

A Study on the Factors Contributing to Motivation with Special Reference to Millennial Employees

Ekagrata Singh

Student, Kirit P. Mehta School of Law, NMIMS Mumbai, India.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to highlight the factors contributing to motivation with special reference to millennial employees. Although millennial employees (born during 1981-1996) have existed in the workforce since quite a long time, little is known about this generation and factors motivating them. This paper studies this generation in greater depth and presents significant findings.

Research Implications: This paper deals with a study on millennial generation through the use of secondary data. The existing policies and practices have been studied. Suggestions have been included to bridge the lacunae. This study is impactful as it aims at motivating employees through different methods/practices. Research should be conducted in the future by collecting primary data and analyzing it.

Findings: As this generation is unpredictable, it is difficult to understand the needs of this generation. Millennials exhibit intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Effective leadership style has to be adopted to train millennials. They desire to work as a team. They expect to be trusted too. Millennials are competitive and focused, they demand flexibility, better job, recognition and work-life balance. Adequate strategies should be adopted to train them and division of work should be there based on the generation an employee belongs to.

Originality: This research paper is original. Thorough research has been conducted by the researcher. Own opinions and suggestions have been included in the conclusion after studying the excerpts from the research papers.

Keywords: Motivation, Millennials, Leadership, Generational differences, Herzberg two-factor theory, Ethics

I. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is described as a process which initiates, drives and maintains a goal-oriented behaviour. Work motivation is one of the most important concerns an organization has to deal with respect to employees who ideally belong to different generations. Employees have to constantly feel motivated because only then will they feel connected to their job and contribute to the best of their capacity. They can be baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (also called millennials), etc. In this research, in depth of analysis of motivation has been carried out in millennial employees in all dimensions.

Millennial refers to that cohort of workforce that is born between 1981 and 1996. They are the largest pool of workforce i.e. around 57% (as of 2020). This generation is popularly known as Generation Y. These are the typical middle-aged group whose contribution is highly embedded in the organization. As this generation consists of mature adults, it is extremely important to ensure that they are motivated and their requirements are met. Millennials, being tech savvy, are well versed with the latest technology and do make use of social media. They are intrinsically motivated and aim for a good work-life balance. They work in alignment with organizational goals and are hardworking. At

times, they favour their family. They are creative in thoughts and innovative in action. This large pool of new workers comes with a mindset that is very different from that of the older generations. Millennials are an enigmatic generation that desires flexibility and independence with guidance and clear goals. Being a dynamic cohort, it becomes difficult to devise motivational strategies for them due to recruitment challenges, rapid turnover, loss of interest, poor compensation, etc. primarily in the hospitality industry. This could be because work might not be interesting or there may be poor superior-subordinate relationship or some other reason.

The purpose of this paper is to provide strategies to motivate millennial employees. Leadership plays a crucial role in this. The researcher studied the leadership styles and has entailed the best style suitable. A comparison has also been brought out with the older generation employees.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study factors contributing to motivation in millennial employees
2. To study the role of a leader in managing millennial employees

- To compare factors that motivate millennial employees compared to older generation

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Kovacevic and Labrovic (2018) in the study “*Work motivation among millennial employees with different life goals: Case of Serbian companies*” collected data from 363 respondents and conducted empirical research to check the levels of motivation in millennials. It was found that motivation in work environment is extremely important. There has to be work-life balance, recognition, interpersonal development, leadership and development opportunities at work to enhance productivity.
- Long (2017) in the report “*Exploring Which Leadership Styles are Effective with Millennial Employees*” examined three leadership styles and the work of an effective leader. Servant leadership style was found to be the most promising in motivating millennial employees. It was concluded that leaders should let employees participate in the decision making process in the organization.
- Dokadia *et al.* (2015) in the paper “*Multigenerational Differences in Work Attributes & Motivation: An Empirical Study*” conducted empirical research by collecting data from 653 respondents working in different sectors. Respondents belonged to Baby Boomer, Silent generation, Generation X and Generation Y. Results indicated the behaviour of Generation Y in working individually in comparison with older generations. Intrinsic motivation was found to be higher in Silent generation while extrinsic motivation was higher in Generation Y.
- Kemper, *et. al* (2016) in “*Diversity management in ageing societies: A comparative study of Germany and Japan*” examined the societies of Germany and Japan. Both made changes in their HRM practices to promote diversity among employees. An empirical research was conducted on 209 organizations. Findings revealed that scope and focus differed among different organizations. Where the Japanese organization focused on gender, communication and HR practices, the Germans focused on broad approaches, integrity and diversity.
- Meng *et.al.* (2017) in “*Managing Millennial Communication Professionals: Connecting Generation Attributes, Leadership Development, And Employee Engagement*” stated the importance of retaining, engaging and recruiting employees in the organization. The paper suggested various leadership styles that can be adopted and also listed down the necessity of suitable talent management strategies in an organization. 39 millennial employees from different sectors were included and regular feedback, flexible work environment, safety nets and employee engagement were the key takeaways.

