Organizational Identification, Moral Identity Centrality and Organizational Engagement of Millennials: Moderating Impact of Psychological Entitlement

K. A. D. I. Udayangi\textsuperscript{a,} G. A. T. R. Perera\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a}Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of the Visual and Performing Arts, Sri Lanka
\textsuperscript{b}Department of Management and Organization Studies, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Abstract

This study analyses the moderating impact of psychological entitlement on the relationships between organisational identification, moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials. It addresses the knowledge gap pertaining to the organisational engagement of Millennials. Although engagement is conceptualised as a multidimensional construct, organisational engagement has only recently received the focus of attention of researchers. Despite Millennials being considered an entitled generation, psychological entitlement remains largely an unexplored area. The survey involved 285 Millennial Master of Business Administration (MBA) students in two leading universities in Sri Lanka. The data was analysed using Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicated no support for the premise that psychological entitlement moderated the relationships between organisational identification or moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials. The results provide valuable insights into the organisational engagement of Millennials and address some of the gaps in understanding the impact of psychological entitlement on organisational engagement.

Keywords: Organisational Engagement, Millennials, Organisational Identification, Moral Identity Centrality, Psychological Entitlement

Received: 07 July 2023
Accepted revised version: 08 Jan 2024
Published: 30 June 2024


DOI: https://doi.org/10.4038/cbj.v15i1.167

© 2024 The Authors. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

\textsuperscript{a}ishara.u@vpa.ac.lk \textsuperscript{b}https://orcid.org/0009-0003-2852-5167
Introduction

Engagement is a multidimensional construct (Bailey et al., 2017; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2006). According to So et al. (2021), employee engagement comprises person, work, relation, and organisational engagement. Work engagement is “the harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles” (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). Saks (2006) proposed that “engagement is specific to the role that an employee is performing, and most employees have at least two primary roles – their work role and their role as a member of their organization” (Saks et al., 2021, p. 23). Bailey et al. (2017) emphasised that “only a small number of studies thus far have examined job vs organizational engagement, and there is scope to develop this line of research further” (p. 46). Saks et al. (2021) defined organisational engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their organization role” (p. 24). It is “about the extent to which employees bring their full and complete self into the performance of organization-based tasks, activities, events, assignments, projects and so on that they have to do as a member of their organization” (Saks et al., 2021, p. 24).

This study focuses on the Millennials/Generation Y who may encompass 75% of the worldwide labour force by the year 2025 (Omilion-Hodges & Sugg, 2019; Ubl et al., 2017). Millennials exhibit distinctive work-related attitudes and behaviours such as non-compliance, and emphasis on work-life balance, leadership, and recognition (Gursoy et al., 2013; Hui et al., 2020; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Polat & Yılmaz, 2020; Seemiller & Grace, 2018). Researchers have focused on the work or employee engagement of Millennials but not necessarily on the organisational engagement of Millennials (Cattermole, 2018; Jha et al., 2019; Murphy, 2012; Raza et al., 2017). It is noteworthy that So et al. (2021) identified organisational engagement as having the highest variance among the dimensions of employee engagement. Engaging Millennials seems to be a challenge for organisations given that they seldom appear to get attached to their workplaces and are likely to emphasise individual goals over organisational goals (Chou et al., 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Njoroge et al., 2021; Polat & Yılmaz, 2020; Seemiller & Grace, 2018; Stewart et al., 2017; Ubl et al., 2017; Udayangi & Perera, 2022). Therefore, research focusing on the organisational engagement of Millennials is a contemporary requirement.

Further, various authors have suggested that Millennials are an entitled, lazy and narcissistic generation (Akhras, 2015; Allen et al., 2015; Credo et al., 2016; Harvey & Dasborough, 2015; Morreale & Staley, 2016; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge, 2013; Ubl et al., 2017; Wood, 2019). Despite widespread consensus that entitlement
in the workplace is escalating as Millennials become the majority generational cohort in the labour force, psychological entitlement remains a largely unexplored area (Brant & Castro, 2019). Therefore, understanding Millennials’ entitlement and its impact on their organisational engagement is crucial for effective human resources management in the present context (Brant & Castro, 2019; Omilion-Hodges & Sugg, 2019).

