

LEADERSHIP STYLES PREFERENCE AMONG MILLENNIALS WORKFORCE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to establish the preferred leadership styles among Millennial workforces. This study used the survey method utilizing three instruments; Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) ($\alpha=0.74$), Task and Relationship Questionnaire (TRQ) ($\alpha=0.75$), and Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) ($\alpha=0.78$). The data was collected randomly from participants who attended career fairs in Kuala Lumpur. The samples comprised of 120 respondents ($N=120$), 46 respondents are male (38.3%) whereas 74 respondents are female (61.7%). The results revealed that Millennials prefer transformational leadership and a degree of transactional leadership, but rejected laissez-faire leadership as a whole. In addition, the results exhibited that Millennials prefer a relationship-behaviour driven leader instead of a task-behaviour driven leader. Furthermore, the results also indicated that Millennials prefer a leader who is true to him/herself, with strong moral character and solid reputation, deep knowledge of the subject matter and performs behavioural reflection. The implication of this study shows that Millennials discard a laissez-faire leadership style and that organizations shall refrain from employing them. In addition, organizations should identify leaders who know themselves, have a clear sense of who they are and what they stand for, and are open and honest in presenting their true self to others.

Keywords: millennials, leadership styles, leadership, organization, workforce

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti gaya kepimpinan pilihan dalam kalangan tenaga kerja Milennial. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan secara tinjauan, dengan menggunakan tiga instrumen; Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) ($\alpha=0.74$), Task and Relationship Questionnaire (TRQ) ($\alpha=0.75$), dan Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) ($\alpha=0.78$). Sampel kajian terdiri daripada 120 responden ($N = 120$), 46 responden adalah lelaki (38.3%) manakala 74 responden adalah perempuan (61.7%). Hasilnya menunjukkan bahawa Milennial pilih kepimpinan transformasi dan kepimpinan transaksional dan menolak kepimpinan laissez-faire secara keseluruhan. Di samping itu, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa Milennial memilih pemimpin yang didorong oleh relationship-behaviour dan bukannya pemimpin yang didorong dengan task-behaviour. Selain itu, hasilnya juga menunjukkan bahawa Milennial memilih pemimpin yang benar kepada diri sendirinya, memiliki nilai moral dan reputasi yang kukuh, berpengetahuan dalam subjek berkaitan dan melakukan refleksi tingkah laku. Implikasi kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa Milennial menolak kepimpinan

laissez-faire. Organisasi harus mengelak dari menggunakan seseorang pengurus yang mengamalkan kepimpinan laissez-faire, selanjutnya sesebuah organisasi harus mengenal pasti pemimpin yang mengetahui diri mereka dan memiliki fahaman yang jelas tentang siapa diri dan tujuan mereka, di samping terbuka dan jujur dalam mempertengahkan diri mereka kepada orang.

Kata Kunci: gaya kepimpinan, kepimpinan, millennial, organisasi, tenaga kerja

BACKGROUND

The definition of leadership has evolved over the last century, from simple definition in 1930s as interaction of an individual's specific personality traits to a group and influencing them to become a prolific stew with several themes such as influence, traits, and transformation (Northouse, 2013). Upon stepping into the 21st century, defining leadership is getting more complicated and multiple dimensional and whether leadership and management are of different process. Thus, understanding leadership styles is essential to manage a team with diverse background, especially for a new generation - the Millennials who have just entered the workforce.

Millennials are graduating from colleges and universities to enter the labour pool as a massive and influential group. The landscape of workforce has been transforming from a traditional chain of command attitude, to a more diverse and extensive set of independent, self-centered and capable individuals. Jerome, Scales, Whithem and Quain (2014) reckoned that over the past 60 years of employment history a three-generational workforce has evolved; Baby Boomers, Generation X, and now the remarkable immergence of Millennials. The researcher has chosen three leadership styles in this context – Transformational, Situational and Authentic to study and understand the Millennials. By comprehending their leadership styles preference, the researcher would be able to obtain some insights on the characteristics of these individuals in order to close the gap on generational differences. Hence, the objective of the study is to establish the preferred leadership styles among the Millennial workforce.

Each of these generation workforces prefer specific leadership styles; and managing a team by a superior from a different generation can indeed be a challenge. According to Tay (2011), the big task for management is to manage how employees from different generations perceive or think of each other. If employees perceive that their expectations of others are met, a state of equilibrium would occur. Leadership traits also vary between these generational workforces. Cheng, Isa and Tantasuntisakul, (2015) discovered that Millennials tend to prefer a supportive leadership style where they are being guided in their early state of their career, whereas Generation Xers prefer a more directive leadership style as they

are more individualistic, resilient, adaptable and have a strong sense of independence.

