

A Glance on Changing Workplace Dynamics Post Covid-19 in India: A Review of Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behavior

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ABSTRACT

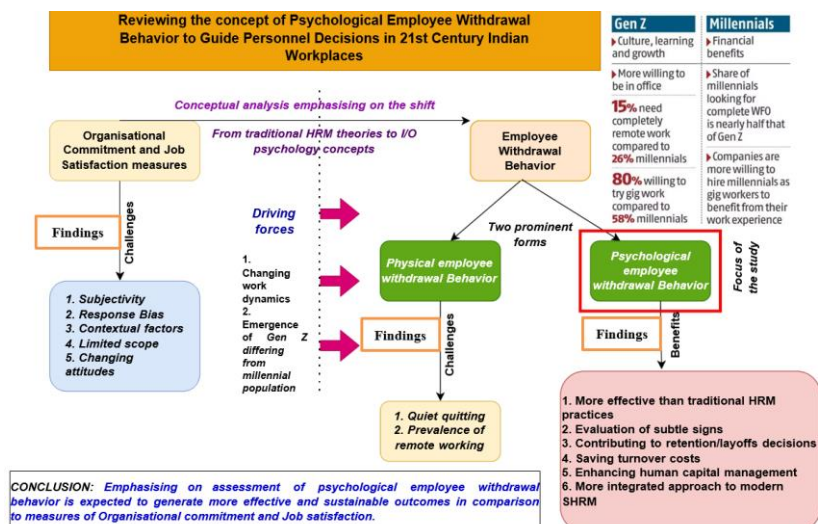
Today, it is often not feasible to put surveillance on physical employee withdrawal behaviours in work institutions or organisations due to continuously changing work perceptions, generational differences, and work attitudes as more Gen Zs and Millennials are taking up the workspace, and rising difficulty in observation due to “work from home/hybrid mode” of work. This research reviewed psychological withdrawal behaviour as an assistive measure to provide more extenuating evaluation and understanding of the level of employee engagement and their productivity in workplace in comparison to existing traditional surveillance measures of employee commitment or job satisfaction. Concepts of I/O psychology is reviewed in this paper to assess the potential of the variable psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, so as to become a fundamental approach of modern HRM to make personnel decisions among small-scale and large-scale organisations across several sectors in the coming years. This is because organisations are recognizing the significance of understanding employee behaviour and attitudes towards work. The study findings produced a detailed understanding as how the assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour would prove more effective in the coming years than surveillance of physical employee withdrawal behaviour, other traditional measures of job satisfaction, and organisational commitment, all of which are traditional HRM practices. The study concluded attesting theoretical significance with assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour stating it to be a smarter, effective, and sustainable tool for improving organisational performance and personnel management across all sectors.

Keywords: Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behaviour, Organisational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, I/O psychology, Human Resource Management



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Graphical Abstract



1. INTRODUCTION

It is safe to say that assessing and maintaining employee organisational commitment and job satisfaction renders a crucial investment for most organisations. This investment can include the use of surveys, focus groups, performance reviews, and other methods to collect employee feedback and monitor changes in job satisfaction and organisational commitment over time. Additionally, organisations also invest in initiatives such as employee recognition programs, professional development opportunities, and work-life balance policies to improve overall employee satisfaction and commitment. Ultimately, the investment in assessing and improving employee organisational commitment and job satisfaction is seen as a crucial precursor to retaining top talent, reducing turnovers and ensuring the long-term success of an organisation (Azeez, Jayeoba, & Adeoye, 2016; Pandey, Singh, & Pathak, 2019; Brwon & Barker, 2019, Bhatt & Sharma, 2019; Bachri & Solekah, 2021). As the nature of work is changing in the post-pandemic era, so must the measure of employee success and engagement. Therefore, this study aims to shift the focus on psychological employee withdrawal behaviour as a framework for measuring employee engagement and success from traditional HRM measures of job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

