

Communication Styles of Millennials: Trends & Relevance for the Industry

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The current study explores trends in communication styles of millennials by investigating a sample of 135 PG students from an institute in Mumbai, India. Communication styles (director, socializer, relater, thinker) are examined vis-à-vis various demographics. The findings have scope for being empirically tested and validated by future researchers. Results suggest that students have a disposition for being socializers irrespective of their gender or sector. Directors and thinkers draw maximum salary package offers. Results highlight the relevance of self-awareness for capitalizing on ones' communication styles and ensuring a good person-job fit, consequently benefiting the organizations. Findings of this study have implications for students and organizations.

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Introduction

Organizations today have a dynamic mix of generations as a part of their workforce, with millennials being the largest constituent. A report by Pew Research Center in the year 2015 (Fry, 2015) suggests that in the US itself, there is a 53.5 million strong millennial workforce which continues to grow. In India, it is estimated that by the year 2020, the median individual will be 29 years of age (Shivakumar, 2013). Thus, with millennials dominating the workforce, organizations have the scope of capitalizing on the energy and enthusiasm of the young talent pool.

Millennials, with their spirit, efficiency and affinity for technology bring with them unique insights and skills to the table that managers and organizations can gain from. They are efficient, creative, and most importantly the replacement of the ageing workforce. However, despite these advantages, there are certain challenges that organizations face with the millennials. Communication skill is one such challenge. A survey by Forbes (Savitz, 2012) of Fortune 500 companies suggests that

80% of the surveyed organizations find communication as the most challenging issue at the workplace. Effective communication is the lifeline and at the core of a successful organization (Wyatt, 2006). In fact communication has been identified as one of the key soft skills in today's workplace (Robles, 2012). Several scholars have found that communication influences employees' attitudes and behavior (Thomas, 2009). Communication has been established to be a leading indicator of financial performance (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). This ultimately results in job satisfaction, commitment and lower turnover intentions (Dasgupta, et al., 2013). Studies on communication within organizations have also focused on group processes (McGrath, 1984), and leader behavior (Penley & Hawkins, 1985). Eventually effective communication would lead to development of a culture that is thriving with positivity (Gudykunst, et al., 1996). In fact research indicates that millennials prefer a culture that fosters communication at the workplace (Gursoy, et al., 2008). Importance of communication as a process can be understood from the research evidence that, between 50 and 90 per cent of a manager's time may be spent communicating (Mintzberg, 1973). Communication is the medium to get the work done, and in this process individuals use different style of communication.

Research indicates that millennials prefer a culture that fosters communication at the workplace.

Communication styles are representative of the individuals and in the organizational context understanding the same is equated with learning the organizational culture (Ibrahim & Ismail, 2007). Being aware of one's style of communication not only helps individuals in understanding themselves but also what kind of job and organization would they be suited for (Sekiguchi, 2004). Once an individual is able to identify the right match between the communication style and his/her job aspirations, it establishes a perfect person-job fit. When he/she has a natural flair for his/her job profile, it not only becomes easier but enjoyable as well. This can be established from the fact that self-concept related to role constitutes role identity (Sekiguchi, 2004). Thus, if the occupational role is relatively salient in self-concept, commitment to effective role performance should be strong. In this study our purpose is to understand the trends in communication styles of the millennials vis-à-vis varied demographics. We focus on the classification given by Alessandra & O'Connor (1998) of identifying communication styles of individuals as director, socializer, relater or thinker.

Literature Review

Communication style is defined as a cognitive process that entails micro behavior in order to make a macro level judgment, wherein the attempt is to get literal meaning across one another (Norton, 1983). It establishes how an individual perceives oneself while interacting with others. Communication style consists of verbal and non-verbal mes-

sages. Verbal messages include words along with the tone, speech rate, volume and tonality of the voice whereas non-verbal cues range from body language, gestures, posture, eye contact and movements (Raynes, 2001). Together they form an identifiable pattern of verbal and non-verbal behaviors which are distinguishable from the behavioral patterns of different communication styles.

