and significant relationship with attitudinal commitment compared to calculative commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The marital status of employees may be related to organisational commitment; in the existing studies, it is presented more as descriptive statistics and control variable than an explanatory variable. The married employees may have low level of organisational commitment compared to single employees because of family responsibility and financial burden.

Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe (2004) have integrated the Pinder's (1998) model of motivation and Meyer and Herscovitch's (2001) model of commitment and developed the integrated model which argued that the motivation is a broader concept compared to commitment and commitment is one among a set of stimulating factors that contributes to a person's behaviour. According to Maslow's human needs-hierarchy theory of

motivation, after achieving most essential goal, the next higher need emerges and the last level of motivation is self-actualization where person feels satisfaction with the achievement; however, it may reduce the level of commitment to achieve further in career (Maslow, 1943).

Therefore, the young IT employees may have stronger organisational commitment because they want to achieve success in their career and the level of commitment may come down after achieving success in their latter part of career. The implication, therefore, for management leadership is as to how to keep up the challenge for achievement as an ingredient of the role of the employee even as age advances.

### **Review of Literature and Hypothesis**

This section covers the existing literature on organisational commitment and various studies on the antecedents and impact of organisational commitment which have been studied in India and abroad.

#### **Studies on Organizational Commitment**

The basis behind many of the studies on organisational commitment is to find out the factors affecting organisational commitment and the impact of organisational commitment on the organisation. Another important purpose of such studies has been to find out the ways to improve on how employees feel about their jobs so that these employees would become more committed to their organisations. The HRM practices have been studied as antecedent of organisational commitment by Meyer and Smith (2000); Chew, Girardi, and Entekin (2005); Chew and Chan (2008); Khan, Awang, and Zulkifli (2013). The literature shows that the HRM practices are significantly related to the organisational commitment (Paul & Anantharaman, 2004; Shahnawaz & Juyal, 2006; Smeenk, Eisinga, Teelken, & Doorewaard, 2006), however, the relationship is conditional in nature (Chew, Girardi, & Entekin, 2005).

The impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment has also been studied extensively (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Shore & Martin, 1989; Curri van, 2000). The literature suggests that while the HRM practices directly influence employees' job satisfaction (Petrescu & Simmons, 2008), the job satisfaction has direct and positive influence on organisational commitment; employees who are satisfied with their job show high degree of organisational commitment.

The work values and work experiences also impact the employees' affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer, Irving, & Allen, 1998). Employees develop some perception based on the experience and understanding of the situation; sometimes, it may be positive or negative and these set of beliefs influence the employees' commitment. The emotional intelligence and occupational self-efficacy make employees to react to the situation; the employees with strong emotional intelligence and high occupational self-efficacy will have strong organisational commitment compared to their counterparts (Rathi & Rastogi, 2009), and also, the employees' perception on procedural justice and organisational support was found to have effect on affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer & Smith, 2000).

The organisational commitment has also been studied as mediating variable between leadership behaviour and work outcomes (Yousef, 2000), work climate and performance (Suliman, 2002), breach and self-reported and supervisor-rated civic virtue (Restubog, Bordia and Tang, 2006), perceived organisational support and intention to leave (Loi, Hang-Yue, and Foley, 2006) and ethics and performance (Chun, Shin, Choi, & Kim, 2013). Many of the studies focused on the relationships between commitment and turnover intentions.

#### **Studies on Organisational Commitment in India**

Organisational commitment is also one of the important topics in the research of HRM and organisational behaviour in India. Since the evolution of the concept of organisational commitment, researchers have been working in different industries in India on the antecedent and impacts of organisational commitment. Among all the studies, the HRM practices received greater attention by the researchers in India. Paul and Anantharaman (2004) examined the impact of HRM practices (selection process, induction, training, development-oriented, job

design, work-environment, compensation, incentives and career development) in IT companies in India and found that friendly work environment, career development, compensation, performance appraisal and training have high positive impact on organisational commitment. In a similar manner, Agarwala (2003) has studied the impact of innovative HRM practices on organisational commitment. Namasivayam and Zhao (2007) examined the relationships among work-family conflict, organisational commitment and job satisfaction in hotel industry, and Bhatnagar (2007) studied the link between organisational commitment and strategic HR roles, psychological empowerment and organisational learning capability among Indian managers, whereas, Joolideh and Yeshodhara (2009) studied the organisational commitment among high school teachers of India and Iran. Gnanakkan (2010) has studied the mediation role and impact of organisational commitment and Guchait and Cho (2010) have studied the mediating effect of organisational commitment on HR practices and turnover intention relationship in software and service industry in India respectively.

