9. The new Millennial global leaders: What a difference a generation makes!

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INTRODUCTION

Our observations of successful global leaders in much of the literature to date are drawn from individuals who began their careers before the effects of globalization began to be felt significantly. However, times are changing, along with an understanding about leading and being led by a new generation of workers. In this chapter, we analyse and reflect on our current knowledge of the generation born in the global era that is now emerging into positions of leadership. In the popular media, this cohort, born between 1982 and 2004 (Strauss & Howe, 1991),[1] is known as Generation Y (Sheahan, 2005), Generation Next (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000), Generation Net (Tapscott, 2009), Generation Me (Twenge, 2006), Trophy Kids (Alsop, 2008), Generation Whine (Bennet, 2012), and the Millennial Generation (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Howe & Strauss, 2000). In this chapter we will use the label 'Millennial generation' and refer to individuals as 'Millennials'.

Much has been written about how different Millennials are from those who have gone before them. However, Millennials are still relative newcomers to the world of work. The oldest university-educated Millennials entered the workforce just over a decade ago; the youngest will not enter the workforce for some years to come. Current writings on Millennials therefore naturally focus on their status as secondary school and university students and newcomers to work. Little has thus far been written on what this generation will bring to positions of leadership. This is an important observation, as any changes to our current understanding of global leadership may come sooner than we think. The Millennial generation is moving ahead quickly, with many members of the generational cohort expecting to assume leadership positions at an earlier stage in their careers than we have seen previously (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Employers are being encouraged to alter the traditional structures, culture and career paths of their organizations to be more attractive to Millennial top talent (Deloitte, 2009). If organizations widely heed this advice owing to the 'war for talent' (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001; Ready, Hill, & Conger, 2008), we might quickly find significant numbers of Millennials in positions of higher responsibility than previous generations were at a similar age. Global assignments are clearly an inevitable part of this development. We may therefore now be on the cusp of the move of the first Millennials into global leadership roles.

Over recent years, 'global leadership' has arisen as a distinct term spawning considerable academic research and writing, including this handbook with a focus on making a difference with global leadership. Understanding what constitutes a successful global leader has commonly revolved around identifying ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving as well as the associated competencies of global leaders (Bird & Osland, 2004; Bird, Medenhall, Stevens,

& Oddou, 2010). Owing to the paradoxes, dilemmas, or contradictions (Holt & Seki, 2012) often inherent in the challenges that global leaders confront day in and day out, interest is shifting toward the process of global leadership, for example, what the role of the global leader encompasses, the actions that the global leader takes in that role, and how others interact with the leader in the course of that role.

Butler, Zander, Mockaitis, and Sutton (2012) argue that successful global leaders develop the necessary focus, drive, and people-orientation (Holt & Seki, 2012) to confront these challenges by acting out three important and interrelated roles, that of boundary spanner, blender and bridge maker. These three roles have been identified as key for leading effectively within the current global environment, in which most global leaders are Generation Xers (born 1964–82), or Baby Boomers (born 1946–64).[2] The rise of the Millennial generation leads us to review how fit for purpose these three roles will be in the future by posing three interrelated questions: first, will the dynamics of work change with the arrival of Millennials to the workplace, and how? Second, what are the implications of changing work dynamics on the role of global leadership within organizations? Specifically, how will Millennials cope with taking on global leader roles? And third, how will work change when Millennials take on global leadership?

We address the first question by drawing upon research about intergenerational workplace relations. We organize our discussion around four themes which reoccur in the literature: the birth of the digital native (or relationship with technology), the rise of narcissism (or relationship with others), the college-bound versus the rest (or place in society), and Millennials around the word (or place of birth). We address the second question by collapsing and juxtaposing the two relationship themes into one theme and, separately, the two place themes into another theme. This is followed by a discussion addressing the third question by drawing on the reconceptualization of the three global leadership roles and how these could be enacted by Millennials as global leaders. In doing so, we undertake to identify both the new strengths of and the new challenges inherent in the process of global leadership to discuss how Millennial leaders will make a difference to the world of global work.

HOW ARE MILLENNIALS CHANGING THE DYNAMICS OF WORK?

The Millennial generation is the largest generation in modern history to enter the workforce (Kwoh, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2018a). The first college-educated members of this generation started in full-time employment in the early 2000s (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Hershatter and Epstein (2010) portray Millennials as requiring stability, structure, and clear rules in the workplace, centralized decision making and well-defined responsibilities, and as being high-maintenance and demanding of their managers' time. Epstein and Howes (2008, as cited in Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) and Schroth (2019) found that clear feedback and career paths motivate this generation. At the same time, Millennials expect work–life balance, and are far less likely to label themselves as work-centric compared with the Baby Boomer generation (Anderson, Bauer, Griffith, & Buckley, 2017; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). They are also willing to make decisions that favour lifestyle over career (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Anecdotal evidence from organizations points to such difficulties in retaining Millennials, because of their need for flexible working hours and instant gratification in the workplace and their tendency to be easily bored (Anderson et al., 2017; Kwoh, 2012). When Millennials were

interviewed on what they think characterize their generation, this response was illustrative: 'Not loyal to companies? Nope. We value ourselves enough to put our well-being ahead of that of a massive corporation' (Lemiski, 2018).

The Millennial generation is more self-focused than earlier generations (Weber, 2017), and look for work to be 'fun' (Moore, 2013). A 2010 study by Pew Research points to further differences in the way Millennials see themselves. The qualities by which Baby Boomers define themselves are work ethic, being respectful, and their values and morals; Millennials define themselves in terms of technology, music/pop culture, superior intelligence, and clothes (Kwoh, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2010; Stewart, Oliver, Cravens, & Oishi, 2017). While differences at work are being experienced in early career, how enduring will they be as Millennials mature and take on leadership responsibilities?

