A Study on Millennial Workforce's Perception about desired Work Place

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Published Online: 11 August 2018 Corresponding Author: **Rangana Maitra**	In today's business scenario, a major challenge that the organisations are facing is for the dynamic and constantly changing workforce demographics, specifically, with elderly employees are gradually retiring and a new generation called the "Millennials" is entering the workforce who is estimated to be more than half of the workforce by 2020. Retention rate for this generation is quite low as compared to the previous generations. This research paper is written to understand the perceptions of the employees of this new millennial generation, what are their expectations from the work place which will provide some guidelines to the organisations on how to engage and retain them. Data was collected from primary sources and based on that conclusions were drawn.

Introduction

A dominant theme affecting organizations is change. Effects of global economy, different information technologies, increased industrial effectiveness, and new entrants of employees affect organizations significantly. To survive and grow in this competitive era organisations are striving hard to change according to the situations. In today's business scenario, a major challenge that the organisations are facing is for the dynamic and constantly changing workforce demographics, specifically, with elderly employees are gradually retiring and a new generation called the "Millennials" is entering the workforce who is estimated to be more than half of the workforce by 2020. By 2025, millennials will comprise nearly 75 percent of the workforce. Many of them leave the organisations in less than two years as well. So retention is going to be a major issue for organisations in the near future. Organisations are facing a great challenge when they have to manage the processes of the organization by recruiting and retaining the younger generation known as millennial who are quite different from the baby boomers many of whose retirement is approaching. (Economist 2009). This change has led to differences in the current work orientations, and constantly has changed the organizational rules of engagement. Before going further, it is important to understand what is meant by 'Millennial'. Researchers Howe and Stauss[1] coined the term "Millennials" using 1982 as the starting birth year for

children and 2002 as last birth year. According to Howe and Stauss millennials generally are having seven key characteristics: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured and achieving (Howe & Strauss, 2000). They have an inclination towards philanthropy and support social issues they care about. This generation garnered much attention in the print and broadcast media because of the challenges that they may pose to organizational work environment. According to Keeter millennials emphasize in managing work life balance within their careers (Keeter, 2010). As employers strive to attract and hire high-value young employees, it is more important than ever for employers to understand the expectations that young people bring to the labor market. The paper initiated to relook into their mind set on different aspects including their views on diversity and inclusion which will provide some direction to the organization on how to retain those employees. According to millennials, inclusion takes place when collaborative atmosphere is created in the organisation leading to open participation from individuals with different ideas and perspectives that has a positive impact on business. Leadership at such an organization is transparent, communicative, and engaging. Their perspective could help spark a fundamental philosophical shift in how their company hires and retains workers in minority populations. This research contributes to the prevailing literature by providing the inclinations, expectations, and the priorities of the Millennials the present and future workforce.

Objectives of this study

To understand the preferences, mindset & inclination of the upcoming millennial generation at workplace

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[1] Howe, N. & Strauss, W. (2007). The next 20 years: How customer and workforce attitudes will evolve, Harvard Business Review, 41-52

To evaluate how millennials view on inclusion and workforce diversity.

To suggest what strategies organizations can adapt in order to engage & retain millennial generation

Methodology

For the introduction and literature review part, secondary Data was collected from articles, surveys and reports. For the main research, primary data was collected through survey methods on the basis of a questionnaire. Sample population was 102 working millennial. The survey respondents included individuals from a variety of backgrounds, with representation across gender.

Limitations

This research was conducted only on a small size of population of 102 working professionals which does not represent the majority of millennial workforce. Therefore to generalize the results for a larger sample, the study should have involved more participants at different levels & of different backgrounds.

Literature Review

Lucia and Lepsinger (1999) emphasizes that regardless of the issues facing an organization "...the solution begins and ends with its people". Therefore, it is quite significant to understand the perceptions of the future workforce to engage and retain them effectively. As Ensle mentioned this generation arrives at the workplace with new mindsets and priorities (Ensle, 2005). According to Marston, millennials are keen to know the significance of their role in the organisation. (Marston, 2007, p. 137). Zemke et al. (2000) suggest that organizations should "spend time learning how to become the employer of choice in their industry and region, and then continually 'sell the benefits' to retain the best and brightest of their employees" (p. 159). Organizations that are successful in the future will follow operating principles that (a) accommodate employee differences, (b) create workplace choices, (c) operate from a polished management style, (d) respect competence and initiative, and (e) sustain retention (Zemke et al., 2000). The

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) reports that the average Millennial employee, ages 25-34 leaves his or her job every 3.1 years compared to late Baby Boomers, ages 45-54 every 7.8 years and early Baby Boomers, ages 55-64 every 10 years. This indicates that organisations are not fulfilling the demands of the new workforce which is the essential requirement for an organization to be become productive, to grow.

