

Volunteer Work Experience: Can It Help Millennials to Find Meaning and Interest in their Work and to Negotiate their Role Within the Workplace?

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Surveys show Millennials initially satisfied with their new jobs but also that they leave on average within the first 3 years. The contention of this paper is that Millennials fail to find meaning and interest in their work and to successfully navigate their workplace; volunteer work experience can change this. Findings show volunteer work experience significantly enhances Millennial job satisfaction. Based upon this, separate analyses compare volunteer Millennial with non-volunteer Millennial job satisfaction. Findings show significantly different reactions of volunteer and non-volunteer Millennials to pay, establishment size, unions, co-workers support; no differences with respect to extreme hours worked and irregular schedules.

INTRODUCTION

Longitudinal surveys show Millennials initially satisfied with the jobs they get. These same surveys however also show Millennials becoming dissatisfied and subsequently leaving their jobs on average within the first 3 years of employment. Despite employer compensation packages and workplace policies offerings to create satisfying work environments and jobs, Millennials are not engaged and are not being retained. So why don't they stay? What happens within this very short time period?

It is the contention of this paper that two elements are missing: Millennials seek but often do not find meaning and interest in their work and although they are confident in their ability to navigate their workplace, they often do not succeed in doing so. Given these missing elements, we often observe the reported "negative" behavior of Millennials: they are bored; they do not persist; they will not go the extra mile; they do not communicate well; they need constant attention from supervisor; they are not team players; they are overly confident; they are risk-averse; they like structure but seek autonomy; they expect more responsibility with few years of experience. Employer compensation packages and workplace policies offerings fail to facilitate engagement and ensure retention.

Previous research has demonstrated that volunteer work experience instills and enhances certain abilities, skills, and personal characteristics which enable employees to successfully adapt to their work roles and negotiate their place in the work environment; and ultimately enable them to find meaning and interest in their work.

Based upon this, the first primary hypothesis tested within this study is that the experience of unpaid volunteer work experience will enhance Millennials' job satisfaction. A cross-sectional sample of one thousand, four hundred 26-27 year old Millennial employees (not including self-employed) drawn from the NLSY97 (BLS, 2016) database for the year 2012-13 (round 15) is utilized to test a model of Millennial employee job satisfaction with volunteer work experience included.

Then based upon the significant finding of the effect of unpaid volunteer work experience on *Millennial* job satisfaction, separate analyses are performed which compare volunteer Millennial job satisfaction with non-volunteer Millennial job satisfaction. Given that job satisfaction is a work attitude and as such is an evaluative (cognitive) and emotional (affective) *reaction* to job and work environment characteristics, the *primary inquiry of these analyses is: Do volunteer Millennial employees react differently to corporate offerings and elements of their work environment than non-volunteer Millennial employees?* Are the correlations between job satisfaction and the compensation package and job and work environment characteristics different for these two groups?

The modest but provocative findings of these analyses suggest that volunteer work experience is one experience that has the potential to significantly affect Millennials' reactions to certain job and work environment characteristics and thus facilitate engagement and potentially affect retention.

BACKGROUND

Why Job Satisfaction? The Evidence

Job satisfaction is now considered a core indicator of workers' evaluations of their jobs (Hodson, 2004). As a concept, job satisfaction assumes that workers evaluate all aspects of their job situations, consider their alternatives, and through an internal calculus arrive at an overall evaluation of the quality of their jobs. Job satisfaction is a work attitude and as such is an evaluative (cognitive) and emotional (affective) reaction to job and work environment characteristics (Hulin & Judge, 2003).

Evidence suggests that job satisfaction is consistently and significantly correlated with retention (Coomber & Barriball, 2007) and low job satisfaction to be a determinant of quits and intention to leave the workplace (Bockerman & Ilmakunnas, 2005). Longitudinal studies show Millennials' job satisfaction to be higher and intention to leave lower than previous generations. However when Millennials become dissatisfied, they move more quickly and more certainly to quit their jobs and move on than previous generations. In this sense, low job satisfaction poses more immediate challenges to employers than might be at first glance (Families & Work Institute, 2006; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

Low job satisfaction negatively affects motivation and absenteeism (Tharenou, 1993). Looking specifically at Millennials, job satisfaction and motivation are strongly impacted by intrinsic work values (Twenge et al, 2010). Low intrinsic satisfaction has been shown to significantly reduce overall job satisfaction (Decker et al, 2009) and thus may lower Millennials' job satisfaction.

Low job satisfaction negatively affects both the physical and mental health of employees and lowers productivity resulting in some cases in counterproductive behavior (Rubin, 2004). Little is known with regard to the effects of work and various work environments on Millennials' health. However one form of counterproductive behavior is failure to contribute to team efforts. Millennials are known to be individualistic rather than team-oriented in the workplace (Kowske et al, 2010).

Millennials – A Review of Research and Derived Conclusions

As newcomers entering the workforce, Millennials must learn about tasks and social expectations through socialization processes, as well as how to adapt to and negotiate their roles. They must learn how to gain others' acceptance of them as participating members in the workforce (De Vos et al, 2003). Organizational socialization is interactive, involving newcomers' and old timers' evaluations and commitments to each other and to the organization (Myers, 2006).