In the context of modern workplace demographics, it can be argued that the increasing population of Gen Zs and Millennials in Indian workplaces may present challenges for human resource management (HRM) in assessing and retaining organisational commitment. The Gen Z and millennials workforce have been found to prioritize factors such as work-life balance, career development, culture, and social responsibility over traditional job benefits and stability (Khare, 2022). This means that HRM may need to adapt their approaches to recruitment, engagement, and retention to meet the changing expectations of these younger generations. Shinde (2022) reported the share of the Gen Z and Millennials population in India to be standing currently 52% higher than the world average. Furthermore, it can be argued that the younger generations may have different expectations of their work experience than previous generations, which may make it harder to assess and retain organisational commitment as shown in Figure 1. For example, younger workers may prioritize a sense of purpose and meaning in their work and may be less likely to stay in a job if they feel that their work is not making a meaningful impact (PwC, 2022). This means that HRM may need to focus on creating a positive work culture and providing opportunities for employee development and growth to retain their commitment.

Gen Z	Millennials
► Culture, learning and growth	► Financial benefits
► More willing to be in office	► Share of millennials looking for complete WFO is nearly half that of Gen Z
15% need completely remote work compared to 26% millennials	► Companies are more willing to hire millennials as gig workers to benefit from their work experience
80% willing to try gig work compared to 58% millennials	

Figure 1: Gen-Z and Millennials' work expectations
(Source: Shinde, 2022)

2 prominent events: IT Wave and the advent of Gen-Z in India

Considering, the modern workforce, Patel (2017) in a Forbes article called attention to the millennial's future co-workers, *Gen Z*, stating the various ways in which this population differs in their workplace perception and work expectations from the millennials. In a bibliometric analysis by Benitez-Marquez et al., (2022) on the Gen-Z workplace population, the study showed a clear orientation towards management and the existence of

generational diversity in place within the workplace. Further evidence from a recent Deloitte report stated Generation Z to be soon surpassing millennials as the most populous generation on Earth, and being radically different from those of millennials, this generation possesses a completely different perspective on careers and ways to define success in life and in the workforce (Deloitte, 2022). Moreover, the NASSCOM report (2022) indicated while the world is getting older, India is getting younger, as reflected in the tech industry with

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Gen Z and millennials accounting for the majority of the workforce. For the last couple of decades, the IT wave has been prudent and the industry has led India in its ascent as a financial virtue. The industry is estimated to employ a workforce volume of over 5 million individuals and the country's IT-BPM (Business Process Management) industry itself was witnessed to contribute 7.4% to the GDP of the country as of 2022 (Sharma,

2023). With an estimated CAGR of 11-14 per cent to be sustained over the next five years, the industry is accounted to be valued at a whopping USD 350 billion by the end of 2026 (Sharma, 2023).

The Indian tech industry has an 86-90% share of Gen-Z and millennial populations in the total Indian tech workforce as highlighted in Figure 1.

