

# **Creating a Sustainable Neurodiverse Workforce in the Australian Retail Sector**

*Final Report of the project “Creating a Sustainable Neurodiverse Workforce in the Australian Retail Sector”*

This report was prepared for:

Australian Retailers Association

This report was prepared by:

Dr. Muhammad Ali, Dr. Katherine Moore, Ms. Maria Hameed Khan, and Ms. Ranjita Islam  
November 2021

---

### **Cite this report**

Ali, M., Moore, K., Khan, M. H., & Islam, R. (2021) *Creating a Sustainable Neurodiverse Workforce in the Australian Retail Sector*. Queensland University of Technology, School of Management.

### **Note**

This report is not for external publication without approval from the Australian Retailers Association. This report is a deliverable under the terms of the QUT Services Agreement with the Australian Retailers Association, which sought to understand *Creating a Sustainable Neurodiverse Workforce in the Australian Retail Sector* and supported by a systematic literature review and survey conducted with 502 respondents.

### **Funding**

This report was funded by the Australian Retailers Association.

### **Acknowledgements**

We acknowledge the Australian Retailers Association for supporting this project and supervisors and employees from the retail industry for taking part in this study.

We would also like to thank Professor Gary Mortimer for guidance on industrial projects and reports.

---

## ***Executive Summary***

Neurodiversity refers to variations in neurocognition including autism (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, and Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) (otherwise known as dyspraxia) (Sumner & Brown, 2015). Emerging literature is focusing on neurodiversity related higher-order cognitive functioning, such as creativity and comprehension, that could be beneficial to organisations (Austin & Pisano, 2017; Hurley-Hanson, Giannantonio & Griffiths, 2020). However, HR practices designed for neurotypical workers, such as recruitment and selection (Richards, 2012), are likely to exclude neurodiverse individuals from employment. Organisational mechanisms, such as neurodiversity human resource practices, inclusive workplace, inclusive leadership, ethical climate, and procedural justice in the workplace, can be effective in managing negative perceptions of neurodiversity, improving affective commitment, increasing wellbeing, and reducing intention to leave (Johnson, Ennis-Cole & Bonhamgregory, 2020, Waisman-Nitzan, et al., 2019). Yet, little research has explored neurodiversity and these organisational mechanisms in the Australian retail sector.

The Australian retail industry, being a popular employment sector, has the potential to become the largest industry to employ neurodiverse Australians and to provide sustainable employment for these workers. This study highlights ways in which the Australian retail sector can create sustainable employment for neurodiverse workers to address the high unemployment rate of neurodiverse Australians. A quantitative approach was undertaken to examine and test the current understanding of the benefits and challenges of working with neurodiverse individuals in the retail sector from frontline retail staff, and the underlying organisational mechanisms that support sustainable employment for neurodiverse employees. The key insights from this study, outlined below, followed by key recommendations will facilitate Australian retail organisations in developing a sustainable neurodiverse workforce.

## ***Summary of Key Insights***

1. The most common forms of neurodiversity are autism, ADHD, dyslexia, anxiety and depression..
2. The retail workforce is neurodiverse.
3. Australian retail organisations offer a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices.
4. Neurodiversity HR practices are moderately effective.
5. Supervisors and employees agree on a range of benefits of neurodiversity in retail.
6. Supervisors and employees agree on some challenges of neurodiversity in retail.
7. Inclusive leadership in retail is only moderate.

- 
8. Social inclusion in retail is only moderate.
  9. Ethical climate in retail is only moderate.
  10. Procedural justice in retail is only moderate.
  11. Affective commitment of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.
  12. Wellbeing of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.
  13. Turnover intention of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.
  14. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more neurodiverse workforce.
  15. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more committed workforce.
  16. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have employees with low turnover intention.
  17. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with highly inclusive leadership.
  18. Neurodiversity HR practices leads to lower turnover intention in workplaces with high social inclusion.
  19. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with high procedural justice.

### ***Summary of Key Recommendations***

1. **Forms and level of neurodiversity.** Organisations should make efforts to increase awareness and education pertaining to a range of neurodiverse conditions through training, visibility, support, and the need for putting reasonable adjustments into place.
2. **Neurodiversity practices and their effectiveness.** Australian retail organisations should improve their neurodiversity HR practices, enhance awareness of their existing offerings of neurodiversity practices, and educate supervisors and employees about the potential benefits of neurodiversity and investigate reasons for the low effectiveness of such practices.
3. **Benefits and challenges of neurodiversity.** Proactive efforts need to be made by retailers to improve the perceptions of various benefits of neurodiversity. Human resource managers should run focus group sessions with staff to further unpack the most salient challenges and their drivers in order to effectively address them.

- 
4. **Moderate levels of commitment, wellbeing, and turnover intention.** Organisations should also create an environment where neurodiverse individuals can freely discuss their condition and ask for associated accommodations and adjustments, as a lack of open communication and access to accommodations might be contributing to moderate levels of commitment, wellbeing, and turnover intentions.
  5. **Impact of neurodiversity HR practices on employee outcomes.** Leadership should consider implementing and promoting neurodiversity HR practices to enhance affective commitment and reduce turnover intention among supervisors and employees.
  6. **Role of contextual factors in capitalising on neurodiversity HR practices.** Managers and supervisors should be provided training around developing an inclusive leadership style for enhancing the positive effect of neurodiversity HR practices on wellbeing. Supervisors and leaders should take action to promote more social inclusion among employees for long-term retention of employees. Leaders should focus on developing a strong sense of procedural justice by emphasising fairness and consistency in job-related decisions to enhance employee wellbeing.
  7. **Future Research.** Australian retailers should also support additional research to explore and understand the complexities associated with managing a neurodiverse workforce. The findings will provide effective solutions to challenges faced by organisations, leading to sustainable neurodiverse workplaces.

---

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
Summary of Key Insights .....	3
Summary of Key Recommendations .....	4
Key Aims .....	8
Method .....	9
Key Insights .....	11
Insight 1. The most common forms of neurodiversity are autism, ADHD, dyslexia and anxiety, depression.....	11
Insight 2. The retail workforce is neurodiverse. ....	12
Insight 3. Australian retail organisations offer a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices. ....	13
Insight 4. Neurodiversity HR practices are moderately effective. ....	15
Insight 5. Supervisors and employees agree on a range of benefits of neurodiversity in retail. ....	17
Insight 6. Supervisors and employees agree on some challenges of neurodiversity in retail. ....	19
Insight 7. Inclusive leadership in retail is only moderate. ....	20
Insight 8. Social inclusion in retail is only moderate. ....	22
Insight 9. Ethical climate in retail is only moderate. ....	23
Insight 10. Procedural justice in retail is only moderate. ....	25
Insight 11. Affective commitment of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.....	26
Insight 12. Wellbeing of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees. ....	27
Insight 13. Turnover intention of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.....	28
Insight 14. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more neurodiverse workforce.....	30
Insight 15. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more committed workforce. ....	31
Insight 16. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have employees with low turnover intention. ....	32
Insight 17. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with highly inclusive leadership.....	33
Insight 18. Neurodiversity HR practices lead to lower turnover intention in workplaces with high social inclusion.....	35
Insight 19. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with high procedural justice. ....	37
Key Recommendations .....	38
Conclusion .....	41

---

Limitations and Future Research ..... 41

Reference List ..... 42

Appendix..... 45

---

## ***Key Aims***

Societal expectations demand the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workforce (Grover and Soldatic, 2013). However, Australia experiences one of the highest rates of unemployment of people with disabilities in the OECD, reflecting a lack of sustainable employment opportunities for people with neurodiversity among other forms of disability (Lantz & Marston, 2012). Neurodiversity refers to variations in neurocognition including conditions such as autism (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, and Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) (otherwise known as dyspraxia) (Sumner & Brown, 2015). In Australia, people with neurodivergent conditions, such as adults with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, Tourette's syndrome, and depression, experience higher unemployment (34.1%), more than three times the rate of people with physical disability (10.3%) and eight times the rate of people without disability (4.6%) (ABS 2019). Many people with neurodivergent conditions have extraordinary skills that can be transferred to appropriate jobs (Austin & Pisano, 2017). For example, human resource (HR) management literature suggests neurodiversity fosters innovation, creativity, and improved problem-solving (Rao & Polepeddi, 2019; Austin & Pisano, 2017). Yet, the neurodiverse population remains largely untapped in the employment market. Diversity and inclusion strategies are developed at higher managerial levels and often are not focused on neurodiversity. If organisations adopt neurodiversity HR practices, the low employment rate for people with neurodivergent conditions would improve and organisations would also be able to leverage the skills of a neurodiverse workforce. (Moore et al., 2017).

The retail industry is a popular sector providing employment opportunities in Australia; hence they have the potential to become a leading industry in employing neurodiverse Australians. Nevertheless, diversity and inclusion strategies are difficult to execute and maintain in retail at the shopfloor level due to contextual pressures. Developing HR practices that accommodate a neurodiverse workforce will help retail organisations build a socially inclusive work environment (Rao & Polepeddi, 2019). However, there is little knowledge to date of the benefits and day-to-day challenges of managing and working within a neurodiverse workforce from the frontline retail staff perspective. Additionally, there is a lack of evidence from the 'shopfloor' level to inform how HR practices, including recruitment, training, and performance management, can be formulated to facilitate sustainable employment for neurodiverse individuals whilst managing workplace challenges that are specific to the retail sector. This leads to the existence of limited guidelines for implementing neurodiverse HR strategies and practices within retail workplaces which largely amplifies the problem of low employment for neurodiverse individuals. To address this research gap, this report aims to:

- Provide insights into the forms and level of neurodiversity prevalent in the retail sector,



- Gain knowledge of the benefits and challenges associated with neurodiverse workplaces from a frontline staff perspective,
- Inform HR practices for implementing and managing neurodiverse employment strategies to create sustainable employment opportunities for neurodiverse individuals in retail, and
- Highlight the retail sector's role in addressing the high unemployment rate of neurodiverse Australians.

## ***Method***

A quantitative approach was undertaken in this study to examine frontline staff perceptions of the benefits and challenges of working in a neurodiverse workplace. An online survey was conducted to investigate the perceptions of frontline staff. This is expected to inform how HR strategies and practices can be designed to create sustainable employment, whilst considering any associated challenges specific to the retail sector. Response data from Likert scale-based survey questions were then analysed using the hierarchical regression technique. A participant information sheet outlined the nature and purpose of the research project for the respondents (Appendix 1).

After a careful data screening and cleaning process, the study contains valid responses from 502 retail supervisors/employees who are currently living in Australia (Table 1). A panel data provider (Qualtrics) was paid to recruit participants due to their wide range of panel members. This method provides a better distribution of the participants than a snowballing method (e.g., recruiting from friends) or recruitment from self-organized platforms such as M-Turk. A strict screening process was followed to assure the quality of the data, which included the usage of screening questions, attention check questions, and elimination of speeders. As shown in Table 1, the participants were broadly split between two groups: supervisors and employees. Each group was categorised into six further sub-groups: gender, age, years in role, years in retail, number of employees in the store, and number of employees in the organisation. Considering there is limited evidence of studies conducted on neurodiversity, we managed to obtain a good sample size.

