



Enablers of Employee Engagement of Gen Y at the Workplace with reference to Automobile Sector

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Abstract

Gen Y, today's dominant and vibrant workforce is shaped by globalization, outsourcing, digital technologies, drastic shift in social, cultural, economic and political events, pampering nature of parents, quick win-win attitude and fun at work. This study explores the importance of various enablers namely, mentoring, career development, work environment, job autonomy, nature of working style and team work and their contribution towards engagement of millennials. This paper is empirical in nature. A total of 200 respondents were identified by systematic random sampling in automobile companies in Coimbatore city. The respondents were junior, middle and senior level of management focused on Gen Y employees respectively. Descriptive statistics and regression were the statistical tools used in the analysis. The results show that mentoring, nature of working style and team work are the significant contributing factors for engaging Gen Y employees. The practical implications of the study are that organizations can better understand the perceived enablers considered important for the engagement of Gen Y. The study suggests strategies to be followed by management for greater engagement level of Gen Y employees, like, reverse mentoring, a degree of freedom in working style and a collaborative workplace, thus, fulfilling Gen Y's sky rocketing expectations and in turn enhancing their engagement levels.

Keywords: Mentoring, Career development, Work environment, Job autonomy, Team work, Gen Y

JEL Classification: M12

Paper Classification: Research Paper

Introduction

The advent of Gen Y employees has become the main stay in the world's business scenario. It is a formidable challenge for organizations to engage the Gen Y employees meaningfully in this Vulnerability, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA) world. According to Kahn (1990), employee engagement is getting oneself immersed in to work without noticing the passage of time. It is the employee's zeal, dedication and willingness to invest their time by engrossing themselves into work. It is evident that importance of employee engagement for Gen Y largely contributes towards organization's productivity. Therefore, employee engagement is an essential driver to be studied on Gen Y as they are more loyal to a meaningful job than a company, have a tendency to change jobs frequently and lower retention and engagement levels.

Each generation is impacted differently from different external forces. As far as Gen Y is concerned, it is shaped by external forces namely globalization, employment outsourcing, foreign investments and explosion of digital technologies. Gen Y, a highly educated generation, is born between 1980-2000. The digital generation responds to different management style, work environment and motivational techniques which have a drastic impact in their engagement levels. Due to steady increase in retirement rates of baby boomers and Gen X, an entirely new Gen Y pool of talented workers enters into the corporate world with skyrocketing expectations.

Organizations and managers are facing a great challenge in understanding their nature, expectations and to transform the enterprise according to their requirements. As Gen Y has different attitudes, ideals, and behaviors; it is pertinent to value their expectations and goals. Gen Y enters the workforce with increased demands, greater expectations, varied attributes and enormous desires. It is necessary to understand the characteristics of millennials as it has a great impact in the level of engagement.

The attributes of Gen Y are creativity, technologically savvy, optimistic, achievement oriented, sociable, existence of moral values, more diverse, heroic spirit, tenacity, need for supervision and support, multitasking capabilities and collective action (Zemke, Raines & Filipczak, 2000). Therefore, it is pertinent to understand their varied nature. A tremendous transformation has taken place in organizations and societies by the advent of young workers. Hence the managers are in dire need to attract, engage and retain Gen Y and propound strategies to fulfil their high expectations.

It is evident that millennials are technology savvy and fast learners yielding tremendous outcomes with their speed and efficiency. Unlike the baby boomers, Gen Y are 24*7 technology connected and highly networked with the advent of social media. So they are called as Web Gen or Digital Gen. It is because they have grown up with internet and digital technologies.

The values of this cohort are 'just do it attitude', 'lack loyalty genre', 'overly ambitious dreamers' and 'get successful quick syndrome'. Thus, technology has revolutionized them in a very different dimension. So, organizations have to redesign corporate culture and management style accordingly to fit in the millennials, as they are the future business leaders and innovators.

Literature Review

This paper postulates on major enablers of engagement of Gen Y employees derived from a comprehensive literature review. By enablers, this study means those factors which have a positive influence in enhancing the main variable of the study, namely, employee engagement. The study identifies various enablers found to be the important requisites to engage better. The various enablers derived from the literature review include mentoring, career development, work environment, job autonomy, nature of working style and team work. Gen Y, which is socially and behaviorally different, expects an entirely different perspective from the workplace. These enablers enlighten a new dimension of millennials expectations, their desires and requirements from the management.