Generation Y (Millennials)

The Millennials are the latest inclusion of the workforce globally. Millennials were born between 1981 and 2000, grew up in the digital age, displayed flair and gift and commanded a better familiarity than previous generations with the use of communications, media and digital technology (Kaifi *et al.* 2014). To some extent they are unique when compared to previous generations, who sometimes are clueless on how to react to these young people. The latter are perceived as narcissistic, shallow and selfish by those older than them (Bolser & Gosciej, 2015).

Contrary to the above beliefs, Millennials are actually less motivated and have developed a short-term career mind-set because they are entering the working class whereby job offers are more than job demand (Wong & Chin, 2016). At the workplace, Millennials evaluate their colleagues by the contributions they make, not by the hierarchical positions they hold. They value and appreciate collaborations and joint ownerships than hierarchies.

Table 1: Summary of Characteristics by Generations

Generations (by years)	Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964)	Generation X (1965 to 1984)	Millennials (1985 to 2004)
Significant Events	▪ Post World War II	▪ Watergate Crisis	▪ Chernobyl Disaster
	▪ Kennedy Assassination	▪ Cold War Tension	▪ DotCom Burst
	▪ Vietnam War Protest	▪ Kuwait-Iraq War	▪ Technology Evolution
Core Values	▪ Tolerant	▪ Responsible	▪ Independent
	▪ Self-Sufficient	▪ Adaptable	▪ Creative
	▪ Disciplined	▪ Goal Oriented	▪ Achievement-Oriented
Work Attitudes	▪ Self-motivated	▪ Mobile	▪ Team Player
	▪ Value Job Security	▪ Work-Life Balance	▪ Adaptive
Philosophy	▪ Proactive	▪ Reactive	▪ Spontaneous
	▪ Live to work	▪ Work to live	▪ Live first, then Work

Adapted: Leaderonomics.com. (2018) A Closer Look at Gen Y and Gen Z in Malaysia. [Online] September 2018. Available from: <https://leaderonomics.com/career/gen-y-z-malaysia>. [Accessed: 14th Feb 2019], Leaderonomics.com. (2018) Ready for

*Generation Z. [Online] September 2018. Available from: <https://leaderonomics.com/pdf/MSJ-180922.pdf>. [Accessed: 15th Feb 2019] & Tay, A. (2011) *Managing Generational Diversity at the Workplace: Expectation and Perceptions of Different Generations of Employees*. *African Journal of Business Management*. 5 (2), pp.251.*

Generation Banding on Malaysian Workforce

The official retirement age for the Malaysian workforce is 60 years old; however, the earliest working age available is not significantly specified. According to the Malaysian Labour Force Report 2015, there are 14 million active employed persons in the Malaysian workforce in 2015. This signifies an increase of 1.5% from the year 2014, and a substantial 13% increase compared four years ago. The researcher clustered the age group into three categories, namely Millennials, Generation X and Baby Boomers to have a clear comparison and understanding of the Malaysian workforce.

Millennials are the dominant workforce in Malaysia, contributing an average of 50% of the total workforce since 2011. Millennials would overtake the other generations as the largest consumer spenders in years to come and could be spending nearly MYR70 million of total MYR143 million based on 2016 Malaysia Consumer Spending statistics. Next, Generation X represents the second largest workforce (average 41%) and followed by Baby Boomers at a mere 8%. Moorthy (2013) discovered that the Millennials started to enter the workforce in large numbers five years ago, and their impact has been felt by employers in all sectors. The distribution of workforce by generation banding from year 2011 to 2015 is depicted in Figure 1.