*Table 1. Demographics of survey participants*

<b>Supervisors (241)</b>		<b>Employees (261)</b>	
	<b>N (sample size)</b>		<b>N (sample size)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		<b>Gender</b>	
Male	93	Male	102
Female	148	Female	157
		Prefer not to say	2
<b>Age Group</b>		<b>Age Group</b>	
18-24 years	51	18-24 years	96

25-34 years	103	25-34 years	88
35-44 years	51	35-44 years	41
45-54 years	19	45-54 years	22
55 years or over	17	55 years or over	14
<b>Years in Role</b>		<b>Years in Role</b>	
Less than 6 months	19	Less than 6 months	29
Between 6-12 months	34	Between 6-12 months	41
Between 1-3 years	60	Between 1-3 years	74
Between 3-5 years	51	Between 3-5 years	51
Over 5 years	76	Over 5 years	64
Prefer not to say	1	Prefer not to say	2
<b>Years in Retail</b>		<b>Years in Retail</b>	
Less than 6 months	3	Less than 6 months	11
Between 6-12 months	16	Between 6-12 months	29
Between 1-3 years	30	Between 1-3 years	60
Between 3-5 years	48	Between 3-5 years	64
Over 5 years	143	Over 5 years	95
Prefer not to say	1	Prefer not to say	2
<b>No. of Employees in your Store</b>		<b>No. of Employees in your Store</b>	
Less than 10	59	Less than 10	57
10-30	75	10-30	92
31-100	52	31-100	57
101-200	28	101-200	25
More than 200	25	More than 200	12
Not sure	2	Not sure	12
		Prefer not to say	4
<b>No. of Employees in your Organisation</b>		<b>No. of Employees in your Organisation</b>	
Less than 10	41	Less than 10	40
10-30	17	10-30	26
31-100	42	31-100	21
101-200	31	101-200	23
More than 200	100	More than 200	108
Not sure	10	Not sure	40
		Prefer not to say	3

---

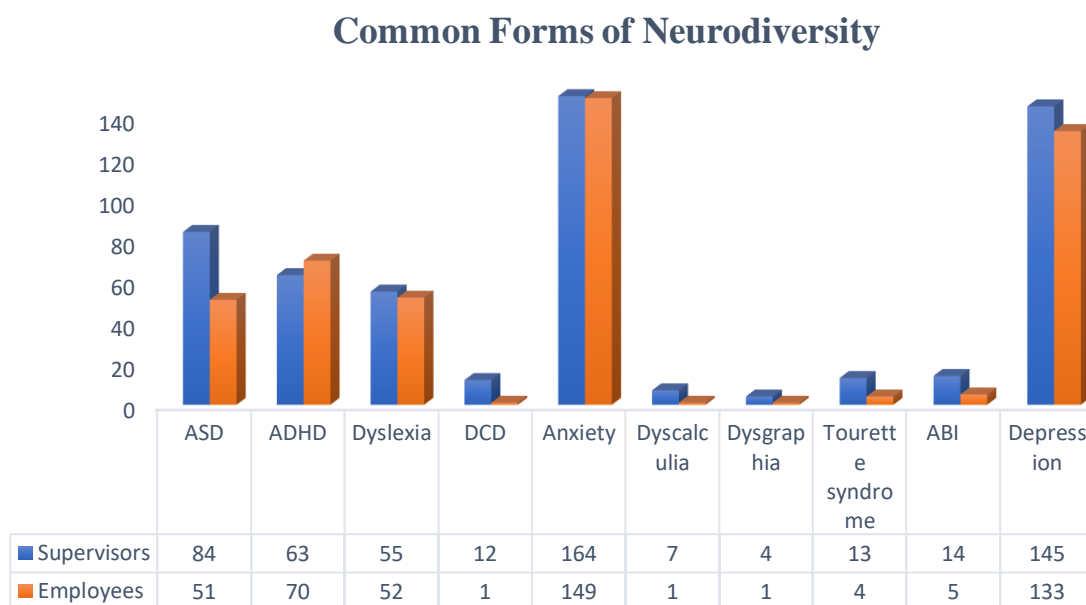
## Key Insights

The following insights summarise the key findings from the quantitative research undertaken to address the research aims listed above:

***Insight 1. The most common forms of neurodiversity are autism, ADHD, dyslexia and anxiety, depression.***

Empirical research suggests, if co-workers are aware of the neurological conditions of their colleagues, they generally become supportive of the special accommodation needs (Ameri et al., 2018). This awareness can facilitate inclusion efforts and create a strong and positive organisational culture towards neurodiversity (Patton, 2019). To understand the common forms of neurodiversity present in the retail sector from the perspectives of the respondents, they were asked about their knowledge of employees/colleagues who identify themselves as having autism, ADHD, dyslexia, anxiety, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, Tourette syndrome, acquired brain injury and/or depression.

The results show that the most common forms of neurodiversity recognised by supervisors and employees in the retail workforce are depression and anxiety. This is followed by ASD, ADHD, and dyslexia. Other conditions such as developmental coordination disorder (DCD), dyscalculia, dysgraphia, Tourette syndrome, and acquired brain injury (ABI) are among the least common forms of neurodiversity present in the retail workplace. Figure 1 represents the data on common forms of neurodiversity in retail.



*Figure 1. Common forms of Neurodiversity.*

---

## Implications and Recommendations

The prevalence of anxiety, depression, autism, ADHD, and dyslexia are common in the retail workforce. This requires building more awareness and educating supervisors and employees about these forms of neurodiversity to provide an appropriate working environment for neurodiverse individuals. Moreover, the results show that there is a low presence of other forms of neurodiversity in the retail workforce which include developmental coordination disorder (DCD), dyscalculia, dysgraphia, Tourette syndrome, and acquired brain injury (ABI). This highlights that individuals with these neurological conditions may not have disclosed their conditions. Moreover, a lack of knowledge may result in ineffective HR practices or discrimination in the hiring process against job applicants with these neurological conditions.

Human resource (HR) managers in retail organisations should also institute mechanisms and a safe environment encouraging existing employees with underreported forms of neurodiversity, to disclose and seek accommodations if required, for example job redesign, aids, and adaptations. Moreover, specific HR practices should be designed to be inclusive and provide specific attention towards a range of neurological conditions and forms of neurodiversity prevalent in the workforce. Furthermore, the least common forms of neurodiversity require further investigation to examine the cause of their low presence and take appropriate actions to make the retail workforce more neurodiversity inclusive.

### ***Insight 2. The retail workforce is neurodiverse.***

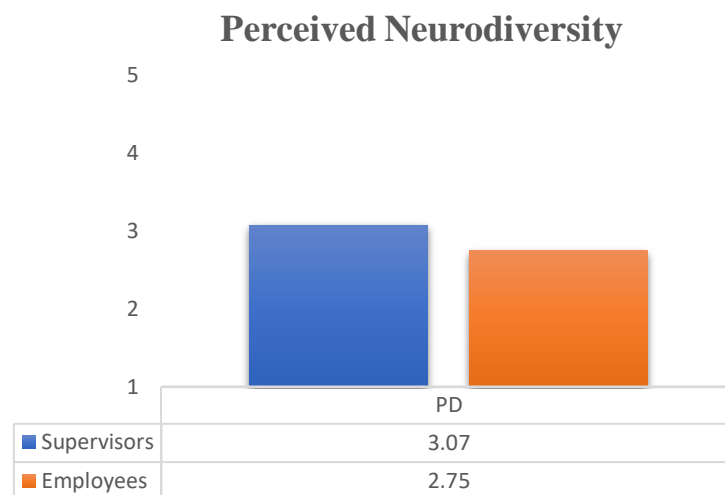
Perceived neurodiversity captures members' beliefs about neurodiversity within their team (Hentschel et al., 2013). Based on this notion, participants were asked if they think about neurological differences among their employees/colleagues when describing their workplaces or their teams. Participants were also asked about their awareness of neurological differences among their employees/colleagues (see list 1).

#### List 1: Perceived Neurodiversity

- When I am supposed to describe my workplace, I automatically think about the neurological differences among my colleagues.
- I am very aware of the neurological differences among my colleagues.
- I think about the neurological differences among the colleagues in our team.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from 1 'never at all', 2 "rarely", 3 "sometimes", 4 "often", to 5 "always." (Alpha = .77; Hentschel et al., 2013).*

The results show that supervisors and employees recognised the presence of neurological differences in the retail workforce as shown in Figure 2. There was a statistically significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=3.731$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).



*Figure 2. Perceived Neurodiversity.*

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The respondents have identified a moderate level of neurodiversity in their workforce which indicates that they are aware of a range of neurological conditions present among their team members and across the organisation. The presence of neurodiversity in the retail workforce requires end-to-end management of neurodiversity with differential and specific attention paid towards a range of neurological conditions and forms of neurodiversity prevalent in the workplace.

#### ***Insight 3. Australian retail organisations offer a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices.***

The success of a neurodiverse workforce depends on awareness and understanding of neurodiversity through training and increased visibility, putting required adjustments into place, and support and acceptance of neurological conditions by employers (Bewley & George, 2016). To understand the level of neurodiversity HR practices in Australian retail organisations, supervisors and employees were asked about their perceptions of their organisations' neurodiversity HR practices (see list 2).

#### **List 2: Neurodiversity HR practices**

- P1. My organisation has an explicit policy on neurodiversity.
- P2. My organisation takes action to raise awareness of neurodiversity.

My organisation explicitly writes policies in relation to neurodiversity for each of these areas:

- P3. The recruitment processes.
- P4. On recruitment/induction.
- P5. Training.
- P6. Performance appraisal and management.
- P7. Retention.

---

P8. Progression.

My organisation takes special measures to ensure people with neurological conditions are not disadvantaged in:

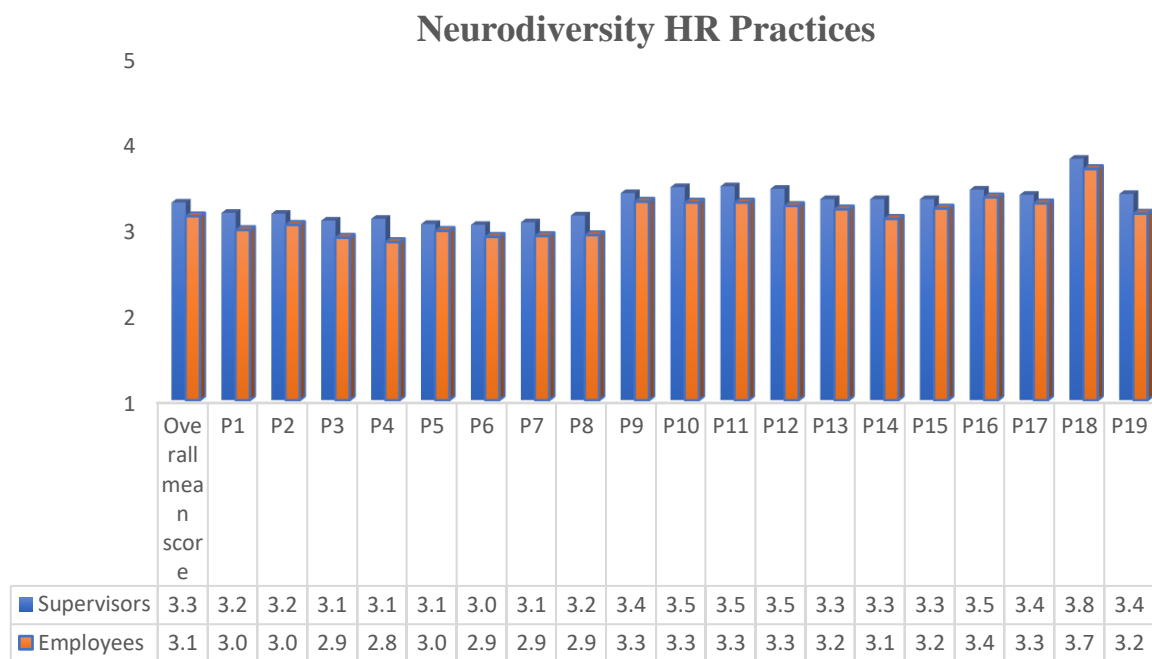
- P9. The recruitment processes.
- P10. On recruitment/induction.
- P11. Training.
- P12. Performance appraisal and management.
- P13. Retention.
- P14. Progression.

My organisation does the following to help employees and potential recruits with neurological conditions:

- P15. Job redesign (tasks, time, teams) e.g., adjusting start and finish times; assigning particular tasks to other team members, etc.
- P16. Movement between jobs e.g., moving people to a more suitable job.
- P17. Aids and adaptations (Use of Access to Work; or paid for by the employer)
- P18. Action against bullying
- P19. My organisation talks to other employees to improve the employment of people with neurological conditions.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Bewley & George, 2016).*

There was a statistically significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=2.016$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Overall, the results show that Australian retail organisations have a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices in place. However, supervisors and employees perceived a moderate level of the offering of different neurodiversity practices. None of the neurodiversity practices reached the level of agree (4) among the respondents. Moreover, employees have a slightly lower perception across all dimensions of neurodiversity HR practices (see Figure 3).