Mentoring – Gen Y

Mentoring is an essential tool for benefit of employees and organizations mutually (Munde, 2010). Generally, mentoring involves a mutual liaison between the supervisors and the juniors; junior employees procure knowledge and skills, understanding of roles and guidance from the mentor; in return supervisor benefits through productive use of knowledge, recognition and sense of satisfaction. Mentoring is a consultative style of approach that leads to higher level of engagement. Previously, mentoring, dealt with one way of instructional direction, delayed

feedback and senior level focused mentoring. Mentoring in context of Gen Y has different dimensions encompassing inclusive style in coaching (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008), immediate feedback (Sujansky, 2002), quality relationship with supervisor (Raman, Ramendran, Beleya, Nodeson & Arokiasamy, 2011), constant approval and praise (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007) and reverse mentoring (Koster, 2013).

Inclusive style of coaching is superior's responsibility to provide right direction, encouragement and supporting employees. Today's young employees seek minimal supervision as they look for more autonomy and independence. Studies show that Gen Y looks for immediate feedback, good rapport with superiors and a partnership kind of healthy relationship (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Rai, 2012; Weyland, 2011). Hence mutual understanding and good rapport makes Gen Y to have better work engagement.

Appreciation and recognition for their work done by their supervisor at regular intervals is expected by Gen Y (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Raman *et al.*, 2011). Gen Y employees are more efficient if the supervisor treats them with respect and provides regular feedback regarding their performance (Jones, Brown, Zoltners & Weits, 2005). Reverse mentoring is a type of mentoring process where the junior employees disseminate the technological skills to seniors and in turn the senior employees provide guidance in terms of direction of work roles and career path. Reverse mentoring enhances harmonious relationships between Gen Y and older generations (Koster, 2013). Hence these mentoring programs lead to higher engagement in Gen Y (Abhilasha & Pathak, 2014).

Career Development - Gen Y

Career development is a process of development rendered by organizations in improving skills and knowledge, individual growth; enriching the present job and preparing for the future. Provision of proper career development by an organization is a vital tool for better engagement of Gen Y (Kovarik, 2008). In previous years, career development relied on professional growth, formal learning with step by step instructions, and waiting for promotion in decades (Gutner, 2002; Tulgan, 2000; Cherri Ho, 2010). But today, Gen Y has different expectations and requirements from the management like, supportive management (Solnet & Hood, 2008); prospect of rapid advancement (Pooley, 2005); mobility in early careers (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008); training and development (Price Water house Coopers, 2008; Dolezalek, 2007); and personal growth and professional development (Eisner, 2005; Martin, 2005). Gen Y's thirst for knowledge and ambition for quick progression has made them to look for the above aspects.

Gen Y are engaged and acquainted with the job only if their values are matched with the company (Ohlrich, 2011). The organization should act as a supportive platform for employees' self-development and enhancement as well as life-long learning (Martin & Tulgan, 2001). Gen Y looks for rapid advancement in their careers and quickly move on to other companies if they feel they have mastered their job (Pooley, 2005; Weyland, 2011). These employees change their careers more than six times in their life as they seek mobility in the early age (Burmeister, 2009 & Dolezalek, 2007). So it is a daunting task for the management to retain, engage and make them perform better.

According to Eisner (2005), millennials want to develop their profession through consistent learning. Gen Y is bored of long lectures and need their training to be interactive and practical (Sheahan, 2005). In training, Gen Y employees look for real world activities and perspectives (Partridge & Hallam, 2006). They prefer multimedia training and e-learning enhancing them laterally and vertically to acquire skills with in a multi-directional career system (Shaw, 2008).

E-learning should be relevant and give a platform for provisional training in real time issues. They value institutionalized training and fast track leadership programs (Huntley, 2006 & Sayers, 2007). Therefore, learning and development should enhance their individualism and new experiences (Weyland, 2011).

A career should provide Gen Y not only flexibility in personal life but also professional satisfaction (Sayers, 2007). According to Kerslake (2005) & Logan (2008), these employees are loyal as long as the organization provides self-development. The Gen Y employees are less engaged and even quit the job if the organization is unable to provide professional training (Martin, 2005). Millennials prefer vocational and work based skills in professional development and to enhance their personal development (Terjesen, Vinnicombe & Freeman, 2007). Hence career development is one of the essential engagement tools as they are loyal to meaningful work than company.

