

# Teamwork self-efficacy and employee satisfaction: a sequential framework to build employee cohesion

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## ABSTRACT

The occupational psychological health of the employees is affected by the behavior of their peers in the workplace. To reduce psychological stress and improve the well-being of employees, organizations are focusing on developing coherence through various human resources practices. In the current business scenario, it is crucial to address psychological stress by building employee cohesion. The aim of this study is to analyze how employees' teamwork self-efficacy influences group cohesion through employee satisfaction. This study followed a quantitative approach to test the data, which comprises 228 information technology (IT) professionals, working in top IT companies in India. This study used a partial least squares structural equation modeling approach to test the hypothesis. The results revealed that employees' teamwork self-efficacy is not directly influencing employee cohesion, whereas it has a significant positive influence on an employee's cohesion only with the mediation effect of an employee's satisfaction. Predominantly, an employee's extrinsic satisfaction has a greater influence on the aforesaid relationship than an employee's intrinsic satisfaction. The results of this study suggest human resources development practitioners place more emphasis on delivering motivational benefits and providing collaboration-oriented interventions that strengthen teamwork self-efficacy, since these factors may directly affect employee cohesion given that a large portion of the respondents were young adults.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cohesion has been recognized as a predominant fragment in psychological well-being [1]–[4]. Positive cohesion in society reduces depression and anxiety [5] and increases self-efficacy [6]. Every adult works in organizations to fulfil their physiological and psychological needs. In today's organizational context, diversity at the workplace has an ambivalent effect [7]. It has a substantial effect on both individual performance [8] and organizational productivity [9] and outcomes [10]. Once an individual becomes competent to deal with groups, he or she exhibits coherence in the groups. Thus, teamwork self-efficacy is vital for every individual to display positive interprofessional communication in the workplace [11], [12]. To minimize the negative effect of diversity and non-coherence among the workforce, and build teamwork self-efficacy among employees, organizations and human resources (HR) professionals have focused on developing unity among employees through various interventions [13]. Any interventions provided by HR professionals act as motivational (extrinsic or intrinsic) factors that affect employees' attitudes [14], [15]. Hence, it is vital to study the relationship between teamwork self-efficacy, employee satisfaction (extrinsic and intrinsic), and employee cohesion in the contemporary scenario.

Prior studies [11], [12], [16], [17] demonstrated the relationship between team cohesion and collective efficacy or interprofessional competence. Besides, it has been identified that the direct impact of teamwork self-efficacy on employee cohesion is understudied. Subsequently, earlier studies [18]–[20] have established the relationship among group cohesion, team competence, and team satisfaction in relation to organizational outcomes. Likewise, few studies [9], [18], [21] have established the association between group cohesion and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the impact of teamwork self-efficacy through employee satisfaction (extrinsic and intrinsic motivators) on employee cohesion is sparsely discussed in the literature. Thus, based on the earlier discussions, this study addresses the above-stated gap by considering employee satisfaction (extrinsic and intrinsic motivators) as a potential mediator between employees' teamwork self-efficacy and employee cohesion.

This study aimed to assess the influence of an employee's teamwork self-efficacy on employee cohesion and the mediation effect of an employee's extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction in the relationship between teamwork self-efficacy and employee cohesion. This study used SPSS v. 25 and SMARTPLS v. 4 software and followed the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach to analyze the data and test the study's hypothesis. Consequently, this study contributes to the social exchange theory [22] of psychology and Herzberg's two-factor theory [23] of motivation, which explain the attitude of employees in today's context. Further, based on the results of this study, implications for HR professionals have been discussed regarding how to effectively build a cohesive team to better achieve organizational goals.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study portrays a sequential framework that describes how an organization can effectively build strong cohesiveness among employees. It can be achieved by improving teamwork self-efficacy, which satisfies employees' extrinsic and intrinsic drives. Based on the collectivist approach, this study is grounded in the social exchange theory [22] of social psychology and Herzberg's two-factor theory [23] of motivation.