Based on the discussion in the literature review it was decided to identify exactly what are the expectations of the new workforce which will decide the future of any organization and in order to retain talented and innovative Millennial workers what steps the organisations should consider which is a crucial factor for the success of the corporate houses.

Analysis

The data which was collected from 102 respondents is analysed in the following paragraphs.

Demographics of Millennial respondents

Out of 102, majority of respondents fall in the experience category of 3-4 years i.e. 20 and in contrary only 11 respondents fall in the experience category of 1year & less.

Majority of our respondents i.e. around 57 respondents have work experience of more than 3years, whereas 45 respondents have work experience of less than 3 years. The Average work experience of our entire employed workforce is around 3.72 years.

Further analyzing the age bracket of our employed millennial workforce, :it was observed that Majority of our respondents, around 44 respondents i.e. 43% are between the age group of 28-30 years and only 8% of our millennial respondents fall in the bracket of 20-23 years.

Analysis of attributes, that millennials like about their workplace:

An open ended question was asked to respondents- 'Attributes that you like about your workplace?'. After collating all 102 responses we further analyzed the responses & broadly classified them into the following 12 categories
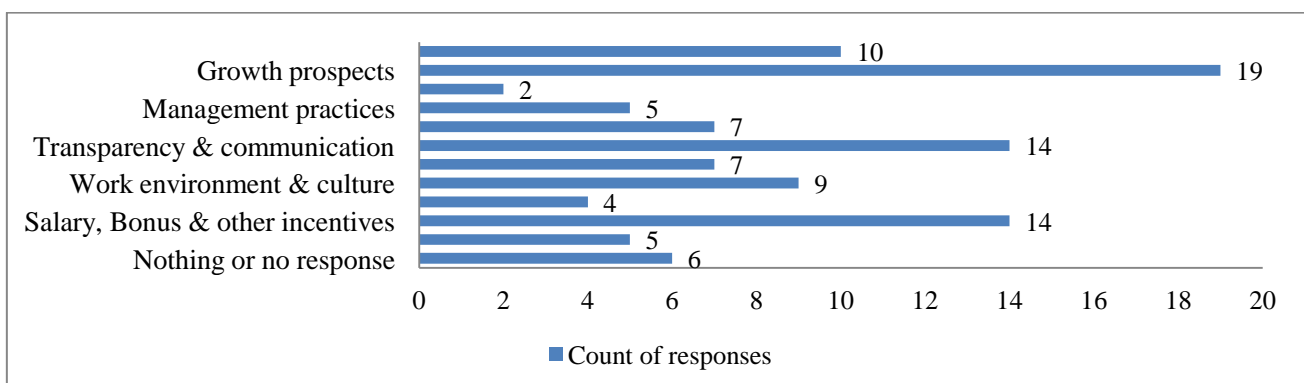

Table no. i

Derivatives: The chart above clearly represents that millennials are not merely interested in monetary incentives, but they also highly value attributes like personal growth, transparency & communication at their workplace. Also they give importance to attributes like flexibility & empowerment at work, work environment & work culture. Attributes like location or resources & facilities are not that important to millennial generation. Also attributes like clients or customers, flexible work timings, collaboration,

management support and emphasis on health & employee's family members are significant for some of them.