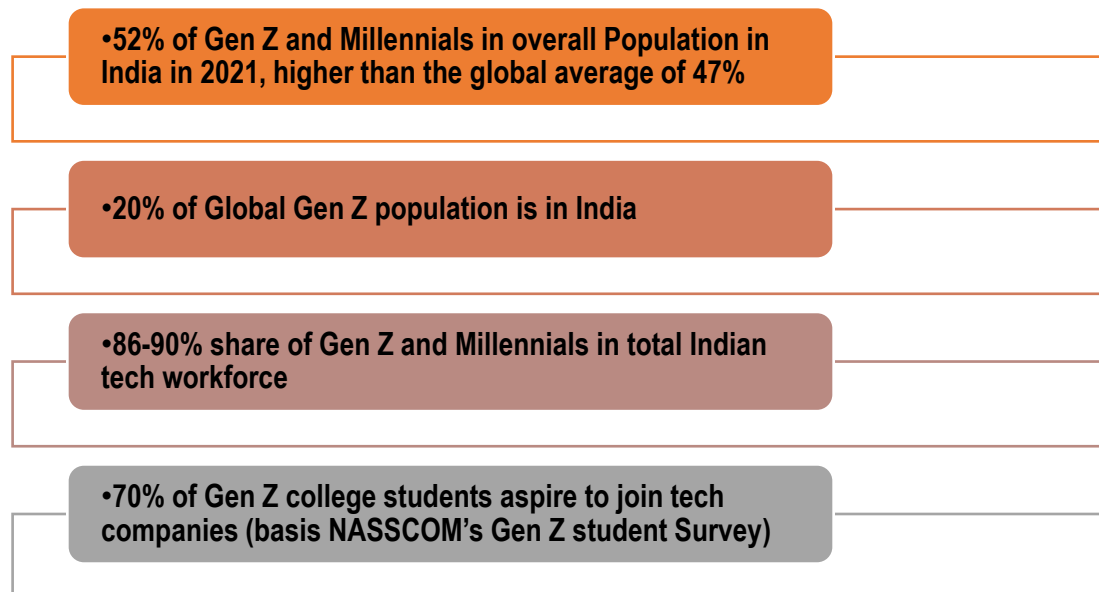


Figure 1: Key Highlights- Indian Gen Z and Millennials workforce and the tech sector
(Source: NASSCOM, 2022)

On the other hand, reports are showing the Indian IT industry to be dealing with an all-time high attrition rate averaging around 25% as per certain group of market

experts (Singh, 2022). Infosys, TCS, and Wipro, along with several other Indian IT giants are facing record-high attrition rates as shown in Figure 2.

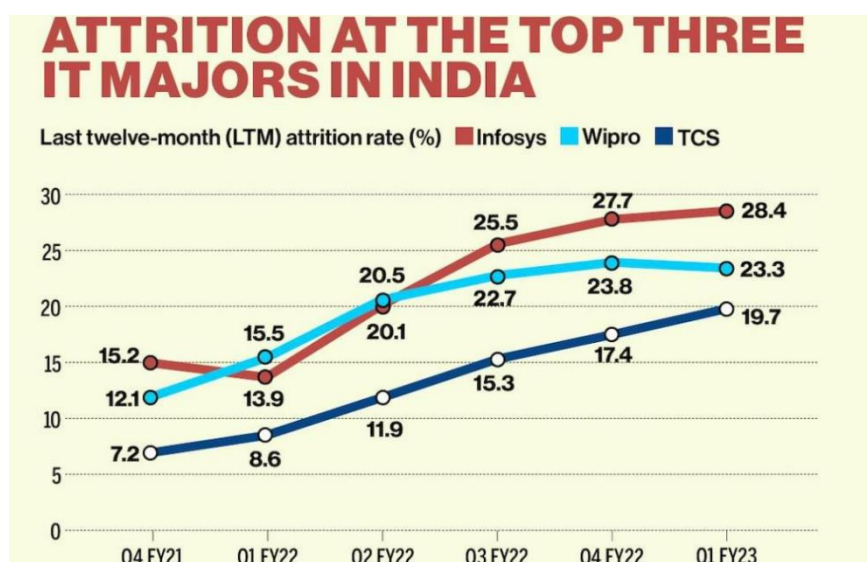


Figure 2: Attrition rate of the 3 IT behemoths in India
(Source: Chaturvedi, 2022)

As evidence, it is witnessed that TCS, Infosys, and Wipro- the three IT behemoths in India raised their 2022-23 hirings to over 50,000 in the first quarter owing to the high attrition, as per their financial records (Chaturvedi, 2022). Findings by Sun (2023) reported technology

industry in India had an attrition rate of around 21-23 per cent as shown in Figure 3, with compensation and benefits being the key reason for attrition in the technology sector followed by career path and role.