According to the social exchange theory [22], social behavior is the consequence of an exchange process driven by an individual's desire to maximize their own benefits while minimizing their personal burdens. Pursuant to this notion, people choose the most mutually advantageous social interactions to participate in by weighing the pros and cons of each. In other words, social exchange theory explicates that each member of a group will reciprocate the good or unpleasant actions of the others in the group [24]. Understanding both intrinsic and extrinsic gratification requires an understanding of Herzberg's two-factor theory [23], which consists of hygiene and motivational factors. The company's policy and administration, compensation, position, supervision, interpersonal connections, working conditions, and security all fall under the category of hygiene variables. These facets are a significant source of job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, motivation components that are intrinsic to the job include accomplishment, acknowledgment or direct feedback, progress, responsibility, and the actual work itself. This type of motivation is a main cause of job satisfaction. Figure 1 illustrates the sequential framework proposed in this study.

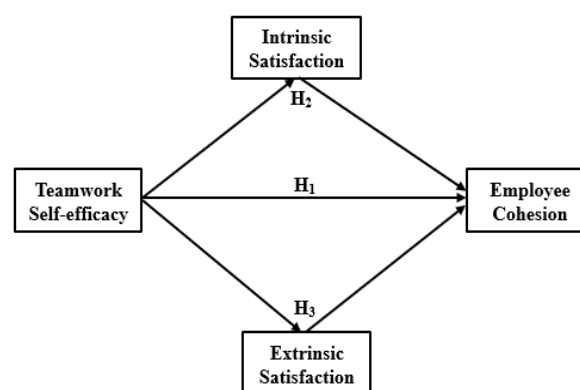


Figure 1. Research model

This sequential framework, grounded in the aforementioned theories, explains how extrinsic and intrinsic motivations make employees display cohesion in groups. Employees demonstrate coherence in organizations with the help of their teamwork self-efficacy. There is a prospect that this impact can also be achieved by satisfying their extrinsic and intrinsic needs. It is implied that by having teamwork self-efficacy,

employees express more cohesiveness only when they feel satisfied with their extrinsic and intrinsic needs. Figure 1 delineates the hypothesis being proposed for the study, which portrays: i) H<sub>1</sub>: Teamwork self-efficacy significantly influences employee cohesion; ii) H<sub>2</sub>: Intrinsic satisfaction mediates the relationship between teamwork self-efficacy and employee cohesion; iii) H<sub>3</sub>: Extrinsic satisfaction mediates the relationship between teamwork self-efficacy and employee cohesion.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Population

This research is applied in the Indian information technology (IT) industry due to the nature of the job, where employees mostly work in teams. In this context, a high level of team cohesion is expected [25]. Recent research has shown that "Indian professionals suffer a higher stress level than most workers globally" because of the COVID-19 epidemic and work-related stress since 2020. This has been reported by The Economic Times [26]. Further, the IT industry is a perpetual, growing sector that has a major contribution to India's Gross Domestic Product [27]. Although, this industry is facing consistent involuntary attrition due to the effects of techno-stress [28], COVID-19 [29], and the gig economy [28], [30]–[32].

#### 3.2. Sampling

Using quantitative-based research, this study applies the survey method to collect data from the respondents. The respondents are IT professionals working in the top 5 IT companies in India based on profit for FY'22. A convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data through the LinkedIn platform, which comprises IT hubs (Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune, Kolkata, Mumbai, and National Capital Region - Delhi) in India.

#### 3.3. Instrument

The self-administered questionnaire employed in this study measures the participants' views on their level of teamwork self-efficacy, satisfaction level, perceptions of employee cohesion, and demographic information. To measure the variables, we adopted established questionnaires, which were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. To assess the teamwork self-efficacy of the respondents, the self-efficacy for teamwork scale developed by Eby and Dobbins [33] was used. It describes the personal capacity of respondents to collaborate in teams. To assess the satisfaction level of the respondents, the Warr *et al.* [34] scale was used. Among the eleven items, six items measure intrinsic satisfaction and five items measure extrinsic satisfaction. The intrinsic satisfaction items measure the respondent's satisfaction level with respect to intrinsic motivators such as attention they received to their suggestions, freedom and responsibility in their job, promotion, and recognition. The extrinsic satisfaction items measure the respondent's satisfaction level with respect to extrinsic motivators such as compensation, supervisory and peer group support, work hours, and job security. The dependent variable, employee cohesion, was measured using the Carron *et al.* [35] scale, which assesses task-related group integration in the workplace.

