

**International Conference – 2025: Developed India @ 2047****Charting Multidisciplinary and Multi-Institutional Pathways for Inclusive Growth and Global Leadership held on 4th & 5th April, 2025****Organised by: IQAC - Gossner College, Ranchi**

## **Understanding Work Culture and Its Impact on Employee Experience in The Retail Industry**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Work culture is the cumulative effect created on a worker due to leadership practices, employee behaviour, workplace amenities, and organizational policies. It is the sum of a company's values, beliefs, and behaviours that shape the day-to-day environment of any organization. It refers to the set of values, attitudes, and practices that guide employee interactions at all levels of an organization. Furthermore, it makes up the regular atmosphere in a work environment. Work culture includes values and ethics, communication style, collaboration and teamwork, development of employee, diversity and inclusion, and work – life balance. It attracts talent, engages employee, fosters innovation and ideas, and leads to better performance. It is essential for building a positive employee experience. A positive employee experience contributes to a productive environment for employees. This further leads to higher job satisfaction, enhanced motivation, increased employee retention, and an increase in the overall performance of organizations.

Employee experience is the sum of all interactions and perceptions an employee has with a company. It is the aggregate of all interactions an employee has with their employer from the moment he applies for a job to the time when he leaves the job. It includes how an employee feels about his job, workplace, and employer.

According to the report, the industry where people frequently leave jobs in India is the Retail Industry. An industry where there is high employee turnover and low employee engagement. Therefore, to find the reason for high employee turnover and low engagement, it becomes important to understand the work culture and its impact on employee experience in the Retail Industry.

The purpose of the paper is to gain an understanding of work culture in the Retail Industry, to assess the determinants that affect work culture, to learn about the impact of work culture on employee experience in the Retail Industry and to pinpoint the areas of improvement.

To meet the objectives of the research, a Dichotomous Questionnaire is prepared. The population of the study is the employees working in the Retail Industry, and they are employees working at different levels. The sampling technique applied is the Snowball, Non –Probabilistic Sampling Method.

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From data analysis and interpretation, we learn that work culture in the retail industry is positive, and it affects the employee experience, which heightens employee engagement and employee retention.

**Keywords:** *Work Culture, Employee Experience, Retail Industry, Employee Engagement, Employee Retention.*

## Introduction

A report in Gallup highlights a troubling state of employee wellbeing in India. It states that only 14% of employees feel that they are "thriving" in life, while a staggering 86% are either struggling or suffering (Source: India Today, 2024) despite a strong sense of belonging in their workplace.

As per Gallup, there is a significant 33% increase in revenue in the companies that prioritize work culture. (Source: Vantage Circle, 2025).

Today, most of the companies are struggling to perform better in the market. This is due to a negative cultural environment. Negative work culture in the workplace causes poor communication, lack of trust, increase in conflicts leading to negative employee experience and a disengaged workforce, which affects the overall performance of an organization. A negative work culture does not attract talents to do business with a company. On the other hand, creating a positive and healthy work culture keeps the employees engaged, enhances productivity, improves innovation, reduces employee turnover, and improves overall organizational success. A positive culture stimulates workforce to be further productive and innovative, and to be positive at work. It promotes productivity, and engagement and improves employee experience.

The problem in most companies is a lack of understanding and awareness of work culture and its impact on employee experience. This lack of knowledge prevents or stops organizations from creating a positive and supportive culture that fosters a high level of employee experience. Therefore, understanding the impact of work culture on employee experience becomes important to develop strategies, and it is important to address the issue to improve employee experience.

If a company significantly considers its work culture, its employees will be happy and more productive in the workplace. Creating a positive work culture will bring a big difference in the workplace when people feel connected and engaged. Many companies still do not understand how to engage and motivate their talents in the workplace. Thus, this research will attempt to investigate more about the impact of work culture on employee experience.

## Review of Literature

Indeed Editorial Team (2025) defined work culture as, “a collection of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that make up the regular atmosphere in a work environment”.

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According to Spiceworks (2025), “Work Culture is defined as the cumulative effect that leadership practices, employee behaviour, workplace amenities, and organizational policies create on a worker or internal stakeholder”.

In the words of Atul Mumbarkar, (2023), “Work culture is defined as the shared values, behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs in the workplace and it reflects the ideology and overall personality of the organization”.

From the above definitions, we infer that work culture is the aggregate effect that is created on a worker. The effect can be positive or negative and it is created due to ‘leadership practices, behaviour of employees, workplace amenities, and policies of an organization’. It is the way, in which, people interact with each other and the company’s policies. Work culture is the atmosphere that is shaped by the people’s interaction with each other and the company’s policies.

