



Dei Climate And Organisational Commitment: Empirical Evidence from IT Professionals in Bengaluru, India

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Abstract – Purpose: This study investigates the influence of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) climate on organisational commitment among employees in information technology (IT) firms in Bengaluru, India - a context underserved by existing DEI research. **Design/Methodology:** A quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed. Primary data were collected from 173 full-time IT professionals in Bengaluru using a structured, validated questionnaire. DEI climate was assessed across three dimensions - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - using adapted scales from Mor Barak et al. (1998), Nishii (2013), and Colquitt et al. (2001). Organisational commitment was measured using the Allen and Meyer (1990) three-component scale. Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) were applied for data analysis. **Findings:** DEI climate demonstrated a significant positive relationship with organisational commitment ($r = 0.496$, $p < 0.001$). PLS-SEM revealed that the model explains 74.5% of variance in organisational commitment ($R^2 = 0.745$). Equity climate emerged as the dominant predictor ($\beta = 0.757$, $p < 0.001$), followed by diversity climate ($\beta = 0.203$, $p < 0.001$). No statistically significant differences in DEI perceptions or commitment were found across demographic groups. **Practical Implications:** Organisations should embed equity-driven practices - transparent performance appraisals, merit-based promotions, and unbiased HR policies - as the foundation of their DEI strategy. Symbolic diversity initiatives, without substantive fairness, are insufficient to drive employee commitment. **Originality/Value:** This is among the first studies to operationalise DEI as a unified organisational climate construct and examine its predictive power on commitment using PLS-SEM within the Indian IT sector, directly addressing conceptual, empirical, and sectoral gaps in the DEI literature.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; DEI Climate; Organisational Commitment; IT Industry; Social Exchange Theory; PLS-SEM; India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The global discourse on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has evolved from a moral imperative to a strategic organisational priority. For knowledge-intensive industries such as information technology (IT), where innovation emerges from the convergence of diverse intellectual capital, fostering environments of genuine fairness and belonging is increasingly recognised as a critical organisational competency. Yet, a persistent gap remains between DEI policy articulation and its empirical impact on employee outcomes - particularly in non-Western contexts.

Bengaluru, widely regarded as the Silicon Valley of India, exemplifies this tension. As the nucleus of India's IT ecosystem, the city hosts a workforce drawn from heterogeneous cultural, linguistic, regional, and educational backgrounds. While this demographic diversity presents extraordinary potential for collaborative innovation, it simultaneously raises concerns about organisational equity and social inclusion (Kundu & Mor, 2017). Evidence suggests that without intentional management, demographic diversity may yield countervailing outcomes including social fissures,

perceived discrimination, and employee disengagement (McKay et al., 2007).

Organisational commitment - defined as the psychological bond that anchors an employee to their organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991) - is a critical predictor of retention, performance, and organisational citizenship behaviour. In the hyper-competitive talent landscape of Bengaluru's IT sector, where annual attrition rates frequently exceed industry benchmarks (Agarwala, 2003), the drivers of commitment represent both a managerial and research imperative.

While DEI has been studied extensively in Western organisational contexts, research from Indian IT organisations remains sparse. Existing studies predominantly examine diversity, equity, and inclusion as discrete constructs rather than as an integrated organisational climate (Cooke & Saini, 2010). Furthermore, the theoretical mechanisms through which DEI climate translates into commitment - rooted in Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Organisational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) - have received limited empirical testing in South Asian contexts.



This study addresses these gaps by examining DEI climate as a unified predictive construct and evaluating its relationship with organisational commitment among 173 IT professionals in Bengaluru. The study employs a rigorous quantitative methodology, including PLS-SEM, to model the structural relationships between DEI dimensions and employee commitment.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 DEI as an Organisational Climate Construct

Organisational climate refers to employees' collective perceptions of organisational policies, practices, and procedures - providing a psychological representation of the work environment that predicts attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Schneider et al., 2013). DEI climate, as a specific climate domain, captures employees' shared perceptions of the degree to which organisations operationalise diversity, fairness, and inclusion through their systems and leadership behaviours.

Roberson (2006) drew a critical conceptual distinction between diversity - representing demographic composition - and inclusion - representing the quality of employee experience, sense of belonging, and participation. Shore et al. (2011) extended this by identifying inclusion as the dual experience of belonging and unique value within work groups. Nishii (2013) operationalised the climate for inclusion as employees' collective perception that their organisation provides equitable employment and decision-making processes while valuing individual uniqueness.