- Jordon, (2019) in “*Leveraging A Multi-Generational Organization Through Mentoring To Manage Workplace Productivity*” raised the issue that traditional mentoring methods in an organization need to be addressed. This is because generations are experiencing a dynamic shift where new generations are entering and old are retiring. This paper addressed the measures to increase productivity of work in intergenerational sphere. For this purpose, mentoring can act as a boon. If a senior employee mentors a junior employee, his skills also sharpen and junior employee learns from the benefits of senior employee. Strategies have been incorporated in the end of this research that will help retain old employee.
- Twenge and Campbell (2008) in “*Generational differences in psychological traits and their impact on the workplace*” stated that more workers with unrealistically high standards, a high desire for praise, trouble with feedback, a rise in innovation demands, job-hopping, ethics controversies, casual wear, and changing workplace norms for women can be anticipated, according to managers. Organizations may adapt to these shifts by making accommodations (e.g., praise programs) or applying pressure (e.g., dress codes), and it's critical that managers decide the best approach for their employees.

III. FINDINGS

Objective1: Factors contributing to motivation in millennial employees

On researching extensively on the topic, it was found that millennials portray both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation means innate tendency to remain motivated while extrinsic motivation implies motivation through rewards like higher pay, recognition, additional benefits, etc. They desire independence at regular intervals. Millennials prefer to retain but do leave at times due to inflexibility and poor leadership. They feel less satisfied with existential needs and more with affiliative and competency need. The researcher agrees here that satisfaction is the key to motivation. Goal orientation needs to be adhered to. Efficient leadership is equally important. There needs to be constant feedback mechanism and less formal organization so that employees can open up. Herzberg two-factor theory (comprising hygiene and motivation factors) was used as a basis of analysis (Fig. 1) and it was found out that growth, advancement, positive working conditions, and quality and influence of supervisors play a substantial role.

There is a positive influence of Public Sector Motivation (PSM) on public sector choice in employing millennials. Millennials, who like to take up challenging work, are less likely to join public sector and more private sector because employment in public sector reduces competition. On the other hand, women, more often, seek employment in public sector as it is a safe place to be. Generation Y strive for

prestige and status in job. They are ambitious, impatient and expect extrinsic rewards. However, they value compensation and compensation-related characteristics on different footings. Non-profit sector is less likely to attract millennials as it does not suit their needs. They are focused on personal achievement and success. Millennials seek satisfaction and look for opportunities for external growth. They are interested in working in organizations that offer meaningful work. Therefore, quality work should be offered to them. Greater employee engagement would help organizations retain millennials. They seek to be trusted and given opportunities.



Fig. 1. Relation of job satisfaction with hygiene and motivator factors on basis of Herzberg two-factor theory

Objective 2: Role of a leader in managing millennial employees

Millennial employees are found to be contradictory generation which is hard to manage. Therefore, careful watch on the leadership styles and strategies should be done and the best suitable option should be implemented. Through an excerpt from the hospitality sector, it was found that Human Resource Management (HRM) and responsible leadership has a positive impact on the well-being of millennial employees. HRM consists of tasks like recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, etc. HRM and supervisors should be more responsible. There should be a responsible leadership. It boosts employee satisfaction and creativity. There needs to be effective supervision by leaders. Existing managers should be more flexible with respect to work schedules. Competitive packages and honest reviews should be given by leaders. Continuous learning has to be promoted with supervision and real time feedbacks. Millennials appreciate teamwork and participation. For this purpose, Servant Leadership Style is the best suited as it encourages teamwork and less ethical violations. This builds strong work relationships. When employees are allowed to participate, they take more interest in task and feel more connected to the organization. High idealism and high relativism is best suited. Leaders need to set better standards. Managers should provide better training in order to enhance learning and problem solving. Democratic/Participative

leadership style incorporated helps in ensuring better employee engagement and free-flow of ideas. Similarly, Ethical Leadership, which is directed towards ethical beliefs and morals, is equally beneficial in driving millennials towards the path of glory. Leader has to provide role clarity. They should care for their employees and act as torch-bearers. Millennials do not like being micromanaged. They are participative and seek leadership roles. Developing mentorship and leadership programmes can be fruitful for millennials. Millennials expect superiors to mentor and develop them holistically and not just delegate tasks to them.