The collective way of thinking, feeling, and behaving within an organization is a work culture. For a company, it is the personality that influences how employees interact with one another, make decisions, and approach their work. A positive employee experience is the result of a positive work culture.

Employee Experience is an interaction that an employee has from the time he applies for a position in an organization till he leaves the company. It encompasses every touchpoint of the employee lifecycle from recruitment, selection, onboarding, appraisal, training and development, and promotion till he exits the company.

Nick Barney defined Employee Experience as “a worker’s perception of the organization they work for during their tenure. It encompasses an employee’s entire journey through all the touchpoints of the employee lifecycle, from job candidacy to exit from the company”.

Employee Experience is an ‘emotional response’ that is felt by employees because of multiple workplace processes. It also includes the worker’s observations or views about the company, which he is going to share with friends and family. (Source: Spiceworks, Spiceworks: hr: talent management: articles: what is employee experience, 2025).

There is a direct link between employee experience and business performance. Research conducted by McKinsey found that workers who had a positive employee experience had 16 times the engagement level and almost 8 times the likelihood of staying at the organization than those with a negative experience. An exceptional employee experience can attract more highly qualified candidates. A heightened employee experience contributes to employee retention, employee engagement, and improved quality of work. (Keith O'Brien, 2023).

A positive work culture builds strong relationships with coworkers, provides assistance and displays empathy, cultivates an environment where errors are forgiven, focuses on problem – solving, motivates and encourages one another, and prioritizes core values such as trust, respect, appreciation, and honesty. A strong work culture helps in employee commitment and engagement leads to enhanced productivity. (Atul Mumbarkar, 2023).

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In their article, “Ultimate Guide to Understanding and Building Positive Work Culture”, Medhi & Gogoi (2025), pointed out that to have an effective workplace, a positive work culture must be created. They defined work culture as “the invisible force that shapes every aspect of the work life. It is shared values, beliefs, and practices that define how things get done in the workplace”. It encompasses everything, from the way teams communicate to how they make decisions. They inferred from their study that work culture shapes employee experience as well as organizational success. A positive culture ‘boosts morale, increases productivity, and attracts top talent’. To build a positive work culture, organizations must promote work–life balance, invest in training and development, foster team collaboration, recognize employee contributions, have effective leadership, and an effective performance management.

In their book, Work Culture, Bayot, Tadi, & Vaqar, (2024) pointed out that a positive work culture involves continuous quality improvement. To create a work culture that brings positive organizational changes, positive leadership is essential. A positive work culture promotes mutual trust among the talents, which establishes harmony and enhances job performance and satisfaction. And, one of the critical aspects of mediating a positive work culture is teamwork.

According to D’Alessandro, culture and employee experience are interrelated aspects of a healthy and thriving workplace. A positive work culture makes the workforce more engaged with lower staff turnover, where employees are more productive and have intent to stay in their current organization. Employees’ wellbeing and organizational policies that encourage respect, equality, inclusivity, trust, empathy and belonging for all people are also priorities of a positive work culture.

According to the research conducted by Westover (2024), positive employee experiences are correlated with heightened job satisfaction, lower turnover, and enhanced productivity. On the other hand, negative employee experience ‘undermine morale, waste talent and drain both human and financial resource’. A positive employee experience improves employee engagement and increases employee retention.

The findings of the study revealed that improving the employee experience, creating a positive work culture, and addressing employee touchpoints from recruitment to exit have a positive impact on employee involvement, satisfaction, and enthusiasm. (Basar, 2024 ).

A recent report by Gallup revealed that organizations with a strong employee experience can see a 25% increase in employee productivity, showcasing a direct correlation between how employees feel and their commitment to the company. (Psico-smart Editorial Team, 2024) Employee Experience not only helps in talent retention but also improves the overall work environment.

**Research Problem**

Due to heightened competition in the market, organizations are facing challenges in engaging and retaining talent. The challenging environment has changed not only in the corporate world but also in the minds of the workers. Fostering a positive work culture has become the need of the hour.

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Creating a positive work culture enhances employee experience, which has become one of the issues in the retail industry. It is observed that employees working in the retail industry frequently leave their company. Therefore, it becomes important to understand work culture in the retail industry and its impact on employee experience.

**Research Objectives**

The following are the objectives of conducting the research:

1. To gain an understanding of work culture in the Retail Industry,
2. To assess the determinants that affect work culture,
3. To learn about the impact of work culture on employee experience in the Retail Industry, and
4. To pinpoint the areas of improvement.

**Research Methodology**

The paper is about Understanding Work Culture and its impact on Employee Experience in the Retail Industry. The reason for undertaking this study is to gain an understanding of work culture in the Retail Industry, to assess the determinants that affect work culture, to learn about the impact of work culture on employee experience in the Retail Industry and to pinpoint the areas of improvement.