The authors adopted a social identity perspective in this study. The social identity perspective is utilised in contemporary literature to explore engagement (He et al., 2019; He et al., 2014; Hui et al., 2020). People develop a part of their identity based on various group memberships such as an organisation and display behaviours that are in concurrence with their identities (Flint et al., 2018; Owens et al., 2010; Stets & Burke, 2014). According to Conroy et al. (2017), employees who identify with the organisation are less likely to demonstrate employee disengagement. According to He et al. (2014), moral identity centrality, which is derived from social identity theory, may positively influence employee engagement. In this context, this study examines the moderating impact of psychological entitlement on the relationships between organisational identification, moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials.

This article presents a literature review and conceptualisation section describing the development of hypotheses based on extant literature. The conceptual model for the study is presented at the end of the said section, followed by a section focusing on the methodology used in the study. This is followed by sections presenting the results of the study, discussion of findings and the conclusion. The limitations and future research directions are discussed in the last section of the article.

**Literature Review and Conceptualisation**

Engagement is essential for organisational success given that engaged employees provide a competitive advantage (Anitha, 2014; Eldor, 2020; Kumar & Pansari, 2016; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rashmi & Singh, 2020; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Suomäki et al., 2019). Employee engagement is a multidimensional construct (Bailey et al., 2017; Saks, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Shuck & Wollard, 2010; Shuck, 2011; So et al., 2021). It captures both the engagement with the work and the organisation (Schaufeli et al., 2006). According to Schaufeli (2013), job engagement involves “performing the work role” while organisational engagement involves “performing the role as a member of the organization” (p. 7). According to So et al. (2021), organisational engagement is the most crucial among the four dimensions of
employee engagement. Yet, it appears that mainstream research on engagement has been focused on job or work engagement while organisational engagement has been somewhat overlooked (Bailey et al., 2017; Saks et al., 2021). This study focuses on the organisational engagement of Millennials.

Millennials have become the majority generational cohort in labour forces globally. The birth years of Millennials in extant literature fluctuate between the early 1980s and the late 1990s (Glazer et al., 2019; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Yet, all sources agree that they grew up during the dawn of the new millennium hence the name ‘Millennials’ (Gabriëlova & Buchko, 2021). This generational cohort has brought about a paradigm shift in the labour force dynamics, as Millennials exhibit distinctive work-related attitudes, expectations, and values (Mahmoud et al., 2020; Polat & Yılmaz, 2020; Rather, 2018; Schullery, 2013; Seemiller & Grace, 2018; Stewart et al., 2017; Ubl et al., 2017; Udayangi & Perera, 2022). Millennials value flexible work, regular feedback, intrinsic satisfaction, work-life balance, leisure, teamwork, recognition, and professional advancement while displaying a propensity for nonconformity, non-compliance and poor organisational citizenship behaviour and a strong dislike of bureaucracy (Chou et al., 2021; Gong et al., 2018; Gursoy et al., 2013; Naim & Lenka, 2018; Pasko et al., 2020; Rather, 2018; Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010).

Given that Millennials are not necessarily driven by the same goals and expectations as the preceding generations, getting them to be engaged in the organisation seems to be challenging (Hui et al., 2020; Naim & Lenka, 2018; Njoroge et al., 2021; Özçelik, 2015; Pasko et al., 2020; Rather, 2018; Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Stewart et al., 2017). Financial rewards alone cannot engage Millennials as they tend to seek careers that provide them with contentment (Greatwood, 2016; Rather, 2018). They pursue continued education, training programmes, and graduate degrees (Goyal & Gupta, 2019; Hui et al., 2020; Murphy, 2012; Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Sandeen, 2008). They are likely to change jobs frequently and therefore labelled as ‘job hoppers’ (Glazer et al., 2019; Greatwood, 2016; Seemiller & Grace, 2018). They are called the ‘Generation Me’ (Twenge, 2013); the entitled generation (Allen et al., 2015); and the most praised generation (Anderson et al., 2016).