Analysis of attributes, that make millennials stay at their current job:

When an open ended question was asked to respondents to find out what makes them stay at their current job, after collating all 102 responses we further analyzed the responses & broadly classified them into the following 9 categories, the observation is provided in the following chart.
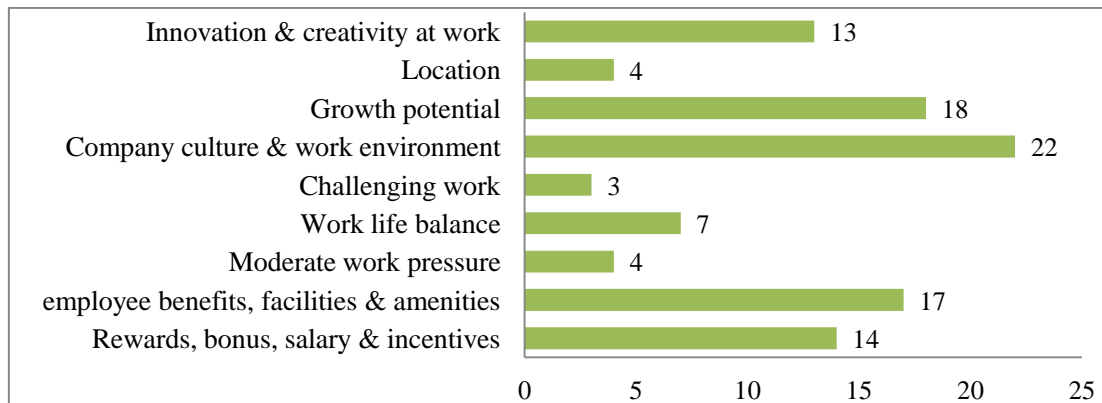

Table no. ii

Derivatives: The chart above clearly represents that the reason what makes them stay at their jobs is not just because of monetary incentives (that got only 14% of total 102 responses) & growth prospects (that got 18% of total 102 responses) entirely, but also because of reasons like innovation & creativity at work (that got 13% of total 102 responses), company culture & work environment (that got the highest 22% of total 102 responses), employee benefits, facilities & amenities (that got 17% of total 102 responses) and work life balance (that got 7% of total 102 responses). According to the trend it can be stated that company culture and work environment is of utmost important to them. Attributes like location or resources & moderate work pressure are not that important to millennial generation.

Would millennials refer someone to work in their current organization?
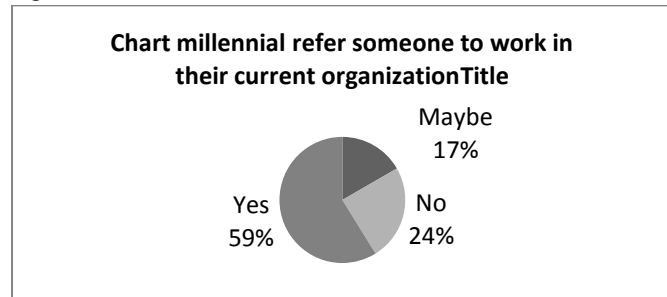
Pie Chart i

Derivatives: When an open ended question was asked to respondents to find out whether millennial refer someone to work in their current organization, out of 102 respondents, majority i.e. 59% said that they would recommend someone to work with their current organization; this could be a result

of their positive and content experience with their work or the organization they are associated with. Whereas 24% said they would not refer someone to work in their organization; this could be due to their dis satisfaction with their work or organization or also could be due to the fear of poor referrals- this could leave others questioning one's judgment or commitment to the organization and fear of setting someone up with false expectations or placing them in a position where they may not be happy.

Analysis of millennials and their contentment with their organization and work:

When asked millennial to rate related to work & workplace on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'very good': based on i) My work and life balance, ii) I have fun at work, iii) I am comfortable giving upwards feedback to my colleagues and iv) I'm happy at work, the following results were availed.

Millennial & work- life balance:

Majority i.e. 25 millennials feel that they have a poor work-life balance, whereas 22 say that they have very poor work-life balance. 19 of them still feel they have moderate work-life balance. Out of 102 only 20 respondents feel that they have very good balance between work and life and 16 of them feel they have good balance between their work and personal life. **It might be stated that some of the organisations do not take care of managing work life balance for their employees.**

Millennials & fun at work:

Out of 102 only 19 respondents feel that they have very poor i.e. slight amount of fun at their work, whereas 17 say that they have poor i.e. minimal amount of fun at their work,

whereas 18 of them still feel they have moderate amount of fun at work. Majority i.e. 25 millennials feel that they have good amount of fun at work and a high number which is 23 feel they have very good amount of fun at work. It seems that the traditional values of respect and equality in the workplace are no longer enough for millennials creating an environment, but a place where lifestyle and interests aligned.

It indicates that at least some organisations are taking certain initiatives in engaging the millennial workforce; but remaining organisations also need to take initiatives.