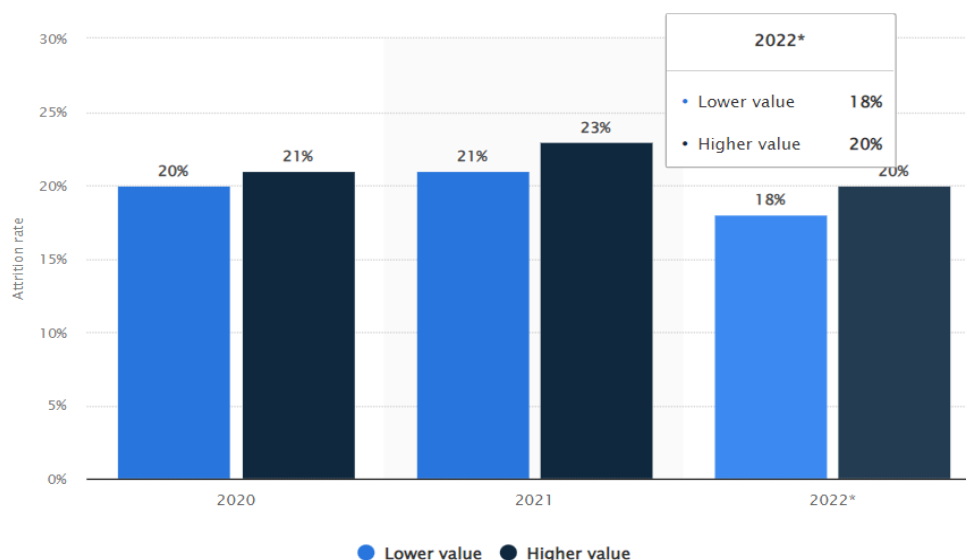


Figure 3: Attrition rate in the Indian IT industry from 2020-2021 with 2022 estimates
(Source: Sun, 2023)

2. Objective

The objective of this review paper is to identify the significance of understanding psychological employee withdrawal behaviour construct across 21st century post-pandemic Indian workplaces to guide human resource capital, understand the level of employee commitment or satisfaction, and manage retention/layoffs decisions by HRM.

3. METHOD

A review of existing research papers assessed from Google Scholar and J-GATE databases delineating the different aspects of the study have been undertaken with an established validity and reliability. Also, articles from current business magazines and newspapers have been considered to attest evidences to the reviewed literature. Empirical articles in English language with the “Title/keywords” of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, human resource management, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee withdrawal have been included in the study.

4. Review Work

4.1 Challenges associated with existing tools of organisational commitment and job satisfaction

Overall, it is important for HRM to be aware of the changing expectations and priorities of younger workers and to adapt their approaches accordingly to assess and retain organisational commitment. This seems to be a backbreaking work for the entire team of HRM given their additional functions and responsibilities like training, development, recruitment, and selection. Also, measuring employees' organisational commitment or job satisfaction can be a complex and challenging process. Some of the main challenges include:

Subjectivity: Organisational commitment and job satisfaction are subjective concepts and can be difficult to measure objectively. Employees' perceptions of their job satisfaction and organisational commitment can vary

widely based on personal factors, such as their personality, expectations, and experiences, which can make it difficult to accurately measure these constructs. Scales like OCQ (Organisational Commitment questionnaire) were reported to render no empirical support claiming that the items of the Cook and Wall 9-items scale (1980) differentiate on three considered distinct dimensions of commitment which were willing to exert effort, desire to maintain membership in the organisation, and acceptance of organisational values. (Price and Mueller, 1986; Bar-Haim, 2019)

Response Bias: When employees are asked to complete surveys or questionnaires about their job satisfaction or organisational commitment, they may be inclined to respond in a way that they feel is socially desirable, rather than providing honest and accurate answers. This response bias can affect the validity and reliability of the data collected. For the ACS commitment measure given by Allen & Meyer (1990), in their 24-item questionnaire, Merritt, (2012) studying the AC factor, argued that there is a chance of careless responding or fatigue on the negatively worded items. It is suggested that the users modify the items to be positively worded or administer the scale when respondents have sufficient cognitive resources to respond.

Contextual factors: The organisational context in which employees work can also affect their perceptions of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Factors such as organisational culture, leadership style, and work environment can all influence how employees feel about their jobs, and these factors can be difficult to measure or control in research studies. Angle and Perry (1981), in their factor analysis of the 15-tem OCQ by Porter et al., (1974), which was later codified by Mowdey et al., (1979) revealed identical characteristics between the two dimensions or subscales; a value commitment, comprising items of identification and involvement, and items indicating a commitment to retain membership in

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the organisation. Further, for the ACS scale, Jaros (2007) indicated that the ACS, which largely lacks behavioural wording, is a much stronger correlate and predictor of turnover-related variables than the NCS or the CCS, which are saturated with staying/leaving the wording

Limited Scope: Some measures of job satisfaction or organisational commitment may only capture a narrow range of factors that contribute to these constructs, such as pay and benefits while neglecting other important factors such as job autonomy or work-life balance. Bar-Haim and Berman (1992) researched the dimensionality of the OC scale of Cook and Wall among 1,299 employees in 14 major Israeli industrial enterprises, using a factor analysis, the nine items of Cook and Wall's scale yielded two different measures of OC: identification on the first factor and loyalty on the second factor. This was a distinction between passive and active organisational commitment, hidden in the original additive scales that could prove useful in understanding the behaviour of different populations of industrial workers.

