A STUDY ON THE RESILIENCE OF MILLENNIAL LEADERS WORKING IN PRIVATE COMPANIES IN CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract: Building Resilience at workplace has become vital skill for employees in any Industry. Resilience refers to the ability of the employee to adapt to change and overcome challenges faced at workplace. In today's business environment with lot of uncertainties, business culture with resilience will prove to be an effective catalyst for organizational success. A resilient leader is one who is equipped to navigate through uncertain situations at workplace. Resilient leaders also help their team members to develop resilience and are instrumental to spread positive work culture. This study focuses on understanding the resilient leadership of millenials in private companies in Chennai city.

Index Terms – **Resilience, Resilient leader, millennial leadership, resilient leadership**

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Resilience is the capability of a person to adapt to disruptive situations. In the today's dynamic work environment, resilience has become a crucial characteristic of high performing leaders. Leadership resilience enables the leaders to carry their responsibility effectively and protect the energy of their teams too. Millennial/ Generation Y individuals are people born between the year 1980 and 1995 and thus, they belong to the age group between 30 years and 45 years of age, approximately. This study focuses on understanding the resilient management of Millennial leaders working in private companies in Chennai City.

1.2 MEANING OF RESILIENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Resilience is the process of successfully adapting to challenging situations. In the workplace, it means employees' ability to face challenging situations, problem solving ability and open to continuous learning. *Garcia-Dia et al., (2013)* defines, "Resilience as a multi-dimensional phenomenon of a person to adjust, re-bound, recover or thrive from an adversity or change in workplace".

Example : An employee may exhibit resilience when they face difficulty in completing a project but still meets the deadline.

Thus, it is no exaggeration that resilience are fuel that powers the positive wok environment and make sure that the employees stays motivated even at times of Challenges. Resilience is no one time, but a repetitive process that enables continuous improvement of an individual.

1.3 NEED FOR RESILIENT LEADERSHIP RESILIENCE

Leaders are pillars of any organization, who are instrumental in contributing to achievement of organizational objectives in the following ways,

- They provide vision and direction to the employees
- They motivate & Inspire people in an organization
- They create a conducive work environment
- They promote communication and collaboration among team members

In today's diverse workplace, that includes people from different nationalities, ethnicities and cultural diversities, role of resilient leaders are critical to navigate uncertainty and ensure long term organizational success. Hence, this study aims at understanding the perceived resilient characteristics exhibited by Millenial leaders working in private companies in Chennai City.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

"Resilience is not a destination, its a way of being"

There are four main types of resilience – Physical, Mental, Social & Emotional.
- *Physical resilience* refers to the body's ability (Stamina & Strength) to adapt effectively to physical challenges
- *Psychological resilience* is the mental capacity (flexible & Calm) to deal with uncertainty
- *Social resilience* at workplace demands connection with people (social interactions) and working together in teams
- *Emotional resilience* involves being able to regulate emotions during times of stress.
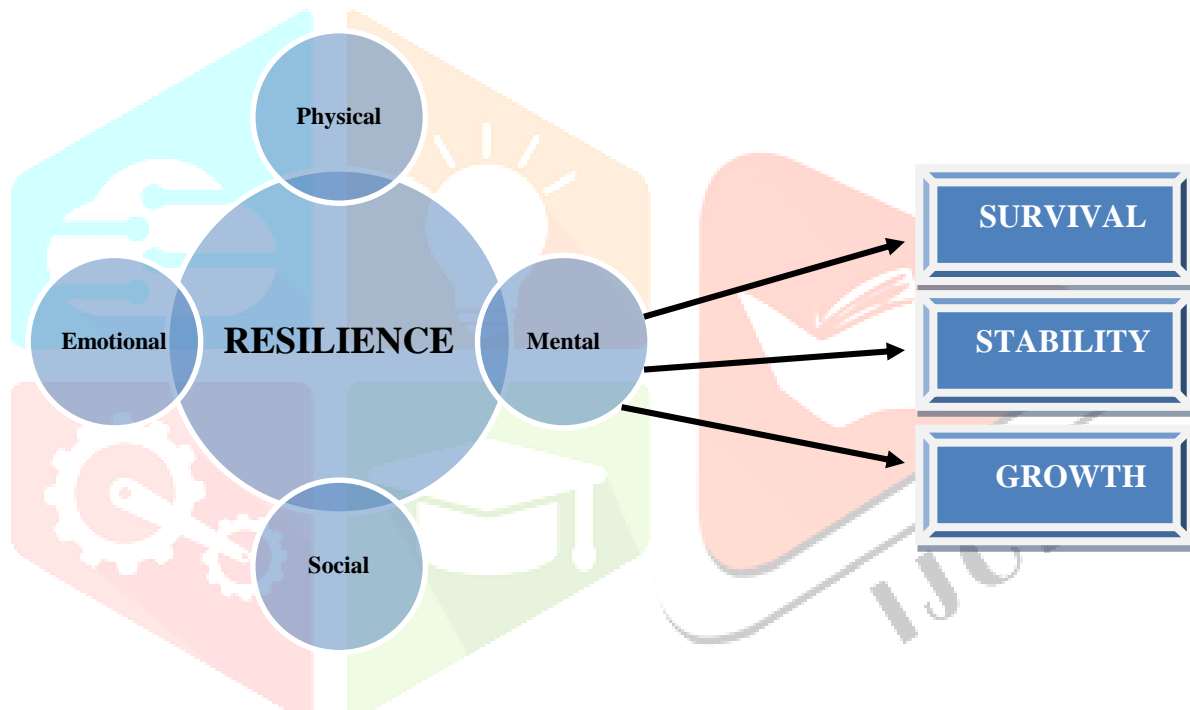
Thus, a Resilient leader is one who not only marshall the copying skills to manage the situation, but also manages to curb the negative reactions of their team members. Thus, a resilient leader at times of turbulent times, ensures– Survival, Stability & Growth of Individual and their team members.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The following are the main objectives developed to pursue the study -
- ☆ To get an insight on the concept of Resilient Leadership and its conceptual framework in organizational growth.
- ☆ To identify and examine the resilient management of Millenial leaders from the employees' perspective working in private companies in Chennai city
- ☆ To analyze demographic variables of the respondents and ratings of leadership resilience by their employees, who participated in the study
- ☆ To provide suggestions for organizations for enhancing more resilience practices at workplace.

