
Predicting employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic: Does employee generation matter?

C. Christopher Lee, Professor, Central Connecticut State University
Keshab Acharya, Associate Professor, Central Connecticut State University
Robert Blair, MBA Student, Central Connecticut State University
Anne M. Tyrrell, MBA Student Central Connecticut State University

ABSTRACT

This paper examines various factors influencing employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper also explores whether the degree of such influence differs among various employee generations. A voluntary survey was conducted among 534 employees using a self-administered questionnaire. The results show that the transformational leadership style has the biggest impact on employee engagement within the workplace. While work-life balance and employee autonomy significantly influence employee engagement, corporate social responsibility moderately impacts employee engagement, particularly among the younger generation. This study is among the first to examine the impact of executive-, employee-, and organizational-level factors on work engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic and to explore the role of the employee generation in this connection.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Employee Generation, Multi-Level Predictors, Covid-19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement can directly affect the well-being and prosperity of a company. It is a key to achieving a competitive advantage (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015). Engaged workers are committed to their work (Ghlichlee and Bayat, 2020) and perform their tasks enthusiastically (Rai *et al.*, 2018), assisting the company in operating more effectively and efficiently (Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a major paradigm shift in how organizations approach employee engagement. Employee engagement was found to be declined significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Quantum Workplace, 2020; 2021). A recent large-scale employee engagement survey showed that 21 percent of employees want to work remotely, 68 percent want to work in a hybrid environment, and only 11 percent want to work on-ground- all under normal circumstances (Quantum Workplace, 2021). This trend suggests that employers need to think “outside the box” regarding employee engagement.

Prior literature has examined the determinants of employee engagement at the executive level (Mandell and Pherwani, 2003; Gergen *et al.*, 2014), organizational level (Bokhari, 2019; Morris and Venkatesh, 2000), and employee level (Riyanto *et al.*, 2019; Taipale *et al.*, 2011). Some studies also reported differences in work engagement among Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z employees (Kordbacheh *et al.*, 2014; Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017). However, there is a lack of research that explores how various factors at different levels of an organization impact employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there is not much research that explores such an impact in relation to different employee generations, including

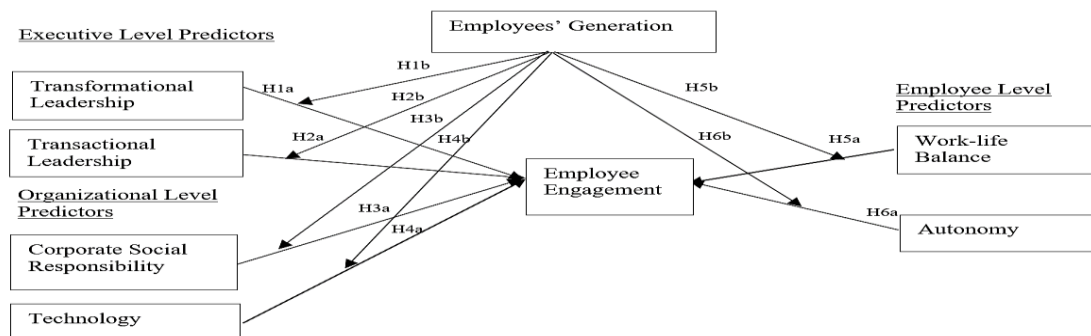
Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. This study examines the factors that influence employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study looks at generational differences in the workforce and explores how executive level (e.g., leadership style), organizational level (e.g., CSR, technology), and employee level (e.g., work-life balance, autonomy) factors have affected employee engagement during the pandemic.

The remaining sections of the paper are structured as follows. First, we review the literature by highlighting the antecedents of employee engagement. We then develop our theoretical background by proposing several hypotheses. Next, we discuss our method, followed by the results of the study. We then discuss the scholarly and practical implications of the study's findings and conclude with suggestions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

