

# Impact of Working Environment on Commitment of Employees in Corporate Retail Sector

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**ABSTRACT** - Retail organizations usually give priority to achieve good quality in their business operations. The working environment and other working conditions are integral part of successful organization. In this way, employees are able to achieve and maintain good quality in their work. The employee-employer relationship should not be looked at simply by economic terms. It is a significant human relationship of mental dependency that has great impact on the people involved and both employer and employee have moral obligations arising from this relationship.

Industrial Relation is defined as “the relationship between the employer and employee”. The employer represented by the management or association of employers and the employees are represented by trade unions. According to Clegg (1979), industrial relations are the “study of governing employment”. It is a broader definition of Industrial Relations which covers all the aspects of employment, employer and employee relationship, trade union and employee relationship, government-employee relationship and also the relationship between government and employee. Industrial relations play a decisive role in establishing and maintaining industrial democracy. The objective of this paper is to analyze the impact of working environment on commitment of employees in corporate retail sector.

**Keywords:** Working environment, industrial relations, employees, employers

## I. INTRODUCTION

Retail organizations usually offer a good quality in their business operations to satisfy the end customers. Organizations reach their goals through the motivated workforce. For this purpose, employers will focus on maintaining good working environment. The working environment and other working conditions are integral part of successful organizations. There are several factors influencing the quality of industrial relations that are beyond the control of any individual management. Factors such as political climate, multiplicity of union, economic factors like inflation and depression, market fluctuations and technological changes cannot be controlled by any individual management. This will influence the approach and behavior of the workers, their union and also the management.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work environments have many properties, components or factors that may affect both physical and psychological well-being of workers (Briner, 2000). The task and national environment includes factors such as supplier's influence,

the customer's role, the stakeholders, sociocultural factors, the national economy, technology, legislations, managerial policies and philosophies. All these go a long way in influencing people's psych and attitude towards work. Kyko (2005) posits that employee personality profile is not static. It is dynamic and changes with the working experiences in the organization environment. How well employees engage with factors in their working environments influences their error rate, level of innovation and collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and ultimately, how long they stay in the job to a great extent (Chandrasekar, 2011) which is a function of their commitment towards work. Chandrasekar identified twelve factors in workplace environment which either lead to engagement or disengagement of workers. These factors include: goal-setting, performance feedback, role congruity, defined processes, workplace incentives, supervisor support, mentoring/coaching, opportunity to apply new skills, job aids, environmental factors, and physical factors. Akinyele Samuel Taiwo (2010), states that conducive work environment stimulates creativity of employees that may lead to better methods that would enhance productivity. It is also concluded based on the T-test results that

improvement in work environment can lead to higher productivity of employees and bad working conditions contribute to low productivity of employees. Corporate organizations that must survive and grow particularly in a competitive business environment must ensure that appropriate environment for increased work performances are created. There are strong indications that a lot need to be done by employers of labor in Nigeria (both in as unfavorable to workers and therefore have negative impact on productivity. Job commitment entails three components – workers 'readiness to exert effort on behalf of the organization; workers' acceptance of organizational goals and values; and workers desires to remain with the organization (Agba, A. M. Ogaboh et al., 2010). Remuneration is not a sufficient motivator in encouraging the workplace performance required in today's competitive business environment (K. Chandrasekar, 2011). Yusuf and Metiboba, (2012) submit that job commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationships with the organization; and has implications for the decision to continue or discontinue in the organization. Job commitment therefore entails attitude or orientation towards the organization which links or attaches the individual or worker to the establishment. It is a process whereby the goals of the individual or worker are increasingly integrated with that of the organization. Working environment always influence the employees' commitment towards the organization. Working environment has been defined as the settings, situations, conditions and circumstances under which people work. Yusuf and Metiboba, (2012), defined workplace environment as composition of three major sub-environments which include the technical environment, the human environment and the organisational environment. According to them technical environment refers to tools, equipment, technological infrastructure and other physical or technical elements of the workplace. Work environment includes systems, procedures, practices, values and philosophies which operate under the control of management. In the words of Akintayo (2012), organizational environment refers to the immediate task and national environment where an organization draws its input, processes it and returns the outputs in form of products or services for public consumption. Many scholars classify the work environment into conducive and toxic environments (Assaf, & Alswalha, 2013). Conducive workplace environments give pleasurable experiences to the employees and help them actualize in the dimensions of personality profile while toxic workplace environments give painful experiences and de-actualize employees' behavior. Kyko believes that irresponsible or uncommitted employees can change to be responsible and be more committed to job in conducive work environment because such environments reinforce the self-actualizing traits in them. Workplace environment plays a vital role in motivating employees to perform their assigned work.