### **Studies on Demographic Variables and Organizational Commitment**

There are not many studies on the effect of the demographic variables on organisational commitment, especially in India and particularly in the software industry. Most of the studies have focused on the antecedent of organisational commitment such as HRM practices, job satisfaction, organisational culture and psychological climate. Mottaz (1988) has examined the role of demographic variables on commitment and suggests that the effect of demographic variables on commitment is indirect through work rewards and values. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have studied the relationship between demographic variables (age, sex, education, position tenure, organisation tenure and salary) and organisational commitment. Scandura and Lankau (1997) studied the relationship of demographic variables (age, gender, marital status and educational qualification) with organisational commitment. Chen and Francesco (2000) have investigated the main effect of demographic variables on organisational commitment based on a survey of 333 employees in the People's Republic of China. Khatri, Fern, and Budhwar (2001) have studied the association between the demographic variables such as age, level of education, tenure, level of income, and job category (managerial or non-managerial) with the organisational commitment. Similarly, Lok and Crawford (2001) studied effect of various demographic characteristics including age, experience, education and job tenure on organisational commitment. Agarwala (2003) studied the correlation between the demographic variables (age, qualification, managerial level, salary, work experience and tenure) and organisational commitment. Powell and Meyer (2004) studied the relationship between the demographic variables such as age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment. Namasivayam and Zhao (2007) have studied effect of age, gender, marital status and educational qualification on organisational commitment. Johnson and Chang (2008) have studied the relationship between the age, sex and tenure with organisational commitment. Pala, Eker and Eker (2008) examined the effect of demographic characteristics (gender, age, level of education, institution, title, years in institution and years in occupation) on Organisational Commitment among Turkish Health Care Staff. Salami (2008) has examined the relationships of demographic factors (age, marital status, gender, job tenure, and educational level) organisational commitment among industrial workers in Nigeria. Yap, Holmes, Hannan and Cukier, (2010) have studied the relationship between age, tenure, education and organisational commitment. Iqbal (2010) has examined the relationship between demographic factors (age, tenure and level of education) and organisational commitment in Pakistan. Kanchana and Panchanatham (2012) have examined the influence of demographic factors (gender, age, job position, education and income) on organisational commitment among industrial worker. Amangala (2013) studied the effect of demographic characteristics (age, education, job position and organisational tenure) on organisational commitment in the soft drink industry in Nigeria. Rabindarang, Bing, and Yin (2014) have studied the impact of demographic factor (gender, age educational qualification and marital status) on organisational commitment in Malaysia.

The review of literature shows that the relationship between the demographic variables and organisational commitment is not consistent; the relationship differs across different industries and countries. There are also few studies available on the relationship between the demographic variables and the three dimensions of organisational commitment in the IT companies in India. In this study, the relationship between demographic variables (age, marital status, qualification, position, current tenure, total experience) and organisational

commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment) has been studied. The following is the hypothesis of the study:

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the set of demographic variables and organisational commitment of the employees.

