A Study On The Impact Of Millennial Leaders In Today's Workplace In Indonesia

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Abstract

Businesses in Indonesia are being attracted by the country's successful economic growth. With a high proportion of millennials in the workforce, it is important to understand millennial leadership, as these employees will soon become managers. This study aims to explore millennial leadership in selected Indonesian companies, with research questions focusing on characteristics, impact, and preparation.

Using comparative case study methodology, interviews with relevant employees were conducted to gather qualitative data The results show that leadership characteristics of millennial managers are similar to general millennials' characteristics, and that leadership characteristics resonate with the transformational leadership style. Millennial leadership also shows positive impact for companies, and relevant training is important to develop millennial to be a leader.

Indeed, there is a need for companies to prepare their millennial employees for leadership roles by providing relevant training and promoting them. Millennial managers are encouraged to combine their natural characteristics with improved social skills to enhance their leadership capabilities.

Keywords: millennial managers, millennials' characteristics, transformational leadership style.

1.0 Introduction

With a vast population, Indonesia has become a significant economic force, garnering attention from various governments, scholars, and business practitioners over the years. According to World Bank data, the country boasts the most substantial economic performance in Southeast Asia, with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rising from $823 in 2000 to $3,932 in 2018. Among the "Emerging 7" countries,

which includes China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, and Turkey, Indonesia ranks highly due to their significant economic performance within the emerging economy class. The country's economy is predicted to continue its upwards trajectory and become the fourth largest in the world by 2050, overtaking the likes of Japan and Germany, with only China, India, and the United States ahead of it. This sizable potential for economic growth makes Indonesia an attractive prospect for global business practitioners in the future (PWC 2008; 2017).

Indonesia is an attractive destination for businesses due to its current and future economic potential. However, successful business operations require essential resources such as capital, physical infrastructure, and intellectual capital, all of which are controlled by employees. Hence, a clear understanding of the human resources landscape in Indonesia is vital to ensure business success. The demographic makeup of the country offers insight into the workforce, with millennials being the largest group, accounting for over 33% of the population. Companies in Indonesia like PT. Astra International have recognized this fact and place significant value on their millennial employees, who make up almost 70% of their workforce of 250,000 employees (Deloitte Indonesia 2019).

The importance of understanding millennial characteristics for companies looking to attract and retain employees cannot be overstated. Scholars and business practitioners have recognized this fact and several studies have highlighted the unique traits of millennial workers (Bannon et.al 2011). As many current millennial workers are likely to soon assume managerial positions, understanding the implications of millennial managers in today's workplace is crucial. This research aims to explore this phenomenon in more detail, with a focus on the context of Indonesian companies. As Indonesia's economic power is set to grow in the future, this research seeks to shed light on the significance of millennial managers in facilitating business success in the country

1.1.   Scope and Limitation

The study was conducted among the millennial managers, the directors, and subordinates of the millennial managers, including the HR managers of the two companies, wherein semi-structured and predetermined questions were focused on 3 major variables **1) leadership style of millennial managers, 2) impact of millennial leadership on team performance, and 3) necessary action by company to prepare for millennial leaders.** During the interview, the participants were free to raise questions other than the predetermined ones.

For this research, two companies were chosen as **sample cases**. The first, known as company A, is a private educational institution located in Jakarta, focusing mostly on business and creative industry programs at the university level. Despite being established in 1992, this institution has undergone several changes in ownership. Presently, approximately 150 faculty members and 100 back-office employees guide 2,500 students. In contrast, company B is a privately owned medical equipment distributor with its headquarters located in the greater Jakarta area. Although established in 2015, this company is quickly growing and already operates in three major cities in Indonesia, having around 100 employees.

The selection of the company considered the availability of millennial managers in that respective company, and the different industry that the companies are in. Initially, through the researcher's personal network, the researcher gained consent from different companies about the availability of millennial manager in their companies, and the same procedure was done until the researcher could gain access to two different companies from two different industries. Furthermore, snowball sampling was done to gain access to the relevant people in the selected

2.0 Literature Review

This section is the compilation of the local and foreign literature and studies that were reviewed by the researchers and provides discussion and synthesis which were used to support or oppose the findings of this paper.

2.1 Millennials' Demographics and Characteristic

(Schullery 2013; Dimock 2019) identifies four distinct generations in the contemporary workplace: traditionalists (born between 1925-1945), baby boomers (born between 1946-1964), Generation X (born between 1965-1981), and millennials (born between 1982-1999). While millennials currently in the workforce are typically between the ages of 21-38, the definition of this generation based on age ranges can vary. Hershatter and Epstein (2010) suggest that millennials were born between 1982-2000, with the first entering the workforce in 2004 and the last set to enter in 2022. Siahaan (2020) categorizes millennials as anyone born after 1982.

Millennials make up a significant portion of the global population and are regarded as crucial resources due to their tech-savvy nature and productivity during their prime working years. In Indonesia, millennials account for approximately 33.25% of the total population, or 87.8 million people (BPS, 2018). By 2020, millennials are expected to make up roughly 50% of the global workforce, making it essential to understand their characteristics to create a productive work

environment and avoid intergenerational conflicts. Several factors, including parenting, technology, economic and political turmoil, have uniquely shaped millennials. Millennials are tech-focused, achievement-driven, confident, and prioritize work-life balance. However, they can also display negative traits such as self-centeredness and feeling pressured to perform, leading to stress. An in-depth understanding of these characteristics can help create an understanding and harmonious work environment.

Millennials are believed to be unique from the previous generations as they have been shaped by various factors, including helicopter parents, frequent positive feedback and reassurance, significant leaps in technology, and political and economic turmoil (Thompson and Gregory,2012).