A key starting point for examination of Millennials' workforce attitudes and behavior is to understand their work-related values and personality traits. From this examination, one could hypothesize how these might impact Millennials' ability to learn job tasks, social expectations, and the organization; how these might impact their adaptability and ability to negotiate their roles in the workplace; and how these might impact their assessments of their co-workers, supervisors, and organizational and industry practices.

Focusing first on the work value, work ethic, several time-lag studies have found that Millennials place less value on work for its own sake (Twenge et al, 2010) and express less interest in working hard, putting in overtime, and taking pride in their own work than previous generations (Marston, 2009). Yet

the Family and Work Institute time lag study found 23-27 year olds actually worked more hours in 2002 than in 1977 (Families and Work Institute, 2006). This reflects the general labor force trend towards working more hours in the U.S. and employer- and industry-driven practices. All of this may reflect the larger underlying trend towards valuing work less, and for Millennials, it may be caused by or in spite of the longer hours worked by them.

The work value, work centrality, has declined across generations. For Millennials, work and building a career are less significant parts of their personal identities. Millennials are less work-centric and more family-centric (Families and Work Institute, 2006) and more focused on leisure exhibiting an increase in the value of leisure compared to previous generations (Twenge, 2010). Although younger employees typically have a strong desire to advance, this desire to advance has been decreasing across generations.

Extrinsic work values, status, respect, and money, are however, more important to Millennials than to previous generations (Twenge et al, 2010). Millennials tend to be focused on their own individual goals and success rather than career or organizational aspirations (Marston, 2009). The importance of extrinsic values may then reflect their need for recognition and the outward signs that accompany this recognition.

Several additional time-lag studies have also examined generational differences in personality traits. Millennials score higher than previous generations on *positive individualistic traits* such as self-esteem and assertiveness (Gentile et al, 2009) and on *negative individualistic traits* such as narcissism. This supports their belief in the right of individuals to succeed and contribute in the workplace regardless of their background and to treat people as individuals rather than members of groups. However, this may contribute to their observed impatience and lack of perseverance, wanting to get ahead faster (Twenge & Foster, 2010).

When individualism reaches the level of narcissism, it could support a sense of entitlement. Reflective of this is perhaps the observation that Millennials often require (believe they are entitled to) a clear path to success with well-defined rubrics and expectations. In their minds achievement of success requires constant feedback from their supervisors (Myer & Sadaghiani, 2010). However Millennials are also more risk-adverse than previous generations, so they may have difficulty communicating their needs and expectations within the workplace *for fear of appearing less competent*.

Despite the decline in work centrality and work ethic, and the changes in personality traits towards individualism, the importance of *intrinsic work values* has not changed across generations over time. To find meaning and interest in work, Millennials need to feel some degree of challenge, autonomy, and responsibility in their jobs. Challenge, autonomy, and responsibility within the organizational setting are associated with proven talent and demonstrated commitment. Unlike previous generations, Millennials do not persist long enough to achieve these intrinsic values. It is the contention of this paper that:

What seems to have changed is:

*... Millennials' ability to negotiate their role and adapt to their work environment
... and therefore their ability to find meaning and interest in work.*

Volunteer Work –Could It Help Bridge these Millennial Ability Gaps?

Volunteer work is an example of intrinsically motivated behavior (Snyder et al, 2004). Every fourth American citizen spends one or more evenings per week engaged in unpaid activities in which he or she helps another person, group, or cause (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) reports Millennials volunteering at historically high rates.

Two basic inquiries guide volunteer work research. The first of these explores the antecedents of volunteer work, focusing on the self-selectivity into volunteer work and thus the demographic characteristics and personal resources of the individual. The second explores the consequences of volunteer work for the individual, net of their demographic characteristics and personal resources that may have initially self-selected them into volunteer work. This paper will investigate the effect of volunteer work on Millennials' job satisfaction.

Several frameworks have been utilized to investigate the specific effects of volunteer work on the work experience of employees. One framework derives from the *multiple domain* literature where the

relationship between the work domain and the volunteer work domain is explored. Volunteer work as a separate domain is becoming increasingly important for individuals who distinguish it from other activities in their lives (Pilivan & Siegl, 2007). One means to tie the two domains together is through the notion of *meaningfulness*. Generally speaking, people seek out meaningfulness in their lives and desire significance and value in their lives (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). The sense of meaningfulness that can be derived from both work and volunteer work is a form of intrinsic satisfaction and motivation.

Millennials are seeking intrinsic meaningfulness in their jobs; something to ignite their passion. This meaningfulness could help Millennials find their place in the workplace and perhaps enable them to make a “less than perfect job”, their own.

When employees engage in volunteer work in addition to paid work, it could be asked: does volunteer work act to compensate for lack of meaningfulness (intrinsic satisfaction) in their jobs? Or does it act to enhance the meaningfulness already present in their job?

In comprehensive studies of the interplay between work and volunteer work, support is found for both compensation and enhancement. Specifically Rodell (2013) and Geroy et al (2000) find a positive relationship between job meaningfulness and volunteer work. This lends support for the view that volunteer work enhances the intrinsic value of work and job meaningfulness.

Rodell (2013) further finds that the interaction of job meaningfulness and volunteer work meaningfulness also provides support for the compensation perspective. Employees who report lower levels of job meaningfulness may also increase volunteer activity to the extent that it provides desired meaning. Thus the relationship between volunteer work meaningfulness and volunteer work is more positive when job meaningfulness is low. This would be a way for *employers to retain those Millennial employees they would otherwise not retain*.