*Figure 3. Neurodiversity HR Practices.*

## Implications and Recommendations

Australian retail organisations have a wide range of neurodiversity practices in place, but the average offering of these practices is moderate. This suggests that the offering of existing neurodiversity practices needs to be improved. Moreover, supervisors and employees require proper education and awareness to be more informed of the neurodiversity practices of their organisations. Otherwise, organisations may not be able to reap the potential benefits of a neurodiverse workforce. Increased efforts should be made to introduce specific organisational policies, job redesign, movement between jobs, aids, adaptations and action against bullying and make recruitment, selection, training and development, performance management and reward management to be more inclusive for neurodiversity.

### ***Insight 4. Neurodiversity HR practices are moderately effective.***

Culture of inclusion refers to an organisational environment that allows diverse people to work together effectively and perform to their highest potential that helps to achieve organisational objectives (Pless & Maak, 2004). Such a vision of inclusion requires the development of HR practices that value diversity and where everyone is respected and heard. To understand the perceptions of respondents of the effectiveness of their organisations' neurodiversity HR practices, they were asked about the employment, progression, retention, and inclusion of neurodiverse employees in their workforce (see list 3).

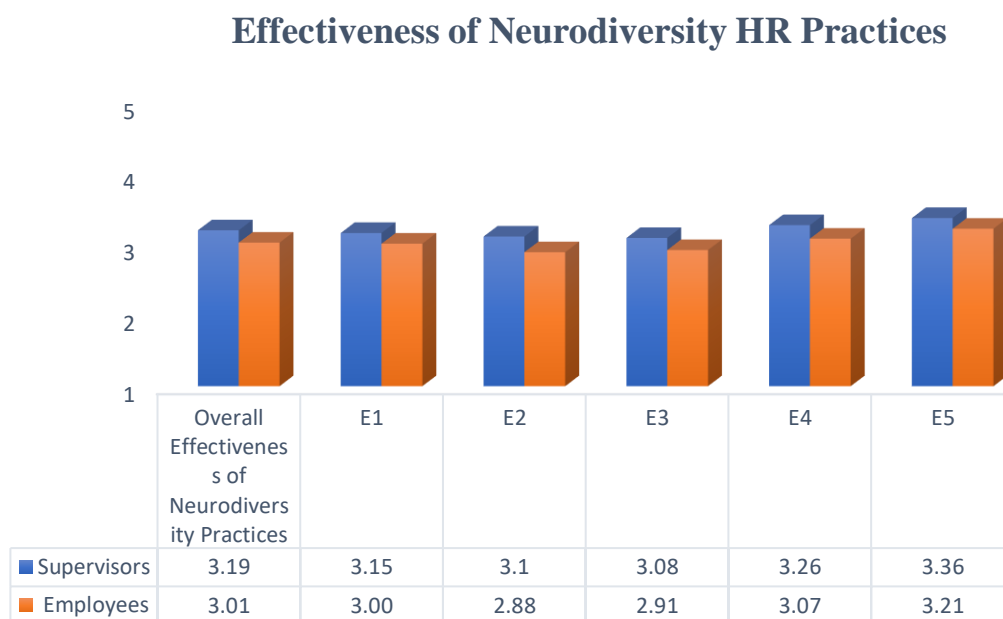
### List 3: Effectiveness of neurodiversity HR Practices

The above-noted neurodiversity practices are effective in terms of:

- E1. Employment of neurodiverse individuals?
- E2. Progress of neurodiverse employees?
- E3. Retention of neurodiverse employees?
- E4. Inclusion of neurodiverse employees?
- E5. Inclusion of other employees?

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree.”*

The results show that neurodiversity HR practices are moderately effective. There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=1.935$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). In an inclusionary approach, differences are recognised, valued, and engaged (Pless & Maak, 2004). Both supervisors and employees have a moderate perception of their neurodiversity practices to be effective in the employment of neurodiverse individuals (E1). While many organisations have diversity policies, they often do not show desired results in practice (Pless & Maak, 2004). To understand how effective the neurodiversity practices are, the participants were also asked about their perception of the progression and retention of neurodiverse employees (E2, E3). For both of these dimensions, employees had a slightly lower perception. Both supervisors and employees have a moderate perception of the effectiveness of neurodiversity practices in the inclusion of neurodiverse employees and other employees (E4, E5) (see Figure 4).



*Figure 4. Effectiveness of Neurodiversity HR Practices.*



---

## Implications and Recommendations

Although there is a wide range of existing neurodiversity practices in the retail workplace, the effectiveness of those practices is only moderate. These perceptions might make it harder for retail organisations to continue to offer these neurodiversity practices, let alone to increase the number of practices. Moreover, if the effectiveness is not perceived high by the members of the organisation, it may not have an actual impact on building and retaining a neurodiverse workforce. Retail organisations need to further investigate the reasons for the perceived low effectiveness of neurodiversity HR practices and focus on the context where neurodiversity practices can be perceived as most effective. Retail organisations should make efforts to change the perceptions of the effectiveness of neurodiversity practices by highlighting how they positively impact and facilitate day to day work for neurodiverse employees.

### *Insight 5. Supervisors and employees agree on a range of benefits of neurodiversity in retail.*

Many neurodiverse individuals have talent that makes them capable of working productively in organisations, however, they remain deprived of possible work opportunities because of the lack of proper knowledge on the part of the employers (Robinson, 2013). Therefore, it is important to understand how supervisors and employees recognise the benefits of a neurodiverse workforce in retail. Based on this notion, we used a scale to ask supervisors and employees about the extent to which they agree with the benefits of having a neurodiverse workforce (see list 4).

#### List 4: Benefits of neurodiversity in retail

- B1. Other workers and management could learn a lot from neurodiverse employees.
- B2. Neurodiverse employees would improve our workplace diversity.
- B3. It would be good for the reputation of our organisation.
- B4. The organisation would benefit because neurodiverse employees are very reliable.
- B5. The organisation would benefit because neurodiverse employees are very productive.
- B6. Neurodiverse employees are very creative and innovative, and this would be good for our workplace.
- B7. Neurodiverse employees are always safe in the workplace.
- B8. Having neurodiverse employees would create a positive workplace.
- B9. Having neurodiverse employees would encourage management to treat all workers as individuals and respect everyone's needs.
- B10. Neurodiverse individuals should be able to work in any job they want, including retail.
- B11. The human resource practices would become more inclusive for everyone if my organisation hired more neurodiverse workers.
- B12. Everyone would benefit from working with neurodiverse employees. (Johnson et al., 2020; Paton, 2019).

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree.”*

The results show that supervisors and employees agreed with a range of benefits of having a neurodiverse workforce in retail. Almost all benefits were equally recognised by both supervisors and employees (see Figure 5).

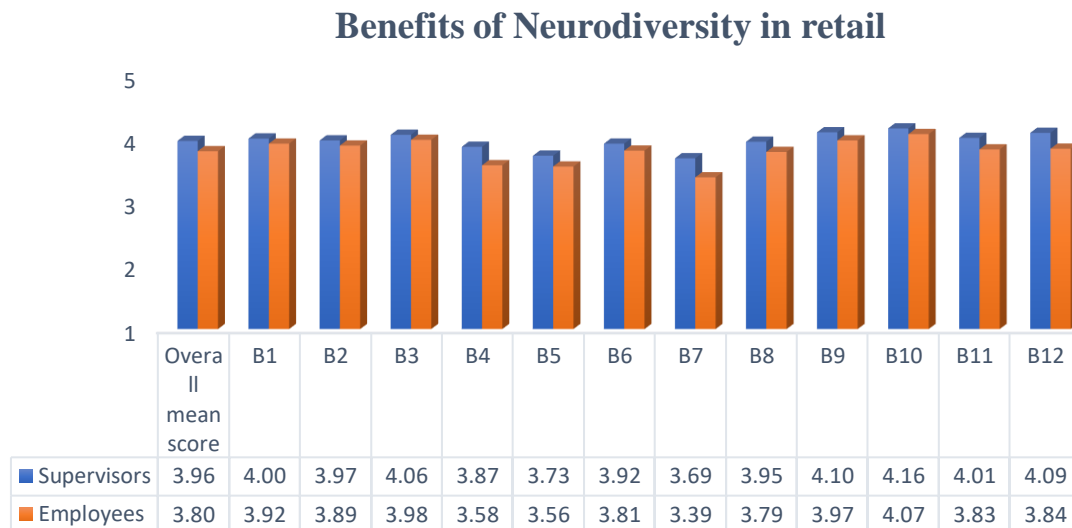


Figure 5. Benefits of Neurodiversity in retail.

The mean scores for supervisors versus employees had a statistically significant difference ( $t=2.861$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Supervisors and employees perceive the benefits of having a neurodiverse workforce across the dimensions, including mutual benefits of working together (B1), diversity in the workplace (B2), and enhancing organisational reputation (B3). Supervisors and employees agree with the benefits that neurodiverse employees are reliable (B4), productive (B5), innovative (B6), safe (B7), and thus help in creating a positive workplace (B8). They also encourage the hiring of neurodiverse individuals for jobs in retail (B9, B10, B11, B12) supporting the arguments of Krzeminska et al. (2019) ‘*obvious tangible benefits are created through the employment and integration of a neurodiversity workforce*’.

### Implications and Recommendations

The results indicate that neurodiversity is perceived to bring a range of benefits to the retail workforce. Both supervisors and employees are convinced of these benefits. Retail organisations should embrace and effectively manage neurodiversity to reap the actual benefits of having a neurodiverse workforce. Proactive efforts should be made by retailers to create awareness of the benefits of neurodiversity in the workforce and the need to capitalise on these benefits through improved neurodiversity HR practices. Organisations can stimulate this through the development of diversity initiatives and specific policies on neurodiversity.

---

***Insight 6. Supervisors and employees agree on some challenges of neurodiversity in retail.***

People with neurodivergent conditions may encounter challenges to attain and retain jobs despite possessing the necessary skill sets and qualifications (Johnson et al., 2020). Based on this notion, we investigated the challenges of neurodiversity in the retail workplace as perceived by supervisors and employees (see list 5).

**List 5: Challenges of Neurodiversity in retail**

- C1. Neurodiverse employees may not want to tell management of their condition.
- C2. Neurodiverse employees may not want to tell co-workers of their condition.
- C3. Other workers may not understand how the co-worker's condition may affect their workplace.
- C4. Other workers may view neurodiverse employees as non-productive.
- C5. Other workers may view neurodiverse employees as being treated differently by managers.
- C6. The pace of the work at my workplace would be too fast for neurodiverse employees.
- C7. There would not be any positions for neurodiverse employees at my workplace.
- C8. Customer service would be too difficult for neurodiverse employees.
- C9. Management would not treat neurodiverse employees well.
- C10. Other workers would not treat neurodiverse employees well.
- C11. Retail is not a good career/job for neurodiverse employees.
- C12. My workplace would not be able to make adjustments for neurodiverse employees to be successful.
- C13. The human resource practices in my organisation would not be fair for neurodiverse employees.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Richards, 2012; Sumner & Brown, 2015).*

There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=1.084$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Both supervisors and employees think that five challenges are more salient namely, neurodiverse employees may not want to tell management of their condition (C1), neurodiverse employees may not want to tell co-workers of their condition (C2), other workers may not understand how the co-worker's condition may affect their workplace (C3), other workers may view neurodiverse employees as non-productive (C4), and other workers may view neurodiverse employees as being treated differently by managers (C5). All other challenges were only moderately highlighted by both supervisors and employees (see Figure 6).