2.2 Millennials in the Workplace

In a study about Chinese millennials employees, it was revealed that millennials like to express their voice and being creative in a workplace, as well as like to work in a team. Therefore, they are eager to create a harmonious organizational environment (Zhao, 2018), all of which is important for company to develop its competitive advantage.

However, a study by Thompson and Gregory (2012) indicated that millennials are known to be disloyal, in the sense that millennials tend to change jobs quite frequently. However, on the positive side, the job-hopping trend happens because millennials are achievement-focused and have strong desire for rapid success.

Millennials have made a big impact on the workforce, changing the way employers communicate, use technology, and manage their staff. Flexible work schedules, the use of personal technology, and more open and transparent environments are largely thanks to millennials (Fuscaldo 2023)

Willyerd (2015) mentioned that feedback is used by millennials as a tool of self-improvement and one way of giving feedback to millennials can be done through performance appraisal (Steward et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the previous generations often see the continuous need of feedback by millennials as needy and might shows that millennials are lacking on clear directions (Thompson and Gregory, 2012)

2.3 Leadership

Although leadership is an important concept in any context of life, especially in the business world, defining leadership is not an easy topic. Northouse (2016, p. 6) describes leadership as a process that involves an individual influencing another group of individuals with the purpose of achieving a common goal. With that regards, the art of

influencing other people is something that might be unique for someone but is nevertheless something that can be learnt. According to Hao and Yazdanifard (2015), an effective leader has certain characteristics like: passion, consistency, trust, and vision in order to build trust among the employees. Also, a leader must have the ability to motivate and provide clear guidance for employees to help in achieving organizational goals.

All the above-mentioned definitions and characteristics of an effective leader have resulted in different theories and approach of an effective leader. The following section will discuss leadership approach in a more detailed and comparative manner.

2.4 Leadership Styles

The debate between transactional and transformational leadership is not about determining a superior or inferior approach to leading. Although these approaches are fundamentally different, both possess benefits and are crucial leadership styles to comprehend and implement in particular scenarios. A leader may incline towards either transactional or transformational tactics based on their personality and techniques. Nevertheless, exceptional leaders recognize the value of incorporating both into their repertoire.

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes change and transformation. Leaders who adopt this approach strive to inspire their followers to achieve more than they ever thought possible by tapping into their potential. This type of leadership can be highly effective in organizations looking to make significant changes or transformations. Transactional leadership establishes roles and responsibilities for each employee. However, it can lead to diminishing returns if employees are always aware of how much their effort is worth. Therefore, incentives must be consistent with company goals and supported by additional gestures of appreciation (IMD, n.d).

2.5 Millennial Leadership

Previous researchers have provided clear definitions of millennials, describing their general characteristics and behaviors in the workplace. Literature concerning leadership has also been discussed, including management of millennial staff. While literature regarding millennial leadership is not yet widespread, this may be attributed to the fact that millennials are still in entry-level positions due to their age and experience.

Harrison's (2017) research focused on developing millennial managers, identifying information communication technology and reverse mentoring as crucial factors for promoting innovative leadership among this group. This is understandable, given

millennials' penchant for tech proficiency and enthusiasm for collaboration.

Another recent study by Saifman and Sherman (2019) examined the experiences of millennial managers in the nursing profession, indicating that organizational factors such as change management and director support can greatly influence their job expectations, satisfaction, and retention. However, this study is limited to nursing and does not delve into the specific leadership traits, skills, and styles of millennial managers in the corporate world.

Bodenhausen and Curtis' (2016) study sought the opinions of millennial workers regarding leadership preferences, revealing that the transformational leadership style is highly favored due to their desire to be involved in work processes. This suggests that once millennial workers become leaders, they are likely to exhibit a transformational leadership style in line with their own characteristics.

In this regard, linking traditional leadership theories with the unique characteristics of millennials can offer another avenue to predict and establish a theoretical framework for millennial leadership. Research by Gilley et al. (2015) on work-life balance suggests that the leadership qualities of millennials would be aligned with their characteristics, as millennial managers are found to provide better support for work-life balance in their company culture compared to older generations.

Additionally, studies show that millennials prefer a harmonious organizational environment and teamwork (Zhao, 2018), indicating that millennial leaders may employ transformational leadership to lead their teams. Under this approach, followers are empowered, and collaboration is an essential aspect of the leadership style.

Similarly, Chou (2012) proposes that millennial leaders are likely to exhibit participative leadership behavior, enabling team members to contribute to decision-making processes, which shares similarities with transformational leadership.

3.0 Conceptual Framework

To comprehend the ramifications of millennial leadership, it's critical to comprehend the characteristics that define it. Two crucial elements that can assist in this regard include **millennial traits and leadership approaches.** Literature on the subject has explored several facets of millennial characteristics, such as their tech-savviness (Eastman et al., 2014), proclivity for teamwork (Zhao, 2018), innovation, open-mindedness, and preference for flexibility at work (Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010 retrieved in 2023). These characteristics can shape the base for millennial manager leadership attributes. In addition to millennial characteristics, grasping the