## Measures

### Organisational Commitment Scale

The present study uses the widely accepted the three components organisational commitment scale of Allen and Meyer (1990) to measure the affective, continuance and normative commitment of the respondent employees. The affective commitment is a 8 item scale which describes the attachment to the organisation, continuance commitment is a 8 item scale which explains the fear associated with losing the current job and normative commitment is also a 8 items scale which explains the obligation towards the organisation. Each respondent was asked to rate their organisational commitment on each parameter in a five point Likert scale from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. Allen and Meyer (1990) have founded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87 for affective commitment scale, 0.75 for continuance commitment scale, and 0.79 for normative commitment scale. The following researchers used the Allen and Meyer (1990) three component organisational commitment scale; Allen and Meyer (1996); Meyer, Irving, and Allen (1998); Meyer and Herscovitch (2001); Powell and Meyer (2004); Conway and Monks (2009); Atak and Erturgut (2010); Weng, McElroy, Morrow, and Liu (2010); Hur, Park, and Kim (2010); Ellenbecker and Cushman (2012).

### Research Methodology

This study covers 37 IT companies in India. The analysis is based on primary data. The data were collected from IT companies located in Chennai, one of the major IT hubs of India and ranked second after Bengaluru. The primary data were collected using simple random sampling method. A total of 37 IT companies registered with National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and located in Chennai were surveyed, in which 23 are Indian IT companies and 14 are foreign IT companies. Age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current and total experiences are the chosen demographic variables. A well-structured questionnaire was used. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed and finally 516 valid questionnaires were returned with a response rate of 64.5 per cent. The among 516 respondents, 57.2 per cent respondents are belong to large IT companies, 21.9 per cent respondents are belong to medium size IT companies and 20.9 per cent respondents are belong to small size IT companies. The variables for the study were identified from the previous research studies. The content validity of the questionnaire was tested by administering it to subject experts and necessary suggestions are incorporated. A Pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the questionnaire, 150 samples were collected from 10 IT companies in Chennai, the calculated Cronbach's alpha are 0.93, 0.89 and 0.87, which have shown a good reliability result and the main study was conducted using final questionnaire.

**The Demographic Characteristics of the 516 Sample Employee Respondents are presented in the Following**

**Table 1. Table 1. Demographic Variables and Respondents**

Demographic Variable	Description	No. of respondents (%)
Age (in years)	< 25	26.2
	25-30	42.8
	30-35	18.2
	35-40	7.2
	40-45	3.3
	>45	2.3
	Total	100
Gender	Male	67.4
	Female	32.6
	Total	100

Education	U.G	55.4
	P.G	44.6
	Total	100
Level of position	Junior	64
	Middle	30.6
	Top	5.4
	Total	100
Monthly Income (Rs.)	Below 20000	9.3
	20000-40000	41.7
	40000-80000	28.8
	80000-120000	13.2
	Above 120000	7
	Total	100
Current Tenure (in years)	0-2	37.2
	2-4	36.2
	4-6	13.6
	6-8	6.3
	8-10	1.9
	10-12	2.9
	above 12	1.9
	Total	100
Total Experience (in years)	0-2	19.6
	2-4	28.3
	4-6	21.3
	6-8	11.6
	8-10	6.1
	10-12	5.2
	above 12	7.9
	Total	100

Source: Primary Data

## Data Analysis and Results

### Demographic Variables and Organisational Commitment

Table 2 summarizes the demographic variables such as age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current tenure and total experience, and the organizational commitment variables such as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The observation, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scale points are presented.

**Table 2. Summary of Demographic variable and Organisational Commitment**

Variable		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Demographic Variables	Age	516	2.255814	1.156016	1	6
	Marital Status	516	1.48062	0.5001091	1	2
	Qualification	516	1.554264	0.4975291	1	2
	Position	516	1.414729	0.5932436	1	3
	Income	516	2.668605	1.044943	1	5
	Current Tenure	516	2.158915	1.363155	1	7
	Total Experience	516	3.036822	1.780313	1	7
Organisational Commitment	AC	516	3.418605	0.880844	1	5
	CC	516	3.306202	0.8852844	1	5
	NC	516	3.45155	0.8335079	1	5

Note: AC- Affective Commitment; CC- Continuance Commitment; NC- Normative Commitment

### Reliability and Validity

The internal consistency of the scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient for affective commitment scale, continuance scale and normative commitment scales are 0.92, 0.89 and 0.88 respectively. The calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all the variables are greater than 0.70, which means the scale is highly reliable to conduct statistical analysis (Nunnally, 1978).