Millennials & giving feedback at workplace:

Out of 102 respondents, majority i.e. 23 millennials felt that they were not very comfortable & very poor at giving upwards feedback to their colleagues, whereas 19 say that they were not comfortable & poor at giving upwards feedback to their colleagues, whereas 21 of them felt they are moderately comfortable & moderate at giving upwards feedback to their colleagues. Only 19 respondents felt that they were good & comfortable at fiving feedback and 20 felt they were very comfortable & very good at giving upwards feedback to their colleagues. The result was a mixed one and like any other generation, it might be dependent on the

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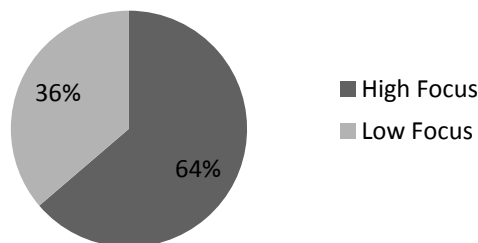personality of the individuals as to whether feedback to be given or not.

Millennials & contentment at workplace:

Out of 102, only 22 millennials feel that they are extremely happy at work and a high number which is 20 feel they are just happy at work. Employee engagement and satisfaction are key to a successful business. Companies need to pay attention to what the millennial workforce wants from a job, offer those benefits and it can be possible to keep millennials happy, productive employees for years.
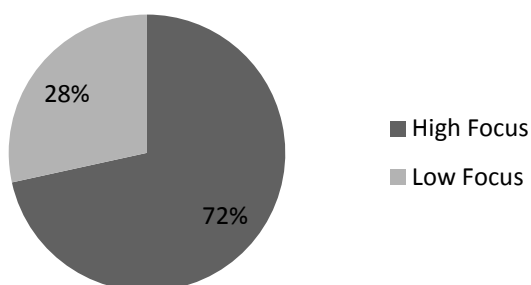
Millennials and workplace diversity:

Today's organisations are having diversified workforce who are having different cultural background. Culture is the accumulation of a group's values, traditions, norms, customs, religion, arts, history, folklore, and language and depending on the norms of the culture employees experience their work place, decide what they should do, how they should behave and to understand cause- and-effect relationships between their behavior and various outcomes.

Culture-clash takes place when individuals or groups in organisations fail to look at things from each- others' perspectives and as a result the performance of the organization suffers. Therefore, diversity aspect was taken into consideration
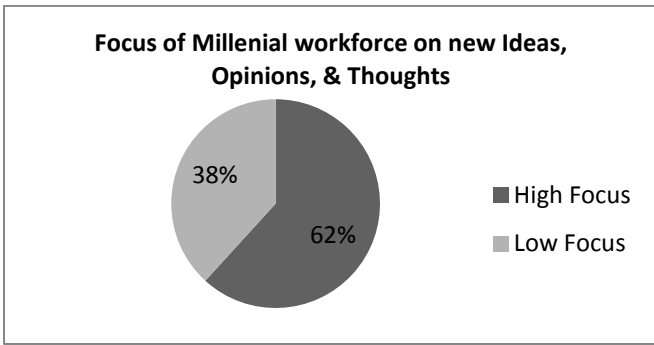

Pie Chart iii

Derivatives: Respecting identities of the fellow members leads to team spirit in the organization.

Majority respondents i.e. 64% of the millennials place high focus on respecting identities of individuals at workplace.

Pie Chart iv

Derivatives: Unique experiences involve creating own experiences by taking risks that put one into situations that challenge one's thinking, expand the perspective, make oneself feel vulnerable, and enable to get mature throughout the process. Key is in knowing how to take key learnings from every experience and apply them to similar circumstances they may be faced with.

Majority respondents i.e. 72% of the millennials place high focus on gaining unique experiences at workplace.

Focus of Millenial workforce on new Ideas, Opinions, & Thoughts

- High Focus: 62%
- Low Focus: 38%

Pie Chart v

Derivatives: Opinions & thoughts on new ideas at workplace are important to make progress happen.

Majority respondents i.e. 62% of the millennials place high focus on new ideas thoughts & opinion at work.