Enhancement here also suggests that volunteer work experience may positively influence individual employees' attitudes and behaviors in the work domain. A distinct but related query therefore is the impact of volunteer work on *on-the-job behavior*. On-the-job behavior refers to task performance, citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive behaviors. Task performance reflects in-role behaviors to accomplish a job's core tasks; citizenship behaviors are positive discretionary actions that contribute to a company's functioning; and counterproductive behaviors are negative discretionary behaviors that harm a company.

Two questions address volunteer work's impact on employee on-the-job behaviors: Does volunteer work have the potential to interfere with work? Or does it help individuals be more absorbed in their jobs? Are there synergies such that there is the potential for benefit from volunteer work that leads to job absorption? Or are there conflicts such that there is potential for harm from volunteer work that leads to job interference?

Job interference premises that individual employees have a finite amount of psychological and social resources and therefore adding volunteer work to a regular job may drain resources away from work and interferes with the job. When job interference occurs, task performance suffers; employees are less likely to engage in citizenship behaviors; and more likely to engage in counterproductive behaviors (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003).

Job absorption on the other hand, premises that volunteer work has potential beneficial job effects where psychological and other resources accumulate from experiences in one domain and expand to others. More absorbed employees are more likely to be invested in their jobs; more likely to collaborate with co-workers; more likely to engage in citizenship behaviors; and more likely to question unethical and unproductive behavior (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003).

Support is found for job absorption and domain synergies: A significant positive relationship between volunteer work and job absorption is found (Rodell, 2013) and a significant positive indirect relationship between volunteer work and all three of the above aforementioned on-the-job behaviors is also found (Rodell, 2013). Employees who volunteer are more likely to be invested in their jobs; more likely to collaborate with co-workers; more likely to engage in citizenship behavior; and more likely to question unethical and unproductive behavior (Rodell, 2013).

Millennials often are technically qualified and can perform job tasks well, but are bored and do not display appropriate discretionary behaviors. Volunteer work has the potential to change this. This is what Millennials need, to find interest and meaning in work; an appreciation for co-workers and the value of teamwork.

Another research framework utilized to investigate the effects of volunteer work on the work experience of individual employees is *the need to recover from work*. Mojza et al (2010) frame volunteer work as a specific form of leisure time activity for the recovery process. They define leisure time experiences that contribute to successful recovery from work as: psychological detachment from work, mastery experiences, and community experiences.

Psychological detachment from work refers to the feeling of being mentally away from work and of “switching off” from work and fully immersing oneself in an activity that is different from one’s job (Stebbins, 2004). Volunteer work is associated with cherished experiences, self-expression, and a combination of superficial enjoyment and deep satisfaction. It restores resources that have been depleted during work time and helps undo the strain initiated during work. Although Mojza et al (2010) do not find support for detachment, Demerouti, et al (2009) do.

For Millennials this may link their high value of leisure with better coping mechanisms that enable them to persist and handle work experiences that may be less than perfect in their minds. By reducing stress or its perception, these recovery experiences may put Millennials’ job and work experience into perspective.

Mastery experiences are experiences that arise during learning or when successfully meeting challenges during leisure time (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Individuals learn new skills and further develop existing skills including interpersonal and leadership skills. People may also find challenges in volunteer work which compensate for the lack of challenges at work. Mastery experiences contribute to successful recovery by helping to replenish and buildup additional psychological resources such as self-efficacy, optimism, and ego-resilience (Fredrickson et al, 2008).

Mastery experiences of volunteer work may be particularly important for Millennials. They are supposed to have a lot of confidence yet they are risk-adverse. A volunteer can work without the pressure to perform that paid work entails. This may enable Millennials to develop better interpersonal skills; the ability to persist; more realistic expectations; and a “real life” demonstrated confidence. It may further reduce the need for constant feedback from supervisors and allow them to operate with desired autonomy. These experiences then provide intrinsic work values. A further implication for employers is that employees with volunteer work experience would then have skills to meet problems head-on and pursue lines of action that further not only their own goals but those of the organization.

Another of the recovery experiences gained from volunteer work is community experience which provides social contacts and connectedness and the cultivation of relationships (Sonnenstag & Fritz, 2007). Volunteer work is associated with a gain of social resources. Many volunteers work together with friends and colleagues, maintaining their relationships while volunteering. It exposes volunteers to new people of different cultures, financial circumstances, world experiences, and generations. Volunteers make new connections as similarity is found, communication is facilitated, and feelings of connectedness and community occur (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007).

These community experiences will contribute to Millennials’ ability to work and communicate with co-workers and supervisors and thus navigate through the required socialization processes. Millennials may then develop the ability to connect to their workplace organization through this realization and acceptance of differences among people within the workplace.

The evidence suggests a win-win. Volunteer work either indicates that an employee’s job meaningfulness inspires them to do even more (enhancement with job absorption) or if the job lacks meaningfulness, volunteer work can compensate and provide needed intrinsic satisfaction. It also suggests that employers need not worry that volunteer work will distract their employees. Rather it will enhance their on-the-job behavior with employees more likely to be absorbed in their work and to engage in positive citizenship, and less likely to engage in counterproductive behavior. Employers will also benefit from the additional personal, social, and cultural resources gained by Millennial volunteers as

demonstrated in better copying strategies, better communication and interpersonal skills, and an appreciation for organizational connection.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Given the ordinal nature of the dependent variable and the skewed distribution of responses, the measures in Model 1 and Model 2a and 2b are analyzed with ordered logistic regression. The ordered logistic regression model estimates a model chi-square (with *df* equal to the number of predictor variables in the model) that shows the reduction in the log likelihood compared with a model that contains only the intercept. Individual-level logistic regression models are estimated.

