

Psychological empowerment & millennial's engagement “will empowerment is the potential antecedent for millennial's engagement”

K. Kaaviyapriya,

Research Scholar, College Of Management, Srm Institute Of Science And Technology,
Kattankulathur Campus

&

Dr. Priya xavier,

Assistant Professor, College Of Management, Srm Institute Of Science And Technology,
Kattankulathur Campus

ABSTRACT

Background: In the current workplace context millennials/ gen Y cohort are very high in any organizations. Each and every organizations nowadays largely needs productivity, innovation and potential competitors. For that, it all strategies depends on their millennial employee's ability in terms of job performance. Therefore it gives a challenging task for HR practitioners for gaining higher engagement from millennial generation. Because it is somewhat difficult when compare to other cohorts by their thinking and lifestyle decisions. Millennials like to work various jobs at one time in a challenging way; they seriously want career promotion in a very short period; and need more self-respect and also expect from others; finally they will excel in their work if they really well motivated by their organizations.

Objectives: So, our study primarily investigates psychological empowerment and its effect on millennials engagement. Because it is considered as one of the intrinsic motivational constructs and that highly needed by millennial cohort.

Methods: Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression statistical tests was used.

Results: The results revealed that there is a positive association between psychological empowerment and millennials engagement particularly the sub-constructs such as competence and impact act as a significant predictor of millennials engagement .

Conclusions: Based on the results this study notified there are many predictors that impacts millennials engagement. Out of that, psychological empowerment plays a crucial role and contributes more positive impact on employee's engagement for the millennial cohort. Furthermore, implications were discussed in this study for the further potential research.

Keywords: Psychological empowerment, Millennial's engagement, millennials/ Gen Y generation, Intrinsic Motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

There is an increasing interest in investigating the antecedents of employee engagement at workplace. Particularly it is a now a great job for HRM practitioners and their interventions were seriously turns to millennial generation. Because when compare to other cohorts gen Y attitudes and their mind thinking lifestyle decisions are totally different and somewhat interesting especially in the workplace context. Because Millennials place more attention on meaningful work, self-actualization, teamwork, career advancement and like to work in positive work environment and competitive salary. For that characteristic of millennials psychological empowerment plays a vital role and considered as a potential construct for gaining higher engagement in current context and even in bad context like pandemic situations too.

Even empowering employees particularly important for organizations in team environment; and the involvement of employee stemming from psychological empowerment leads toward organizational citizenship behaviour. Intrinsic motivation has the ability to increase the employee assistance and coordination among them in the organizations (Kosar and Mehdi Raza Naqvi, 2016).

Through the wise utilisation of human resources empowerment is closely aligned and it has a thirsty need for organizations for enhancing their effectiveness (Siegall, & Gardner, 2000). It is the context to identify what exactly drives engagement; with increasing relevance of employee engagement, researchers are now focusing on how it can be enhanced. Also, psychological empowerment could be considered as a personal resource due to its ability through different interventions (Jose & Mampilly, 2015).

Furthermore, finding the association of empowerment and engagement had been very low in significant empirical research in the non-Western context (Jose & Mampilly, 2015) and such empirical studies from India are very few (Sharma & Garg, 2017). Probably more organizations really needed the challenging mindset employees for business competitiveness in terms of innovative job performance.

Empowered employees have more positive emotions and those employees have the ability for gaining more resilience and also it viewed as one of the potential personal resources in the workplace. Psychological empowerment gives more self-belief and enough confidence for employees to stimulate engagement and creativity. Organizations have realized that they need workers to make decisions more about how the work should get accomplished. This requires more autonomy, flexibility, empowerment, continuous learning, risk taking & creativity (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009). So, it is well clear from above discussions that empowerment and its four dimensions deserves potential role in millennials perspectives in workplace and it fostering engagement for creativity & innovative performance.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