In examining the organisational engagement of Millennials, social identity theory is used by the authors in this paper. Social identity theory has been employed by contemporary researchers to analyse employee engagement (Conroy et al., 2017; He et al., 2014; He et al., 2019). According to this theory, individuals categorise
themselves as well as others into social groups based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, generational cohort, organisational affiliation, etc. (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to Porck et al. (2019), the higher the extent of identification with a social group, the more likely its members may endorse the rules and practices of the group. Conroy et al. (2017) postulated that the more an employee tends to identify with the organization, the less likely they may demonstrate employee disengagement. He et al. (2014) postulated that moral identity centrality positively affects employee engagement. This study postulates that organisational identification and moral identity centrality, both derived from social identity theory, could lead to engagement.

Hypothesis Development

Organisational Identification and Organisational Engagement

According to Tyler and Blader (2003), the key reason people engage themselves in social groups is to create and maintain their identities. Individuals develop a fair share of their identity based on group memberships, and their behaviour is attuned to the fundamental undertones of their respective identities (Flint et al., 2018; Owens et al., 2010; Stets & Burke, 2014). According to Porck et al. (2019), the likelihood of an individual endorsing the norms of a social group increases with his/her extent of identification with the group.

Organisational identification refers to a sense of affinity with the organisation and involves the extent to which the identity of the organisation is fundamental to an individual’s sense of self (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Lee et al., 2015; Piening et al., 2020; Riketta, 2005). It is deemed to be a form of social identification (Boroş, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Turner et al., 1987). According to Traeger and Alfes (2019), the likelihood of an employee envisioning the organisation’s achievements and shortcomings as his/her own may increase with his/her extent of organisational identification.

Organisational identification is correlated with various behaviours and attitudes in the workplace including innovative job performance, turnover intention, organisational commitment, and employee creativity (Ashforth et al., 2020; Cornwell et al., 2018; Frare & Beuren, 2021; Hui et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2015; Riketta, 2005; Zhu et al., 2017). It has an empirical relationship with turnover intentions through social, relational, or personal identification (Ashforth et al., 2020; Conroy et al., 2017; Van Dick et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2017). Zhu et al. (2017) pointed out that fluctuations in identification might affect the incidence of employee turnover. According to Saks (2006), turnover intentions are negatively related to organisational engagement.
Extant literature indicates that Millennials have a tendency for job hopping, an indication of turnover intentions (Glazer et al., 2019; Greatwood, 2016; Hoffman, 2018; Ngotngamwong, 2019; Tetteh et al., 2021), which in turn, signals less engagement. Further, according to Conroy et al. (2017), the greater the extent of identification with the organisation, the less likely the employee may show disengagement. Accordingly, the first hypothesis for the study was formulated as, 

\[ H_1: \text{Organisational identification has a positive impact on the organisational engagement of Millennials.} \]

**Moral Identity Centrality and Organisational Engagement**

Moral identity is a concept derived from the social identity theory and is considered to be “a self-conception organized around a set of moral traits” (Aquino & Reed II, 2002, p. 1424). Moral identity tends to be motivational and serves as a driving force for moral conduct (Ete et al., 2020; Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Stets et al., 2008; Stets & Carter, 2012; Stets & Serpe, 2013). Moral identity makes individuals envision themselves as “caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind” (Aquino & Reed II, 2002, p. 1426). Moral identity centrality is the extent to which moral characteristics are fundamental to the sense of self of an individual (Aquino & Reed II, 2002). An identity that is highly imperative to the sense of self of an individual is deemed to have greater centrality (Stets & Serpe, 2013). According to Aquino et al. (2007), individuals tend to engage in acts that are attuned to the connotations pertaining to their moral identity. Those who view themselves as being moral have a higher inclination to exhibit moral behaviour in any given situation (Reynolds & Ceramic, 2007; Stets & Serpe, 2013). The higher the moral identity centrality, the more likely an individual may display a sense of justice and care for fellow human beings (Stets et al., 2008; Stets & Carter, 2012; Stets & Burke, 2014). According to He et al. (2014), moral identity centrality has a positive influence on employee engagement. It can be inferred that moral identity centrality may have a positive impact on organisational engagement as well (Bailey et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; So et al., 2021).