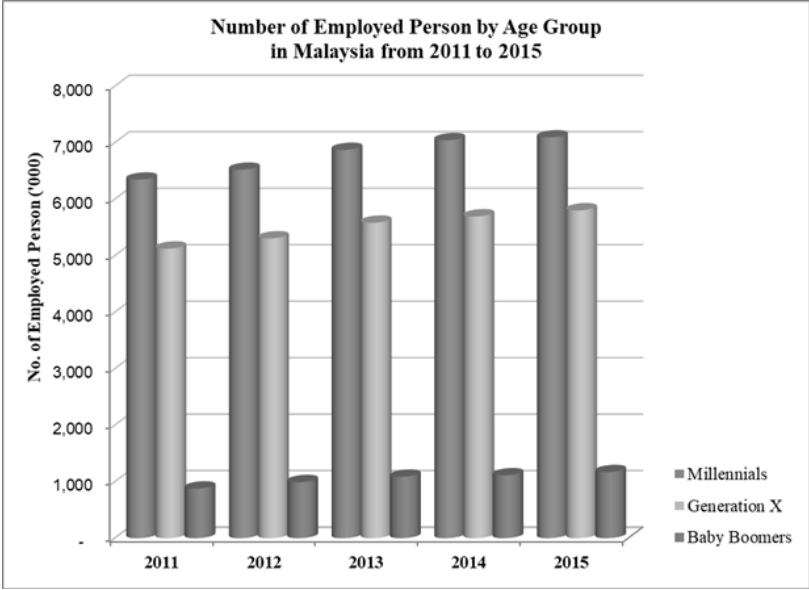


Figure 1: Number of Employed Person by Generation from 2011 to 2015
Source: Labour Force Survey Report, Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2015

In 2015, the Malaysian workforce consisted of 7.1 million of Millennials (51%), 5.8 million of Generation X (41%) and 1.1 million of Baby Boomers (8%). While Generation X is currently in the helms of affairs of Malaysia, Millennials are expected to assume leadership roles soon especially when the country is moving to fulfil its Vision 2020 (Cheng *et al.* 2015).

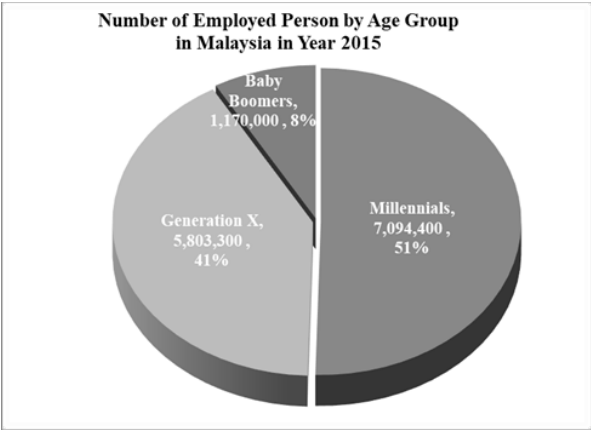


Figure 2: Composition of Workforce by Generation in 2015
Source: Labour Force Survey Report, Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2015

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is dealing with ethics, values, emotions, values, standards as well as long-term goals. This process includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings. Bass and Avolio and Gardner (2005) characterized the "Four I's", namely Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual simulations and Individualized consideration as behaviours related to transformational leadership.

Despite being one of the most studied and debated idea within the field of leadership, transformational leadership attracted criticisms from a number of scholars. Yukl (1999) argued that the underlying influence process for transformational leaders is still ambiguous and studies have not been conducted in a systematic way. Yukl (1999) also pointed that this theory conceptualized primarily at the dyadic level. The major interest is to explain a leader's direct influence over individual followers, not leader influence on group or organizational processes. Many of Yukl criticisms retained its relevance till today.

According to Salahuddin (2010) who conducted a similar study, Millennials are the newest addition to the workplace, and only a few have the opportunity to be a leader in the organization. Salahuddin (2010) noted that core values, work values and ethics characterize the leadership style of the Millennials. Thus, they will tend to lean towards transformational leadership style. Brousell (2015) revealed that most Millennials aspired to be transformational leaders who challenge and inspire others with purpose and excitement. They want to establish a more collaborative working environment where they can exchange ideas with peers and accomplish a task in a less rigid corporate culture framework. Howe and Strauss (2007) studied how workforce attitudes will evolve in the next 20 years. Their findings supported the views of past researchers whereby Millennials have more flair for cooperation and organization than for out-of-box initiative. They will tend to treat their peers as business partners rather than rivals. In addition, unlike young Generation Xers, who typically resign and move on when they have a workplace challenge, Millennials are used to stay put and will wait until someone in charge resolve the challenge.

