

## EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT (EXM): A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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**Abstract:** Employee Experience Management (EXM) has gained significant importance in contemporary organizational research and practice due to its profound impact on employee well-being, engagement, and overall organizational performance. This systematic review analyzed existing research on EXM, focusing on its influencing factors, outcomes on employees and organizations, and implications for organizational effectiveness. Following PRISMA guidelines, an extensive literature search was conducted on Scopus and Web of Science databases, resulting in 85 selected research articles from the last 25 years. These articles were divided into four themes: Employee Wellbeing and Health, Employee Engagement and Recognition, Technology, and Factors Influencing EX, like Organizational Culture and Leadership, Work-life Balance, and Opportunities for Growth and Development. The review found that employee experience is a multi-dimensional concept, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements of the employee-organization relationship. Positive employee experiences were consistently associated with higher job satisfaction, increased engagement, reduced turnover, and improved organizational performance. EXM was identified as a multifaceted construct, involving physical, emotional, and technological aspects of an employee's journey within the organization. The synthesis of research findings highlighted the positive associations between EXM and key organizational outcomes, such as enhanced employee engagement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced turnover rates. However, the review acknowledged limitations, as the search was limited to specific databases. Future research could explore other avenues to gain a more comprehensive understanding of EXM.

**Keywords:** Employee Experience, Employee Experience Management

### 1. Introduction:

Employee experience research traces its roots back to 1998 when researchers recognized the importance of positive experiences in shaping positive attitudes (Rucci et al., 1998). Haris (2007) supports this notion and explains that the theory of employee experience is built upon the principles of customer experience management, which is fundamental to the core of any business (Itam and Ghosh, 2020). The concept of employee experience emerged from the foundation of customer experience management, which is deeply ingrained in the essence of a business (Itam and Ghosh, 2020). It should be noted that employee experience goes beyond employee engagement as emphasized by Morgan (2017). Employee engagement focuses on short-term changes, whereas employee experience involves a long-term transformation of the entire organization (Morgan, 2017). Employee experience can be defined as the amalgamation of an employee's perceptions,

emotions, and feelings that arise from their involvement in work and within the organizational climate. These experiences serve as positive reinforcements that facilitate employee development, engagement, contribution, and long-term retention within the organization (Itam and Ghosh, 2020). Previous industry research asserts that Employee Experience (EX) plays a significant role in influencing business growth, employee engagement, productivity, profitability, and in creating a competitive advantage (Nelson and Doman, 2017).

Employee Experience (EX) encompasses the perspectives and perceptions of employees throughout their entire tenure in an organization, spanning from initial contact as potential recruits to eventual separation (Pine & Gilmore, 2019). The EX strategy prioritizes employees as central stakeholders and views them as genuine advocates for both internal and external parties (Maylett & Wride, 2017). Rather than focusing solely on physical office spaces, EX emphasizes the redesign of workplace practices and environments to align with employee needs and preferences (Maylett & Wride, 2017). It encompasses three key factors: physical workspace, technology, and culture (Vischer & Wifi, 2017). Numerous EX initiatives exist, including job design, workplace redesigns, learning and development opportunities, flexible work policies, diversity and inclusion efforts, performance management, simplification of technology experiences, and innovative HR interventions (Morgan, 2017). Organizations can shape the EX through a three-step process: managing expectations, personalizing the experience, and shaping memorable moments (Morgan, 2017). By implementing and measuring EX, organizations strive to become experiential organizations that deeply understand their workforce and create an environment that fosters employee engagement and satisfaction by redesigning physical, technological, and cultural aspects (Hsieh, 2010). The cultural environment plays a significant role in shaping a rich EX, followed by technological and physical aspects. EX revolves around how employees feel about their interactions with the employer across all touch-points, and the process of creating positive experiences is referred to as EX design (Morgan, 2017).