The study is based on the primary sources of data, which is collected from the employees working in retail companies like Reliance Trends, V Mart, Apna Mart, Wipro Enterprises, Shoppers Stop, and Pantaloons. The respondents are from the managerial as well as the ones working at ground level. The primary data is collected through a questionnaire, which is designed to meet the objectives of the research. The questionnaire prepared is the dichotomous type where the options given to the respondents are “Positive” and “Negative”. The data has been collected through Google Forms.

Secondary data, for the study, is gathered from sources like journals, research papers, articles, websites, and so on. The sampling technique used is non – probabilistic snowball convenience sampling.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The data collected through a questionnaire, which has options like “Positive” and “Negative”, is the dichotomous type and qualitative in nature.

The research is conducted using a questionnaire survey method and this allowed to gain insight into the minds of the respondents. Following are the interpretations from the data gathered:

The total number of respondents to the questionnaire is 22 out of which 22.70% are female and 77.30% are male.



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In the research, employees working in the retail industry are targeted, and they belong to different age groups. 68.20% of the respondents are between the age group 20-30 years and 31.80% of the respondents are between 30-40 years. There are no respondents between the age group 40-50 years and 50-60 years.

1. Based on the survey data, almost 81.82% of the respondents are positive about the overall work culture at their organization, suggesting that the workplace fosters a sense of well-being, support, and respect, leading to increased employee engagement and loyalty.
2. Almost 73.73% of the respondents are positive that they can express their opinions and ideas openly at work. This means that the majority of the respondents feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas without fear. Since workers feel that their thoughts and ideas are valued, it creates trust between employees and management.
3. Approximately 73.73% of the respondents are positive while 27.27% of the respondents are negative for the level of trust and respect among colleagues. This means that most of the respondents feel valued that their contributions, in the organization, to work are acknowledged, and the respondents are treated with dignity and fairness, which leads to higher engagement, loyalty, and productivity.
4. The majority of the respondents, approximately 90.91%, are positive about being valued and appreciated by their manager and colleagues. This signifies a positive and healthy work environment, leading to increased employee engagement, motivation, and better performance and retention.
5. Almost 90.91% of the respondents are positive about their immediate manager being accessible for feedback and concerns. This indicates that most of the respondents feel valued and heard, fostering better communication and potentially leading to improved morale and performance.
6. Based on the survey data, 90.91% of the respondents are positive for their manager for providing them with clear directions and expectations. This signifies that the respondents understand the goals of the company and work towards them more effectively.
7. Almost 86.36% of the respondents are positive about their feelings for their manager's effectiveness in motivating and supporting their professional development suggesting a thriving, engaged workforce, where employees feel valued and supported in their career development.
8. Approximately 77.27% of the respondents are positive about their team demonstrating the company's values in their action which signifies a strong, aligned culture, leading to increased employee engagement, motivation, and better business performance.
9. About 95.45% of the respondents are positive about the communication within their team and across departments which means a healthy and productive environment, leading to enhanced collaboration, increased employee satisfaction and improved overall performance, better problem-solving.

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10. Based on the survey data, 86.36% of the respondents are positive about the channels for sharing information and ideas in their company which means improved employee engagement, enhanced productivity, stronger collaboration, better problem-solving, increased trust and transparency, improved decision-making, reduced misunderstandings and conflicts.
11. About 86.36% of the respondents say their team collaborates effectively towards project goals, it suggests positive teamwork where members share ideas, skills and resources to achieve common objectives, fostering a sense of unity and potentially leading to better results.
12. Almost 86.36% of the respondents are positive about receiving feedback from colleagues on their work performance, which means a strong, collaborative, and trusting work environment where employees feel valued and are open to learning and improvement.
13. About 50.00% of the respondents are positive about the balance between their work and personal life. This suggests a healthy and productive work environment, which leads to increased employee engagement and job satisfaction, and lower employee turnover.
14. Almost 63.64% of the respondents are positive for flexible work hours and arrangements suggesting increased job satisfaction, leading to higher productivity, reduced stress, and improved work–life balance, which benefits both employees and the organization.
15. Based on survey data, 81.82% of the respondents are positive about their company for being supportive regarding personal emergencies or family matters which signifies that companies foster a culture of trust, improve employee morale, and can lead to increased productivity and reduce stress.
16. Almost 63.64% of the respondents are positive about the availability of opportunities for them to learn new skills and advance their career within the company, which means a motivated and engaged workforce, leading to productivity, innovation, and retention.
17. Almost 63.64% of the respondents are positive that their company is supportive of their professional development through training and mentorship programs. This means that the company fosters a culture of growth, engagement and retention, which leads to a more skilled and motivated workforce.
18. About 86.36% of the respondents are positive about how they feel towards their company for encouraging them to take on new challenges and responsibilities. This indicates a positive work environment, increased employee engagement, and higher productivity and retention.
19. Based on the survey data, approximately 81.82% of the respondents are positive that their company's stated values are reflected in the daily work practices which signify a strong alignment between the company's values and its actual behaviours, fostering trust, engagement and a positive work environment.
20. About 77.27% of the respondents are positive about their personal values aligned with company's values suggesting a strong sense of purpose, engagement, and commitment, adding to a more positive and productive work environment.