Situational Leadership Style

Through the years, many studies have been written on how leaders behave by renowned scholars such as Blake and McCanse (1991). The essence of situational leadership encompasses two dimensions - task behaviours and relationship behaviours. It also stresses that situational leadership is composed of both a directive (task-oriented style) and a supportive (relationship-oriented style) dimension, and that each has to be applied

appropriately in a given situation. Northouse (2013) pointed that task-oriented people are goal oriented and will begin with achievement in mind whereas relationship-oriented people want to connect with people and attach with others. Situational leadership evolved from a task-oriented against relationship-oriented continuum. This continuum represented the extend the leader focuses on the required task or focuses on relations with their followers.

Kaifi *et al.* (2014) presented a study on the importance of situational leadership in the workforce. This study discovered that Millennials have a higher propensity for a situational leadership style in comparison to their co-workers of Generation X. Kaifi *et al.* (2014) suggested that Millennials are very active in crafting job characteristics and exploring role ambiguity rather than being passively accepted in conventional job design model. Millennials tentatively approached job adaptations at ease to create a meaningful work environment. However, this study did not highlight whether Millennials are more task-oriented or relationship-oriented. There is no available literature on the correlation between Millennials and Generation Xers on the success of applying situational leadership. McCleskey (2014) studied the situational, transformational and transactional leadership and its development. McCleskey (2014) highlighted that notwithstanding in some previous research suggested that relation-oriented leadership is preferred to task-oriented leadership in some situations. It was concluded that successful leadership incorporates both universally applicable elements (task-oriented) and contingency elements (relation-oriented).

Authentic Leadership Style

Authentic leadership symbolizes one of the essential areas of leadership research. It focuses on whether leadership is genuine and “real.” It begins with developing authenticity, or being true and trustworthy to the self. Avolio and Gardner (2005) discovered that when a leader’s actions are genuine and focused on the development of the self and others, the effectiveness of other forms of leadership is likely enhanced. Avolio and Gardner (2005) also outlined that authentic leadership requires heightened levels of self-awareness, leading to authentic leaders knowing where they stand on important issues, values and beliefs. Nonetheless, Gardner *et al.* (2005) figured that authentic leadership extends beyond the authenticity of the leader as a person to encompass authentic relations with followers and associates. These relationships are characterized by: (a) transparency, openness, and trust (b) guidance toward worthy objectives and (c) an emphasis on follower development

Gardner *et al.* (2005) explored that authenticity could be accomplished via self-awareness, self-acceptance and authentic actions

and relationships. Scott, Pennington and Brown, (2014) presented a study on exploring authentic leadership with Millennials and shared the same findings. They opined that for Millennials to identify congruency of their visions, values and behaviours, they will be required to examine a variety of topics related to personal leadership development including authentic leadership, costs of leadership, relationship between personal vision and leadership vision. Bartlett (2015) shared the same view on Millennials preference to authentic leadership, whereby they value flexibility, connection, technology, movement and meaning. Millennials also consider the best leaders to have sense of purpose and authenticity. The cornerstone of authentic leaders is having a strong moral character, solid reputation to himself/ herself, deep knowledge and reflection on himself/ herself (Bartlett, 2015). Millennials want a leader who is willing to invest in them, first seek to understand then to be understood. By genuinely empowering others, motivating them to realise their potential and displaying connection, the leader will be able to attract and retain Millennials.

Millennials Workforce Attitude

The fact that Millennials are different from Generation Xers and Baby Boomers has led to much debates. Barsh, Brown and Kian (2016) related that Millennials were hard to manage workers, were likely to quit at a moment's notice, and made nonstop blunders as they forged ahead blindly without permission and hesitation. Warner and Sandberg (2010) depicted that Millennials thrived on small goals with short deadlines, and demanded fast results and fast promotion too. Next, Millennials liked to dress casually to work, such as jeans, sandals and polo shirts. They did not like contemptuous managers who were not approachable when they seek help; in fact, they wanted to feel like a colleague who is treated with respect, and not as a subordinate.

Contrary to above findings, Chou (2012) suggested that Millennials have higher levels of job satisfaction, coupled with job security, recognition at work and bright career advancement than Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. Chou (2012) also found that Millennials worked well as a team, were highly motivated by significant tasks, preferred open and transparent communication and were talented in communicational technologies. Salahuddin (2010) suggested that Millennials believed in collective action, were optimistic about the future and showed trust in centralised authority. They were an amalgamation of the teamwork of the Baby Boomers and technology literacy of Generation Xers. Brousell (2015) also highlighted that Millennials are not attracted to the money or recognition associated with leadership positions. Instead they were inspired to be leaders who want to make a difference in the world and lead organizations that care more than profits.