Working environment and leadership styles had a strong positive and significant correlation on employee retention (Lencer Achieng' Nyaura & DR Jane Omwenga.2016). Bui N. B. Khue & Ho N. Quang (2017), found that working environment has a positive relationship for Job satisfaction and increases commitment so the companies should facilitate for employees to work in a new environment if possible. For example, one or two days a week, they can sit next to their favorite colleagues or work outside the office. Company shall remodel the workspace to promote cooperation and creativity but still keep enough private space for each employee. The study aimed at establishing the influence of employee relations strategies on performance of selected firms in the telecommunication sector in Kenya (Charles W. Musundi & Dr. Joyce Nzulwa, 2018). The results showed in the study that employee relation strategies were found to significantly and positively influence performance. The strategies included work-life balance, organization communication, employee voice and employee compensation. Workplace environmental factors are antidotes that ammonize employee with their environment. In that regard, it must be meticulously and systematically integrated and harnessed by managements to ascertain their specific objectives and compete favorably in global market (Adeoye K. Funminiyi, 2018).

#### Research Questions:

1. What kind of work environment is provided to employees?
2. Are the employees committed to their jobs?
3. Are the employees seeking a good career in retail sector?
4. Is retail sector able to attract and retain their talent?

#### Objectives of the study:

1. To examine the perception of employees on Working Environment and Commitment of Employees in corporate retail sector.
2. To evaluate the impact of Working Environment on Commitment of Employees in the select corporate retail organizations based on sample characteristics of select employees.
3. To identify the deficiencies and suggest effective measures for providing good working environment in the corporate retail organizations.

#### Need of the study

It is a fact that the motivated working conditions will help the organization to reach its desired goals. The retail sector is not exceptional in maintaining good working conditions; hence current study is focused on the work environment prevailing in corporate retail sector. It is very much needed to maintain harmonious working conditions in corporate

retail sector also to attract and retain the talent. Corporate retail sector is not only providing plenty of jobs, also helping to increase the nation's economy. In these important views, the study has been taken up to investigate the prevailing working conditions and commitment of employees in corporate retail sector.

**Hypothesis of the study:**

Based on the above objectives of the study, the following hypotheses have been formulated.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the perception of select employees on Working Environment and Commitment of Employees of CROs.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the Working Environment and Commitment of Employees based on sample characteristics of select employees.

**III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING**

A questionnaire has been prepared based on the objectives of the current study. It has been prepared for employees to examine the impact of Working Environment on commitment of employees in corporate retail sector. For the purpose of administering the questionnaire, a sample of 300 respondents has been selected on the basis of random sampling method. The sample consists of Customer Sales Associates, Supervisors, Assistant Managers and Managers of corporate retail organizations. The method, therefore, consists of identifying some specific variables, for developing hypotheses, collecting data via a survey through a predetermined questionnaire which can be statistically tested in support of the hypotheses or otherwise. The period of study spans ten years from 2009 to 2018. This period is used to collect secondary data from various sources. Research Articles, Periodicals and Magazines available in Andhra University Central and Library and various Department Libraries have been used to gather supporting data. The study is confined to three select corporate retail organizations in Visakhapatnam city viz., *Central, Spencer's and Central*. The data have been analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical techniques by using SPSS-17.0. The researcher had put an attempt to analyze the relationship between the independent variables (gender, age, education, social status) and dependent variables (Working Environment and Commitment of Employees). Appropriate hypotheses have been framed for the purpose of testing.