Work Environment - Gen Y

Work environment is a basic pre-requisite that a company provides to the employees which supports them to engage better. Work environment is an atmosphere where the entire situation, events and people influence the employees. According to a report by (Gen Y & Global Workforce Report, 2010), workplace environment is a platform for engaging Gen Y employees. In previous years, the career development mainly focussed on long hours of work time, work only at office, lesser technological influence, and lesser entertainment. Unlike the other cohorts, Gen Y employees have greater preferences for workplace with flexible and unconventional work environment (Lowe *et al.*, 2008); common space to collaborate (Reed, 2010); relaxation activities (Raman *et al.*, 2011); technological connections and social media (Rai, 2012); friendly co-workers (Asisonthisakul, 2005) and fun atmosphere (Raman *et al.*, 2011).

Work place environment is the place where they learn, collaborate and socialize (Rai, 2012). Workspace requirements of Gen Y includes interactive and comfortable (Raman *et al.*, 2011) and colourfully designed and flexible (Rai, 2012). Additionally, entertainment and relaxation activities reenergize them in the workplace (Raman *et al.*, 2012).

Technology paves way for information dissemination in a faster pace in today's workplace. Gen Y employees are highly frustrated with old technology and slow communication as they need instant results (Weyland, 2011). They are engaged well if the company provides them new technology and systems. Millennials are aptly called as wired generation as they are 24*7 connected and comfortable in digital environments (Rai, 2012). Apart from technology, social media has also become a part and parcel of Gen Y and a viable platform for sharing of ideas internally within an organization (Rai, 2012). For instance, many companies have initiated social media usage policies namely, Internal Bulletin Boards, InfiBlog, Blogs and Discussion Forums (Rai, 2012).

The mixture of environments like breakout areas, creative rooms, even sleep rooms can make the Gen Y employees feel comfort in their work (Weyland, 2011). Lyons (2003) emphasizes that Gen Y prefers friendly co-workers and fun environment resulting in collaboration and sharing of ideas. Therefore, work environment is found to be a vital tool for engagement of millennials.

Job Autonomy - Gen Y

Job autonomy is the employees' decision to have their own working style in carrying out a job. Esren (2002) elicits that autonomy and independence are requisites in engaging oneself. Job autonomy, in context of Gen Y, details on demanding freedom and flexibility (Martin, 2005); ownership of their work and assignments (Gravett & Throckmorton, 2007); creativity (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008); and value for one's ideas (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008).

Gen Y wants to be independent and be flexible to do their work in their own style with minimal supervision (Martin, 2005; Tapscott, 2009; & Weyland, 2011). They do not blindly follow others' opinions in decision making. As millennials work creatively, they need their management to encourage creative ideas (Zemke *et al.*, 2000; Eisner 2005). Gen Y needs the organization to listen to their ideas and value it by giving respect. Therefore, Gen Y looks for greater autonomy in workplace due to self-confidence, self-reliance and ability to voice their opinion.

Nature of working style - Gen Y

Nature of working style is the style adopted by the employee to accomplish his/her work and is one of the tools for better work engagement (Weyland, 2011). The nature of working style of previous generations focused mainly on processes and not on results. They were more dependent in decision making, had less freedom in their work and followed rules and regulations. But Gen Y seems to have significant variations in par with other cohorts namely, higher responsibility (Martin, 2005); challenging and meaningful work (Baruch, 2004); multitasking (Sujansky, 2002); smarter and faster in doing things (Eisner, 2005); prone to take risks (Gale, 2007) and flexible working hours (Sacks, 2006).

Gen Y employees prefer doing the job around the clock if they are given responsibility (Weyland, 2011). They always strive for meaningful and challenging work (Baruch, 2004; & Elkins, McRitchie & Scoones, 2007).

A report by Robert Half reveals that they prefer their own strategies to deal with the work task and do things in a faster and smarter way. They crave for more risk and pressure in their work and are more success oriented (Shih & Allen, 2007). They are risk takers and want to challenge the existing traditional systems and bring transformation in a particular enterprise. Gen Y looks for flexible time in accomplishing the tasks (Reed, 2010). Hence ownership of one's work with lesser intrusion makes them involved in their tasks in a better manner.

Team Work - Gen Y

There is an increase in engagement level if Gen Y is made to work in teams (Kovarik, 2008). It is found that Gen Y is team oriented (Glass, 2007); collaborative (Glass, 2007; Shih & Allen, 2007); involved in decision making (Beck & Wade, 2004) and believes that participation is key rather than results (Hill, 2002).