There is a robust literature on the determinants of employee engagement. For example, several studies have been conducted in order to understand the impact of executive-level factors such as leadership style on employee engagement (Mandell and Pherwani, 2003; Wolfram and Gratton, 2014; Gergen *et al.*, 2014). Numerous studies have examined the impact of organization-level factors such as CSR (Bokhari, 2019; Brammer *et al.*, 2007; Chaudhary, 2017) and technology (Morris and Venkatesh, 2000; Sanders *et al.*, 2015) on employee engagement. This body of literature also explored several employee-level determinants of employee engagement ranging from autonomy (Sheemun *et al.*, 2013; Johnson and Spector, 2007; Taipale *et al.*, 2011) to work-life balance (Capnary *et al.*, 2018; Riyanto *et al.*, 2019; Parkes and Langford, 2008). In the meantime, the research indicates that employee engagement differs across various generations. Most scholars agree that age plays a vital role in employee engagement, arguing that certain age groups of employees are more motivated with their work than others (Schullery, 2013; Kordbacheh *et al.*, 2014; Hoole and Bonnema, 2015). In this study, we examine the impact of executive-, employee-, and organizational-level factors on work engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic and explore the role of the employee generation in this connection. In the next section, we develop various hypotheses linking the impact of executive-, employee-, and organization-level factors on work engagement. Figure 1 below demonstrates our research model.

Figure 1. Multi-level Predictors of Employee Engagement



Transformational Leadership and Employee Engagement

Studies have shown that transformational leadership motivates and inspires employees to be more productive. For instance, in a study conducted among employees in a European bank, Besieux *et al.* (2018) found that transformational leadership positively influences employee engagement. In the meantime, studies suggest that younger generations prefer a work environment that facilitates open communication and encompasses the concept of involved employees (Bodenhausen and Curtis, 2016). These employees might prefer transformational leaders that give them the personal attention and inspire them to achieve higher performance (Gergen *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, in a study conducted among Generation Z employees, Lee *et al.* (2020) found that transformational leadership positively influences work engagement. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes that transformational leadership will be more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations than older generations.

- H1a.* Transformational leadership positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.
- H1b.* Employees' generation moderates the effect of transformational leadership on employees' engagement in the workplace such that transformational leadership is more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations.

Transactional leadership and Employee Engagement

Studies have shown that a transactional leadership style is more task-oriented and focuses on objective outcomes. Older generations tend to prefer a leadership style that focuses on a specified expected outcome with consequences in place if requirements are not met. While younger individuals in the early stages of their careers might also prefer transactional leadership (Popli and Rizvi, 2016), older generations are more likely to do so across the board. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that transactional leadership will be more positively related to the work engagement of older generations than the younger generations.

- H2a.* Transactional leadership positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.
- H2b.* Employees' generation moderates the effect of transactional leadership on employees' engagement in the workplace such that transactional leadership is more positively related to the work engagement of older generations.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Engagement

Employees tend to be more engaged with a positive attitude when they view their organization to be socially responsible (Brammer *et al.*, 2007). Meanwhile, studies have shown that there is a correlation between corporate social responsibility and employee generation (Bokhari, 2019). Younger generations are shown to value a strong corporate culture that is centered around corporate social responsibility (Bokhari, 2019). For instance, Abdelhalim and Eldin (2019) demonstrated that a firm's engagement in CSR activities, such as community welfare programs and social advancement programs, is particularly appealing to younger generations. Taken

together, this study proposes that corporate social responsibility will be more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations than older generations.

H3a. Corporate social responsibility positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.

H3b. Employees' generation moderates the effect of corporate social responsibility on employees' engagement in the workplace such that corporate social responsibility is more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations.

Technology and Employee Engagement

Implementing the latest technology in the workplace not only increases a company's efficiency but also enhances employees' motivation. Research has shown that the appropriate utilization of technology can enable younger generations to engage more in their work (Jha *et al.*, 2018). Younger generations are more likely to adopt technology in their job functions than older generations (Morris and Venkatesh, 2000). They might feel more comfortable with the new technology than do older generations (Lapoint and Liprie-Spence, 2017). Consequently, this study suggests that technology will be more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations than older generations.

H4a. Technology positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.

H4b. Employees' generation moderates the effect of technology on employees' engagement in the workplace such that technology is more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations.