**2.8. Sampling Techniques:**

The response of the employees in the study area was tabulated with the help of SPSS and the required tables were drawn to analyze the opinions of the respondents with the help of statistical tests to estimate the level of significance of the relationships based on their demographic

characteristics (sex, age, education, caste). In the present study, the investigator has applied five types of statistical tools to test the data and analyze the results.

**IV. RESEARCH GAP**

The previous studies have not covered the impact of working environment on commitment of employees in retail sector. Based on the gap identified, the current study has been taken up. It is an empirical and critical study which makes certain observations on the impact of working environment on commitment of employees in corporate retail sector.

The following dependent variables have been taken up for the current study.

**Table 1: Details of Dependent Variables**

Variables	Questions / Statements
DV1.	How do you rate the working environment in your organization
DV2.	The resources provided to do your job are good
DV3.	How do you rate your job schedule / working hours?
DV4.	I do not experience stress on my job
DV5.	My organization believes human resource is extremely important resource and treated humanely
DV6.	How do you rate the corporate communication structure in the organization?
DV7.	How do you rate your professional bond with the organization?
DV8.	The family members too share the pride of their association with the organization
DV9.	How do you rate attracting talent in the organization?
DV10.	How do you assess talent retention in the organization?
DV11.	Employees in the organization work collectively towards improving image, acceptability and reliability of the organization
DV12.	There is a bright future for the organization

**V. PERCEPTION OF EMPLOYEES ON WORK ENVIRONMENT**

In the contemporary times, retail organizations are facing numerous challenges due to the vibrant nature of the environment. One of the several challenges for a retail organization is to satisfy its personnel in order to handle the ever changing and evolving environment and to attain success and remain in competition. In order to increase efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and job commitment of employees, the business must satisfy the needs of its employees by providing good working conditions.

Employee relationship management is a process that organizations use to effectively manage all interactions with employees, ultimately to achieve the goals of the organization. The success of productivity improvement strategy is dependent on employee commitment, job satisfaction, skills, and motivation. The perception of

employees on twelve select variables (V1 to V12) is discussed and presented as follows:

**Table 2 : The Cumulative Results of Relationship between the Variables**

Variables	Gender (IV-1)		Age (IV-2)		Education (IV-3)		Social Status (IV-4)	
	$\chi^2$	H <sub>0</sub>	$\chi^2$	H <sub>0</sub>	$\chi^2$	H <sub>0</sub>	$\chi^2$	H <sub>0</sub>
DV1	5.11	A	51.38**	R	43.69**	R	18.96	A
DV2	3.51	A	40.39**	R	42.96**	R	17.37	A
DV3	3.53	A	74.39**	R	46.08**	R	22.61*	R
DV4	3.22	A	55.61**	R	48.49**	R	11.10	A
DV5	1.62	A	32.02**	R	56.54**	R	4.57	A
DV6	1.08	A	27.62**	R	50.44**	R	5.24	A
DV7	7.30	A	5.93	A	32.99**	R	8.71	A
DV8	6.67	A	21.10**	R	59.35**	R	24.06*	R
DV9	6.30	A	43.63**	R	76.73**	R	9.41	A
DV10	3.04	A	51.91**	R	84.74**	R	4.83	A
DV11	1.57	A	23.56**	R	62.81**	R	8.15	A
DV12	0.25	A	28.90**	R	40.73**	R	7.44	A

A-Accepted, R-Rejected

It is found that there is no significant difference in opinion between male and female respondents on the Variables (V1 to V12) whereas the results based on age, education and social status of respondents state that the opinion of respondent employees is not similar.

**10.0 CROSS SECTIONAL ANALYSIS:** The cross-sectional analysis is a research method used in developmental psychology and also utilized in many other areas including social science and education. In the current study, sample employees are classified according to gender, age, educational qualification and social status to know their perception about working environment and commitment of employees in CROs. The cross-sectional analysis is conducted and the results are presented as follows:

**10.1 Male and Female employees do not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees differently:** Retail sector is providing equal opportunities for both male and female. The perception of men and women may differ significantly in general. In order to compare the perceptions of employees, F-test has been carried out in this study.