## Challenges of Neurodiversity in Retail

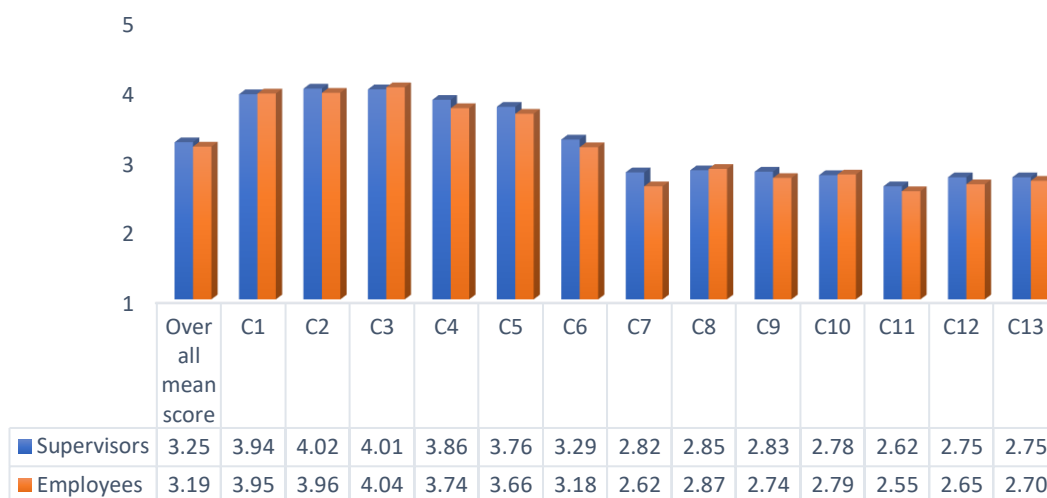


Figure 6. Challenges of Neurodiversity in retail.

This shows that neurodiverse individuals can excel at retail tasks, and they should be provided with the opportunity to build a career in this field. Therefore, this report is expected to dispel some of the stereotypes that employers have towards people with neurological conditions that are not corroborated by research (Johnson et al., 2020).

### Implications and Recommendations

The perceived challenges of having neurodiversity in the retail workforce have two implications. First, neurodiverse employees may not feel comfortable disclosing their neurological conditions to the management and their co-workers for fear of facing discrimination. Second, supervisors and co-workers may not be fully aware of the neurological differences in their workplace which may have an impact on neurodiversity processes and outcomes. More awareness and education about workforce neurodiversity are needed for supervisors and employees in order to avoid any misconceptions. Organisations can run focus groups with staff and offer opportunities for open and confidential discussion to understand the challenges experienced by them. This will help to ensure a safer and supportive workplace for neurodiverse individuals where they can freely communicate their condition and ask for associated accommodations and adjustments.

#### ***Insight 7. Inclusive leadership in retail is only moderate.***

A hierarchical, individualised leadership approach hinders inclusiveness and creates obstacles for the development of creative and innovative potential inherent in a diverse workforce (Pless & Maak, 2004). Inclusive leadership on the other hand is practiced through collaboration, recognition of employee voice and open communication with staff. To understand the inclusivity of leadership

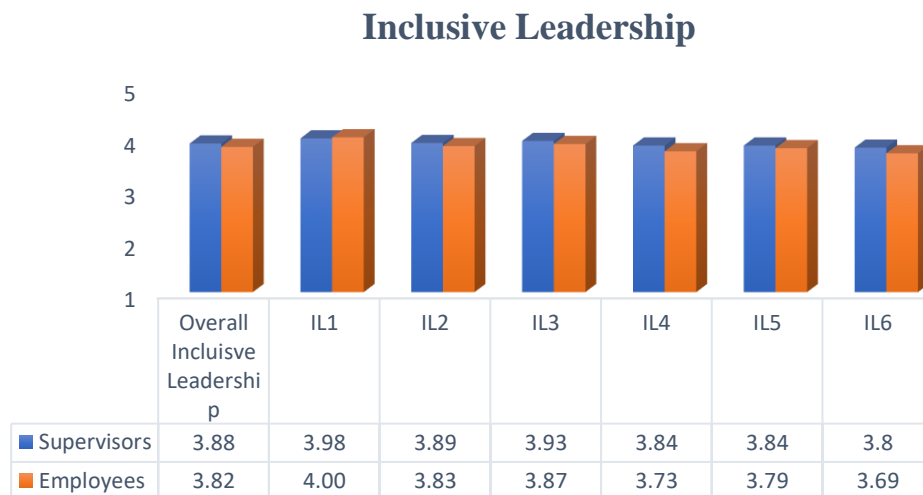
practice in retail, respondents were asked about their perception of inclusive leadership in their workplace (see list 6).

#### List 6: Inclusive leadership

- IL1. My supervisor shows respect and recognition for others.
- IL2. My supervisor shows appreciation for different voices.
- IL3. My supervisor encourages open and frank communication.
- IL4. My supervisor cultivates participative decision-making and problem-solving processes.
- IL5. My supervisor shows integrity and advanced moral reasoning.
- IL6. My supervisor uses a cooperative leadership style.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Pless & Maak, 2004; Zheng et al., 2017).*

The results show that both supervisors and employees were slightly above moderate in their perceptions of inclusive leadership at their workplaces. There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=.804$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Both supervisors and employees agreed with the different dimensions of inclusive leadership including showing respect and recognition for others (IL1), appreciation for different voices (IL2), encouraging open and frank communication (IL3), cultivating participative decision-making and problem-solving processes (IL4), showing integrity and moral reasoning (IL5), and using a cooperative leadership style (IL6) (see Figure 7).



*Figure 7. Inclusive Leadership.*

#### Implications and Recommendations

Supervisors and employees perceived a moderate level of inclusive leadership in their workplaces. This may have a negative impact on the effectiveness of neurodiversity practices impeding the

---

potential benefits of having a neurodiverse workforce and increasing challenges. There is a need to introduce training for managers to further evaluate and develop their leadership styles to be more inclusive. Developmental workshops can be provided to introduce an awareness of benefits associated with inclusive leadership and develop appropriate competencies and practices.

***Insight 8. Social inclusion in retail is only moderate.***

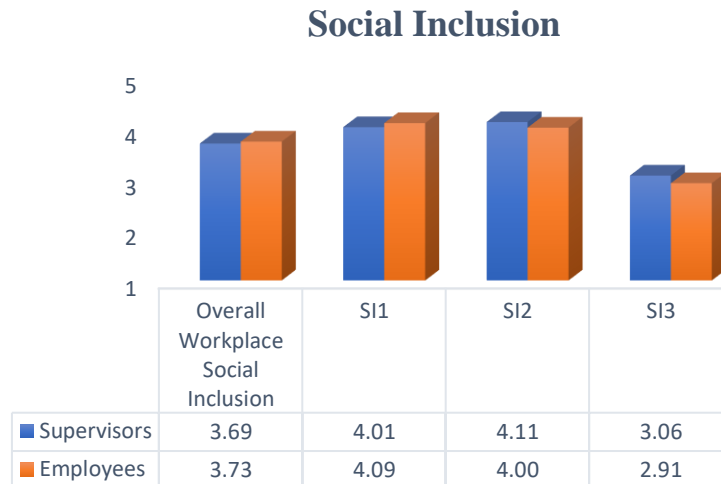
Perceived workplace social inclusion refers to the perception of employees about their acceptance and recognition in the workplace (Chen & Tang, 2018). Inclusion reflects the positive experience and psychological satisfaction of employees in their organisations (Mor Barak et al., 1998). To understand workplace social inclusion perceived by the respondents, they were asked if they feel accepted in their team, included in activities at work, and whether they ever feel like an outsider (see list 7).

**List 7: Social Inclusion**

- SI1. I feel like an accepted part of a team.
- SI2. I feel included in most activities at work.
- SI3. Sometimes I feel like an outsider.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Chen & Tang, 2018; Pearce & Randel, 2004).*

The results show that overall social inclusion in retail is perceived by supervisors and employees as slightly above-moderate. There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for employees versus supervisors ( $t=-.480$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Both supervisors and employees agreed with the dimensions of feeling of being accepted as part of the team (SI1) and included in most activities at work (SI2). Feeling like an outsider (SI3) was comparatively lower, with supervisors displaying a slightly higher perception of feeling like an outsider than employees (see Figure 8). The dimensions of workplace social inclusion were measured based on the notion that inclusion-related feelings are the key to the psychological satisfaction and performance of diverse employees (Robinson et al., 2013).



*Figure 8. Social Inclusion.*

### Implications and Recommendations

A moderate level of social inclusion perceived by supervisors and employees may create obstacles in achieving job-satisfaction. This may also lead to low productivity and performance among employees. Employees may not also feel comfortable in their working environment resulting in poor communication and a reluctance to disclose their neurological condition and associated needs. This will have an overall impact on organisational processes and outcomes. Supervisors and leaders should take action to promote social inclusion among employees. There should be opportunities for open communication horizontally and vertically across the organisation. This will foster a sense of being valued and accepted among the members of the organisation enhancing their perceptions of social inclusion.

### *Insight 9. Ethical climate in retail is only moderate.*

Ethical work climate constitutes the prevailing perceptions of organisational practices and procedures with ethical content (Victor & Cullen, 1988). Perceptions of ethical climate shape employee attributions about perceived organisational support and how they respond to perceived support (Zagenczyk et al., 2020). To understand the perceptions of supervisors and employees in retail, they were asked about the ethical climate in their organisations (see list 8).

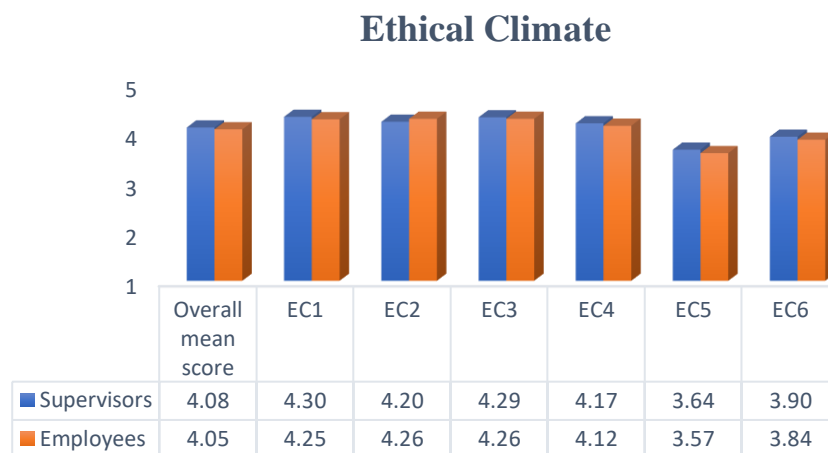
#### List 8: Ethical Climate

- EC1. At organisation, people are expected to comply with the law and professional standards.
- EC2. It is very important to follow the company's rules and procedures here.
- EC3. Everyone is expected to stick by company rules and procedures here.
- EC4. In this company, people are expected to strictly enforce legal or professional standards.

EC5. In this company, people are guided by their own personal ethics.  
 EC6. People in this company strictly obey company policies.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Victor & Cullen, 1988; Zagenczyk et al., 2020). Short (6-item) Version used by Zagenczyk et al. (2020). Alpha of short version .90.*

Overall, both supervisors and employees agreed to the different dimensions of ethical climate, but the perceptions are not very high. They moderately agreed with the perceptions that employees are guided by their ethics (EC5), and everyone strictly obeys company policies (EC6). Although participants agree that company rules and procedures should be strictly followed by everyone in the organisation (EC1-EC4), they have a comparatively lower perception of obeying the policies in reality. There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=.635, p>0.05$ ). We focused on measuring perceived organisational ethical climate because it affects how employees interpret workplace conditions (Zagenczyk et al., 2020) and their judgement and decision-making including hiring decisions (Victor & Cullen, 1988) which may affect the hiring of neurodiverse individuals (see Figure 9).



