

A Study on Impact of Generational Differences on Employee Engagement in the Workplace with Special Reference to Corporate Sector, Chennai City

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Abstract

Every organization aims at maintaining the commitment level of its employees so that the growth of the organization is guaranteed along with its employees'. It has become a paradigm that committed employees are those who keep themselves engaged in a better way for achieving such a development. Besides, the working environment is dynamic to the extent that, at times, it becomes unpredictable. It has seen greater swings due to attitude of its employees, market forces, technical and technological backgrounds, socio-economic culture like. In addition to the mentioned element, of late, the shift could be identified due to generational differences at workplace leading to supplementary challenges. Most of the organization has all the four different generations, namely, Baby Boomer, Generation X, Generation Millennial and Generation Zoomer/ Z.

(1) Background of the study: The rationale of this quantitative study was to identify the effect of generational difference on employee engagement in the corporate sector in Chennai city.

(2) Methods: A quantitative descriptive, non probability sampling research design was preferred for this study. The population to be included was all the four generation as mentioned below. While only last three generation of employees were covered in the sample size. The sample size is 100, which includes employees belonging to corporate sector serving at various designations. This study was not purposely limited to Generation X, Generation Millennial and Generation Zoomer/ Z, yet there were no respondents from Baby bloomer. A questionnaire with Likert five point scale was designed and distributed as a tool to proceed with the survey.

(3) Result: The study defined a chief relationship between the age/generational difference with loyalty, work environment, work life balance, commitment, work and value and like. The main findings of the research are that, there is a relationship between generational differences and different components of employee engagement. It was ascertained that there exists a strong bond between generational difference and overall employee engagement in any corporate sector.

(4) Conclusion: The attitude, thinking pattern and maturity level depends mostly on the age bracket of the individual and that is termed as experience as a whole. It so governs the emotional balance. Hence generational differences have its impact on employee engagement.

Keywords: [Commitment, Employee Engagement, Baby Boomer, Generation X, Generation Millennial, Generation Zoomer/ Z, Non Probability]

Introduction

The field of management particularly Human Resource Management has evolved with a greater dimension wherein it is called as Human Resource Development, due to the vibrant nature of human being. In the initial days of business or management, theories like Maslow's hierarchy of needs or McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y were prominent to understand the need of an individual employee. But in today's scenario where Emotional Quotient over takes Intelligence Quotient the need to understand the term "Employee Engagement" plays a greater role. This expression embraces every aspect in the sphere human resources approximating motivation, job satisfaction, team building and like. Engaged employees proves to be the human assets for any organization. The more an organization is flexible and transparent every employee will try to unleash his potential. It is a proven fact that if there lays strong attachment between employee, employer and the work place the productivity increases. This in turn, will lead to em-

ployee engagement. Work place includes varieties of work-task or work-force. Among those varieties found in workforce, recently generational difference dominates principally after Covid season(s). The attitude towards work have undergone a vast alteration which needs due consideration. This condition brings up the reservation on the generational differences. The age is categorized into generation as under:

- Baby Boomers - born from 1946 to 1964
- Generation X -born from 1964 to 1980
- Generation Millennial - born from 1981 to 1996
- Generation Z - born from 1997

This study concentrates on the impact of generational differences and its influence on employee engagement. To examine in a broad manner certain dimensions like communication, work life balance, work environment with reference to hybrid or remote or traditional office mode, loyalty and like were scaled. The relationship among these domains was used to

figure out the overall employee engagement in corporate sector.

Materials and Methods

Questionnaire was used as survey material to collect the required details from the respondents as a means of exploratory research. The questionnaire hence structured contains demographic assessment and attributes to be assessed using Likert point scale. To validate the questionnaire pilot survey was undergone with ten respondents. Convenience sampling was used

to collect the data from 100 employees from corporate sector in Chennai city. SPSS 20.0 and Microsoft Excel 2013 were used to interpret the data collected and to obtain the conclusions.