Objective 3: compare factors that motivate millennial employees compared to older generation

Through an elaborate study, the researcher has learnt that different generations exhibit different motivation patterns. The strategies to achieve the same are also variable. Therefore, an organization has to frame policies for different generations which are best suitable for them. In a case study relating to turnover in federal sector, Millennials are more likely to report an intention to leave the organization in comparison to older generations. Most work attributes do not matter more for millennial turnover (34% v. 24%). Millennials lack PSM and many of them wish to leave the public sector altogether. It is important for the organisations to respect the values and needs of the young generations. There is high sense of personal gratification in older generation. Millennials were compared with older generations in their birth range namely- Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1978), Generation Y (1979-1992). Herzberg technique was used again. Media focuses more on generational differences. Millennials are born in the era when technology was introduced so they are more tech-oriented. They have an upper edge in comparison to older generations who are not very comfortable with latest technology. Baby boomers, Generation X and millennials are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Baby boomers are more interested in achievement, interest and job growth than millennials and Generation X. Generation X and millennials have same priorities when rating work as low priority. Baby boomers have stronger work ethics. Generation Y applauds more on motivating factors (Hertzberg theory). Hygiene factors of pay, relationship and supervision predict job satisfaction among all generations. Job security is a significant predictor of job satisfaction for Baby boomers and millennial employees. Generation X tries creating new paradigms and systems to facilitate complex problem solving. Some studies suggest that millennials wish to act in existing structure only but according to the current scenario, millennial employees are highly competent and wish to hunt for opportunities beyond their comfort levels. For millennials, IT sector is a good option because they have sophisticated knowledge with respect to technology and training sessions would further help them hone their skills. Generation X and Generation Y are more individualistic and independent in comparison to baby boomers. Preference for

feedback is highest in Generation Y. Extrinsic motivation is highest in Generation Y and lowest in baby boomers. Generation Y have greater expectations from jobs (which sometimes leads to turnover due to dissatisfaction). According to one study, Generation Y is not keen in taking authority, responsibility and challenging work environment, but in a dynamic work structure and burdensome times, superiors have to delegate work to subordinates and subordinates are equally responsible and accountable to the work assigned to them, irrespective of their generation.

SIGNIFICANCE/IMPLICATIONS

This study is significant to HR professionals, students, academicians, research scholars and organization executives. This study is based on multiple researches. The aim is to highlight the factors affecting motivation in millennial generation and what practices can organisations adopt. It provides strategies to boost motivation in this cohort.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is based on secondary data collection. Articles have been used from various journals. No empirical research has been conducted by the researcher. The purpose of this study may not be a replica of the universe. There were time and money constraints.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Secondary data was collected. Use of several articles, journals from pedigree sources has been made. Thorough analysis of the collected data has been done and reviewed by the researcher along with a genuine feedback on the same.

V. CONCLUSION

The researcher, through this paper has discussed the meaning of millennial employees and elaborated on the current situation. Based on this, suggestions have been put forth to enhance productivity and job satisfaction of millennial employees. The author feels that there is a huge scope for organizations to boost morale of millennials so that they become more effective and productive. There is a need to bridge the gap between procedural framework and policies. Millennials are creative. Organisations should research more on this aspect and foster talent management strategies. Leader must develop individual goals among them. Regular feedbacks, challenges, interpersonal involvement and recognition should be promoted. Social relationships between millennials and their superiors must be enhanced. There should be better job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, professional development, merit based promotions and good work groups. Development of HRM practices and policies to handle increasingly mobile workforce should be done. There should be flexible work relations and better training to allow them to make meaningful contributions towards their work. Job should be made more fun and there should be an increase in activities to promote employee engagement. There should be a positive change in human resource policies. Work

should be assigned keeping in mind the generation an employee belongs to. Leaders should be efficiently trained and they should trust their subordinates (here, millennials). Use of social media should be made to the fullest because people today are highly active on digital platforms. Personalized components should be added. There should be better channels of communication (strategic communication). Organisations should be up-to date with technologies. Organizations should motivate millennials because they have great potential to work and contribute.

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