It is difficult to determine from cross-sectional studies whether differences between generational cohorts are due to true generation differences in values, or due to differences in age or career stage. A number of studies have compared work values across generations; studies including the Millennial generation are emerging and have focused mainly on comparisons with Generation X and the Baby Boomer generation. Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance (2010) conducted a study of high school seniors in the United States (USA) from three generations – Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials – and collected data at three points in time over a 30-year period. Their findings showed that Millennials, more than the other generations, place significantly greater value on leisure, viewing work as less central in their lives; they were also less likely to work overtime and would stop working if they had enough money. Millennials were less likely to value extrinsic rewards (e.g., status, salary, advancement, promotion) than Generation Xers, but more likely to do so than Baby Boomers; of the three generations, Millennials valued intrinsic rewards (e.g., interesting job, learning new skills, and using skills) the least. Millennials also valued social interactions and social rewards at work significantly less than either of the other generations. A need for belonging or interpersonal interactions at work – possibly because of the intensity of online social networking – was not a priority for this generational cohort. At the same time, Millennials' locus of control was more external, which meant they experienced little sense of impact on the unfolding of events. They found the modern workplace stressful and ambiguous. Not surprisingly, anxiety and depression were more common in this generation. Twenge et al. (2010) summarize their findings about the Millennial generation as one that does not want to work hard, with less need for face-to-face social interactions, but one that wants more money and status – an apparent disconnect between expectations and reality, or possibly a display of overconfidence in this generation. Another example of a cross-sectional study including three generations is that of Gursoy, Chi, and Karadag (2013). Compared to the other two generations, Millennials were: less likely to place importance on work centrality, more likely to challenge conventional norms, more likely to value work–life balance, more likely to need direction and leadership, and more likely to expect recognition. Further evidence that Millennials think of work differently is for instance that they don't link organizational commitment with workplace culture, as earlier generations have done, not even if it is a supportive and attentive type of culture (Stewart et al., 2017), leading the authors to conclude that 'differences in generations might radically change how to manage, motivate, and retain a workforce' (Stewart et al., 2017: 49). In a similar vein, but comparing with generation Z that comes after the Millennials, Schroth (2019) finds that Millennials prioritize open communication and feedback from their leaders (42 percent).

Our review of the relatively limited available intergenerational comparative research reveals that there are some real differences between the new Millennial generation in early career, on the one hand, and Generation X and the Baby Boomer generations in early career, on the other hand. However, to answer our first question regarding the effects that entry into the workforce by Millennials will have on the nature and dynamics of work, we need to move beyond surface-level differences and dig deeper to consider core differences by reflecting on the four reoccurring themes that we have identified earlier in this chapter.

The Birth of the Digital Native

The Internet protocol suite was standardized in 1982, at just the same time as the first Millennials were being born, allowing for the first-time instant access to a worldwide network. This is a generation that has grown up with technology, and its members are often referred to as 'digital natives' (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Tapscott, 2009). However, access to the Internet continues to vary by world region. According to ITU 2018 figures, over 3.9 billion people, or 51.2 percent of the world's population, are now using the Internet. In the developed world 51.3 percent of the population was online in 2005, 13 years later we find that 80.9 percent are online. In contrast, in the developing world, figures have increased seven-fold from 7.7 percent in 2005 to 45.3 percent today. Europe has the highest Internet penetration rate with 84 percent of households online followed by the Americas at 65 percent. In contrast, in Asia and the Pacific, 48 percent of households are online, and in Africa, just 18 percent of households are using the Internet (ITU, 2017). Nonetheless, the evidence is clear: the world is getting smaller quickly, and so the Internet access gap is likely to narrow rapidly alongside technological advances.

Young people are at the forefront of developing technologies with 70 percent online worldwide. Most young people (94 percent) in the developed world are online compared to only 30 percent in the least developed countries. Nine out of ten young people who are not using the Internet are located in the two regions of Africa and Asia-Pacific (ITU, 2017). The lack of Internet access is linked to low incomes, but this obstacle is increasingly circumvented in developing nations through advances in mobile phone technology; portability makes access to energy sources, sharing of devices, and the like much simpler. A recent Pew Research Center study (2018b) of six sub-Saharan countries indicates that 75–91 percent of adults own a mobile phone and regularly use it to text, access social media, and make payments. At the same time, most are basic (or 'flip') phones rather than smartphones where a significant ownership gap exists on the basis of wealth, education, and gender. This gap notwithstanding, younger Millennials from around the world are more likely to be digital natives compared with previous generations.

Being a digital native has some obvious positive implications, e.g., demonstrated ease with multitasking, information acquisition, social networking, and virtual relationships (Kwoh, 2012; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). However, some scientists have found that a reliance on technology from such an early age causes the brain to be wired differently (Small & Vorgan, 2008) resulting in more difficulties with interpersonal interaction, especially face-to-face interaction and non-verbal communication. As the world becomes increasingly digitally connected, electronic working continues apace, and face-to-face interaction difficulties are likely to be exacerbated and so influence the nature of global work.

The Rise of the Narcissist

Shortly before the birth of the first Millennial, and drawing on Freud's much earlier work, Lasch (1979) argued that a societal 'culture of narcissism' was on the rise. Today, nearly four decades after the publication of Lasch's work, narcissism (Cusk, 2013; Lasch, 1979) is the subject of a wide-ranging debate ranging from 'healthy' narcissism to the 'malignant' self (Vaknin, 1999) and the high level of stress and anxiety about making the right choices in life (Atwood & Scholtz, 2008), and on to the relationship of narcissism with banality and creativity, societal demands for autobiographical narrative, and the search for self, identity, and love. The term is popularly understood 'as a shorthand for the general idea of self-obsession' (Cusk, 2013). A self-interest focus (combined with a lack of interest in others) identified in Weber's (2017) analysis of personal values confirms such narcissistic tendencies in Millennials.

Lasch (1979) might be thought of as the parent (of the culture of narcissism) with the world now living through the rise of 'his' social media offspring (Cusk, 2013). Facebook (from 2004), Twitter (from 2006), Instagram (from 2010), and Snapchat (from 2011) were all founded by Millennials. 'Selfie' (from 2002), a photograph taken by you of yourself to be uploaded to a social medium, was chosen by Oxford Dictionaries as the 2013 word of the year. The digital native melds with that of the narcissist.