The data utilized in this study are drawn from the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) which are a set of surveys designed to gather information at multiple points in time on labor market activities and other significant life events of several groups of men and women. The sample utilized here is drawn from one of these surveys, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 97 (BLS, 2016). The NLSY97 is designed to document the transition from school to work and into adulthood. It consists of a nationally representative sample of approximately 9,000 youths who were born in the years 1980-1984 and were 12-16 years old as of December 31, 1996. Youth have been interviewed on an annual basis since then.

This study utilizes a cross-sectional sample of one thousand, four hundred 26-27 year old Millennial employees (not including self-employed) drawn from the NLSY97 database for the year 2012-13 (round 15) to test a model of employee job satisfaction. The sample data utilized includes information on employee job satisfaction, compensation, job characteristics, work environment characteristics, and employee volunteer work activities.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 lists the descriptive statistics for all variables utilized in this study. The sample is nearly evenly split in terms of gender, with 48% of sample members male. Twenty four percent of sample members are Hispanic; 21% married marital status, and most are relatively healthy on a scale of 1-5, 1=excellent, with a mean value of 2.4. On a scale of 1-5, 1=dislike very much, the mean value of job satisfaction is 3.18. In terms of compensation, the mean hourly wage is \$22.53; 28% have medical insurance provided; and 39% have paid leave days provided. In terms of job and work environment, 22% have a flex time option; 31% work 50 hours or more per week; and 37% work an irregular schedule. Eighteen percent of these employees are unionized, working on average at a medium-sized establishment, 1=small (0-49 employees), with a mean value of 2.41; and 69% receive some co-worker support. On a scale of 1-4 (1=never), the mean value volunteer work is 1.57.

MODEL 1: HYPOTHESES AND VARIABLE MEASUREMENT

Model 1 represents the initial primary analysis in which volunteer work is added to the traditional job satisfaction model for all sample Millennial employees (n=1400).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Job Satisfaction} = f(\text{Volunteer Work}, \text{Pay}, \text{Medical Insurance}, \text{Paid Leave}, \text{Flex Time}, \\ \text{Extreme Hours}, \text{Irregular Schedule}, \text{Small Establishment Size}, \text{Union Coverage}, \\ \text{Co-Worker Support}, \text{controls}) \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

Measuring the Dependent Variable Job Satisfaction: The job satisfaction variable utilized here measures global job satisfaction. In the NLSY97 data used here, workers respond to the question: how satisfied are you with your job overall? Response categories include: like very much; like fairly well; think it's OK; dislike somewhat; and dislike very much. As shown in the descriptive statistics section, the categories are re-ordered to facilitate interpretation of the results.

Measuring Volunteer Work: The NLSY97 data asks each respondent whether they have done any volunteer work during the past year. Given volunteer work, it then asks the primary reason for the volunteer work: court ordered, required for school (strictly speaking these are not volunteer) or strictly voluntary. This study's sample consists of employees who have voluntarily performed volunteer work. The NLSY97 data then provides a recoded variable of the number of times an employee performs unpaid volunteer work during the year; 1=never, 2=one to four times; 3=five to eleven times; and 4= twelve times or more. Note, even though most Millennials volunteers were coded 3or 4, non-volunteers were coded 1 (=never). The mean value is therefore skewed downward towards 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variable	Definition	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Independent</i>			
Comp & Benefits			
Rate of Pay	Wage	22.53	14.690
Medical	1 = Provided	0.28	0.448
Paid leave	1 = Provided	0.39	0.932
Job & Work Char			
Flex	1 = Available	0.22	0.448
Union	1 = Union Coverage	0.18	0.323
Extreme50	1 = Works \geq 50 hours	0.31	0.423
Emp Size	1 = Small, up to 49	2.41	0.531
Irregular	1 = Irregular schedule	0.37	0.892
Co-worker	1 = Receives support	0.69	0.624
Controls			
Ethnicity	1 = Hispanic	0.24	0.379
Gender	1 = Male	0.48	0.166
Marital St	1 = Married	0.21	0.381
Health	1 = Excellent (scale 1-5)	2.40	0.906
Volunteer Work	1 = Never (scale 1-4)	1.57	0.466
<i>Dependent</i>			
Job Satisfaction	1 = Dislike very much (scale 1-5)	3.18	1.040

Corporate Offerings and Policies: While employers have offered an array of compensation and workplace policies, there are also employer-driven practices and industry norms that must be examined in light of the work values and personality traits of Millennials and employers' failure to retain.

Control Variables: Individual demographic and personal variables are included as controls to account for self-selectivity: ethnicity, gender, marital status, and general health.

Several hypotheses are set forth with respect to Millennials' job satisfaction:

Hypothesis 1: The initial primary hypothesis of this paper is: *volunteer work will substantially and positively affect global job satisfaction of Millennials.* Volunteer work has the capacity to enable Millennials' ability to negotiate their role and adapt to their work environment and has the capacity to provide and enhance intrinsic motivation and satisfaction derived from work.

