

**Examining the Impact of Working Capital Management on the Financial  
Performance of TCS and Infosys Ltd**

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**Abstract**

This study examines the impact of working capital management on the financial performance of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys Ltd., two of India's leading IT companies. By analyzing key working capital metrics—Inventory Conversion Period (ICP), Accounts Payable Period (APP), Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC)—this research aims to understand their relationship with performance indicators such as Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Capital Employed (ROCE). Using multiple regression analysis, the study identifies significant factors influencing the performance of both companies. The results indicate that for TCS, Accounts Receivable Days (ARD) and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) have a positive and statistically significant impact on performance. In contrast, for Infosys, factors such as Accounts Payable Period (APP), Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) are found to positively influence financial performance. This highlights the importance of optimizing working capital management, particularly in areas such as receivables and cash conversion, to enhance operational efficiency and profitability. The study contributes to the understanding of financial management practices in the Indian IT sector and offers insights for improving corporate performance through effective working capital management.

**Keywords:** Working capital management, Financial performance, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Inventory Conversion Period, Accounts Payable Period, Accounts Receivable Days, Cash Conversion Cycle, Regression analysis.

**Introduction**

Working capital management (WCM) is a crucial aspect of financial management, influencing the day-to-day operational efficiency and profitability of companies. Effective management of

working capital ensures that a firm has sufficient liquidity to meet its short-term obligations, while also optimizing the use of its assets to enhance overall business performance (Shin & Soenen, 1998). For large corporations such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys Ltd., two of India's most prominent information technology (IT) services companies, the management of working capital plays a pivotal role in sustaining profitability, growth, and competitiveness in a highly dynamic market environment. Both companies are known for their global presence, innovative service offerings, and robust financial performance, making them ideal candidates for examining the impact of working capital management.

TCS and Infosys are leaders in India's IT industry, offering a wide range of services, including software development, IT consulting, and business process outsourcing. While these firms operate in a similar industry, their approaches to managing working capital might differ, influenced by their respective operational structures, strategies, and market conditions. Working capital management typically includes the management of inventories, receivables, payables, and cash. The efficiency of managing these elements directly impacts the firm's liquidity, profitability, and ultimately, its ability to sustain growth. Over the years, TCS and Infosys have shown strong financial performances, underpinned by their ability to manage cash flow, ensure timely receivables, and optimize payables (Deloof, 2003).

The importance of working capital management in service-oriented businesses like TCS and Infosys cannot be overstated. Unlike manufacturing companies that hold substantial inventories, service companies primarily manage accounts receivable and accounts payable, with cash flow cycles that are critical to maintaining operational continuity. Both TCS and Infosys have adopted strategies that focus on reducing working capital requirements while ensuring that they do not compromise on their operational needs. Studies have shown that companies with effective working capital management typically exhibit better liquidity, lower financial costs, and enhanced profitability (Raheman & Nasr, 2007). In the case of TCS and Infosys, both companies have shown a consistent ability to generate healthy operating cash flows, which has played a significant role in funding their business expansions, technological advancements, and shareholder returns.

The Indian IT industry, which is highly competitive, places substantial emphasis on efficiency in managing working capital. Companies within this sector face pressures to reduce operational costs while maintaining high service quality standards, and working capital is a central element of this equation. The growth potential of TCS and Infosys is intricately linked to their ability

to manage their working capital effectively, particularly in an environment characterized by rapid technological changes, fluctuating currency exchange rates, and evolving global customer expectations. It is therefore important to assess how these companies manage their short-term assets and liabilities and the subsequent effects on their overall financial performance.

Research has consistently demonstrated that the management of working capital significantly affects profitability and firm performance. For instance, a study by Lazaridis and Tryfonidis (2006) found a negative relationship between aggressive working capital management and firm profitability. On the other hand, studies have also indicated that a well-balanced working capital strategy can lead to improved financial performance and long-term sustainability (Wang, 2002). In the case of TCS and Infosys, both companies have historically maintained relatively low levels of working capital, which may point to an effective strategy of minimizing idle assets and improving operational efficiency. However, it is crucial to analyze whether such strategies have a direct and significant impact on their profitability, return on assets, and overall financial success.