Focus of Millenial workforce on Representation

- High Focus: 50%
- Low Focus: 50%
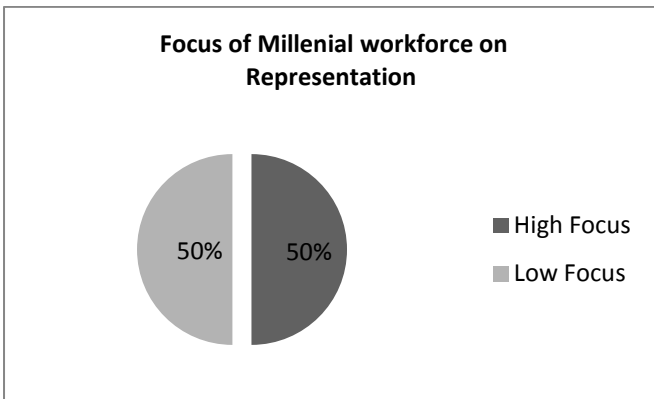
Pie Chart vi

Derivatives: Representation provides meaning and language to culture leading to exchange of thought among members of a diversified workforce

Part respondents i.e. 50% of the millennials place high focus on representation and 50% respondents do not place high focus on representation.

Focus of Millenial workforce on Equality

- High Focus: 72%
- Low Focus: 28%
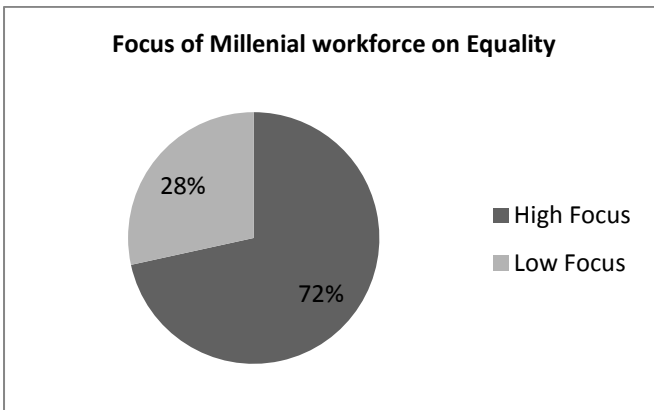
Pie Chart vii

Derivatives: Equality is all about not only promoting but also fostering everybody's right to be different and free from discrimination, it's a place where everyone is valued as an individual and all employees have a choice and their own beliefs and values are respected.

Majority respondents i.e. 72% of the millennials place high focus on regarding equality at workplace.

Focus of Millenial workforce on Religion & Demographics

- Low Focus: 34%
- High Focus: 66%
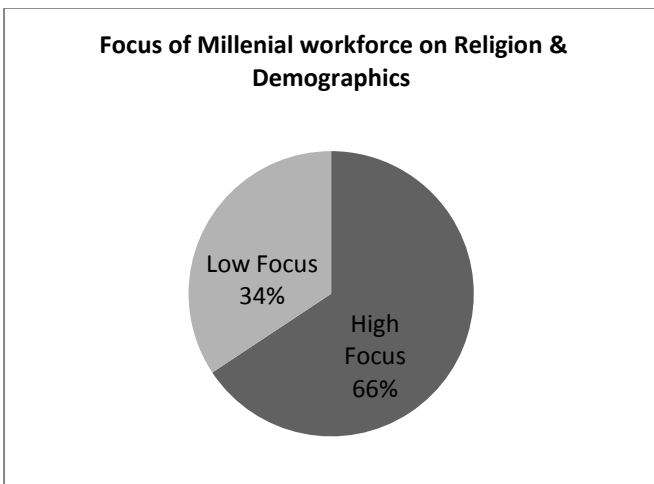
Pie Chart viii

