

# STRATEGIC HRM PERSPECTIVES: STUDY OF INDIAN GEN Y MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

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**Abstract** *This research is based on a pilot study conducted on a limited population of Gen Y employees in the executive cadre having work experience of minimum 1 year to an upper limit of 8 years, within the age group of 19-29 years. The study shows that contrary to the general belief of employees getting motivated on aspects of enhanced pay, stable career and satisfactory work environment; Gen Y employees expect fairness in allocation of pay and benefits based on capability and merit, give higher importance to challenging work and strive to maintain cordial relationships with their peers and supervisors, collaborating for enhanced learning and career growth opportunities. This study emphasizes that Gen Y management cadre employees across industry categories, irrespective of gender tend to give a higher level of importance to aspects of career growth, meaningful work, work-life balance and cordial relationships which challenges preset HR notions of motivation, performance evaluation and pay allocation demonstrating that this generation is highly different from its previous counterparts in their openness, inquisitiveness and ability to foster collaboration for growth.*

**Keywords:** *Gen Y, HRM, India, Organisation, Strategic, Supervisor*

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## INTRODUCTION

Business organisations globally are witnessing a rapid shift in employee demographics with strong aspects of multi-generational workforce dominating work values and characteristics through their specific attitudes, perceptions and learning processes (Kyles, 2006). The workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century termed as the 'Multi-Generational' workforce is characterised with a mix of all generations from Baby Boomers, to Generation X, with recent and ongoing inclusion of Generation Y since the last few years. Research in the last two decades has steadily contributed to understanding the differences in generational cohorts and impact of these different outlook and approaches on organisational practices thus trying to understand the context of person-organisation fit (Kupperschmidt, 2000; McGuire, Todnem & Hutchings, 2007; Mackey, Gardener & Forsyth, 2008). Researchers working on the multi-generational context understand that managing the diverse expectations and expressions of this workforce is both challenging and daunting, given their varied value systems and social upbringing resulting at times in organisational conflicts; challenging both management styles and practices related to managing generational differences across organisations (McGuire *et al.*, 2007). Various research studies in the context of understanding specific characteristics of this young working population have identified this cohort as being impatient, non-

confirmative, thriving on connectivity, speed, flexibility and a desire to challenge and excel in their respective domains through collaboration and team work (Deloitte and IABC Report, 2008, Haworth Report, 2010). Preliminary studies linking GEN Y and HRM practices have generally been conducted in the western countries focusing on the aspects of attracting, engaging and retaining this talented but impatient workforce. However there seems to be limited research in relation to growing economies, like India wherein work values are strongly influenced by national cultural values which may have an impact on employee perceptions and expectations from the workplace.

Indian GenY has been characterized as tech-savvy, entrepreneurial, ambitious, optimistic and ready to walk the extra mile for achieving their dreams and goals (Haworth, iDEA and Johnson Controls Report, 2010). There is dearth of research linking organisational HR practices to the aspect of generational differences in perception and its related impact on employee outcomes of job satisfaction and turnover intention in the context of India.

The purpose of this research thus was to focus on Indian GenY management cadre employees born between 1983-1993, in the age group of 19-29 years with a work experience of at least 1 year across any organisation or sector. The aim was to analyze their perceptions towards organisational HR practices and their expectations from the workplace through a

pilot study conducted on a limited Gen Y population of management professionals. This study is the preliminary phase and part of a larger research study focused on understanding the linkage between the aspects of Perceived Organisational Support (POS), Gen Y work values, organisational HR practices and their impact on employee outcomes of satisfaction and turnover. The study aims to help practitioners understand the changing expectations of a young workforce that is highly networked and knowledgeable, with a higher IQ, demanding challenging work; equating work outcomes to aspects of intellectually stimulating growth, work-life balance and fairness in evaluation of performance standards.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Generation Y

Gen Y is loosely defined as a group born between 1982-2000 (hence the term Millennial Generation) who would range in the age groups of 15-29 years, identified herein as the young generation. Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau, estimate that Generation Y comprises around 25.7% of the world total population given the age category of 15-29 years.<sup>1</sup> Analysts define this generation as having an upbringing in a world marked by neoliberal approach towards politics and economics marked by increased usage of communications, media and digital technologies (Rai, 2012). This generation is also at times referred to as the 'Wired Generation' that needs to be connected at all times and feels most comfortable in digital environments. For the purpose of this research study, Generation Y shall be considered between the age group of 20-29 years, which comprises almost 17% of the world population as on 2012 (mid-year population estimation by U.S. Census Bureau, International Database)<sup>2</sup>.