Studies on Millennials and Leadership

There are several similar studies in Western literature, focusing on Western Millennials by Western scholars. As to date, there is a lack of research conducted on Malaysian Millennials workforce specifically emphasising on leadership preferences. Moorthy (2014) conducted an empirical study by focusing on the leadership preferences among Millennials in Malaysia. The study was conducted among 250 respondents who were pursuing a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) and specializing in leadership management. In the study findings, it was established that behavioural theory, situational theory, contingency theory, trait theory and great man theory were the key elements in the decision to become a leader in Malaysia from the perception of Millennials (Moorthy, 2014). Furthermore, it was concluded that Millennials leadership preference was for transformational leadership.

The following section discusses some previous research which the researcher opined that those ideas and empirical findings are important to this study.

A substantial amount of studies on the topic in the United States and Europe has generated varied results which are inconclusive. Some studies (Cates, Cojanu & Pettine, 2013; Salahuddin, 2010; Serini & Diane, 2015) found a strong relationship between leadership differences among the generations with Millennials preferring transformational leadership style. In addition, some studies (Scott *et al.* 2014; Walker & Walker, 2011) found Millennials inclined to authentic relationship. Likewise, some studies (Acar 2014; Chou, 2012) found no significant relationship at all as Millennials demonstrated exemplary followership style at the workplace rather than transformational, situational or authentic leadership.

In Asia, past studies on the topic has generated mixed results too. Pipitvej (2014) conducted similar research in Thailand and found Millennials reacted to transformational leadership differently compared to Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. A study in India by Srivastava (2013) indicated a weak relationship on Millennials preference to transformational, situational or authentic leadership but validated the importance of generational differences as a diversity issue. In Australia, Solnet and Hood (2008) also discovered a weak relationship and suggested that if Millennials did not feel valued, involved and cared about, they were unlikely to feel committed to work, making them less dedicated.

Moorthy (2014) used 250 respondents in the research and discovered that Millennials prefer leaders that were competent, hardworking, determined and accountable for their actions. These traits concurred with the high preference for idealised influence under the transformational leadership style. This finding is essential in supporting the

hypothesis that Millennials prefer a transformational leadership style than transactional or laissez-faire style. Sharkawi, Mohamad and Roslin (2016) concluded that most studies on Millennials were in the area of motivation, values, job satisfaction but not on leadership preferences specifically, especially in the Malaysian context. Cheng *et al.* (2015), Tay (2011) and Wong and Chin (2016) conducted similar studies in Malaysia and reached similar conclusion whereby Generation Xers were self-motivated and self-sufficient while Millennials thrived on innovation and teamwork. There were significant differences in leadership styles and preferences thus increasing the propensity towards the leadership styles between Millennials and Generation Xers.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and corresponding hypotheses in this study are listed as follows:

Research question 1: What is the preferred leadership style amongst Millennials?

The researcher believed that Millennials preferred transformational leaders such as Steve Jobs who challenged and inspired others with purpose and excitement. Moorthy (2014) found out that Millennials preferred leaders that were competent, hardworking and accountable of their action. These traits corresponded with the high preference for idealized influence factors under the transformational leadership styles. Thus, this contributed to the formation of the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive correlation that Millennials prefer transformational leadership to transactional leadership.

Research question 2: How far is Situational Leadership Style affecting the Millennials workforce?

Millennials, to some extent are unique in comparison to previous generations, who sometimes are clueless on how to react to these young people. They are perceived as narcissistic, shallow and selfish by generations older than them (Bolser & Gosciej, 2015). Cheng *et al.* (2015) observed that Millennials would prefer a directive leadership style and an achievement-oriented leadership. It was asserted by the research that Millennials support clear directions and managerial support from their superiors. They often choose the best solutions to achieve goals where older generations would never have considered. Thus, this gives rise to the second hypothesis, namely:

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive correlation that Millennials prefer supportive behaviours to directive behaviours of leaders.

Research question 3: What is the stand of Millennials on leaders who are genuine and real?

Bresman (2015) discovered that Millennials have chosen high future earnings as the most attractive theme in a managerial/ leadership role. The society is demanding for a genuine and trustworthy leadership as a result of major leadership failures and corporate scandals in public and private sectors, such as AIG, Enron and Worldcom. Consequently, measurement of how authentic, genuine and trustworthy of Millennials leadership is essential in their pursuit to become the leaders of tomorrow. Therefore, the third hypothesis is formulated as:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive correlation between Millennials and Authentic Leadership Style.

