

Chapter 1

Millennial Leadership in Global Society and Future Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Leadership has always been an interesting but challenging and dynamic area of management studies. Be it the theories on leadership or the evolution of leadership or what makes good leadership, studies are numerous. But with the changing workforce, and organizations having more than four generations at work, it becomes more interesting and challenging to lead this group. Among the existing generations, the millennial generation workforce calls for more studies due to changing patterns of work, culture, technology roles, etc. Hence adopting a qualitative approach with an in-depth literature review; the aim of this chapter is to understand the concept of millennial leadership and the future prospects for millennial leaders to make a positive contribution to global society.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership theories and the academic literature can sometimes seem difficult for practitioners to understand because of complex conceptualizations, obscure terms, and its enormity (Baporikar, 2023). Yet taken as a whole, the literature makes a great deal of sense and has much to offer. Indeed, the truths are often quite simple,

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elegant, and straightforward. However, leadership is a process ordinary people use to bring forth the best from themselves and others; it is not reserved for a few charismatic men and women (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Leadership first requires personal growth that develops through inner self-leadership; then moves outward as the leader influences, guides, supports, and leads others. Individuals ultimately demonstrate leadership through their actions and influence on those around them; however, leadership begins with how an individual develops personally (Baporikar, 2018). Although discussions of leadership have continued for many centuries (Burns, 1978; Hackman & Johnson, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Northouse, 2010), the concept has evolved in definition and understanding (Burns, 1978) as researchers' proposed different explanations for how leadership works. The actual success of the leader may be the result of the *leadership style* engaged (Hackman & Johnson, 2009; Northouse, 2010). Leadership style is a consistent pattern of behavior, exhibited by a leader over time, when trying to influence followers, which also affects human resource performance and organizational results (Baporikar, 2021).

Karl Mannheim (1952, as cited in Pilcher, 1994) presented the seminal work on generational theory and created the term *generational cohort*. Mannheim argued that generations emerge when political and historical events create an impact on society. Today's workforce comprises multiple generations, each trying to understand the differences in their perspectives on work, perspectives influenced by events that occurred earlier in their collective lives that contribute to their generational identity (Alsop, 2008; Elam, Stratton, & Gibson, 2007; Kunreuther, Kim, & Rodriguez, 2008; Twenge, 2006). Recent emphasis in the literature on workforce differences related to generational cohorts likely stems from the first occurrence of four generations in the workforce at the same time (Green, 2008; Piktialis, 2007). Only very recently has any interest emerged regarding the impact of generational differences on leadership, as the leadership differences become recognized as one of many diversity issues that leaders face in today's rapidly changing organizations and research also confirms that different generations have different leadership styles (Salahuddin, 2010).

Recent research has indicated there is an organizational impact of generational cohort differences on leaders and leadership (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). The current lack of identification and understanding of Millennials as leaders leaves management making assumptions that, if incorrect, could impact the future of their organizations. Despite identified differences in leadership styles for Veterans, Baby Boomers, and Generation Xers (Green, 2007); there is a gap in the corresponding research for millennial leaders (Sessa et al., 2007). With the retirement of Veteran leaders and the beginning of retirement for Baby Boomer leaders, Generation X and Millennials will begin to fill more leadership positions in organizations. Better understanding the leadership style of millennial leaders will help organizations adapt to this group of workers in hiring, motivating, incentivizing, and retaining these future

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