The idea of "Employee Experience" has gained a lot of attention recently as organizations recognize how crucial employees are to their success. Employee Experience refers to the overall journey an employee goes through within a company, including their interactions, perceptions, and emotions during their employment. It encompasses the physical, cultural, and technological aspects of the workplace and covers everything from recruitment to daily work experiences, career development, and eventually leaving the organization. The concept emphasizes the importance of creating a positive and engaging work environment that promotes employee satisfaction, productivity, and well-being. It acknowledges that employees are unique individuals with their own needs and aspirations, not just resources. By focusing on improving the Employee Experience, organizations aim to increase employee engagement, retention, and overall performance. The rises of flexible work arrangements, digital advancements, and changing workforce expectations have contributed to the emergence of the Employee Experience concept. Employees now seek fulfilling experiences that align with their values, and technology has increased their access to information and ways to voice their opinions. Research has also shown that a positive Employee Experience leads to better financial performance, customer satisfaction,

and innovation, prompting organizations to invest in creating a favorable experience for employees.

Despite growing interest, there is still a lack of consensus and clear definitions regarding Employee Experience. Employee experience is a subjective construct that varies from person to person. It can be influenced by individual differences, personal circumstances, and expectations. As a result, it can be challenging to measure and generalize findings across different individuals and organizations. The field of employee experience is still evolving, and there is no universally accepted framework or measurement tool. This lack of standardization makes it difficult to compare and synthesize research findings across studies. Conducting a systematic literature review can help consolidate existing knowledge, identify trends, and provide recommendations for future research and practice.

The objective of this paper is to conduct such a review, analyzing studies, frameworks, and best practices to gain a comprehensive understanding of the key aspects, factors, and outcomes of Employee Experience. The findings will contribute to the academic literature and provide insights for organizations seeking to improve their Employee Experience and create a thriving work environment.

**2. Methods:** The process of choosing papers adhered to the guidelines outlined in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement.

### 2.1. Information Sources:

Database and search engines employed for the search were: Scopus, Web of Science. Each database required a different detailed strategy. The last search conducted or data were extracted from Scopus database was on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and from Web of Science was on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### 2.2. Search Strategy and Selection Process:

For this systematic search; a search strategy is developed to identify relevant literature. This search strategy was tailored to two databases: Scopus, Web of Science, and the search terms used were the following: “Employee Experience” OR “Employee Experience Management”

For Scopus database: All searches spanned from database inception until 2023, limit to subject areas like ‘Business, Management and Accounting’, ‘Social Sciences’, ‘Psychology’, and ‘Arts and Humanities’; limit to the language “English” only. Filters are not used in ‘Document Type’ and in ‘Country/Territory’ and articles, conference papers, book chapters, and review papers of various countries are found from Scopus database. 67 papers from Scopus website from 1998 till June 2023 are found. The last search conducted or data is extracted from Scopus database was on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The search query of Scopus database is given below.