METHOD

The researcher used questionnaires to gather answers from targeted respondents on the three identified research questions, and statistical tools to determine the correlation between these variables. As the sample is representative of the population, the researcher is applying a quantitative approach as the research methodology as it is more appropriate to the study in comparison to qualitative approach. In addition, quantitative approach is more reliable and objective. It also allows the researcher to use statistics to generalise a finding, and often reduces and restructures a complex problem to a limited number of variables. A quantitative approach also examines the relationships between variables and thus establishes cause and effect in a highly controlled environment. Subsequently, the researcher is able to test relevant hypotheses derived from the research questions.

Participants

The data was collected randomly from participants who attended a career fair at Kuala Lumpur. The samples comprise of 120 respondents (N=120), 46 respondents are male (38.3%) whereas 74 respondents are female (61.7%). The distributions of age band are 49 respondents to be below 35 years old (40.8%), followed by 47 respondents below 30 years old (39.2%) and 24 respondents are below 25 years old (20%). Majority of the respondents have been working between 2 to 5 years (60 respondents, 50% of sample), 53 respondents have 2 years of working experience (44.2%) and only 7 respondents have worked more than 5 years (5.8%).

INSTRUMENTS

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

This questionnaire consists of 21 items which measures respondent's leadership on seven factors related to transformational leadership. It is extracted and adapted for use from Northouse (2013) and uses Likert system with four (4) options ranging from 1–Never to 4–Always. The result will demonstrate leadership preference of the respondent between transformational, transactional or non-transactional (*laissez-faire*). The reliability of MLQ is ($\alpha=0.74$).

Task and Relationship Questionnaire (TRQ)

This questionnaire consists of 10 items which measures respondent's inclination towards task-behaviour or relationship-behaviour. It is extracted and adapted to use from Northouse (2013) and uses Likert system with four (4) options ranging from 1–Never to 4–Always. The result will demonstrate leadership styles of the respondent between directive-behaviour and supportive-behaviour. The reliability of MLQ is ($\alpha=0.75$).

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ)

This questionnaire consists of 16 items which measures respondent's authentic leadership by assessing four components. It is extracted and adapted to use from Northouse (2013) and uses Likert system with four (4) options ranging from 1–Strongly Disagree to 4–Strongly Agree. The result will demonstrate respondent has stronger or weaker authentic leadership. The reliability of MLQ is ($\alpha=0.78$).

Procedure

Prior to the field study the researcher had to obtain a written permission to conduct the study from the organizer and both were present personally to meet the participants. At the sampling process stage, the researcher approached the randomly selected sample to explain the intention of the survey and hand-over the survey booklet which consisted of a cover letter, introducing and explaining the objective of the survey and a thank-you message. The data collection took place on 13th to 15th January 2017.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented as follows:

Millennials and Transformational Leadership

Results from ANOVA analysis showed the means of various groups and how significantly different they are from one another, as indicated by the F-Statistics (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The purpose of F-Statistics is to discover the model which best suits the population where the sample

originated from. With reference to Table 2, all factors have good F-Statistics with p-value less than significant level of 0.05 except for Idealized Influence and Laissez-faire. This suggested that the Laissez-faire factor has no significant relationship to the respondents, whereas all other factors (variables) do in relation to Millennials leadership preference, especially factors under transformational leadership. Therefore, this model is reliable and fit to accept hypothesis 1 that Millennials prefer transformational leadership than transactional and reject laissez-faire leadership.

Table 2: ANOVA Analysis for Hypothesis 1

Components/ Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Idealized Influence	Between Groups	0.613	1	0.613	0.525	0.47
	Within Groups	137.978	118	1.169		
	Total	138.592	119			
Inspirational Motivation	Between Groups	4.683	1	4.683	3.655	0.05
	Within Groups	151.183	118	1.281		
	Total	155.867	119			
Intellectual Stimulation	Between Groups	20.373	1	20.373	8.088	0.005
	Within Groups	297.219	118	2.519		
	Total	317.592	119			
Individualized Consideration	Between Groups	26.687	1	26.687	17.976	0
	Within Groups	175.18	118	1.485		
	Total	201.867	119			
Contingent Reward	Between Groups	67.785	1	67.785	25.192	0
	Within Groups	317.515	118	2.691		
	Total	385.3	119			
Management by exception	Between Groups	21.551	1	21.551	11.439	0.001
	Within Groups	222.315	118	1.884		
	Total	243.867	119			
Laissez-faire leadership	Between Groups	9.381	1	9.381	4.14	0.064
	Within Groups	267.419	118	2.266		
	Total	276.8	119			

Hypothesis 1 is accepted partially as it established positive F-statistics value with p-value ranging from 0.000 to 0.005 which are less than the significant value of 0.005. Only two components are insignificant in the ANOVA test, thus it is established that there is a positive correlation between Millennials preference for transformational and transactional leadership.