Millennials' sense of entitlement and importance seems to stem from educational systems focused on the (over)development of self-esteem and exacerbated by overinvolved parenting approaches by a generation of parents who felt let down by the system and who are themselves uploading selfies on social media. Following Lasch (1979), there has been a long-standing trend to narcissism and so all American generations, and not just Millennials, are affected to some extent. Narcissism seems also to be not just an American phenomenon. Over the last 30 years, the World Health Organization has documented a worldwide rise in narcissistic tendencies (Konrath, O'Brien, & Hsing, 2011; Twenge & Foster, 2010). Narcissism is expected to remain a strong, but regionally varied, feature of global work for the foreseeable future. To be noted is that Millennials could be characterized as 'narcissist light'. The clinical definition of a narcissist personality disorder is associated with far-reaching and much more severe consequences to the people around them than what is assumed in the writings on Millennials as narcissists.

The College-Bound Elite versus the Rest

Being a digital native and a narcissist seem to be on their way to becoming enduring global features of the Millennial generation around the world, but these features may be experienced differently by Millennials depending on their socio-economic background. Levenson (2010) offers an alternative view to the success of the demand-wielding Millennial employee. He argues that reports attesting to the power that Millennials wield in the workplace seriously overestimate the actual situation. Levenson (2010) states that, in the USA, only those educated to first-degree level (31 percent) might be in a position to make significant economic demands at work (e.g., salary, hours, and place of work).

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) contrast US 'college-bound' Millennials with 'the rest'. The college-bound are anxious to attend the most prestigious higher education institution to which they can be accepted as they perceive a strong correlation between the institution's status and their own job prospects. They have also been raised from birth by their helicopter parents

(a term common in the USA, Canada, and the United Kingdom (UK)) or curling parents (a term coined in Denmark by Bent Hougaard and commonly used in Sweden) to achieve. The helicopter metaphor alludes to parents hovering over their children to keep a close watch on them and sort any problems on their behalf while the curling metaphor alludes to the parents 'sweeping away' any barriers and increasing friction in the path of their child, as curling players do to aid the curling stone to hit the target. Even though college-bound Millennials comprise a small proportion of their generation, they may be not only just as coddled as the rest of the Millennial generation, sharing characteristics such as valuing work–life balance, needing direction and leadership, and expecting recognition, but also highly being achievement-oriented. College-bound Millennials are optimistic (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007), and tend to believe that ideas matter more than experience (NCF, 2012). They couple this with an entrepreneurial mind-set (NCF, 2012) and a desire to challenge conventional norms (Gursoy et al., 2013). In addition, US college-bound Millennials seem to be less loyal than the elites of the generations that preceded them, having come to expect institutional accommodation (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) from their earlier life experiences. They want to call the shots not only when they accept a job, but after they are in work; employers who do not comply may have trouble attracting and retaining the talent they so desperately need to compete against the rise of other economic regions as global competition continues to increase. As the employment base continues to shift (Levenson, 2010), US-based employers might be faced with working increasingly closely with an emerging 'elite' – a small segment of highly educated, highly achievement-oriented, highly coddled, and not very loyal digital natives – to create more tailored jobs and career paths than has been the case to date.

Around the world, 25–34 year olds have the highest rate of tertiary attainment of all adults exceeding other groups. In 2017, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD_ average was 44 percent for this group of young adults and an increase of 10 percent on figures from a decade earlier. In contrast, the OECD average in the same year for the 55–64 age group was a full 17 percent lower at 27.2 percent. At the same time, the proportion and growth of Millennials with tertiary education varies significantly among member countries. Canada, Japan, and Korea have a significantly greater proportion of 25–34 year olds with tertiary education (e.g., in 2017 Canada had 61 percent; Japan 60 percent; Korea 70 percent) than did the USA at 48 percent (OECD, 2019). Equivalent figures for India, China, and Brazil range from 14 to 18 percent. Between 2000 and 2010, tertiary attainment in the USA grew on average 1.3 percentage points a year, compared to 3.7 percentage points annually for OECD countries overall (OECD, 2012). Ranked 13th in the world for tertiary attainment of 25–34 year-olds in 2017 (OECD, 2019), the USA is likely to find itself overtaken in terms of not just tertiary, but specifically degree educational attainment by more countries in the coming years (OECD, 2012). The shifting global balance in educational attainment also allows for the emergence of new elites around the world. Moreover, the elites are on the move, drawn by what Zander (2000) refers to as the magnetism of so-called 'Cathedrals of Modernity'. Citizens of other countries move across the globe in search of more suitable environments for rapid self-realization than where they spent their formative years and were educated.

While some (e.g., Atkinson, 1984; Lepak & Snell, 1999) have advocated a differentiated workforce since the first Millennials were toddlers, the resulting 'war for talent' seems now to be shifting from one where employers are in charge to one where these A-list players are. In an even more extreme depiction of events, Martin (2008) argues that organizational power is shifting away from capital and towards 'little gods', those who can distinguish themselves

through their extraordinary talent especially in the arena of technology and around whom there are currently no governance structures. Leveraging their extraordinary educational success with exceptional technological skills and extreme achievement orientation, these 'little gods' will form a new 'super elite'. And, if US employers are to compete with the increasingly tough economic players from countries such as India and China, the power wielded by 'little gods' may be heightened further as, not just elites, but also super elites are now appearing in the four corners of the world.

Millennials around the World

Much of the current writing on Millennials, including most of the work reviewed thus far, focuses on Millennials in the USA. In this section, we aim to consider if and how Millennials might really think, feel, and behave differently around the world, taking the USA as our point of departure. In a review of American society, Barone (2004) notes that some sectors, such as business, are hard, or competitive, and others, such as education, are soft, or coddling. He notes too that the relative hardness/softness of these and other sectors shifts over time. Older US Millennials spent their years in a very coddling education sector. During the unfolding of the Millennial generation itself, Barone argues that education has been hardening and so younger US Millennials have been educated in a somewhat more competitive school environment. Some of the needy behaviour seen in older US Millennials while they are at school may therefore have already reduced somewhat in younger Millennials and may disappear altogether once these younger Millennial students finish their education and enter the hard workplace.