Global survey by IABC and Deloitte Consulting towards understanding GenY imperatives, discusses how important it is for GenY employees to feel connected, updated and involved in an organisation. The paper details viewpoints of these employees that highlight aspects of frequent, short and updated communications, alongside factors like honesty with clarity in communication. Gen Y is dynamic and eager to collaborate; they respect leaders who are honest, forthright and open, hence their relationship to an organisation is not just based on their perception of the organisation but also on the leader they are associated with. This emotionally charged enthusiastic young workforce seeks to contribute to their organisations through a plethora of ideas, suggestions and informed opinions; which at times challenge the traditional mindset of organisational management (Rai, 2012).

CRISIL 2010 Report on Skilling India highlights the

<sup>1</sup> Refer Annexure (Table 1.1)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/worldpop.php>

tremendous opportunity and challenges for Indian business organisations. The country with a population of 1.2 billion (as on 2010) has 17.6% share in the world population pie making it the second largest country after China in terms of demography. This is slated to change by 2030, with India reaching 1.5 billion population crossing China and becoming the largest populated country in the world. While this may seem challenging, there is also an opportunity; India's working population (15-59 years) will swell from 749 million to 924 million by year 2030, making it the most desired location of talent acquisition (employee availability) heightening business growth and progress in the country. Interestingly as on 2010, half of India's working population that is around 362 million, is below the age of 25 and this number shall only increase with the population figures making it one of the youngest countries of the world (Rai, 2011). Research report by Haworth, iDEA and Johnson Control on Gen Y and Workplace, 2010 gives a different picture relating to Indian youngsters (Gen Y employees) through their global survey. Indian Gen Y workforce is considered the most demanding population with high expectations from the work environment in terms of better on-site support facilities and norms for work-life balance. They believe in not only socially collaborating but also engaging socially as an extension of their workplace to enhance learning opportunities and maintain a balance between their personal and professional lives. This generation of Indian youngsters is tech-savvy, entrepreneurial, ambitious, optimistic and ready to walk the extra mile for achieving their dreams and goals. They are strongly influenced by social opinions and base their judgments on peer factors much like their counterparts across the globe. They are a generation tuned to opportunities and consumerism, which make them more open for change, demanding with higher levels of expectations, impacting their perception towards organisations and their engagement processes (Rai, 2012).

### Strategic HRM and Its Linkage to Organisational HR Practices

"Strategic HRM is an approach to making decisions on the intentions and plans of the organisation in the shape of the policies, programmes and practices concerning the employment relationship, resourcing, learning and development, performance management, reward, and employee relations. The concept of strategic HRM is derived from the concepts of HRM and strategy. It takes the HRM model with its focus on strategy, integration and coherence and adds to that the key notions of strategy, namely, strategic intent, resource-based strategy, competitive advantage, strategic capability and strategic fit" (Armstrong, 2006, p13). Strategic HRM is essentially an integrated process that aims to achieve 'strategic fit'. A strategic HRM approach

produces HR strategies that are integrated vertically with the business strategy and are ideally an integral part of that strategy, contributing to the business planning process as it happens.

According to Hendry and Pettigrew (1986), strategic HRM has four meanings:

1. Efficient use of planning;
2. A coherent approach to the design and management of personnel systems based on an employment policy and manpower strategy and often underpinned by a 'philosophy';
3. Matching HRM activities and policies to some explicit business strategy;
4. Viewing people of the organisation as a 'strategic resource' for the achievement of 'competitive advantage'.

