

**AUGMENTING HUMAN POTENTIAL AT WORK:  
AN INVESTIGATION ON THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY  
IN WORKFORCE COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION**

**Mishra U.S., Patnaik S., Mishra B.B.\***

**Abstract:** The prime purpose of this study is to evaluate the role of self-efficacy in job satisfaction and employee commitment. Self-efficacy refers to individual's conviction in their ability to successfully execute a given task (Bandura, 1997). Ensuring job satisfaction and increasing employee commitment are important issues faced by organizations. Results of this study depict that self-efficacy is significantly and positively associated with job satisfaction and commitment. Findings of the study have got implication on gaining competitive advantage. Contemporary scholars argue that obtaining competitive advantage through traditional resources is not sustainable as proprietary information, economic resources, and technology are available. Self-efficacy being a positive psychological resource is not easily replicable by competitors and thus can serve as a source of competitive advantage. Further, self-efficacy training can be devised to enhance self-efficacy in employees. Improvement in self-efficacy is likely to foster growth in self-leadership behavior, commitment, job satisfaction, and performance.

**Key words:** self-efficacy, job satisfaction, commitment, steel company

DOI: 10.17512/pjms.2016.13.1.13

**Introduction**

Enhancing job satisfaction and fostering employee commitment are of paramount importance for attaining organizational objectives. A study undertaken by Yadav and Rokade (2013) in India found that 58 percent of employees expressed job dissatisfaction. A committed and satisfied workforce contributes towards performance and results in lowering attrition rate. Apart from achieving organizational objectives, ensuring long term job satisfaction results in diminishing work stress and helps employees to enhance their well-being at work. Now the question arises what determines job satisfaction and commitment. There are many factors that influence job satisfaction and commitment. Hackman and Oldham (1975) are of the view that skill variety, autonomy, task identity, feedback, and task significance are underlying factors that determine meaningfulness in work and meaningfulness at work is a necessary ingredient that promotes job satisfaction. Positive psychology literature provides necessary insights that positive psychological resources play a crucial role in nurturing human motivation,

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\* **Uma Sankar Mishra**, Associate Professor, PhD, **Mr. Subhendu Patnaik**, Research Scholar, **Bibhuti Bhusan Mishra**, Assistant Professor, PhD, Siksha'O'Anusandhan University, Institute of Business and Computer Studies (IBCS), Faculty of Management Sciences, India

✉ Corresponding author: mail.subhendupatnaik@gmail.com

✉ umasankarmishra@soauniversity.ac.in; bibhutibhusanmishra@soauniversity.ac.in

meaningfulness in work and commitment in work settings. Bandura (1997) conceptually argues that self-efficacy is an important positive psychological resource which plays an instrumental role in increasing work motivation, job satisfaction and commitment. Self-efficacy refers to people's belief in their capabilities to successfully execute a task (Bandura, 1997). The main purpose of this research is to examine the role of self-efficacy in job satisfaction and commitment. This study is also expected to establish the external validity of self-efficacy construct with relation to job satisfaction and commitment in Indian cultural context.

Although self-efficacy studies have been conducted in Western cultural context but there is dearth of literature concerning to the relationship of self-efficacy with job satisfaction and commitment in Indian cultural context. *Generalizability theory* of Cronbach et al., (1972) strongly emphasize that to ascertain generalizability of a construct multiple studies should be undertaken across cultures and countries. Further, in support of *generalizability theory*, John's (2006) *contextual theory* also claims that "relationships theorized or found in Western cultures might not hold up in non-Western cultures" (Johns, 2006). Given the fact that India has diversity in cultures therefore, it is relevant to examine the role of self-efficacy construct in job satisfaction and commitment in Indian cultural context to ascertain the external validity of self-efficacy construct in Indian context.

### Literature Review

Albert Bandura, a noted psychologist of Stanford University developed and validated the self-efficacy construct. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions". Likewise, Maddux (2009) explained self-efficacy as "*what I believe I can do with my skills under certain conditions*". Self-efficacy construct is firmly grounded on the theoretical proposition of Bandura's (1986) *social cognitive theory*. Bandura's (1986) *social cognitive theory* posits that an individual's social behavior and cognitive processes are influenced by what an individual observes in others. He claims that "observational learning", "social experience", and "modeling" have a profound impact on cultivation of self-efficacy. Further, Bandura (1997) argued that efficacy can take three forms (generalized self-efficacy, domain-specific efficacy and collective efficacy). Generalized self-efficacy refers to a broader belief in people that they possess adequate capabilities (Bandura, 1997). Domain-specific efficacy indicates an individual's conviction that they have the requisite skills or capabilities to execute a very specific task (e.g., teaching efficacy). Collective efficacy refers to a common belief in all group members that all of them collectively possess the requisite capabilities to attend success in a task or attend group objectives. This form of efficacy is also termed as team efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

