

A Study on the Usefulness of Incident Analytics and Automation in Improving IT Operations Performance in the IT Industry: Pune Region

Chetan Dudhare

MBA – Sem IV, Zeal Institute of Business Administration, Computer Application & Research (ZIBACAR),
Pune

(Under Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune)

Guide: Prof. CMA Shivaji Rajmane

ZIBACAR, Pune

Abstract

Modern IT Operations teams work in complex environments such as hybrid cloud, distributed architectures, and dependency-heavy services. Incidents can disrupt service reliability, customer experience, and SLA performance. To address recurring incidents, alert overload, and long resolution times, organizations are turning to Incident Analytics (trend analysis, correlation, RCA insights) and Automation (runbooks, orchestration, auto-remediation). This study evaluates IT practitioners' views on incident analytics and automation in improving IT operations performance in the Pune region. A structured questionnaire with 15 Likert-scale statements was used. Responses from 100 IT professionals were analyzed using frequency, percentage distribution, and construct-level interpretation. Results show a strong positive view of automation's role in reducing manual effort and human error. There is also strong agreement on the combined effect of analytics and automation in boosting efficiency. Moderate agreement was found for reducing alert fatigue, supporting incident decisions, and improving SLA/KPI adherence. This suggests that factors like maturity, governance, and dependencies affect the outcomes. The study concludes that incident analytics and automation are valuable for better operational performance. It recommends a phased adoption roadmap, starting with data foundations, focused automation cases, governance controls, and continuous improvement.

Keywords: Incident Analytics, IT Operations, Automation, AIOps, Alert Fatigue, MTTR, SLA, RCA

1. Introduction

IT Operations' role is to ensure the availability, reliability, and performance of digital services used by both internal and external customers. Modern enterprises rely on distributed platforms and cloud services. Many dependencies exist across compute, storage, networks, databases, and security layers. Incident handling has become difficult and often reactive. Traditional incident management relies on manual monitoring, human expertise, and escalation. This leads to repeated incidents, uneven troubleshooting, alert fatigue, and delayed restoration.

To improve speed and consistency of response, operations teams increasingly adopt:

- **Incident Analytics** leverages historical ticket data and real-time signals to identify patterns, recurring clusters, correlations, and anomaly trends, thereby strengthening root-cause analysis and proactive prevention.
- **Automation**, which reduces manual work via runbooks, orchestration, ticket enrichment, workflow execution, and auto-remediation, improves repeatability and response reliability.

This research examines the **perceived usefulness** of incident analytics and automation in improving IT operations performance in the Pune region using a structured survey-based approach.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To assess the usefulness of incident analytics and automation in improving IT operations performance using survey-based evidence.
2. To evaluate the perceived effectiveness of incident analytics in identifying recurring issues and improving RCA accuracy.
3. To assess the perceived effectiveness of automation in reducing incident resolution time and manual effort.
4. To study perceptions of analytics-driven alerting on alert fatigue.
5. To examine whether combined adoption improves operational efficiency and service outcomes (availability, SLA/KPI adherence, customer satisfaction).

2. Review of Literature

The evolution of IT Service Management and modern operations highlights growing adoption of analytics-driven approaches for situational awareness, recurrence reduction, and RCA improvement. Literature on AIOps integrates analytics and automation, emphasizing benefits such as alert noise reduction and faster triage, while also noting adoption challenges, including data silos, integration complexity, governance concerns, and trust in automation.

Studies referenced in the project also discuss:

- Incident relationship analysis and co-occurrence patterns to accelerate resolution.
- Machine-learning and analytics methods for prioritization/categorization and operational scalability
- Alert fatigue is a major operational risk requiring better correlation, filtering, and design.

3. Problem Statement & Research Hypotheses

3.1 Problem Statement

Despite the availability of monitoring and ITSM platforms, many organizations continue to experience recurring incidents, prolonged resolution times, alert overload, and inconsistent RCA quality, resulting in increased operational effort and SLA breaches. Although incident analytics and automation are increasingly adopted, there is limited perception-based empirical evidence validating their usefulness in improving IT operations performance, particularly in the Pune region.

3.2 Research Variables

- **Independent Variables:**
 - (i) Incident Analytics (historical analysis, correlation, dashboards, RCA insights)
 - (ii) Automation (workflows, runbooks, orchestration, auto-remediation).
- **Dependent Variable:**

IT Operations Performance is measured through resolution time, manual effort, alert fatigue, prioritization, efficiency, availability, SLA/KPI adherence, and customer satisfaction.

3.3 Research Hypotheses

H1: Incident analytics has a significant positive impact on IT operations' performance.

H2: Automation significantly reduces incident resolution time and manual operational effort.

H3: Analytics-driven insights reduce alert fatigue and improve prioritization/decision-making.