Work-life Balance and Employee Engagement

Employees consider work-life balance when making career-related decisions (Capnary *et al.*, 2018). Studies have shown a correlation between work-life balance and employee generations. However, there is not strong enough evidence to conclusively determine if work-life balance impacted a specific age group (Capnary *et al.*, 2018; Gilley *et al.*, 2015; Riyanto *et al.*, 2019; Dex and Bond, 2005; Parkes and Langford, 2008). While Parkes and Langford (2008) found that the older generation displayed a relationship with work-life balance compared to younger generations, there are multiple other studies that indicated the opposite (Capnary *et al.*, 2018; Gilley *et al.*, 2015; Riyanto *et al.*, 2019). However, in general, younger employees may have more family commitments (e.g., the need to take care of their young children) than the older-generation employees (Dow-Clarke, 2002; Wiradendi Wolor *et al.*, 2020). Studies have shown that younger generation employees prefer more flexibility in work (Wiradendi Wolor *et al.*, 2020). Thus, this study hypothesizes that work-life balance will be more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations than the older generations.

H5a. Work-life balance positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.

H5b. Employees' generation moderates the effect of work-life balance on employees' engagement in the workplace such that work-life balance is more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations.

Autonomy and Employee Engagement

Studies have demonstrated that work autonomy is a strong predictor of work engagement (Taipale *et al.*, 2011). For instance, Sadler-Smith *et al.* (2003) reported that work autonomy positively impacts employee motivation, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. Research has also shown that employees with a level of seniority reported more autonomy and work engagement (Sadler-Smith *et al.*, 2003; Sheemun *et al.*, 2013). This suggests that autonomy is a factor with older, more experienced employees. Accordingly, this study proposes that autonomy will be more positively related to the work engagement of older generations than younger generations.

H6a. Autonomy positively relates to employees' engagement in the workplace.

H6b. Employees' generation moderates the effect of autonomy on employees' engagement in the workplace such that autonomy is more positively related to the work engagement of older generations.

METHODOLOGY

Sample Data

In order to test the above hypotheses, we created a survey questionnaire using the variable items discussed in the following section. We first collected the survey data using *Amazon Mechanical Turk*. We required three conditions to be met for the survey. Specifically, the Amazon Mechanical Turk workers had to be employed, aged from 18 to 55 years old, with equal sampling among the three generations – Generation Z, Generation Y, and Generation X. We ran the first round of our online survey for a week in the third week of April 2020 and received 220 responses. In the fourth week of August 2020, we ran the survey again and received 350 responses. In addition, we collected 39 surveys from senior students and MBA students in a public university in the New England region. In sum, we collected 609 valid responses. However, we deleted 9 repeated responses and 24 responses with multiple missing values, resulting in 576 responses. From the 576 responses, we excluded the 42 responses with poor response quality. We used the items with reverse codes to identify the poor response quality. Accordingly, our final sample consists of 534 responses.

Measures

Dependent Variable - Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the dependent variable of this study. Schaufeli *et al.* (2006) developed a questionnaire that identified the three dimensions of positive workplace engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Additionally, they developed a questionnaire by identifying nine items in total for the three dimensions. For the purpose of this study, the following three items were selected from the original nine items to measure employee engagement in the workplace: “I am enthusiastic about my job”, “When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work”, and “I feel happy when I am working intensely.” We utilized a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) and used the average value to measure all the variables used in this study.

Moderating Variable - Employee Generation

For the purpose of this study, employees were categorized into three generations based on their age as of April 2020, Generation Z: 18 to 24 years old, Generation Y: 25 to 39 years old, and Generation X: 40 to 55 years old.

Independent Variables

Transformational Leadership

Bass and Avolio (2000) developed a multifactor leadership questionnaire based on the six-factor model that measures transformational and transactional leadership styles and summarizes the six traits. Transformational leadership includes four traits: charisma, inspirational/motivating, intellectually stimulating, and individualized consideration (Bass and Avolio, 2000). The charismatic leadership dimension consists of three items as follows: *“My leader makes everyone around him/her enthusiastic about assignments”*, *“I have complete faith in my leader”*, and *“My leader encourages me to express my ideas and opinions.”* Similarly, the inspirational motivation dimension includes the following three items: *“My leader is an inspiration to us”*, *“My leader inspires loyalty to him/her”*, and *“My leader inspires loyalty to the organization.”* Furthermore, the intellectual stimulation dimension includes three items as follows: *“My leader’s ideas have forced me to rethink some of my own ideas, which I had never questioned before”*, *“My leader enables me to think about old problems in new ways”*, and *“My leader has provided me with new ways of looking at things, which used to be a puzzle for me.”* Finally, the individualized consideration dimension consists of the following three dimensions: *“My leader gives personal attention to members who seem neglected”*, *“My leader finds out what I want and tries to help me get it.”*, and *“I can count on my leader to express his/her appreciation when I do a good job.”*