In work context Stajkovic and Luthans (1998b) defined self-efficacy as "*an individual's conviction about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation,*

*cognitive resources, and action needed to successfully execute a specific task*". Self-efficacious individuals are self-motivated, and accept challenging goals whereas inefficacious individuals are susceptible to encounter failure and they are doubtful of their personal capabilities (Bandura and Locke,2003).Self-efficacy as a psychological construct is developable (state-like) (Bandura, 1997; Luthans et al., 2015), measurable (Maurer and Pierce,1998; Parker,1998).

Self-efficacy as a psychological resource has emotional, motivational and cognitive functions (Bandura, 1986, 1997, 2001). These attributes of self-efficacy construct are likely to influence job satisfaction and work commitment. Self-efficacy resource propels an individual to accept challenging task and channelizes the required motivational energy to achieve the goal in view and thus is expected to foster work commitment (Bandura, 1997). High levels of work commitment will result in application of continuous effort and thereby it is likely to result in high performance. When a person accomplishes the performance target, it will possibly result in job satisfaction (Luthans et al., 2015). Moreover, self-efficacy is likely to promote positive expectations and such positive expectations are expected to enhance work commitment and job satisfaction (Fredrickson, 2001; Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Turner and Lawrence, 1965).

There are many factors that promote job satisfaction. Hackman and Oldham (1975) argue that skill variety, autonomy, task identity, feedback, and task significance are causal factors that determine job satisfaction. These factors help individuals to realize meaningfulness in work. Meaningfulness in work in turn enhances job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Self-efficacious individuals are likely to experiences meaningfulness in work. Meaningfulness in work is likely to promote job satisfaction and work commitment (Frankl, 2004). Further, researchers have found that self-efficacy is positively related to job satisfaction in Western context (Larson and Luthans, 2006; Youssef and Luthans, 2007).

On the basis of the literature review following hypotheses are formulated:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Self-efficacy will have positive relationship with job satisfaction.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Self-efficacy will have positive relationship with commitment.*

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Design and Procedure***

This study was undertaken on a sample of 225 employees (180 males and 45 females) from four large steel manufacturing organizations situated in the eastern region of India. Average age of the participants was found to be 46.7 years with (*SD*=6.2). The average tenure of respondents was found as 4.8 years (*SD*=4.2) in their respective organizations. The response rate for the study was 74 percent. Questionnaires were distributed by hand and respondents were asked to fill-out the questionnaires using paper and pencil. "Expectancy effect" is a major problem in survey based research. To avoid this problem researcher were not present in person while the respondents were filling-out the questionnaires. Another problem in

a survey based research stems from “common method variance bias”. To evade this problem we followed the recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2003). As per their guidelines to minimize “common method variance bias” predictor variables questionnaire and dependent variables questionnaires should be administered in separate points of time. These guidelines were followed and accordingly predictor variable (self-efficacy) questionnaire was administered at Time 1 and criterion variables (job satisfaction and commitment) were administered at Time 2.

### *Measures*

Self-efficacy was measured with the help of Parker’s (1998) self-efficacy scale. This self-efficacy scale is a 6-item scale and responses are measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1=*strongly disagree*, 2=*disagree*, 3=*somewhat disagree*, 4=*somewhat agree*, 5=*agree*, 6=*strongly agree*). We obtained (Cronbach’s alpha=0.84) for this scale. Guidelines of Beaton et al. (2000) were followed for cross-cultural adaptation of this self-efficacy scale in Indian cultural context. This scale has demonstrated adequate reliability and has been validated across multiple settings (Luthans et al., 2007; Luthans et al., 2010; Parker, 1998). “*I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management*” is an example item of this scale. Further, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the construct validity of self-efficacy construct in Indian context. Maximum likelihood method was followed to conduct CFA. It was observed that items loaded very high on the latent factor self-efficacy and item loading ranged from 0.81 to 0.93  $p < .01$ . Following fit indices were found: (Chi-square=25.049, DF=9  $p < .01$ ); (CFI=0.985); (RMSEA=0.088); (NFI=0.977); (GFI=0.964). The obtained fit indices support a good fit with the data.