Researchers over the last few decades have classified communication style through multiple approaches, but Norton's (1983) categorization is one of the most widely accepted one. He identified distinctive styles which are reflected in presumed behavioral, affective and cognitive differences. According to him there are ten styles of communication that are used by individuals, namely, dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression-leaving, relaxed, attentive, open, friendly and precise. Another well researched and documented method of classification of communication style is by McCallister (1992). According to her there are broadly three distinct styles of communication; socratic, noble and reflective. Further, significant classification was given by Heffner (1997), constituting of three varying communication styles. These styles were defined as assertive, passive and aggressive.

It is well established that each individual has his/her own unique style of communication that represents him/her (Ibrahim & Ismail, 2007). He/she may use or blend different styles of communication depending on the context and the environment. Within an organization, an

individual's style of communication is based on rules, values and norms of the culture of the organization (Gudykunst, et al, 1997).

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Classification of communication style that has intrigued us in particular, is given by Alessandra and O'Connor (1998). It emphasizes that understanding one's own style of communication involves comprehending and adjusting our own behavior in order to make others feel more comfortable. It accentuates the fact that one's communication is only as good and effective as his/her understanding of the person he/she is communicating with. If an individual can comprehend the needs of another person on the basis of verbal and non-verbal cues, he/she can accordingly adapt his/her behavior, subsequently leading to beneficial outcomes. However, it is important that an individual is first aware of one's own communication style. It must be noted, that this rule does not propagate manipulation or fake behavior, but proposes to make efforts in actual learning and adaptation for maximum benefits personally and professionally. One does not have to alter basic nature of oneself or one's ideas, but just how they are presented to others. This can prove to be highly effective in business organizations, as success is dependent on the web of relationships one creates and nurtures over a period of time. Although it is natural to be attracted to people who complement our communication style and

behavior, this rule can actually help individuals to adjust their style in such a way that it makes people of different styles feel comfortable with each other.

At a personal level, self-awareness with respect to communication style is expected to enhance and enrich job performance, career prospects, and productivity of the individual. Alessandra and O'Connor (1998) classified communication styles into four categories. These are directors, socializers, relaters and thinkers. *Directors* are natural leaders who are challenge oriented, independent, risk-takers, and decisive. They have a high need for achievement which makes them best suited for jobs that require quick turnarounds and executions like investment bankers and project managers. However, they end up being frustrated if others are unable to keep up to their demanding levels.

Socializers are expressive, fun-loving, outgoing and optimistic individuals who love to be around people and at the center of action. They have a high need for companionship and recognition from other people, which makes them people oriented in decision making. Their energy and fast paced style is best suited for sales and public relations jobs. However, they can be erratic and be easily boring. *Relaters* are calm, friendly, low key and easy going individuals who seldom show emotional peaks. They crave stability and peace, as a result of which they have a strong need to belong. They do well in roles of teachers, counselors and customer service, as these positions require them to have the ability to connect with

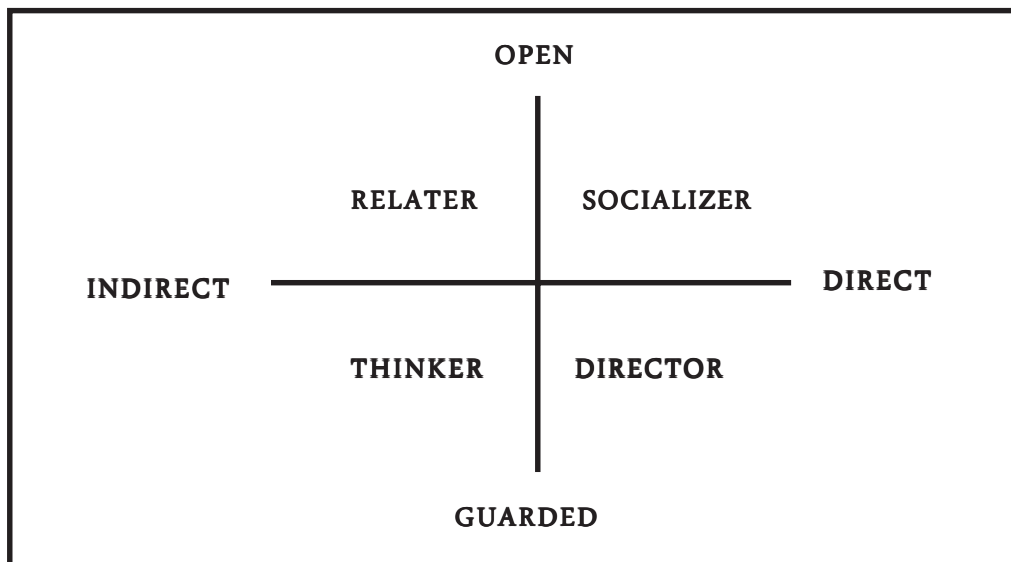
other people and be good listeners. However, they are unassertive, detest conflict, and can be reluctant towards change. *Thinkers* are serious, analytical, intellectual, meticulous, and disciplined individuals who love logic, details and long-term goals. They crave approval for their precision and thoroughness. Their follow through is excellent, thus, are likely to make excellent engineers and architects. They are not very expressive and like to be in control of their emotions and environment, however in their desire for perfection they can be over-analytical, demanding, and compulsive too.