We are starting to see references to those born during the Millennial era from elsewhere in the world (e.g., Alsop, 2008; Steelcase, 2010), but we are at the very earliest stages in understanding whether American Millennials are significantly different from those from any other part of the world. Nations around the world have been influenced by different factors which may differentially impact the Millennial generation. For example, Chinese Millennials have grown up with the one-child policy. This younger generation of Chinese is thus more individualistic than those that have gone before it (Moore, 2005). The vast literature on the persistence of cultural values (e.g., Adler, 1983; Hofstede, 1980; Ralston, Holt, Terpstra, & Kai-Cheng, 1997; Ronen & Shenkar, 1985; Schwartz, 1992; Webber, 1969) underlines the robustness of value differences moving into the future even if there are also growing similarities (e.g., Bond & King, 1985; Tung, 2008; Woldu, Budhwa, & Parkes, 2006), creating a crossvergence of values which is continuing to unfold in complex ways (Ralston, 2008; Ralston, Gustafson, Cheung, & Terpstra, 1993). We have evidence of the persistence of certain values over time, and change in others (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; van Hoorn, 2019). Notably, Inglehart and Baker (2000) is a pre-Millennial study, but they find that there are fewer value differences across generations in the low-income and developing societies. Intergenerational value changes were mostly found among the more advanced societies, with the exception of the USA characterized by more traditional religious and conservative values, while the Nordic countries in contrast are more change-oriented (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). In more recent work van Hoorn (2019) demonstrates how certain values persist while others change across generations in converging or diverging patterns.

Steelcase (2010) conducted one of the more comprehensive surveys of Millennial characteristics in countries outside of the USA, with a focus on India and China. The findings confirmed many similarities to US Millennial studies, for instance, a heightened focus on a selfish or

narcissistic orientation and ease of communication technology interaction, although cultural subtleties in value interpretation and prevalence or depth of the characteristics are not captured in the study format. The effect of enduring and/or shifting value differences may also be heightened or diminished across whole societies depending on the proportion of the society that Millennials comprise (Tilford, 2018). In the USA, Millennials comprise approximately 22 percent of the population whereas in China they comprise about 25 percent. However, in absolute terms, the number of Millennials in China is greater than the entire population of the USA. Nearly nine out of ten Millennials live in emerging economies. Small value changes are thus magnified by the overwhelming numbers of Millennials in these countries.

Value differences permeate the workplace, affecting many aspects of work itself. These include empowerment (Zander, 2002), teamwork (Butler, 2006), and leadership (Mockaitis, 2005; Zander, 1997) to note but a very few examples from our own work. These differences suggest that the relative coddling/competitive balance of the education and work sectors is likely to vary around the world. For example, in much of Europe, secondary school education is very competitive, whilst business was in recent decades comparatively more coddling. Since the 2008 economic crisis, European business has hardened. Millennials from this continent are likely to be less needy when leaving school compared to US Millennials of the same age, but needier than earlier generations of school-leaving Europeans. It is likely too that the difference in the relative hardness of the work environments of post-crisis Northern Europe and the USA has shrunk, leading to increased similarity in the young Millennials from these two regions notwithstanding significant remaining differences in cultural values.

The increased physical and virtual mobility of the world's population play a significant role in the crossvergence of values. Mobility has also resulted in a higher relative proportion of the current Millennial generation being born or raised bi- or multicultural. They might also form part of the growing numbers of 'third-culture kids' growing up abroad owing to parents' international work assignments (Selmer & Lam, 2004; Tarique & Weisbord, 2013; Useem, 1993). Those bi- or multicultural individuals who successfully integrate their cultures are cognitively highly flexible and behaviourally highly adaptive and so are likely not just to cope especially well with the demands of global work as cultural differences and similarities continue to shift, but to use their capabilities to leverage the mix of cultural values to their own advantage (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Fitzsimmons, 2013; Lücke & Roth, 2008, Lücke, Kostova, & Roth, 2014).

We now turn to considering whether these digitally native narcissistically college-educated Millennials, who are, for now, more often found in the developed world, will take on and cope with the three global leadership roles.

HOW WILL MILLENNIALS COPE WITH TAKING ON THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ROLES OF BOUNDARY SPANNING, BLENDING, AND BRIDGE MAKING?

In this section, we briefly outline and reconceptualize each of the three global leader roles with respect to Millennials. For each role, we organize our reconceptualization firstly around relationships (considering individual relationships with technology and others) and secondly around place (considering place in society and of birth). Juxtaposing digital natives with narcissists and the American college-educated with those from other parts of the world allows

us to begin to shed light on potentially shifting and growing differences in the enactment of global leader roles between current and future generations.

Boundary Spanners

The first global leader role is that of the boundary spanner. It is also the role with the most developed literature. Boundary spanning in organizations is not new (for a review see Johnson & Duxbury, 2010). Boundary spanners in organizations actively engage in the development of linkages with the external environment to ensure the flow of information and resources and exert influence on stakeholders in achieving organizational objectives (Johnson & Duxbury, 2010).

In global work environments, the role of the boundary spanner is crucial for effective leadership where work crosses national and other boundaries on a daily basis. Effective global leaders are able to 'leverage the skills, resources, and values of others, as well as one's own social ties in multiple locations' (Butler et al., 2012: 246). They have an established network of social ties in multiple locations. They recognize the value of these resources and know how and when to tap into them, resulting in linkages among different groups that foster goal attainment. This in turn ensures the flow of information, skills, and resources that is a key outcome of boundary-spanning activities.

In the expatriate literature, numerous boundary-spanning activities have been identified, including: building relationships, serving as a conduit of information and knowledge, communicating, negotiating, and representing the organization to external agents (Au & Fukuda, 2002; Caligiuri, 1997; Harzing, 2001; Johnson & Duxbury, 2010). However, despite the importance of boundary spanning, few individuals are recognized as boundary spanners within multinational organizations (Mäkelä, Barner-Rasmussen, Ehrnrooth, & Koveshnikov, 2019), which perhaps can be explained by a lack of necessary skills related to interacting with people (Barner-Rasmussen Ehrnrooth, Koveshnikov, & Mäkelä, 2014; Johnson & Duxbury, 2010). In a qualitative study of 84 expatriates, Johnson and Duxbury (2010) identified 'developing interpersonal relationships' as a salient theme in 61 percent of the boundary-spanning episodes that the expatriates had experienced.

