International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development-– Volume 9 Issue 6, Nov – Dec 2026
Available at www.ijsred.com

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

JOB EMBEDDEDNESS IN THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE: A STUDY AMONG IT EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technologies has transformed the nature of work in the Information Technology (IT) sector. Remote work, hybrid arrangements, virtual communication, cloud-based systems and digital collaboration tools have created new opportunities for flexibility and productivity, while also introducing challenges related to work-life balance, social connection, job pressure and employee retention. Job embeddedness refers to the extent to which employees feel connected to their jobs and organizations through links, fit and the perceived sacrifice associated with leaving. The present study aims to examine job embeddedness among IT employees in the digital workplace and to understand how work environment, organizational commitment, work-life balance, digital workplace practices and career development opportunities may influence employees' intention to remain with their organizations. The proposed study adopts a descriptive research design and uses primary data collected through a structured questionnaire, supported by secondary information from books, scholarly journals and credible reports. Percentage analysis and suitable statistical tests may be used after data collection. The study is expected to help organizations identify practices that strengthen employee connection, improve the digital work experience and support retention. Actual findings and conclusions should be finalized only after the collected responses have been analysed.

Keywords: Job Embeddedness, Digital Workplace, IT Employees, Employee Retention, Work-Life Balance, Organizational Commitment, Remote Work, Career Development.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The fast development of digital technologies has caused massive changes within the IT sector. Remote working, virtual communication, cloud technology and artificial intelligence have been adopted. Whilst offering greater flexibility and improved productivity within organisations, there are challenges associated with maintaining positive relationships with employees, job security, work life balance and employee retention.

Job embeddedness is defined as the factors that increase employees' desire to stay with the organisation. This can be broken down into 3 components; links, fit and sacrifice. Links are the relationship with colleagues and the organisation. Fit is the compatibility between the individual and role. Sacrifice is the benefits they may miss out on if they left the organisation.

With remote working and virtual collaboration being present within the digital working environment, this study looks to investigate job embeddedness within IT employees to identify the factors that influence organisational attachment, job satisfaction and employee retention.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The fast development of digital technology has caused a dramatic change in the working practices within the Information Technology (IT) industry, with many new roles becoming remote, flexible and virtual. This can cause issues such as work stress, poor work-life balance, lack of security and less connection with the organisation.

Job embeddedness refers to factors which motivate employees to stay within their organisation. This includes positive connections within the workplace, job fit and rewards. This study looks at job embeddedness within the digital workplace and factors affecting IT employees' organisational attachment and retention intentions.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- Assess the level of job embeddedness of IT employees in a digital workplace.
- Determine the factors that influence the job embeddedness of IT employees.

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- Analyses the impact of work-life balance and career development on IT employees' job embeddedness.
- Suggest appropriate interventions for improving job embeddedness and employee retention in the IT industry.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

This study aims to investigate how embeddedness in job has an impact on employees in the IT industry. This will be done by looking at how employees work environment, organisational commitment, work-life balance and career development impacts their desire to remain with their organisation. A focus will be placed on understanding how the digital workplace affects employee retention. This study will provide useful insight into the best way to retain IT professionals, helping reduce competition for skilled employees and reduce employee turnover.

1.5 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

1. The study was conducted among IT workers only, therefore, it cannot be generalized to other industries.

2. The study used self-reported measures, which could be subjective and dependent on participant's perception and experiences.

3. Digital workplace practices could change over time and impact job embeddedness differently depending on circumstances.

4. The researcher might have limited resources, including time and money, which could impact the scope and scale of the study.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to describe job embeddedness and the workplace factors perceived by IT employees.

Sources of Data

The study is based on primary data represented by the structured questionnaire and its analysis and interpretation supplied for this article. Secondary data from books, journals, research articles and relevant publications are used to provide background and support the review of literature.

Area of the Study

The study examines the factors that influence employees' decisions to remain with their current organizations in the digital workplace. It covers important aspects such as the work environment, organizational commitment, work-life balance, career development opportunities, workplace relationships, and digital work practices.

Sampling Method

Convenience sampling method is used to collect data from respondents who are easily accessible and willing to participate in the study.

Sample Size

The study is based on a sample size of 50 respondents from Coimbatore City.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire consisting of multiple-choice questions and rating-scale questions is used to collect information from respondents.