Derivatives: In a diverse workforce, the confidence to be able to be open about one's religious or belief system is an important part of working life. One may want to tell the employer and colleagues about his religious beliefs; sometimes sharing details about his personal life can help to build working relationships.
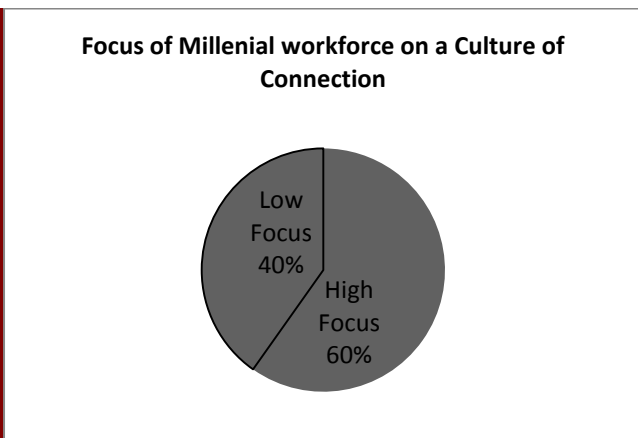
Majority respondents i.e. 66% of the millennials place high focus on respecting religion & demographics at workplace.
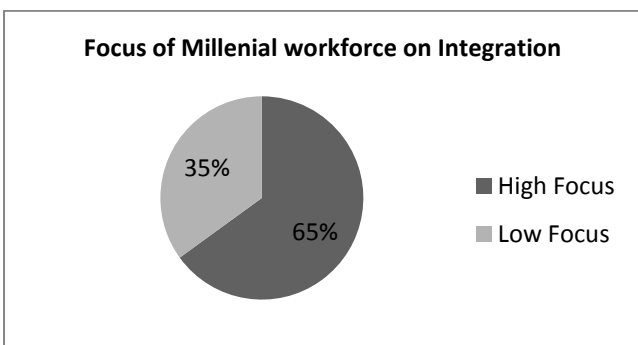
Focus of Millenial workforce on Business Impact
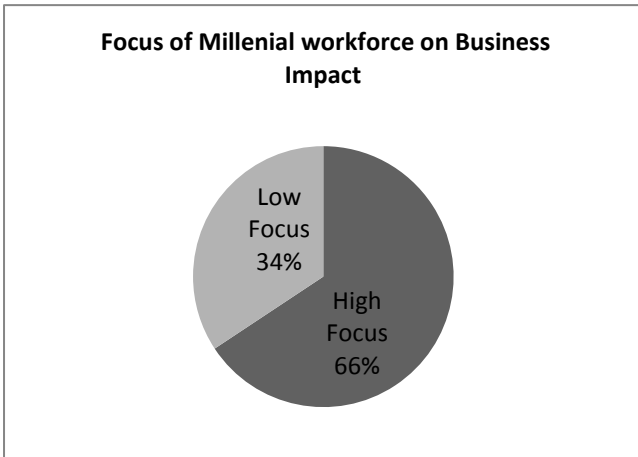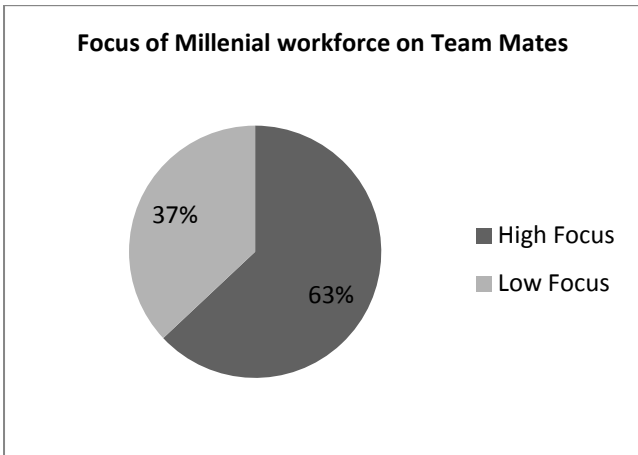
Pie Chart ix

Derivatives: Focus on the effects and consequences of the interruption to critical business functions is an important step in a business continuity plan for the survival of any company. An individual should be aware of the impact of his actions on the entire organization before taking any decision.

Majority respondents i.e. 66% of the millennials place high focus on business impact.

Focus of Millenial workforce on Team Mates

Pie Chart x

Derivatives: If employees are highly focused on team mates, organisations will be able to accomplish its overall objectives.

Majority respondents i.e. 63% of the millennials place high focus on team mates & team work at workplace.

