

# RELATIONSHIP CULTIVATION WITH MILLENNIALS AT WORKPLACE

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**ABSTRACT:** Millennials are prone to frequent switching of jobs which is why they are attributed with the character of job-hopping. Of all the generations in the work force, Millennials are found to be less consistent in their workplace relationships which calls for the purposeful need for cultivating positive relationships with them at workplace. Organizational commitment is the most evident form of commitment of an employee as a committed employee stays with the organization and this can be brought about if the employees perceive that they are supported well by their organization. This is a conceptual paper, which examines how organizations cultivate committed relationships with employees using Perceived organizational support.

**Key words:** perceived organizational support, millennials, organizational commitment

## I. INTRODUCTION

Millennials, also known as Gen-Yers or the Gen-Next are defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011), as a segment of the population, born between 1981 and 2000, and they are the cohort following Generation X (born between 1966 – 1980), and Baby Boomers (born between 1946 – 1964). Over one third of the population of the world is categorized as part of the Millennial generation; there are more Millennials in India than the total populations of Germany, Spain, France, and the U. K combined (Perakslis and Michael,2012). As per the CRISIL Insight report,2014, by 2018-19, almost 50% of the Indian population will be constituted by Gen-Yers. With the influx of the millennials into the workforce, whose mobility intent is found to be highest when compared to other generation cohorts (Randstad work monitor-Wave 1 report (2011) and Wave-3 report (2015)), it is getting increasingly difficult for industry practitioners to understand how to cultivate a long-term relationship with the millennials.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social exchange theory(SET), which is among the most influential concept in understanding the workplace behavior(Blau,1964), involves interdependent interactions that generates obligations (Emerson,1976), and these interdependent transactions have the potential to generate high-quality relationships which seems to evolve overtime into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments. These exchange relationships are based on the Norm of Reciprocity or repayment in kind, which is probably the best-known exchange rule. Reciprocal interdependence emphasizes contingent interpersonal transactions, whereby an action by one party leads to a response by another (Kropanzano and Mitchell,2005), which is when an employee who gets a positive response from the employer will be obliged to return the same.

Another theory that helps us understand workplace behavior is Organizational Support theory (OST). According to organizational support theory, employees develop a general perception about how and to what extent, the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, which is popularly termed as the Perceived Organizational support (Eisenberger et al, 1986; Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). Owing to the growing need of viewing the employee– organization relationship from the employees’ viewpoint, and also because of its intended relationship with affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviors and other attitudinal outcomes, OST has attracted considerable interest from the academic as well as from the industrial perspective. (Kurtessis et al,2015).

## III. OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this paper is to understand how organizations can instill a feeling of commitment among the employees by examining the role of perceived organizational support.

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to do a detailed study on perceived organizational support and organizational commitment and thereby explain the relationship between these two variables in creating a positive workplace relationship. It is specifically designed to gather and represent the information for more detailed study. Secondary data collection method was used ranging from research papers, articles and industry review reports. Several articles pertaining to perceived organizational support and organizational commitment had been reviewed for this study.

## V. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Perceived Organizational Support*

Perceived organizational support (POS) is most popularly defined in the reviewed literature as the extent to which individuals believe that the organization where they are employed values their contributions and cares for their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). POS is driven by certain factors which determines the extent of employees’ perception of organizational support. Based on the Organizational support theory, perceived organizational support is preceded by three forms of treatment received from the organization viz. fairness, supervisor support and organizational rewards and job conditions, which increases employees’ POS

(Rhoades&Eisenberger,2002).Similarly, studies have shown that Perceived organizational support to be paid off by a number of positive employee attitudes and desirable work place behavior, including, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, various forms of citizenship behaviors, attendance and intention to stay (Rhoades & Eisenberger,2002;Kurtessis et al,2015;Ahmed&Nawaz,2015). Exchange theories (Social exchange theory and Organizational support theory) believe that such support forms a catalyst for desirable employee outcomes; attitudinal, behavioral, and performance aspects (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). These exchange relations are backed by the norm of reciprocity where the recipient is obliged to return the benefit, support, and care offered by other party (Gouldner, 1960). When any one party, be it the organization or the employee, provides support in any form, it makes the other reciprocate, which in turn benefits the other and eventually both, thereby fostering the exchange relationship in an organization (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). POS is the organization's form of commitment to its employees (Eisenberger et al,1986). Organization-employee relationship is backed by organization support theory, which presumes that "global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values employee contribution and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It is also believed to be an assurance that organization will always be there to help their employees when they are in a stressful situation or need help to deal any problems to do their job effectively. (Ahmed and Nawaz,2015). Perception of higher levels of organizational support encourages employees to go that extra mile, showing higher level of commitment to the employing organization. (Biswas and Bhatnagar,2013)