diverse approaches to leadership can enhance comprehension of millennial leadership. Although various leadership approaches exist, this study primarily focuses on leader traits and skills, transformational or transactional leadership styles.
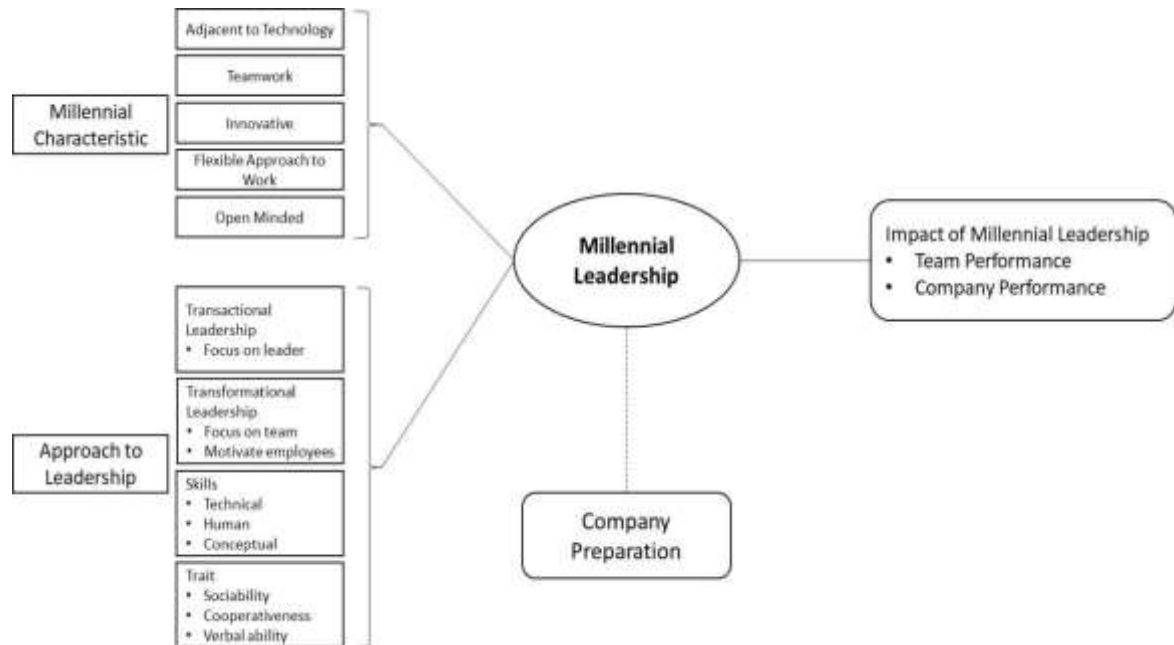

Figure 1. Understanding Millennial Leadership: A conceptual framework

3. 1 Research Methodology

This study utilized **interpretivism paradigm** with qualitative methodology to get full understanding about the subject of the research (Goldkuhl, 2012), which is necessary to get detailed information about millennial leadership. Furthermore, comparative case study was used as the method to address the proposed research question, and this method was utilized because millennial leadership is a complex phenomenon in which different paradox might occur all at the same time and thus detailed understanding is needed to discover the leadership characteristic of millennial manager, its impact for company, as well as how to prepare for that emerging phenomenon.

The data of this research was obtained by conducting semi-structured interviews – that is a type of interview organized with sets of predetermined questions, yet still open for follow-up questions - with participants from two companies from two different industries. The participants were millennial manager, the director and subordinate of the millennial manager, as well as the HR manager of the respective companies.

Two different companies from two different industries were chosen to allow for better understanding about millennial leadership in company from different industry perspectives, and to improve the

validity of this study. Furthermore, participants with different roles within the company were interviewed so that each participant could give specific information to answer the different research questions and thus to ultimately achieve the objectives of this research study.

3.2 Justification of Methodology

The reason for utilizing comparative case study in this research is due to the complexity of millennial leadership and the various paradoxes that may occur simultaneously. A thorough understanding is needed to uncover the leadership style of millennial managers and the impact of millennial leadership in the workplace, making case study a suitable method for this research. It's necessary to examine millennial leadership within specific companies to understand its impact on each respective workplace and provide a more comprehensive picture of the overall impact.

Case studies were utilized to obtain information about millennial leadership not just from the managers themselves, but also from relevant employees. This approach offers a more profound understanding of the impact of millennial leadership, as it considers multiple viewpoints from those directly affected by it. Additionally, comparative case studies allow knowledge about millennial leadership to be obtained from companies in different industries, which adds to the generalizability of the study.

Moreover, comparative case studies also enhance the reliability of the research, as data is sourced from multiple case studies instead of being limited to one. In summary, the utilization of comparative case study in this research provides an in-depth understanding of millennial leadership and its impact in the workplace.

4. Analysis of Findings

To gather information about millennial leadership, phone interviews were conducted with eight participants from two different companies with various roles. Due to confidentiality agreements, full information on the participants was not disclosed, but their roles and companies were available. The interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, transcribed, and translated into English for analysis using a general analytical procedure that involved categorizing data into sets and patterns. The information gathered from these individuals provided a comprehensive perspective on the impact of millennial leadership within the company. Appendix I contains the list of interview questions. The findings were used to analyze necessary measures for companies to face the emergence of millennial managers. The study found that millennial managers' leadership characteristics were consistent with the general traits of this generation

The study revealed that **millennial leadership positively impacted company performance. Training to improve leadership skills and interpersonal communication** were identified as beneficial for companies preparing millennial employees for leadership roles. This emerging trend of millennial leadership can be addressed by companies utilizing these tools to improve their performance.

The millennial manager had at least one year of experience in their role to ensure the validity and significance of their leadership.

In terms of **Leadership Characteristic of Millennial Managers**, both Company A and Company B report similar aspects of millennial leadership, with a few variations. Flexibility, inspiration, innovation, teamwork, and helpfulness are the most prominent attributes reported by Company A. The Director of Company A vouches for the millennial manager's proclivity for giving autonomy to subordinates and employing creativity to meet goals. Meanwhile, the millennial manager values teamwork and motivation to lead their team to success.