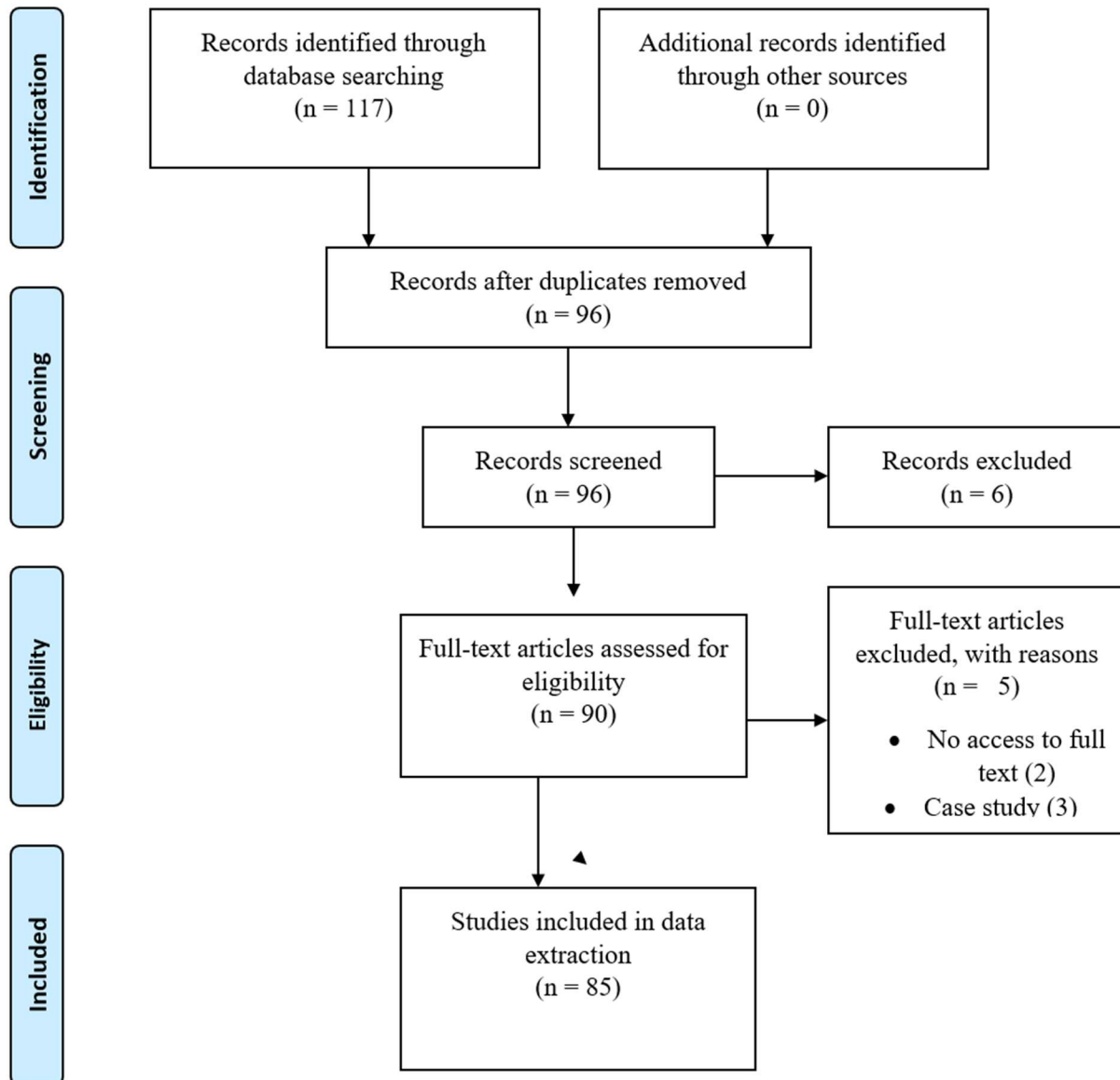
"Employee Experience" OR "Employee Experience Management" AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "BUSI" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "SOCI" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "PSYC" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "ARTS" ) ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Employee Experience" ) ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , "English" ) )

For Web of Science database: The search terms are “Employee Experience” OR “Employee Experience Management”, exactly like the search terms of Scopus database. There is no limit to

any years of publication; so the searches spanned from database inception until 2023. ‘Meeting Abstract’, and ‘Editorial Materials’ are excluded in the document types. In the ‘Web of Science categories’, limit is refined to ‘Management’, ‘Industrial Relations Labor’, ‘Business’, ‘Psychology Applied’, ‘Psychology Multidisciplinary’, ‘Social Sciences Interdisciplinary’, ‘Psychology Social’, and in Language category, and in English only. The last search conducted and data is extracted from Web of Science database was on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023. Total 50 records are extracted from Web of Science.

### 2.3. Selection Process and Data Collection:

The study is based on research articles, review papers, conference papers, and book chapters. Each record is reviewed by author. To ensure the review’s quality, a comprehensive check is performed to identify and remove any duplicate entries. After the filtration of duplicate records, 21 articles are removed from the study. Abstracts, introductions, and findings of the articles are checked deeply for the analysis and purification of the articles to ensure the quality and relevance of the academic literature included in the review process. In this step, 6 non-relevant papers are removed. Furthermore, 5 records are excluded on the ground of no access to full text and case study. 85 papers are selected after assessing each article on the aforementioned inclusion and exclusion criteria. Figure-1 depicts the PRISMA Flow Diagram illustrating the inclusion and exclusion of literature at each stage.



(Figure-1)

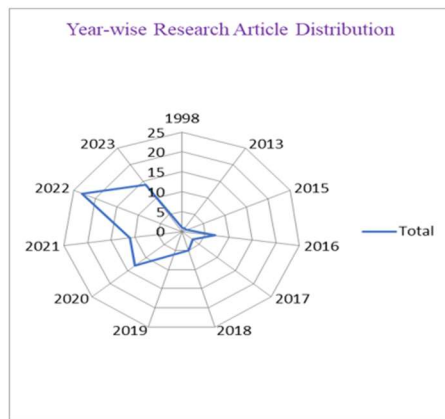
### 3. Reporting Results:

#### 3.1. Study Characteristics:

Under descriptive analysis, we have analyzed the data under four categories like- the frequency or distribution of articles based on the number of year, country wise distribution of records, the number of articles the publication houses have published, and document or paper type wise.