Dwertmann et al. (2016) advanced DEI climate research with their FADE (Fairness and Anti-Discrimination/Exclusion) model, which posits that meaningful inclusion requires both the active cultivation of fairness and the reduction of exclusionary practices. Recent integrative reviews (Da Silva Almeida et al., 2024; Mor Barak et al., 2016) confirm that DEI is most effective when embedded as a systemic organisational property rather than a discrete programmatic intervention.

2.2 Organisational Commitment: Theoretical Foundations

Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model remains the gold standard in commitment research, differentiating affective commitment (emotional attachment), continuance commitment (perceived cost of exit), and normative commitment (felt obligation). Affective commitment, in particular, has been consistently linked to reduced turnover intention, elevated performance, and positive organisational citizenship (Meyer et al., 2002).

The theoretical connection between DEI climate and commitment rests on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that perceived fair treatment generates

reciprocal loyalty. When organisations demonstrate care - through equitable HR practices, inclusive leadership, and respect for individual differences - employees respond with heightened psychological investment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Colquitt et al.'s (2001, 2013) meta-analytic evidence confirms that procedural and distributive justice perceptions are robust antecedents of affective commitment.

2.3 DEI Climate and Commitment: Empirical Evidence

McKay et al. (2007) demonstrated that a positive diversity climate moderates racial performance disparities and predicts commitment, particularly among minority employees. Choi (2009) found that perceptions of justice and inclusiveness were positively associated with organisational identification. Gonzalez and DeNisi (2009) provided cross-level evidence that diversity climate influences individual commitment through organisational identification - particularly within IT organisations.

Budhwar and Bhatnagar (2009) highlighted the institutional duality faced by Indian IT firms navigating global HRM best practices and local cultural norms, resulting in variable experiences of fairness and inclusion across organisational levels. NASSCOM (2023) industry data confirms that while DEI policies are widespread in Indian IT firms, implementation consistency and perceived equity remain areas of significant underperformance.

2.4 Research Gaps

Three interconnected gaps motivate this study. First, a conceptual integration gap: DEI components are predominantly examined as separate constructs rather than as a unified climate. Second, an empirical gap: few studies directly link DEI climate to organisational commitment - most focus on engagement or turnover intention. Third, a sectoral gap: DEI-commitment relationships remain largely unexamined within the Indian IT context, where cultural, institutional, and structural dynamics markedly differ from Western research settings.

III. CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Drawing on Social Exchange Theory and Organisational Support Theory, this study proposes that positive employee perceptions of DEI climate function as signals of organisational care - activating reciprocal psychological bonds that manifest as heightened organisational commitment. Each dimension of DEI

climate is theorised to contribute uniquely to commitment, while the integrated DEI climate construct provides aggregate explanatory power.



Hypothesis Statement Basis

Hypothesis	Statement	Basis
H1a	Diversity climate is positively associated with organisational commitment	McKay et al. (2007); Robertson (2006)
H1b	Equity climate is positively associated with organisational commitment	Colquitt et al. (2001); Greenberg (1990)
H1c	Inclusion climate is positively associated with organisational commitment	Shore et al. (2011); Nishii (2013)
H1d	Overall DEI climate is positively associated with organisational commitment	Blau (1964); Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002)

A simple random sampling procedure was applied to ensure representativeness and minimise selection bias. A final sample of 173 valid responses was obtained, exceeding the minimum requirements established by Green's (1991) regression rule ($N \geq 74$ for three predictors) and Cohen's (1992) power analysis ($N \geq 84$ at $\alpha = 0.05$).

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	85	49.1
	Female	88	50.9
Age	Below 25 years	43	24.9
	25-30 years	48	27.7
	31-35 years	42	24.3
	36-40 years	31	17.9
	Above 40 years	9	5.2

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Designation	Software Developer/Engineer	47	27.2
	Technical Lead/Team Lead	43	24.9
	Senior Software Developer	34	19.7
	Project Lead/Manager	33	19.1
	Architect/Senior Specialist	16	9.2
Experience (Current Org.)	0-1 years	33	19.1
	1-3 years	57	32.9
	3-5 years	38	22.0
	5-8 years	36	20.8
	Above 8 years	9	5.2

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 173)

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive-analytical, cross-sectional research design was employed. This design is appropriate for testing relationships among measured variables at a single point in time and is widely adopted in organisational behaviour research. The study collects primary data directly from IT professionals, ensuring that findings reflect employees' subjective perceptions - consistent with the climate-based theoretical framing.