**Table-3: ANOVA Results for IR Climate & Commitment of Employees**

	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value
Working Environment	Between Groups	6.881	1	6.881	1.768	0.185
	Within Groups	1159.556	298	3.891		
Commitment of Employees	Between Groups	.589	1	.589	0.048	0.827
	Within Groups	3671.758	298	12.321		

It is clear that the probability values, 0.185 & 0.827 are greater than 0.05 at 5% level of significance in both the cases, i.e., Working Environment and commitment of employees, hence H<sub>0</sub> is accepted. It concludes that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female employees on working environment and commitment of employees in the select corporate retail organizations.

**8.6.2. Different age group of employees does not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees differently:** Organizations need an efficient and dynamic workforce in the productive age group. The working environment in the organizations effects the commitment of employees either positively or negatively. The motivated environment will enhance the employees' commitment towards their work. In this important view, an attempt is made to know the perceptions of the employees on working environment and commitment of employees in select corporate retail organizations.

**Table-4: ANOVA Results of Working Environment & Commitment of Employees**

	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value
Working Environment	Between Groups	3.188	2	1.594	0.407	0.666
	Within Groups	1163.249	297	3.917		
Commitment of Employees	Between Groups	267.538	2	133.769	11.669	0.000
	Within Groups	3404.808	297	11.464		

The *p-value* of working environment is not significant at  $p < .05$ , whereas for commitment of employees, *p-value* is 0.000, the result is significant at  $p < .05$ . Therefore it is concluded that the different age groups of employees perceive the working environment and commitment of employees differently. Thus, their satisfaction level is different on these factors.

**8.6.3 Different educational status of employees does not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees differently:** Education is considered to be the chief means of social awareness and development. Education makes people rational thinkers. Education enlightens the human beings towards their work as well as responsibilities. In general, education increases the knowledge and understanding power of the people. Different levels of education will develop different types of perception and analyzing skills in the employees and this type of distribution of employees will bring out different types of opinions on ‘Working Environment’ of three select CROs.

**Table-5: ANOVA Results of Working Environment & Commitment of Employees**

	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value
Working Environment	Between Groups	8.079	3	2.693	0.688	0.560
	Within Groups	1158.357	296	3.913		
Commitment of Employees	Between Groups	532.794	3	177.598	16.744	0.000
	Within Groups	3139.553	296	10.607		

The *p-value* of working environment is not significant at  $p < .05$ , whereas for commitment of employees, *p-value* is 0.000, the result is significant at  $p < .05$ . It is clear that the employees’ perception is different on working environment and commitment of employees.

**8.6.4 Different Social Status of employees does not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees differently:** In order to evaluate working environment among the employees based on their social status; F-test has been carried out in the present study. The ANOVA results are presented in the Table-6.

**Table-6: ANOVA Results of Working Environment & Commitment of Employees**

	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value
Working Environment	Between Groups	30.677	3	10.226	2.665	0.048
	Within Groups	1135.760	296	3.837		
Commitment of Employees	Between Groups	46.321	3	15.440	1.260	0.288
	Within Groups	3626.026	296	12.250		

The *p-value* of working environment is significant at  $p < .05$ , whereas for commitment of employees, *p-value* is 0.288, the result is not significant at  $p < .05$ . Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the perception of respondents based on their social status towards working environment and commitment of employees in the select corporate retail organizations.

### TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

There are differences in the Working Environment and Commitment of Employees in Corporate Retail Organizations in India. The summary of the hypotheses tested in this study is presented as follows:

**Table-7: Perception of Employees on V1 to V12**

(1)	Working Environment & Commitment of Employees	IV:Gender		IV:Age		IV: Education		IV:Social Status	
		(2)	(3)	(2)	(3)	(2)	(3)	(2)	(3)
V1.	How do you rate the working environment in your organization?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V2.	The resources provided to do your job are good	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V3.	How do you rate your job schedule / working hours?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	Y	R
V4.	I do not experience stress on my job	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V5.	My organization believes human resource is extremely important resource and treated humanely	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V6.	How do you rate the corporate communication structure in the organization?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A