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21. Approximately 86.36% of the respondents are positive about working for their company and representing its values. It signifies a strong sense of employee engagement, a positive work culture, increased productivity, and retention.

**Findings**

1. From the data analysis, it is found that in most retail companies the general work culture is positive. The respondents feel comfortable expressing their opinions and ideas openly at work. They feel that the level of trust and respect among their colleagues is positive. They feel valued and appreciated, too by their manager and colleagues.
2. Most people feel positive that their immediate manager is accessible for feedback and concerns, their manager provides them clear directions, and it is clear to the people what the manager expects from them. The respondents say that their manager's effectiveness in motivating and supporting their professional development is positive, and their team demonstrates the company's values in their actions. Hence, we find that leadership and management in the retail industry are positive.
3. We further find that the communication and collaboration among the teams, in the retail industry, are positive. The respondents feel that the communication within their team and across departments, the channels for sharing information and ideas, the team's collaboration in working towards project goals, and receiving feedback from colleagues on their work performance is positive.
4. The employees working in the retail sector feel that they have a good work-life balance. They have flexible work hours and arrangements, and their company is supportive regarding their personal emergencies or family matters. This indicates that organizations offer them a healthy work-life balance.
5. The findings also say that the respondents have good professional development in their respective companies. The availability of opportunities to learn new skills and advance their career within the company, support of their company for their professional development through training and mentorship programs, and the companies' support to them to take on new challenges and responsibilities are positive.
6. From the analysis, we also find that the company's stated values are reflected in the daily work practices, the respondent's personal values are aligned with the company's values, and the respondents feel proud to work for the company and represent its values. Hence, company value and alignment are positive and this indicates that employees have a sense of purpose in their roles.
7. Since the work culture in the retail industry is found to be positive, we learn that the employee experience is good. Employees are engaged and the chances of people leaving their company are less.
8. From the study, we learn that the work culture in the retail industry is positive.



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9. Leadership and management, communication and collaboration, work-life balance, and opportunities for professional development are the main determinants that affect work culture.
10. Work culture has an impact on employee experience which heightens employee engagement and employee retention.

**Suggestions**

Following are a few suggestions to create a conducive work culture that would enhance employee experience:

1. To make the general work culture more positive, organizations should give a platform to employees where they can express their views and concerns. Suggestions boxes can be placed in the premise so that they can share their opinions and ideas.
2. Immediate managers should be available for feedback whenever required.
3. Organizations should create a matrix organizational structure that involves clear channels, regular updates, and open dialogue between functional and project managers to ensure alignment and address potential conflicts.
4. Employees should prioritize work tasks, structure their time, minimize distractions, take breaks during the work day, and start each day with a plan. Employers should be supportive regarding their personal emergencies or family matters.
5. Regular checks on the daily practices of employees should be done to see if their work is aligned with the company's stated values.
6. Organizations should cultivate strong workplace relationships that will lead to effective communication and collaboration.
7. Have transparent policies so that everyone in the organization knows what is expected of them.
8. Organizations should make sure that employees feel comfortable, motivate them to work, and make them feel valued.
9. Employees should be rewarded for their achievements as a sign of appreciation and recognition.
10. Setting policies and regulations that guide businesses and other leaders on specific practices, like promotions and rewards, can ensure that everyone gets the same treatment.
11. Employees should be encouraged to take on challenges and responsibilities.
12. Further studies must be conducted to understand the reasons for employees leaving their company frequently, in the retail industry.

**Conclusion**

Most of the respondents are positive towards the work culture, however, we cannot overlook a few of the respondents who are negative towards the work culture at their organization. Employers should take heed to the employees who are unhappy or negative or dissatisfied with leadership and management, communication and collaboration, work-life balance, and opportunities for professional development. When these factors make employees feel positive, then automatically company values



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and alignment will get positive, and employee experience will be positive. This in turn will increase employee engagement and decrease employee turnover rate or attract qualified talents.

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