\[ H_2: \text{Moral identity centrality has a positive impact on the organisational engagement of Millennials.} \]

**Psychological Entitlement as a Moderator**

According to Campbell et al. (2004), psychological entitlement is “a stable and pervasive sense that one deserves more and is entitled to more than others” (p. 31). Entitlement in the workplace refers to a sense of deservingness involving self-interested behaviour and selfishness (Brummel & Parker, 2015). Campbell et al.
(2004) considered entitlement to be a constituent of narcissism, and according to Credo et al. (2016), narcissism has a positive relationship with entitlement and a negative relationship with engagement.

According to Kahn (1990), engagement and disengagement at the workplace involve three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Workplaces that offer incentives in return for investing oneself in work are more likely to result in psychological meaningfulness (Saks & Gruman, 2014). However, entitled employees expect incentives disproportionate to their actual merit (Harvey & Martinko 2009). Accordingly, Joplin et al. (2021) proposed that entitlement negatively affects employee engagement. Extant literature recognises Millennials as an entitled generation (Akhras, 2015; Allen et al., 2015; Twenge, 2013; Zhao & Xu, 2019).

Entitled individuals are likely to be selfish, unempathetic, self-centred, and socially irresponsible, concentrating on their personal goals even at the expense of others’ well-being (Alnaimi & Rjoub, 2021; Zitek & Schlund, 2021). It is unlikely for entitled individuals to identify with a social group or organisation and endorse its norms, as they may prioritise their individual goals instead (Porck et al., 2019; Zitek & Schlund, 2021). It can be inferred that entitled employees are less likely to embrace the organisation’s identity as being fundamental to their sense of self. Therefore, it can be argued that the relationship between organisational identification and organisational engagement will be weaker for those who are high on psychological entitlement than those who are low. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

$$H_3: \text{Psychological entitlement moderates the positive relationship between organisational identification and organisational engagement of Millennials such that high psychological entitlement weakens the relationship and low psychological entitlement strengthens the relationship.}$$

According to Liu et al. (2022), psychological entitlement may enhance unethical behaviour. According to Lee et al. (2019), the connection between psychological entitlement and negative attitudes or behaviour at the workplace can be explained using moral detachment as an underlying mechanism. According to Stets et al. (2008), moral identity involves “a concern for justice and the preservation of human rights” as well as “a concern for care and the preservation of mutual relationships” (p. 230). However, entitled individuals tend to be selfish, unempathetic, and socially irresponsible, even at the expense of others’ well-being (Alnaimi & Rjoub, 2021;
Zitek & Schlund, 2021). Entitled employees are less likely to embrace moral attributes as being central to their sense of self (Alnaimi & Rjoub, 2021; Zitek & Schlund, 2021). Hence, it can be argued that the relationship between moral identity centrality and organisational engagement will be weaker for those who are high on psychological entitlement than those who are low. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated;

H4: Psychological entitlement moderates the positive relationship between moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials such that high psychological entitlement weakens the relationship and low psychological entitlement strengthens the relationship.

The conceptual model used in the study is illustrated in Figure 1. It depicts the relationships between the constructs described above.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

![Conceptual Model](image)

**Methodology**

*Research Design and Sampling*

This study utilised a cross-sectional research design and a survey strategy with quantitative techniques. The scope of the study was narrowed down to Millennials pursuing Master of Business Administration (MBA) programmes. The sample selected for the study consisted of Millennial MBA students who are following MBA
programmes offered by two leading universities in Sri Lanka. The sampling frame consisted of 1300 MBA students from the 2020 and 2021 intakes. Therefore, the sample size is 297 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The sampling technique used in the study is convenient sampling. For the purpose of the study, the birth years of Millennials were considered as 1982 – 2000 (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

The questionnaire was administered by distributing hard copies among the members of the sampling frame and collecting their responses. A total of 315 responses were received from 373 questionnaires distributed, accounting for a response rate of 84.5%. Out of the 315 questionnaires received, two were incomplete and therefore rejected. One questionnaire had been filled out by the respondent by selecting all seven options given against the items in several sections and this was also rejected. Out of the 312 respondents, 285 (91.3%) were aged between 22 – 39 years, indicating that they belonged to the Millennial generation/ Generation Y while the remaining 27 respondents were aged between 40 – 56 years indicating that they belonged to Generation X. Accordingly, the 285 responses from the MBA students who are Millennials/ Generation Y were used for the subsequent analysis.