Statistical Tools and Calculations

As mentioned earlier, SPSS 20.0 was used to analyze the extent of dependency of dimensions with the aid of the descriptive statistics like frequency, cross tabs, case processing, chi-square test, paired sample test and correlation.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Dimension	Factor Classification	No of Respondents	Frequency	Mean	Std Deviation
Age	Gen X	30	30	2.9	0.70353
	Gen Millennial	50	50		
	Gen Z	20	20		
Gender	Male	48	48	1.52	0.50212
	Female	52	52		
Experience	Less Than 5 Years	7	7	2.57	0.76877
	5-10 Years	39	39		
	10-15 Years	44	44		
	15 Years And Above	10	10		
Education	UG	40	40	1.7	0.68902
	PG	53	53		
	Certification Course	4	4		
	Diploma	3	3		
Designation	Junior Executive	13	13	2.56	0.91365
	Executive	34	34		
	Supervisor	37	37		
	Manager	16	16		

Source: Primary data

The above table clearly depicts the details of the respondents on various demographic factors along with the mean and standard deviation. Maximum number of respondents constituting 50% belongs to Generation Millennial, who were born from 1981 to 1996.

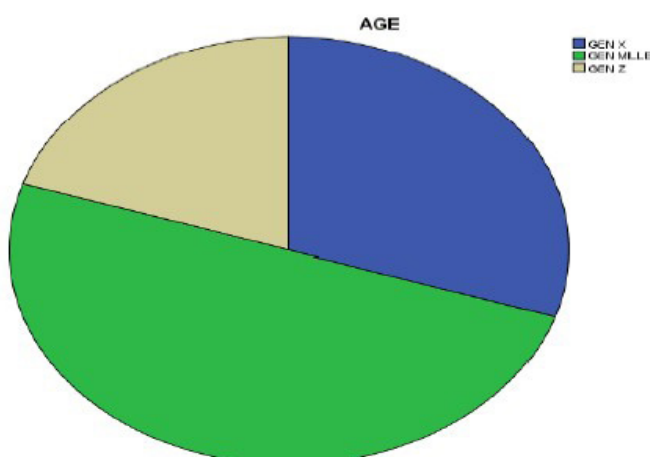


Figure 1: Chart Representing the Classification of Respondents According to Age

Next is Generation X who is subjected to the category of year 1964 to year 1980. And least number of respondents belongs to Generation Z who was born from year 1997. It could also be witnessed here that there are no respondents in the age category born from 1946 to 1964 called as Baby Boomers. The age category here plays a vital role as this study is based on the influence of age or generational differences on diverse aspects of employee engagement. Figure 1 obviously states the partition of respondents on the age bracket.

It could also be noted from Table 1 that most of the respondents are female who constitute 52% of the respondents. A good number of the respondents (44%) have working experience between 10-15 years. When it comes to education qualification about 53% of the

respondents hold a post graduation degree. Approximately 37% of the respondents are designated as 'supervisor'. This is shown in the below Figure 2.