Focus of Millenial workforce on a Culture of Connection
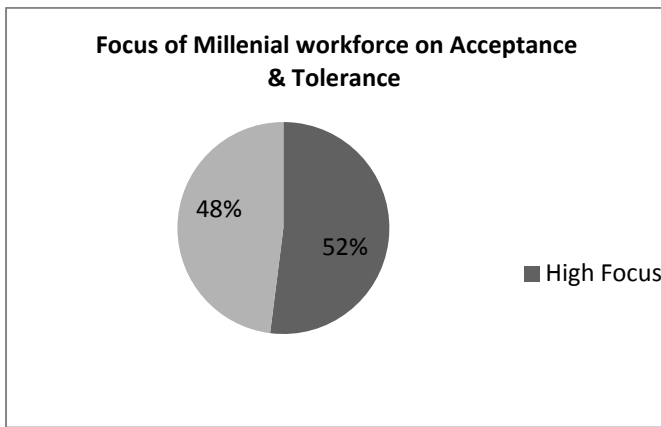

Pie Chart xi

Derivatives: A culture of connection can create a work- environment wherein employees are engaged and ready to give their best output that further influences customer experience positively.

Majority respondents i.e. 60% of the millennials place high focus on building & respecting a culture of connection at workplace.

Focus of Millenial workforce on Integration

Pie Chart xii

Derivatives: How well employees are integrated directly affects how connected they feel to the organization.

Majority respondents i.e. 65% of the millennials place high focus on building an integrated workplace.

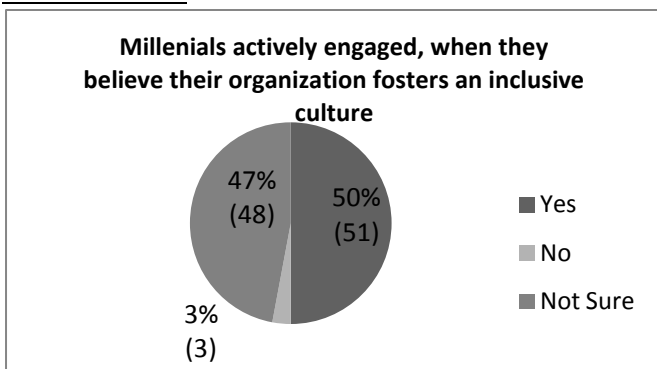**Focus of Millenial workforce on Acceptance & Tolerance**

Pie Chart xiii

Derivatives: Workplace environments are made up of various personality types, each of which may complement or conflict with others. This is why it's equally important to accept other people, leading to accepting diversified workforce from different background having different kinds of personality traits Tolerance helps employees build bridges and capitalize on the differences present in the workplace.
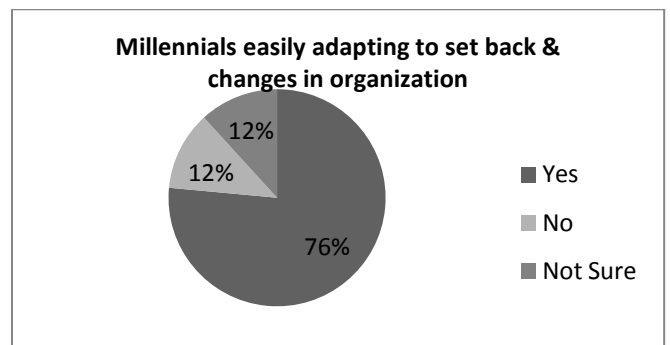
Majority respondents i.e. 52% of the millennials do not place high focus on building acceptance & tolerance at workplace.

Millennials& levels of engagement when operating in an inclusive culture:
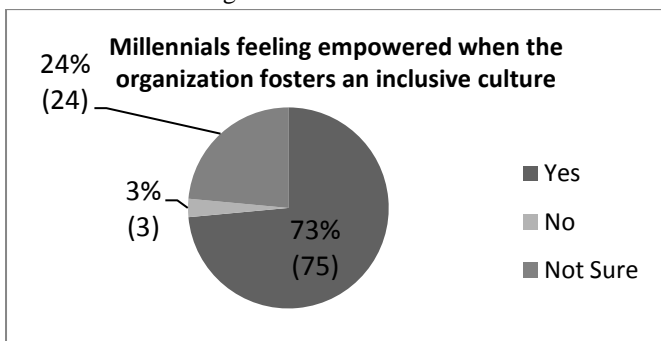
Millenials actively engaged, when they believe their organization fosters an inclusive culture

Pie Chart xiv

Millennials and engagement: 50% of the millennials reported that they were actively engaged, when they had believed that their organization fosters an inclusive culture

Millennials feeling empowered when the organization fosters an inclusive culture

Pie Chart xv

Derivatives: Majority i.e., 73% of millennials feel empowered when they believe the organization fosters an inclusive culture.