Narcissistic digital native boundary spanners

To leverage opportunities across boundaries, global leaders need to use people skills to tap into available, but 'unseen' information, knowledge, and resources. Millennials are better at multitasking, responding to visual stimulation, and filtering information owing to differences in neural circuitry (Small & Vorgan, 2008). Millennials may excel at web-based information searches, but they seem also to want all information to be accessible at the touch of a button and have little experience in putting together solid presentations based on deep interpretation (Carr, 2008). Whilst these Millennials might be quick at accessing information, this is but the first piece of the information puzzle which needs to be put in place to leverage knowledge and resources as a boundary spanner. The emphasis on digital relationships and scanning for information corresponds to greater difficulty in interpersonal interaction, particularly that which is face to face and non-verbal (Small & Vorgan, 2008). Given that our current understanding of boundary spanning presents the real opportunity-leveraging skill as people- rather than task-oriented, a decreased desire to seek out social interactions and a reduced desire for social rewards in the work setting could lead to interpersonal interactions becoming more

pragmatic. The extent to which this may matter would depend on the benefit of information gathered serendipitously through interpersonal interactions meeting social needs. As they have larger personal (virtual) networks than Generation Xers and Baby Boomers, Millennials are likely to find more and better ways to interact than those 'older' generations can even imagine, contributing to a different feel of organizations over time. Even now, making contact on the move is a reality, and robotic avatars which can 'meet around the office cooler' (or wherever it is avatars will gather) are being tested.

The necessary people skills required by boundary spanners go beyond socializing to identifying, analysing, and integrating business-relevant information, and doing so with people in faraway places. Presenting needs to business audiences across a boundary-spanning environment may be challenging for Millennials, who are less apt in these other domains than previous generations. However good their general and virtual social-networking skills, they may be less skilled at the higher-level opportunity leveraging aspects. This lack of skill may be reinforced by a desire for continued institutional (organizational) accommodation stemming from the narcissistic tendencies developed during childhood. Supportive demands from supervisors for Millennials to increase the robustness and subtleties of the data they collect should be possible without excessive pushing back from subordinates (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). However, unless Millennials receive the guidance they need to develop the skills to draw out and evaluate information effectively (i.e., and not rely on a 'sample' of their social media friends), they may well be less rather than more successful as boundary spanners than Generation Xers, with global variation in success arising from societal variation in levels of narcissism around the world.

College-educated boundary spanners around the world
As college-educated Millennials move into the workforce and take up positions as global leaders, they can be expected to further develop their social ties in the traditional manner through the seeking of opportunities to work abroad. For previous generations, working abroad has been a select path for a chosen few, providing new experiences and career variety as well as increased challenges. The opportunities for and movement of individuals is now more easily achieved and not limited to the college-educated. Given Millennials' propensity to become easily bored, the desire for international challenges is predicted to remain. The attraction, however, may not just be variety, but could well be combined with the expectation of rapid progression in terms of money and status. The latter is reflected in their destinations of choice whereby they hold a preference for developed nations such as the USA, UK, and Australia (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007). This desire for globe-trotting life and work experiences and the specific destination preferences seems to hold for Millennials from both developed and developing nations alike. This is good news for employers based in the fast-growing economies of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey) nations who want to send their young employees overseas to continue to increase their global competitiveness. However, the Millennials' desire for work opportunities in the developed world is not such good news for employers based in that part of the world hoping to send young leaders to newly flourishing nations to expand their global reach, exacerbating the competitive pressures identified earlier.

Employers might persuade college-educated Millennials to sojourn in developing countries by involving them directly in the design of the international work opportunity. This approach is not significantly different from current work engagement practices in use with Generation

Xers or Baby Boomers, who are earmarked as 'talent'. This move to more accommodation might be a matter of degree rather than a step change for employers. However, if Millennial narcissism is not just the result of soft education and an element of immaturity (Barone, 2004) but, as Lasch (1979) has argued, a larger societal trend, then persuading Millennials to take on the hard work of international postings to less-desired locations may prove very challenging. A career focus on developed nations together with increased use of short-term international assignments (e.g., Collings, Scullion, & Morley, 2007; Mayerhofer, Hartmann, & Herbert, 2004) may limit the diversity of cultural skills developed over time in global leaders from North America and Europe, leading to a diminished and more specialized application of the boundary-spanning role in those regions. In other regions of the world, cultural competency may broaden with increased use of international assignments, leading to enhanced boundary-spanning skills.

Blenders

The second global role is that of the blender. The term blender was introduced into the literature by Butler et al. (2012) in their analysis of the roles leaders play in global teams. The idea of a blend resonates with that of 'cultural fusion' as used by Janssens and Brett (2006). 'A blend can be understood as a strong new "whole" which nevertheless retains the clear individual elements of which that whole is comprised, such as the sound blends found in language (e.g., "str" in "strategy")' (Butler, 2012: 248). Both the group and the individual are thus equally, but differently, valued.

   Much work is now being carried out by global teams. The global team is by definition globally diverse – heterogeneous, comprised of members of different backgrounds, skills, and expectations. A global leader, acting as a blender, creates high-performance teams even 'on the fly' (Janssens & Brett, 2006). The successful blender is interpersonally skilled, valuing each team member for his or her uniqueness and individual contribution (Hewstone & Brown, 1986), while simultaneously engendering feelings of team unity throughout the group as a whole through the identification of superordinate goals (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000).

   It is easy for global teams to become dysfunctional, or marginally effective, because of the emergence of subgroups or cultural fault lines (Butler et al., 2012), especially in 'in-between teams' (Butler, 2010). The blender helps globally diverse teams to avoid such difficulties by skilled management of affect within the team (for more on managing emotion in teams see Chapter 7 in this volume). By developing and maintaining relationships with each individual and subgroup, liking is increased (Pittinsky, 2010); by creating a group-level focus on superordinate goals, dislike is decreased (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000).