The responses b e l o w were in accordance with the information obtained from the subordinate, in which she explained that the millennial manager is very helpful and innovative in handling the

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"The way he leads his team is actually by giving them the flexibility and freedom to find out the best method to reach the goal of the department. In that way, he is open with any approach from his subordinates on how to do things, in a sense that he is not strict with his own way of doing things." (Director, company A)

"For me, they are all my partners. So, I like to inspire them if there are any setbacks or difficult assignments. I will also give examples of how to do things. So, for me, a good leader is inspirational." (Millennial manager, company A)

"I like it the most that he is a very open person. As our work mostly utilizes Microsoft Excel, he is open and willing to teach us on how to use the excel formulas. Also, I am glad that he always looks at different points of view. For example, is working pattern, while others may think we should do it according to the SOP, Mr. X will try to explore a better way to do it." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

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team's assignment.

Furthermore, the information obtained from the HR also suggests that the millennial manager is flexible, teamwork and inspirational.

> *"His leadership is really based on teamwork and inspirational leadership. Mr. X helps the team to move forward together by inspiring, motivating and putting the importance of team above individual needs." (HR manager, company A)*

On the other hand, the key answer about leadership style of millennial manager in company B revolves around the usage of technology, open minded, teamwork, as well as motivation. The director explained the style of millennial manager as being supportive with the whole

> *"He is a sales manager, so as a salesman, there are a lot of follow up to the potential buyer that he needs to do. Instead of using conventional meetings or phone calls, he utilizes technology such as chat via social media platform to do the follow up. Furthermore, he also manages the database of potential buyers with the usage of an IT system, making it easier to be tracked and controlled by me. In a nutshell, he utilizes technology as his main tool in leading the team to reach the department's goal." (Director, company B)*

team and utilize technology when working with assignments, which is in accordance with the manager's opinion about how he led, that is by having good coordination with the whole team.

> *"Coordination is key in my leadership. I like to gather with my team for weekly or biweekly meetings, not only to ask for sales progress, but also to gather information from them on how we should improve the team, as well as how I should improve my leadership.*
> *Communication and coordination among the team for me is very important to be done as a leader, because a leader cannot work alone, but instead coordinating with the whole team on how to get the job done." (Millennial manager, company B)*

The subordinate also explained another characteristic of the millennial manager, that is freedom to do the assignment as long as the team's goal is reached, while the HR emphasized the motivating leadership style, as well as the willingness to be open with the whole team.

> *"I like the way Mr. X leads the team, because he gives me freedom to get my job done. What he does frequently is that he only gives me the assignment with simple direction, and then he leaves it up to me on how I should get those jobs done. That gives me the flexibility that I want." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)*
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> *"Being a millennial sales manager, he brings positive energy to the team. His leadership, by being energetic personnel, in a way turns out to be the source of motivation for his team. In other words, he uses his personality to motivate the team. Feedback from the subordinates is always respected and communicated evenly throughout the whole team." (HR manager, company B)*

With regards to **Impact of Millennial Leadership** the millennial manager gives positive impact for the company in terms of team performance, business performance as well as individual performance. In both sample companies, the millennial manager can achieve the department's target, and the team performance also improves, leading to a positive impact on the company's business performance.

> *"Since he is an income manager, ever since he took charge of the department, we have had tremendous improvement with the uncollectible account receivable. He came, he created the system for collecting accounts receivable and billing, and ever since the data regarding account receivable has become more detailed and accurate. All that improvement leads to positive cash flows within the institution, and that is one indicator that he is doing a good job. In other words, his leadership approach really brings positive impact to the team and department." (Director, company A)*
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> *"The impact of his leadership is really apparent with the growth of sales that we have seen over the last year. I believe his motivation to lead the team, not to mention his motivation to achieve the sales target, which inevitably is the team's target, really gives a positive influence on the team to achieve the target. Overall, I'm happy with his current performance and the respective impact for my business." (Director, company B)*

The leadership of the **millennial manager** also **affects** the subordinate's individual performance positively, primarily due to the unique leadership characteristic that each of the millennial manager

> *"For individual, I mean each person's KPI. We have KPI targets. For me, with the directions given by Mr. X, we can do our work nicely and be able to achieve our KPI targets. I can give you an example of account receivable billing to students. Mr. X gives step by step directions on what should be done, whether we must put a call reminder, or email remainder, or SMS remainder so that students may get used to the billing pattern. By doing that, the students will make the payment on time and that also means our KPI performance is fulfilled." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)*

possesses.

Similarly, the **company culture is also favorably influenced by the style of leadership and behavior of the millennial manager**. Lastly, although the millennial managers are still

> *"He impacts the company culture positively, because with his willingness to not set a distance from his subordinates, makes everyone in the company become closer to each other, and thus there is a sense of family among us all. He sees his subordinates as his colleagues, his team, and that really influences other teams as well." (HR manager, company A)*
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> *"He has been here for just over a year, however his ability to develop his team is already quite imminent. His good coordination with the team combines with his flexible approach to solve problems, means that he can always coordinate the team on how to face obstacles but at the same time trigger the team to think of the possible solution. That in the way I believe really gives a good opportunity for his employees to improve." (HR manager, company B)*

young, they already have the capability to develop their team.

When it comes to the **Leadership Characteristic of Millennial Manager** several categories were highlighted such as: behavior, mindset, and trait.

The topic of millennial leadership often centers on the conduct of millennial managers in their professional work. Through interviews, it has been observed that these managers tend to inspire and motivate their co-workers and subordinates, recognizing that this is key to empowering their team and achieving departmental objectives.