Orrell (2008) asserts that Gen Y believes that "working in a group is more productive, and joining forces to accomplish a goal is ideal". Team work leads to clarity in work, sharing of ideas through mutual interaction and increases the end results. Gen Y has high team spirit which comes from the early school education where they were involved in group projects and seminars (UAO, 2006). Weston (2006) conveys that team spirit aids in mutual cooperation which ultimately enhances the organization's productivity in the longer run. They tend to work collaboratively in teams (Fehn, 2010). They desire to take part in decision making process in an organization (McCrinkle & Hooper, 2006). They feel that mere participating is essential rather than focusing on outcomes. Therefore, team work is preferable largely by Gen Y employees in getting immersed in their job.

Research Gap and Contribution of the Study

There are only a few studies that focus on Gen Y. Engaging Gen Y employees in car companies has been a difficult task for the firms. Gen Y has greater expectations in every aspect from automobile sector as its growth makes significant contribution to the economy. Factors like

improved standard of living, ease in the availability of car loans and tendency to change cars often for better models define the expectations of customers. Therefore, the pool of Gen Y employees faces a great challenge in sales by bringing in innovative ideas. Therefore, it is imperative that the management takes proper steps to engage Gen Y employees and in this context, the present study is of immense importance. Appropriate strategies, policies and structure can be framed from the result of this significance study. By imbibing employee engagement strategies, automobile companies would reap the benefits by higher production and longer retention of employees.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the level of importance of various enablers given by Gen Y in engagement.
2. To determine the enablers that influence employee engagement of Gen Y.

Conceptual framework

After a thorough and extensive literature review to explore different enablers of employee engagement, the present study has arrived at a conceptual framework. Figure 1 elicits that various independent variables, namely, mentoring, career development, work environment, job autonomy, nature of working style and team work have a great impact in employee engagement of Gen Y, which is the dependent variable. This theoretical framework of the study is validated and estimated using path modelling technique. An instrument was developed to measure these enablers and was validated using a pilot data.

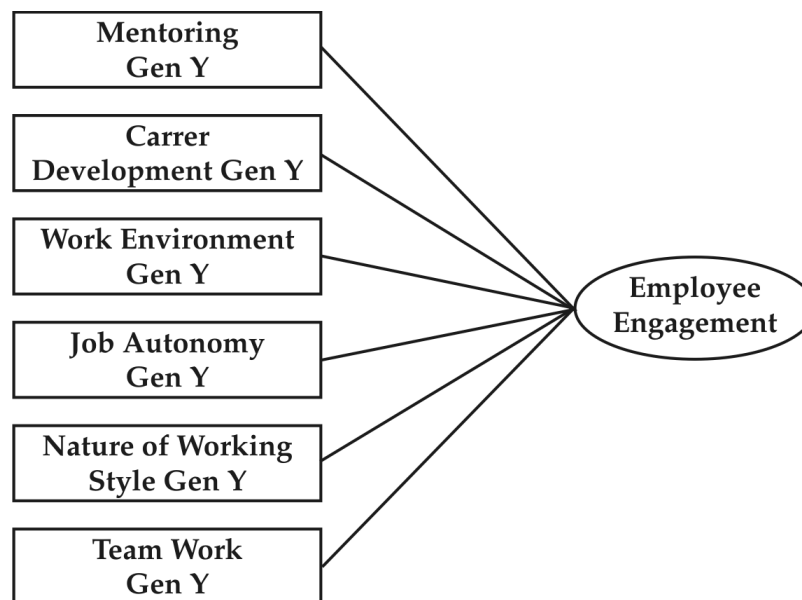


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for Engagement of Gen Y Employees

Methodology of the Study

The methodology of the study deals with various segments and process undergone by the researcher in the study.

Type of Study

The type of the study is empirical in nature.

Sample

The area of the study was Coimbatore particularly in automobile companies. The population for the study comprises of 27 automobile companies out of which 10 companies were focussed. The companies are namely, Maruti Suzuki, Ford, Honda, Mahindra & Mahindra, Nissan, Renault, Tata Motors, Toyota, Hindustan Motors and Chevrolet. The sample was Gen Y employees, i.e., 20 employees each of 10 automobile companies were chosen who belonged to the age group 21 – 35. The study focused on all levels of management, namely, senior, middle and junior level.