#### 3.4. Sample size determination and data collection

The sample size was determined based on the scope of the study. Based on the G\*Power [36], [37] analysis tool, the sample size was determined. The sample size required for this study is 191, with the power setting of 0.95, the effect size of 0.10, and the  $\alpha$  (alpha) at 0.05 [38]. The self-administered questionnaire (an online form) was circulated to 250 IT professionals who agreed to participate in the study. Finally, 228 valid responses were taken to test the hypothesis of this study out of 246 filled-in forms.

#### 3.5. Data analysis

To analyze the data and test the hypothesis of the study, SPSS v. 25 and SMART-PLS v. 4 software [39] were used. The partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach was employed in this study. It is a multivariate method used to test multiple linear regression, path analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis concurrently [38]. This approach adopts a two-step analysis: assessing the measurement model and the structural model. The results of these analyses are presented in the following section.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Descriptive statistics of the demographic profile

The descriptive statistics of the demographic profile of the respondents are presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents are male (78%), young adults (89%), and have 1 to 3 years of work experience (73%). In this study, age has been considered on the basis of Erikson's re-envisioned eight stages proposed by Sacco [40].

Table 1. Demographic profile of the study

Profile	Classifications	Number of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	177	78
	Female	51	22
Age	Young adulthood (18-29)	203	89
	Middle adulthood (30-48)	25	11
Experience (years)	<1	13	6
	1 to 3	167	73
	4 to 6	24	10
	7 to 9	7	3
	10 and above	17	8

#### 4.2. Measurement model assessment

To examine the measurement model, the factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) are to be considered. The reliability of the constructs was tested by Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ). The values of the constructs range from 0.770 to 0.913 and are above the required value of 0.7 [41], which ensures the scale is highly reliable. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed by the outer loadings of the measurement model. The outer loadings for individual items range from 0.561 to 0.889, above the threshold value of 0.5 [38]. Further, the composite reliability rho\_a and rho\_c ranges from 0.793 to 0.917 and 0.843 to 0.934 for all the constructs, surpassing 0.7 [42], and the AVE of the constructs ranges from 0.519 to 0.740, greater than 0.5 [42], which ensures adequacy in convergent validity. Thus, it has been validated that the measurement model of this study is highly reliable and consistent. The final result of the measurement model is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the measurement model

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	AVE
Employee cohesion (EC)	EC1	0.819	0.779	0.808	0.861	0.614
	EC2	0.878				
	EC3	0.561				
	EC4	0.836				
Extrinsic satisfaction (ES)	ES1	0.797	0.770	0.793	0.843	0.519
	ES2	0.789				
	ES3	0.678				
	ES4	0.706				
	ES5	0.617				
Intrinsic satisfaction (IS)	IS1	0.737	0.854	0.856	0.893	0.585
	IS2	0.802				
	IS3	0.585				
	IS4	0.792				
	IS5	0.832				
	IS6	0.814				
Teamwork self-efficacy (TS)	TS1	0.846	0.913	0.917	0.934	0.740
	TS2	0.860				
	TS3	0.889				
	TS4	0.863				
	TS5	0.844				

To examine discriminant validity, the Fornell & Larcker criterion was used. In the Fornell & Larcker criterion, the diagonal values (the square root of the AVE of each construct) are greater than any of the correlations of the constructs, which validates discriminant criteria [42]. The results of the discriminant validity of the constructs are presented in Table 3. To conclude, the measurement model establishes good reliability and validity.

Table 3. Results of discriminant validity

Constructs	Fornell & Larcker method			
	EC	ES	IS	TS
EC	0.783	-	-	-
ES	0.648	0.721	-	-
IS	0.598	0.703	0.765	-
TS	0.286	0.275	0.283	0.860

### 4.3. Hypothesis testing

The hypothesis of this study was tested by path analysis using structural model assessment. The path analysis results show that the  $R^2$  value is 0.468, which surpasses the threshold of 0.2 [43]. This result indicates that 46.8% of the variance in the employee's self-competence is explained by the mediation effect of employees' extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction through teamwork self-efficacy. The results of structural model assessment with respective path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values are presented in Table 4. Figure 2, the path model exhibits relationships between the constructs with path coefficients and t-values.