##### 3.1.1 Year of Publication

The first paper tackling Employee Experience in an empirical investigation was published in 1998 (n=1), showing an increasing trend until 2022 (n=23). Figure 2 and Table 1 show this trend in detail.



(Figure-2)

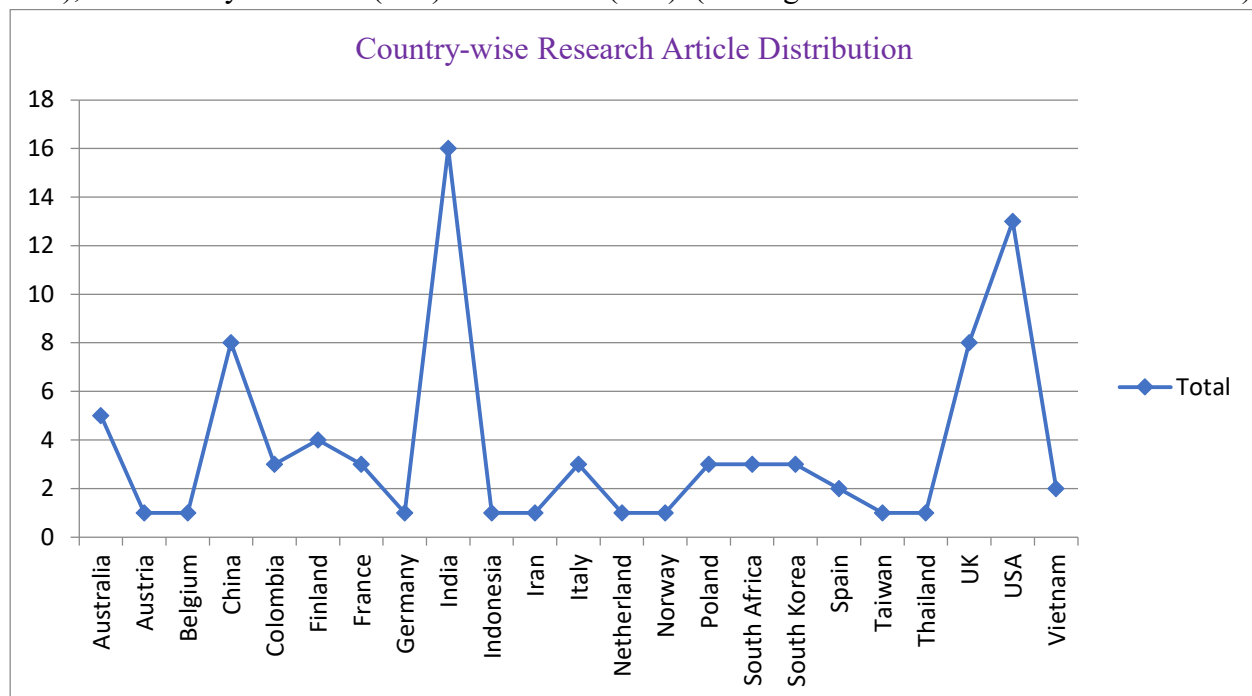
Year	Count of Publication	Year of
1998	1	
2013	1	
2015	1	
2016	7	
2017	3	
2018	5	
2019	6	
2020	13	
2021	11	
2022	23	
2023	14	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>85</b>	

(Table-1)

Figure-2 and Table-1: The chronological trend in the publication of 'Employee Experience' or 'Employee Experience Management' research papers

### 3.1.2. Country-wise:

Regarding the countries involved, India was the most represented in the selected studies (n=16), followed by USA (n=13). Consistently, most studies were conducted in UK and China (n=8 for both), followed by Australia (n=5) and Finland (n=4). (See Figure-3 and Table-2 for more details.)