Although researchers have established and validated various communication styles in the past, this particular classification is distinct and unique in terms of its categorization, comprehension and implementation. Firstly, it focuses on understanding the communication style of self in a holistic manner. A better sense of self is expected to not only lead to higher productivity in organizations, but also develop a strong sense of camaraderie and rapport with others, eventually creating a healthy culture within the organizations. Secondly, once an individual learns how to identify various communication styles of self and others; and how to adjust to them, one can appreciate their goals, fears and motivation of processing information and interaction within the organization. This is bound to ensure more efficient dyads and teams, leading to a positive dynamic environment. Thirdly, this classification also presents an opportunity to be more appreciative and tolerant towards others.

Alessandra and O'Connor (1998) also propose an intricate grid which helps us to label and analyze whether the communication style is direct or indirect; and open or guarded. This two by two matrix results in various combinations resulting in formulation of the four styles of communication as discussed above. As per the grid, direct communication style involves being ex-

pressive, assertive, and bold. On the contrary, indirect style is attributed to being easy going, diplomatic, and defensive. The other dimension highlight is open vis-à-vis guarded. Open individuals are people oriented, expressive and good listeners. In contrast, guarded people are formal, detail oriented and disciplined, with high priority given to rules and procedures. Fig. 1 displays the grid.

Fig. 1 Grid



Source: Alessandra & O'Connor (1998): 63

Person - Job Fit

Person-job fit indicates the congruence between the abilities of an individual and attributes of a particular job (Edwards, 1993). In fact it is the traditional foundation for employee selection via means of job analysis, in order to assess the demands of the job in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform the duties and tasks (Sekiguchi, 2004). Abilities consist of experiences, skills,

education and attitudes. An intricate aspect of establishing this fit is the identification of communication style of an individual. A good fit ensures job satisfaction, low stress, motivation, performance and retention (Sekiguchi, 2004).

Understanding one's style of communication helps in attaining clarity on the kind of job profile an individual is best suitable for and thus, enhances person-job fit. One's communication style may

make one more suitable than another depending on the characteristics of the job at the designated level in the organization.

Person - Organization Fit

Similarity in the fundamental characteristics of people and the organizations they aspire to work for is important (Sekiguchi, 2004). Person-organization fit is the match of an individual with the organization's mission, goals, and values. It has been established to be a key ingredient in retaining a committed and productive workforce (Kristof, 1996). It is operationalized as the similarity between characteristics of an individual's personality and the organization's personality (Bowen, Ledford & Natthan, 1991). Studies suggest that person – organization fit impacts levels of commitment (O'Reilly et al., 1991), job satisfaction, performance and intent to turnover (Lauver & Brown, 2001).

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Knowledge and awareness of communication style of a potential employee by both, the individual at the application stage and the organization at the selection stage, is critical. When the communication style of the potential employee is in sync with the vibe of the organization, it results in a good person-organization fit. For instance, an organization that

is highly creative and entrepreneurial in nature, would seek and thrive on the energy of employees who are social, interactive and outgoing. However, if these skills are absent in the individual, it would be a mismatch and thus, unproductive for the employee and the organization. Such individuals are likely to struggle in the organization. In turn, the organization would probably have a tough time allocating them a profile suited to their communication style and behavior.