Hypothesis 2: *Pay will substantially and positively affect Millennials' job satisfaction.* Millennials value extrinsic factors such as money more than previous generations (Twenge et al, 2010). This importance of

extrinsic values may reflect Millennials' need for recognition and the outward signs of success that accompany this recognition (Marston, 2009).

Hypothesis 3: Provision of medical benefits will positively affect Millennials' job satisfaction, given that Millennials are more risk-adverse than previous generations (Twenge et al, 2010; Families & Work Institute, 2006).

Hypothesis 4: Paid leave will positively affect Millennial job satisfaction, given that Millennials have lower work centrality and a higher value of leisure relative to previous generations (Twenge, 2010).

Hypothesis 5: Flex time will positively affect Millennials' job satisfaction, given that Millennials value work arrangements that offer them more flexibility (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) and that they prioritize work-life balance (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

Hypothesis 6: Working extreme hours will substantially and negatively affect Millennials' job satisfaction. Regardless of the reason for the intensity, some have argued that a "new normalized intensity" exists with respect to hours worked on the job (McCann et al, 2008). Longitudinal studies find that despite a decline in Millennials' work ethic, 23-27 year olds actually worked more hours in 2002 than in 1977 (Families and Work Institute, 2006). Does this reflect a discrepancy between Millennials' work values and their behavior or does it reflect the reality that most of the new normal intensity is employer-driven? Could Millennials' negative attitude to overtime and long hours reflect the reality of overtime and excess hours on top of already long hours?

Hypothesis 7: Irregular schedules will substantially and negatively affect Millennials' job satisfaction. Irregular, multiple shifts per day mean that some employers have made hours divisible according to their own needs to maximize customer service and minimize labor costs (McMenamin, 2007). Millennials may be more willing to work irregular shifts and hours to establish their lifestyle and/or increase their earnings (Hewlett & Luce, 2006) or they may balk at these schedules which may interfere with their valued work-leisure balance and their increased value of leisure time. It is expected that the latter will be stronger.

Hypothesis 8: Small size of establishment will substantially and positively affect Millennials' job satisfaction. Evidence suggests that job satisfaction tends to be lower in larger establishments due to their more impersonal and bureaucratic nature and less satisfactory management-employee relations. Larger employers can however provide more varied pay and promotional opportunities as well as the latest technology (Tansel & Gazioglu, 2006). Evidence suggests that Millennials prefer organizations with central decision making, clearly defined responsibilities, and formalized procedures (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010); all of which would suggest a match to larger organizations. Millennials are however also prone to want to choose the specific tasks they will perform and the conditions and timing under which they do them (Twenge, 2010). They need supervisor direction and feedback while desiring autonomy and freedom. This description may suggest a match with smaller more flexible organizations.

Hypothesis 9: Establishment union coverage will negatively affect Millennial job satisfaction. Unions traditionally provide professional and social network contacts as well as sources of information and potential grievance resolution (Bluestone & Rose, 1997). However union influence also represents the establishment and enforcement of seniority systems. Given Millennials strong sense of individualism, they may not consider union influence a positive one.

Hypothesis 10: Co-worker support will substantially and positively affect Millennial job satisfaction, given Millennials' substantial need for support and guidance to achieve their individual career development and goals. As Millennials enter the workplace they must evaluate their organization and whether they like working with co-workers and supervisors (Scott & Myers, 2010). Evidence suggests

that employees *who perceive* more co-worker support obtain more job resources and that this support motivates employees to persist in meeting requirements of their jobs (Chuang et al, 2012). Co-worker support is measured as “someone at work to talk to about work-related issues”.

RESULTS MODEL 1: JOB SATISFACTION with VOLUNTEER WORK

The results from Model 1 are presented in Table 2. Both the parameter estimates b_k and the exponential parameter estimates (e^b_k) are reported. Overall the global chi square statistic indicates that the Model 1 logit regression is highly significant (Chi square statistic=98.437; $p<.01$).

It was expected that given the importance of extrinsic values to Millennials, the variable pay would substantially affect job satisfaction. However although pay positively contributes to job satisfaction, it does so only moderately ($b=0.124$; $p<.10$). Both paid leave ($b=0.220$; $p<.10$) and flex time ($b=0.397$; $p<.10$) are moderately significant and positively affect job satisfaction. Given Millennials’ increased value of leisure and the importance of balance between work and leisure, both were expected to positively affect job satisfaction.

TABLE 2
RESULTS: MODEL 1 JOB SATISFACTION MODEL
With VOLUNTEER WORK

Variable	b_k	e^b_k
<i>Independent</i>		
Rate of Pay	0.124*	1.132
Medical	-0.148	0.862
Paid leave	0.220*	1.246
Flex	0.397*	1.487
Union	-0.392**	0.676
Extreme50	-0.601***	0.548
Emp Size	0.312***	1.366
Irregular	-0.289***	0.749
Co-worker	0.127*	1.135
<i>Volunteer Work</i>	0.501**	1.650
Ethnicity	0.200	1.221
Gender	-0.182	0.834
Marital St	0.201*	1.223
Health	0.436**	1.439
Global Chi-Square Statistic	98.437***	
<p><i>Note:</i> e^b_k is the exponentiated parameter estimate and represents the factor change in the odds of the outcome produced by a one unit increase in the value of the independent variable (Sell and Cleal, 2011).</p> <p>*$p<.10$; **$p<.05$; ***$p<.01$.</p> <p>n=1400</p>		

Both extreme hours ($b= -0.601$; $p<.01$) and irregular schedules ($b= -0.289$; $p<.01$) are found to be highly significant and to substantially reduce Millennials’ job satisfaction, as hypothesized. Each of these

makes it difficult for Millennials to find and maintain balance in their lives. Even if Millennials are working long hours and irregular schedules to earn more money or to keep their jobs or both, both seemingly important outcomes to Millennials, these realities do not translate into satisfaction and are soundly rejected by Millennials as the means to achieve their goals.