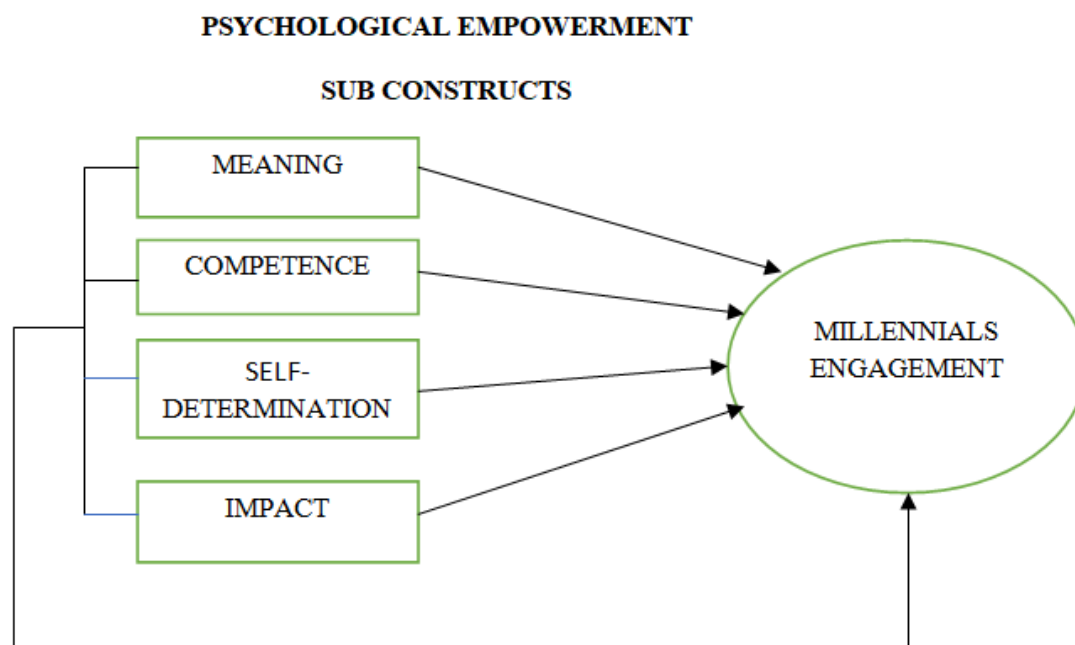
Employee engagement is not so easy for the millennial generation by HR manager's perspectives in workplace. Organizations largely depend on their employees in terms of productivity and innovative job performance. As in this context compare to other cohorts,

Gen Y cohort is very much different in their characteristics and there is thirsty need for potential strategy for gaining higher engagement and thus leads to better outcomes for the organizations.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the overall association of psychological empowerment and millennial's engagement
2. To examine the individual association of psychological empowerment of four sub-constructs on millennials engagement
3. To analyze the level of impact of psychological empowerment on millennials engagement

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THEIR HYPOTHESES



GEN Y/MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Millennials who are born between in the year of (1980 – 2000) and they grew up more in technology and social media driven around the world (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). This generation provides more value on full freedom with flexibility adjustments. Millennial's have the opportunities for challenging assignments, job enrichment & even international projects in their organization. (Ozcelik, 2015). Characteristics of Gen Y such as place more value on self-actualization, feeling valued & involved, meaningful and fulfilling work, likes teamwork, autonomy and so on.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

Psychological empowerment is a concept originating from the industrial-organizational psychology (Meng & Sun, 2019). Psychological empowerment stimulates the feelings of being in powerful and control among employees in the organization. In addition, it also

facilitates employees with a course of action where they are fully responsible and accountable for their results; which turn acts as a self-belief and it creates a variation in their attitude and behaviour among employees & it directly affect each other (Iqbal, Ahmad & Nasim, 2020). Empowering employees is very essential for organizations in the way of react quickly for changes in the environment and leads to job enrichment in the workplace (Jose & Mampilly, 2014).

According to spreitzer (1995), PE has four dimensions and the cognition dimensions are meaning, competence, self-determination & impact. Meaning considered as results from the feeling that job tasks are valuable and make a difference. (Stander & Rothmann, 2010). Competence or self-efficacy is considered as the ability to attain his/her self-defined goals. Self-determination considered as reflecting the autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behavior process (Spreitzer, 1995). Impact implies a sense of progression towards a goal and individuals' belief that their actions are making a difference in their organizations, which in turn contributes as employee engagement (Stander & Rothmann, 2010).