Job satisfaction was measured using Hackman and Oldham’s (1980) job satisfaction scale. This job satisfaction scale is a component of Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS). This is a 3-item, 6-point Likert-type scale. Response pattern ranges from (*strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=6*). Hackman and Oldham’s (1980) job satisfaction scale is an extensively used scale in organizational behavior investigations (Judge and Bono, 2001; Judge and Hulin, 1993). “*Generally speaking; I am very satisfied with this job*” is an item of the scale. Cronbach’s alpha was (0.81) for this scale.

Allen and Meyer’s (1990) affective commitment scale was adapted to measure employee commitment. It is a 6-item, 6-point Likert-type scale. Response pattern ranges from (*1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=slightly agree, 5=agree, 6=strongly agree*). This is a psychometrically valid scale and is frequently used in organizational behavior research (Allen and Meyer, 1996). “*I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own*” is an example item of the scale. In this study we found Cronbach’s alpha of (0.82) for this scale.

### Results and Discussion

The main aim of this study was to assess the degree of association of self-efficacy in employee job satisfaction and commitment in Indian cultural context. Hypotheses were tested with the help of Pearson correlation, linear regression, and structural equation modeling (SEM). As observed in Table 1, there is existence of significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and job satisfaction ( $r=0.875, p<0.01$ ).

**Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Self-efficacy	4.33	1.36	1		
2. Job Satisfaction	4.35	1.56	0.875**	1	
3. Commitment	4.17	1.25	0.853**	.841**	1

Notes: N= 225; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

Table 2 regression analysis results revealed that self-efficacy as a (predictor variable) successfully predicted job satisfaction ( $\beta=0.875, p<0.01; F=731.253, p<0.01; r^2=0.766$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. Likewise, it is seen in Table 1 that there is significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and commitment ( $r =0.853, p<0.01$ ). Further, it is observed in Table 2 that predictor variable (self-efficacy) significantly predicted commitment ( $\beta=0.788, p<0.01; F=597.912, p<0.01; r^2=0.728$ ). This suggests strong evidence towards support of Hypothesis 2.

**Table 2. Regression Output**

Predictor	Predictant	$\beta$	F	$R^2$
Self-efficacy	Job Satisfaction	0.875**	731.253**	0.766
Self-efficacy	Commitment	0.788**	597.912**	0.728

Notes: N= 225; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

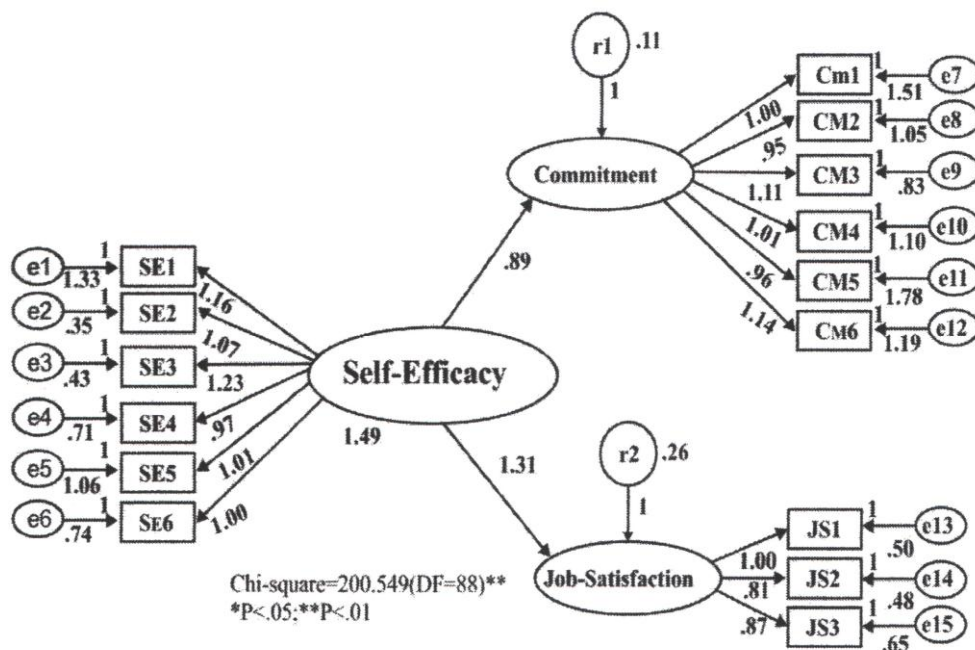
Furthermore, findings of this research are consistent with earlier studies (Avey et al., 2011; Larson and Luthans, 2006; Luthans et al., 2007) and therefore, the findings of this study support the external validity of self-efficacy construct in non-Western cultural context with reference to job satisfaction and commitment. Results of this study also signify the importance of self-efficacy as a positive psychological resource which can play a beneficial role in sustaining and improving employee commitment and job satisfaction. Improvement in commitment and job satisfaction in employees is likely to reduce employee attrition rate and enhance employee performance. Structural equation modeling (SEM) (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993) using AMOS (v.4) software was used to test the conceptual model.