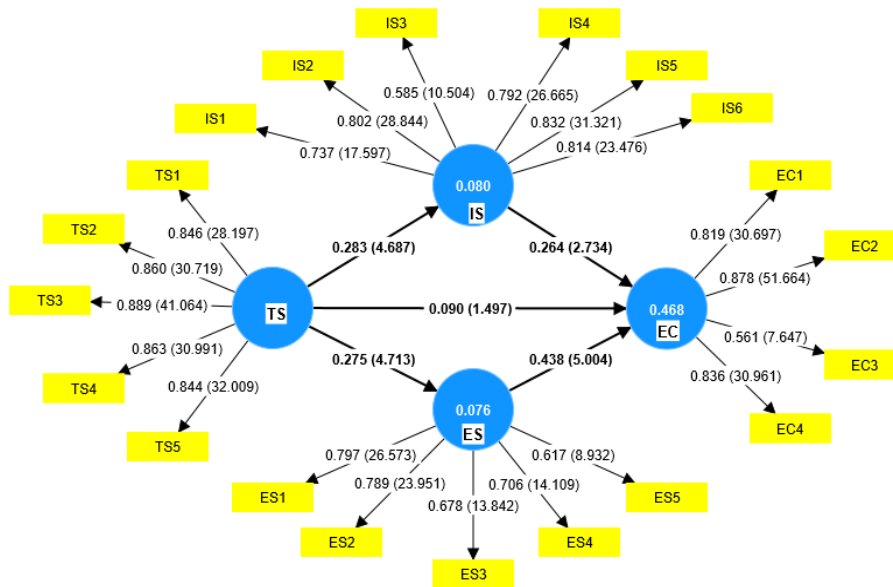


Figure 2. Results of PLS-SEM

Table 4. Summary of the structural model

Effect type	Relationship	Path coefficient	t-value	p-value	Effect size ( $f^2$ )	Result
Direct effect	TS → EC	0.090	1.497	0.134	0.014	No impact
	ES → EC	0.438	5.004	***	0.180	Impact
	IS → EC	0.264	2.734	***	0.065	Impact
	TS → ES	0.275	4.713	***	0.082	Impact
	TS → IS	0.283	4.687	***	0.087	Impact
Indirect effect	TS → EC	0.195	5.203	***	-	Impact
Specific indirect effect	TS → ES → EC	0.121	3.445	***	-	Impact
	TS → IS → EC	0.075	2.390	**	-	Impact
Total effect	TS → EC	0.286	3.708	***	-	Impact

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\* $p < 0.05$

The path analysis shows that teamwork self-efficacy is not directly influencing employee cohesion (Beta=0.090,  $p > 0.05$ ). Here, the hypothesis  $H_1$  is not supported statistically. Whereas, teamwork self-efficacy has a significant impact on employee extrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.275,  $p < 0.01$ ) and intrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.283,  $p < 0.01$ ), where a 1% increase in teamwork self-efficacy increases employee extrinsic satisfaction by 0.27% and intrinsic satisfaction by 0.28%. Consequently, employees' extrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.438,  $p < 0.01$ ) and intrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.264,  $p < 0.01$ ) have a significant impact on employee cohesion. It means that a 1% increase in employees' extrinsic satisfaction leads to a 0.44% increase in employee cohesion. Meanwhile, a 1% increase in employees' intrinsic satisfaction leads to a 0.26% increase in employee cohesion. Hence, teamwork self-efficacy is having a significant indirect effect (Beta=0.195,  $p < 0.01$ ) on employee cohesion, where a 1% increase in teamwork self-efficacy indirectly leads to a 0.19% increase in employee cohesion. Specifically, extrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.121,  $p < 0.01$ ) and intrinsic satisfaction (Beta=0.075,  $p < 0.05$ ) significantly mediate the relationship between teamwork self-efficacy and employee cohesion. It means that a 1% increase in extrinsic satisfaction with the prediction effect of teamwork self-efficacy leads to a 0.12% increase in employee cohesion. Meanwhile, a 1% increase in employees' intrinsic satisfaction with the prediction effect of teamwork self-efficacy leads to a 0.7% increase

in employee cohesion. To conclude, teamwork self-efficacy has a significant direct influence ( $\text{Beta}=0.286$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) on employee cohesion through employee satisfaction (both extrinsic and intrinsic). It implies that a 1% increase in teamwork self-efficacy leads to a 0.29% increase in employee cohesion through the mediating effect of employee satisfaction. Thus, the statistical analysis revealed that the proposed hypotheses ( $H_2$  and  $H_3$ ) of this study are supported.