For effective empowerment people requires to make good decisions about their work, at the same time poor communication and network systems could inhibit empowerment (Siegall & Gardnesr, 2000). If managers can enable their staff to feel involved and valued in their work with full freedom and support, then they play a very important role in nurturing engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2015). As before mentioned, millennial's characteristics, this study again proves that psychological empowerment is very important for millennials because empowerment and its cognition dimensions are exactly about millennials perspectives such as feeling valued and involved, needs good communication and this all together brings intrinsic motivation. Psychological empowerment is not a fixed personality attribute that consists of cognitions that are shaped by the work environment (Stander & Rothmann, 2010). Although PE refers to the individual level of analysis, and it should not be interpreted to mean that the individuals are solely responsible for their development (Zimmerman, Israel, Schulz & Checkoway, 1992). In line with connectivity, the other study revealed based on their results; that due to the loss of meaning, competence and impact, employees resulted in lower levels of engagement (Stander & Rothmann, 2010).

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement has become as a interesting topic in recent years among the researchers & practitioners; and it has been rarely studied relatively known about their antecedents & consequences for employee engagement (Saks, 2006). Engagement is the degree to which an individual is more attentive and absorbed in the performance of their individual's work roles. Also, engagement has been linked with more positive outcomes at both individual and organizational levels (Jose & Mampilly, 2015). Academic literature provides a several number of definitions for employee engagement.

Kahn (1990), defines it as "harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles". In engagement, it is a multidimensional construct, employee physically, cognitively & emotionally engaged.

Schaufeli, et.al., (2002), defines engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption.”

(Moura, et.al., 2015) defines engagement “as a motivational and positive construct related to work that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption”.

Where, Vigour is characterized by high levels of energy, mental resilience, willingness to invest effort in one’s own work and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge while doing their work. The final dimension of engagement, absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and they facing more difficulties while detaching oneself from their work.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT & EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The study proposed that strong exchange relationship between boss and subordinate will strengthens the association between psychological empowerment and employee engagement (Kosar & Mehdi Raza Naqvi, 2016). Competence was also found to be a significant predictor of employee engagement and there is not much research evidence to show competence determining employee engagement, and there exists some supporting views (Jose & Mampilly, 2015). When people are psychologically empowered, outcomes are successfully linked through research, then it is obvious to ascertain that such employees would be engaged employees in the organization (Sharma & Singh, 2018).

When employees are psychologically empowered, his/her dedication and absorption will be more without the role of leader. (Kosar & Mehdi Raza Naqvi, 2016). Psychological empowerment is one of the crucial drivers for employee engagement; and this will motivate the employees who are creative and willing to find effective solutions for organizational challenges. So, it is well clear from various literature studies that psychological empowerment considered as one of the most potential antecedents for millennial generation engagement. Based on the various literature studies insights, our current study made an assumption and proposed hypothesis and it sub-constructs for checking the individual association such as H1, H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d. By doing we can determine which subconstruct potentially impacts employee engagement for millennial cohort and the overall level of impact on millennials engagement.

H1: Psychological empowerment is positively related to millennials engagement.

H1a: Meaning is positively related to millennials engagement.

H1b: Competence is positively related to millennials engagement.

H1c: Self-determination is positively related to millennials engagement.

H1d: Impact is positively related to millennials engagement.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is a cross-sectional quantitative pilot study. The survey research questionnaire was distributed to various employees from different private organizations. A convenience sampling method was used and collected the survey data responses by primary data collection method through email.

For data analysis 52 proper responses were received from the employees. Responses were received from the employees who are in the millennial generation (1980-2000) and age ranges from 21 to 39 yrs; and used to examine the data for analyzing the effect of psychological empowerment on millennials engagement.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEIR OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Psychological empowerment: Spreitzer (1995) developed psychological empowerment 12 items scale was used and its dimensions are (meaning, competence, self-determination & impact). 'The work I do is very important to me' (meaning), 'I am confident about my ability to do my job' (competence), 'I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job' (Self-determination) and 'My impact on what happens in my department is large' (impact) was the sample items. Employee engagement: Schaufeli (2007) developed UWES-17 items scale was used. It has three dimensions vigour & absorption has 6 items and dedication has 5 items), 'At my work, I feeling bursting with energy' (Vigour), 'I find the work that I do full of meaning & purpose' (Dedication) and 'Times flies when I am working' (absorption) was the sample items. Both construct responses were rated on 5-point Likert type scale with anchor (1) as strongly disagree to (5) as strongly agree.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 version, Pearson correlation was performed to test the relationship between PE & EE. Furthermore multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to check potential predictor for millennials engagement. In Pearson correlation has two assumptions

1. Data set is normal
2. Data set has the property called linearity

Once we confirmed both assumptions, we proceed further correlation test. See (Table 1) shows the test of normality. Data was normally distributed because significant value was $p > 0.05$.