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership includes two traits: contingent reward and management by exception (Bass and Avolio, 2000). The contingent reward dimension consists of the following three items: *“My leader tells me what to do if I want to be rewarded for my efforts”*, *“There is a close agreement between what I am expected to put into the group effort and what I can get out of it”*, and *“Whenever I feel like it, I can negotiate with my leader about what I can get from what I accomplish.”* Similarly, the management by exception dimension includes three items as follows: *“My leader asks no more of me than what is absolutely essential to get the work done”*, *“It is all right if I take initiatives, but my leader does not encourage me to do so”* and *“My leader only tells me what I have to know to do my job.”*

Corporate Social Responsibility

To assess corporate social responsibility, we used the following dimensions developed by Woo (2013): environment, human rights & labor, product responsibility, society, and economy. The environment-related dimension includes the following three items: *“I think the company I work for tries to invest in protecting the environment”*, *“I think the company I work for tries to minimize pollution when producing products/services”*, and *“I think the company I work for tries to take care of water, energy, and material uses.”* The human rights & labor-related dimension includes three items as follows: *“I think the company I work for tries to clarify health care benefits for employees”*, *“I think the company I work for tries to allow the freedom of labor union and forbid”*, and *“I think the company I work for tries to protect human rights at the*

workplace.” The product responsibility-related dimension includes two items: “*I think the company I work for tries to take care of customer complaints*”, and “*I think the company I work for tries to clearly label/explain products/services to customers.*” The society-related dimension includes the following three items: “*I think the company I work for tries to consider the indirect impacts of marketing*”, “*I think the company I work for tries to avoid corruption in business*”, and “*I think the company I work for tries to invest in developing local community welfare.*” Finally, the economic-related dimension includes two items: “*I think the company I work for tries to provide the company’s financial information to the public*”, and “*I think the company I work for tries to consider the indirect impacts of marketing.*”

Technology

We used the items developed by Nambisan *et al.* (1999) to assess technology. Specifically, we used the following three items to do so: “*I have easy access to new technologies at the workplace*”, “*I am permitted to use new technology*”, and “*I am capable of experimenting with new technology as necessary.*”

Work-life Balance

The following questions drawn from Brett and Stroh’s (2003) study were used to assess work-life balance: “*I feel that my job negatively affects my psychological well-being*”, “*I feel that my job negatively affects my physical health*”, “*I feel tension about balancing all my responsibilities*”, “*I feel that you should change something about my work in order to balance my responsibilities*”, and “*I feel that personal commitments interfere with my job*”. We reverse-coded all these items and averaged them.

Autonomy

The following questions drawn from Hackman and Oldham’s (1980) study were used to assess autonomy: “*I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job*”, “*I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work*”, and “*I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.*”

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Most of our respondents belong to Generation Y (age 25 to 39), coming in at 55.8% of the total respondents. Our second largest group was Generation Z (age 18 to 24), representing 24.9% of the total respondents. Our smallest group Generation X (age 40 to 55), represents 16.3% of total respondents. Additionally, 16 of the participants failed to identify their age. We carried out a Pearson correlation analysis and found that employee engagement was significantly correlated with transformational leadership, transactional leadership, corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, autonomy, and technology ($p < 0.01$). There was no serious multicollinearity present in the regression model because all VIFs were less than 10 (Vittinghoff *et al.*, 2012), and the condition index was less than 30 (Kennedy, 2003).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation Results for All Data

	Variables	Mean	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Engagement	4.890	1.628	534	1						
2	Transformational Leadership	4.761	1.447	534	0.693***	1					
3	Transactional Leadership	4.383	1.083	534	0.447***	0.659***	1				
4	Corporate Social Responsibility	5.049	1.114	534	0.543***	0.636***	0.465***	1			
5	Work Life Balance	4.669	1.606	534	0.327***	0.218***	-0.109**	0.141***	1		
6	Autonomy	5.070	1.507	534	0.564***	0.530***	0.357***	0.395***	0.273***	1	
7	Technology	5.381	1.429	534	0.445***	0.456***	0.394***	0.470***	0.177***	0.436***	1

Note: $N = 534$; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Hypothesis Testing