To consider the practical statistical implications of the study, the effect size ( $f^2$ ) has to be considered [38]. Effect sizes ( $f^2$ )  $<0.15$  are considered small, between 0.15 and 0.34 are considered moderate, and over 0.35 are considered large [43]. In this study, the effect size ( $f^2$ ) for the impact of teamwork self-efficacy on extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction is comparatively low (0.082 and 0.087). As stated by Chin *et al.* [44], merely because the effect size ( $f^2$ ) is small is not an indication that the underlying moderator effect is trivial: “even a small interaction effect can be meaningful under extreme moderating conditions; if the resulting beta changes are meaningful, then it is important to take these conditions into account”. However, the effect size of the impact of extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction on employee cohesion varies significantly. The impact of employees’ extrinsic satisfaction on employee cohesion’s effect size is moderate (0.180) when compared with the impact of employees’ intrinsic satisfaction on employee cohesion’s effect size (0.065).

Thus, the study provides empirical findings that employees’ extrinsic satisfaction has a greater influence on employee cohesion than employees’ intrinsic satisfaction. The arguments from earlier studies [18], [20] support the findings of the study. Precisely, this study’s results reinforce Herzberg’s two-factor theory of motivation [23], which explains that the absence of hygiene factors creates dissatisfaction and that providing motivational factors increases employee satisfaction. It implies that hygiene (extrinsic) factors have a major influence on expressing cohesion in the workplace. Further, the importance of extrinsic motivation is also supported by the findings of this research, which are consistent with those of Ahmed *et al.* [45]. Also, the main finding of this study is that employees’ intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction act as mediators, improve the effect of teamwork self-efficacy on employees’ cohesive behavior and support the social exchange theory [22], which says that each member of a group is expected to make up for the good or bad actions of the others.

Moreover, the major respondents to this study are young adults. The young pool of talent plays a major role in today’s workplace. Hence, based on the results of the study, it is recommended that organizations and human resource development professionals consider motivating employees with extrinsic factors such as supervisor and peer group relationships, compensation, work hours, and job security to build a strong sense of cohesiveness among their workforce. Besides, HRD professionals should also consider motivating employees with intrinsic factors such as recognition, freedom and responsibility in the job, promotion, and attention to the suggestions they make to ensure cohesiveness among their employees in all aspects. This study also suggests HR professionals focus on building strong interprofessional skills [12] to directly influence employee cohesion in organizations by conducting community orientation interventions [11] such as team learning [46], encouraging the combination of demographically diverse teams [47], team goal-setting [17], and providing additional mentoring, technical training, recognizing their accomplishments, and understanding different cultures of group members [48].

#### 4.4. Limitations and future directions

This study examines the influence of teamwork self-efficacy on employee cohesion. There is scope to study the influence of other types of employee competencies (change competence, ethical competence, and diversity competence) on employee cohesion. Further, it is suggested that researchers can portray organizational performance and organizational effectiveness as outcome variables of this sequential framework. Besides, this study was conducted in the Indian IT industry. Researchers can investigate this framework in other industries and cultural environments to spotlight the potential for improving employee cohesion in the workplace.

### 5. CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggested that organizations should focus on building the teamwork self-efficacy of employees, which makes them satisfied (both extrinsically and intrinsically), to strengthen the cohesiveness among them. The major implication of this study is that when employees are satisfied with extrinsic motivational factors, they are highly inclined to exhibit cohesion in the workplace when compared to intrinsic motivational factors. Hence, it is suggested that extrinsic and intrinsic factors make employees psychologically cohesive among peer groups with the prevailing HR interventions that promote teamwork self-efficacy in the contemporary business context. This study also recommends HR professionals provide cohesion-oriented interventions that directly influence cohesiveness among individuals.

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