(Figure-3)

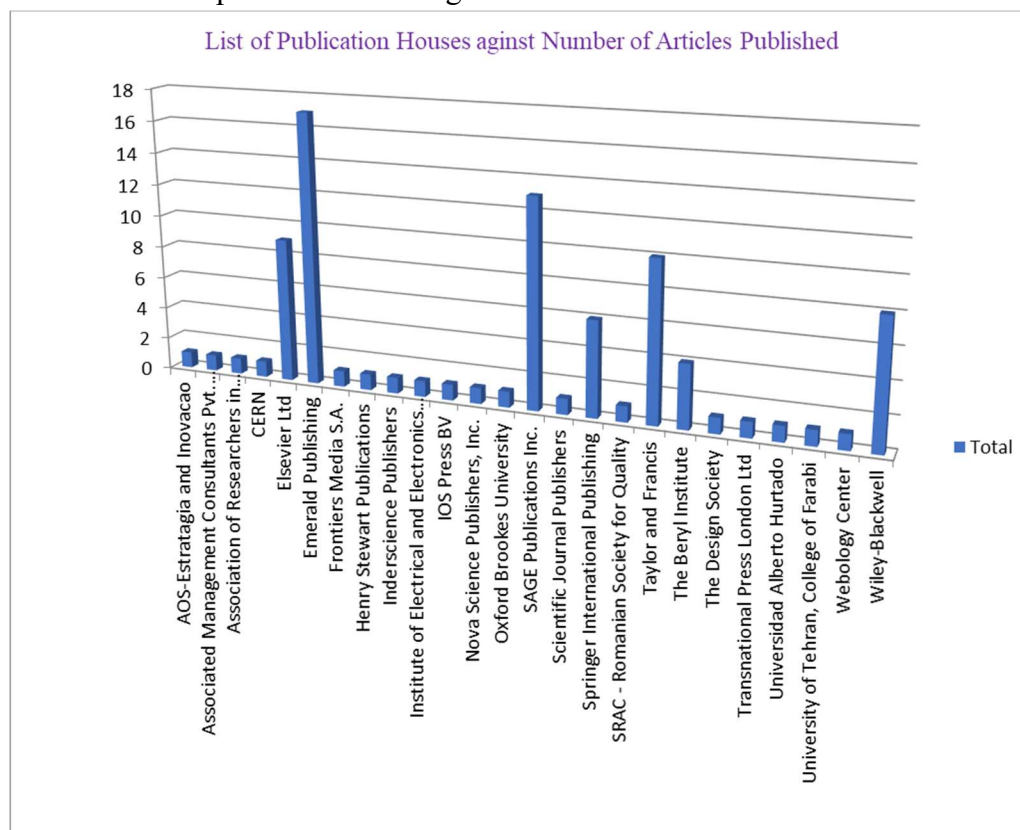
Country	Count of Articles	Country	Count of Articles
Australia	5	Italy	3

Austria	1	Netherland	1
Belgium	1	Norway	1
China	8	Poland	3
Colombia	3	South Africa	3
Finland	4	South Korea	3
France	3	Spain	2
Germany	1	Taiwan	1
India	16	Thailand	1
Indonesia	1	UK	8
Iran	1	USA	13
		Vietnam	2
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>85</b>	

(Table-2)