To examine our hypotheses, we employed ordinary least square (OLS) regression in addition to several robustness tests. In particular, we employed a multiple regression model in which the dependent variable is work engagement, while “transformational leadership, transactional leadership, corporate social responsibility, autonomy, work-life balance, and technology” are independent variables. Similarly, we used employee generation as the moderating variable. Evidence was found to support Hypothesis 1a. Transformational leadership was shown to have a positive relationship with employee engagement. When examining all data, the results showed that transformational leadership was significantly related to employee engagement ($\beta = 0.466$, $p < 0.01$). However, we did not find support for hypothesis 1b since the results were consistent across all generations, X, Y, and Z ($\beta = 0.453$, $p < 0.01$ for generation X; $\beta = 0.479$; $p < 0.01$ for generation Y; and $\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.01$ for generation Z).

Table 2. Regression Model Results

Variable	Regression Model				Bootstrap Regression Model		
	All Data	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
Constant	-0.781*** (0.289)	-0.863 (0.652)	-0.434 (0.392)	-1.225*** (0.600)	-0.863 (0.741)	-0.434 (0.364)	-1.625** (0.600)
Transformational Leadership	0.466*** (0.053)	0.453*** (0.124)	0.479*** (0.071)	0.361*** (0.116)	0.453** (0.164)	0.479*** (0.082)	0.361** (0.116)
Transactional Leadership	0.052 (0.061)	-0.00004 (0.139)	0.115 (0.079)	0.052 (0.135)	-0.00004 (0.142)	0.115 (0.081)	0.052 (0.135)
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.189*** (0.056)	0.151 (0.111)	0.141* (0.077)	0.376*** (0.120)	0.151 (0.130)	0.141* (0.085)	0.376*** (0.120)
Work Life Balance	0.156*** (0.032)	0.382*** (0.087)	0.118*** (0.040)	0.176** (0.077)	0.382*** (0.103)	0.118*** (0.040)	0.176** (0.077)
Autonomy	0.229*** (0.038)	0.135 (0.082)	0.218*** (0.049)	0.312*** (0.093)	0.135 (0.093)	0.218*** (0.074)	0.312*** (0.093)
Technology	0.071* (0.040)	0.074 (0.088)	0.035 (0.054)	0.036 (0.084)	0.074 (0.097)	0.035 (0.066)	0.036 (0.084)
R²	0.570	0.693	0.565	0.591	0.693	0.565	0.591
Adjusted R²	0.565	0.670	0.556	0.572	0.670	0.556	0.572
F (6, 527)	116.512						
F (6, 86)		30.058			30.058		
F (6, 297)			63.077			63.077	
F (6, 132)				30.393			30.393

Note: $p < 0.1$, $**p < 0.05$, $***p < 0.01$; Standard errors in parentheses; 1000 bootstrap samples were used for bootstrap regression model

We did not find any evidence to support Hypothesis 2a and 2b. We did not find any statistical significance for overall data or even when we segmented it by generation. Our findings thus suggest that transactional leadership does have a significant impact on employee engagement.

Evidence was found to support Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 3b. When examining overall data, corporate social responsibility was found to have a positive effect on employees' engagement in the workplace ($\beta = 0.189$, $p < 0.01$). However, when segmenting the data into three different generations, only Generation Z was found to be statistically significant ($\beta = 0.376$, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, our findings suggest that corporate social responsibility is more positively related to the work engagement of younger generations than older generations.

We did not find any evidence to support Hypothesis 4a and Hypothesis 4b. According to our results, there was no significant relationship between technology in the workplace and employee engagement. Hypothesis 4b stated that technology would be more important to younger generations. Contrary to our prediction, our data do not show a significant result for any of the generations considered.

Our findings supported Hypothesis 5a. When examining overall data, work-life balance was found to have a positive effect on employees' engagement in the workplace ($\beta = 0.156$, $p < .01$). When further broken down by generations, there was a strong significance with generation X ($\beta = 0.382$, $p < .001$), generation Y ($\beta = 0.118$, $p < 0.01$), and generation Z ($\beta = 0.118$, $p < 0.05$). The results suggest that work-life balance is equally important across all generations. As such, we did not receive empirical support for Hypothesis 5b.