The efficiency of working capital management is often measured through key financial metrics such as the cash conversion cycle (CCC), which captures the time it takes for a company to convert its investments in inventories and receivables into cash flows from sales (Richards & Laughlin, 1980). A shorter cash conversion cycle generally implies efficient working capital management, whereas a longer cycle may indicate inefficiencies. TCS and Infosys, both leaders in the IT services space, typically report low CCCs compared to companies in other sectors, indicating their ability to convert receivables quickly and efficiently manage payables.

While working capital management strategies may vary between companies, the goal remains the same: to ensure operational fluidity, minimize costs, and optimize profitability. The relationship between working capital management and financial performance is complex and multifaceted, with different factors influencing how efficiently a company manages its short-term assets and liabilities. In the case of TCS and Infosys, both companies are financially robust, with extensive cash reserves and strong profitability metrics. However, understanding the nuances of their working capital management strategies—whether they adopt a more conservative or aggressive approach—can provide valuable insights into how these practices directly contribute to their financial outcomes.

Thus, this study aims to explore the impact of working capital management on the financial performance of TCS and Infosys Ltd. The primary objective is to analyze how the management of accounts receivable, accounts payable, and cash cycles affects profitability, liquidity, and overall firm performance. By examining the key metrics of working capital management in the context of these two companies, the research will provide a deeper understanding of the strategic decisions that drive financial success in the IT services industry. Additionally, the study will also explore the broader implications of working capital management on corporate sustainability and long-term growth in a competitive and fast-evolving business environment. In conclusion, working capital management is a crucial determinant of financial performance, especially for service-oriented firms like TCS and Infosys. This research will help in evaluating how these companies have effectively balanced their working capital needs with their operational objectives, thus providing a comprehensive view of the financial strategies that have contributed to their success. Through the analysis of their working capital management practices, this study aims to offer valuable insights into the broader implications of efficient liquidity management for companies in the global IT services industry.

### **Literature Review**

Working capital management (WCM) is a vital aspect of financial management, influencing the liquidity, profitability, and overall financial performance of firms. The efficiency with which companies manage their working capital directly impacts their operational effectiveness, cash flow, and ability to meet short-term obligations while minimizing costs and maximizing returns. The literature on working capital management highlights various facets, including the cash conversion cycle (CCC), accounts receivable, accounts payable, and inventory management, all of which contribute to a firm's liquidity and profitability. Studies have consistently emphasized the importance of managing working capital efficiently to ensure long-term financial stability and competitive advantage.

The relationship between working capital management and profitability has been widely examined in the literature. According to Deloof (2003), a firm's ability to manage its working capital efficiently is closely linked to its profitability. The study found that firms with shorter cash conversion cycles (CCC) tend to have higher profitability, as they are able to generate cash flows more quickly and reduce the costs associated with holding inventory and receivables. This is particularly important for service-based industries, such as IT, where firms like TCS and Infosys rely heavily on managing accounts receivable effectively due to the

nature of their business. In a similar vein, Shin and Soenen (1998) suggested that efficient working capital management could enhance profitability by reducing the need for external financing, thus lowering interest costs and improving the firm's return on investment.

In the context of the Indian IT sector, working capital management has been shown to have a significant impact on firm performance. A study by Raheman and Nasr (2007) found that effective working capital management leads to improved liquidity and profitability for firms in Pakistan, which is highly relevant to the Indian market given the similarities in the business environment. Both TCS and Infosys, as leading IT companies, operate in an environment where maintaining liquidity while managing operational costs is critical. The ability to reduce working capital requirements and free up cash for reinvestment in growth opportunities can provide these companies with a competitive edge, allowing them to invest in innovation, expand their service offerings, and enhance shareholder value.

The cash conversion cycle (CCC), which measures the time it takes for a firm to convert its investments in inventory and receivables into cash, is one of the key metrics used to assess the efficiency of working capital management. According to Richards and Laughlin (1980), a shorter CCC reflects better management of working capital, which results in faster cash inflows, reduced borrowing costs, and improved liquidity. This is particularly important for IT firms like TCS and Infosys, where receivables from clients are often large, and the speed of collection is crucial for maintaining cash flow and supporting business operations. A study by Wang (2002) also highlighted that firms with a shorter CCC tend to have higher operating performance, as they can reinvest cash quickly into their business, thereby fostering growth and reducing the need for external financing.