One's communication style is associated with being a part of self-identity. If that style is relatively similar to the expectations of the job and the organization, it will naturally result in better output. This consequently would lead to higher levels of performance (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2013) and organizational effectiveness (Koys, 2001). In fact, communication effectiveness has a positive relationship with organizational success (Sinickas, 2001). Clearly, for an individual, to make a mark in the industry, his/her style of communication is a critical component for competitive edge.

Millennials

A generation is described as a group of people that have age, significant life events and critical development stages in common (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Millennials or Gen Y is the generation born between the years 1981 and 2000 (Gursoy, et al., 2008). Practical, result oriented, opinionated and impatient, are the characteristics often associated with them. A hyper-connected generation globally, they have a natural affinity for technology that equips

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them with unique skills and insights that can prove to be beneficial for organizations (Barsh, et al., 2016). They thrive on learning by doing, making experiential learning an integral part of their education system and the workplace. Often described as collaborators and technologically sophisticated, millennials are characterized as being instant communicators. With the upsurge of the social media, millennials are always connected to the world. Communication, being the key to getting work done, is integral to personal and business growth. According to a recent report by McKinsey Quarterly (Barsh, et al., 2016), for business success it is imperative that employees today not only manage their subordinates but also their bosses (upwardly) and peers (horizontally). They need to engage effectively with their peers across functional and business units. However, it is ironic that millennials are reported to be deficit in communication skills despite being used to instant messaging, gaming and constant interactivity. Milliron (2008) argues that students pay relatively low importance to development of communication skills and the ability to work effectively with others. As mentioned before, employers are also wary of the deficit in communication skills in graduates (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). Hence, the key objective of this study is to understand and observe the trends in communication styles of millennials (PG students). The comprehension of communication styles is done via the classifi-

cation given by Alessandra and O'Connor (1998). Subsequently we suggest implications for individuals, industry and society at large. Our research objective is to explore the trends in communication styles of post graduate business students in terms of program, gender, job sector, day of placements, packages offered and work experience.

Sample & Procedure

Final year post graduate students at ABC Institute, Mumbai constituted the sample for this study. ABC, established over five decades ago, is a premier institute that specifically caters only to engineers for the management (PG) courses. It is a one year study, conducted only on final year PG students at the institute. A total of 170 respondents, selected through simple random sampling, participated, via answering an online based questionnaire. The response rate was 79.4%, resulting in a total of 135 usable responses. The sample comprised 73% males and 27% females. The average age of the respondents was 25 years. The average work experience of respondents was around 20 months.

Measures

To determine the communication style of the students, the questionnaire established by Alessandra and O'Connor (1998) was used. It consisted of 18 pairs of statements. Scoring is done as a relative comparison between the two given statements such that the sum of the scores of the two statements is 3. Sample item includes, 1(a) I usually react slowly and deliberately (b) I usually react quickly and spontaneously.

Results

It is observed that amongst our sample of students, 31.1% are directors, 43% socializers, 10.4% relaters and 15.6% think-

ers. Descriptive statistics of our data give us some compelling insights into the trends of various demographics vis-à-vis communication styles of the students. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Trends in Communication Styles Across Demographics