V7.	How do you rate your professional bond with the organization?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V8.	The family members too share the pride of their association with the organization	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	Y	R
V9.	How do you rate attracting talent in the organization?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V10.	How do you assess talent retention in the organization?	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V11.	Employees in the organization work collectively towards improving image, acceptability and reliability of the organization	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
V12.	There is a bright future for the organization	N	A	Y	R	Y	R	N	A
Column headings are: (1) Variables; (2) Significance Difference (N=No, Y=Yes); and (3) Null Hypothesis Reject (R) or Accept (A); IV (Independent Variables)									

The study is intended for knowing the impact of working environment on employees' commitment in corporate retail organizations. The analysis of this study divulges that there is a mixed opinion among the respondents on the working environment and commitment of employees. The results are stating that 18 percent of respondents are not happy with working environment. Similarly, 23 percent of respondents stated that the resources provided to do their job are not good, whereas surprisingly 62 percent of respondents are not happy with the job schedule or working hours, while more than 50 percent of respondents stated that they have not experienced any stress on their job, whereas 11 percent of respondents believe that corporate retail organizations treat human resource is extremely important, 30 percent of respondents stated that communication structure is not good, while 14 percent of respondents not agree that employees are not having professional bond with the organization, similarly 14 percent of respondents stated that their family members are not feeling proud of the organization in which retail employees are working, while 50 percent of respondents mention that CROs are failing to attract the talent, whereas 29 percent of respondents stated that CROs are not showing interest to retain the talent, surprisingly only 9 percent of retail employees state that employees work collectively towards improving image, acceptability and reliability of the organization and 88 percent of respondents mention that there is a bright future for corporate retail organizations.

**Table-8 Comparison, Cross-sectional Evaluation and Analysis on Working Environment & Commitment of Employees in CROs**

S.No.	Null Hypothesis (H <sub>0</sub> )	F-Value	P-Value	Accept/Reject
01.	Female and male employees do not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees in CROs differently.	1.768 0.048	0.185 0.827	A A
02.	Different age group of employees does not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees in CROs differently	0.407 11.669	0.666 0.000	A R
03.	Different educational status of employees does not perceive Working Environment & Commitment of Employees in CROs differently	0.688 16.744	0.560 0.000	A R
04.	Different social status of employees does not perceive Working Environment and Commitment of Employees in CROs differently	2.665 1.260	0.048 0.288	R A

*Accepted(A), Rejected (R)*

## VI. CONCLUSION

The long and irregular working hours are the major reasons for dissatisfaction of the employees in any kind of organization. With regard to this important aspect, an enquiry has been made to know the job schedule or working hours of employees in the select CROs. It is observed from the study that on an average, only 61 percent of total respondents are not happy with the job schedules and half of the total respondents experiencing stress on the job. It is suggested that the shift timings should be followed strictly by the retail organizations. The resources provided to the employees must be favorable to do the given jobs perfect. The study reveals that 23 percent of respondents are not happy with the provided resources in the CROs. It must be an obligatory to any organization to provide

required resources to the employees to do their jobs effectively. Surprisingly more than 60 percent of total respondents are not happy with their job schedule/working hours. It clearly speaks that it is a serious problem and need to reschedule the working hours by introducing proper shift system. Employees feel a stress from poor working hours and it effects employees' commitment towards the organization. The study states that communication structure is somewhat not good in CROs. More than half of the respondents mention that CROs are failing to attract talent. Astonishingly, nearly 30 percent of respondents state that CROs are failing to retain the acquired talent also. It is observed from the above study that there is an impact of working environment on the employees' commitment. The study reveals that the current discontented working

environment is depleting the commitment of the employees in corporate retail sector.

It is to recommend the CROs that the job schedules/shifts, with timings, must be placed on the notice boards to be followed strictly by all the employees and also must be compensated over time. No recreation facility is observed in all the CROs of this study, it is recommend the management of all CROs to arrange some recreational facilities to refresh and rejuvenate the employees to free from the stress in the job. Implementing reward system continuously is very much essential to motivate employees and whiin turn it creates a bonding to the employees with the organization and ultimately the working conditions in all the CROs will improve.

### FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The study was confined to working environment and commitment of employees only in the corporate retail stores. There is a scope for future research to enquire the factors for not maintaining expected working conditions and to suggest appropriate measures for improving the working conditions and motivate the employees to have a commitment in the corporate retail sector.

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