**Data Collection Instrument**

The data collection instrument was a self-administered structured questionnaire in the English language. Part A of the questionnaire focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Part B comprised scales adopted from extant research literature and used a seven-point Likert scale where agreement or disagreement with each statement could be indicated in a range between strongly disagree (= 1) and strongly agree (= 7). Organisational engagement was measured using the six items developed by Saks (2006), of which an example item is “Being a member of this organisation is very captivating”. Organisational identification was measured using the five items of the scale of organisational identification developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992), comprising items such as “When someone criticises the organisation I work for, it feels like a personal insult”. The thirteen-item scale developed by Aquino and Reed II (2002) was used to measure moral identity centrality and they refer to a set of moral characteristics including being “caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind” (p. 1426). An example item is “It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics”. The psychological entitlement scale (PES), comprising nine items, developed by Campbell et al. (2004) was used to measure psychological entitlement; “I honestly feel I’m just more deserving than others” was one of the items.
Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test whether the scales adopted were applicable in the Sri Lankan context. IBM SPSS Statistics version 23 was used for the data analysis of the pilot study. The Cronbach’s alpha score was greater than 0.60 for all constructs indicating internal consistency (Churchill, 1979). The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) values were greater than 0.5 for all variables while Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant. A factor analysis was conducted to check the construct validity (Thompson & Daniel, 1996). The rotated loadings were greater than |0.6| on one factor for all items of the constructs. Accordingly, all the items in the instrument were retained for the data collection.

Preliminary Analysis

The skewness and kurtosis values calculated for all the items in the instrument ranged from -1.273 to 0.216 and -0.993 to 1.720 respectively. Accordingly, the dataset was deemed to have satisfied the requirement for skewness and kurtosis (between the range of -2 and +2), indicating that the assumption of normality is satisfied (George & Mallery, 2019; Kline, 2011). The variance inflation factor (VIF) values were all below 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues (Ringle et al., 2015). The KMO value was greater than 0.6 for all the constructs while Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant. Accordingly, the dataset for the study was suitable for factor analysis (Dziuban & Shirkey, 1974; Tobias & Carlson, 1969). As per the output of Harman’s one-factor test, the total variance extracted by one factor was 29.637% which is less than the threshold value of 50%, indicating no noteworthy threat of common method bias (Fuller et al., 2016; Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015). The correlation coefficients are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organisational Engagement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organisational Identification</td>
<td>0.495**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moral Identity Centrality</td>
<td>0.427**</td>
<td>0.513**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Psychological Entitlement</td>
<td>0.146*</td>
<td>0.299**</td>
<td>0.236**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **p < 0.01; *p < 0.05

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Since all the items in the instrument were adopted from extant literature, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using SPSS AMOS version 23. None of
the model fit indices for the initial measurement model achieved their respective threshold values. Therefore, the initial measurement model was modified by stepwise deletion of indicators with standardised regression weights less than 0.50 (Stevens, 1992). The model fit indices for the modified measurement model achieved their respective threshold values: Chi-square fit statistics/degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF) was 2.3 (CMIN/DF < 3), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.927 (CFI > 0.90), Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.068 (RMSEA < 0.08), and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) was 0.0673 (SRMR < 0.08) (Bentler, 1990; Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 1998). The reliability statistics for the modified measurement model are given in Table 2. The Cronbach’s alpha score was higher than 0.70 for all constructs, indicating internal consistency (Taber, 2018).

Table 2: Reliability Statistics for the Modified Measurement Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>No of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Engagement</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>0.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Identification</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>0.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Identity Centrality</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>0.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Entitlement</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>0.885</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Convergent validity was tested by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The AVE values are given in Table 3. All constructs of the measurement model had AVE values above the threshold value of 0.50, indicating convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). Composite reliability (CR) is a measure of true score variance compared to the total scale score variance and a value greater than 0.70 is considered acceptable (Brunner & Süß, 2005).