The evidence supported Hypothesis 6a. When examining all data, employee autonomy was found to positively affect employee engagement in the workplace ($\beta = 0.229$, $p < 0.01$). However, when further broken down by generation, no statistical significance was found with the generation X group ($\beta = 0.135$, n.s.). Both generations Y and Z were found to be statistically significant ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < 0.01$ for generation Y and $\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.01$ for generation Z). Accordingly, we did not receive empirical support for Hypothesis 6b. Contrary to our prediction, our data shows that autonomy is more important to younger generations than older generations.

As can be seen in Table 2, the regression model was bootstrapped in an attempt to see what differences there might be with a wider population. Results were similar across all generations confirming our initial regression analysis.

We carried out several additional robustness checks to further validate our theoretical arguments and empirical results. In particular, we carried out various statistical analyses, including discriminant analysis, logistic regression, and cluster models. Overall, additional analytical techniques showed quantitatively similar results to those obtained by using the OLS regression model. These additional robustness tests validated our theoretical arguments and empirical findings based on OLS regression analysis.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that leadership style influences employee engagement in the workplace. The results show that the transformational leadership style has the biggest impact on employee engagement. However, the findings suggest that the transactional leadership style does not have as much of an impact. Furthermore, the findings indicate that work-life balance and employee autonomy are also critical factors in keeping employees engaged, but not as much as the transformational leadership style. Corporate social responsibility moderately affects employee engagement, more strongly so among younger employees. The results also suggest that the technology has no impact whatsoever on employee engagement.

The results have important managerial implications. Table 3 below summarizes some important implications. Based on the findings of this study, the leadership style of a manager, particularly the transformational leadership style, is effective in increasing employee engagement. This indicates that managers should utilize the transformational leadership style over the transactional one as the latter does not seem to have a significant impact on employee engagement. To maintain employee engagement, managers should focus on additional factors such as autonomy and work-life balance. Thus, employee engagement can also be enhanced by offering work-life balance and creating a more flexible environment for their employees. Additionally, allowing employees to own their work and giving them levels of autonomy improve employee engagement.

Table 3. Executive Recommendation for Employee Work Engagement

Priority	General	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
1	Transformational Leadership	Transformational Leadership	Transformational Leadership	Transformational Leadership
2	Autonomy	Work Life Balance	Autonomy	Autonomy
3	Work Life Balance	Autonomy	Work Life Balance	Corporate Social Responsibility
4	Corporate Social Responsibility	Corporate Social Responsibility	Corporate Social Responsibility	Work Life Balance
5	Technology	Technology	Transactional Leadership	Technology
6	Transactional Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Technology	Transactional Leadership

Even when broken down into different generations, the transformational leadership style has the most significant impact on employee engagement. However, corporate social responsibility has much more of an impact on Generation Z employees than on other age groups. As such, companies with more younger employees should adopt appropriate corporate social responsibility initiatives to enhance employee engagement.

CONCLUSION

This research sheds light on the factors contributing to employee engagement in the workplace. The key takeaway from this study is that the transformational leadership style has the biggest impact on keeping employees engaged. Keeping employees engaged could lead to increased efficiency and profitability for the organization. Furthermore, work-life balance and an autonomous environment are factors that result in highly engaged employees. Incorporating these factors into workplace culture could lead to a company's success. It is intriguing to see how management style affects employee engagement. Future research could be performed to see if management style affects other aspects of employment, such as job satisfaction or employee retention. Our samples were conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic when many employees and students were required to stay home. Now with more employees returning to the office, the dynamic in the workplace is starting to change once again. Perhaps the sample size could be increased to capture a wider swath of the working population. The research only concentrated on the employee age group. Future research can incorporate other factors such as marital status, gender, income, and education. We used linear regression, logistic regression, discriminant model, and cluster model to examine our hypotheses. Future studies could include other statistical methods such as factor analysis and structural equation models.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, S. M. and Zhiqiang, L. (2020), "COVID-19, Mental well-being and work engagement: The psychological resilience of senescent workforce", *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, Vol. 9 No. 4, pp. 356-365, doi:10.20525/ijrbs.v9i4.760.
- Abdelhalim, K. and Eldin, A. G. (2019), "Can CSR help achieve sustainable development? applying a new assessment model to CSR cases from Egypt", *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 39 No. 9/10, pp. 773-795, doi:10.1108/ijssp-06-2019-0120.