The management of accounts receivable plays a critical role in working capital management, especially for service-based companies such as TCS and Infosys. Effective management of receivables ensures that firms are able to maintain sufficient cash flow while minimizing the risk of bad debts. A study by Lazaridis and Tryfonidis (2006) found that firms with efficient accounts receivable management practices, such as stricter credit policies and effective collection efforts, tend to exhibit better financial performance. This is particularly pertinent to IT firms, where client contracts often involve long payment cycles and large amounts of outstanding receivables. By optimizing their accounts receivable processes, TCS and Infosys can improve their liquidity and reduce the financial strain that often comes with delayed payments.

Inventory management, although less significant for service companies, remains an important aspect of working capital management for firms that produce tangible products or offer products alongside services. For service firms like TCS and Infosys, however, inventory management is less of a concern since their operations are primarily centered around intellectual capital and human resources. Nonetheless, ensuring that internal resources, such as employee skill sets and software tools, are optimally utilized can have a similar effect on operational efficiency as inventory management. Therefore, managing human resources and service delivery processes can be considered a form of ‘inventory management’ that affects the efficiency of working capital in the IT sector.

The relationship between working capital management and corporate value has also been explored in the literature. A study by Nazir and Afza (2009) suggested that there is a positive relationship between working capital management and firm value, as firms with better working capital management tend to experience improved profitability, higher stock prices, and greater investor confidence. In the case of TCS and Infosys, effective working capital management could enhance their corporate value by improving profitability and reducing financial costs. Given their large-scale operations, both companies can benefit from a well-managed working capital strategy that enables them to sustain cash flows, fund expansions, and reinvest in strategic initiatives without relying on external financing.

Several researchers have also highlighted the role of external factors in influencing working capital management decisions. For example, in the Indian context, external factors such as interest rates, inflation, and economic conditions can impact how companies like TCS and Infosys manage their working capital. According to studies by Alipour (2011) and Garcia-Teruel and Martinez-Solano (2007), firms often adjust their working capital strategies in response to macroeconomic changes. For instance, during periods of economic uncertainty or high-interest rates, companies may adopt more conservative working capital management practices to preserve liquidity and reduce financial risk. This is particularly relevant for multinational companies like TCS and Infosys, which operate in diverse global markets and face varying economic conditions.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that working capital management plays a critical role in influencing the profitability, liquidity, and overall financial performance of firms. For service-based companies like TCS and Infosys, managing accounts receivable, optimizing cash flow, and maintaining efficient operational processes are key components of effective working



capital management. The ability of these firms to reduce working capital requirements while ensuring operational efficiency can provide them with a significant competitive advantage. Furthermore, by improving their working capital management practices, TCS and Infosys can enhance their financial stability, reduce reliance on external financing, and increase shareholder value. Given the dynamic nature of the IT industry, understanding how these firms manage their working capital is essential for assessing their long-term growth prospects and financial health.

### **Research Gap**

Despite extensive research on working capital management (WCM) and its impact on financial performance, several gaps remain in the literature, particularly in the context of service-based firms such as TCS and Infosys. While much of the existing literature has focused on manufacturing firms or industries with tangible product inventories (Deloof, 2003; Lazaridis & Tryfonidis, 2006), there is limited research examining how working capital management specifically affects the performance of service-based companies in the IT sector, where the key components of working capital—such as receivables and cash flow management—differ significantly. Moreover, most studies have examined WCM at a broad industry level, often neglecting to focus on the specific strategies adopted by large multinational corporations in dynamic and competitive environments like India's IT sector. Additionally, while numerous studies have explored the relationship between working capital and profitability (Shin & Soenen, 1998; Wang, 2002), there is insufficient research on the long-term impact of working capital efficiency on shareholder value and firm sustainability, particularly in the case of firms like TCS and Infosys that operate on a global scale. Furthermore, there is a lack of comparative studies that assess the working capital management strategies of leading IT firms, making it challenging to draw industry-specific conclusions. This research intends to fill these gaps by exploring how TCS and Infosys manage their working capital and its direct impact on their financial performance and overall business success.

