

# **A STUDY ON THE RELATION BETWEEN ORGANISATION CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

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## **Abstract**

Employee engagement has garnered significant attention in recent years; however, critical academic literature on the subject remains limited, and the mechanisms by which management can influence engagement are not well understood. Despite the burgeoning interest, confusion persists regarding the concept of engagement. This research article seeks to clarify this by examining the interplay between organizational culture and employee engagement within a business context. Utilizing a comprehensive literature review and empirical investigation, the study explores how cultural norms within organizations affect employees' commitment and active participation in achieving organizational goals. Findings indicate that employees are more likely to engage and align with organizational objectives when they resonate with the established cultural norms. This study advances the understanding of organizational culture's relation to employee engagement, offering valuable insights for both academic research and practical management.

**Keywords:** Employee engagement, Organizational culture, Management influence, Cultural norms, Employee commitment, Organizational goals, Business context, Empirical investigation

## **Introduction**

The concept of "culture" has a long history rooted in decades-old anthropological literature. In the immediate post-war years in the United States, these concepts were first applied to organizations rather than indigenous peoples. However, it wasn't until the 1980s that the idea of "organizational culture" gained widespread recognition. Several best-selling management books from this era significantly influenced the perception that organizational culture is a critical factor in managing an organization's performance.

The study of organizational culture has grown significantly during the last ten years in various industrial contexts, including the healthcare industry. According to Hofstede (1980), culture within an organization emerges as a result of the organization's place in a specific society. Hofstede's extensive research, based on 88,000 survey responses from IBM employees in 66 countries, identified four distinct aspects of culture:

1. **Level of Individualism:** The degree to which individuals prioritize their own interests over those of the larger group they belong to.
2. **Uncertainty Avoidance:** The degree to which individuals try to lessen uncertainty versus their ability to tolerate ambiguity.
3. **Power Distance:** The extent to which interactions are formal and distant versus informal and close between superiors and subordinates.
4. **Masculinity:** The degree to which success is defined by aggression, challenge, and ambition rather than kindness and nurture.

These cultural dimensions provide a framework that helps understand how organizational culture impacts various aspects of organizational life. This study explores the intricate connection between organizational culture and employee engagement, concentrating on how cultural norms within businesses affect employees' commitment to and involvement in achieving corporate goals. Through analyzing this interaction, the study hopes to contribute to our knowledge of how organizational culture affects employee engagement and provide insightful information for both practical management and scholarly research.

In recent years, the term "employee engagement" has become increasingly prevalent and broadly used (**Robinson et al., 2004**). Despite its prevalence, most writing on employee engagement is found in practitioner journals, which often lack robust theoretical and empirical foundations. This paucity of scholarly and empirical research on such a popular topic has led some to view employee engagement as faddish or as "old wine in a new bottle."

Employee engagement can be defined in various ways. At its core, an engaged employee is a productive worker who remains committed to their job and consistently represents the company positively. According to the Hay Group, the performance of an engaged worker is "a result achieved by stimulating an employee's enthusiasm for work and redirecting it towards organizational success." This outcome is dependent on an

implicit agreement between the employer and employees, whereby the latter demonstrate actions that are consistent with and beneficial to the organization's goals. More than just a gauge of job satisfaction, employee engagement shows how passionate workforces are about their professions and their work environments. Elevated levels of employee engagement are positively correlated with increased productivity and commitment, which can yield substantial benefits for the firm. Companies with engaged employees often experience superior performance and profitability compared to those with low engagement levels.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Organizational Culture**

The human relations perspective of companies from the 1940s is where the idea of organizational culture originated, despite becoming fashionable in the early 1980s. Human relations theorists emphasized the value of informal, non-material, interpersonal, and moral bases of cooperation and commitment in contrast to rational system theorists who focused on formal, material, and instrumental controls. This perspective was inspired by earlier anthropological and sociological studies on culture within groups and communities, as shown by **Geertz (1973), Mead (1934), Durkheim (1964), and Weber (1947, 1958)**.

Organizational culture plays a critical role in fostering success as it establishes expectations for conduct (**Umrani, 2017**). These guidelines cover morals, ethics, symbolism, and appropriate language usage in conversations (**Sureci, 2017**). According to **Mashal and Saima (2014)**, organizational values and principles are developed to address environmental difficulties through group problem-solving. The organization's founders or leaders establish this culture, which the team subsequently builds upon as they resolve challenges related to both internal and external adaptation (**Odiakaose, 2018**). According to **Robert (2013)**, an effective organizational culture necessitates active employee participation in its operations. Organizational culture is defined as shared values and conventions.