It is understood that effective HR practices help acquire, develop and motivate employee behaviour thus affecting firm performance (Jackson *et al.*, 1987; Schuler & MacMillan, 1984). Research has looked at impact of HRM practices on organisational performance (Guest *et al.*, 2003; Huselid, 1995) and to an extent on employee attitudes and work behaviours (Guest, 1997). Strategic value of HR in creating and developing organisational culture and social relations cannot be replicated thus creating competitive advantage for organisations (Becker & Gerhart, 1996). Strategic HRM thus is understood to be an approach that the management desires to adopt aligning their business strategies to the policies and processes of managing their human resources creating competitive advantage for the organisation in future.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample Population

This study was conducted through an online web-based questionnaire link designed on Google docs and a link to the survey forwarded across to targeted respondents- alumni network of a reputed management institution in the city of Pune. The study targeted the alumni network of two batches of the Institution, namely alumni related to the batches of 2008-10 and 2009-11, a population of almost 240 students. It was clarified in the web survey that respondents need to fill their responses in the context of their current job and organisation. Mailers with link to the survey form were forwarded to all the 240 contact email ids, thereafter follow-up emails were sent to all the concerned email ids after 1 month time frame. This was to ensure maximum responses from the targeted alumni population.

The response rate for the pilot study was around 49% with 117 fully filled valid responses availed after removal of few half-filled responses.

In terms of gender composition, of the 117 respondents, 104 respondents were male and 13 respondents were female.

In terms of age composition, 89 respondents belonged to the age category of 27-30 years while 28 respondents belonged to the age category of 23-26 years. The reason for this composition may be attributed to the fact that the study was conducted with alumni of a management institution, wherein the average age at entry level is around 23-25 years.

In terms of work experience<sup>3</sup> composition, it was observed that majority of the respondents belonged to the experience category of 2 years – 4 years (93 respondents) with 8 respondents each having experience in the range of above 1 year, 5 years – 8 years and higher level of work experience in the range 8 years – 10 years.

### Procedural Design and Measures

The questionnaire was designed through adaptation of standardized versions (adapted from Judge, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1994; Graen & Scandura, 1987) in tune with evolving perceptions of Indian Gen Y management cadre employees. The questionnaire had 17 items which were targeted at understanding perspectives related to SHRM practices amongst Gen Y employees, viz Supervisory support, Pay & Rewards, Career Development support and Work-Life balance support. The questionnaire had questions for example, "Benefit is fair compared with peers in division", "My organisation is supportive of my long-term career development", "and "My supervisor recognizes my potential". Items with reverse coding were also included in the instrument to increase its reliability, like "The organisation doesn't show fairness in rewards and benefits".

The questionnaire was statistically tested for reliability using Cronbach alpha test. The Cronbach Alpha for the adapted questionnaire was 0.859 showing higher level of reliability for the instrument. Further analysis revealed that if a certain item in the questionnaire ("Doesn't show fairness in rewards") was removed then the Cronbach alpha could go up to 0.891 demonstrating a higher level of reliability for the instrument. Table 1 depicts the Cronbach alpha values.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factor analysis was conducted to understand main factors that are attributable to Strategic HRM practices having major impact on perceptions of Gen Y employees. Principal component analysis extraction method with varimax rotation through Kaiser normalisation was applied at eigen

<sup>3</sup> Work experience refers to overall work experience of the Individual and not post-management degree work experience, this deduction is possible given that the sample deals with alumni of a management institution.

**Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Item statistics**

	Scale	Scale	Corrected	
	Mean	Variance	Item-	Alpha
	if Item	if Item	Total	if Item
	Deleted	Deleted	Correlation	Deleted
HRPAYSAT	46.2393	112.3215	.2389	.8618
HRFAIRBE	46.1624	112.7062	.2148	.8629
HRPERFBA	45.9231	110.1406	.2863	.8608
HRUNFAIR	46.0769	128.8302	-.4127	.8918
HRSUPPOR	46.0940	105.7583	.6229	.8469
HRCAREER	46.1282	102.9576	.6374	.8448
HRMAXIMI	46.1966	101.9696	.6928	.8424
HRCAROPPUR	46.0256	98.3183	.8152	.8357
HRBALANC	46.5043	104.0625	.5737	.8476
HRBALFAMI	46.5470	105.0775	.5009	.8509
HRSUPSAT	45.5812	106.8662	.5259	.8503
HRSUPUND	46.1282	100.0610	.6411	.8435
HRSUPREC	45.5641	114.9549	.0910	.8696
HRSUPSOL	45.9231	101.0371	.6788	.8423
HRSUPHEL	46.5641	101.1963	.6781	.8424
HRSUPDEC	46.1538	97.5623	.8076	.8353
HRSUPEFF	45.6410	99.6976	.7223	.8399

value 1. The results yielded four major factors with the first factor accounting for 28% variance and the second, third and fourth factors accounting for 23%, 15% and 9% variance respectively. Taking the results into consideration the factors were assimilated under four major aspects of the study related to SHRM practices; Supervisory Support, Pay & Rewards, Career Development and Work-Life balance.

The factors corroborated with a study by Shore and Shore (1995) wherein it was understood that there are majorly two types of HR practices that impact employee's perspective of organisational support and is related to the concept of Perceived Organisational Support (POS). The first is discretionary practices that imply organisational caring but are not mandated by company policy or union contract; the second, HR practices that symbolize organisational recognition of the employee's contribution. First, satisfactory pay is necessary for meeting individuals' physiological or existence needs. Second, growth needs can be met by sufficient career development opportunities that help employees extend their potential and expand their capabilities. Third, HR practices that provide social support, such as job security and family relationships, can help meet employee basic needs of safety and well-being. They asserted that organisational actions that are interpreted by the employee as symbolic of appreciation, recognition,

and discretionary rewards are more likely to contribute to the aspect of organisational support in turn creating positive perspectives amongst employees towards their respective organisations.

The survey instrument yielded 117 responses on a five point scale from 5='strongly agree' to 1='strongly disagree'. The responses were collated and analyzed under the four major factors to give an understanding of the perspectives of Gen Y management cadre employees.

### Pay and Rewards

In terms of Pay satisfaction an equal percentage of respondents (31%) agree and disagree on their satisfaction levels towards this item with 24.1% being neutral to their satisfaction level. Similarly in terms of fair benefits, while 34.5% disagree to organisations availing fair benefits, around 27.6% agree to this aspect with 24% remaining neutral. In terms of organisations availing performance-based pays, while 31% agree, 27.6% disagree and almost 20.7% remain neutral. This shows that responses are almost equally divided for each item under pay equity and satisfaction, indicating that the sampled population varies on their understanding of organisational pay policies which may be attributable to their lesser years of work experience or age factor.

**Table 2: Factor Analysis**

	Initial	Extraction
HRPaysatisfaction	1.00	<b>0.87</b>
HRFairbenefit	1.00	<b>0.83</b>
HRPerfbasedpay	1.00	0.69
HRSupportforcareer	1.00	0.69
HRCareeradvancement	1.00	<b>0.83</b>
HRMaximizecareer	1.00	0.73
HRCareeroppurtunity	1.00	0.78
HRBalancedualcareer	1.00	<b>0.74</b>
HRBalancefamily	1.00	<b>0.75</b>
HRSupsat	1.00	<b>0.79</b>
HRSupunderstanding	1.00	0.70
HRSuprecognizespotential	1.00	0.64
HRSupsolveprob	1.00	<b>0.76</b>
HRSuphelps	1.00	0.73
HRSupdecision	1.00	<b>0.88</b>
HRSupeffectiveverelation	1.00	<b>0.84</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

### Career Development

In terms of items related to organisations being supportive of long term career development, accomplishing individual career goals, maximizing individual potential and giving career advancement opportunities, most respondents remained either negative or neutral with just around 27.6% agreeing to this aspect across the items. This implies that there remains some amount of dissatisfaction amongst these young employees related to organisations actually supporting their individual potential and helping them grow on their career paths by providing potential career advancement opportunities.