### 3.1.3. Number of articles the publication house has published:

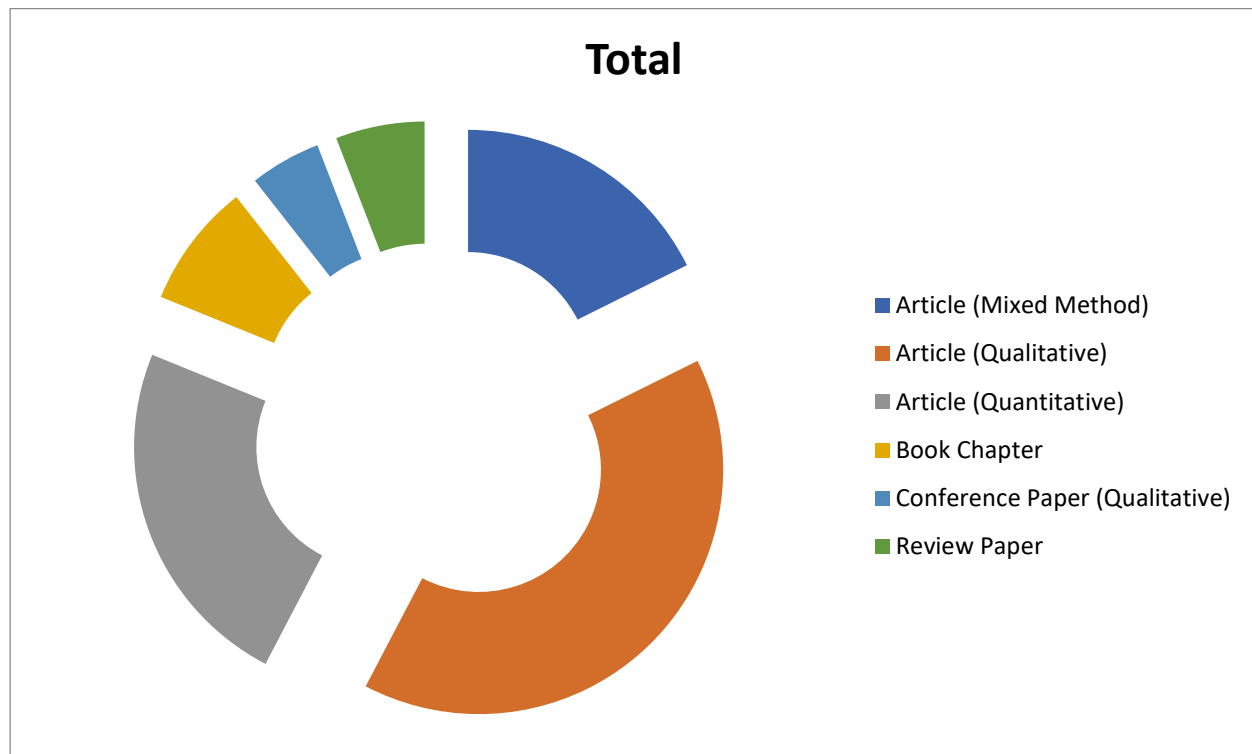
This comprehensive systematic literature review examines research articles on 'Employee Experience' published by prominent publication houses. Figure 4 represents the distribution of 85 selected works from 25 different publication houses. The vast majority of studies are from Emerald Publishing House (n=17), followed by SAGE Publications Inc. (n=13), Taylor and Francis (n=10), Elsevier Ltd. (n=9), and Wiley-Blackwell (n=8). The total list of articles published by different publication houses are represented in the figure below.



(Figure-4)

### 3.1.4. Document or Paper Type:

From the 85 selected papers for our systematic literature review, 34 articles were qualitative research, 20 articles were based on quantitative study, 15 articles were mixed method (both qualitative and quantitative) study, 4 articles were conference proceedings and were qualitative in nature. There were 7 book chapters and 5 review papers among the 85 selected studies for the comprehensive systematic literature review. Figure-5 represents the distribution of the 85 selected works in 6 types of papers.



(Figure- 5)

## 3.2. Synthesis of Results:

The systematic literature review on employee experience has identified several key themes and factors that play a crucial role in shaping the overall perception of employees within organizations. This synthesis of results provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee experience and their impact on organizational success.

### 3.2.1. Theme-1: Factors influencing Employee Experience (EX):

Numerous factors were identified in the literature as critical influencers of employee experience. These factors can be broadly categorized as follows:

#### 3.2.1.1. Organizational Culture and Leadership:

The pivotal role of organizational culture and leadership in shaping employee experience was consistently highlighted. A positive and inclusive culture that prioritizes employee wellbeing and fosters open communication was found to boost overall job satisfaction and engagement.



### 3.2.1.2. Work-life Balance:

Dhanpat, N., Makgamatha, K., Monageng, R., & Sigawuki, K. (2022) observed that, during pandemic, employees were working remotely, using online platforms to communicate, received adequate support from the organization and achieved positive work life balance, hence got positive experience. The essential aspects that significantly influence employee experience encompass receiving respectful treatment, aligning with organizational strategies, maintaining work-life balance. Pangallo, A., Atwell, T., Roe, K., & Boissy, A. (2022). The balance between work and personal life emerged as a key determinant of employee experience. Organizations that offered flexible work arrangements and supported employees in achieving a healthy work-life balance were perceived more favorably by their workforce.