> *"For me, they are all my partners. So, I like to inspire them if there are any setbacks or difficult assignments. I will also give examples of how to do things. So, for me, a good leader is inspirative." (Millennial manager, company A)*
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> *"And then we also have motivation, in a sense that we are motivated to reach our common goal" (Millennial manager, company A)*
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> *"His leadership is really based on teamwork and inspirational leadership. Mr. X helps the team to move forward together by inspiring, motivating and putting the importance of team above individual needs." (HR manager, company A)*
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> *"It is something that I cannot really explain by sentence, but when I see him working, it seems that the things that he does could be an inspirational source for his team." (Director, company B)*
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> *"He motivates his team to do great work." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)*

It was also found out that millennial managers are willing to teach and therefore give good direction to their subordinates, especially when dealing with new assignments or facing obstacles and problems.

Nevertheless, it is good to note that although millennial managers like to direct their subordinates, it is not a strict or a very detailed order. The millennial managers tended to give a rather flexible, and open direction towards the assignment, which can be quite different if compared with the older generation manager.

"I will call them and find out what is causing them to be unmotivated, whether it is professional motives or problems with family or anything else. And then from there we will try to solve the problem together so that the employee can be motivated with their work." (Millennial manager, company A)

"He has the willingness to patiently teach his subordinates and gives guidance on best way to do things related to the work." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"As our work is mostly utilize Microsoft Excel, he is open and willing to teach us on how to use the excel formulas." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"When problem arises within the team, often times I will look at the problem, and I will give basic direction on how I think the problem should be handled." (Millennial manager, company B)

"Yes, he does give direction to the team. He will lay out the assignment, or in our case probably a new product to sell, let us know which type of customers might be interested in that product. He will give us the basic direction on how we should get that assignment done." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

"Sometimes I see him at the office teaching his team some new information or knowledge

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Furthermore, the millennial managers also emphasized the importance of teamwork, since they regard the importance of the team above their own self, especially in the workplace setting. As such, good coordination and communication between the millennial managers and the subordinates were also regarded as the highlight of the behavior of the millennial managers.

Lastly, the **millennial managers** studied in this research were found to be **fond of technology,** in a sense that they relied quite heavily on technology to work on their assignment.

"If I can compare him with the baby boomer managers, I can say he is quite open and flexible with the team. He will lay out the assignment to his employees and let them think what the best way would be to get those assignments done. On the other hand, the older managers tend to give rather strict direction regarding what the employees should be doing, and maybe
this is because they have experience of how to do things correctly, so they can just tell their staff what to do. But for him, he is quite flexible and open-minded with how his staff handles the assignment" (HR manager, company A)

"Many of the managers in this company are baby boomers, so the approach to leadership can be significantly different if compared to Mr.X, as such that they only give orders and expect the subordinates to follow orders. Yet, Mr.X is quite open to opinions from his subordinates, and therefore he values leadership as a collaborative teamwork to achieve the team's common goal, but at the same time ensures that his voice remains to be respected." (HR manager, company B)

"What he does frequently is that he only gives me the assignment with simple direction, and then he leaves it up to me on how I should get those job done." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

"I always want us to work not individually but instead as a team, so that any difficult target can be achieved because we have a lot of power. So beside me, my team also works together." (Millennial manager, company A) "Also, communication is important, because with good communication they can understand their role and the role and purpose of the team and the organization." (Millennial manager, company A)

"On daily basis, he often asks about how we are doing with our work." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"Coordination is key in my leadership. I like to gather with my team for weekly or biweekly meetings, not only to ask for sales progress, but also to gather information from them on how we should improve the team, as well as how I should improve my leadership. Communication and coordination among the team for me is very important to be done as a leader, because a leader cannot work alone, but instead coordinating with the whole team on how to get the job done." (Millennial manager, company B)

"When there is a very important project going on, he will set up a weekly meeting to have good coordination on the project. If it's just a normal daily operation, then it is usually a biweekly meeting. The point is, he regularly coordinates with the team, not only in the form of phone communication, but also team meeting" (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

"He is a sales manager, so as a sales manager, there is a lot of follow up to the potential buyer that he needs to do. Instead of using conventional meetings or phone calls, he utilizes technology such as chat via social media platform to do the follow up. Furthermore, he also manages the database of potential buyers with the usage of an IT system, making it easier to be tracked and controlled by me. In a nutshell, he utilizes technology as his main tool in leading the team to reach the department's goal." (Director, company B)

"If you compare him with the older manager, or even me, he is quite brave with using technology. He even introduced some software to us that he believes could be quite useful for the company. More intriguingly, he is also able to use some sophisticated editing software, so sometimes he himself created advertorial banner as a tool to introduce our products to the potential customer" (Director, company B)

"I like it the most that he is a very open person." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"In that way, he is open with any approach from his subordinates on how to do things, in a sense that he is not strict with his own way of doing things." (Director, company A)

"As I digest the feedback that I often receive from my boss or my employees, I then realized that I must be open minded, because my method to get the job done might not always work, but instead the opinion from one of my employees might be able to solve the problem that we are facing. Therefore, I think being open minded is critical for a leader to succeed, and thus able to reach the team's goal." (Millennial manager, company B)

"I like the way Mr. X leads the team, because he gives me freedom to get my job done." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

"With regards to receiving feedback however, he is quite open, in a sense that he is willing to receive my opinion about his performance and improve it with open minded. More interestingly, he also likes to gather feedback from his subordinates." (Director, company B)

"Feedback from the subordinates is always respected and communicated evenly throughout the whole team" (HR manager, company B)

In the discussion regarding **Mindset** or the way of thinking of the millennial managers, it was found out that millennials are open-minded in terms of problem-solving or completing assignments, They also respond to feedback - either it is from their subordinates or superior – in an open-minded fashion.