*Figure 9. Ethical Climate*

## Implications and Recommendations

The perception of the dimensions of ethical climate is not very high among supervisors and employees. The results denote that while there are organisational policies in place, there may be lapses in the level of compliance by staff in retail organisations, which may give rise to potential discriminatory behaviours. Managers and supervisors should be provided training around developing ethical standards. Proactive efforts should be made to emphasise the importance of complying with high ethical standards for the betterment of organisational processes and outcomes.



---

**Insight 10. Procedural justice in retail is only moderate.**

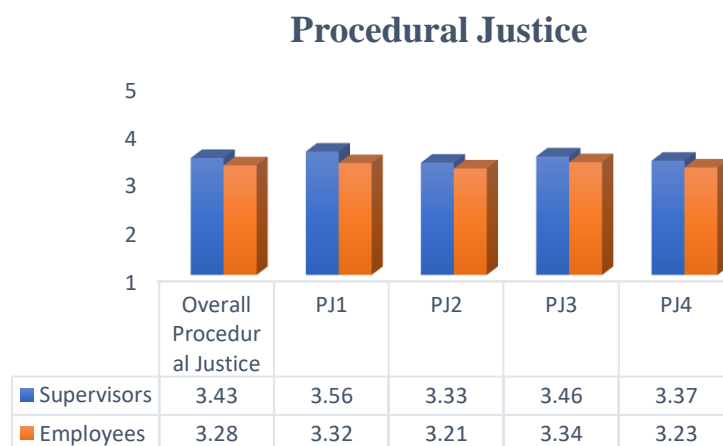
Procedural justice refers to the degree to which those affected by organisational decisions perceive them to have been made fairly and as per the guidelines (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). To understand how procedural justice is perceived by supervisors and employees in retail, they were asked about the fairness of job-related decisions made by their organisations, the chance of making their voices heard before job decisions are made, the consistent application of job decisions across all affected employees, and the opportunity to challenge or appeal job decisions made by their organisations (see list 9).

**List 9: Procedural Justice**

- PJ1. Job-related decisions are made by my organisation in an unbiased manner.
- PJ2. My organisation makes sure that all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made.
- PJ3. All job decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees.
- PJ4. Employees are allowed to challenge or appeal job decisions made by my organisation.

Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993).

The overall results show that procedural justice is not very highly perceived by supervisors and employees. There was a statistically non-significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=1.832$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Literature on procedural justice posits that if a procedure helps to satisfy one of these - consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, representativeness, or ethicality rules - an individual will consider it fair (Leventhal, 1980). However, the mean scores against each of the dimensions of procedural justice show that both supervisors and employees have a moderate perception of the procedural justice present in retail (see Figure 10).



*Figure 10. Procedural Justice.*

---

## Implications and Recommendations

A moderate level of perceived procedural justice implies that employees may feel that their voices are not heard, and job-related decisions are not perceived as fair and consistent. This may give rise to perceived discrimination across all areas of HR including recruitment, training, and development. Organisations should revisit their procedural justice policies and practices to redesign them to be more inclusive and fairer. HR practices in particular should be developed to highlight transparency, consistency, and fairness.

### ***Insight 11. Affective commitment of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.***

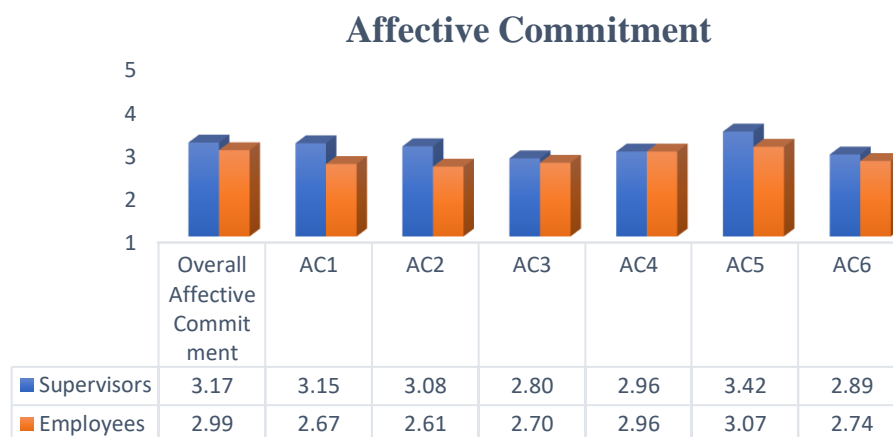
To understand the commitment of supervisors and employees to their organisations, affective commitment was measured against six dimensions (see list 10).

#### List 10: Affective Commitment

- AC1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation.
- AC2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
- AC3. I do not feel like 'part of my family' at this organisation.
- AC4. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation.
- AC5. This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
- AC6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organisation.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree", 2 "somewhat disagree", 3 "neither agree nor disagree", 4 "somewhat agree" and 5 "strongly agree". (Alpha .87; Meyer et al., 1993).*

The results show that overall affective commitment among the retail workforce is moderate. Supervisors have a slightly higher level of affective commitment than employees. There was a statistically significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=2.650$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Supervisors showed moderate commitment to spending the rest of their careers in their organisations (AC1) and to feeling their organisational problems as their own (AC2). Employees have low levels of commitment for these two dimensions of affective commitment. Both supervisors and employees moderately agreed with organisations bearing a personal meaning for them (AC5). Supervisors and employees also scored moderate with feeling like a family in their workplace (AC3), having an emotional attachment towards their organisations (AC4), and having a strong sense of belonging to their respective organisations (AC6) (see Figure 11). The results reiterate that affective commitment is a complex and multifaceted construct and can depend on multiple factors (Meyer et al., 1993).



*Figure 11. Affective Commitment*

## Implications and Recommendations

If supervisors and employees do not demonstrate a high level of affective commitment, this may have a negative impact on their level of productivity and performance. Employees with moderate affective commitment may not be contributing to the organisation to their full potential which will have an impact on their productivity and organisational outcomes. Retail organisations should concentrate on improving the affective commitment of its supervisors and employees by providing opportunities for training, development, and communication. This will, in turn, increase the motivation of the employees and enhance their engagement with the organisation. Organisations must revisit their HR practices to tailor them to the needs of the employees that will raise employee affective commitment.

***Insight 12. Wellbeing of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.***

To understand how supervisors and employees perceive wellbeing in retail, the participants were asked if they experienced health issues, nervousness, and stress and/or had a feeling of not being able to cope with the things they had to do in the last 3 months (see list 11).

### List 11: Wellbeing

WB1. How often are you bothered by minor health problems such as headaches, insomnia, or stomach upsets?

WB2. During the past 3 months, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?

WB3. During the past 3 months, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?

*Responses were categorised on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “very often”, 2 “often”, 3 “sometimes”, 4 “rarely” to 5 “never”, with higher scores more desirable. (Alpha .74; Nomaguchi et al., 2005).*

There was a statistically significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=3.505$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The results show that on average, supervisors and employees perceive a moderate level of wellbeing. Supervisors felt slightly fewer health problems (WB1) and difficulty in managing tasks than employees (WB3). However, employees felt slightly more nervous and stressed than supervisors in the last 3 months (WB2) (see Figure 12).

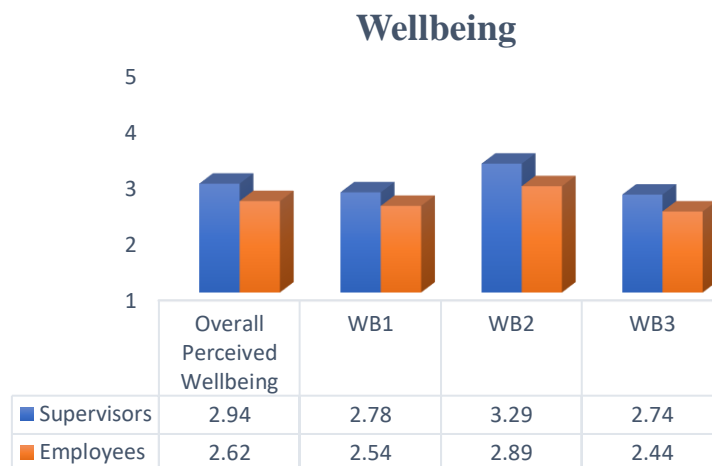


Figure 12. Wellbeing.

## Implications and Recommendations

If the level of perceived wellbeing is not high, the performance of the employees will be adversely affected, which may result in low productivity and increased absenteeism. This will also negatively impact the culture and climate of the workplace. Managers and supervisors need to pay greater attention towards the wellbeing of the employees because often these problems are not disclosed or properly communicated. Supervisors need to be provided with training to identify stressors and triggers to identify if employees are not being productive and if not, be able to investigate the reasons. Organisations should introduce wellbeing programs and offer opportunities for employees to openly discuss their concerns and specific needs.

***Insight 13. Turnover intention of the retail workforce is moderate, with slightly higher levels among supervisors than employees.***

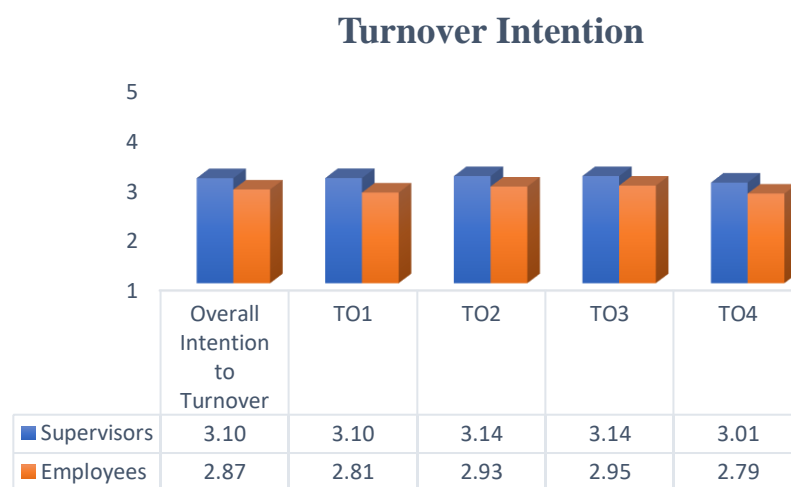
In the present era of globalisation, one of the persistent problems in organisations is turnover. To understand participants' organisational commitments, they were asked about their turnover intention against four dimensions (see list 12).

List 12: Turnover Intention

- TO1. I am thinking about leaving this organisation.  
 TO2. I am planning to look for a new job.  
 TO3. I intend to ask people about new job opportunities.  
 TO4. I don't plan to be in this organisation much longer.

*Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” to 5 “strongly agree”, with lower scores more desirable (Alpha .93; Kelloway et al., 1999).*

Overall, turnover intention in retail is moderate with supervisors having a slightly higher intention to turnover than employees (see Figure 13). There was a statistically significant difference between mean scores for supervisors versus employees ( $t=2.081$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).



*Figure 13. Intention to Turnover*

## Implications and Recommendations

The turnover intention is not very low as perceived by supervisors and employees. This indicates that there is room to develop the right practices that will retain the employees through inclusive neurodiversity practices. The intention to turnover may reflect the low commitment of employees to their organisations and ultimately influence their productivity. Providing more inclusive environment and neurodiversity policies and practices may reduce turnover intentions of the employees. The neurodiversity policies should foster progression and development of employees which would lead to retention. Specific performance management plans and training and development opportunities can be introduced for this purpose. Further investigation needs to be conducted on the factors that trigger turnover intentions among employees to address them properly.

---

***Insight 14. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more neurodiverse workforce.***

The absence of neurodiversity HR practices may impede the actual recruitment of a neurodiverse workforce (Moore et al., 2018). Based on this notion, an analysis was performed to test the effect of organisational neurodiversity practices on neurodiversity in retail. The analysis controls for the effects of gender (male/female), age (18-34, 35 and above), role (supervisors/employees), years in the role (up to 3 years, 3+ years), years in retail (up to 3 years, 3+ years), store size (up to 100 workers, 100+), and organisation size (up to 100 employees, 100+). Given the sample size, the previously mentioned multiple categories of age, years in role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size were collapsed into two categories for each variable to reduce the number of variables in the regression analysis. The results are displayed in Table 2.