### 3.2.1.3. Opportunities for Growth and Development:

Employees expressed a strong preference for organizations that provides ample opportunities for professional growth and skill development. The availability of training programs and prospects for career advancement positively influenced their over experience. According to Contreras-Cruz, A., Kirbac, A (2023), Companies have to re-skill and up-skill the workforce in order to remain competitive. Design labor policy that aligns with human needs since workers value more working with employers that align with their values. Companies can attract employees by giving career development opportunities. In multinational corporations (MNCs) or foreign-invested-firms (FIFs), career satisfaction tends to be higher compared to Vietnamese State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) due to the increased level of flexibility, recognition, and openness to change. If expatriates find their job aligning with their current career needs and aspirations, they are more likely to develop a stronger sense of attachment to their home country. Thi, Ho (2022). Skill development significantly influences the overall employee experience (EX), with employees considering salary and growth as the most critical factors contributing to their Employee Experience (EX), Joshi, A., Sekar, S., & Das, S. (2023).

### 3.2.2. Theme-2: Technology's Impact on Employee Experience:

The integration of technology into the workplace was a pervasive theme in the literature. Technological tools, such as digital communication platforms, employee-self service portals, and performance management software, played a significant role in enhancing employee experience by streamlining processes and facilitating seamless communication. According to Malik, A., Budhwar, P., Mohan, H., & NR, S. (2023), the utilization of AI-assisted applications in HRM improves Employee Experience, boosts employee productivity, and enhances the effectiveness of HR functions. Technology plays a significant role in positive employee experience. Experience is not confined to mere transactions; rather, it occurs within relationships, be it with individuals, processes, or even technology that actively engages us. Wolf, J. A. (2022). Future of work will be more dependent on technology and according to Cetindamar Kozanoglu, D., & Abedin, B. (2021), given the possibility of future of work occurring remotely at home, it becomes even more imperative to enhance the adoption of digital technologies throughout the organization and optimize employee experiences for greater effectiveness. The implementation of a wide range of AI applications focused on HRM enhances cost-effectiveness in HR operations and overall

employee experience, leading to increased employee commitment and satisfaction, while also reducing turnover rates. Malik, A., Budhwar, P., Patel, C., & Srikanth, N. R. (2022). Digital engagement increases meaningful employee experience. Ludike, J. (2018). The literature also talks about improving Digital Employee Experience (DEX). For a successful digital transformation and improved productivity, organizations need to reconsider and enhance their digital employee experience (DEX). Gheidar, Y., & ShamiZanjani, M. (2021).

### **3.2.3. Employee Wellbeing and Health:**

Employee wellbeing and health were consistently identified as crucial components of a positive employee experience. Organizations that invested in employee wellness programs, mental health support, and stress management initiatives were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and reduced turnover rates. In contemporary times, employees prioritize flexibility, recognition, personal-wellbeing, and open communication more than ever before, Contreras-Cruz, A., Kirbac, A., Dennett, C., & Daim, T. U. (2023). According to Batat, W. (2022), “The EMX (Employee Experience) framework provides a comprehensive outlook on the relationship between EMX and well-being, where the latter is considered both a driving force and an outcome of the overall EMX. EMX is a multilevel model offering a big-picture view of how the three entities– personal, social and cultural– of the organization referring to different levels of the EMX can affect employees’ well-being in terms of their functional, emotional, hedonic, and eudemonic needs. EMX generates higher levels of employee well-being mainly because of reasons: by adopting a comprehensive perspective on the EMX, EMX emphasizes the entire combination of the several pillars that describe an employee’s well-being.” Organizations need to restructure support services like cleaning, food, and IT to cater to employees’ well-being requirements. This approach ensures that employees feel supported and cared for by the organizations in every interaction and touch points. Such principles should serve as a valuable reference for those responsible for designing or making decisions related to well-being as a service (WaaS), including HR managers and CEOs. Vignoli, M., Di Norcia, M., & Bertolotti, F. (2021).

### **3.2.4. Employee Engagement and Recognition:**

Employee engagement and recognition programs were prominent themes in the literature. Effective employee engagement strategies, such as regular feedback sessions, teambuilding activities, and recognition programs, were found to enhance employee morale and overall experience within the organization. The findings include, one of the main source of employee experience inequalities is imbalance in rewards and recognition. Sońta, M. (2023).