Narcissistic digital native blenders
To manage affect successfully with global teams requires considerable cultural competence. However, Millennials (especially those without the benefit of a bi- or multicultural start in life) may be worse at face-to-face interaction and deciphering non-verbal cues (Small & Vorgan, 2008, as cited in Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) than previous generations. This suggests two possibilities. It might be that, when such individuals act as leaders of global teams, their less-skilled management of affect leads to team interaction unravelling. A second possibility is that team interaction might start as or shift to become predominantly or wholly virtual. Growing up with social networking might enhance Millennials' skills in developing and main-

taining positive relationships with each and every team member and fostering positive affect (e.g., liking) within dyads across the team. Team interaction might equally or even be more effective in such circumstances even if we do not yet know the full impact of purely virtual relationships.

The heightened narcissism of many Millennials may temper the experience of virtual team blending by global leaders even where that team experience is positive (especially where the global leader is not bicultural). Expectations of organizational accommodation might remain largely unmet with work–life imbalance becoming more prevalent when all work is conducted virtually, owing to hard work environments and where parents are not welcome to intervene (Barone, 2004). Not all Millennials who find themselves in such positions will have the leverage available to the college-educated. They may remain for long periods with their organizations with their productivity suffering and so too that of their organizations. Given increasing global competitiveness, organizations can ill afford weakness of this sort, a weakness which might become difficult for organizations, especially those based in the USA, to recognize, as Millennials increasingly populate organizations.

College-educated blenders around the world

Many Millennials worldwide should step naturally into the blender role given a greater generational team orientation (Borges, Manuel, Elam, & Jones, 2010), and a focus on collaboration (CFC, 2002), and as such they might be more adept at blending than previous generations. Millennials are purportedly more tolerant of those from other ethnic groups than previous generations, as well as valuing diversity more (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007), providing a different starting point for this generation in the blending role. A higher proportion of Millennials is being born into bi- or even multicultural situations, e.g., have parents who are from two different ethnic backgrounds and/or cultures and/or grow up as 'third-culture kids' (Useem, 1993). A bi- or multicultural background enables the individual to straddle two cultural worlds and to more effectively receive and send verbal and non-verbal communication across cultural boundaries. Interpersonal tensions may be avoided altogether or identified and addressed more quickly. The bicultural blender can sell superordinate team goals using culturally adapted affect management which encourages the belonging of all team members and reduces interpersonal dislike throughout the group.

College-educated bicultural Millennials who recognize the growing importance of both interpersonal skills and team working may thrive given opportunities to act as blenders through leadership of global teams. Blending may be a step to career advancement, which high-achieving college-educated Millennials from around the world would have on top of their wish list. Indeed, this opportunity might be one key to convincing Millennials to take assignments in less-developed economies. It is unlikely though that all Millennials, whether bicultural or not, will act in this way. Super-elite Millennials, those who can act as 'little gods', may not find that being a team player, even a team leader, is a means to their desired end, and so opportunities may be avoided, negotiated away with the threat of departure, and blending skills not deployed.

Bridge Makers

The third global role is that of bridge maker. The boundary-spanning leader links people, resources, ideas, and information spanning across different groupings of people from wher-

ever they are located around the world. The blender role brings team members and subgroups together, not just intellectually, but especially emotionally, wherever those individuals are located around the world. But enacting both these roles successfully is not possible without a sense about different cultures. Effective global leaders also act as bridge makers (Butler et al., 2012; Liljegren & Zander, 2012).

Bridge makers can be said to have a cosmopolitan disposition defined by engagement with the 'cultural other' while facilitating interaction between people across national cultural boundaries (Levy, Lee, Jonsen, & Peiperl, 2019). Such interactions can take place within global teams (virtual as well as face-to-face teams), departments, or other organizational units with a diverse workforce. Bridge makers need to be culturally insightful, good communicators, and note others, e.g., their actions, reactions, expectations, and other manifestations of their cultural background (Abreu & Peloquin, 2004). The bridge maker leads other organizational members in activities, discussions, or tasks that foster dialogue, collaboration, and understanding in such a way that their uniqueness, and their value in providing different perspectives, know-how, and experience, is appreciated. The essence of bridge making is being able to recognize cultural differences when these surface in interpersonal interactions, to acknowledge, include, clarify, incorporate and facilitate these in such a way as to enable positive individual, team, and organizational outcomes.

Narcissistic digital native bridge makers

Being digital natives, Millennials are less comfortable with face-to-face interaction, and have difficulties in deciphering non-verbal cues (Small & Vorgan, 2008, as cited in Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) making it difficult for them to bridge make. Not only do they feel awkward and uneasy about interpersonal interaction, some would even say that they shy away from it, avoiding telephone calls, and only communicating via digital media (BBC, 2013; Teitel, 2018). On a typical day Millennials are said to communicate around 26 percent in person while 74 percent of their communication is carried out digitally (Schroht, 2019). This not only bodes for difficulties in bridge making, but also in gaining the experience necessary to be able to bridge make.

On a positive note, however, Millennials as digital natives have the skills, such as social networking and digital experience, to excel at virtual (or distance) leadership. With their ease in digital-based communication, and bringing with them the emerging simplified 'digital lingua franca' (from text messaging), they could develop virtual collaboration in such a way that it would limit language-caused misunderstandings. One thing to bear in mind, though, is that other Millennials around the world may not be equally digital savvy, due to lack of access and experience with digital-based communication. Bridge making still presupposes a cultural understanding that may go beyond Millennials' experience. They could be prone to making the same mistake as those before them of taking for granted that people around the world, in their case especially other Millennials, are similar in attitudes, expectations, and life ideals. The downside of such a similarity assumption, although valid in certain settings and situations, could be that diverging cultural perspectives are left unrecognized and unattended cultural-based conflicts escalate out of control.

Bridge making also involves acknowledging and engaging with the other in a way that does not necessarily come easy to narcissistic Millennials. Not only are awareness, knowledge, and a mapping of cultural differences required to bridge make, but as outlined by DiStefano and Maznevski (2000) in their Map-Bridge-Integrate model, the ability to decentre, to take

a step out of oneself in order to see the other's perspective, is indispensable. Bridge making involves leveraging, facilitating, and integrating diverse cultural perspectives, and an inability to look beyond oneself will nullify such attempts. Narcissism could have the upside of being aware of oneself and, if so, would allow for a better understanding of one's 'cultural side'. But a self-interest focus coupled with a lack of interest in others (Weber, 2017) can prove bridge making to be more challenging than at first envisioned. Incapability of recognizing others' point of view is often associated with an ethnocentric, and in some cases even a parochial, mindset, and this would not only inhibit Millennials as global leaders, but also rule out the possibility of being an effective bridge maker. However, perhaps this risk is less so for Millennials, who with their increasing global experience online, and/or elsewhere, realize that there is another world out there.