- Albrecht, S. L., Bakker, A. B., Gruman, J. A., Macey, W. H. and Saks, A. M. (2015), "Employee engagement, human resource management practices and competitive advantage: An integrated approach", *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*.
- Bass, B. M. and Avolio, B. J. (2000), "Multifactor leadership questionnaire", Redwood City, CA: Mindgarden.
- Batech, D. (2019), "Leadership from millennials to Generation Z transformed", *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 11-14. Retrieved from <http://www.joams.com/uploadfile/2019/0314/20190314021647211.pdf>
- Besieux, T., Baillien, E., Verbeke, A. L. and Euwema, M. C. (2018), "What goes around comes around: The mediation of corporate social responsibility in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement", *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 249-271.
- Bodenhause, C. and Curtis, C. (2016), "Transformational leadership and employee involvement: Perspectives from millennial workforce entrants", *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 371-387.
- Bokhari, R. P. (2019), "Evaluating the link between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and employee engagement: Evidence from selected commercial banks of Bangladesh", *European Journal of Business and Management*, Vol. 11 No. 33, pp. 32-44.
- Brammer, S., Millington, A. and Rayton, B. (2007), "The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organizational commitment", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 18 No. 10, pp. 1701-1719.
- Brett, J. M. and Stroh, L. K. (2003), "Working 61 plus hours a week: Why do managers do it?", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 88 No. 1, pp. 67-78, doi:10.1037/0021-9010.88.1.67.
- Brown, O., Shallcross, D. and Stuebs, M. (2019), "What it takes for accounting firms to recruit Gen Z: Organizational culture and opportunities for career growth are the top factors today's students seek in an employer", *Journal of Accountancy*, Vol. 228 No. 6, pp. 37.
- Capnary, M. C., Rachmawati, R. and Agung, I. (2018), "The influence of flexibility of work to loyalty and employee satisfaction mediated by work life balance to employees with millennial generation background in Indonesia startup companies", *Business: Theory and Practice*, Vol. 19, pp. 217-227, doi:10.3846/btp.2018.22.
- Chaudhary, R. (2017), "Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: Can CSR help in redressing the engagement gap?", *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 323-338, doi:10.1108/SRJ-07-2016-011.
- Dex S. and Bond S. (2005), "Measuring work-life balance and its covariates, Work, Employment and Society", Vol. 19, pp. 627-637.
- Dhopade, P. (2016), "Support Generation Z", *Benefits Canada*, Vol. 40 No. 2, pp. 22-23.
- Dow-Clarke, R. A. (2002), "Work-life balance in an industrial setting: Focus on advocacy", *Aaohn Journal*, Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 67-74.
- Gergen, E., Green, M. and Ceballos, S. (2014), "Generational and gender differences in implicit leadership prototypes", *Business Management Dynamics*, Vol. 3 No. 9, pp. 44-54.
- Ghlichlee, B., and Bayat, F. (2020), "Frontline employees' engagement and business performance: the mediating role of customer-oriented behaviors", *Management Research Review*. Vol. 44 No. 2, pp. 290-317