## **4. Discussion:**

This systematic literature review on ‘Employee Experience’ provides a comprehensive and conceptual understanding of the multitude of factors and themes influencing employees’ perceptions within organizations. By examining a diverse array of research, this review unveils essential insights into the elements that contribute to a positive and fulfilling employee experience. Organizational culture and leadership emerge as pivotal determinants of employee experience. A supportive and inclusive culture, fostered by effective leadership practices, instills a sense of

belonging and satisfaction among employees. The ability of organizations to adapt their culture and leadership approaches plays a crucial role in shaping the overall employee experience.

Work-life balance stands out as critical aspect influencing employee experience. Organizations that embrace flexibility in work arrangements and prioritize employees' personal lives witness higher levels of satisfaction and engagement. Achieving a healthy work-life balance is instrumental in promoting employee well-being and productivity, impacting their overall experience positively.

Opportunities for growth and development are key factors shaping employee experience. Employees value organizations that invest in their professional growth and offer avenues for skill enhancement and career progression. Emphasizing learning and development not only drives employee engagement but also fosters a sense of loyalty and commitment.

The integration of technology into the workplace emerges as a prominent theme in influencing employee experience. Technological advancements, such as digital communication platforms, HR chat bots, and employee self service tools provide seamless access to resources, streamline processes, and facilitate communication, thereby enhancing employee experience.

Employee well-being and health play a pivotal role in shaping employee experience. Organizations that prioritize employee wellness programs and mental health support create an environment conducive to employee satisfaction and productivity. Nurturing employee well-being has a direct impact on reducing turnover rates and fostering higher retention.

Employee engagement and recognition are fundamental components of a positive employee experience. Regular feedback, recognition programs, and team-building activities nurture employee morale and job satisfaction. A culture that recognizes and appreciates employee contributions fosters a more fulfilling experience within the organization.

The implications of these findings for organizations are profound. Creating a positive organizational culture, promoting employee well-being, providing growth opportunities, embracing technology, and recognizing employee efforts all contribute to a more engaging and satisfying work environment. A positive employee experience leads to employee commitment, productivity, and reduced turnover, contributing to overall organizational success.

## **5. Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Directions:**

To sum up, the comprehensive literature review on 'Employee Experience' presents a thorough and conceptual outlook on the various factors and themes that influence how employees perceive their organizations. By focusing on these aspects, companies can foster a positive workplace atmosphere, resulting in increasing employee satisfaction, commitment, and overall organizational performance. This research serves as a priceless resource for organizations aiming to enhance employee experience amidst the constantly evolving and dynamic work environment.

The findings indicate that employee experience is a multi-dimensional concept, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements of the employee-organization relationship. Consistently, a positive employee experience has been associated with higher job satisfaction, increased employee engagement, reduced turnover, and enhanced organizational performance.

Organizations that prioritize and invest in cultivating a positive EX are more likely to attract and retain top talent, leading to a competitive advantage in the market.

At the same time, this review acknowledges certain limitations. Firstly, the review was conducted based on the scholarly articles available until June 2023. Secondly, we extracted records from Scopus and Web of Science databases only for this review. Third, our eligibility criteria excluded non-English papers. It is reasonable to assume that research conducted in various languages could have made a significant contribution to this review.

Looking ahead, future research recommendations include prioritizing longitudinal studies to better understand the dynamic nature of employee experience over time. Performing cross-cultural research on employee experience can illuminate the influence of cultural variations on employees' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors within the workplace. By analyzing findings from various cultural backgrounds, organizations can devise more inclusive and efficient approaches to enhance employee experience across global teams. Making the identification and evaluation of successful interventions and best practices to improve employee experience a top priority for future research is crucial. These discoveries can serve as a guiding framework for organizations to develop targeted initiatives aimed at enhancing workplace culture and promoting employee well-being. Our intention is that this review will act as a necessary shared foundation for future research on Employee Experience (EX).

## 6. Registration:

OSF Pre-registration citation: SWAIN, P. (2023, June 27). Employee Experience Management: A Systematic Literature Review. Retrieved from [osf.io/wmey5](https://osf.io/wmey5)

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