**Table 3. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): Fit Indices**

	Fit Value
Chi-square	200.549(DF=88)**
CFI	0.961
RMSEA	0.076
NFI	0.934
GF1	0.900

Notes: \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01

Figure 1 depicts the diagrammatic representation of the empirical model. Following model fit indices were obtained and can be seen in Table 3: (Chi-square=200.549, DF=88;  $p < 0.01$ ), (CFI=0.961), (RMSEA=0.076), (NFI=0.934), (GFI=0.900). These model fit indices indicate an overall good fit with the data (Hair et al., 2006).



**Figure 1. Results of Structural Equation Modeling**

### *Limitations*

This study was restricted to a sample of 225 participants from four steel manufacturing organizations. Further, studies could be undertaken with a larger sampling frame involving participants across sectors to obtain greater generalization of findings. Further, this study being cross-sectional in design absolute causality cannot be confirmed.

### *Managerial Implications*

Findings of this study suggest both managerial and theoretical implications. In terms of theoretical implication, this study provides evidence towards the support of external validity of self-efficacy construct. External validity of self-efficacy with relation to job satisfaction and commitment indicate that the utilitarian values of self-efficacy construct are also applicable in non-Western cultural context. Apart from the said theoretical implication this study also has multifaceted managerial implications which are as follows.

Firstly, findings of this study have far-reaching implications in obtaining competitive advantage through enhancing human resource potentials. Self-efficacy as a psychological resource of individual employees can serve as a source of competitive advantage for the organization. The reason being, in this globalized world getting competitive advantage only through the lances of Barney's (1991) traditional resource-based view no more holds good. Contemporary scholars claim that only through traditional resources (proprietary information, economic resources and technology) obtaining distinctive competitive advantage has increasingly become difficult because technology is easily replicable (Kraaijenbrink et al., 2010; Luthans and Stajkovic, 1999), financial resources are also available, however, replication of psychological resources of individual employees among corporations is not easily achievable. Hence, notion of psychological resources as a source of competitive advantage does exist (Luthans et al., 2015). Therefore, self-efficacy being a positive psychological resource can serve as a source of complete advantage.

On a pragmatic note it has been found in this study that self-efficacy is positively associated with job satisfaction, and commitment. Further, extant literature also depicts that self-efficacy is developable through training interventions (Dello Russo and Stoykova, 2015; Luthans et al., 2010). This being the scenario, management practitioners can take these scholarly insights and implement self-efficacy development programs. Such initiatives will enhance self-efficacy and thereby improve organizational outcomes like employee performance, job satisfaction, commitment, and profit (Avey et al., 2011; Luthans et al., 2015). Therefore, enhancement of self-efficacy will generate human competencies leading to creations of both tangible and intangible assets.

Secondly, as this study was conducted on steel manufacturing sector, results of this study have particular pragmatic implications for manufacturing sector. In a manufacturing sector those workers who are involved in sole manufacturing process are generally low in morale, motivation, and are emotionally laid down mostly because their counter parts in other departments who are customer facing take the credit. As a result of which manufacturing workers express job dissatisfaction, poor work commitment, and work monotony. In such a scenario self-efficacy being a positive psychological resource can help mitigate these problems through self-efficacy training interventions. Furthermore, enhancement of self-efficacy would result in increasing motivation and would help in fighting

negative emotions. There are both theoretical and empirical evidences in support of this assertion. For example, Fredrickson's (2001) *broaden-and-build* theory of positive emotions emphasizes that when an individual has positive emotions it results in activation of thought-action repertoires thereby leading to broadening an individual's spectrum of positive emotions like intellectual, physical, social resources, problem-solving skills, and adaptive mechanisms.

Thirdly, considering the scholarly argument made by Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) that those individuals who are predisposed with psychological resources withstand work pressure and attain success than those who are less predisposed with positive psychological resources. Given this understanding and findings of this study that self-efficacy is positively associated with job satisfaction and commitment, human resource professionals can use self-efficacy questionnaire as one of the selection tools for ensuring higher employee productivity, retention, commitment and job satisfaction.