### *Organizational Commitment*

Organizational commitment may be defined as the extent to which an individual identifies with the goals and values of the organization and the how far the employees involves themselves in the activities of their organization, by exerting considerable effort on behalf of the organization with a desire to remain in the organization for a long term. (Porter et al,1974). Meyer and Allen,1990, brought out the three facets of commitment namely, Affective commitment (desire to remain), Normative commitment (obligation to remain) and Continuance commitment (recognition of the cost of leaving the organization), when summed up enhances better understanding of the relationship with the organization. Affective and normative commitment found likely to increase across employee age, while continuance commitment increases as organizational and positional tenure increase (Meyer and Allen,1993). Organizational commitment was found to increase performance and reduce withdrawal behaviors such absenteeism and turnover (Mathieu and Zajac,1990). Out of the three forms, affective commitment has the strongest and most prominent predictor of organization-related outcomes like attendance, performance, and organizational citizenship behavior and employee-related outcomes like stress and work-family conflict (Meyer et al,2002; Somers,1995). When the organization projects themselves as a platform for the employees to utilize their skills and fulfill their needs, the likelihood of increasing commitment is apparently enhanced. However, if the organization is not dependable, or in case if it does not provide employees with challenging and meaningful tasks, commitment levels are seen to diminish (Steers,1977). Likewise, organizational commitment was found to be influenced by perceived organizational support along with other work outcomes(Arshadi,2011). Once individual joins an organization, he or she enters into a psychological contract with the organization, which determines the psychological climate of the organization. The breach of such a contract can affect the employee-organization relationship adversely. Employees' positive evaluation of such a climate makes a stronger bond with the organization (Wolowska ,2014).

### *Relation between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment*

Lin and Chen (2004), in their study conducted on 298 staff from six large hospitals in Taiwan, found that, employees with higher perceived organizational support displayed enhanced organizational commitment with organization support activities which include adequate training support, compensation support, career planning support, and so on, thereby being the key to future organizational success.

LaMastro (1999), studied 251 faculty members from five public schools in New Jersey and found that perceived organizational support evidenced a strong positive correlation with affective commitment, which meant that, individuals felt more emotionally attached to the organization as well as their profession, when they experienced more support and consideration from the organization.

Currie and Dollery (2006), found in a study done on 351 police officers of New South Wales (NSW), in the light of the knowledge of increasing attrition among them, that, a dip in the levels of perceived organizational support were followed by lower levels of organizational commitment.

Edwards and Peccei (2010), conducted an investigation with 736 employees from a UK National Health Service (NHS) Trust and concluded that if an organization manages and treats its employees supportively, employees are likely to reciprocate and identify with the organization to a greater extent, with additional benefits in terms of wanting to stay in the organization and exerting effort on its behalf.

O'Driscoll and Randal (1999), reported, in a study done on 350 respondents from four dairy cooperatives in Ireland and New Zealand, that, the belief that the organization cares about the employees and values their contribution can be a viable mechanism for enhancing positive work attitudes like affective organizational commitment and job involvement.

Ucar and Otken (2010), found a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective and normative commitment and negative correlation with continuance commitment among 148 white collar employees in Istanbul. Employees develop a sense of belongingness and a feeling of attachment towards their organization, once they perceive that their organization extends support and values and cares for them. The greater the extent to which employees perceive that the organization is giving them support, the more they feel morally obliged to continue working for that organization.

Arshadi (2011), in a study on 325 full time employees in an organization in Iran, provides further insight into the effects of perceived organizational support, which shows a direct impact on the organizational commitment.

Lee and Peccei (2007), studied 910 employees from two Korean Banks, stating that perceived organizational support had a positive effect on affective commitment mediated by organization -based self - esteem.

## VI. CONCLUSION

It can therefore be concluded that commitment is a two-way process, where the commitment from the organization's end can be termed perceived organizational support and the employees' commitment to the organization can be termed organizational commitment, and both these variables go hand in hand, in creating a committed relationship in the organization especially with the millennial generation in the employees.

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