- Gilley, A., Waddell, K., Hall, A., Jackson, S. A., and Gilley, J. W. (2015), "Manager behavior, generation, and influence on work-life balance: An empirical investigation", *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 3.
- Hackman, J. R. and Oldham, G. R. (1980), "*Work redesign*", Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.
- Hoole, C. and Bonnema, J. (2015), "Work engagement and meaningful work across generational cohorts", *S.A. Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp.1-11, doi:10.4102/sajhrm.v13i1.68.
- Jha, N., Sareen, P. and Potnuru, R. K. G. (2018), "Employee engagement for millennials: considering technology as an enabler", *Development and learning in organizations: An international journal*.
- Johnson, H. A. M. and Spector, P. E. (2007), "Service with a smile: Do emotional intelligence, gender, and autonomy moderate the emotional labor process?", *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 319–333, doi:10.1037/1076-8998.12.4.319.
- Kasasa (2020), "Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z explained", <https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>
- Kennedy, P. (2003), "*A guide to econometrics*", MIT Press.
- Kordbacheh, N., Shultz, K. S. and Olson, D. A. (2014), "Engaging mid and late career employees: The relationship between age and employee engagement, intrinsic motivation, and meaningfulness", *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp, 11-25.
- Lapoint, P. A. and Liprie-Spence, A. (2017), "Employee engagement: Generational differences in the workforce", *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 17 No. 5, pp. 118-128.
- Lee, C. C., Aravamudhan, V., Roback, T., Lim, H. S. and Ruane, S. G. (2021), "Factors impacting work engagement of Gen Z employees: A regression analysis", *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp.147-159.
- Mandell, B. and Pherwani, S. (2013), "Relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style: A gender comparison", *Journal of Business and Psychology* Vol. 17 pp. 387–404, doi:10.1023/A:1022816409059.
- Morris, M. G. and Venkatesh, V. (2000), "Age differences in technology adoption decisions: Implications for a changing work force", *Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 53 No. 2, pp.375-403.
- Nambisan, S., Agarwal, R. and Tanniru, M. (1999), "Organizational mechanisms for enhancing user innovation in information technology", *MIS Quarterly*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 365-395.
- Parkes, L. P. and Langford, P. H. (2008), "Work-life balance or work-life alignment? A test of the importance of work-life balance for employee engagement and intention to stay in organizations", *Journal of Management and Organization*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 267-284.
- Popli, S. and Rizvi, I. A. (2016), "Drivers of employee engagement: The role of leadership style", *Global Business Review*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 965-979, doi:10.1177/0972150916645701.
- Quantum Workplace (2020), "*Employee Engagement Trends Report*", Retrieved from: <https://www.quantumworkplace.com/2020-employee-engagement-trends>
- Quantum Workplace (2021), "*Employee Engagement Trends Report*", Retrieved from: https://marketing.quantumworkplace.com/hubfs/Marketing/Website/Resources/PDFs/2021_Employee_Engagement_Trends_Report.pdf?hsCtaTracking=ea3ab287-381a-4e9b-b06c-f07f7444e412%7C1de4d0f3-fb37-4a44-9380-6b4aa4bf55ab

- Rai, A., Ghosh, P., Chauhan, R., and Singh, R. (2018), "Improving in-role and extra-role performances with rewards and recognition: does engagement mediate the process?" *Management Research Review*. Vol. 41 No. 8, pp. 902-919
- Riyanto S., Ariyanto, E. and Sihombing, L. (2019), "Work life balance and its influence on employee engagement "Y" generation in courier service industry", *International Review of Management and Marketing*, Vol. 9 No. 6, pp. 25-31.
- Sadler-Smith, E., El-Kot, G. and Leat, M. (2003), "Differentiating work autonomy facets in a non-western context", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 24 No. 6, pp. 709-731, doi:10.1002/job.200.
- Sanders, M., Zeng, J., Hellicar, M. and Fagg, K. (2015), "The power of flexibility: A key enabler to boost gender parity and employee engagement", *Chief Executive Women*.
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B. and Salanova, M. (2006), "The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: A cross-national study", *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, Vol. 66 No. 4, pp. 701-716, doi:10.1177/0013164405282471.
- Schullery, N. M. (2013), "Workplace engagement and generational differences in values", *Business Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 76 No. 2, pp. 252.
- Schroth, H. (2019), "Are you ready for Gen Z in the workplace?", *California Management Review*, Vol. 61 No. 3, pp. 5-18, doi:10.1177/0008125619841006.
- SheeMun, Y., Suhaimi, M. N., Abdullah, S. S., Rahman, S. A. and Mat, N. K. N. (2013), "Employee engagement: A study from the private sector in Malaysia", *Human Resource Management Research*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 43-48.
- Taipale, S., Selander, K., Anttila, T. and Nätti, J. (2011), "Work engagement in eight European countries", *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 31 No. 7, pp. 486-504, doi:10.1108/01443331111149905.
- Wolfram, H. J. and Gratton, L. (2014), "Gender role self-concept, categorical gender, and transactional-transformational leadership: Implications for perceived workgroup performance", *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, Vol. 21 No. 4, pp. 338-353, doi:10.1177/1548051813498421.
- Woo, H. (2013), "Do consumers want a "good" apparel brand? The effects of apparel brands' corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices on brand equity moderated by culture", Unpublished master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
- Vittinghoff, E., Glidden, D. V., Shiboski, S. C., and McCulloch, C. E. (2012), "Regression methods in biostatistics: Linear, logistic, survival, and repeated measures models. 2nd ed", Springer.
- Wiradendi Wolor, C., Kurnianti, D., Fatimah Zahra, S. and Martono, S. (2020), "The importance of work-life balance on employee performance millennial generation in Indonesia", *Journal of Critical Reviews*.