It was hypothesized here that union influence would negatively affect Millennials' job satisfaction. Millennials' significant individualism and confidence lead them to reject strict seniority rules and to downgrade the importance of experience on the job, tenets of union operations. What was surprising was the strength of the negative influence of unions on Millennials' satisfaction ($b = -0.392$; $p < .05$).

Given the importance of individualized supervisor support to Millennials, evidence has suggested that small establishments are more likely to address this need. The results here show that small establishment size is a highly significant positive contributor to job satisfaction ($b = 0.312$; $p < .01$). Co-worker support on the other hand, is a moderately positive significant contributor to job satisfaction ($b = 0.127$; $p < .10$). In the past, co-worker support has been found to be a significant source of help and direction for new employees. Millennials however often view their co-workers and team members as friends.

With respect to the initial primary hypothesis, volunteer work is found to positively and significantly affect Millennial job satisfaction ($b = 0.501$; $p < .05$). Volunteer work experience could provide Millennials with skills to negotiate their role and adapt to their organization and also provide their much desired intrinsic values. Intrinsic satisfaction directly increases global job satisfaction of Millennials.

MODEL 2: HYPOTHESES

Given the significance of volunteer work in Model 1 and the wide ranging effects of volunteer work on employees who do such volunteer work and the fact that Millennial employees as a whole seem to be having difficulty in the workplace, a second set of analyses is performed in which the sample is split into two groups. Equations 2a and 2b allow comparison of volunteer Millennial employees' job satisfaction with non-volunteer Millennial employees' job satisfaction.

$$\text{Job satisfaction model for Volunteers } (n=574) \quad (2a)$$

$$\text{Job satisfaction model for Non-Volunteers } (n=826) \quad (2b)$$

The primary inquiry: Do volunteer Millennial employees react differently to corporate offerings and elements of their work environment than non-volunteer Millennial employees? Could the experience of volunteer work help Millennials find meaning and interest in their work; will it help them navigate their role and adapt to their workplace?

The focus for Model 2 analysis will be on the six variables from Model 1 in which there were strong and/or unexpected results: pay (weaker, unexpected), extreme hours (strong, expected), irregular schedules (strong, expected), union coverage (strong, unexpected), small establishment size (strong, expected), and co-worker support (weaker, unexpected). Hypotheses for Model 2 are:

Hypothesis 1: Pay: Volunteer Millennial employees will react more positively to higher pay than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Even if the extrinsic factor pay is not directly linked to intrinsic values and represents the employer-practice to offer higher pay for lack of meaningfulness in the job, volunteer work experience may compensate for this lack of job meaningfulness.

Hypothesis 2: Extreme hours: Volunteer Millennial employees will react less negatively to extreme hours than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Volunteer work contributes to enhancement of collaborative on-the-job behavior as well as the job's own meaningfulness. This may give Millennials a different perspective on long work hours as a means to gain experience and with that, responsibility and challenge. It may allow them to see beyond the narrow focus of their individual goals to the wider vision of the accomplishment of organizational goals through teamwork.

Hypothesis 3: Irregular schedules: Volunteer Millennial employees will react less negatively to irregular schedules than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Volunteer work may teach employees the skills necessary to cope with the stress associated with these types of schedules. It may enable Millennials to navigate the challenge of balancing work and leisure and to persist in less-than-perfect conditions.

Hypothesis 4: Union coverage: Volunteer Millennial employees will react less negatively to union policies and practices than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Volunteer work reduces narcissism and exposes Millennials to community experiences. This may help these Millennials to re-assess the value of their co-workers' on- and off-the-job experience and the place this experience holds in the functioning of the workplace. This may further enable Millennials to appreciate the role of unions as part of the tapestry of the work environment.

Hypothesis 5: Small establishment size: Volunteer Millennial employees will react less positively to small establishment size than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Volunteer work contributes to self-esteem, a sense of control, and a sense of mastery. These promote realistic expectations and "real life" confidence that enable Millennials to achieve some level of autonomy with less need for supervision. Volunteer work may compensate for lack of meaningfulness in their jobs and enable them to persist and navigate the more complex bureaucratic culture of larger organizations.

Hypothesis 6: Co-Worker Support: Volunteer Millennial employees will react more positively to co-worker support than non-volunteer Millennial employees. Volunteer work increases employees' social resources by enhancing exposure to and connections with a more diverse community of people. This may help Millennials to navigate the various organizational socialization processes and as a result to appreciate the value of organizational knowledge embedded in their co-workers. It may also help to bridge any differences in communication styles and use of technology between themselves and their co-workers.

RESULTS: MODEL 2: COMPARISON VOLUNTEERS with NON-VOLUNTEERS

Results are shown in Table 3. Overall the global chi square statistic indicates that the Model 2 logit regressions (2a and 2b) are highly significant (Chi square statistic=99.023; p<.01 and Chi square statistic=100.210; p<.01).