### Work-Life Balance Support

In terms of organisations supporting dual-career couples and helping them achieve a work-life balance; most responses were either negative or neutral with just 20.7% respondents agreeing to this support from their organisations. This shows that continuous discussion on strategic HR initiatives related to balancing career demands of dual-career couples and supporting them for balancing their work and family life have yet further to go with major initiatives needed by organisations in closing this gap in employee expectations.

### Supervisory Support

In terms of supervisory support related to supervisor being satisfied with their work, supportive of their decisions, helping them solve problems and supporting them during crisis;

most tend to agree to this aspect with responses in agreement ranging from 24.5% to as high as 41.4% for some items . This implies that in general young employee look up to their supervisors for knowledge and support, demonstrating willingness to develop and nurture effective relationship which merits due recognition from supervisors, acting as mentors in developing young talent.

Table 3 depicts the mean, standard deviation and correlation between the items. The mean and standard deviation for the items in the questionnaire are highest for items related to supervisor support (understanding, effective relationship, recognition of potential and satisfaction of supervisor related to work performance), aspect of pay (fairness in pay/rewards based on performance) and career development (career opportunity availed, advancement options and support for career growth). The data indicates that Supervisor Support is highest amongst all Strategic HRM practices perceived by Gen Y employees, meaning that Gen Y employees put a lot of emphasis on relationships with their supervisors wherein recognition and support availed by supervisors is understood to be meaningful and expected and a sort of motivational aspect by this generation. It implies that in general young employee look up to their supervisors for knowledge and support, demonstrating willingness to develop and nurture effective relationship which merits due recognition from supervisors, acting as mentors in developing young talent.

The correlation between items that are interlinked is highly significant ( $p < .01$ ), that is fairness in benefits and rewards/ performance based pay is significantly related to the aspect of Pay Satisfaction implying that Gen Y employees avail satisfaction when pay is linked both to their capabilities to deliver and is also perceived to be fair in allocation

**Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlations**

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
HRPaysatisfaction	2.73	1.047																
HRFairbenefit	2.8	1.069	0.78**															
HRPerfbasedpay	3.04	1.192	0.53**	0.58														
HRSupportforcareer	2.87	0.943	0.06	-0.05	0.16													
HRCareeradvancement	2.84	1.122	0.16	0.15	0.19*	0.8**												
HRMaximizecareer	2.77	1.109	0.03	-0.06	0.22*	0.6**	0.53**											
HRCareeroppurtunity	2.94	1.177	0.15	0.18*	0.25**	0.71**	0.73**	0.78**										
HRBalancedualcareer	2.46	1.141	0.22*	0.06	-0.02	0.48**	0.42**	0.58**	0.54**									
HRBalancefamily	2.42	1.191	0.06	-0.06	-0.17	0.51**	0.54**	0.49**	0.46**	0.75**								
HRSupsat	3.38	0.999	0.16	0.27**	0.42**	0.2*	0.06	0.36**	0.40**	0.22*	0.01							
HRSupunderstanding	2.84	1.319	-0.08	0.08	0.16	0.32**	0.47**	0.45**	0.48**	0.45**	0.44**	0.47**						
HRSuprecognizespotential	3.4	1.197	-0.02	0	0	0	-0.09	0.24**	0.18*	0.17	0.16	0.26**	0.14					
HRSupsolveprob	3.04	1.192	0.17	0.14	0.17	0.38**	0.52**	0.37**	0.57**	0.17	0.28**	0.39**	0.64**	0.01				
HRSuphelps	2.4	1.182	0.08	0.11	0.07	0.5**	0.64**	0.45**	0.58**	0.36**	0.38**	0.24**	0.58**	0.01	0.74**			
HRSupdecision	2.81	1.231	0.17	0.22*	0.29**	0.52**	0.56**	0.48**	0.59**	0.40**	0.39**	0.49**	0.75**	-0.05	0.79**	0.79**		
HRSupeffectiverelation	3.32	1.216	-0.11	-0.01	0.21*	0.47**	0.40**	0.68**	0.7**	0.41**	0.34**	0.59**	0.70**	0.02	0.62**	0.56**	0.77**	

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

(procedural and distributive justice for motivation). Similarly highly significant correlations exist for within items related to Career Development, Work-Life balance and Supervisory Support implying that each item falling under the major factors list corresponds to each other; that is to maximize career development it is imperative that opportunities to advance be provided alongside support to grow; for balancing dual careers it is needed that both partners are able to achieve work-life balance through organisational support; to have effective relationship with supervisor it is important that he/she understands employee issues, supports them and stands by them in enhancing their problem solving capabilities thus building trust and creating an environment of mutual respect and collaboration.