The rise of narcissism-light together with being born digital has certain redeeming properties, such as possible cultural self-awareness and digital communication skills, but the unwillingness, or lack of experience, to engage in interpersonal interaction will make it difficult for Millennials to act effectively as bridge makers.

College-educated bridge makers around the world

Millennials' sense of entitlement and self-worth, brought on by helicopter or curling parents in combination with having access to the best college educations (for those who do), and by attitude changes as societies become more affluent (Inglehart & Baker, 2000), have been argued to lead Millennials to have unreasonably high expectations at work (Anderson et al., 2017; Ng et al., 2010). We could think of this as an input-output imbalance where especially college-educated Millennials expect earlier and grander output than their input to the organization merits. And if their expectations are not realized then the Millennials will move on to another organization, which in search for talent, rare and high in demand, could be more accommodating to Millennial demands (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Stewart et al., 2017). Millennials with a grandiose sense of self-importance would not only lack the necessary skills but also the interest to engage with cultural others. Bridge making is ultimately about making interpersonal work relationships, multicultural teams, and diverse workplaces function. To support others in an often anonymous and humbling way would not be appealing to Millennials who desire recognition and feedback from their leaders (Schroth, 2019). Although bridge making, like blending and boundary spanning, is key to global leadership, Millennials may perceive this as lacking in potential to fulfil their high-flying aspirations.

There is, however, another side to the Millennials, as they look for meaning, challenge, and flexibility in their work, they have an ambition to change conventional norms (Gursoy et al., 2013). Some would argue that this is a typical trait of the young, indeed it is, but it seems to be a more defining characteristic of the Millennial generation than those before them, and it looks like it is going to last (DeFrank-Cole & Tan, 2017). We can expect that this ambition to challenge norms will have an impact on working life in many countries around the world.

We can also expect that culture around the world continues to influence Millennial leadership ideals and their own leadership attempts. Despite some early (and limited) evidence of cultural values converging and crossverging, such as when national culture interacts with economic systems or other institutions (van Hoorn, 2019; Witt, 2008), cross-cultural differences in leadership attitudes and behaviours remain stable and consistent. Millennials around the world may go about leadership differently, but for many their ambition to change conventional norms could entail recognizing and leveraging cultural differences in new ways.

HOW WILL WORK CHANGE WHEN MILLENNIALS TAKE ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP?

To understand the impact of Millennials on global leadership, we identified four themes from the literature which distinguish this generation. One important difference between Millennials and those who have come before is their affinity with technology stemming from the coincidence of their birth with that of the Internet. They have earned the moniker 'digital natives'. A second important difference is their expectation of organizational accommo- dation stemming from the coincidence of their birth with a shift in societal values towards the development of a high self-esteem and a taken-for-granted admiration of achievement, a short-hand term for which is 'narcissism'. Additionally, it seems important to differentiate clearly between 'college-educated Millennials and the rest' – this is the third feature. Those who are college-educated are most likely to move into global leader positions in the not too distant future. Further, most writing is focused on the experience of Millennials in the USA, and so the fourth theme is the extent of variation among 'Millennials from around the world', and especially contrasting US citizens with those from elsewhere.

While many developed societies have been 'plugged in' from the birth of their own first Millennials, developing societies have not. Great strides have been made in the last decade in terms of other regions such as Africa becoming full partners in the digital age, but there are many Millennials worldwide who are not truly digital natives. Nonetheless, given the rapid speed with which technology has spread, it is likely to even out the unequal digital competence and confidence among Millennials around the world, especially as organizational structures become more team-based (Zander et al., 2015) and careers become increasingly boundaryless (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996).

The USA has become well known for pushing a 'self-esteem' agenda. This agenda has come to Europe later, to a lesser degree, and not uniformly. Many other regions of the world have not adopted this approach so widely (i.e., with narcissism limited to the elites and super-elites) or have very different agendas (e.g., the Tiger Mum phenomenon, denoting a tough, discipli- narian mother). As far as narcissism is concerned, we assume some difference between East and West will remain as Millennials from all parts of the world mature. But, based on early limited evidence, among those destined to become global leaders, narcissism is likely to result in increased self-interest across societies.

Higher education attainment varies significantly around the world. The West has long dominated, but the balance of power is shifting to the East. With growing strengths in the East in the fields of science and technology beginning in secondary school, the shift in power may be more rapid than overall statistics suggest. At the same time, talent pressures in the East and throughout the BRICS and MINT countries are being alleviated through changes in educational attainment. The result may be that fewer college-educated Millennials will need to be recruited from the developed world (alongside developed countries (e.g., the UK) closing their borders to further immigration). An increasing proportion of people worldwide with a college education will level the playing field among global regions generally, increasing the competitive pressure on already developed nations. Simultaneously, a college education will differentiate within the Millennial generation itself irrespective of nation of origin, increasing competitive pressures also for individuals with leadership potential early in their careers.

The rise of the bi- and multicultural Millennial is one significant outcome of the movement of people around the globe. These culturally competent individuals offer the prospect of com-

petitive advantage to developed countries with high rates of immigration and so differentiate within and across societies. This phenomenon is occurring against the backdrop of crossvergent pressures causing cultural values to shift and differentiate among people around the globe creating a complex pattern of stability and change within which some bi- and multicultural Millennials will excel as global leaders.