Method of Data Collection

The type of sampling used in the study is systematic random sampling. The employees list was taken and every fifth employee belonging to the age group of 21 – 35 was considered. Likert's seven point scale, with anchors, strongly agree, moderately agree, agree, neutral, disagree, moderately disagree and strongly disagree, was used. In order to measure employee engagement, Gallup Q12 questionnaire was used. For measuring the other enablers, the researcher constructed an instrument based on literature review and the same was validated using the pilot data.

Instrument development and validation

As standardized questionnaire was not available for measuring different enablers, construction of items under each construct was done by the support of literature review. The instrument comprised 5 items for the construct mentoring, 6 items for career development, 6 for work environment, 4 for job autonomy, 7 for nature of working style and 4 items for team work as summarized in Table 1. The table displays the content categories compiled under each construct from in depth review of literature and questions were framed accordingly.

Table 1: List of Independent Variable Constructs for Gen Y generated through extensive Literature Review

S. No.	Construct	Content Categories
1.	Mentoring	Immediate feedback (Sujansky, 2002) Inclusive style in coaching (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008) Quality relationship with supervisor (Raman, <i>et al.</i> , 2011) Constant approval and praise (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007) Reverse mentoring (Koster, 2013).
2.	Career Development	Supportive management (Solnet & Hood, 2008) Prospect of rapid advancement (Pooley, 2005) Look for mobility in early careers (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008) Practical and interactive training (Sheahan, 2005) Training in real time issues (Partridge & Hallam, 2006) Opportunity for personal development (Eisner, 2005; Martin, 2005)
3.	Fun atmosphere (Raman <i>et al.</i> , 2011)	Work Environment Flexible and comfortable work environment (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008) Common space to collaborate (Reed, 2010) Provision of relaxation activities (Raman <i>et al.</i> , 2011) To be technologically connected with social medias (Rai, 2012) Friendly co-workers (Asisonthisakul, 2005)

(Continued)

4.	Job Autonomy	Demanding freedom in work (Martin, 2005) Demanding flexibility in work (Martin, 2005) Ownership of their work and assignments (Gravett & Throckmorton, 2007) To encourage creativity and value one's ideas (Lowe, Levitt & Wilson, 2008)
5.	Nature of Working Style	Higher responsibility (Martin, 2005) Challenging work (Baruch, 2004) Meaningful work (Elkins <i>et al.</i> , 2007) Multitasking (Sujansky, 2002) Smarter and faster in doing things (Eisner, 2005) Prone to take risks (Gale, 2007) Flexible working hours (Sacks, 2006)
6.	Team Work	Desire to work in teams (Glass, 2007) Collaborative (Glass, 2007; Shih & Allen, 2007) To take part in decision making (Beck & Wade, 2004) Participation is key rather than their results (Hill, 2002).

The instrument development was further validated by using pilot data whose reliability is tested. Table 2 shows the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for over-all reliability of the instrument found to be ($\alpha = 0.909$), depicting that it is statistically significant as it is above the acceptance level of 0.6. The Cronbach Alpha values for various enablers namely mentoring, career development, job autonomy, nature of working style, work environment and team work are summarized in Table 2. Hence it is found that reliability of all the constructs is significant.

Table 2: Table showing Reliability Statistics (Cronbach Alpha) for all the Independent Variable Constructs for measuring the Employee Engagement of Gen Y

Constructs	Reliability (Cronbach alpha)
Overall Reliability of the Instrument	0.909
Mentoring	0.650
Career Development	0.700
Work Environment	0.743
Job Autonomy	0.806
Nature of Working Style	0.908
Team Work	0.820

Therefore, instrument development was validated and used for data collection.

Variables Used

Independent Variables. Mentoring, Career Development, Work environment, Job autonomy, Nature of Working Style and Team Work.

Dependent Variable. The dependent variable is Employee Engagement, which is defined as getting fully engrossed and committed towards one's work.

Table No. 3 : Table showing the Description of the Independent Variables used for measuring Employee Engagement in Gen Y

S. No.	Variable	Description/Definition
1.	Mentoring	Equal partnering and sharing of knowledge and skills between the junior and senior employees
2.	Career development	Rapid advancement in one's career path
3.	Work environment	Physically viable and socially interactive workplace
4.	Job autonomy	Access to greater autonomy in their work with lesser supervision
5.	Nature of working style	One has his/her own style of work and in their own pace
6.	Team Work	To be connected with peers collaboratively

Statistical Tools

Descriptive Statistics was used to find the mean values of various enablers by using SPSS software. Using PLS, regression was done in order to find the impact level of different variables influencing the engagement of Gen Y.