Inter-item correlations are highly significant for items related to Supervisory satisfaction with work and aspects of fair pay, performance based pay, career advancement opportunities, and providing opportunity to balance dual careers implying that Gen Y employees believe that if their performance is commendable and their supervisors are appreciative of their work then in general it impacts their pay, career and work-life balance aspects. The items under Supervisory support factor, related to supervisors understanding problems, availing support in solving problems, recognising potential and having effective work relationship shows highly significant relationship to both aspects of career development and work-life balance and no significant relationship with Pay and Rewards practices implying that Gen Y employees believe more strongly in collaborating with their supervisors for career advancement and work-life balance than only pay related aspects. Their ability to do good work, avail appreciation from supervisors and building effective

working relationship with their supervisors is typical of Gen Y characteristics (partner well with mentors, value guidance and expect respect – Deloitte Survey, 2005)<sup>4</sup>

In terms of age; the data comprised two sub-categories amongst Gen Y employees, with one group being in the age group of 23-26 years and second being from 27-30 years. The researcher intended to understand if the SHRM perspectives were significant amongst these two groups, hence an Independent sample t-test was applied to the available data. The results showed high significance ( $p < 0.01$ ) for Work-life balance factors (specifically policies related to balancing of dual careers) and Supervisory support factors (support, understanding, recognition of potential and effective relationship) with moderate significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) for factors of Pay satisfaction and Career development and enhancement within the groups indicating that Gen Y employees as categorized under the age group of 19-29 years demonstrate similar levels of significance in their SHRM perspectives. In terms of significance majority of the items related to Supervisory support yielded  $p < 0.01$ , implying that Gen Y employees highly value the aspect of Supervisory support. This specific observation can be linked to the impact of national culture on perceptions of Gen Y Indian employees as it understood that Indian employees in general have paternalist orientation<sup>5</sup>. Sinha (1984) outlines that Indian employees believe in the aspect of *sneh* (affection) and *shraddha* (respect) in supervisor-subordinate relationship that values the paternal image of the supervisor ensuring workers (subordinates/employees) put in their

<sup>4</sup> Refer Appendix

<sup>5</sup> Refer Hofstede (2011)

best efforts to avoid any loss of face by their supervisor and supervisor in turn recognises employee contribution by way of understanding their problems, mentoring them and helping them develop to their best potential. This aspect of supervisory or in other terms managerial/leadership support existing across Indian organisations is supported by a study by Cappelli *et al.* (2010) wherein they compared and contrasted leadership focus amongst US and Indian leaders highlighting the paradigm shift amongst Indian leaders by way of investment in 'people'. Termed 'The Indian Way' this research focused on how the priorities for Indian leaders today is based on business strategy, organisational culture and nurturance of people. The focus is on 'transformational leadership' with a strong belief that investing in people, creating a culture of trust and mentoring people would on its own elevate an organisation to a business leader platform thus ensuring high profitability and success. Infact the study reveals that "twice as many Indian leaders as U.S. leaders think that human capital drives business success"(Rai, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