Millennials and empowerment

Millennials report higher levels of empowerment when operating in an inclusive culture

Millennials and adaptation to set back & changes in organization

When further examining differences on empowerment, millennial respondents were more likely to feel they were capable of adapting to setbacks easily.

Millennials easily adapting to set back & changes in organization

Pie Chart xvi

Derivatives: 76% agreed with the statement that they feel they easily adapt to changes & setbacks in their Organization. Millennials feel comfortable taking a stance on the environment they feel empowered in, and are demanding at a younger age a collaborative culture that is cognitively diverse and non-hierarchical. Only in these conditions millennials feel they can learn, grow, and be most productive in their organization.

Also Millennial respondents reported feeling more comfortable in expressing their own identities at work and in front of their teams and leadership than did their generational counterparts. 76% of millennials felt free to express their true identity at work.
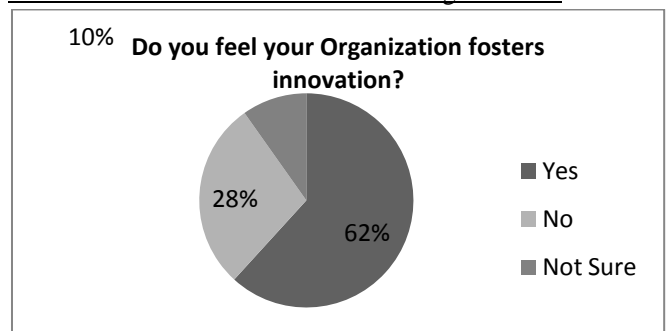
Millennials& culture of innovation in Organization:

Do you feel your Organization fosters innovation?

Pie Chart xii

Derivatives: 62%of millennials i.e., majority of them feel their Organization fosters Innovation at work.

Findings and Conclusion

In today's market force of Millennials, they strive more for growth related factors, transparency, communication, flexibility and empowerment and not just Salary, bonus and incentives. It was also observed that the major factors which make Millennials stick around in the same work place are the company culture and working environment. Further it is to conclude that the factors such as growth potential, employee benefits and a menities and innovation and creativity at work are either more or equally important to monetary factors in a company. Analysis reflects that millennials are less likely to refer some body to their company. The analysis concludes that only 41%of the population would recommend their organization to others; from which we can draw that majority of the companies are not entirely successful in satisfying them.

Analysis reflects that majority of the Millennials give more than their 100% to their work because of which their work-life balance is being compromised. As noted that majority of the respondents either don't enjoy their or they are not happy about their current work. Hence they are not excited to go to their work. As noted, majority of the population are not comfortable in providing upward feedback in their workplace. It was also observed that majority of the Millennials focus on Respecting identities of individuals (64%), Unique experiences (72%), New ideas, thoughts and opinions (62%), Equality(72%), Religion and demographics (66%), Business impact (66%),Teammates (63%), Culture of connection (60%), Integration (65%)and Acceptance and tolerance (52%). Majority of them empowered (73%) when their organization fosters an inclusive culture. Quite a huge number of Millennials (46%) believe that the work which they do in their workplace does not have an impact on their organization. Majority (76%) of the Millennials feel that they easily adapt to setbacks and changes in an organization. Only 45% of the Millennials feel free to express their identity at workplace. Majority (54%) of the Millennials feel that their organization does not fosters innovation and creativity.

This study highlighted that millennials have substantially different perspective son diversity, culture and inclusion than old regenerations. Organisations need to strategies effectively for creating and nurturing culturally diverse and inclusive workplaces. The traditional diversity and inclusion models are some what limited by respective leaders' in organization and their emphasis on one-dimensional identifiers of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Whereas considering there sponses collected from millennials a imedat, diversity and inclusion should instead focus on improved business opportunities and outcomes as a result of the acceptance of individualism, collaboration, teamwork, and innovation. The findings suggest that Millennials a cross the board want a good work-life balance, transparency, creativity, flexibility they also have aspirations to reach leadership objectives. As per the findings millennials feel more engaged and empowered when they work in an inclusive environment. There fore organizations still need to work a lot on developing purpose ful inclusive cultures-for employee so fall generations, and create a workplace where all generation scan come together & collaborate on the right solutions despite of their diverse backgrounds & cultures. In order to create a truly inclusive culture where in all employees will be engaged and engaged–they need to rethink by unlearning the previous way of managing the human resources.

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