Volunteer Millennials react more positively to "pay" than non-volunteer Millennials as hypothesized in hypothesis 1(b=0.134; p<.05 vs b=0.111; p<.10). Volunteer Millennials are perhaps now able to see pay just as a means to their desired lifestyle end and do not need it to be directly linked to intrinsic values.

Contrary to hypothesis 2, volunteer work experience does not reduce the highly negative significance of extreme hours compared to non-volunteer Millennials (b= -0.476; p<.01 vs b= -0.491; p<.01). Contrary to hypothesis 3, volunteer work experience does not reduce the highly negative significance of irregular hours compared to non-volunteer Millennials (b= -0.319; p<.01 vs b= -0.402; p<.01).

Volunteer work experience reduces the negative contribution to job satisfaction of union coverage as put forth in hypothesis 4 (b= -0.491; p<.10 vs b= -0.328; p<.05). The community experiences and the resultant increase in social resources of Millennial volunteers may help them to understand and accept the union's institutional rules and seniority system.

As hypothesized in hypothesis 5, volunteer work experience dramatically reduces the importance of small size establishment (b=0.197; b=p<.10 vs b=0.841; p<.01). Millennials with volunteer work experience gain personal resources that lessen the need for a smaller employer.

TABLE 3
RESULTS: MODEL 2 JOB SATISFACTION
VOLUNTEERS vs. NON-VOLUNTEERS

Variable	Volunteers		Non-Volunteers					
	b _k	e ^b _k	b _k	e ^b _k				
<i>Independent</i>								
Rate of Pay	0.134**	1.143	0.111*	1.117				
Medical	-0.051	0.950	-0.148	0.862				
Paid	0.263*	1.301	0.120	1.127				
Flex	0.400*	2.519	0.271	2.210				
Union	-0.491*	0.754	-0.328**	0.753				
Extreme50	-0.476***	2.683	-0.491***	2.697				
Emp Size	0.197*	1.217	0.841***	2.319				
Irregular	-0.319***	0.727	-0.402***	0.669				
Co-worker	0.282**	1.326	0.186*	1.204				
Ethnicity	-0.138	0.871	-0.102	0.903				
Gender	-0.123	0.884	-0.110	0.896				
Marital St	0.422*	1.525	0.531*	1.701				
Health	0.672**	1.742	0.538**	1.561				
Global Chi Square Statistic	99.023***		100.210***					
<i>Note:</i> e ^b is the exponentiated parameter estimate and represents the factor change in the odds of the outcome produced by a one unit increase in the value of the independent variable (Sell and Cleal, 2011).								
*p<.10; **p<.05; ***p<.01.								
n=574; n=826 respectively								

As hypothesized in hypothesis 6, volunteer work experience may increase perception of the helpfulness of co-worker support (0.282; p<.05 vs b=0.186; p<.10) through exposure to and connections with a more diverse community of people.

CONCLUSION

The results of *Model 1* show that although Millennials value extrinsic aspects of the job more than previous generations, pay was found to be only modestly associated with job satisfaction. This may reflect two observations suggested by the literature: one the corporate practice of offering high pay to attract Millennials without any follow up mentoring or social orientation; and two high pay may be used to distract from more serious negative aspects of job and work environment; subsequently Millennials are enlightened to these practices.

Both paid leave and flextime, highly valued by baby boomers, were expected and found to be only moderately important to Millennials' satisfaction. Although these were found to be very useful means for baby boomers to help balance work and family/leisure, Millennials may see these as more fixed means to be flexible. Flexibility to Millennials involves notions of autonomy and choosing the when, where, and how of doing their work.

Both sources of potential human workplace support to Millennials, small establishment size and co-worker support are significant positive contributors to job satisfaction. However the magnitude of the effect of establishment size is substantially greater than that of co-worker support. In seeking intrinsic

value in their work, Millennials are highly satisfied with smaller establishments where it is more likely that they find the challenge, autonomy and even responsibility that they seek. Smaller organizations may simultaneously provide supervisor attention while allowing these Millennials the flexibility in the doing of their jobs, the learning of multiple tasks, and the ability to take on responsibility in a more open-ended environment. Unlike flex time or paid leave, this is the *life-balancing flexibility Millennials seek*.

Millennials were only moderately impacted however by co-worker support. Co-workers represent a vital means to orient new employees to their workplace. The perception of co-worker support helps employees gain more job resources, resulting in more motivated and absorbed employees. Perhaps these Millennials do not have the skills to be able to perceive the potential value of this help. They will often instead socialize as friends with co-workers.

Given the current declining prevalence and influence of unions, it was hypothesized that union establishment coverage would negatively influence job satisfaction. Unions historically played an important role in the determination of compensation and job retention, and in the orientation of new employees to the work environment. However Millennials' highly significant negative reaction to union coverage means that in their overall rejection of union tenets of seniority and collectiveness, they are unwilling to see any positive union effects.

Both extreme hours and irregular schedules are soundly rejected by Millennials. Many argue that working long hours, defined here as 50 hours or more per week, reflects what some have referred to as the "new normalized intensity". For previous generations, working extreme hours was an institutionalized norm to demonstrate their commitment to the organization. After years of "proof", baby boomers held on for the extrinsic rewards. Millennials seem to need the intrinsic side of rewards immediately. Without finding meaning and interest in their work, they will not stay.