	TOTAL	DIRE- CTOR	%Share	SOCIA- LIZER	%Share	RELA- TER	%Share	THIN- KER	%Share
	135	42	31.1	58	43.0	14	10.4	21	15.6
Program									
CAT	91	27	29.7	42	46.2	10	11.0	12	13.2
GATE	44	15	34.1	16	36.4	4	9.1	9	20.5
Gender									
Male	98	28	28.6	39	39.8	12	12.2	19	19.4
Female	37	14	37.8	19	51.4	2	5.4	2	5.4
Placement Day									
PPO	31	13	41.9	14	45.2	1	3.2	3	9.7
Day-1	15	6	40.0	6	40.0	1	6.7	2	13.3
Day-0	28	8	28.6	15	53.6	3	10.7	2	7.1
Day1	21	4	19.0	8	38.1	4	19.0	5	23.8
Day2	19	7	36.8	9	47.4	0	0.0	3	15.8
After Slots	21	4	19.0	6	28.6	5	23.8	6	28.6
Profile									
Consulting	32	7	21.9	16	50.0	6	18.8	3	9.4
Finance	11	4	36.4	3	27.3	1	9.1	3	27.3
IT	20	2	10.0	9	45.0	2	10.0	7	35.0
Operations	17	6	35.3	6	35.3	3	17.6	2	11.8
Sales	8	2	25.0	3	37.5	0	0.0	3	37.5
Supply Chain	47	21	44.7	21	44.7	2	4.3	3	6.4
Package(Rs.Millian/annum)									
<1	8	2	25.0	3	37.5	2	25.0	1	12.5
1-1.5	72	19	26.4	29	40.3	9	12.5	15	20.8
1.5-2	27	11	40.7	14	51.9	0	0.0	2	7.4
2-2.5	23	7	30.4	12	52.2	3	13.0	1	4.3
>2.5	5	3	60.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0
Work Experince									
Fresher	40	14	35.0	14	35.0	6	15.0	6	15.0
0-1 year	18	8	44.4	8	44.4	0	0.0	2	11.1
1-2 year	21	4	19.0	11	52.4	2	9.5	4	19.0
2-3 year	37	11	29.7	17	45.9	3	8.1	6	16.2
3-4 year	15	4	26.7	5	33.3	3	20.0	3	20.0
4 year plus	4	1	25.0	3	75.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Note: The highest percentages are highlighted.

Program: In this institute, the intake of students is through two national level examinations, Common Admission Test (CAT) and Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE). Results show that students who come in through CAT, constitute highest of socializer (46.2%) profile followed by director (29.7%), thinker (13.2) and relater (11%) profiles. Students who have come in through GATE, have socializer (36.4%), director (34.1%), thinker (20.5%) and relater (9.1%) profiles respectively.

Gender: In terms of gender, males prefer the socializer style of communication (39.8%), followed by the director (28.6%), thinker (19.4%) and relater (12.2%) styles. Females also majorly opt for socializer style (51.4%), followed by director (37.8%), relater (5.4%) and thinker (5.4%).

Sectors: This institute majorly attracts 6 sectors for its placements, namely; consulting, supply chain, operations, finance, IT and sales. It is evident that for students who received offers from consulting firms were predominantly of socializer (50%) profile. Supply chain and operations profiles have more of socializers (44.7% and 35.3%) and directors (44.7% and 35.3%). In finance sector, we observe that directors (36.4%) take the lead while in the IT sector socializers have an edge (45%). Finally, sales sector is dominated by socializers (37.5%) and thinkers (37.5%).

Day of Placements: Day of placements for students comprises four days viz. *day -1, day 0, day 1 and day 2.*

Some students receive job offers during summer internships and are classified under *PPO* (pre-placement offer) students. Students who still donot manage to get placed, are given a chance in the after slots which are days after *day 2* of placements. When we investigate the days on which students' placements take place, it is revealed that those who received *PPOs* and placements on *day -1* primarily consist of socializers (45.2% & 40%) and directors (41.9% & 40%). In contrast, placement of a major share of thinkers (23.8%) and relaters (35.7%) occurs in the after slots phase of placements.

Packages Offered: Observing the overall trend for only one year, it is revealed that directors (60%) and thinkers (40%) receive the highest pay packages (above 2.5 million rupees). It is seen that in case of directors, highest package is that of more than 2.5 million rupees, offered by supply chain, IT and operations sectors respectively. For socializers, the highest package offered was 2 - 2.5 million rupees and that too by all sectors except sales. Relaters are offered a maximum of 2 - 2.5 million rupees by consulting and supply chain sectors. Finally, thinkers receive highest package offers, that of above 2.5 million rupees by IT and operations sectors.