Changing attitudes: Employees' attitudes towards their jobs and organisations can change over time due to a variety of factors, including changes in leadership, organisational restructuring, or personal life events. This means that measures of job satisfaction and organisational commitment may need to be administered periodically to capture changes in employees' attitudes over time.

Overall, measuring employees' organisational commitment or job satisfaction is a complex process that requires careful consideration of the challenges involved in order to produce valid and reliable results. Turnover can be a costly problem for organisations as it involves expenses related to recruitment, training, and lost productivity. A study by the Society for Human Resource Management SHRM, (2019) estimates that direct replacement costs can reach as high as 50-60% of an employee's annual salary, with total costs associated with turnover. In India, turnover can be particularly costly due to the country's complex labour laws and regulations, which can make it difficult for companies to quickly fill vacancies. Additionally, in industries such as IT and finance, where skilled labour is in high demand, turnover can be especially damaging as it can lead to the loss of valuable knowledge, resources, and expertise. Bhalla (2022) in an article in "Business Insider" indicated total employee costs of the top 500 Indian companies to be reaching a whopping INR 10.8 Lacs crores in 2022. With such an expenditure on Indian employee costs, it becomes necessary for modern HRM to develop strategies to assess and retain employees and reduce turnover, particularly among younger generations who may have different expectations and demands from their jobs. Therefore, the quandary rises of reducing turnover and saving human resource capital on one side, and the failing measures of organisational commitment or job satisfaction on the other side owing to its high level of subjectivity especially due to the

wandering needs of Gen Z and millennials population growing in the Indian workplaces.

4.2. Defining the concept of Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behaviour in recent times

At times like this, it can be said that psychological employee withdrawal behaviour plays a critical role in examining the viability of an employee regarding commitment. Psychological withdrawal behaviour at the workplace alludes to the indicators of an employee's disengagement from both their work as well as the organisation (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013). Such kinds of behaviour are inclusive of reduced effort, low motivation, increased absenteeism or lack of presenteeism, and tardiness, among many others with the idea to conserve remaining resources before the occurrence of depletion as viewed from a resource-based perspective (Pingel, Fay, & Urbach, 2019). By determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, HR managers would be enabled to identify the employees who are on the verge of disengagement thereby proactively taking steps to address their concerns before they leave their job. Therefore, it can be said that psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can be used as an indicator to reduce turnover and associated costs, along with increasing employee retention and job satisfaction (van Ruyseveldt et al., 2022). Furthermore, assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour would also help HR managers to identify underlying issues contributing to employee disengagement. For instance, if an employee is witnessed to be experiencing a high level of stress or feels that their contributions are not valued as they should be, it can lead to the expression of withdrawal symptoms (Lim & Parker, 2020). Assessment of such psychological withdrawal behaviour would alert the management to take a step back in understanding the accumulative reasons behind such behavioural manifestations. With the identification of such issues, HR managers can work in the direction of improving overall employee engagement and commitment, especially for key employees who come with valuable knowledge and expertise and retention of them is directly associated with organisational productivity.