Table 3: Convergent Validity Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Convergent Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational engagement</td>
<td>0.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Identification</td>
<td>0.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Identity Centrality</td>
<td>0.929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Entitlement</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlations between the constructs are presented in Table 4. The requirement of discriminant validity is satisfied since correlations were below 0.85 (Kline, 2005).
Table 4: Correlation between Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organisational Engagement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organisational Identification</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moral Identity Centrality</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Psychological Entitlement</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was carried out by structural equation modelling (SEM). The interactive effects between latent variables were used to test the moderating impact (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Cortina et al., 2021). The structural model had zero degrees of freedom indicating that it was a just-identified/saturated model and therefore the model fit indices are meaningless (Lei & Wu, 2007; Ramlall, 2016; Tomarken & Waller, 2003). However, the path coefficients can be used to test the hypotheses. The regression weights pertaining to the structural model are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression Weights for the Direct Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>6.873</td>
<td>&lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Identity</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>4.321</td>
<td>&lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
<td>0.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement (standardised)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOI_x_ZPE</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>-0.143</td>
<td>0.989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZMIC x_ZPE</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>-1.051</td>
<td>0.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ZPE = Psychological Entitlement (standardised); ZOI = Organisational Identification (standardized); ZMIC = Moral Identity Centrality (standardised); C.R. = Critical Ratio

Critical Ratio is the ratio of a parameter to its standard error and if the absolute value of the critical ratio is 1.96 or greater, that parameter is considered significant (Bentler & Speckart, 1981). The path analysis in the case of H1 for the direct effect of organisational identification on organisational engagement revealed a C.R. value of 6.873 and a significant p-value (<0.001), indicating that the results supported H1.
The path analysis in the case \( H_2 \) for the direct effect of moral identity centrality on organisational engagement revealed a C.R. value of 4.321 and a significant \( p \)-value (0.000), indicating that the results supported \( H_2 \). The path analysis in the case of \( H_3 \) for the interaction effect of organisational identification and psychological entitlement had a \( p \)-value of 0.989 and a C.R. value of -0.014. Accordingly, the results of the study did not support the hypothesis that psychological entitlement moderates the relationship between organisational identification and organisational engagement of Millennials. The path analysis in the case of \( H_4 \) for the interaction effect of moral identity centrality and psychological entitlement had a \( p \)-value of 0.293 and a C.R. value of -1.051. Accordingly, the results did not support the hypothesis that psychological entitlement moderates the relationship between moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study attempts to explain why Millennials appear to display poor organisational engagement despite their engagement being crucial for organisational effectiveness and looks into the applicability of the social identity perspective to analyse the organisational engagement of Millennials. The results, while indicating that both organisational identification and moral identity centrality have a positive impact on the organisational engagement of Millennials, do not support the premise that psychological entitlement moderates these relationships.

The findings of the study contribute to the literature by addressing the knowledge gaps pertaining to empirical research focusing on the organisational engagement of Millennials, and the impact of psychological entitlement on organisational engagement. The findings of the study highlight the importance of utilising the social identity perspective to understand the organisational engagement of Millennials.

The findings pertaining to \( H_1 \) aligned with the empirical results of Conroy et al. (2017), and Frare and Beuren (2021). Conroy et al. (2017) empirically demonstrated that, up to the extent that individuals identify with the organisation, they are less likely to display feelings of disengagement, implying that identification with the organisation is positively related to engagement. Frare and Beuren (2021) presented empirical evidence that employee-company identification influences organisational engagement. The findings of this study, being aligned with the above-mentioned prior research, indicate that Millennials are not different from others in terms of this relationship.
The findings pertaining to H2 aligned with the empirical results of He et al. (2014), who empirically demonstrated that moral identity centrality had a positive influence on employee engagement. Considering that organisational engagement has been considered as a dimension of employee engagement by some authors (Bailey et al., 2017; Saks, 2006; Saks & Gruman, 2014; So et al., 2021), the findings of He et al. (2014), by extension, could be seen as aligned with the findings of H2.