*Table 2: Impact of Neurodiversity Practices on Workplace Neurodiversity*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	6.738	.000
Gender	-.263	.281
Age	.084	.762
Role	-.884	.001
Years in Role	.139	.635
Years in Retail	-.761	.017
Store Size	.676	.030
Organisation Size	-.452	.092
Neurodiversity Practices	.052	.000

The results show that neurodiversity HR practices (unstandardised coefficient=.052) have a positive effect on workplace neurodiversity. This effect of neurodiversity practices on neurodiversity in the workplace was statistically significant ( $p<.001$ ). Previous literature also highlighted a significant positive relationship between inclusive organisational disability practices and the facilitation of recruitment of people with disabilities in the workforce (Moore et al., 2018). Our findings further extend the relationship by showing the importance of having neurodiversity HR practices to encourage the employment and retention of neurodiverse individuals contributing to enhanced workplace neurodiversity (Post et al., 2010).

### **Implications and Recommendations**

Neurodiversity HR practices work as a driving factor in building an inclusive neurodiverse workforce. The presence of neurodiversity practices will provide a favourable environment for neurodiverse

individuals to address their needs which will increase employee affective commitment and decrease intention to turnover. This will also pave the way of hiring more neurodiverse individuals into the workforce. Retail organisations should look at improving their neurodiversity practices that will help to build a more inclusive neurodiverse workforce. Organisations should proactively promote their diversity and inclusion initiatives to attract neurodiverse workers.

***Insight 15. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have a more committed workforce.***

Affective commitment is viewed as a psychological state characterising the employees' relationship with the organisation influencing the decision to continue or discontinue citizenship in the organisation (Meyer et al., 1993). Quality HR practices can improve employees' affective commitment toward their organisations (Lee et al., 2018). Based on this notion, an analysis was performed to test the effect of organisational neurodiversity HR practices on retail supervisors' and employees' affective commitment. The analysis controlled for the effects of gender, age, role, years in the role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size divided into categories as mentioned above. The results are displayed in Table 3.

*Table 3: Impact of Neurodiversity Practices on Affective Commitment.*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	13.763	.000
Gender	.676	.076
Age	.796	.066
Role	-.659	.095
Years in Role	.251	.584
Years in Retail	.379	.444
Store Size	-.703	.148
Organisation Size	-.542	.194
Neurodiversity Practices	.073	.000

The results show that neurodiversity HR practices (unstandardised coefficient=.073) have a positive effect on participants' affective commitment. This effect of neurodiversity practices on participants' affective commitment was statistically significant ( $p<.001$ ). Previous literature also highlighted a significant positive relationship between inclusive organisational practices and employees' attitudes toward their workplace including psychological contracts (Chang et al., 2011; Abdullah and Boyle, 2015; Suazo et al., 2009). Our findings further reinstate this relationship by showing the importance

---

of having neurodiversity practices to enhance supervisors' and employees' affective commitment to their organisations.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The presence of neurodiversity HR practices improves the affective commitment of employees. This contributes to decreasing turnover intention among employees and can foster a socially inclusive workplace environment. Retail organisations should look at improving the existing offering of neurodiversity practices to include more specific policies and practices to cater to individual needs. This will improve the affective commitment of the employees.

#### ***Insight 16. Organisations with a wide range of neurodiversity HR practices have employees with low turnover intention.***

Satisfied employees are more likely to be committed to their organisations which decreases their intention to quit from jobs (Yin-Fah et al., 2010). Therefore, organisations that invest in inclusive HR practices are perceived to gain employee satisfaction, which in turn help employees to feel attached to their organisations (Lee et al., 2018). Based on this notion, an analysis was performed to test the effect of organisational neurodiversity practices on supervisors' and employees' turnover intentions in retail. The analysis controlled for the effects of gender, age, role, years in the role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size divided into categories as mentioned above. The results are displayed in Table 4.

*Table 4: Impact of Neurodiversity Practices on Turnover Intention.*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	14.772	.000
Gender	-.323	.455
Age	-1.264	.010
Role	-1.136	.011
Years in Role	.262	.614
Years in Retail	-.646	.250
Store Size	.874	.112
Organisation Size	-.023	.961
Neurodiversity Practices	-.024	.062

The results show that neurodiversity HR practices have a negative effect on participants' turnover intention (unstandardised coefficient=-.024). This effect of neurodiversity practices on employee turnover intention was statistically significant ( $p < .10$ ). This means that retail organisations that offer



---

a wider range of neurodiversity practices can lower the turnover intentions among their supervisors and employees (Lee et al., 2018).

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The presence of neurodiversity HR practices decreases turnover intention among supervisors and employees which impacts overall performance and productivity. Retail organisations should look at improving the existing offering of neurodiversity practices and introduce additional neurodiversity HR practices to address the turnover among supervisors and employees.

#### ***Insight 17. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with highly inclusive leadership.***

Successful diversity practices impact job satisfaction and a higher perception of wellbeing among employees (Mor Barak & Levin, 2002). Given that, diversity practice is a managerial initiative, leaders are in charge of integrating diversity in the workplace (Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000). Leadership plays a critical role in managing organisational diversity practices that, in turn, influences employee wellbeing (Chen, 2020). Based on this notion, an analysis was performed to test the role of inclusive leadership in enhancing the effect of neurodiversity HR practices on retail supervisors' and employees' perceived well-being. The analysis controlled for the effects of gender, age, role, years in the role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size divided into categories as mentioned above. The results are displayed in Table 5.

*Table 5: Role of Inclusive Leadership in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Wellbeing.*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	13.653	.000
Gender	1.262	.000
Age	-1.311	.000
Role	-1.018	.000
Years in Role	-.022	.942
Years in Retail	-.317	.331
Store Size	.631	.048
Organisation Size	.222	.421
Neurodiversity Practices	-.058	.056
Inclusive Leadership	-.277	.000
Neurodiversity Practices*Inclusive Leadership	.003	.009

The results show that interaction term (unstandardised coefficient=.003) was statistically significant ( $p<.001$ ). Figure 14 shows the role of inclusive leadership in influencing the impact of neurodiversity practices on perceived wellbeing.

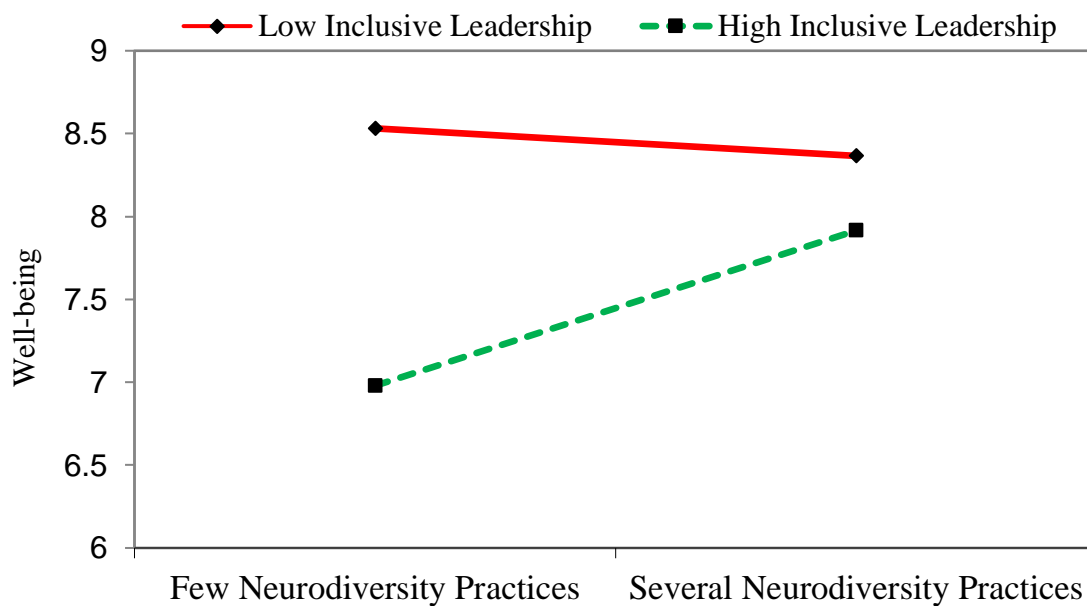


Figure 14. Role of Inclusive Leadership in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Wellbeing.

If there is a high level of inclusive leadership, the effect of neurodiversity practices on perceived wellbeing is positive. This denotes that neurodiversity practices increase the wellbeing of individuals in organisations with a high level of inclusive leadership. Whereas, if the level of inclusive leadership is low, there is a negative association of neurodiversity practices with perceived wellbeing. This demonstrates that neurodiversity practices may decrease supervisor/employee wellbeing in organisations with a low level of inclusive leadership. Previous literature shows the importance of inclusive leadership in enhancing employee wellbeing (Chen, 2020). The findings of this report extend the literature by showing the positive role of inclusive leadership in enhancing neurodiversity practices that improve perceived wellbeing in retail organisations.

### Implications and Recommendations

Inclusive leadership has an important role in organisations. Without a high level of inclusive leadership in retail, neurodiversity practices are not very effective in ensuring wellbeing of the employees. Organisations may miss out on the benefits of neurodiversity practices for wellbeing of employees if it lacks inclusive leadership. Organisations should develop coaching plans and offer workshops to develop the skills and competencies of supervisors and managers to demonstrate inclusive leadership.

---

***Insight 18. Neurodiversity HR practices lead to lower turnover intention in workplaces with high social inclusion.***

Past literature shows that workplace social inclusion plays an important role in determining the relationship between employee mobility and job performance (Pearce & Randel. 2004). Employee mobility and employment security policies increase employees' expectations regarding the benefits they could achieve which, in turn, increases employee commitment (Appelbaum et al., 2000). Therefore, HR practices influence turnover intention which is influenced by workplace social inclusion (Lee et al., 2018; Pearce & Randel. 2004). Based on this notion, an analysis was performed to test the role of social inclusion in the effect of neurodiversity practices on supervisors' and employees' turnover intention. The analysis controlled for the effects of gender, age, role, years in the role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size. The results are displayed in Table 6.

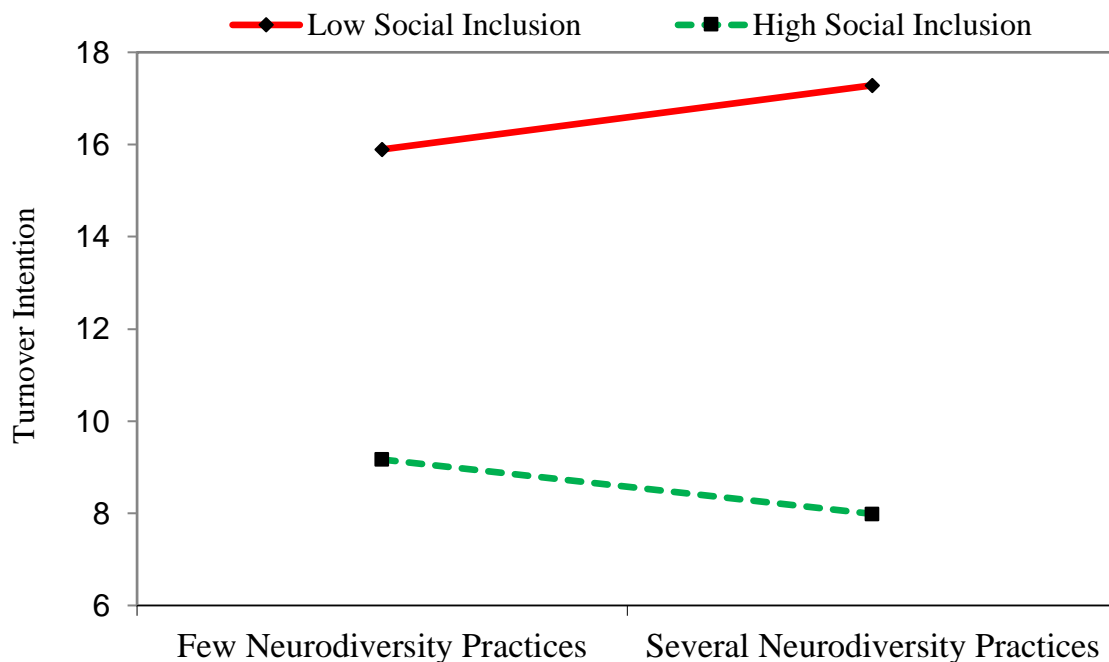
*Table 6: Role of Social Inclusion in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Turnover Intention.*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	15.944	.000
Gender	.026	.948
Age	-1.262	.006
Role	-.972	.020
Years in Role	-.016	.974
Years in Retail	-.018	.972
Store Size	.142	.784
Organisation Size	.438	.323
Neurodiversity Practices	.081	.082
Social Inclusion	-.319	.185
Neurodiversity Practices*Social Inclusion	-.007	.091

The results show that the interaction term (unstandardised coefficient=-.007) was statistically significant ( $p>.05$ ). Figure 15 shows the role of social inclusion in influencing the impact of neurodiversity practices on turnover intention.