4.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population comprised full-time employees in software development and IT services firms operating within Bengaluru city limits. Eligible respondents included technical and project-based professionals (Software Developers, Senior Engineers, Technical Leads, Project Managers, Architects) with a minimum tenure of six months in their current organisation. Interns, contractual staff, and non-IT support roles were excluded.

4.3 Measurement Instruments

DEI climate was assessed using 18 items across three dimensions. Diversity climate (6 items) was adapted from Mor Barak et al. (1998), capturing perceptions of representation and fairness in HR decisions. Equity climate (6 items) was derived from Nishii (2013) and Colquitt et al. (2001), covering procedural and distributive justice perceptions. Inclusion climate (6 items) was adapted from



Shore et al. (2011) and Nishii (2013), assessing belonging, voice, and participation. All items used a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree).

Organisational commitment was measured using the Allen and Meyer (1990) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), comprising 18 items (6 per dimension: affective, continuance, normative). A pilot study with 20 IT professionals confirmed scale clarity and contextual relevance.

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Assessment
Diversity Climate	6	0.930	Excellent
Equity Climate	6	0.966	Excellent
Inclusion Climate	6	0.946	Excellent
Overall DEI Climate	18	0.921	Excellent
Affective Commitment	6	0.891	Good
Continuance Commitment	6	0.872	Good
Normative Commitment	6	0.887	Good
Overall Org. Commitment	18	0.781	Acceptable

Table 2: Reliability Analysis - Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients

All constructs exceeded the conventionally accepted reliability threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ (Nunnally, 1978), with DEI dimensions demonstrating excellent internal consistency ($\alpha > 0.90$). These results affirm the measurement instruments' suitability for structural analysis.

4.4 Analytical Strategy

Data analysis proceeded in four stages: (1) Descriptive statistics to characterise the sample and construct distributions; (2) Normality assessment via skewness and kurtosis to verify parametric test assumptions; (3) Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis to examine the directionality, magnitude, and predictive power of relationships; (4) PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4 for comprehensive structural model evaluation, including

measurement model assessment (indicator loadings, composite reliability) and structural path analysis with bootstrapping (5,000 re-samples).

V. RESULTS

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Diversity Climate	3.45	1.285	1.00	5.00
Equity Climate	3.56	1.269	1.00	5.00
Inclusion Climate	3.74	0.975	2.00	5.00
Overall DEI Climate	3.58	0.774	1.72	4.72
Affective Commitment	3.31	1.172	1.00	5.00
Continuance Commitment	2.48	0.995	1.00	5.00
Normative Commitment	2.63	0.977	1.00	5.00
Overall Org. Commitment	2.80	0.484	1.56	3.89

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Key Constructs

Employees reported moderately positive DEI climate perceptions ($M = 3.58$), with inclusion achieving the highest mean score ($M = 3.74$) among the three dimensions. Organisational commitment was comparatively lower ($M = 2.80$), driven primarily by moderate affective commitment ($M = 3.31$) and notably lower continuance ($M = 2.48$) and normative commitment ($M = 2.63$). This gap between DEI perceptions and commitment levels signals that while employees recognise DEI efforts, these initiatives are not yet fully translating into strong organisational attachment. Normality tests confirmed acceptable skewness (-0.663 to 0.016) and kurtosis (-0.338 to -0.195) values, validating parametric analysis.

5.2 Correlation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Predictor	r (Pearson)	p-value	Effect Size	Decision
Diversity Climate → Org. Commitment	0.151	0.47*	Weak	H _{1a} Accepted
Equity Climate → Org. Commitment	0.539	<	Moderate	H _{1b} Accepted



Org. Commitment		0.01** *	e-Strong	Accepted
Inclusion Climate → Org. Commitment	0.405	< 0.01** *	Moderate	Accepted
Overall DEI Climate → Org. Commitment	0.496	< 0.01** *	Moderate	Accepted

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Results (* p < 0.05; *** p < 0.001)

All four hypotheses are accepted. Equity climate demonstrated the strongest bivariate association with organisational commitment (r = 0.539, p < 0.001), followed by inclusion climate (r = 0.405, p < 0.001). Diversity climate, while statistically significant at the conventional threshold, exhibited a comparatively weak association (r = 0.151, p = 0.047), suggesting that workforce demographic representation alone exerts limited influence on psychological attachment.