Organizational culture is an integral component of the surroundings and is crucial to educational institutions' efforts to promote pride in well-thought-out organizational initiatives (**Syakur, 2011**). Early definitions of organizational culture concentrated on defining its degrees and identifying the differences between strong and weak cultures. Assumptions, beliefs, and values were among the cognitive elements that were given

priority in several definitions. Similar to the environment/values distinction made by **Kotter and Heskett (1992)**, others broadened the notion to encompass behaviors and artifacts, resulting in a contrast between the apparent and hidden levels of corporate culture.

**Schein (1992)** argues that corporate culture has become considerably more significant in the modern era due to factors such as increased competition, globalization, mergers, acquisitions, alliances, and the emergence of a diverse workforce. In light of these factors, it is essential to:

- Coordinate and integrate across organizational units to increase the speed, quality, and efficiency of the design, manufacture, and delivery of goods and services.
- Successfully introduce new technologies, such as information technology, and innovate strategies, goods, and procedures.
- Skillfully oversee geographically distributed teams and a staff that is growing in diversity.
- Create meta- or hybrid cultures as a result of mergers and acquisitions, which combine elements of many organizational cultures.
- Encourage and assist with teamwork.

### **Employee Engagement**

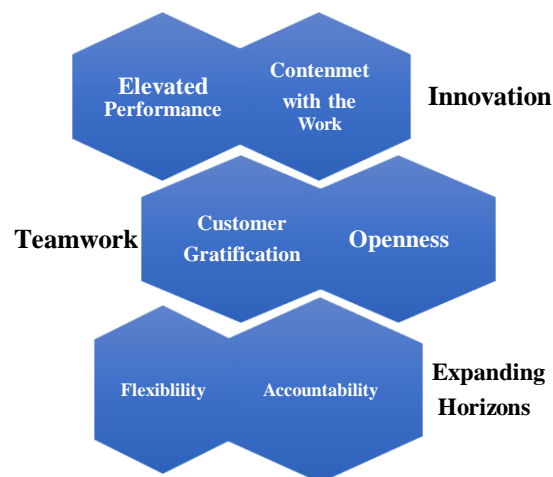
One of the initial problems identified in the literature is the lack of a consensus definition for employee engagement. **Kahn (1990)** defines employee engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles." In this environment, personnel express themselves through their body, mind, and emotions while performing their duties. Common definitions of employee engagement include the level of an employee's discretionary effort at work (**Frank et al., 2004**) or their intellectual and emotional commitment to the company (**Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006; Shaw, 2005**). **Truss et al. (2006)** reduced the definition of employee engagement to "passion for work," a psychological state that includes the three dimensions of engagement covered by **Kahn (1990)** and captures the common themes shared by all these definitions while acknowledging that employee engagement is a multifaceted construct. According to **Saks (2006)** and **Andrew & Sofian (2012)**, employee engagement is thought to function as a mediator in helping employees change their attitudes, intentions, and behaviours to perform better at work. Employers can improve

employee behaviour, intention, and attitudes toward improved work performance by leveraging employee engagement (**Andrew and Saudah, 2012**).

Furthermore, **Basquille (2013)** suggests that executives should support managers in their efforts to offer career guidance, development support, and recognition—all of which are elements that significantly raise employee engagement. According to Patro (2013), employers ought to allow workers the latitude to infuse excitement into their work and establish a work atmosphere that fosters employee engagement.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study's conceptual framework is based on the knowledge that employee engagement is largely influenced by organizational culture and that employee engagement in turn drives a range of organizational outcomes. To investigate the dynamic interaction between cultural norms and employee behaviour, this framework incorporates important theoretical viewpoints and empirical data.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the study**

**Source: Prepared by the author**

### **Findings**

The study's conclusions highlight how organizational culture has a big impact on worker engagement. Organizational culture not only shapes how employees view their responsibilities but also affects their interactions with colleagues and their support for the company's objectives. Understanding this correlation is crucial for both academic research and practical management, as it offers valuable insights into enhancing

organizational efficiency, employee satisfaction, and overall success. This impact can be observed in various facets of employee behavior and organizational outcomes.

Employee motivation to achieve at their highest level is fostered by a good organizational culture. This is accomplished by having clearly stated goals and standards that employees may follow and understand what is expected of them. Employees can achieve success in their roles when they work in an environment that fosters growth and offers the resources they need. Regularly praising accomplishments raises spirits and encourages excellence. Employee engagement and commitment are higher when they are happy with their roles and work environment. Organizational culture has an impact on employees' satisfaction and happiness. Work-life balance-promoting cultures increase job satisfaction and lower burnout. A sense of satisfaction and loyalty is fostered by a steady and secure work environment. Organizations that recognize and reward fresh ideas can greatly increase employee engagement by fostering a culture that encourages creativity and innovation. This encourages people to think creatively and make novel contributions. Employees are more inclined to innovate when they feel comfortable taking risks and trying new things without worrying about failing. Employees in cultures that prioritize ongoing learning and development are more likely to look for and use novel solutions.