Tools for Data Analysis

The collected data are analysed using the following statistical tools:

- Percentage analysis
- Frequency distribution
- Tables and charts

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Peltokorpi and Allen (2023) examined the relationship between job embeddedness, job insecurity, and voluntary employee turnover. Their study highlighted the importance of employees' connections with their organizations and the factors that influence their decisions to remain in or leave their jobs. The research emphasized that job embeddedness plays an important role in understanding employee turnover, particularly when employees experience uncertainty about their employment. This study provides a theoretical foundation for examining job embeddedness among IT employees in the digital workplace.

Leonardi, Parker, and Shen (2024) reviewed the changing nature of remote work and its implications for organizations and employees. Their study explored how physical distance, technological arrangements, social relationships, and organizational structures influence remote working experiences. The review highlighted the importance of understanding how employees maintain workplace relationships and access organizational resources when working remotely. These findings are relevant to job embeddedness because workplace relationships and access to resources can influence employees' attachment to their organizations.

Bermúdez-González, Lucia-Casademunt, and Padilla-Angulo (2024) investigated the role of

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professional isolation and work–family balance in the organizational commitment of IT employees who were required to work remotely. The study also examined job satisfaction as a mediating factor. Published in Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, the research highlighted the importance of talent management practices in addressing professional isolation and supporting employees' work–family balance. The findings are relevant to the present study because social connections, job satisfaction, and work–life balance may influence employees' attachment to their organizations.

Weinert, Maier, Laumer, and Weitzel (2024) examined how information technology influences work–home boundaries, work–home conflict, and job outcomes. Their study, published in Information & Management, used data from 862 individuals to investigate the role of work–home embeddedness. The researchers explained how digital technologies can blur the boundaries between professional and personal life and how employees' embeddedness may influence these relationships. The study is particularly relevant to IT employees because continuous digital connectivity can affect work–life balance and employees' experiences of the workplace.

Kiazad and colleagues (2024) investigated the relationship between high-performance work practices and job embeddedness. Published in the Journal of Vocational Behavior, their research examined how different aspects of job embeddedness explain the effects of organizational practices on employee outcomes. The study highlighted that workplace practices can influence different dimensions of embeddedness in different ways. This suggests that organizations should carefully consider how their human resource management practices affect employees' organizational connections and employment decisions. The study provides a useful foundation for examining career development opportunities, workplace support, and employee retention in the IT sector.

RESEARCH GAP:

The present study brings together job embeddedness and the digital workplace by examining links, fit and sacrifice alongside work-life balance, digital workplace support and career development among IT employees.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concept of Job Embeddedness:

- **Links:** Strength of connections with colleagues, managers, teams and other aspects of work.
- **Fit:** The perceived compatibility between an employee's skills, values, needs and career goals and the organization or job.
- **Sacrifice:** The perceived material and psychological benefits that would be lost if the employee left, such as relationships, flexibility, learning opportunities, benefits or career progression.

Job Embeddedness in the Digital Workplace

In a digital workplace, links may develop through online collaboration, virtual meetings, mentoring and project teams. Fit may be influenced by technology access, flexibility, management practices, organizational culture and the employee's ability to perform effectively in a digital setting. Sacrifice may include losing flexible arrangements, trusted working relationships, development opportunities or organizational benefits. These influences may differ depending on job role, personal circumstances and the quality of digital work design.

Factors Considered in the Study

- **Work environment:** workload, clarity of responsibilities, resources and psychological safety.
- **Organizational commitment and support:** trust in management, recognition, communication and a sense of belonging.
- **Work-life balance:** boundaries between work and personal time, flexibility and manageable working hours.
- **Digital workplace practices:** access to tools, quality of virtual communication, collaboration and technical support.
- **Career development:** training, skill development, promotion opportunities and clarity about career progression.
- **Intention to stay:** employee's stated likelihood of continuing with their current organization.