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000), in their research study attempted to identify the factors that contributes to resilience. They found that resilience occurs when individuals have access to necessary capitals, competence/expertise, and self efficacy. They also found that resilient
people are often more energetic in their lives and they are more prone to engage in new experiences.

According to *Lengnick-Hall and Beck (2003),* a unique mixture of organization-level behavioral, cognitive, and contextual capabilities can develop resilience and a shared mindset that makes an organization reach to a better point with flexibility. It is often created by an rigorous blend of experience, innovativeness, opportunism and decisiveness inspite of uncertainty.

Decman et al (2021), in their research paper, explored to understand the importance of resilience leaders in education settings. The concept of the importance of teachers establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships (need for social resilience) with students and parents was echoed throughout the interview responses.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used exploratory research design. Structured questionnaire method used to collect primary data from *312 employees* from various private companies in Chennai city. Questionnaire was drafted via Google forms and was circulated. Convenient and Purposive Random sampling technique was employed to choose the respondents.

The study also used secondary data. Online sources such as company reports, blogs of experts, websites, Research papers, and magazines have been used.

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Primary data collected from 312 employees working in private companies in Chennai City. The participants rated the resilience traits exhibited by their Millenial leaders using 5-Likert Scale (1-Strongly disagree, 2 – Disgree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree) Purposive random sampling was used to collect data about Millenial resilent leadership in private companies.

From the below table 4.1 - demographic variable of respondents, it was observed that majority of the millennial team leaders,
who participated in the study are Male with 58% and most of them work for Company that provides consultancy services.

TABLE 4.1 : DEMOGRAPHIC PROFLE OF EMPLOYEES

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF RESPONDENTS			%
GENDER	MALE	181	58%
	FEMALE	131	42%
TOTAL		312	100%
NATURE OF	BPO /KPO	114	37%
COMPANY	SOFTWARE	76	24%
	CONSULTING	122	39%
TOTAL		312	100%

Table 4.2 shows the ratings of employees about the leadership resilience of their team leaders. It was found that   Emotional
Resilience of the team leaders (Helping team members to improve) was the highest with Mean Value – 3.56, followed by
Social resilience (Building empathy among team) with mean – 3.28 and cultivate team work with mean value – 3.11.

TABLE 4.2 : EMPLOYEES' RATING ON THEIR TEAM LEAD'S RESILIENCE

EMPLOYEES' RATING ON LEADERS' RESILIENCE IN PRIVATE COMPANIES

Physical Resilience	Mean	SD
Nurture staff strengths	2.11	1.92
Share healthy coping strategies with staff	2.62	0.98
Establish clear and fair expectations of staff	2.34	2.99
Mental Resilience		
Model and encourage positivity and optimism	2.28	0.84
Encourage staff to be flexible	2.16	0.74
Validate the feelings of staff	2.57	2.16
Social Resilience		
Encourage collaborative problem solving with staff	2.87	0.63
Cultivate supportive teamwork	3.11	0.77
Encourage staff to show empathy to others	3.28	0.54
Emotional Resilience		
Manage impulsive feelings	3.24	1.35
Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence	3.56	2.48
Sensing others' feelings and perspective	2.89	0.93

5.1 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Most employees agreed that their leaders exhibited emotional resilience by way of helping team members to improve and excel at work with highest mean vale of 3.56
- Based on the responses, it was found that most leaders exhibit social resilience such as building empathy among team and cultivate sense of team work
- The least mean value was computed for Physical resilience and Mental resilience. Thus, it can be concluded that based on the ratings of employees, most millennial leaders must focus on encouraging healthy lifestyle choices for self and their team members.
- A Chi-square analysis was made and it was found that there is no association between gender of employees and their ratings on resilience leadership. (Chi-square value =5.247, p value – 0.128). P - value greater than 0.05 and hence, null hypothesis accepted.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

- Implementing educational efforts to better prepare leaders to engage in resilience practices (e.g., employee development programs & training programs)
- Redesigning of processes, policies and norms (e.g., Allowing flexibility at work)
- Business organizations today demands 24/7 connectivity of employees with work and targets & deadlines leading to burnout and mental exhaustion. Relaxation opportunities will help in maximize productivity and prevent burnout. (e.g., allowing employees for detachment breaks)

6.1 CONCLUSION

Most of the workforce feels that their job life is one of the stressor in life. Long work hours, job strains, Insecurity, low social support are few of the factors that contribute to workplace stress. Hence, creating resilience in workplace culture is need of the hour to improve productivity and efficiency. Developing resilient leaders are the best way to achieve the culture of resilience within an organization.

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