The open mindedness of the millennial managers possibly results in their innovative mindset. Indeed, findings from the interviews suggest that the managers like to find innovative approach towards

"With that said, he didn't do things with conventional method, but instead quite innovative on the way he does things. Innovation is the key feature of his leadership approach." (Director, company A)

"Being open minded is crucial in leadership nowadays. World is changing very rapidly, and we as a young leader, must keep our mind open to the dynamic business environment" (Millennial manager, company A)

"With that said, he didn't do things with conventional method, but instead quite innovative on the way he does things. Innovation is the key feature of his leadership approach." (Director, company A)

"Being open minded is crucial in leadership nowadays. World is changing very rapidly, and we as a young leader, must keep our mind open to the dynamic business environment" (Millennial manager, company A)

"Yes. He is also able to see things from a different point of view. For example, if our work may involve a long authorization process, he will try to look for the best way to simplify it." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"Also, I am glad that he always looks at different point of views. For example, is working pattern, while others may think we should do it according to the SOP, Mr. X will try to explore a better way to do it." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"Furthermore, I think his utilization of technology, especially with different kind of IT techniques that he is capable of doing, is just showing that he is an innovative manager" (Director, company B)

"Most of the time, he can come up with something that is out of the box. Innovative mind
is quite apparent with him" (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

problem solving, and to find better, out of the box approach for dealing with assignment.

The **Trait or Personal characteristic** has been known to be affecting the leadership of a manager. Indeed, a millennial manager from this study was found to have a positive, outgoing personality which in turn impacted the way of leadership.

> *"I love his positive upbringing. Every time we communicate, either individually or within a team, you can sense his positivity and that's really motivates me as an individual and as an employee." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)*
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> *"Being a millennial sales manager, he brings positive energy to the team. His leadership, by being energetic personnel, in a way turns out to be the source of motivation for his team." (HR manager, company B)* Interestingly, the millennial managers in this study also showed a *caring personality that again affected the leadership style.*
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> *"Other than that, he is very helpful and caring. On a daily basis, he often asks about how we are doing with our work." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)*
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> *"Sometimes I see him asking his team whether they have had their break or not. Even more, I think he always has lunch together with his team. He really cares with the   wellbeing of his team." (Director, company A)*

Moreover, findings on the **Impact of Millennial Leadership** focused on three (3) perspectives**:** business performance, team performance and development, as well as company culture and reflect the following results:

The Managers were able to boost their team's performance and successfully foster team development

Regarding **Business Performance**, the millennial managers observed in this study showed a positive impact on the company's performance. One manager accomplished a previously unattainable goal, while the other consistently met the company's sales target. study suggests that the **improvement in business performance** by

> *"As far as I'm concerned, his team really grows under his leadership. They have made no complaints about him, and everything has looked very good until now. I see them mingle quite often, so it is obvious that teamwork is really built up and I believe that is good in order to achieve the team's goal." (Director, company A)*
>
> *"The team has performed quite well under his guidance. The team coordinates very well to do follow up with the potential buyer, and with his guidance, the follow up looks more coordinated and it can be seen with the positive sales performance over the past year." (Director, company B)*

millennial managers could be attributed to their skill in enhancing and cultivating their team, as evidenced by the interview results.

"I believe that although he is still relatively young, he has the ability not only to perform but also a very good leadership skill that he is able to improve the team for the better. With his ability to lead the team with innovation and open mindedness, I sense the team has been able to improve their capabilities and also become more innovative as time goes by. The way this team performs and solves problems is sometimes quite unique and stands out from the other team." (HR manager, company A)

"He has been here for just over a year, however his ability to develop his team is already quite imminent. His good coordination with the team combines with his flexible approach to solve problems, means that he can always coordinate the team on how to face obstacles but at the same time trigger the team to think of the possible solution. That in the way I believe really gives a good opportunity for his employees to improve." (HR manager, company B)

In addition to **team development**, it was revealed that millennial managers possess the capacity to foster individual team member

"For individual, I mean each person's KPI. We have KPI targets. For me, with the directions given by Mr. X, we are able to do our work nicely and able to achieve our KPI targets. I can give you an example of account receivable billing to students. Mr. X gives step by step directions on what should be done, whether we have to put a call reminder, or email remainder, or SMS remainder so that students may get used to the billing pattern. By doing that, the students will make the payment on time and that also means our KPI performance is fulfilled." (Staff of millennial manager, company A)

"In my opinion, his leadership gives meaningful impact for my performance. With his openness, in a way that I am able to communicate with him without any formal   barrier, make it easier for me to consult any obstacles that I face in the   daily   operation of the company. Because of that, I am able to improve my performance with his guidance." (Staff of millennial manager, company B)

growth.

The presence of millennial managers and their distinctive qualities have a positive impact on the **company culture**. One participant's positive and extroverted nature contributes to a more pleasant work atmosphere. Meanwhile, the other millennial manager's emphasis on teamwork

fosters a stronger sense of unity among colleagues.