### Canonical Correlation Analysis between Demographic Variables and Organisational Commitment

Canonical correlation analysis has been used to identify and estimate the shared relationship between two or more set of variables. This analysis finds the individual relationship among two variables and also examines the overall relationship between two or more set of variables. Canonical correlation between demographic variables and organisational commitment are tested using Stata SE 10 statistical package. The canonical correlations for demographic variables and organisational commitment are displayed in table 3.

**Table 3. Canonical Correlation for Demographic Variables and Organisational Commitment**

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Err.	t	P > t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
u1						
Age	0.5105391	0.3409561	1.50	0.135	-.1592968	1.180375
Marital Status	-1.295054	0.488276	-2.65	0.008	-2.254312	-0.3357966
Qualification	-0.4750486	0.4360976	-1.09	0.277	-1.331798	0.3817005
Position	-0.6335279	0.4825807	-1.31	0.190	-1.581597	0.3145409
Income	0.6521185	0.2888004	2.26	0.024	0.0847468	1.21949
Current Tenure	0.2201935	0.208109	1.06	0.291	-0.1886535	0.6290404
Total Experience	0.0118718	0.2348507	0.05	0.960	-0.4495113	0.473255
v1						
Affective Commit.	0.5331093	0.2690109	1.98	0.048	0.0046157	1.061603
Continuance Commit.	-0.4054475	0.2611552	-1.55	0.121	-0.9185081	0.1076132
Normative Commit.	-1.148632	0.2952443	-3.89	0.000	-1.728663	-0.5686001
u2						
Age	0.5843985	0.4915464	1.19	0.235	0.3812841	1.550081
Marital Status	1.848726	0.7039331	2.63	0.009	0.4657927	3.23166
Qualification	-0.6989137	0.628709	-1.11	0.267	-1.934064	0.5362361
Position	0.3302131	0.6957223	-0.47	0.635	-1.697016	1.03659
Income	-0.1117165	0.4163549	-0.27	0.789	-0.9296795	0.7062465
Current Tenure	0.091207	0.3000246	0.30	0.761	-0.4982155	0.6806296
Total Experience	-0.2490384	0.3385773	-0.74	0.462	-0.9142009	0.416124
v2						
Affective Commit.	-1.020014	0.387825	-2.63	0.009	-1.781927	-0.2581001
Continuance Commit.	-0.5942251	0.3764998	-1.58	0.115	-1.333889	0.1454392
Normative Commit.	0.6271146	0.425645	1.47	0.141	-0.2090995	1.463329

u3						
Age	1.045355	0.9476198	1.10	0.270	-0.8163203	2.907031
Marital Status	-0.1138501	1.357066	-0.08	0.933	-2.779917	2.552216
Qualification	1.208469	1.212047	1.00	0.319	-1.172695	3.589633
Position	-0.6607626	1.341237	-0.49	0.622	-3.295731	1.974206
Income	0.2688403	0.8026632	0.33	0.738	-1.308057	1.845737
Current Tenure	-0.1387079	0.5783975	-0.24	0.811	-1.275017	0.9976009
Total Experience	-0.6867879	0.6527207	-1.05	0.293	-1.969111	0.5955349
v3						
Affective Commit.	-0.6930952	0.7476622	-0.93	0.354	-2.161938	0.7757478
Continuance Commit.	1.087954	0.7258291	1.50	0.135	-0.3379965	2.513904
Normative Commit.	-0.6794089	0.820573	-0.83	0.408	-2.291491	0.9326732
(Standard errors estimated conditionally)						
Canonical correlations: 0.2155 0.1513 0.0792						
Tests of significance of all canonical correlations						
	Statistic	df1	df2	F	Prob>F	
Wilks' lambda	0.92587	21	1453.51	1.8817	0.0092 a	
Pillai's trace	0.0756223	21	1524	1.8766	0.0094 a	
Lawley-Hotelling trace	0.0784616	21	1514	1.8856	0.0090 a	
Roy's largest root	0.0487159	7	508	3.5354	0.0010 u	
e = exact, a = approximate, u = upper bound on F						

**Note:**

*Commit.* = Commitment, Std. Err. = Standard Error, Conf. = Confidence.