With the increasingly global reach of technology we might expect to see fewer issues arising from a mismatch of digital comfort among Millennials but, until then, those from the developed world who have a greater preference for virtual interaction with colleagues irrespective of their location might clash with those from developing regions of the world who desire at least some face-to-face interaction. Exacerbated by the levelling out of educational attainment and regional rather than global wars for talent, this mismatch might lead to even less-developed networks than we proposed earlier, with boundary-spanner capabilities further reduced rather than enhanced. Simultaneously, the blending capabilities of even bi- and multicultural individuals to enhance liking and decrease disliking within teams might come under increased pressure. The development and management of social ties, not only those internal to the organization, but particularly those of external stakeholders from across the globe, looks set to become a significant factor determining the success of organizations as Millennials begin to assume the mantle of global leadership.

For the time being, the mismatch between narcissistic tendencies in the USA and the more traditional approaches to child development in other parts of the world might result in additional challenges for the blending and bridge-making roles. Capabilities to blend will vary according to the national origin of individual global leaders. And to bridge make cultural insights and 'seeing the other' is vital. US-based organizations might find that their success is diminished unless Millennials' narcissistic tendencies naturally reduce as they mature in the face of hard work environments or can otherwise be managed. The awareness and management of affect, together with the ability to communicate and disentangle cultural differences, particularly virtually, will increasingly determine success in organizations as Millennials become global team leaders.

Global leaders from the developing world might be less narcissistic, but may need to manage team members who have a grandiose sense of self-worth together with a reluctance to engage with others. As a result, the inability to acknowledge different cultural perspectives and experiences could exacerbate cross-cultural misunderstandings and pose problems to organizations' attempts at becoming more diverse and inclusive. But Millennials aspire to challenge norms. And when Lemiski (2018) asked Millennials how they see themselves, an illustrative response was: 'The truth is that millennials are more often than not, practical, hard-working, tolerant, and multitaskers. Do we get strident about injustice? Absolutely we do.' This bears promise that Millennials, who are not as affected by a narcissistic and grandiose sense of self-worth, will be able to create understanding, reconcile differences, and leverage diverse cultural perspectives among employees from different national and cultural backgrounds. Millennials would thus have the potential to make a difference when engaging in boundary spanning, blending and bridge making as global leaders.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we introduced the Millennial as the new global leader. First, we introduced the available evidence to evaluate whether and how Millennials might experience the work-

place differently from previous generations such as Generation X and the Baby Boomers. We reviewed work which painted a picture of the Millennial generation as one that does not want to work hard, preferring to have fun, but which, at the same time, has less need for face-to-face social interactions. This generation is one with more need for support, experiencing anxiety about life choices at an early age, but also one that wants more recognition and status. It is a generation that, to those of us from older generations, and perhaps only for a brief moment, appears to live with strong contradictory tendencies.

As the first Millennials entered the workforce a little over a decade ago, most writing is focused on them as relative newcomers to work. As such it is difficult to predict how the factors that distinguish this generation will shape them as global leaders. We have speculated that around the globe: technological changes will level the playing field within and across societies, heightened narcissism and increasing levels of education will allow for more equal access to opportunities across societies, but may serve to differentiate among members of this generation within societies; and country of birth will continue to differentiate between those who are and those who are not destined for success with those from the current developed world continuing to maintain the advantage even in the face of crossvergent pressures.

Millennials will encounter challenges in taking on the important roles of boundary spanning, blending, and bridge making as global leaders; but they also bring new skill sets, attitudes, and experiences to these roles. We expect and hope that Millennials, whose formative and educational years have given them a deep-seated belief in their ability to make a difference as leaders, will challenge conventional leadership norms, and bring people together to achieve meaningful goals. As Millennials come to comprise an increasingly large share of the global leaders in organizations, Generation X and Baby Boomer managers and senior managers will find that their organizations begin to look and feel different. Those organizations that can bring out the best in Millennials will be rewarded with global leaders who can boundary span, blend, and bridge make in new ways to make a difference in the twenty-first century.

BOX 9.1   IDEAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this chapter, we have discussed the potential role of Millennials as global leaders through the lens of extant research on global leadership roles. We have conceptually discussed whether Millennials can cope with boundary spanning, blending, and bridge making, and what changes they may bring to global leadership. There is much potential for empirical research in this area. Some ideas for future research are as follows:

- Empirical research could investigate differences between early- and late-generation Millennials through intergenerational workplace research.
- As much research has been conducted from a Western perspective, future research would benefit from a comparative perspective. Researchers might compare characteristics of the Millennial workforce from around the world with a particular focus on Millennial representatives from the BRICS/MINT nations and other developing nations.
- Operationalization of the global leader roles in this chapter and examining the relationship between leader roles and technological factors, the nature of social ties, the importance of affect and cultural values.

BOX 9.2   RELEVANCE FOR EDUCATORS

Educators can apply the concepts in this chapter in cross-cultural management or communication courses, when discussing the topics of global leadership and generational change. The chapter may also be useful for educators in international management, sociology, or psychology. Some specific aspects that may be highlighted are:

- Adopting a balanced perspective when teaching about Millennials at work and their development needs that highlights the strengths and weaknesses of this generation.
- Developing a fine-grained understanding of the interaction of the various factors (i.e., technology, education, personality, and culture) in discussing the Millennial generation as global leaders.
- Highlighting these interactions when discussing change across generations.

BOX 9.3   INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

Practitioners may benefit from reading this chapter in several ways. All organizations have employees who represent different generational cohorts. This chapter highlights some of the potential challenges faced by organizations when cohorts are represented by different cultures, values systems, perceptions about leadership, leadership abilities, and expectations based on background. Managing these expectations becomes even more complex when there are also inherent generational differences. We argue that the differences introduced with the arrival of Millennials are vast and need special consideration. Some of the ways that practitioners are encouraged to address the characteristics of the Millennial generation is via the development and management of social ties, especially those with external stakeholders, as well as supporting continual awareness and understanding of affect especially in cross-cultural virtual environments. Organizations should also encourage more face-to-face interaction to develop interpersonal skills in this generation, especially in multicultural contexts.

NOTES

1   Strauss and Howe (1991) define the Millennial generation as those born 1982–2004. Broadbridge, Maxwell, and Ogden (2007) define the (early) Millennial generation as those born 1977–94. In this chapter, we use Strauss and Howe's definition as it corresponds more closely to birth dates for Millennials born in countries other than the USA.
2.   See Kelan (2012) for a discussion of the different ways of conceptualizing 'generation'.

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