The result from the study concurred with Salahuddin (2010) who believed that the core values, work values and ethics characterize

the leadership styles of the Millennials, and a leaning towards the transformational style. Baldonado (2015) explored that a transformational leader such as Larry Page – founder of Google is an inspiring, intelligent and creative leader. He showed interest and talent in computer and technology at an early age. Although being an introvert, Larry Page is driven, ambitious and collaborative. Dannar (2013) opined the same perspective that Millennials were brought up on technology and they have an inherent trust in organization to deliver outstanding performance as they are motivated by accomplishment and independence.

Sharkawi *et al.* (2016) yielded the same results as well by noticing Millennials preferences to work within a collaborative environment. This is very similar to transformational leaders creating synergy within organizations by working together with their followers to achieve organizational goals. Henceforth, it is well established that Millennials prefer transformational leadership style than others.

The researcher would like to highlight that in some versions of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, the four components of transformational leadership (Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration) correlate highly with each other, which signifies they are not distinct factors (Tejeda, Scandura & Pillai, 2001). Besides, some of the transformational components correlate with the transactional and laissez-faire components, which may not be unique to the transformational model. Hence, the results of the study concurred with Tejeda *et al.* (2001) judgement as the two components under transactional leadership are found to be correlated with transformational leadership.

Millennials and Situational Leadership

In view of Table 3, Relationship Behaviour has F-Statistics of 4.408 with p-value of 0.000 whereas Task Behaviour has F-Statistics of 3.779 with p-value of 0.054 (p-value >0.05). As the p-value for Relationship Behaviour is less than significant level of 0.05, it denotes that the Relationship Behaviour has a significant relationship in relation to Millennials task/behaviour oriented leadership style. As a result, this model is reliable and fit to accept hypothesis 2 that Millennials prefer supportive behaviours to directive behaviours of leaders.

Table 3: ANOVA Analysis for Hypothesis 2

Components/ Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Task Behaviour	Between Groups	15.3	1	15.3	3.779	0.054
	Within Groups	477.692	118	4.048		
	Total	492.992	119			
Relationship Behaviour	Between Groups	12.91	1	13.715	4.408	0
	Within Groups	463.415	118	3.927		
	Total	476.325	119			

Hypothesis 2 is accepted as it established positive F-statistics value with p-value 4.408 which are less than significant value of 0.005. As a result, it is established that there is a positive correlation between Millennials preference to supportive behaviours (relationship behaviour) compared to directive behaviours (task behaviour) of leaders.

According to McCleskey (2014), relation-oriented leadership is preferred to task-oriented leadership situation. McCleskey (2014) also noted that both conceptualizations of situational leadership theory admit that task-oriented and relation-oriented behaviours are dependent, rather than mutually exclusive approaches. In addition, Kaifi *et al.* (2013) also suggested that Millennials have higher situational leadership propensities in comparison to Gen Xers workers.

Millennials and Authentic Leadership

With reference to Table 4, Self-Awareness ($F=7.619$) and Relational Transparency ($F=5.66$) have p-value of 0.007 and 0.019 respectively, which are less than significant level of 0.05. It is concluded that both factors have significant relationship for Millennials.

In contrast, Internalized Moral Perspective (1.585) and Balanced Processing (0.064) have p-value higher than 0.005, thus denoting that these two factors do not have significant relationship to Millennials. Consequently, this model is reliable and fit to accept hypothesis 3 that there is a positive correlation between Millennials and Authentic Leadership style.