*Age coded as (in years); below 25 = 1, 25 - 30 = 2, 30 - 35 = 3, 35 - 40 = 4, 40 - 45 = 5, above 45 = 6.*

*Marital Status coded as; Single = 1, Married = 2.*

*Qualification coded as; Graduation = 1, Post-graduation = 2.*

*Position coded as; Junior executive = 1, Middle management = 2, Senior management = 3.*

*Income coded as (in rupees); below 20000 = 1, 20000 - 40000 = 2, 40000 - 80000 = 3, 80000-120000 = 4, above 120000 =5.*

*Current Tenure/Total Experience coded as (in years); 0 - 2 = 1, 2 - 4 = 2, 4 - 6 = 3, 6 - 8 = 4, 8 - 10 = 5, 10 - 12 = 6, above 12 = 7.*

In the first dimension, only marital status ( $p = 0.008$ ) and income ( $p = 0.024$ ) are statistically significant along with the dimension as a whole. However, affective commitment ( $p = 0.048$ ) and normative commitment ( $p = 0.000$ ) share some variability with one another, as well as with marital status and income, which also share variability among each other. For the second dimension only affective commitment (0.009) and marital status (0.009) are significant. The third dimension is not significant; therefore, no attention will be given to its coefficients.

The Canonical Correlation coefficient values in respect of these three factors are 0.2155, 0.1513 and 0.0792. Other results displayed in the above table such as df1 value of 21, df2 value of 1453.51, f value of 1.8817,



Wilks's value of 0.92587, and p value of 0.0092 reveal that there is significant relationship between the two sets of data. To predict the overall relationship between these two sets of data, Wilk's ( ) value is deducted from one. From the three canonical function set, the  $r^2$  value 0.07413. This implies that the entire canonical model explains a sizeable portion of about 7 per cent of the variance. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

The correlation between the demographic variables and organisational commitment are presented in the table 4. The demographic variables such as age, position, income, current tenure and total experience are negatively related to the three dimensions of commitment - affective, continuance and normative commitment. Marital status displayed a negative relationship with both affective and continuance commitment, but displayed a positive relationship with normative commitment. The other important demographic factor - qualification displayed a negative relationship with affective and normative commitments, but has positive relationship with continuance commitment.

**Table 4, Correlations between Demographic Variables and Organizational Commitment**

	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment
Age	-0.0977	-0.1279	-0.1342
Marital Status	-0.1050	-0.0655	0.0047
Qualification	-0.0121	0.0371	-0.0054
Position	-0.0319	-0.0611	-0.0496
Income	-0.0578	-0.1105	-0.1355
Current Tenure	-0.0587	-0.1225	-0.1145
Total Experience	-0.0581	-0.1217	-0.1054

Source: Primary Data.

### Discussion

The purpose of this study is to measure the link between demographic variables and organisational commitment among the IT professional in India by using Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organisational commitment. Khatri, Fern, and Budhwar (2001) have argued that the demographic variables (age, level of education, tenure, income, and job category) are associated with the organisational commitment. The results of the study reported herein establish the relationship between demographic variables and organisational commitment and it may be more complex than the previous studies.

The canonical correlation analysis with the sample has confirmed the hypothesis that the set of demographic variables (age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current tenure and total experience) have significant impact on organisational commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment). The age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current tenure and total experience are negatively related to affective commitment. However, in this study only marital status and income of employees are found to be significant predictor of affective commitment.

Salami (2008) has also reported significant relationship between the marital status and organisational commitment among industrial workers in Nigeria. The inverse relationship between marital status, income and organisation commitment shows that unmarried IT employees have higher affective commitment and it decreases after they get married. Similarly, with the increase in the income, the affective commitment of IT employees gradually decreases. The affective commitment denotes the employees' attachment with the organisation. It is an essential component of organisation commitment to predict the employees' intention to stay or leave the organisation. Therefore, the IT employees who are married and earning higher income are likely to have poor affective commitment and they may leave their organisations.