Work Experience: We have observed and classified work experience as freshers, 0 – 1 year, 1-2 years, 2-3 years, 3-4 years, and 4 years and beyond. Results reveal an interesting trend in the socializers' profile. It is apparent that for freshers who have no work experience, socializers (35%) form a considerable

chunk of the profile. However, students with work-experience of 2 years have a considerably high socializer style (52.4%). In fact, students who have more than 4 years of work-ex, make socializer their most preferred style of communication (75%). The reasons for an increase in percentage of socializers with an increase in the number of years of students' work-experience are worth exploring.

Discussion

In our sample, we observe that CAT students have a higher share in the socializer communication style as compared to GATE students. However, GATE students have higher number of thinkers. Though this is an institute that only accepts engineering students, there appears to be a stark difference in the communication styles of students selected through these two examinations. This is likely due to the fact that GATE examinations are strictly analytical and technical in nature, hence, excelled by students who have a flair for such traits and qualities, thus, thinkers whereas CAT examinations involves analytics, data interpretation, and a comprehensive test of the English language. Language requires expression and creativity, thus, naturally leaning towards a more socializer approach at the outset. When we delve deeper, it seems that it

It seems that it is not the examination that is causing the difference, but the preparation, orientation, and nurturing over the years.

is not the examination that is causing the difference, but the preparation, orientation, and nurturing over the years. In India, children are primarily encouraged to be engineers and managers. Though this trend is changing, still many parents desire that their children pursue engineering and business management. It is their belief that this will ultimately enable the children to be successful adults. Primarily for engineering, the exam structure is such that one needs to be technical, analytical, methodological and logical in approach. Though this holds true for CAT students as well, the larger picture here is that students since childhood are technically oriented or become so with time. In this process, orientation towards people in skills of listening, understanding and relating is compromised. Hence, institutes need to determine interventions that can lead to development of students especially coming in through GATE entrance examinations, in being more social, and expressive in their way of communicating with others. It is imperative that educational institutes take initiatives to develop effective communication skills in students for the benefit of the individuals and organizations. This is further supported by the recent McKinsey Quarterly report (Barsh et al., 2016) which highlights the significance of communication and managing ones' peers, subordinates and supervisors by interacting horizontally and vertically. It has a direct impact on the performance and career growth at the individual level and business profits at the organization level. Parents, relatives and peers have a collective responsibility in understanding that being extremely academic and technical alone is

likely to take a toll on ones' social and interactive skills.

Gender results reveal that men and women are inclined towards being socializers. However, what is of concern is that both men and women are least interested in adopting the relater style of communication. Relaters are friendly, low key, easy going individuals who operate at a steady pace. They crave stability, are cooperative team players, good listeners and collaborators. While business students are generally encouraged to be competitive, goal oriented and outgoing, it is equally important for individuals to be good listeners and team players. The skill and art of collaborating and caring about others is integral to people management, which eventually is responsible for promotions and rising in the organization. One might be a great achiever but without the support of peers, juniors, seniors and teams he/she can't advance in any organization. Hence, the critical role of being a relater is something that individuals and educational institutes need to focus on. For the organizations, it will be resourceful as well, because an organization cannot function only with directors and socializers. Organizations are formed by smaller groups that require collaboration and team work, which is the forte of relaters.

Examining the sectors, we observe that consulting is majorly for socializers. Consulting is a people oriented profile that requires one to be expressive, outgoing and fast paced. Thus, the results are in line with our expectations. In the supply chain and operations

sectors, there is the requirement for people handling skills, ability to take risk, be spontaneous and expressive. Both directors and socializers are capable of doing so. No wonder, they gain maximum offers from these two sectors. Next, the outcomes highlight that for finance profile directors are most lucrative profiles. They have a high priority for getting things done, are task oriented, disciplined and deadline oriented. Thus, results are in sync with the expectations of the finance sector. For sales, socializers are high in demand and it is logically and rightly so, because of their characteristic style of being, energetic, talkative and outgoing, which meets the needs of the sales sector.

The outcomes highlight that for finance profile directors are most lucrative profiles.