Table 4: ANOVA Analysis for Hypothesis 3

Components/ Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-Awareness	Between Groups	40.301	1	40.301	7.619	0.007
	Within Groups	624.199	118	5.29		
	Total	664.5	119			

Internalized Moral Perspective	Between Groups	4.893	1	4.893	1.585	0.211
	Within Groups	364.407	118	3.088		
	Total	369.3	119			
Balanced Processing	Between Groups	0.139	1	0.139	0.064	0.801
	Within Groups	256.786	118	2.176		
	Total	256.925	119			
Relational Transparency	Between Groups	15.334	1	15.334	5.664	0.019
	Within Groups	319.457	118	2.707		
	Total	334.792	119			

The research concludes that hypothesis 3 is accepted as it established positive F-statistics value with p-value ranging from 5.664 and 7.619 which are less than significant value of 0.005. Only two components are insignificant in ANOVA test, thus it is established that there is positive correlation between Millennials preference to authentic leadership.

Northouse (2013) stated that authentic leaders are described as leading by example as they demonstrate transparent decision making, confidence, optimism and resilience as well as consistency between their words and deeds. The cornerstone of authentic leaders is having a strong moral character, solid reputation, deep knowledge of the subject matter and perform reflection on themselves (Barlett, 2015). This accord to the research results whereby two components of authentic leadership have the highest score, namely Self-Awareness and Relational Transparency.

Gardner *et al.* (2005) assert that authenticity (through Self-Awareness and Relational Transparency) fosters positive affective states. It is also noted that the positive emotions experienced by authentic leaders will spread and reverberate through social contagion processes to positively foster the emotional and cognitive development of other organizational members, in this context is the Millennials.

IMPLICATIONS

With reference to the results in the research, some practical implications could be drawn to provide some insights for a better understanding of the preferred leadership style among Millennials. Since they embraced both transformational and transactional leadership, a leader (manager) needs to have both leadership qualities in order to control Millennials effectively. The leader needs to be charismatic, of high calibre and act as strong role models for subordinates who want to emulate the leader very much. Moorthy (2014) asserted that Millennials preferred leaders with high scores for idealized influence under the transformational leadership style. On the other hand, the leader also has to display transactional leadership

skills by exchanging specific rewards with Millennials once they achieved certain tasks. The leader also needs to monitor the subordinate closely for mistakes or rule violations and then takes corrective action.

In respect of empirical results on task-behaviour and relationship-behaviour leadership, Millennials prefer leaders who display relationship-behaviour. Leaders should find meaning in being connected to the subordinates instead of find meaning in doing work. They should also be able to listen with care to the subordinates' problems and motivate them. Hence, the most effective leaders are those who recognize and adapt to the needs of the followers (Northouse, 2013). Millennials will become more confident and optimistic when leaders respect their opinions and contribution. They expect managers not only to listen to their ideas but also provide prompt feedback and rewards for their achievements (Tay, 2011).

As shown by the evidence, self-awareness and relational transparency have a positive relationship with authentic leadership. Hence, the organization should identify leaders who know themselves and have a clear sense of who they are and what they stand for, in addition to being open and honest in presenting their true self to others. These traits are essential and imperative to lead and manage Millennials.

Lastly, the findings indicated that Millennials do not prefer leaders with high self-regulatory standards. Leaders with internal moral standards and values to guide their behaviour as well as ability to analyze information objectively and explore other people's opinions before making a decision may not be suitable to manage Millennials in the workplace.

Limitation

Although the study has met the research objectives, it only focused on a sample from the city area of Kuala Lumpur. Most of the respondents worked in the metropolitan area and have better educational background compared to other sample located in other areas in Malaysia. Therefore, the findings from the workforce in these areas could be different from the observed sample workforce in the study.

Generation Z is not included in this study as the focus is on the Millennials. Generation Z (born after year 2000) would be the latest inclusion into the workforce in a few years' time. The researcher believed that Generation Z could have a different interpretation of the meaning of leadership which would differ from the other generations. In addition, they could play an important role not only in the future employment market, but also in the consumer spending market of the future.

CONCLUSION

In summary the study has revealed that transformational leadership and transactional leadership are positively related to the Millennials. In addition, laissez-faire leadership had been established to be not so significantly related to Millennials, suggesting that they are more inclined to transformational leadership and certain degree of transactional leadership. In the context of situational leadership Millennials are more in favour of relationship leadership than task leadership. Last but not least, Millennials exhibit a preference for authentic leadership, inspire to be authentic leaders who demonstrate genuine leadership, and lead with conviction. With the discovery of Millennials preferred leadership styles, Baby Boomers and Gen Xers managers should be aware that there will always be a continuous adjustment in managing the young generation as they begin to enter and advance at the workplace. With the aim of establishing a prosperous and flourishing workplace, it is imperative for managers to adapt and adopt the leadership styles preferred by Millennials.

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