H4: Combined incident analytics and automation significantly improve efficiency, availability, SLA/KPI adherence, and customer satisfaction.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study is as follows:

- Descriptive design to summarize response distributions
- Analytical/interpretive approach to derive meaning from patterns
- Hypothesis-driven assessment aligned with constructs (analytics, automation, performance).

4.2 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire containing 15 statements was designed using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree).

4.3 Sampling Method and Sample Size

- Sampling: Non-probability convenience sampling
- Respondents: IT professionals exposed to incident handling and operational tools
- Sample size: 100 respondents in the Pune region.

4.4 Tools and Techniques

- Google Forms for data capture
- MS Excel / Sheets for coding, percentage analysis, and charts
- Techniques: frequency & percentage analysis, agreement aggregation, and construct-level interpretation.

5. Data Analysis & Findings (Survey Outcomes)

5.1 Summary of Key Response Results (Agreement %)

The table below summarizes agreement levels (Strongly Agree + Agree) across the 15 statements:

Area	Survey Statement (Q#)	Agreement (%)
Analytics – recurring issues	Q1 Faster identification of recurring issues	68%
Analytics – RCA	Q2 Historical data improves RCA accuracy	69%
Automation – MTTR	Q3 Automation reduces resolution time	70%
Analytics – alert fatigue	Q4 Analytics-driven alerts reduce alert fatigue	56%
Analytics – proactive	Q5 Analytics supports proactive prevention	58%

Automation – consistency	Q6 Automated workflows improve consistency	62%
Analytics – prioritization	Q7 Analytics improves prioritization	69%
Automation – manual effort	Q8 Automation reduces manual effort	77%
Analytics – MI decisions	Q9 Analytics improves MI decision-making	56%
Automation – SLA/KPI	Q10 Automation improves SLA/KPI adherence	48%
Analytics – collaboration	Q11 Analytics improves collaboration	56%
Automation – human error	Q12 Automation minimizes human error	73%
Analytics – availability	Q13 Analytics improves availability	67%
Combined value	Q14 Combined analytics + automation improves efficiency	80%
Customer outcome	Q15 Improves customer satisfaction	61%

5.2 Interpretation of Findings

- **Automation benefits are strongest:** respondents strongly agree automation reduces manual effort (77%) and human error (73%) and improves resolution speed (70%).
- **Incident analytics is viewed as impactful:** high agreement for recurring issue identification (68%), RCA accuracy (69%), and service availability improvement (67%).
- **Alert fatigue and major incident decision support show moderate strength:** only 56% agreement suggests benefits depend on monitoring hygiene and correlation maturity.
- **SLA/KPI adherence is mixed:** lower agreement (48%) indicates SLA outcomes also depend on external dependencies, governance, and architecture constraints beyond automation alone.
- **Combined analytics + automation shows the highest perceived value:** 80% agreement demonstrates strong synergy—analytics identifies what to fix, and automation executes at scale.

6. Hypothesis Support

Using the project’s construct-level alignment and dominance of agreement responses:

- **H1 Supported:** Analytics-related statements show majority agreement (68–69% on key items), indicating perceived positive impact on performance.
- **H2 Supported:** Automation outcomes show strong agreement (70–77%) on MTTR and effort reduction.
- **H3 Partially Supported:** Alert fatigue and MI decision support have moderate agreement (56%), suggesting maturity influences impact.
- **H4 Supported (with SLA constraint):** Efficiency (80%) and satisfaction (61%) support combined impact; SLA/KPI remains influenced by additional factors.

7. Conclusion

The study concludes that incident analytics and automation are perceived as valuable enablers for improving IT operations performance. Incident analytics strengthens operational visibility by helping identify recurring issues, improving RCA accuracy, supporting prioritization, and contributing to service availability. Automation reduces manual effort, improves response consistency, minimizes human errors, and accelerates restoration. The combined use of analytics and automation shows the strongest perceived impact, especially on operational efficiency and service outcomes. However, metrics such as SLA/KPI adherence may require additional enablers, including governance, dependency reduction, accurate CI ownership, and process maturity.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Improve incident data quality** by enforcing mandatory ticket fields (CI, category, impact, resolution codes) to strengthen analytics accuracy.
2. **Build dashboards for recurring incidents and noisy alerts** to guide proactive prevention and prioritization.
3. **Prioritize automation for high-frequency, low-risk incidents first**, then expand to complex use cases with governance controls.
4. **Strengthen runbook governance** (validation, approvals, rollback, audit logs, access control) to build trust and reduce automation risk.
5. **Continuous enablement and training** in analytics interpretation, scripting/orchestration, and reliability engineering to sustain improvement.

9. Scope for Future Research

Future work may include:

- KPI-based validation using MTTR, MTTA, breach rate, and recurrence metrics over time.
- Longitudinal studies tracking improvement for 6–12 months post-implementation.
- Comparative studies across industries and organization sizes for better generalizability.
- Research on automation trust, governance, and adoption maturity as moderate factors.

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