STARS

University of Central Florida
STARS

Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019

2013

Managerial Descriptions Of Characteristics And Communication Rule Violations Of Millennial Employees: Insights Into The Hospitality Industry

Nicole Baker
University of Central Florida

Part of the Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Commons

Find similar works at: https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd

University of Central Florida Libraries http://library.ucf.edu

University of Central Florida

STARS
Showcase of Text, Archives, Research & Scholarship

MANAGERIAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS AND COMMUNICATION
RULE VIOLATIONS OF MILLENNIAL EMPLOYEES: INSIGHTS INTO THE
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

by

NICOLE M. BAKER
B.S. University of Florida, 2009

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Nicholson School of Communication
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term
2013

ABSTRACT

Millennials are the newest generation to enter the workforce. When Millennials enter organizations, managers construct perceptions about Millennials' communication behaviors, including their characteristics and adherence to organizational rules. These perceptions help managers decide Millennials' organizational fit. A review of literature revealed a scarcity of empirical research in this area with little empirical research from communication scholars who apply communication frameworks, theories, and concepts. This research used the lens of social constructionism to understand the membership categorization devices and category-bound activities managers use to characterize Millennials. In order to better understand how Millennials conform to and change organizational culture, data were reviewed for those normative and code rules managers described Millennials violating. In this qualitative, exploratory study, 25 managers who were 31 years of age or older that worked in the hospitality industry and managed Millennial (18 to 30 years old) employees were interviewed through a snowball convenience sample. Interviews were transcribed and patterns were identified. Data analysis indicated that "kids," "age group," and "Millennials" and variations of the Millennial term were used to categorize Millennials. Analysis of category-bound activities showed patterns in Millennials' desire for learning and training, mixed preference for teamwork often affected by their liking for peers, and needs for frequent, clear, personalized feedback. With respect to rule violations, data showed that some organizations were adapting their cell phone policies in response to Millennial rules resistance. However, organizations were not willing to accommodate Millennials' rule violations in either the area of time-off requests or uncivil behavior due to organizational codes.

This work is dedicated to my mother, Marea Baker. She has believed in me and supported my decisions through every step of life, which has greatly contributed to my successes. I am grateful for her love and support and in return would like to devote this accomplishment to her.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Sally O. Hastings served as a mentor, teacher, and inspiration through the thesis process. Her guidance and assistance over the last couple of years is invaluable. She encouraged me to conduct high-quality work with passion for my topic. Her direction served as a crucial element in completing the thesis. I hope to emulate her same leadership in my professional endeavors.

Thank you to my thesis committee members, Dr. Ann Miller and Dr. George Musambira, for serving on my thesis committee. I appreciate your insights, suggestions, and time spent on improving the thesis. Thank you both for your assistance.

My family members, fiancé, and close friends also deserve to be acknowledged. All of their love and support throughout this journey have helped me achieve my goals. I am fortunate to have you all as motivators in my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Millennial generation is the newest cohort to enter the workforce. According to Hershatter and Epstein (2010), Millennials first began to enter organizations in 2004 and will continue to do so until 2022. In simplest terms, it is important to study this developing generation to understand its organizational behaviors and the perceptions other generations are constructing about these behaviors. It is imperative that scholars provide research that delves into how Millennials are assimilating into organizations as well as the types of interactions occurring in this context between Millennials and other generations, including Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Traditionalists (Olson, Coffelt, Dougherty, & Gynn, 2007; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2010).

Often members of these other generations work closely with Millennials in managerial or supervisory roles or as co-workers at the same level within the organization. According to the literature, differences between the generations appear to develop from technology-use (see Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008), multi-tasking (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008), feedback needs (see Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010), and teamwork (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Hershatter and Epstein (2010) explained how some managers believe Millennial employees need to be thrown into their work and fend for themselves like they did. Further, it is of interest to speak to managers to see how they characterize Millennials.

The study explores the manager and Millennial employee interaction from a communication perspective. Existing literature indicates a need for scholars in the communication field to contribute to this topic. An original search for information on Millennials yielded articles from popular press writers which did not provide evidence to support their