Sector results imply that for students it is critical to be self-aware about ones' communication style. Once they understand themselves, the next step is to identify what kind of job sector they would like to work in and whether functioning there is in sync with their communication style or not. If yes, it is a good match. If no, then they need to work on themselves, adapt and change their communication style or chose a different sector. As far as educational institutes are concerned, it is critical that they aid students identify their style of communication and help them shortlist and select roles that suit them the most and are in congruence with their style of communication.

Analysis of the data pertaining to the day of placements of the students shows that socializers, directors and thinkers end up receiving the most number of lucrative offers. However, relaters are placed in the after slots of placements, which happens towards the end of the entire placement process. Relaters are methodical, realistic, tolerant, peace loving and easy going individuals who have the ability to connect with other people. Organizations need to be more educated on the qualities of a relater because in the long run it is likely that they are the ones that will actually sustain and grow in organizations. So employers need to be more indulgent in hiring relaters, as relaters crave stability which can be used by organizations to combat attrition.

Directors and thinkers get the maximum share of highest packages. Thus, it is important for students to be sure of their style of communication and the job role they are getting into, so that they can cope with the pressure and perform at their workplace.

The trend in the prior work experience and communication styles highlights that students who have already worked in the industry, with time, increasingly tend to have the socializer style of communication, irrespective of their previous communication style. They perceive it to be relevant in sustaining themselves at the workplace. In contrast, relater and thinker profiles for students cease to be relevant over a period of time. This is something that requires further investigation in order to delve deeper and gain perspective as to how and why this happens.

As mentioned above, though for some individuals, their natural style is that of relater or a thinker, with time, they are modifying it to fit into the crowd and not lag behind. Is this transition by choice or the need of the hour to survive in organizations? Could this be the reason for increased amount of discontentment, dissatisfaction, stress and burnout in millennials at the workplace? Is it likely to result in job hopping and inconsistency at work? Can it lead to incompatibility while working with bosses and in teams? Could this be the probable reason for restless and instant gratification approach at work by youngsters at the workplace? These are some questions which future researchers can explore.

Managerial Implications

There is a dearth of studies that have explored communication styles and its significance in understanding self. No study utilizes the potential of the Alessandra & O'Connor (1998) classification to determine the trends in communication styles and explore its usage for the benefit of individuals and organizations. Hence, this study adds to the literature by means of highlighting the significance of communication styles of millennials and its relevance for students, organizations and society at large. Future researchers can explore and validate the match between communication style and job profile of individuals, and eventually study its impact on subordinate and organizational outcomes. Researchers can identify different job roles, their demands and outcomes; and how mapping them on individuals

through their communication styles, can result in establishing beneficial job-person and job-organization fit. There is a great deal of scope for researchers to explore the usage of this classification in understanding self and others, subsequently its impact on various organizational aspects such as job profiling, selection, allocation of leaders and team building. This in turn, will benefit organizations as well.

Further, going to the next level, researchers can examine the match between leader-member communication styles and its impact on subordinate outcomes. Previously researchers have studied the relevance of leader's style of communication (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007) and communicator competence (Madlock, 2008). Thus, probing deeper within the dynamics of dyads' communication styles is worth investigating. This can also be extended to the group level where communication styles can be mapped keeping in mind group personality and team effectiveness (Halfhill et al., 2005).

As far as the practitioners are concerned, this study is useful for them in understanding the relevance of determining the unique style of communication of individuals. This awareness and knowledge is likely to be critical for organizations during placement sessions with colleges, selection of employees, delegation of leaders and teams. An appropriate match would eventually lead to maximum job satisfaction for the individuals and productivity for the organizations.

Limitations & Opportunities for Future Research

For researchers and academicians, assessing the communication styles of millennials seems to be an intriguing concept which has the potential to be established through empirical testing and validation. In order to ensure cross-validity, the study may be conducted in different contexts to signify any variations as we have only looked at management students with engineering background. This was a one year study, thus limited in its scope. Also, we were restrained by our sample size. Our responses conformed to single-source data. We limited our observation to the communication styles of students. In future, its relation and impacts on individuals in terms of job profiling and identifying careers in particular, is an area which researchers can explore in detail. Further, the communication styles of employees and its relation to LMX, team formation, job performance, career growth and development of culture in the organizations are worth investigating.

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