> *"He impacts the company culture positively, because with his willingness to not set a distance from his subordinates, makes everyone in the company become closer to each other, and thus there is a sense of family among us all. He sees his subordinates as his colleagues, his team, and that really influences other teams as well." (HR Manager, company A)*
>
> *"His positivity helps create a positive environment within the office. Although as a salesman he spends most of his working hours outside the office, his energetic characteristics help bring some positivity into the office. And in the end, I feel that he really helps bring some energy into the daily culture of our company." (HR Manager, company B)*

> *"From what I have experienced, millennial managers t e n d to love their gadget and technology more. That results in their preference to not socialize, to not have physical bonding with each other, especially with those who are older. They need more physical interaction with other people. With all that, I can say that the company, especially the old corporate with many baby-booming managers, needs to have some sort of team building training between the employees. The training is needed to make sure that the inter- generational team can work together. The baby boomer can understand the characteristics of millennials, and the millennial can also understand their older generation colleagues." (Director, company A)*
>
> *"I think millennials in general are quite good with teamwork, collaboration and all those kinds of things. Yet, I also believe they rely too much on their phone or computer to build those relationships. While it may be good, especially in time of pandemic like nowadays, I believe it might not be good forever, in a sense that they should also interact with people physically, directly as well. That case will especially affect their relationship with the older people at the office, who might not be so into technology. Therefore, improving real, physical interaction might hold a key for successful millennial managers and the one thing that company, possibly through HR department and board of directors, need to think about in the future. As for me, I think the appropriate, and possibly the easiest thing for a company to do, and we do that also here, is to make company gathering as frequently as possible. Of course, there will be budget and time limitation, but it is important to create bonding between the employees." (Director, company B)*

As millennials make up the majority of today's workforce, it is crucial for **companies to prepare for this growing trend**. According to interview findings, fostering inter-generational

understanding in the workplace is crucial, which highlights the significance of team building training. This training can also enhance the millennials' abilities in interacting with people, as some directors observed that they overly rely on technology and lack social interaction skills. To address this, one director recommended that

company gatherings could serve as a means for millennials to directly interact with other employees.

Interestingly, HR manager from one of the companies suggested that the older generation may also need to familiarize themselves with millennials, particularly with the **usage of technology.**

> *"As much older generation workers retire, and the influx of millennial workers and millennial managers, I sense that technology will be used more often in the workplace. As millennials are already good with that, then I think it is the older generation that may need to adapt themselves with the use of technology. As such, maybe the older generation needs to accustom themselves to technology, so that they can blend in well with the millennial." (HR Manager, company B)*

On a more general note, HR from both companies A and B mentioned the **importance of leadership training for incoming millennial managers,** perhaps due to the limited leadership experience of the

> *"One thing that might help is to provide essential leadership training to millennials, so that they can prepare themselves for the upcoming challenge, especially when they climb up their career ranking. Some people are born as a leader, but others need to learn first, and as an HR, I need to generalize this for all the upcoming millennial managers, and that is the importance of leadership training." (HR Manager, company A)*
>
> *"Seeing the current dynamics of business, where things can change very quickly, I think millennials can be managers in any company, in no time. I mean, why not? They have the capabilities, they have the knowledge, the skills. Yes, but I think they are still lacking one thing, that is experienced to lead. To anticipate that, I think leadership training can be useful, not only for the potential millennial manager, but also for the company itself, so together we can ensure smooth transition of the millennial manager leadership" (HR Manager, company B)*

millennial workers.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study identifies the **unique leadership characteristics of millennial managers,** which include **behaviors, mindsets, and traits**. While these traits may be personal to each manager, their behavior and mindset are general characteristics shared among them. The study highlights that industry may not necessarily determine the leadership characteristics of a manager. The findings align with the general characteristics of millennials, **particularly their preference for utilizing technology.** The study also

shows that millennial managers are **motivated to effect positive changes and are flexible, innovative, and receptive to feedback.**

In terms of **communication,** despite the literature that suggests that millennials tend to be self-centered due to their dependence on technology, this study found that millennial managers prefer **frequent communication with their subordinates**. Their preferred mode of communication, however, was not explicitly mentioned. The study also revealed that millennial managers tend to **utilize a transformational leadership style**, which **positively impacts business, team, and company culture.**

While there is limited literature on the impact of millennial leadership, it is comparable to the positive impact of transformational leadership on company performance. These findings provide important insights for business practitioners and scholars about millennial leadership.

5.2 Recommendation

When it comes to preparing millennial employees for leadership positions, it is important for companies to acknowledge the influx of this generation in the workforce. While they may lack experience and leadership skills, it is recommended that companies provide training opportunities such as team building and leadership training.

Social events like company gatherings can also improve their social capacity, which will be helpful in managerial positions.

Promoting millennial employees is a positive move for companies because they are often motivated by rewards. Promotions not only benefit the individual but also open up more opportunities for innovation and change from the millennial manager, ultimately leading to better competitive advantage.

The study shows that millennial leadership positively impacts team and company performance, as well as company culture. Therefore, it is suggested that millennial managers keep their genuine characteristics when taking on leadership roles.

It is important for millennial managers to overcome their tendency towards digital communication to improve their direct people interaction skills. This will ultimately make them better leaders.

6.0 Limitation of Study and Recommendation for Future Research

The primary limitation of this study is its scale, due to limited resources available for research. Two companies are not sufficient for a complete understanding of millennial leadership, and obtaining data from more sample companies with more participants can improve the generalizability and validity of the results (White, 2000). More time or a research partner can address this issue. Another potential limitation is the use of qualitative methodology, which may

not lead to generalized conclusions, especially with a case study (Noor, 2008).

However, this study minimized this limitation by involving two companies from different industries, leading to better insights about millennial leadership.

Future research could broaden the scope by studying industries and sectors unexplored in this study and compare leadership characteristics among male and female millennials.

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Appendix – Interview Questions

Question to Manager

1. Can you please confirm that you are a millennial by mentioning your age or date of birth?

[Probe: age, year of birth]

2. Can you please tell me your position/role, how long have you been in this position, and how many subordinates do you have?