Productive teamwork is a sign of a healthy company culture. This is promoted by fostering a culture where cooperation is valued and open communication strengthens team dynamics. Employee activities are more coherent and productive when they are working toward shared objectives. Teams with cultures that foster mutual respect and trust are more resilient and productive. This is impacted by organizational cultures that place a high priority on customer satisfaction and develop similar values in their staff members. Improved client experiences are the result of giving staff the freedom to decide and solve problems. Employees that work in an excellent culture are guaranteed to deliver top-notch service on a regular basis. When they perceive chances for advancement, workers are more engaged. This is facilitated by the organizational culture, which keeps workers interested and motivated by providing opportunities for training, mentorship, and career advancement. Employees can explore multiple positions and develop new abilities in cultures that encourage internal mobility and a variety of career options. A culture of growth and development is fostered when potential in employees is recognized and nurtured. Employees that operate in an

accountable culture accept responsibility for their work and its results. This is accomplished by having roles and tasks that are clearly defined, which helps staff members comprehend their accountability. employing quantifiable objectives and frequent feedback to monitor responsibility and performance. Encouraging individuals to assume responsibility for their jobs fosters a sense of accountability and involvement. Transparency and trust are essential for employee engagement, and they are fostered in an open organizational culture. Building trust and involvement inside the organization involves keeping lines of communication open at all levels. Including staff members in decision-making procedures promotes a feeling of value and belonging. Open communication and a culture of continuous improvement are fostered by welcoming and acting upon employee feedback. Workplace flexibility that takes into account the requirements and preferences of employees raises employee engagement. Flexibility can be promoted by an organization's culture by providing options like reduced workweeks, flexible hours, and remote work. Employee engagement is increased by a culture that welcomes change and helps staff members through shifts, allowing for the flexibility to manage personal obligations and recognizing and respecting them.

### **Discussion & Conclusion**

Since organizational culture influences how employees see their responsibilities, interact with co-workers, and support company objectives, it has a substantial effect on employee engagement. A positive corporate culture fosters high performance, job satisfaction, creativity, teamwork, customer satisfaction, responsibility, openness, and flexibility. This dynamic work atmosphere fosters a workforce that is dedicated, driven, and productive. Comprehending and cultivating these cultural dimensions is imperative for scholarly inquiry as well as applied management, propelling the prosperity of organizations and augmenting the welfare of employees. Such programs improve employee satisfaction in addition to organizational success and sustainability. Employee engagement is significantly impacted by organizational culture. When employees identify with the established culture standards, they are more engaged and supportive of the company's objectives. When employees feel valued and understood, their motivation to contribute to the company's success increases, leading to increased levels of creativity and productivity.

High performance is encouraged by positive corporate cultures, which establish clear expectations and give staff members the tools they need to meet them. Employees are more likely to strive for excellence in a workplace where continuous development is valued and individual and team accomplishments are acknowledged. Employee perceptions of their workplace and the extent to which their wants and expectations are met are directly related to job satisfaction. Increased job satisfaction and lower turnover rates are the results of an encouraging culture that puts an emphasis on the growth and well-being of its employees. Originality and inventiveness are fostered in societies that embrace variety of thought and promote taking risks. Employees are more inclined to solve organizational problems creatively when they feel free to voice their opinions without worrying about repercussions.

Another essential component of a healthy culture is teamwork. More cohesive and productive teams are produced in collaborative settings where mutual respect and trust are valued. This cooperation also includes customer contacts, where a contented and driven staff can greatly increase client loyalty and happiness. A culture that welcomes new opportunities and adjusts to changing circumstances must be open and flexible. Companies that encourage open communication and adaptable work schedules are better able to meet the needs of both their workforce and the market. These societies encourage flexibility and resilience.

For both academic and applied management research, it is crucial to comprehend and cultivate these cultural traits. Studies that look into the connection amongst employee engagement and business culture contribute to the accumulation of knowledge by providing fresh perspectives and conceptual frameworks for comprehending this intricate interaction. This study offers managers practical suggestions on how to cultivate a more productive and engaged team. Managers can boost engagement and enhance overall organizational performance by implementing focused cultural initiatives that emphasize the significance of cultural alignment. Creating laws and programs that support desired cultural traits is one way that this research can be put to use. These could include programs for staff recognition, leadership development, and ongoing feedback systems. Employers may develop a more devoted and productive staff by fostering an atmosphere that supports and reflects the values and goals of their workers.



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