5.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis with diversity, equity, and inclusion climate as predictors yielded a statistically significant model: F(3, 169) = significant, R = 0.542, R² = 0.294, Adjusted R² = 0.281 (p < 0.001). The model explains 29.4% of variance in organisational commitment. Equity climate emerged as the dominant predictor (β = 0.479, p < 0.001). The regression coefficient for the simplified DEI composite model was β = 0.496, R² = 0.246, confirming a meaningful predictive relationship.

5.4 PLS-SEM Analysis

Measurement Model

All indicator loadings exceeded the 0.70 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2019): diversity climate loadings ranged from 0.790 to 0.883; equity climate loadings ranged from 0.903 to 0.960; inclusion climate loadings ranged from 0.832 to 0.971. Affective commitment was retained as the primary outcome variable in the structural model, given its theoretical centrality and superior loading performance (0.738-0.838) relative to continuance and normative dimensions.

Structural Model

Bootstrapping (5,000 re-samples) was applied to assess path coefficient significance. The structural model explained 74.5% of variance in organisational commitment (R² = 0.745), demonstrating strong explanatory power.

VIF values for all constructs (Diversity = 1.847; Equity = 2.531; Inclusion = 2.203) were below the 5.0 threshold, confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity.

Path	β Coefficient	p-value	Decision
Equity Climate → Organisational Commitment	0.757	< 0.001 ***	Significant
Diversity Climate → Organisational Commitment	0.203	0.001 ***	Significant
Inclusion Climate → Organisational Commitment	-0.057	0.248 (ns)	Not Significant (suppression)

Table 5: PLS-SEM Structural Path Coefficients (R² = 0.745)

The non-significant and negative path for inclusion climate in the multivariate model is attributable to the suppression effect arising from high inter-construct collinearity - a well-documented phenomenon in multi-predictor structural models (Hair et al., 2019). The bivariate correlation confirms inclusion climate's positive and significant relationship with commitment (r = 0.405, p < 0.001), validating its independent relevance. Equity climate's dominant beta coefficient (β = 0.757) across both regression and SEM frameworks underscores fairness as the pivotal mediating mechanism between DEI and commitment.

5.5 Demographic Comparisons

Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVAs were conducted to assess whether DEI climate perceptions and organisational commitment differed across gender, age, designation, and experience. No statistically significant differences were found for any demographic variable (all p > 0.05). This cross-group consistency suggests that organisational systems and practices - rather than individual characteristics - are the primary determinants of DEI perceptions in IT firms. The structured, process-driven nature of these organisations may create sufficiently standardised experiences to produce convergent perceptions across diverse employee populations.



VI. DISCUSSION

6.1 The Primacy of Equity in DEI-Commitment Dynamics

The most theoretically significant finding of this study is the dominant role of equity climate across all analytical frameworks. Equity's consistently stronger effect - whether measured bivariate ($r = 0.539$), through regression ($\beta = 0.479$), or via SEM ($\beta = 0.757$) - establishes fairness in organisational processes as the critical pathway through which DEI climate generates psychological commitment.

This finding resonates with organisational justice theory (Greenberg, 1990; Colquitt et al., 2001) and supports the social exchange framework (Blau, 1964): employees who perceive fair treatment reciprocate with loyalty and dedication. The implication is profound - organisations cannot substitute visible diversity or inclusion rhetoric for substantive fairness. Employees in India's IT sector, who navigate demanding performance environments, appear highly attuned to procedural and distributive justice signals as indicators of organisational trustworthiness.

6.2 The Distinction Between Symbolic and Experiential DEI

Diversity climate's comparatively weak bivariate correlation ($r = 0.151$) illuminates a crucial distinction between the structural presence of diversity and its psychological impact. Demographic representation, while necessary, does not inherently translate into employee belonging or organisational commitment. This challenges prevalent organisational approaches that conflate diversity counts with DEI effectiveness.