Researchers and practitioners in the field of human resource management are witnessed to continue to work towards developing more holistic and effective tools for assessing psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, however, most of the existing ones are based on satisfaction, commitment, and turnover measurements. The most common scales that are currently used to assess psychological employee withdrawal behaviour are;

1. Job Descriptive Index (JDI)
2. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)
3. Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)
4. Mobley's (1977) Model of Employee Turnover
5. Price and Mueller's (1986) model of turnover

However, arguing in this context, assessing psychological employee withdrawal behaviour differs

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from satisfaction or commitment questionnaires in several ways. Firstly, while satisfaction and commitment questionnaires like the JDI, OCQ, MSQ, and as such typically ask employees to rate their level of satisfaction or commitment on a numerical scale (Fields, 2002), an assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour indicators would involve observing and measuring actual behaviours such as absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover. This means that the assessment would be based on objective data rather than self-reported subjective opinions. Secondly, an assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour indicators can provide insight into the underlying reasons why an employee may be disengaged or withdrawing from their job. For example, it can reveal whether the employee is experiencing burnout, conflicts with colleagues or managers, or a lack of opportunity for growth and development. This information can help HR managers to develop targeted interventions to address the root causes of disengagement and improve retention (Lim & Parker, 2020). Finally, an assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour indicators can provide a more comprehensive picture of employee engagement and retention than satisfaction or commitment questionnaires alone. While satisfaction and commitment are important factors, they do not necessarily indicate whether an employee is likely to leave the organization or become disengaged.

4.3. Perceived benefits of Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behaviour over Organisational commitment and Job Satisfaction measures

Determining psychological employee withdrawal behavioural indicators is expected to be more cost-effective and objective in comparison to the evaluation of organisational commitment or job satisfaction measures owing to its higher predictive power and tangible impact (Zimmerman et al., 2016). This is attributed to the fact that it can help identify potential issues before becoming significant problems. For long years, measuring psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, such as burnout, tardiness, or turnover, has been providing concrete and measurable indicators of the level of an employee's engagement and commitment to the organisation (Gupta and Beehr, 1979). These behaviours are objectively tracked and analysed, allowing HR managers to identify patterns and trends over time and take proactive steps to address underlying issues. In contrast to the same, measures of organisational commitment and job satisfaction can be said to be more subjective and nature with higher difficulties to quantify (Price and Mueller, 1986, p. 77; Bar-Haim, 2019). Surveys or interviews which are the most common format of organisational commitment and job satisfaction measures are mostly self-reporting in nature and are vulnerable to factors such as social desirability bias and individual differences pertaining to the response styles. Further, these available measures are not enough in providing a clear demonstration of employee's motivations and interests thereby not being an accurate predictor of how the employees are going to act or behave in the future.

Determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can be further said to be cost-effective as it allows the HR managers to identify specific areas of dysfunction thereby focusing organisational resources on targeted solutions (Avey et al., 2019). For instance, if lack of will is identified to be a potential issue, HR would direct its effort to find out the root causes inducing such behavioural patterns, thereby developing interventions in the process to address such issues directly such as improving employee's work-life balance, increasing employee autonomy, or providing additional training or support. By targeting particular areas of problem, depending on psychological or behavioural norms, HR managers across industries can minimise the associated costs with employee turnover, recruitment, training, and productivity loss (Boon et al., 2014). Thereafter, determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour helps provide more concrete and objective indicators of the level of employee engagement and commitment to their respective job and organisation, thereby helping HR managers identify targeted solutions and address underlying issues.

4.4. Prudence of Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behaviour measures over Physical employee withdrawal behaviour measures

Studying psychological employee withdrawal is believed to be more effective than understanding the physical withdrawal behaviour from the workplace or the job. Several reasons can be attributed to the same, firstly, the nature of the work in recent years has witnessed drastic changes. Many jobs are now more mentally demanding rather than physically enduring (Michie, 2002). This has introduced a new term "quiet quitting". Employees experience stress, and burnout, along with other mental health issues that impact their job performance and motivation level. Secondly, remote working has become highly common since the pandemic which had made it more difficult to observe physical employee withdrawal behavioural patterns. Employees might disengage or demonstrate work withdrawal in less visible ways such as being less communicative or less productive, rather than calling in sick or being absent, or visibly leaving the office (Serenko, 2023; Vartiainen, 2021). Studying psychological employee withdrawal behaviour would help in the evaluation of these subtle signs to take necessary actions. Thirdly, the costs of turnover in recent days have been cosmic, and psychological employee withdrawal behaviour is a proven predictor of turnover. Sethi (2022) reported that poor mental health amongst employees had cost Indian employers ₹1.1 lakh crore or \$14 billion in the past year. Out of the ₹1.1 lakh crore, ₹14,000 crore was the cost of absenteeism, while presenteeism cost ₹51,000 crore and employee turnover cost ₹45,000 crore. By identifying and addressing the underlying causes of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, HR managers would be enabled to effectively handle issues of turnover and talent retention.