The results of the study pertaining to the interaction effect of psychological entitlement and organisational identification appear to challenge the premise that psychological entitlement negatively influences engagement. The findings contradict those of Joplin et al. (2021), who proposed that entitlement negatively impacts engagement. Naseer et al. (2020) reported that organisational identification had an indirect effect on unethical work behaviours through psychological entitlement, implying a possible interaction between organisational identification and psychological entitlement. However, the results of the study appeared to deviate from this premise given that the impact of such interaction was deemed to be not significant with regard to the relationship between organisational identification and organisational engagement of Millennials. The results of the study pertaining to the interaction effect of psychological entitlement and moral identity centrality appear to contradict those of Lee et al. (2019), who reported that the link between psychological entitlement and counterproductive work behaviour could be explained by using moral detachment as a causal mechanism and Liu et al. (2022) who proposed that psychological entitlement enhances unethical behaviour.

The contradictory findings may be due to differences in measurements. Joplin et al. (2021) measured engagement using the six-item measurement scale of work engagement developed by Barrick et al. (2015). The present study used the measurement scale of organisational engagement developed by Saks (2006). Accordingly, psychological entitlement, as measured by the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES) developed by Campbell et al. (2004), might influence individuals’ work or job engagement as suggested by Joplin et al. (2021), but not necessarily their organisational engagement, as defined by Saks et al. (2021).

The findings of interaction effects of psychological entitlement appear to align with those of Brummel and Parker (2015) and Credo et al. (2016), who found no significant correlation between entitlement and engagement. Arnett (2013) and Cairns (2017) disputed the premise that Millennials are an entitled generation, while Andreassen et al. (2012) proposed that narcissistic employees may have higher levels of employee engagement.
Conclusion

Based on the empirical findings of the study, it can be concluded that both organisational identification and moral identity centrality have a positive impact on the organisational engagement of Millennials. Despite extant literature indicating a negative influence of psychological entitlement on job/ work or employee engagement, it can be concluded that psychological entitlement, as measured by the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES), does not appear to influence the relationships between organisational identification or moral identity centrality and organisational engagement of Millennials.

The theoretical contributions of the study include addressing the knowledge gaps relating to the organisational engagement of Millennials and providing insight into the psychological entitlement of Millennials. This study enables managers to get a better understanding of Millennials and thereby take a more informed approach in their attempts to engage Millennials. Millennials, owing to their technological orientation and digital immersion, are considered a vital human resource for organisations confronted with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Managers may benefit from focusing on the aspects of organisational identification and moral identity centrality in their attempts to engage and retain Millennials.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

A longitudinal research design would have been more insightful since organisational behaviour-related concepts such as organisational engagement are better understood over a long period. This study used convenient sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique that is prone to sampling bias, undermining the generalisability of the findings. The generalisability of the findings could be affected by the socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects pertaining to the sample. Future researchers may benefit from extending their scope to include sampling frames that represent the educational and socio-economic backgrounds of millennials more extensively.

The data collection instrument was a self-administered structured questionnaire and therefore, the findings of the study may be limited by the conscientiousness and truthfulness of the respondents in answering the questionnaire. The data screening process addressed this concern to some extent. English is not the first language of the respondents of the study, and therefore, they could have misinterpreted items in the questionnaire. This study addressed this issue to some extent by selecting a highly
educated sampling frame, which warranted that they may be well versed in English as both MBA programmes are conducted in English medium. The pilot study where the reliability and validity of the instrument were tested also addressed this concern to some extent.

Future researchers are recommended to further explore the social identity perspective of organisational engagement. For instance, the findings of this study may be tested in the context of Generation Z (born 2002 – early 2010s). Given that previous researchers have proposed that psychological entitlement influences engagement, it is recommended that additional research is needed to further investigate the role of psychological entitlement with regards to the concept of engagement and its dimensions (Bailey et al., 2017; Brant & Castro, 2019; Joplin et al., 2021; Saks, 2006; So et al., 2021).

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

References


https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471


https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569913476543


https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484309353560

https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484311410840

https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-11-2020-0155