The reality of irregular schedules is that they are an employer-driven practice to make hours divisible according to employer needs only. More than likely the rejection reflects Millennials' high value of work-life balance. These schedules also contribute to the failure of many Millennials to orient themselves to the culture of the organization, *keeping these employees marginalized*. It is also likely that the types of jobs that require these schedules are unattractive in many respects, with irregular schedules just adding to these.

Volunteer work is found to be positively and highly significantly associated with Millennial employee job satisfaction. It has the potential to enhance or provide meaningfulness and build additional psychological, personal, and social resources. Millennials could then acquire skills to negotiate their role and adapt to their organization and acquire their much desired intrinsic values.

Thus the primary focus of *Model 2* was the comparison of volunteer Millennial employees' and non-volunteer Millennial employees' reactions to corporate offerings and elements of their work environment. Model 2 analysis focused on six variables from Model 1 in which there were strong and/or unexpected Millennial reactions: pay (weaker, unexpected), extreme hours (strong, expected), irregular schedules (strong, expected), union coverage (strong, unexpected), small establishment size (strong, expected), and co-worker support (weaker, unexpected).

Volunteer Millennial employees react more positively to pay than non-volunteer Millennials. Even though the extrinsic reward of pay is often not tied to the intrinsic meaning and interest of work, the potential compensating meaningfulness of volunteer work may allow volunteer Millennials to see pay as an acceptable means to a monetary lifestyle end and thus react more positively to higher pay.

The strong need that Millennials have demonstrated for close supervisor attention and aspects of intrinsic satisfaction was seemingly easier to find in smaller establishments. With an increased sense of mastery and control, Millennial volunteers may more successfully navigate the more complex, bureaucratic structure and culture of larger organizations. Millennial volunteers' "real life" confidence gained through their volunteer experiences may allow them the freedom (autonomy) to achieve their goals, the mastery skills to meet challenges, and the maturity to accept the correlation between responsibility and proven performance.

Co-worker support takes on significantly more importance for Millennial volunteers. The increase in emotional intelligence and maturity resulting from volunteer work experience may afford Millennials the

skills to navigate the various organizational socialization processes and appreciate the value of organizational knowledge embedded in their co-workers. It may also help to bridge any gaps in communication styles and use of technology between themselves and their co-workers.

For union principles and norms to function, employees must be able to conceive the collective. Millennials with volunteer work experience become less narcissistic and learn the value of community. As a result they may be better able to assess and accept the value of their co-workers' on- and off-the-job experience and the place this experience holds in the functioning of the workplace. For unions, this could mean Millennials' individualistic vision and goals could embrace the value of union goals.

The experience of volunteer work does not reduce the negative significant reaction to extreme hours or to irregular schedules. Although volunteer work experience contributes to enhancement of collaborative on-the-job behavior and organizational commitment, the negative effect of extreme hours on job satisfaction remains strong. Millennials, even those with volunteer work experience, soundly reject the "new normalized intensity". Likewise although Millennials often acquire better coping strategies through their volunteer work experience, the potential application of these skills did not change Millennials' rejection of the employer-driven practice of irregular schedules.

In final conclusion, experiences such as volunteer work experience have the potential to dramatically change both employee and employer workplace experiences. Given all the benefits of volunteer work experience discussed above including the compensating meaningfulness of volunteer work, volunteer Millennial employees are able to accept pay as simply income and recognize co-workers as valuable assets. It changes their reaction to both small establishment size and union establishment coverage. With this experience, Millennials are better equipped to understand and navigate both organizational and union culture and to both appreciate and envision the convergence of their individual goals with those of these organizations. However Millennials with and without volunteer work experience reject both the new normalized intensity and the employer-driven practice of irregular schedules.

IMPLICATIONS

Regardless of the job or the skill level required of the job, employee turnover is costly and disruptive. Employee retention however is not a singular event but rather part of an ongoing process. The process begins with employee recruitment, continues with on-the-job learning and hopefully ends with productivity and organizational commitment. There is no such thing as the perfect employee or the perfect job. For the employment process to work, both employer and employee must adjust and adapt, teach and learn, in recognition of individual and organizational needs and goals. Clearly volunteer work experience has the substantive potential to help employees and employers in their quest to "fit" together.

The modest but provocative findings of this paper suggest that volunteer work experience is one experience that has the potential to significantly affect Millennials' reactions to their job and their work environment. In doing so, volunteer work experience facilitates the required adaptations and adjustments, learning and mentoring that must occur. Volunteer work experience has the potential to change Millennials' reactions to unions, large companies, and co-workers. These changes can precipitate positive changes to union and corporate policies. Millennials' individualism, seeing people as individuals rather than members of a group, could foster both union and corporate recruitment of underrepresented individuals. Mentoring programs can and should be available, but can now be designed for a higher level of functionality as opposed to day-to-day supervision.

However corporate practices using pay as an intrinsically unconnected enticement for new recruits, requirements of extreme hours of work unconnected to explicit individual productivity goals, and schedules designed solely for narrow definitional cost reduction goals appear significant obstacles to Millennials' job satisfaction, even those with volunteer work experience. Employers will not retain Millennial employees until they re-examine some of their unpalatable practices and institutionalized norms and re-focus their attention to the value of human resources – training, health and respect – otherwise all their recruitment efforts will be for naught.

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