Analysis

SPSS software has been used to examine the analysis of descriptive statistics and PLS has been implemented to measure the variance and structural equation model. The demographic profile includes 58% of male and 42% of female respondents; 41% are married and 59% are unmarried. Figure 2 depicts the different level of designation of employees comprising 60% of junior level, 30% of middle level and 10 % of senior level employees respectively. The sales department constitutes around 57 % of the sample and the service department comprises of the remaining 43%.

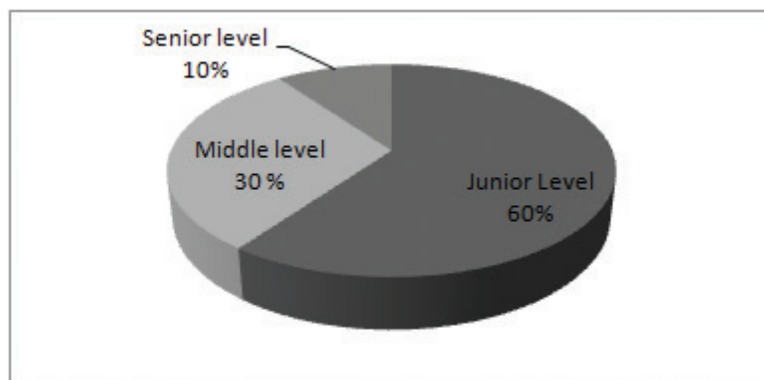


Figure2. Different levels of designation of employees

Descriptive statistics was used to find the mean values of different enablers influencing engagement of Gen Y. Figure 3 explains the level of importance or expectation of Gen Y with respect to these factors. These enablers are measured in a scale of 1 to 7 point Likert's scale. The greater the mean value, higher is the importance of the enablers of Gen Y and lesser mean values elicits the lesser importance given to the enabler.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is administered to measure the cause and effect relation between the variables through a structural model. "SEM is composed of two inter related models namely, the measurement model and structural model. The measurement model defines the latent variables and assigns observed variables to each. Structural model is the causal relationship among these latent variables" (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 2010)

“The Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modelling is one of the structural equations modelling techniques called as second generation data analysis technique” (Bagozzi & Fornell, 1982). PLS is employed to examine the significance of the relationships. It helps to measure the impact of enablers on engagement of Gen Y employees and also to find whether the structural model is fit or not. After the measurement and structural paths are estimated, PLS bootstrap approach is used to find the t – values of the paths. Reflective indicator is used in the study. Using PLS, the structural model test results are graphically shown in Figure 4.

Discussion

Level of importance of various enablers

Figure 3 shows that mean score (M = 5.82) is higher for job autonomy than the other enablers, depicting that Gen Y give more importance to job autonomy. The main reason is that Gen Y looks for autonomy in whatever work they do. The results are similar to the studies by Martin (2005) & Weyland (2011) where it is found that freedom or ownership in completion of one’s work and autonomy in making their choices of when and where to work plays a greater role in their engagement level. A leading electronics retailer named Best Buy has introduced ROWE (Results Only Work Environment) which gives the employees preference to do their work anytime and anywhere until they complete their task (Tapscott, 2009).

The second level of importance is found to be given for career development by the Gen Y respondents, with a mean score of M = 5.77 as shown in Figure 3. This shows that Gen Y looks for more career choices and even quit their job if unsatisfied with career paths as they are more loyal to meaningful job than the company they work for. It is significant that customized career paths should be developed for millennials. Studies (Pooley, 2005; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008) advocate that Gen Y look for rapid career progression and movement of career growth right from their early years. Results from different researchers support the present study. The vital reason is that Gen Y has many career choices both domestically and internationally. So it is true that they change jobs when they don’t have good career paths. It is imperative for organizations to provide customised career paths so that their talent is retained in a longer run.