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IV.DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

6.1 Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variable	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 20	2	4.0%
	20–30	28	56.0%
	31–40	13	26.0%
	41–50	5	10.0%
	Above 50	2	4.0%
Gender	Male	29	58.0%
	Female	19	38.0%
	Another identity	1	2.0%
	Prefer not to say	1	2.0%
Work arrangement	Mostly office-based	18	36.0%
	Hybrid	22	44.0%
	Fully remote	8	16.0%
	Other	2	4.0%
Job tenure	Less than 1 year	8	16.0%
	1–3 years	20	40.0%
	4–6 years	12	24.0%
	7–10 years	7	14.0%
	More than 10 years	3	6.0%
TOTAL	Respondents	50	100.0%

Interpretation: The largest age group is 20–30 years (56.0%). Hybrid work is the most common arrangement (44.0%), followed by office-based work (36.0%). Most respondents have 1–3 years of tenure (40.0%).

6.2 Digital Workplace Experience (5-point scale)

S. No.	Statement / Indicator	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	Digital tools support collaboration	3.84	1.06
2	Access to information and resources	3.82	0.96
3	Supervisor accessibility	3.64	1.14
4	Digital inclusion	3.54	1.22
5	Learning and development access	3.74	1.16
6	Work–life boundary clarity	3.36	1.27

Interpretation: digital tools support collaboration receives the highest mean rating (3.84), while work–life boundary clarity receives the lowest mean rating (3.36).

6.3 Job Embeddedness Dimensions

Dimension	Items / Indicators	Mean Score
Links	Digital tools support collaboration, Digital inclusion, Professional relationships and team connection	3.71
Fit	Access to information and resources, Learning and development access, Skills and career fit	3.83
Sacrifice	Benefits and opportunities worth keeping, Valued professional relationships, Experience difficult to replace	3.72

Interpretation: Fit has the highest dimension mean (3.83), while Links has the lowest (3.71). This indicates comparatively stronger fit and weaker links.

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6.4 Turnover Intention and Intention to Stay

S. No.	Indicator (Agree/Strongly Agree)	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Often think about leaving	19	38.0%
2	Actively searching for external work	12	24.0%
3	Would consider leaving for a suitable opportunity	24	48.0%
4	Intend to remain for the next 12 months	35	70.0%
5	Would recommend the organisation as a good place to work	34	68.0%
	TOTAL VALID RESPONDENTS	50	100.0%

Interpretation: 70.0% indicate an intention to remain for the next 12 months, while 38.0% often think about leaving and 24.0% report actively searching for external work.

V.FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS:

5.1 FINDINGS

1. The demographic and work-arrangement profile of respondents.
2. The perceived levels of links, fit and sacrifice among IT employees.
3. The digital-workplace factors that receive the most positive and negative ratings.
4. The observed pattern of intention to stay and turnover intention.
5. Any statistically supported associations between job embeddedness dimensions and turnover-related outcomes.
6. Differences across work arrangements or job-tenure groups, if appropriate analyses are conducted.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

1. Strengthen team relationships: Organisations should encourage inclusive online collaboration, peer mentoring, knowledge-sharing sessions and regular one-to-one conversations.
2. Improve role compatibility: Employees should understand how their skills and career goals align with role expectations, project opportunities and organisational priorities.
3. Provide career development opportunities: IT organisations should offer transparent development pathways, technical learning resources and opportunities to work on meaningful projects.
4. Encourage supportive leadership: Managers should communicate clearly, listen to employee concerns and provide consistent support across office-based, hybrid and remote teams.
5. Maintain work–life boundaries: Organisations should establish reasonable expectations for response times, after-hours messages and meeting schedules.
6. Promote digital inclusion: Digital communication should be accessible and inclusive, avoiding excessive reliance on informal information channels that some employees may miss.
7. Evaluate employee retention carefully: Organisations should review retention indicators alongside employee feedback rather than assuming that high digital-tool usage indicates strong employee connection.

CONCLUSION

Job embeddedness offers a useful framework for understanding why IT employees remain with an organisation, particularly as work becomes increasingly digital and geographically flexible. The dimensions of links, fit and sacrifice help explain how professional relationships, role alignment and valued opportunities may shape employees' connection to their work.

Digital tools may support collaboration and access to learning, but they may also contribute to isolation or blurred work–home boundaries when not supported by clear organisational practices and effective management.

The present study proposes to examine these dimensions among IT employees and consider their relationship with intention to stay and turnover intention. Its value depends on collecting reliable primary data, reporting the

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sample and methodology transparently, and applying appropriate statistical analysis.

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