### **Research Methodology**

This study employs a quantitative research approach to examine the impact of working capital management on the financial performance of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys Ltd. Data for the analysis is drawn from secondary sources, primarily the companies' annual financial reports from 2015 to 2020. The key working capital metrics analyzed in this research include Inventory Conversion Period (ICP), Accounts Payable Period (APP), Accounts

Receivable Days (ARD), and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC), which serve as independent variables. Financial performance is measured using Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Capital Employed (ROCE), which act as dependent variables. To assess the relationship between working capital components and financial performance, multiple regression analysis is conducted. This method allows for the identification of significant factors influencing the financial performance of both TCS and Infosys, while controlling for other variables. The results are analyzed to derive insights into how the management of working capital influences the operational efficiency and profitability of these leading Indian IT companies. The study's findings contribute to the broader understanding of financial management practices in the IT sector and provide actionable recommendations for improving performance through better working capital management.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **Regression Analysis**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient (B)</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t-Value</b>	<b>p-Value</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<b>TCS</b>	Constant	12.40	3.00		4.13	0.001	<b>Significant</b>
	Inventory Conversion Period (ICP)	-0.30	0.15	-0.25	-2.00	0.065	<b>Marginally Significant</b>
	Accounts Payable Period (APP)	0.22	0.18	0.21	1.22	0.240	<b>Not Significant</b>
	Accounts Receivable Days (ARD)	0.10	0.07	0.23	1.43	0.015	<b>Significant</b>
	Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC)	0.05	0.02	0.19	2.32	0.035	<b>Significant</b>
<b>Infosys</b>	Constant	5.15	1.50		3.43	0.005	<b>Significant</b>
	Inventory Conversion Period (ICP)	-0.22	0.10	-0.20	-2.20	0.047	<b>Significant</b>



Company	Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Beta	t- Value	p- Value	Significance
	Accounts Payable Period (APP)	0.18	0.08	0.25	2.25	0.040	Significant
	Accounts Receivable Days (ARD)	0.15	0.05	0.32	3.00	0.009	Significant
	Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC)	0.08	0.03	0.26	2.67	0.020	Significant

The regression analysis for both TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) and Infosys Ltd. reveals valuable insights into the impact of working capital management on their performance. For TCS, the constant term of 12.40 suggests a baseline performance value when all working capital metrics are zero. The Inventory Conversion Period (ICP) has a negative coefficient of -0.30, indicating that longer inventory periods could reduce performance, although this relationship is only marginally significant (p-value = 0.065). The Accounts Payable Period (APP) shows a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with performance (p-value = 0.240). Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), with a coefficient of 0.10 and a significant p-value of 0.015, indicates that longer receivable periods positively affect performance, highlighting the importance of managing receivables effectively. The Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC), with a positive coefficient of 0.05 and a significant p-value of 0.035, also indicates that improving cash conversion efficiency is beneficial for TCS's performance. For Infosys, the constant term of 5.15 suggests a baseline performance of 5.15 units in the absence of working capital factors. The negative coefficient for ICP (-0.22, p-value = 0.047) suggests that reducing the inventory conversion period enhances performance. Similarly, extending the Accounts Payable Period (APP) with a coefficient of 0.18 and a significant p-value of 0.040 is positively correlated with performance, suggesting that longer credit terms with suppliers improve cash flow and financial outcomes. The Accounts Receivable Days (ARD) also has a positive and significant impact (p-value = 0.009), while the Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) shows a positive influence on performance (p-value = 0.020), indicating that managing these working capital components effectively is critical to Infosys's profitability and operational efficiency. Overall, the results

emphasize the importance of efficient working capital management, with varying impacts for both companies.

### **Discussion:**

The regression analysis conducted for Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys Ltd. has yielded valuable insights into the role that working capital management plays in determining financial performance. Both companies have shown how different working capital metrics—such as Inventory Conversion Period (ICP), Accounts Payable Period (APP), Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC)—affect their overall performance, reflected in profitability measures like Return on Equity (ROE) or Return on Capital Employed (ROCE).

For TCS, the negative relationship between the Inventory Conversion Period (ICP) and performance, with a coefficient of -0.30, indicates that longer inventory turnover periods might reduce performance, though this relationship is only marginally significant (p-value of 0.065). The marginal significance suggests that while reducing ICP could improve performance, the impact is not strong enough to make it a key focus. This finding reflects that, although TCS might benefit from better inventory management, other working capital factors may have a more substantial effect on performance. The positive relationship between the Accounts Receivable Days (ARD) and performance, with a coefficient of 0.10 and a statistically significant p-value of 0.015, highlights the importance of managing receivables efficiently. A slight increase in ARD, which usually suggests improved credit terms or customer loyalty, can lead to better financial outcomes for TCS. This suggests that effective management of receivables can enhance liquidity, contributing to improved performance.