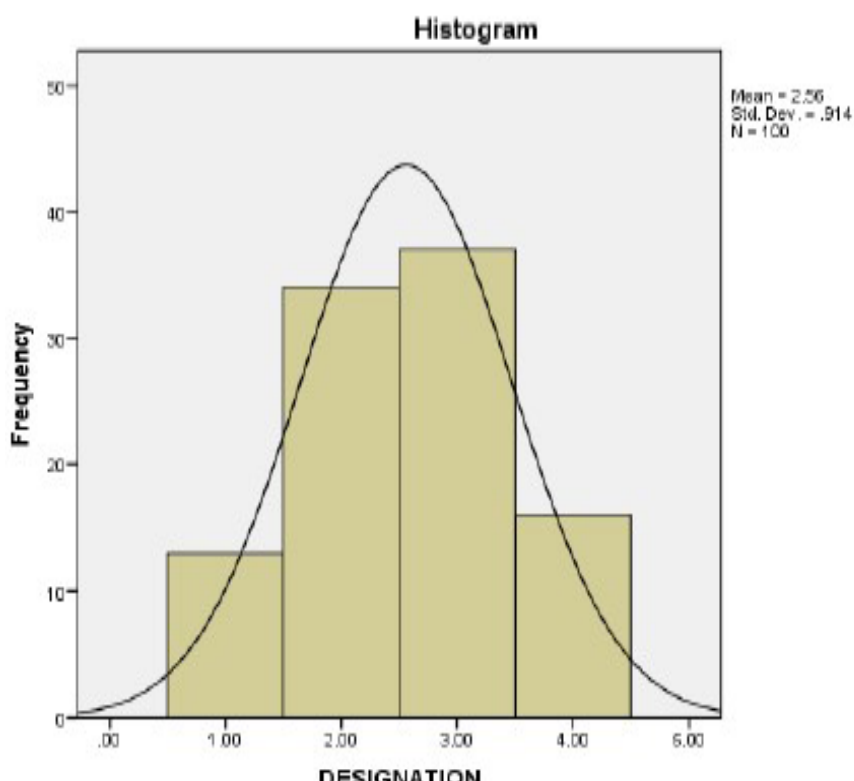


Figure 2: Chart Representing the Respondents according to Designation

Table 2 below throws clarity on the dimension loyalty to generational difference/age. It can be understood from the table that the level of loyalty stays high with the Generation millennial than the other two generation. The satisfactory level is 61% followed by highly satisfied with 29%. It is also implied that all the respondent fall under the classification that stays positive for the organization.

Table 2: Crosstab on Loyalty and Generational Differences

Age * Loyalty Crosstab				
Count				
	Loyalty			Total
	Neutral	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	
AGE Gen X	2	15	13	30
Gen Millennial	7	33	10	50
Gen Z	5	9	6	20
Total	14	57	29	100

The table above gives the count of classification while, the initial hypothesis is to test the interdependency of age with loyalty for which chi-square test was applied.

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests on loyalty and generational differences

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.883a	4	.096
Likelihood Ratio	7.738	4	.102

Linear-by-Linear Association	3.582	1	.058
N of Valid Cases	100		
a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.80.			

From table 3 it could be comprehended that the table value being more than the expected value the null hypothesis which states that there exist no relationship between loyalty and generational differences is rejected. Hence it is proved that there exist relationship between loyalty and age.

Table 4: Interdependency of Age with Work and Value, WLB and Work Environment

Paired Samples Test								
	Paired Differences							
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Age-Work and value	-1.25000	1.07661	.10766	-1.46362	-1.03638	-11.611	99	.000
Pair 2 Age-WLB	-1.00000	1.02494	.10249	-1.20337	-.79663	-9.757	99	.000
Pair 3 Age-Work Environment	-1.29000	.95658	.09566	-1.47981	-1.10019	-13.486	99	.000

The above mentioned table is the paired sample test to examine if the null hypothesis fixed as 'there exist no relationship between Work and Value, Work Life Balance and Work Environment and generational differences' could be accepted or not. The p value arrived here is less than 0.05 which means that the null hypothesis is rejected, proving that there exist relationship between the dimension aforesaid with that of generational difference.

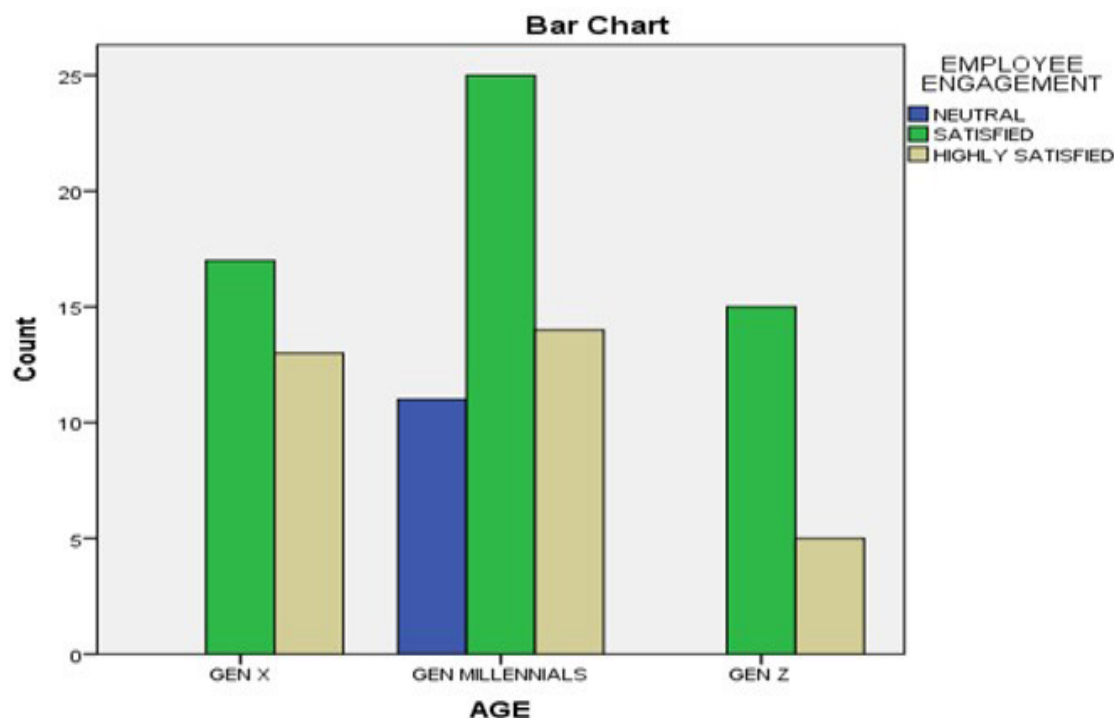
Table 5: Classification of Satisfaction Level of Employee Engagement with Reference to Generational Difference