Fourthly, results of this study have implications on augmenting self-leadership roles in employees. It is axiomatic that effective leadership role is a very scarce resource and is of immense importance for the success of any organization. Self-efficacy being a positive psychological resource has motivational potential and self-efficacious individuals have the necessary motivation in them to involve in self-leadership behavior (Bandura, 1997; Prussia et al., 1998). Given these scholarly insights practitioners can help nurture self-efficacy in employees. Such initiatives would help employees to take up self-leadership roles. A self-efficacious individual who gets encouraged to take up self-leadership role is expected to get intrinsically motivated and would perform better than the others. Such individual would display responsibility, job satisfaction, commitment, and flexibility in work environment.

Lastly, assessment of self-efficacy can serve as a potential indicator of HR scorecard reflecting on the positive psychological resources available, overall job satisfaction, well-being, psychological health, and probable future performance of employees. Finally, nurturing and sustaining self-efficacy in employees will remain an important objective both for organizational scholars, and practicing strategic managers.

## Conclusions

Cutthroat rivalry among corporations and free flow of information has created a "flat" world. In this dynamic "flat" world, competitive advantage cannot be harnessed and perpetuated only through creating entry barriers simply by means of technological advancements. Therefore, in such circumstances positive psychological strengths can play much more vital roles as compared to material resources. Positive psychological resource can help to enhance work related outcomes like performance, job satisfaction, commitment, and overall competitive advantage. Self-efficacy being a positive psychological resource, its assessment,



development, and sustenance in employees will remain an important objective both for organizational scholars and practicing managers.

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### **ZWIĘKSZANIE POTENCJAŁU LUDZKIEGO W PRACY: BADANIE ROLI WŁASNEJ SKUTECZNOŚCI W ZAANGAŻOWANIU SIŁY ROBOCZEJ I ZADOWOLENIU Z PRACY**

**Streszczenie:** Głównym celem tego badania jest ocena roli własnej skuteczności w satysfakcji z pracy i zaangażowania pracowników. Poczucie własnej skuteczności odnosi się do przekonania jednostki w jej zdolność do pomyślnego wykonania danego zadania

(Bandura, 1997). Zapewnienie satysfakcji z pracy oraz zwiększenie zaangażowania pracowników to ważne kwestie, z którymi borykają się organizacje. Wyniki badania pokazują, że poczucie własnej skuteczności jest istotnie i pozytywnie związane z satysfakcją z pracy i zaangażowaniem. Ustalenia przedstawione w analizie mają wpływ na uzyskanie przewagi konkurencyjnej. Współcześni uczeni argumentują, że uzyskanie przewagi konkurencyjnej za pomocą tradycyjnych środków nie jest zrównoważone jak zastrzeżone informacje, zasoby gospodarcze i dostępne technologie. Własna skuteczność będąc pozytywnym zasobem psychologicznym nie jest łatwa do powielenia przez konkurencję, a zatem może służyć jako źródło przewagi konkurencyjnej. Ponadto szkolenie własnej skuteczności może być opracowane w celu zwiększenia poczucia własnej skuteczności u pracowników. Poprawa własnej skuteczności może wspierać wzrost zachowań samoprzywództwa, zaangażowania, satysfakcji z pracy i wydajności.

**Słowa kluczowe:** poczucie własnej skuteczności, zadowolenie z pracy, zaangażowanie, firma hutnicza

### 提高人體電位工作：調查感興趣的自我效能感勞動和就業滿意度的作用

**摘要：**本研究的主要目的是評估自我效能感的工作滿意度和員工的承諾方面的作用。自我效能感是指個體在他們成功地執行給定的任務（班杜拉，1997年）的能力的信念。確保工作滿意度和提高員工的承諾是企業所面臨的重要問題。該研究結果描繪了自我效能感顯著並積極與工作滿意度和承諾有關。研究結果已經得到上獲得競爭優勢的意義。當代學者認為，通過傳統的資源獲取競爭優勢是不可持續的專有信息，經濟資源和技術可供選擇。自我效能感是一個積極的心理資源不是被競爭對手很容易複製，因此可以作為競爭優勢的來源。另外，自我效能訓練可以設計，以提高在員工自我效能。改善自我效能感很可能會促進自我領導的行為，承諾，工作滿意度和業績增長。

**關鍵詞：**自我效能感，工作滿意度的承諾，鋼鐵公司