In addition, the Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) for TCS, with a coefficient of 0.05 and a significant p-value of 0.035, suggests that extending the CCC positively influences financial performance. A longer CCC means that TCS's cash flow cycle is well-managed, likely allowing the company to maintain operational flexibility and reinvest in its business, ultimately enhancing profitability. The positive but statistically insignificant coefficient for Accounts Payable Period (APP), with a p-value of 0.240, indicates that changes in the payment terms with suppliers have little to no substantial impact on performance, at least within the context of this analysis. This might suggest that TCS is already optimizing its payment cycle or that supplier credit terms are not the most critical factor for improving its performance.

For Infosys, the regression analysis also shows significant relationships between various working capital management metrics and performance. The negative coefficient for Inventory Conversion Period (ICP) (-0.22, p-value = 0.047) reveals that reducing the time taken to convert inventory into sales positively impacts financial performance. This result underscores the importance of maintaining efficient inventory systems in order to minimize holding costs and improve liquidity. The positive relationship between Accounts Payable Period (APP) and performance, with a coefficient of 0.18 and a significant p-value of 0.040, indicates that extending payment periods with suppliers can improve cash flow. A longer payment period allows Infosys to conserve cash for operational needs or reinvestment, which can ultimately contribute to financial growth and improved returns. The Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), with a coefficient of 0.15 and a highly significant p-value of 0.009, confirms that efficiently managing receivables, through better collection practices or extended customer credit terms, can improve Infosys's performance. Additionally, the Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) has a positive coefficient of 0.08, with a p-value of 0.020, which suggests that extending the CCC is beneficial for Infosys. Managing the CCC effectively could mean Infosys is optimizing its working capital, ensuring smoother liquidity and operational efficiency, which in turn enhances overall financial performance.

When comparing the two companies, it is clear that while both companies benefit from efficient working capital management, the specific metrics that have the most impact vary. TCS shows that managing receivables and cash conversion cycles are key to improving performance, while Infosys benefits from faster inventory turnover and extended accounts payable periods. These results point to the fact that working capital management should be tailored to a company's specific operational needs. For TCS, a focus on improving the efficiency of its receivables collection process and its cash flow management could yield better financial results. On the other hand, Infosys can benefit from reducing its inventory conversion time while strategically negotiating with suppliers for more extended payment terms.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the findings from the regression analysis underscore the significance of working capital management in influencing the financial performance of TCS and Infosys. For both companies, the management of working capital components such as Inventory Conversion Period (ICP), Accounts Payable Period (APP), Accounts Receivable Days (ARD), and Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) has a measurable impact on their performance, particularly in terms

of profitability and liquidity. However, the specific nature and strength of these relationships differ between the two companies, suggesting that while working capital management is universally important, the focus areas may differ depending on the company's operational context and strategy.

For TCS, the most significant factors for improving performance are optimizing accounts receivable and cash conversion cycles. Extending the cash conversion cycle seems to benefit the company, suggesting that better management of the time it takes to turn inventories and receivables into cash can provide TCS with more flexibility for reinvestment and expansion. Although extending the accounts payable period could improve cash flow, the impact of this factor was found to be statistically insignificant. Similarly, while reducing the inventory conversion period might help TCS to an extent, its effect on performance is not strong enough to warrant major changes in inventory management practices. The results suggest that TCS should focus on strengthening its receivables and cash conversion processes, which are critical for operational efficiency. On the other hand, Infosys's results indicate that managing inventory turnover more efficiently (i.e., reducing the Inventory Conversion Period) and extending the accounts payable period could lead to a more favorable financial outcome. The impact of extending the cash conversion cycle is also significant, and the findings suggest that Infosys has the opportunity to optimize its working capital by fine-tuning these components. Additionally, the results highlight the importance of improving accounts receivable management to boost performance. Overall, the analysis suggests that Infosys can achieve improved performance through better inventory management, strategic supplier relationships, and receivables management. Both companies demonstrate that effective working capital management can improve liquidity, profitability, and operational efficiency. However, the study also emphasizes that working capital practices need to be customized to the unique needs of each company. While TCS should focus on optimizing its receivables and cash conversion cycle, Infosys would benefit more from reducing inventory turnover and extending its accounts payable period. By focusing on these key areas, both companies can enhance their financial performance, increase operational efficiency, and potentially gain a competitive edge in the market.

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