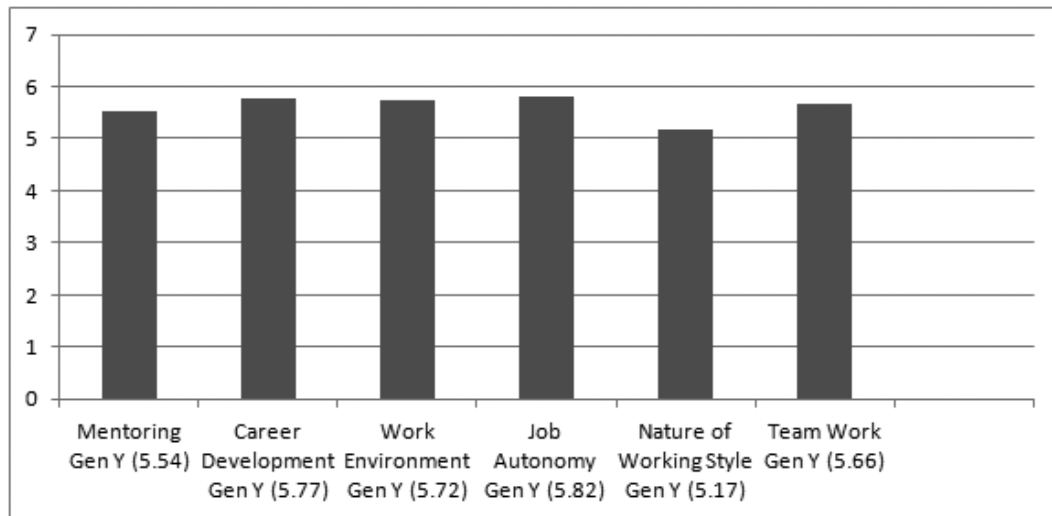


Figure 3. Measurement of level of Enablers of Gen Y in a scale of 1 to 7 in Employee Engagement

Impact of various enablers on employee engagement of Gen Y

The structural model depicting the relationship between the enablers and employee engagement is tested by examining the R-square value. The Coefficient of determination (R²) value of employee engagement of Gen Y is 41% which is statistically significant, showing that the various enablers have a significant impact in employee engagement of Gen Y. It is true that all the enablers are required for engaging millennials in a better way. These enablers drive them to involve and engage in their work profoundly. Hence the structural model is found to be a good fit.

The t- values of various variables are administered to ensure the path validity. The values are significant except for career development, work environment and job autonomy. As shown in Figure 4, the t-value is found to be higher for nature of working style ($t = 2.92$; $\beta = 0.298$) which is statistically significant. It shows that the path validity from nature of working style towards employee engagement is valid. The nature of working style has a significant impact on engagement of Gen Y employees. It is significant that there is an increase in engagement level of Gen Y if they are given freedom and flexibility in implementation of their tasks as they prefer to do the work in their own pace and style.

Mentoring also has a significant impact in engaging Gen Y employees. From Figure 4, the t-value for mentoring ($t = 2.50$; $\beta = 0.173$) depicts that it is significant with the acceptance value above 1.96. It is obvious that the path validity is significant. Gen Y needs their mentor to give instant feedback (Sujansky, 2002; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008) mostly within a week or a month and they do not wait for a longer time as they have “get-now” attitude. Apart from these, constant praise and recognition are desired by Gen Y for their work done and similar results were found by Crumpacker & Crumpacker (2007). The reason is that friendly supervisors are desired by millennials rather than the hierarchical instruction based mentor (Raman *et al.*, 2011; Weyland, 2011). They just need mere direction from their respective supervisor with lesser supervision and control. Therefore, mentoring makes a significant impact in engagement of Gen Y employees.

Team work is also found to have an impact on employee engagement of Gen Y. The team work ($t = 2.31$; $\beta = 0.211$) from Figure 4, shows that the path is valid. The present study is in line with previous reviews of Glass (2007), Shih & Allen(2007) and Beck & Wade (2004) which show that Gen Y are team oriented with collaborative nature and with a desire to participate in decision making process. This depicts that a team leader should be a good listener and charismatic rather than autocratic supporting the study of the Weyland (2011).

A survey (UAO, 2006) supports the present study that team work plays a greater influence in the engagement level of Gen Y due to their school and college education. In schoolings, activity based learning and group projects; group seminars and participation of services like NCC and NSS in colleges have inculcated in them strong team ethics resulting in team spirit in the workplace also. Additionally, by working in teams there is sharing of knowledge and mutual understanding; thus enhancing organization’s productivity (Weston, 2006). Organizations need to value team work more, as it has a significant impact in engaging Gen Y better.