Table 1. Test of Normality

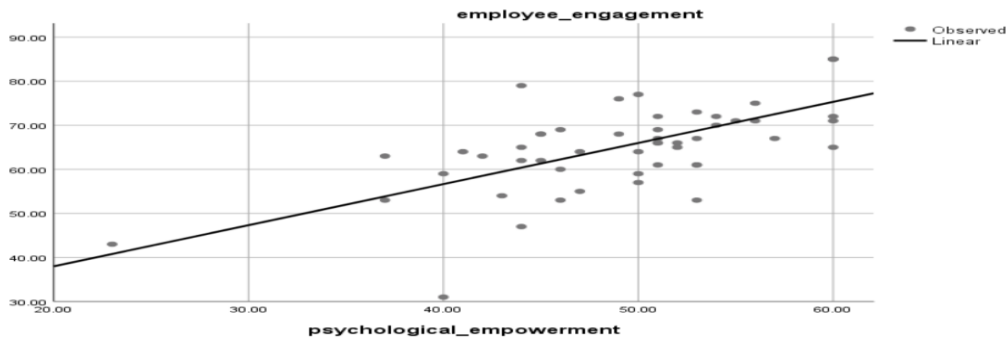
	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
psychological_empowerment	.108	52	.191	.936	52	.008
employee_engagement	.102	52	.200 [*]	.954	52	.045

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

And then, see (fig. 1) shows significant value below 0.05 for curve estimation in regression analysis and proved the data has linearity.

Fig 1. Linearity curve estimation test



After the assumptions well proved, conducted the correlation test. See (table 2), psychological empowerment and millennials engagement are positively correlated with the threshold value of 0.655 and it ranges from -1 to +1.

Table 2. (Pearson Correlation)

		psychological empowerment	employee engagement
psychological empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1	.655**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	52	52
employee engagement	Pearson Correlation	.655**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Then multiple linear regression test was conducted for checking the model fit, level of predicting the dependent variable by independent variable, and most influential psychological empowerment sub-dimensions in predicting millennials engagement. See (table 3), model summary and parameter estimates in regression analysis and the r square value was found 0.464 (i.e., 46.4% of psychological empowerment construct contributing to millennials engagement); and see (table 4), the $p < 0.05$ denotes it has goodness of model data fit.

Table 3. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.681 ^a	.464	.419	7.86240	.464	10.181	4	47	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), impact, meaning, competence, selfdetermination

Table 4. ANOVA

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2517.507	4	629.377	10.181	.000 ^b
	Residual	2905.417	47	61.817		
	Total	5422.923	51			

a. Dependent Variable: employee_engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), impact, meaning, competence, selfdetermination

See (table 5), Statistical significant association of four constructs of psychological empowerment in coefficient table. From the table, it clearly identified that competence and impact has statistically significant association with millennials engagement, which p value less than 0.05.

Table 5. Regression analysis coefficient table

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	18.108	7.934		2.282	.027	2.147	34.069		
	meaning	1.437	.787	.281	1.825	.074	-.147	3.021	.482	2.073
	competence	1.630	.717	.368	2.275	.028	.188	3.071	.435	2.301
	selfdetermination	-.360	.801	-.075	-.450	.655	-1.971	1.251	.411	2.435
	impact	1.079	.520	.266	2.077	.043	.034	2.125	.698	1.433

a. Dependent Variable: employee_engagement

So, in summary of results, our present study accepted the hypotheses such as H1, H1b, H1d and revealed that psychological empowerment is positively related to employee engagement of millennial generation. Furthermore, the sub-constructs such as competence and impact found to be a significant predictor of millennials engagement.

7. DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSION

Our present study results confirmed that psychological empowerment sub-dimensions; Competence & impact has the significant predictor of millennials engagement. Also psychological empowerment proved that it has a potential antecedent for enhancing the millennials engagement and their outcomes as well as overall organizational growth & productivity. In future research, researchers may generalize the findings with wide number of samples, may also researchers analyse the relationship between psychological empowerment and millennials engagement by testing mediating and moderating variable for more advancement analysis which was highly needed by the organizations. So that it provides

various potential insights for improving the engagement for millennial generation and helpful to determine the new drivers that affecting employee engagement as well as giving the opportunity for more positive outcomes in the organizations.

The study also strongly recommends that organizations have to implement the key strategies such as internal communication, work environments for empowering the employees. So those employees are more engaged and have the ability to give better outcomes at both individual and organizational level. Finally, this study hopes that it fills the research gap because very few studies analysed the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee engagement for millennial cohort; and still there is a need to strengthen the association in the Indian context.

DECLARATION

The authors declare no conflict of interest relating to the material presented in this article. The contents, including any opinions and conclusions expressed which are solely those of the authors.

REFERENCES

1. Chalofsky N, Krishna V. (2009). Meaningfulness, Commitment, and Engagement: The Intersection of a Deeper Level of Intrinsic Motivation, *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 11: 189 – 203.
2. Hoole C, Bonnema J. (2015). Work engagement and meaningful work across generational cohorts. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13: 1-11. doi:10.4102/sajhrm.v13i1.681
3. Jose G, Mampilly SR. (2014). Psychological Empowerment as a Predictor of Employee Engagement: An Empirical Attestation. *Global Business Review*, 15: 93-104. doi:10.1177/0972150913515589
4. Jose G, Mampilly SR. (2015). Relationships Among Perceived Supervisor Support, Psychological Empowerment and Employee Engagement in Indian Workplaces. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 30: 231-250. doi:10.1080/15555240.2015.1047498
5. Kahn WA. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work, *Academy of management Journal*, 33: 692-724.
6. Kosar R, Mehdi Raza Naqvi SM. (2016). Psychological empowerment and employee behaviors: Employee engagement as mediator and Leader-Member Exchange as Moderator. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 1: 24-30.
7. Meng Q, Sun F. (2019). The Impact of Psychological Empowerment on Work Engagement Among University Faculty Members in China. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 12: 983-990. doi:10.2147/prbm.s215912
8. Moura D, Ramos AO, Jesus SND. (2015). Psychological Empowerment and Work Engagement as predictors of Work Satisfaction: A sample of Hotel Employees, *Journal of Spatial and Organizational Dynamics*, 3: 125-134.
9. Ozcelik G. (2015). Engagement and retention of the millennial generation in the workplace through internal branding, *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10: 99 – 107, DOI: 10.5539/ijbm.v10n3p99

10. Saks AM. (2006). Antecedants & Consequences of employee engagement, *Journal of managerial psychology*, 21: 600-619. DOI 10.1108/02683940610690169
11. Schaufeli WB, Salanova M, Gonzalez-Roma V, Bakker AB. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3: 71-92.
12. Sharma N, Garg P. (2017). Psychological Contract and Psychological Empowerment as Employee Engagement Drivers in Indian IT Sector. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 15: 279-287.
13. Sharma N, Singh VK. (2018). Psychological Empowerment and Employee Engagement. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 9: 44-55. doi:10.4018/ijhctip.2018100103
14. Siegall M, Gardnesr S. (2000). Contextual factors of psychological empowerment. *Personnel Review*, 29: 703-722. doi:10.1108/00483480010296474
15. Spreitzer GM. (1995). Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace: Dimensions, Measurement, and Validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38: 1442-1465. doi:10.5465/256865
16. Stander MW, Rothmann S. (2010). Psychological empowerment, job insecurity and employee engagement. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 36: 1-8. doi:10.4102/sajip.v36i1.849
17. Zimmerman MA, Israel BA, Schulz A, Checkoway B. (1992). Further Explorations in Empowerment Theory: An Empirical Analysis of Psychological Empowerment, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 20: 707-727.