Age * Employee Engagement Crosstab					
		Employee Engagement			Total
		Neutral	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	
Gen X	Count	0	17	13	30
	Residual	-3.3	-.1	3.4	
Age Gen Millennial	Count	11	25	14	50
	Residual	5.5	-3.5	-2.0	
GEN Z	Count	0	15	5	20
	Residual	-2.2	3.6	-1.4	
Total	Count	11	57	32	100

The figures over the table reveal that the respondents belonging to Generation Millennial show a high degree of satisfaction with 14%. Same set of respondents stand high in count in case of satisfaction with the level of engagement they are provided by the organization. It is noteworthy here that there are neither highly dissatisfied nor dissatisfied respondents. This

proves that the corporate sectors are taking measures to see to it that their employees are engaged in a proper manner. Count in case of neutral is less which is only 11%. The chart below gives a clear picture of the satisfactory level of employees towards engagement activities of their organization.

Figure 3: Chart Representing the Satisfaction Level of Employee Engagement with Reference to Generational Difference



To authenticate the same in terms of statistical point Chi-Square Test was undertaken and the table is as under:

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests on Satisfaction Level of Employee Engagement with Reference to Generational Difference

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.328a	4	.006
Likelihood Ratio	18.407	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.823	1	.177
N of Valid Cases	100		
a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.20.			

The test furnishes that the table value resulting in 14.328 which is higher than the expected count the null hypothesis 'there exist no relationship between generational difference and employee engagement' is rejected, demonstrating that there exist relationship between the two parameters.

Discussion

From the above tables and figures it is lucid that there exists a relationship connecting a variety of dimensions of employee engagement on generational differences. There were statements dependent on age like:

- I feel happy when I am working intensely.
- It is difficult to detach myself from my job.
- I get carried away when I am working.
- At my job, I feel strong as it involves variety

- I can continue working for very long periods at a time

The interpretation for the first statement 'I feel happy when I am working intensely' is that 58% of the respondents were satisfied and 34% hold highly satisfactory level. The p value stands to be .0001. The second statement 'It is difficult to detach myself from my job' has a p value of .000. In this case 67% of the respondents are satisfied with the engagement level while 27% are highly satisfied. Only 6% of the re-

spondents do not hold any views. The third statement 'I get carried away when I am working' resulting with a p value of .0001 has respondents of 65% with satisfactory level and 30% with highly satisfactory level. Fourth statement which is 'At my job, I feel strong as it involves variety' goes with the p value of .0002, where 63% show a satisfactory level while 31% stay with highly satisfied category. 'I can continue working for very long periods at a time' is the fifth statement with p value of .0005 and the category with highly satisfaction stands at 26% and category with satisfaction level is 69% only 5% of the respondent stayed neutral.

Future Recommendation

In order to make the study further more advanced and deep stratified random sampling technique can be adopted. The respondents in this research are categorized according to designation. In the future research they may be further more grouped according to the nature of the industry or the area of specialization. There seemed to be no respondents coming under the category of Baby boomers as the chance are more where they are retired. The future research may be taken up among the retired professionals for best results.

Conclusions

The outcome of the study revealed that employees belonging to Generation X showed a higher level of engagement if they worked with employees belonging to similar age bracket. Female employees seemed to easily recognize themselves with teams comprising various generations compared to male employees. It was also noticed that employees with rich experience were able to move freely with those with lesser experience leading to higher engagement level. That category of employees falling under Generation Millennial was able to associate themselves with the other two categories of employees. The workforces falling under Generation Millennial are able to balance their work and life followed by Generation X. Employee engagement is an ongoing and never ending practice

as it is placed in tune with the employee's emotions. The thinking pattern of the employees and their attitude also depends on the age bracket causing an impact on the engagement level.

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