Though, the other demographic variables such as age, qualification, position, current tenure and total experience are not significant predictors of affective commitment, they have a significant impact on employees' affective

commitment. The inverse relationship shows that the IT employees with lower age, qualification, position, current tenure and total experience have higher level of affective commitment compared to employees have higher age, qualification, current tenure and total experience. The latter group may have higher expectations from the organisation and may have more job opportunities outside.

Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) have also reported inverse relationship between education and commitment explained in terms of higher expectations, whereas, Mathieu and Zajac, (1990) have explained in terms of more job opportunities for better educated.

Contrary to the findings of present study, Powell and Meyer (2004) found positive impact of age and tenure on affective commitment. Mathieu and Zajac, (1990) and Lok and Crawford (2001) have found positive relationship between age and organisational commitment, and Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have reported positive relationship between organisational tenure, position tenure and organisational commitment, whereas, Jaros (1997) found positive and significant relationship between organisation tenure and affective commitment.

The continuance commitment is not significantly related to any of the demographic variables. Not only that the age, marital status, position, income, current and total experience of employees are negatively related to continuance commitment. Only qualification is found to be positively related to continuance commitment, however, the relationship is not significant. This finding is supported by the findings of previous studies; Jaros (1997) has found the positive relationship between education and continuance commitment, whereas, Al-Emadi and Marquardt (2007), Sikorska-Simmons (2005), Johnson and Chang (2006) have also found positive relationship between educational qualification and organisational commitments. Contrary to these findings, Powell and Meyer (2004) have found positive relationship between age, tenure and continuance commitment, whereas, Jaros (1997) found positively and significant relationship between organisation tenure and continuance commitment.

The normative commitment is found to be negatively related with age, qualification, position, income, current and total experience of employees, whereas, marital status is positively related to normative commitment. Among all demographic variables only the marital status and income is significantly related to normative commitment. Agarwala (2003) found negative relationship between the qualification and organisational commitment. Jaros (1997) also found negative relationship between education and normative commitments whereas, Powell and Meyer (2004) found negative association between age, tenure and normative commitment.

In the previous studies, Agarwala (2003) has found positive and significant relationship between experience and organisational commitment, whereas, Jaros (1997) has found positive and significant relationship between the organisation tenure and normative commitment and Joolideh and Yeshodhara (2009) found significant normative commitment between age groups. The positive and significant relationship between marital status and normative commitment indicates that the married IT employees are obligated to continue to work for their organisations. However, the normative commitment seems to be declining with income increases.

### **Conclusions, Managerial Implications and Recommendations**

The three components of organisational commitment are different across different industries, geographical boundaries (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002) and cultures (Chen & Francesco, 2000; Lee, Allen, Meyer, & Rhee, 2001). The present study is an attempt to examine the relationship between demographic variables and organisational commitment in the Indian IT sector.

The findings from this study have significant practical implications. The results of the study revealed that the sets of demographic variables (age, marital status, educational qualification, position, current tenure and total experience) have significant impact on the organisational commitment. The findings show that the age, marital status, qualification, position, income, current tenure and total experience are negatively related to affective commitment. Among these, only qualification is found to be positively related to continuance commitment. The

normative commitment is found to be negatively related with age, qualification, position, income, current and total experience of the employees, whereas, marital status is positively related to normative commitment.

The findings suggest that the level of organisational commitment among different employees is varied. The IT companies should provide an enabling organisational climate to improve the organisational commitment. Designing appropriate reward and compensation practices and assigning challenging and meaningful work, and nurturing positive co-worker relationships (Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane, & Ferreira, 2011) will go a long way in promoting organisational commitment. High organisational commitment helps reduce the recruitment and retention costs and also leads to greater productivity of the employees. Hence, high organisational commitment results in higher profits for the firm and sustains economic growth.

The present study is limited to the IT employees working in Chennai, India. Future research can be undertaken covering more employees with greater geographical spread.

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