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4.5. Emphasising on I/O psychological perspective for modern HRM

Modern SHRM (Strategic Human Resource Management) has been earlier believed to stress I/O psychology practices as it provides a more comprehensive understanding of employees' attitudes, behaviours, and motivations, and how these factors tend to influence employee's performance and their level of commitment to their respective organisation (Piotrowski, 2014). While traditional HRM practices emphasise more on administrative and transactional functions such as recruiting, hiring, training, and compensation, SHRM aims to study the strategic integration of HR practices with organisational goals, culture, and values. By implementing the principles of I/O psychology, SHRM would be able to enhance its effectiveness in promoting employee engagement, retention, and productivity (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2002). For instance, in existing real-time practices, SHRM is witnessed to be already using various psychological assessments in the identification of the preferences of employees, interests, and personality traits to ensure a better fit between the demands of the job and the existing characteristics of the employee thereby leveraging strategic human capital (Chadwick, Li, & Na, 2022). SHRM even uses behavioural interventions like coaching, mentoring, and other training and development activities to improve the skills, motivation, and satisfaction levels of the employees (Sims, 2023). Furthermore, the study of I/O psychology emphasises providing insights into several social and cultural factors like group dynamics, power relations, and social norms. Through affiliation of these factors, SHRM might thrive in designing more efficient policies and practices that promote diversity, inclusion, and equity, and reduce practices of bias and discrimination in the workplace. Recent research in Canada, delving into modern SHRM directed to rely on a more integrated and comprehensive approach that combines traditional HRM functions with principles of I/O psychology. The emphasis on I/O psychology delivered findings with some insights into the inconsistencies present in team dynamics and cross-cultural psychology (Roulin et al., 2021). This approach is thereby expected to generate more effective and sustainable outcomes for both employees and organisations.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Inferring from these findings, it is clear that these two major events comprising of emergence of the Gen-Z workforce and ongoing higher attrition rates in the Indian IT industry, make the industry exposed to contemporary research. Newer methods of evaluation, theoretical frameworks, and strategies for workplace planning and decisions are required to adequately address the ongoing challenges of the Indian IT industry. The study of "Psychological Employee Withdrawal Behaviour" is perceived to be of immense significance within the field of organisational behaviour, human resource management, and I/O psychology. Now, this category of withdrawal behaviour is expected to manifest in several forms such as absenteeism, reduction

in the effort given, issues of turnover, decrease in the motivation level, or even over-counterproductive behaviours at the workplace. It indicates the involuntary form of disengagement or employee detachment signs from the organisation and their work itself. The emergence of this retro concept with a fresh and modern approach is surely expected to help the modern HRM with consequential workforce planning decisions such as retention, lay-offs, turnover, workplace promotions, human resource capital management, identification of reluctant stayers and leavers, address of employee stress, dissatisfaction, engagement, and productivity level.

By analysing psychological employee withdrawal behaviour, HR managers can make more informed decisions about employee retention, development, and promotion (Cascio, 2014). It can be argued that in small-scale companies, there is an absence of sufficient capital exposure to recover from frequent turnovers. The exchange relationships between employees and employers are different today. Career success is now defined by the employees to be independent of any one organisation (Gowan, 2012). Under the new employer model engraving in recent times, organisations are still responsible to invest in human capital with the intention to sustain competitive advantage (Morris et al., 2017), though on the contrary from an employee's perspective, gone are those days of working for the same employer throughout one's career (Cappelli, 2008). Such insights from human resource capital literature, make the assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour more enriching, thereby helping the HR managers to manipulate its limited capital effectively on employee retention, promotion, and development activities. Moreover, advancements in technology and data analytics have made it easier to collect and analyse data on employee behaviour and attitudes, making it easier for HR managers to make data-driven decisions. For example, some organisations utilise apps that encourage employees to ask for and receive real-time, open, anonymous feedback. GE developed an app called "PD@GE" which stands for "performance development at GE" (Bersin, 2015). In addition, with the changing work environment and increasing emphasis on employee well-being and satisfaction, it is becoming more important for organisations to understand and address the psychological factors that influence employee performance and satisfaction. Individuals are expected to carry psychological armour at work. Therefore, individual psychological factors are even at play when an employee goes to work. In a study by Bovey & Hede (2001), an event like organisational change was shown to positively correlate with maladaptive defence mechanisms such as projection, acting out, isolation of effect, dissociation and denial. Organisational change is researched to be even a critical factor in inducing psychological employee withdrawal behaviour (Shin, Taylor, & Sheo, 2012; Kiefer, 2005; Bordia et al., 2004). Therefore, it is safe to say that many such workplace circumstances prevail which are influenced by individual psychological factors like the use of defence mechanisms further causing psychological employee