If there is a high level of social inclusion, the effect of neurodiversity practices is negative on turnover intention. This denotes that the enforcement of neurodiversity practices decreases the turnover intention of supervisors/employees in organisations with a high level of social inclusion. Whereas, if the level of social inclusion is low, there is a positive effect of neurodiversity practices on turnover intention. This demonstrates that the offering of several neurodiversity practices may not be effective in decreasing employee turnover intentions in retail organisations with a low level of social inclusion. Previous literature shows the importance of social inclusion in decreasing employee turnover

intention (Pearce & Randel, 2004). The findings of this report extend the literature by showing the positive role of social inclusion in influencing the relationship between neurodiversity practices and turnover intention of supervisors and employees.



*Figure 15. Role of Social Inclusion in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Turnover Intention.*

### **Implications and Recommendations**

In organisations with low social inclusion, there is a positive relationship between neurodiversity practices and turnover intention, which means that the presence of high neurodiversity practices cannot deter turnover intentions among employees. However, in organisations with high social inclusion, there is a negative relationship between neurodiversity practices and turnover intention which is desirable. Organisations may not be able to capitalise on the benefits associated with a neurodiverse workforce if there is a lack of social inclusion. Supervisors and leaders should take action to promote more social inclusion among employees. Efforts to enhance perceptions of workplace social inclusion should be made through proactive inclusion in work activities and ensuring workers do not feel like outsiders. By focusing on social inclusion, retail will improve psychological satisfaction and work performance of the workforce resulting in long-term retention of neurodiverse workers in organisations with a range of neurodiversity HR practices.

---

***Insight 19. Neurodiversity HR practices positively impact wellbeing in workplaces with high procedural justice.***

How an employee is treated in an organisation influences the perceived fairness of processes by the employee (Niehoff et al., 1993). The perceptions of procedural justice can affect employee wellbeing and affective commitment (Niehoff et al., 1993). Moreover, HR practices including diversity practices play an important role in employee wellbeing and affective commitment (Lee et al., 2018). Based on the concept that neurodiversity practices will have an impact on the perceived wellbeing of supervisors/employees and this impact may be influenced by perceived procedural justice, an analysis was performed to test the role of procedural justice. The analysis controlled for the effects of gender, age, role, years in the role, years in retail, store size, and organisation size. The results are displayed in Table 7.

*Table 7: Role of Procedural Justice in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Wellbeing.*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Constant	15.016	.000
Gender	1.211	.000
Age	-1.155	.000
Role	-.920	.000
Years in Role	-.080	.790
Years in Retail	-.343	.287
Store Size	.629	.047
Organisation Size	.024	.931
Neurodiversity Practices	-.098	.000
Social Inclusion	-.570	.000
Neurodiversity Practices*Social Inclusion	.008	.000

The results show that the interaction term (unstandardised coefficient=.008) was statistically significant ( $p<.001$ ). Figure 16 shows the role of procedural justice in influencing the impact of neurodiversity practices on perceived wellbeing.

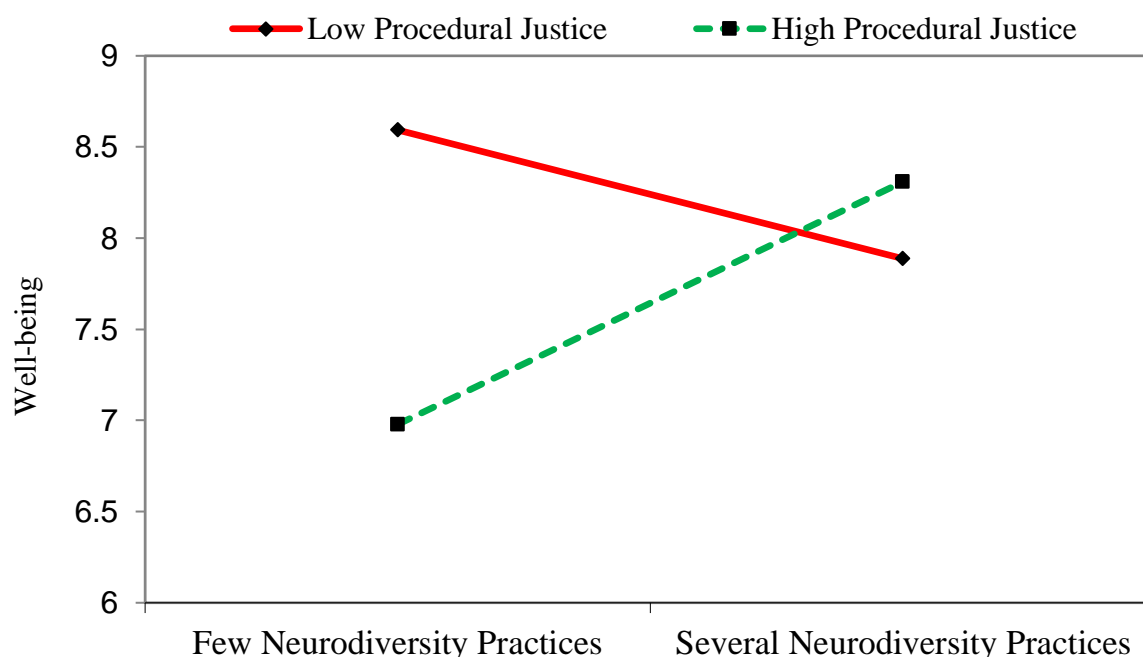


Figure 16. Role of Procedural Justice in enhancing the effects of Neurodiversity Practices on Wellbeing.

If there is a high level of procedural justice, the effect of neurodiversity practices is positive on perceived wellbeing. This denotes that the inclusion of neurodiversity practices increases the perception of wellbeing among supervisors/employees in organisations with a high level of procedural justice. Whereas, if the level of procedural justice is low, perceived wellbeing decreases. This demonstrates that the inclusion of several neurodiversity practices reduces individual wellbeing in organisations with a low level of procedural justice. The findings show an important role of procedural justice in influencing the relationship between neurodiversity practices and wellbeing of supervisors/employees.

### Implications and Recommendations

Organisations may miss out on the benefits of neurodiversity practices for wellbeing of employees if it lacks procedural justice. Organisations and leaders should focus on developing procedural justice by emphasising fairness, transparency and consistency in the practices, in particular in job-related decisions and appeal decisions. These will improve employee wellbeing in organisation with a range of neurodiversity HR practices.

### Key Recommendations

This section aggregates the recommendations pertaining to the nineteen insights to provide seven key recommendations for the Australian retailers to develop a sustainable neurodiverse workforce.

---

## **1. Forms and level of neurodiversity**

- i. There is a prevalence of certain dimensions of neurodiversity in the Australian retail sectors. Organisations should make efforts to increase awareness and education pertaining to a range of neurodiverse conditions through training, visibility, support, and the need for putting reasonable adjustments into place.
- ii. Human resource managers in retail organisations should also institute mechanisms and a safe environment encouraging existing employees with underreported forms of neurodiversity, to disclose and seek accommodations if required, for example job redesign, aids, and adaptations.

## **2. Neurodiversity practices and their effectiveness**

- i. Australian retail organisations should enhance awareness of their existing offerings of neurodiversity practices and educate supervisors and employees about the potential benefits of these practices and investigate reasons for their low effectiveness.
- ii. Increased efforts should be made to introduce specific organisational policies, job redesign, movement between jobs, aids, adaptations, and action against bullying and make recruitment, selection, training and development, performance management, and reward management to be more inclusive for neurodiversity.

## **3. Benefits and challenges of neurodiversity**

- i. Considerable efforts to emphasise the benefits of neurodiversity in the workplace are needed to stimulate the development of programs by Australian retailers to enhance neurodiversity in their organisations. Proactive efforts need to be made by retailers to change perceptions at lower hierarchical levels in Australian retail organisations.
- ii. Some challenges associated with neurodiversity are more salient than others. Human resource managers should run focus group sessions with staff to further unpack these challenges and their drivers in order to effectively address them. The practices around open communication with employees may also be helpful to understand these challenges and their negative implications in the workplace.

## **4. Moderate levels of commitment, wellbeing, and turnover intention**

- i. Australian retailers need to emphasise awareness and education about benefits associated with workforce neurodiversity in order to avoid any misconceptions or adverse impacts of mismanaged neurodiversity practices which might be contributing to moderate levels of commitment, wellbeing, and turnover intentions.

- 
- ii. Australian retailers should provide training for managers to understand how to utilise contextual factors to foster more commitment, improve wellbeing and mitigate intentions of turnover of employees (see Key Recommendation 6).
  - iii. Organisations should also create an environment where neurodiverse individuals can freely communicate their conditions and ask for associated accommodation and adjustments, as a lack of these might be contributing to moderate levels of commitment, wellbeing, and turnover intentions.

## **5. Impact of neurodiversity HR practices on employee outcomes**

Leadership should consider implementing and promoting neurodiversity HR practices to enhance affective commitment and reduce turnover intention among supervisors.

## **6. Role of contextual factors in capitalising on neurodiversity HR practices**

- i. Managers and supervisors should be provided training around developing an inclusive leadership style for enhancing the positive effect of neurodiversity HR practices on employee wellbeing.
- ii. Supervisors and leaders should take action to promote social inclusion among employees. Efforts to enhance perceptions of workplace social inclusion should be made through proactive inclusion in work activities and ensuring workers do not feel like outsiders. By focusing on social inclusion, retail organisations will improve psychological satisfaction and work performance of the workforce resulting in long-term retention of neurodiverse workers in organisations with a range of neurodiversity HR practices.
- iii. Leaders should focus on developing a strong sense of procedural justice by emphasising fairness and consistency in job-related decisions, encouraging employee voice and participation in decision making, and implementing mechanisms to challenge or appeal decisions. These will improve employee wellbeing in organisations with a range of neurodiversity HR practices.

## **7. Future Research**

Australian retailers should support additional research to explore and understand the complexities associated with managing a neurodiverse workforce. The findings will provide effective solutions to challenges faced by organisations, leading to sustainable neurodiverse workplaces.



---

## **Conclusion**

Embracing neurodiversity in the workplace is essential for a sustainable society. Literature suggests that perceived challenges of working with neurodiverse workers, such as the costs and fairness of workplace accommodations, indirect communication difficulties, and low productivity, can impede long-term employment for neurodiverse individuals (Colella, 2001; Patton, 2019). The findings of this study suggest that the current state of neurodiversity is only modest and to foster sustainable neurodiverse retail workplaces, organisations need to undertake neurodiversity-focused human resource management as follows: First, educate supervisors and employees about common and less common forms of neurodiversity, and offer and promote a range of neurodiversity HR practices. Second, capitalise on the benefits of neurodiversity and address challenges associated with neurodiversity through effective management of neurodiversity via first-line supervisors. Third, enhance moderate levels of employee affective commitment and reduce turnover intentions through a range of neurodiversity HR practices. Fourth, ensure inclusive leadership, social inclusion, and procedural justice to provide a supportive environment for enhanced positive effects of neurodiversity HR practices on employee wellbeing and turnover intentions.