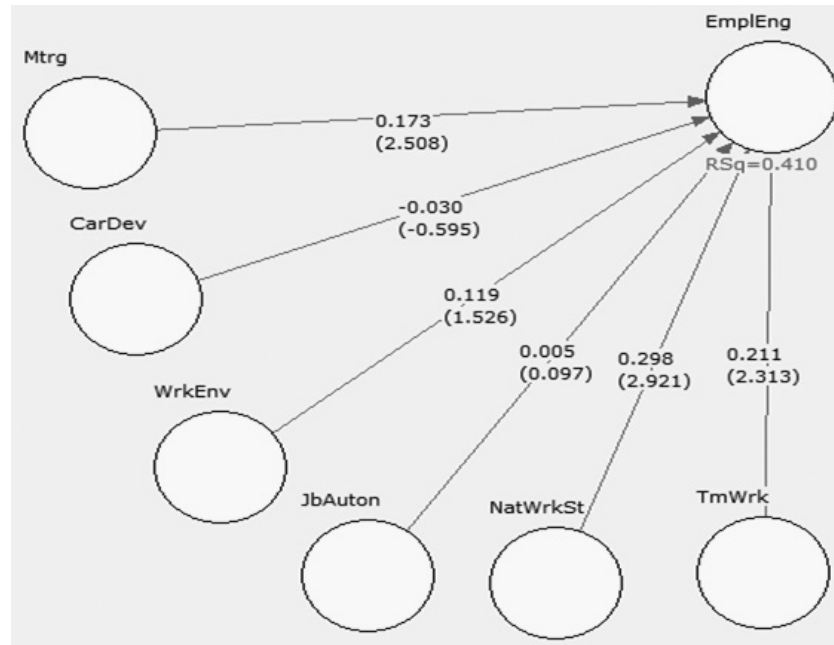


Figure 4. PLS model to test the impact of enablers in engagement of Gen Y employees

Mtrg – Mentoring Gen Y

CarDev – Career Development Gen Y

WrkEnv – Work Environment Gen Y

JbAuton – Job Autonomy Gen Y

NatWrkSt – Nature of Working Style Gen Y

TmWrk – Team Work Gen Y

EmplEng – Employee Engagement

Career development does not have impact in the engagement level of Gen Y in Indian context. Figure 4 shows the following the values: ($t = -0.595$; $\beta = -0.030$) for career development, which means that though t-value is negative but the value is less than 1.96, therefore, career development does not have any impact in engaging Gen Y. Although several studies show that career development has greater impact in engaging them. But in the Indian context in the present study of automobile industry, career development is not significant to engage Gen Y employees. The t-value of work environment ($t = 1.526$; $\beta = 0.119$) from Figure 4 shows that work environment does not have a significant impact in engagement of Gen Y. The probable reason could be that in automobile companies employees do work externally particularly in sales department rather than internally in the workplace. This makes them give lesser preference to the workspace. Additionally, job autonomy ($t = 0.097$; $\beta = 0.005$) from Figure 4, does not have a significant impact in engaging Gen Y. The reason could be that in automobile companies the employees have to report to their superiors in each and every aspect and strong hierarchical relationship is followed which makes Gen Y to adapt to more supervision control and look for lesser autonomy.

Conclusion

The present study analyzed the various enablers that would aid in better engagement of Gen Y employees. The sample studied was 200 Gen Y employees of automobile companies. Data was collected by questionnaire method with standardized instrument for employee engagement and an instrument was developed to measure the enablers. The findings show that Gen Y gives more

importance to mentoring in terms of mutual sharing of knowledge, adapting one's own work style and team work for their better engagement.

Since Gen Y is the future generation of organizations, it is imperative to replace the traditional style of hierarchy, conventional structure and process, static workspace, senior based mentoring and rigid career growth, to give a better work environment for them. Hence, Gen Y has to be treated as customers, employees and future employers. It is high time that management should initiate and support strategies like lesser senior intrusion in their work style, two way mentoring and a collaborative workplace, to address the requirements and sky rocketing expectations of Gen Y.

Limitations and Scope of the Study

The study is focused on automobile car companies of Gen Y employees particularly to Coimbatore city. The study can be further extended to other sectors like IT companies, service sectors and manufacturing industries. The study can be focused on different geographical locations as the output may vary according to different perceptions of Gen Y in different regions.

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