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withdrawal behaviour. Therefore, future research needs to even consider a psychoanalytic approach combined with I/O psychology in human resource management. Gauging the scope in such a comprehensive approach to the management of human resources surely can provide new insights into handling workplace nuances and addressing global human resource challenges, to which psychological employee withdrawal behaviour assessment will be just the start.

The only limitation to the same is the availability of a holistic tool for "Employee psychological withdrawal behaviour" analysis. There are a few potential reasons why a holistic instrument for assessing employee psychological withdrawal behavioural indicators may not exist yet which are due to the following reasons complexity, contextual differences, limited research, and subjectivity. Psychological withdrawal is a complex construct that has been studied to manifest in different ways, making it challenging to create a single comprehensive assessment tool that captures all potential indicators. Psychological withdrawal might also manifest differently depending on the organisational context, job type, and other factors, making it challenging to create a tool that can be universally applied across different settings. Although there is some research on psychological withdrawal, there may not be enough empirical evidence to create a comprehensive assessment tool that is valid and reliable. Lastly, determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour indicators can be subjective and dependent on individual perceptions, which may further complicate the development of a comprehensive assessment tool.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Assessing the above observations of the emerging research scope in I/O psychology, determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can be certainly said to be a valuable tool for human resource management in India to retain talent and sustain workplace productivity, especially in this post-pandemic period. Determining psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can be helpful for HR managers in decision-making. By indicating employees who are exhibiting withdrawal behaviours, HR managers can engage in considering proactive steps to address their concerns and try to retain them. For example, HR managers can offer career development opportunities, flexible work arrangements, or additional support to improve employee job satisfaction and commitment. Most importantly, if psychological employee withdrawal behaviour is severe and cannot be addressed, HR managers may need to make the difficult decision to terminate their employment. In this way, assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can inform HR managers' decisions related to talent management, employee engagement, layoffs and retention saving high human capital. Further, it can be argued that assessment of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour can help HR managers in the decision-making of whom to promote, retain or not. If an employee exhibits high levels of psychological

employee withdrawal behaviour, it may indicate a lack of commitment or engagement towards their job and the organisation. Such employees may not be suitable for promotions or retention as they may not have the necessary motivation or zeal to excel in their future roles which would include higher responsibilities. On the other hand, employees who exhibit low levels of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour may be more committed and engaged, and thus, may be more suitable for promotions or retention. Therefore, psychological employee withdrawal behaviour assessment can become an instrument helping HR managers to make more informed decisions regarding promotions, retention, and other talent management activities. This is a fine example of reflection and reflexivity which makes up the foundation of I/O research as indicated in a recent study by Hyland (2023). However, it is important to note that evaluating psychological employee withdrawal behaviour should not be the only tool used by HR managers. Conjunction with other tools and a comprehensive approach to address the underlying causes of withdrawal behaviour is important. A comprehensive approach that includes assessing employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment can provide a more holistic understanding of the workforce and identify areas for improvement. Therefore, while the use of I/O psychology concepts in HRM may increase, it is unlikely to completely replace traditional HRM concepts and practices. This review on the emergence of psychological employee withdrawal behaviour as a critical construct in understanding retention and turnover could be a source of major empirical research designed to further test the phenomenon.

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