## **Limitations and Future Research**

In addition to recognising the contributions from this survey, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study to help guide future research in this area. First, this is a pioneering study in examining the viability of creating a neurodiverse workforce in the Australian retail sector. Significant insights were generated from this study, which should be explored further. Future studies should test the same research model in more retailing categories with a variety of samples such as retail-specific jobs and perceptions of customers. Second, the research explored several areas that require further empirical investigation in the context of neurodiversity, including affective commitment, turnover intention, and procedural justice. Third, other research methods such as in-depth interviews will be helpful to understand the lived experiences and perceptions of supervisors/employees on neurodiversity workforce in the retail sector. This will be helpful to develop more effective neurodiversity practices for the retail sector. In collaboration with retailers, experiments and/or observations could be conducted to collect field data in this research context. While this research measures the perceptions and intentions of supervisors and employees, additional research may be conducted on actual performance to further validate the findings of this research.

---

## Reference List


- Abdallah, A., & Sweis, R. J. (2015). The effect of a manager's emotional intelligence on employees' work outcomes in the insurance industry in Jordan. *International Business Research*, 8(9).
- Ameri, M., Schur, L., Adya, M., Bentley, F. S., McKay, P., & Kruse, D. (2018). The disability employment puzzle: A field experiment on employer hiring behavior. *ILR Review*, 71(2), 329-364.
- Appelbaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., Kalleberg, A. L., & Bailey, T. A. (2000). *Manufacturing advantage: Why high-performance work systems pay off*. Cornell University Press.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2019). *Disability, Australia, 2019*. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>.
- Austin, R. D., & Pisano, G. P. (2017). Neurodiversity as a competitive advantage. *Harvard Business Review*, 95(3), 96-103.
- Barak, M. E. M., & Levin, A. (2002). Outside of the corporate mainstream and excluded from the work community: A study of diversity, job satisfaction and well-being. *Community, Work & Family*, 5(2), 133-157.
- Bewley, H., & George, A. (2016). Neurodiversity at work. London: *National Institute of Social and Economic Research*.
- Chang, P.-C., & Chen, S.-J. (2011). Crossing the level of employee's performance: HPWS, affective commitment, human capital, and employee job performance in professional service organizations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(04), 883-901.
- Chen, C., & Tang, N. (2018). Does perceived inclusion matter in the workplace? *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.
- Chen, L. (2020). The Effect of Inclusive Leadership on Employee Well-Being: A Case of XYZ Bank in Yunnan, China. *ABAC ODI Journal Vision. Action. Outcome*, 7(2), 39.
- Grover, C., & Soldatic, K. (2013). Neoliberal restructuring, disabled people and social (in) security in Australia and Britain. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 15(3), 216-232.
- Hentschel, T., Shemla, M., Wegge, J., & Kearney, E. (2013). Perceived diversity and team functioning: The role of diversity beliefs and affect. *Small Group Research*, 44(1), 33-61.
- Ivancevich, J. M., & Gilbert, J. A. (2000). Diversity management: Time for a new approach. *Public personnel management*, 29(1), 75-92.
- Johnson, K. R., Ennis-Cole, D., & Bonhamgregory, M. (2020). Workplace success strategies for employees with autism spectrum disorder: A new frontier for human resource development. *Human Resource Development Review*, 19(2), 122-151.
- Kelloway, E. K., Gottlieb, B. H., & Barham, L. (1999). The source, nature, and direction of work and family conflict: a longitudinal investigation. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 4(4),

- Lantz, S., & Marston, G. (2012). Policy, citizenship and governance: the case of disability and employment policy in Australia. *Disability & Society*, 27(6), 853-867.
- Lee, J., Sohn, Y. W., Kim, M., Kwon, S., & Park, I.-J. (2018). Relative importance of human resource practices on affective commitment and turnover intention in South Korea and United States. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 669.
- Leventhal, G. S. (1980). What should be done with equity theory? In *Social exchange* (pp. 27-55). Springer.
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Smith, C. A. (1993). Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of applied psychology*, 78(4), 538.
- Moore, K., McDonald, P., & Bartlett, J. (2017). The social legitimacy of disability inclusive human resource practices: the case of a large retail organisation. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27(4), 514-529.
- Mor Barak, M. E., Cherin, D. A., & Berkman, S. (1998). Organizational and personal dimensions in diversity climate: Ethnic and gender differences in employee perceptions. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 34(1), 82-104.
- Niehoff, B. P., & Moorman, R. H. (1993). Justice as a mediator of the relationship between methods of monitoring and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management journal*, 36(3), 527-556.
- Nomaguchi KM, MA Milkie and SB Bianchi (2005) Time strains and psychological well-being: do dual-earner mothers and fathers differ? *Journal of Family Issues* 26(6), 756–792.
- OECD. (2010). Transforming disability benefits into an employment instrument. In OECD, sickness, disability and work: Breaking the barriers: A synthesis of findings across OECD countries (pp. 103–124). Paris: *OECD Publishing*. doi:10.1787/9789264088856-6-en
- Patton, E. (2019). Autism, attributions and accommodations: Overcoming barriers and integrating a neurodiverse workforce. *Personnel Review*.
- Pearce, J. L., & Randel, A. E. (2004). Expectations of organizational mobility, workplace social inclusion, and employee job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 25(1), 81-98.
- Pless, N., & Maak, T. (2004). Building an inclusive diversity culture: Principles, processes and practice. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 54(2), 129-147.
- Post, M., Campbell, C., Heinz, T., Kotsonas, L., Montgomery, J., & Storey, K. (2010). Collaboration between supported employment and human resource services: Strategies for success. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 35(1-2), 24-30.
- Rao, B., & Polepeddi, J. (2019). Neurodiverse workforce: inclusive employment as an HR strategy.

- Richards, J. (2012). Examining the exclusion of employees with Asperger syndrome from the workplace. *Personnel Review*, 41(5), 630–646. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483481211249148>
- Robison, J. E. (2013). What is neurodiversity. *Psychology Today*, 7.
- Robinson, S. L., O'Reilly, J., & Wang, W. (2013). Invisible at work: An integrated model of workplace ostracism. *Journal of Management*, 39(1), 203-231.
- Suazo, M. M. (2009). The mediating role of psychological contract violation on the relations between psychological contract breach and work-related attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.
- Sumner, K. & Brown, T. (2015). Neurodiversity and human resource management: employer challenges for applicants and employees with learning disabilities. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 18(2), 77-85.
- United Nations. (2018). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Disability. Retrieved 25/10/2021 from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/about-us/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-and-disability.html>
- Victor, B., & Cullen, J. B. (1988). The organizational bases of ethical work climates. *Administrative science quarterly*, 101-125.
- Yin-Fah, B. C., Foon, Y. S., Chee-Leong, L., & Osman, S. (2010). An exploratory study on turnover intention among private sector employees. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(8), 57.
- Zagenczyk, T. J., Purvis, R. L., Cruz, K. S., Thoroughgood, C. N., & Sawyer, K. B. (2020). Context and social exchange: perceived ethical climate strengthens the relationships between perceived organizational support and organizational identification and commitment. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-20.
- Zheng, X., Diaz, I., Zheng, X., & Tang, N. (2017). From deep-level similarity to taking charge: The moderating role of face consciousness and managerial competency of inclusion. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

## Appendix.

### Participant information sheet.

	<b>PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT</b> <b>– Survey –</b>
<b>Creating a sustainable neurodiverse workforce in the Australian Retail Sector</b> <b>QUT Ethics Approval Number 4437</b>	

#### Research team

Principal Researcher: Dr Katherine Moore

Associate Researchers Associate Professor Muhammad Ali  
Ms Maria Khan  
**QUT Business School/Faculty of Business & Law**  
**Queensland University of Technology (QUT)**

#### Why is the study being conducted?

The purpose of this research project is to gain an understanding of the perceived benefits and challenges of working in and managing a neurodiverse workforce in the Australian retail sector and the relationship between neurodiverse human resource practices, other mechanisms that operate in organisations, and perceived organisational outcomes from a frontline retail staff perspective. This project is funded by the Australian Retail Association.

You are invited to participate in this research project because you are 18 years of age or over and currently work, or have previously worked, in the Australian retail sector.

#### What does participation involve?

Participation will involve completing a 100-item questionnaire, most with Likert scale answers (strongly agree – strongly disagree) and some multiple choice and free text answers that will take approximately 15 minutes of your time.

Questions will include:

- My organisation explicit writes policies in relation to neurodiversity.
- When I am supposed asked to describe my workplace, I automatically think about the neurological differences among my colleagues.
- The human resource practices would become more inclusive for everyone if my organisation hired more neurodiverse workers.

Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate you do not have to complete any question(s) you are uncomfortable answering. Your decision to participate or not participate will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with QUT or the Australian Retail Association.

The submission of the completed survey is accepted as an indication of your consent to participate in this research project.

If you do agree to participate you can withdraw from the research project during the survey without comment or penalty. Any information already entered via the survey prior to your withdrawal will not be used and will be deleted by Qualtrics. However, as the survey does not request any personal identifying information once it has been submitted it will not be possible to withdraw.

You will be able to review your responses before submitting and save a copy of your responses after submitting the survey.

#### What are the possible benefits for me if I take part?

It is expected that this research project may not directly benefit you. The outcomes of the research, however, may benefit current or future neurodiverse employees in the retail sector. You can request a summary of the outcomes of the study by contacting the Principal Researcher via email [k3.moore@qut.edu.au](mailto:k3.moore@qut.edu.au). The outcomes of the study will be available from 1 November 2021.

To recognise your contribution should you choose to participate you will receive payment directly from Qualtrics in accordance with your agreement with them.

#### **What are the possible risks for me if I take part?**

There are no risks beyond normal day-to-day living associated with your participation in this research project. However, as the survey questions ask you to recall events or experiences related to your organisation and people who you currently or previously worked with, you may experience some discomfort in this process.

QUT provides for limited free psychology, family therapy or counselling services for research participants of QUT research projects who may experience discomfort or distress as a result of their participation in the research. Should you wish to access this service please call the Clinic Receptionist on 07 3138 0999 (Monday–Friday only 9am–5pm), QUT Psychology and Counselling Clinic, 44 Musk Avenue, Kelvin Grove, and indicate that you are a research participant. Alternatively, Lifeline provides access to online, phone or face-to-face support, call 13 11 14 for 24-hour telephone crisis support. If you are aged up to 25, you can also call the Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800.

#### **What about privacy and confidentiality?**

All comments and responses are anonymous i.e., it will not be possible to identify you at any stage of the research, because personal identifying information is not sought in any of the responses and no traceable information is collected via the server or survey tool.

Any data collected as part of this research project will be stored securely as per QUT's Management of research data policy. Data will be stored for a minimum of 5 years and can be disclosed if it is to protect you or others from harm, if specifically required by law, or if a regulatory or monitoring body such as the ethics committee requests it.

The research project is funded by Australian Retail Association, and they will not have access to the data obtained during the project. A report of the overall findings will be presented to the funding organisation at the completion of the project.

#### **How do I give my consent to participate?**

The submission of the completed survey is accepted as an indication of your consent to participate in this research project.

#### **What if I have questions about the research project?**

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact one of the listed researchers:

Dr Katherine Moore	<a href="mailto:k3.moore@qut.edu.au">k3.moore@qut.edu.au</a>	07 3138 1248
Associate Professor Muhammad Ali	<a href="mailto:m3.ali@qut.edu.au">m3.ali@qut.edu.au</a>	07 3138 2662

#### **What if I have a concern or complaint regarding the conduct of the research project?**

QUT is committed to research integrity and the ethical conduct of research projects. If you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the QUT Research Ethics Advisory Team on 07 3138 5123 or email [humanethics@qut.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@qut.edu.au).

**Thank you for helping with this research project. Please print this sheet for your information.**