The study shows that contrary to the popular belief of employees getting motivated on aspects of enhanced pay, stable career and satisfactory work environment; Gen Y employees expect fairness in allocation of pay and benefits based on capability and merit, give higher importance to challenging work and strive to maintain cordial relationships with their peers and supervisors, collaborating for enhanced learning and career growth opportunities. The aspect of Supervisory Support is understood to be more critical to Gen Y employees who believe in social collaboration and engaging with their superiors for better knowledge creation and growth. This corroborates with a previous study done by author on aspect of Gen Y characteristics<sup>6</sup>, wherein this generation is understood to give more weightage to two aspects – 'Expressions' and 'Acceptance'. In this study the factor of 'Supervisor recognizes my potential' has higher mean (3.40), similarly the factors 'Supervisor is satisfied with my work' and 'Supervisor has effective relationship' have higher means of (3.38) and (3.32) respectively. All these items also show higher levels of significance ( $p < 0.01$ ) amongst the 2 categories of Gen Y employees (23-26 years and 27-30 years). This shows that Gen Y employees are eager to share and collaborate through their knowledge, but they in turn believe in reciprocation of these efforts by their superiors through 'timely recognition' and 'motivation for growth' which may be mundane as small praises or pat on the back for good work. The aspect of being able to express their opinions (*Expression*); and having their ideas being valued and recognised (*Acceptance*) hold a higher level of importance for this category of employees. This is evident

through their higher presence on social media platforms wherein they seek to share ideas, collaborate and grow both individually and as a group.<sup>7</sup>

The study was limited in its aspects of being unable to cater to a larger population of Gen Y employees, given the constraints of it being conducted as a preliminary pilot study. However this initial study emphasizes the fact that Gen Y employees across industry categories, irrespective of gender tend to give a higher level of importance to aspects of career growth, meaningful work, work-life balance and cordial relationships which challenges preset HR notions of motivation, performance evaluation and pay allocation demonstrating that this generation is highly different from its previous counterparts in their openness, inquisitiveness and ability to foster collaboration for growth. Being a young workforce their focus at this turn of their career seems to be more on learning from their mentors (thus items related to Supervisory Support seems to be highly loaded), advance in their careers and achieve excellence through merit. However this generation also values work with family values hence the aspect of Work-life balance has also emerged as a critical aspect of the study while 'Pay & Rewards' traditionally understood to be major determinants of motivation seems to have occupied the lowest rungs of the perspective ladder with only focus being pay for merit and fairness in allocation of benefits and rewards. The study reveals that while Gen Y employees do not overlook the monetary aspect (satisfaction with pay showing moderate significance at  $p < 0.05$ ), but that does not remain their sole criterion for motivation in terms of organisational support. Other aspects of strategic HRM, particularly policies that look towards work-life balance and enhancing prospects of supervisory support by mentoring and sharing of ideas/opinions, hold more prominence for Gen Y employees in India. By way of impact of national culture, this generation believes in effective supervisor-subordinate relationship by does not maintain a high power distance as has been evidenced about Indian employees through previous studies (Hofstede, 2001). This generation on the other hand believes more in expressing their ideas/opinions and want their potential to be recognised by their leaders (supervisors); thus growing by availing opportunities of mutual development.

HR strategist across the globe need to realize the immense talent and potential of Gen Y employees who are and will continue to swell organisations in large numbers, crafting HR practices and policies that address the unique demands and expectations of this generation. Future research by the author intends to look at this very aspect through a linkage of Gen Y employee work values, perception of organisational support and impact on HR practices-cum-employee outcomes.

<sup>6</sup> Refer Rai, S. (2011)

<sup>7</sup> Refer Rai, S. (2011)

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**APPENDIX**

**Table 4: Share of Population**

Generations	Population	% Of World Population
Gen Y - 15-29 years old	1,723,911,077.00	25.47
Gen x - 30-44 year old	1,442,951,791.00	21.32
Baby Boomers - 5 - 64 years old	1,233,836,150.00	18.56
Traditionalists - 65-74 years old	316,330,067.00	4.67

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

**Table 5: Who are the Millennials of Gen Y?**

Work well with friends and on teams
Collaborative, resourceful, innovative thinkers
Love a challenge
Seek to make a difference
Want to produce something worthwhile
Desire to be a hero
Impatient
Comfortable with speed and change
Thrive on flexibility and space to explore
Partner well with mentors
Value guidance and Expect respect

Source: Deloitte Consulting (2005). Who Are the Millennials, aka Generation Y?