The moderate gap between DEI climate perceptions ($M = 3.58$) and organisational commitment ($M = 2.80$) further underscores this distinction. Employees can recognise DEI efforts as present while simultaneously failing to experience them as substantive, fairness-driven, or consequential to their daily work lives. This gap between policy awareness and experiential quality represents the most actionable finding for practitioners.

6.3 Contextual Contributions: The Indian IT Landscape

The absence of demographic differences in DEI perceptions across age, gender, designation, and experience offers a theoretically relevant finding specific to the Indian IT context. In contrast to studies from culturally diverse Western organisations - where demographic subgroup differences in DEI perceptions are

commonly reported - the structural uniformity of IT organisations in Bengaluru appears to create convergent experiences of the work environment.

This finding aligns with Budhwar and Bhatnagar's (2009) observation that Indian IT firms tend to apply standardised HRM practices influenced by multinational parent

companies, potentially flattening group-level perceptual differences. However, this uniformity is a double-edged sword: while it may reflect equitable policy application, it may also reflect a homogenised surface-level experience that does not address individualised needs.

VII. THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several distinct theoretical contributions. First, it advances DEI climate research by empirically validating DEI as a unified organisational climate construct with differentiated dimensional effects - moving beyond the prevailing practice of studying diversity, equity, and inclusion separately. Second, it extends Social Exchange Theory to the DEI domain by demonstrating that equity-driven climate signals activate reciprocal commitment responses among employees in the Indian IT sector.

Third, the application of PLS-SEM to model the DEI-commitment relationship provides a methodologically rigorous contribution, explaining 74.5% of commitment variance - a substantially stronger effect than previously reported in regression-based studies in this domain. Fourth, the study contributes contextual evidence from a high-growth, non-Western market that has been systematically underrepresented in DEI research.

7.2 Managerial Implications

For HR practitioners and organisational leaders, the findings offer a clear strategic roadmap. The paramount implication is that equity must serve as the operational foundation of DEI strategy. Organisations should audit performance evaluation frameworks, promotion processes, compensation structures, and workload allocation mechanisms for systemic bias - as employees' commitment is most strongly predicted by their perceptions of fairness in these processes.

Managers play a disproportionately influential role in bridging the gap between DEI policy intent and lived employee experience. DEI training programmes should therefore prioritise unconscious bias recognition, decision-making consistency, and inclusive communication for line managers, rather than focusing exclusively on broader awareness campaigns. Regular DEI experience audits - using structured employee feedback mechanisms - are essential to close the policy-experience gap identified in this study.

The convergent DEI perceptions across demographic groups suggest that organisation-wide equity systems - rather than targeted subgroup interventions - may be the most efficient lever for improving commitment. Transparency in HR decisions, clear communication of DEI progress metrics, and leadership accountability for



DEI outcomes are recommended as foundational organisational practices.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study acknowledges several limitations that delimit the scope and generalisability of its findings. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference and longitudinal tracking of DEI-commitment dynamics. The sample is confined to Bengaluru's IT sector, limiting generalisation to other industries, regions, or organisational sizes. Self-reported data introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, and the exclusion of moderating variables - such as leadership style, psychological safety, and organisational culture - constrains explanatory completeness.

Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to track how DEI climate changes interact with evolving commitment levels. Cross-industry and cross-regional comparative studies would test the boundary conditions of these findings. Qualitative methodologies - in-depth interviews and focus groups - could illuminate the mechanisms through which employees construct DEI perceptions and translate them into commitment. Future studies should also examine DEI climate as a moderator in the leadership-commitment relationship and explore the role of inclusive leadership behaviours as mediating variables in the DEI- commitment pathway.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study establishes DEI climate as a significant, multidimensional predictor of organisational commitment among IT professionals in Bengaluru, with equity climate emerging as its most potent constituent. The PLS-SEM model - explaining 74.5% of variance in organisational commitment - provides among the strongest empirical evidence to date for the DEI-commitment relationship in an Indian organisational context.

The central message is unequivocal: organisational commitment is not driven by the existence of DEI initiatives but by how fairly and consistently those initiatives are experienced in daily organisational life. For India's IT sector - navigating intense talent competition and ambitions of inclusive growth - this insight calls for a fundamental reorientation from symbolic representation to substantive equity. When employees encounter fairness as an everyday organisational reality, the conditions for deep, durable commitment are created.

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