[Probe: assigned duties or responsibilities, the duration in the respective position,

number of staff]

3. Can you please explain the role of your department and your job description? [Probe: key business of the company, function of the department, manager's job description]

4. How would you describe yourself as a manager?

[Probe: approach to subordinates, style of leading, behavior in leading the team]

5. As a manager, how do you define leadership and its importance?

[Probe: leadership definition, impact of leadership to the team, what can good leadership do to the team and the business]

6. How do you confer your message to your subordinates and ensure that it can be delivered on time and with the quality that is required?

[Probe: style of communication, quality control, approach, or method in giving order]

7. If any of your subordinates look unmotivated or unwilling to do the assigned task, what will be your action?

[Probe: Method of communication, way to motivate staff, reward, or punishment]

8. How do you handle conflict in your team?

[Probe: problem solving method and skills, communication method between leader and subordinates, communication method between subordinates]

9. If your subordinates are doing good or overachieve, what will you do?

[Probe: rewards, motivation, behavior, team-performance]

10. Are there any differences in terms of your professional characteristics that you can feel before and after becoming a manager?

[Probe: Professional behavior, communication method, lifestyle, leadership, teamwork]

11. Can you describe one of the most challenging things that you experienced as a leader and how did you overcome it?

[Probe: Work difficulties, problem solving skills, stress condition, leadership]

12. What are the most useful leadership skills that you think you use the most in your daily professional life?

[Probe: leadership skills, teamwork, problem solving, communication, leadership trait,

leadership style]

Question to Director

1. Can you please tell me your position/role, how long have you been in this position, and how many managers that you have?

[Probe: assigned duties or responsibilities, the duration in the respective position, number of staff]

2. Would you please explain the nature of the business of the company?

[Probe: Type of business or industry, number of branches, size of the company]

3. How do you see the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Leadership style, way of communication, quality of work, teamwork]

4. How would you compare Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager) with your other generation managers in terms of leadership style?

[Probe: Leadership style, trait, approach, comparison between manager, way of communication, teamwork]

5. In terms of team performance, can you please explain any notable impact from Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Punctuality of the target assignment, quality of the assignment, team

performance, employees' satisfaction, and motivation]

6. In terms of business performance, can you please explain any notable impact from

Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Quality of the work, profitability, budget usage, financial impact]

7. How do you confer your message to Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Leadership style, way of communication, professional behavior]

8. How do you give feedback to Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: leadership style, punishment, way of communication 9. How do you reward Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: leadership style, reward, promotion, financial reward, word of praise, motivation]

10. Looking at Indonesia demography, millennial manager is an emerging trend in any workplace in Indonesia. As an experienced leader, how do you think the company should prepare for this? Is there any do's don'ts that you would suggest for the company?

[Probe: leadership training, trust to millennial, company culture, cross generation work, communication, and teamwork training]

Question to Staff

1. How long have you been working in this position?

[Probe: Time of start working in the current position, duration of work]

2. How long have you been under the supervision of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Duration of working with the millennial manager]

3. How do you define good leadership and what do you expect from a good leader?

[Probe: leadership style, trait, reward, feedback from manager, communication]

4.   How do you see the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: leadership style, trait, way of communication, professional behavior]

5. How do you receive direction, guidance, and feedback from your manager?

[Probe: leadership style, way of communication]

6. How the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager) impact your performance?

[Probe: Personal performance, achievement, impact of leadership, feedback]

7. In terms of leadership, please explain anything that you like from Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)

[Probe: leadership style, reward, motivation, communication, professional behavior]

8. In terms of leadership, please explain anything that you don't like from Mr/Mrs X (the
millennial manager)

[Probe: leadership style, punishment, communication, professional behavior]

9.   In relation to the previous question, what do you think can be improved?

[Probe: leadership style, communication, professional behavior, feedback, improvement] 10. What kind of leadership value that you think is most useful for you?

[Probe: guiding principle of leadership, leadership style]

11. How do you see the importance of leadership and a good leader in your career? [Probe: career improvement, impact of leadership, feedback, professional behavior, quality of work]

Question to HR Manager

1. How many employees does this company have in total?

[Probe: number of staff]

2. Would you be able to approximately share the composition of the employees in terms of their age and generation?

[Probe: generation, percentage of staff]

3.   What do you think are the positive and the negative traits of millennial employees? [Probe: millennial characteristic, positive and negative behaviors that are impacting the company]

4.   From HR perspective, how do you see the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: Leadership style, way of communication, quality of work, teamwork, interdepartmental collaboration]

5.   How do you think the ability of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager) in developing his/her team?

[Probe: leadership style, people development, feedback, reward/punishment]

6.   How do you think the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager) impacts the employee culture of the company in general?

[Probe: company culture, way to do things in the company, way of communication]

7.   What value do you think has been brought to the company by Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager)?

[Probe: guiding principle of leadership, leadership style, leadership impact]

8.   How is the leadership of Mr/Mrs X (the millennial manager) compared with other managers (from different generations) in this company?

[Probe: Leadership style, trait, approach, comparison between manager, way of

communication, teamwork]

9.   What do you think is a suitable reward for millennial managers in order to satisfy their personal career   goals?

[Probe: motivating factor, reward, promotion, financial reward, job fulfillment]

10. Looking at Indonesia demography, millennial manager is an emerging trend in any workplace in   Indonesia. As an HR, how do you think the company should prepare for this? Is there any do's   don'ts that you would suggest for the company?

[Probe: leadership training, trust to millennial, company culture, cross generation work, communication, and teamwork training].