claims. The majority of academic investigations on this topic are published in business journals that approach the issue from a business perspective (see Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010; McCready, 2011; Real, Mitnick, & Maloney, 2010). Although these works provide a starting point and are useful, there is a need for further empirical research, especially from communication scholars using their frameworks, theories, and concepts to make sense of workplace interaction.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to study communication patterns in interpersonal interactions between Millennials and other generations in the workplace from the managerial perspective through application of a social constructionism perspective and organizational communication theories and concepts. Social constructionism is used as an underlying framework; it is appropriate because realities are constructed through the language and grammars people use when socially interacting (see Gergen, 1991; Gergen, 2003; Leeds-Hurwitz, 1995; Littlejohn, 2006; Pearce, 1995; Shotter, 1993; Stewart, 1995). These relations help people make sense of the world they live in. However, the factor that guides this research is how members of a generation live within a reality that is, to some extent, outwardly constructed for them. In this case, it is of interest to see how other generations create perceptions about how they believe Millennials interact with one another and in the world around them. These established perceptions are likely to affect communicative expectations for Millennial employees in their organizations. It is not that this outwardly socially constructed reality is necessarily happening at an increased rate for Millennials. Rather, it is the prevalence of Millennials in publications that makes this generational cohort an important group to study the opinions and observations other generations are making about their truths through dialogue.

The idea of an outwardly constructed reality is further studied through membership category devices, or membership categories and category-bound activities. These activity theories help people make sense of others' actions and in return assign categories to people that they see fit (see Edwards, 1998; Pomerantz & Mandelbaum, 2005; Psathas, 1999; Sacks, 1972; Schegloff, 2007; Scott, 2007; Silverman, 1999; Spreckels, 2008). In this study, membership categories and category-bound activities assist in understanding how other generational members observe Millennials' actions to create perceptions about the Millennial reality and even assign them the category, Millennial.

Organizational cultures (defined later) are established and change over time. This study examines the organizational culture established by those with a historical association with the organization, and how that culture shows signs of stability and change in the midst of a changing workforce. Organizations establish various rules to guide its members' behavior. Millennial employees may find that such organizational structure conflicts with their personal, Millennial-defined needs when it comes to workplace satisfaction, such as a desire for constant, constructive feedback from supervisors. Managers, on the other hand, may find themselves both frustrated and puzzled by Millennials' beliefs, values, and practices that do not coincide with the established organizational culture. The application of organizational communication theories and concepts assists in noticing the influences of organizational culture and the process of assimilation on the success of interactions between Millennial workers and other generational members (see Alvesson, 2002; Eisenberg, Goodall, & Trethewey, 2010; Eubanks and Lloyd, 1992; Gilsdorf, 1998; Harris & Cronen, 1979; Hess, 1993; Jablin, 1987; Keyton; 2005; Kramer, 2010; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011; Martin, 2002; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-

Trujillo, 1983; Schall, 1983; Smircich & Calas, 1987; Wanous, 1992). Assimilation provides insight into organizational members' negotiations between the self and organization's needs. Discourse of managers is used to analyze the normative and code rules that Millennials encounter in the workplace, and the ways that the new Millennial employees deviate from and conform to these rules (see Carbaugh, 1990; Cushman, 1977; Gilsdorf, 1998; Harris & Cronen, 1979; Jabs, 2005; Schall, 1983; Shimanoff, 1980).

The study provides useful information for managers supervising Millennial employees. Due to their organizational role, managers have a hierarchal power over young, entry-level organizational members based on their status and knowledge of organizational functioning. Moreover, managers' opinions about Millennial employees are significant and may influence the success or failure of a Millennial's career. Again, managers served as the participants in this study to understand the perceptions and expectations they create about the Millennial employee. This research involves the study of thematic patterns in manager's discourses about Millennials so that managerial expectations may be more clearly identified. Organizations can create more clear communication guidelines for problem areas commonly identified. These communication rules may be delivered through organizational member training, orientation, and interpersonal interactions between supervisor and employee. In turn, the Millennial employee will also benefit from organizations' stating their communicative expectations more openly. Millennial workers will know what is expected of them from the beginning. Ultimately, the data provide more information about how Millennials can assimilate more smoothly into organizations, take part in fewer communication-rule violations, and develop more successful working relationships, all of which will benefit organizational productivity.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's workplace, there are numerous types of people operating together, which create diversity amongst organizational members (i.e. cultural, gender, and economic). This study focuses on the analysis of organizational member variation through a generational lens. The interest herein involves how membership in a specific generational category might affect how people behave, interact, and communicate in their workplace environment. Of equal importance, this study explores how co-workers may perceive members of a generational category.

While Millennials are the focal point of this research, it is essential to overview all generations in the workplace to establish the unique values each generation adheres to, creating a clearer context for the study. A generation is conceptualized as a cohort of people who identify with the same years of birth, experience similar significant life and historical events, and usually embody comparable values and beliefs (see Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Real, Mitnick, & Maloney, 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Specifically, generations are created when there is a noticeable increase in births during a specific time and then another point in time when the birthrate declines (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008).

Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010) pointed out that the term generation should not to be mistaken for "familial generations[s]" (p. 266). For instance, it does not describe the relationship of grandfather, father, and son. Also, the term 'intergenerational' communication is used differently in literature pertaining to aging. Often, it refers to communication between age groups such as adolescent, young adult, middle aged, and old aged (Garrett & Williams, 2005; McCann & Giles, 2007). Researchers usually analyze levels of accommodation and satisfaction in these

'intergenerational' interactions. Garrett and Williams (2005), for example, looked at uses of accommodation between younger adults and older, elderly adults. Communication and aging literature has only dipped into research in the workplace context. For instance, McCann and Giles (2007) studied 'intergenerational' communication in the workplace to look at age discrimination and the use of avoidant communication between age groups. Communication and aging research is communicative in nature but not the same topic discussed in the thesis.

With the literature's definitions, generations in the current study are people who belong to a certain group based on their history, birth dates, and experiences; the term does not purely refer to age. People can transition between different age groups but do not move from one generational cohort to another. Also, people do not decide to belong to one of these cohorts, nor do people necessarily realize they are members of the cohort (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010). Rather, they are categorized into these generations based on the criteria mentioned above - birth dates, values, and history of their group. Intergenerational communication herein refers to communication occurring between the different generations. Currently, four generations may be working side by side in organizations, including Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Olson et al., 2007; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2010). It is critical to explore the different values of each of these generational cohorts to understand their lived realities. The following characteristics are tendencies of each generation and not inclinations. Not all people will identify with the stereotypes provided for each group. However, the fact that these stereotypes do exist is telling of each generation.

Overview of the Generations

Traditionalists comprise the oldest generation in the workplace. They are also known as Veterans and Silents, and researchers state that they are born before 1945 (Kowske et al., 2010; McCready, 2011; Olson et al., 2007). Few members of this generation are left in the workforce because most have entered retirement. However, it is still important to be familiar with this cohort for those organizational members who are still present. The Great Depression and World War II are two pivotal events to this group of people. These historical occurrences influenced the standards for this generation (McCready, 2011). Additionally, most Traditionalists appreciate structure in all of facets of life, especially the workplace. Traditionalists embody a "military style of management" (McCready, 2011, p. 13). They tend to think that information and power should be given to organizational members at the top of the organization, with superiority obtained mainly through hard work. Overall, many Traditionalists personify a patriotic spirit, display loyalty to those around them, and have faith in their place of work (McCready, 2011; Olson et al., 2007). As their name implies, Traditionalists are conventional in their thinking and have a classical approach to organizational communication.

The next distinguishable generation that emerged is known as the Baby Boomers. Unlike other generations, researchers appear to strongly agree on the years that categorize this group. Baby Boomers were born from 1946 to 1964 (see Barzilai-Nahon & Mason, 2010; Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg (2010); McCready, 2011; Olson et al., 2007; Reynolds, Bush, & Geist, 2008). This cohort experienced different social and historical events than its Traditionalist predecessors, which defined a new reality. McCready (2011) pointed out the effect of civil rights, political assassinations, and the Vietnam War on Baby Boomers. These experiences encouraged many

Baby Boomers to openly question authority. However, Twenge and Campbell (2008) stated that this did not occur until they were young adults. Baby Boomers were typically raised to exemplify a "we" and not "I" attitude. Conflicting messages between their parents' verbal input and what they were actually witnessing led to many Baby Boomers favoring an individualistic attitude. This may explain, "why they took the ironic step of exploring the self in groups," such as in protests (Twenge & Campbell, 2008, p. 864). It was a way to simultaneously take action and find oneself.

Baby Boomers' ideals have been extremely influential on today's organizations. This generation is the largest group in the workforce and it holds many of the powerful roles in companies (Olson et al., 2007). Work is an important element of many Baby Boomers' lives. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) explained that their careers are largely a part of their identities. With this said, they tend to be workaholics, which hinders their ability to separate work and life. Baby Boomers work more than the typical 40-hour workweek, and think this shows dedication to their organization. They often believe organizational members must show this commitment and wait for their turn to move up in the organization. However, many Baby Boomers are extremely competitive with one another (McCready, 2011; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Many will do whatever it takes to make their way to the top, as this is one of their ultimate goals in the organization and life. Further, this focus on work ethic has influenced the expectations Baby Boomers have for other organizational members.

Generation X is quite different than Baby Boomers. This cohort is also known as "Latchkey Kids" and the "Overlooked Generation" (McCready, 2011; Olson et al., 2007). These children of the older Baby Boomers were first born in 1965. Yet, research suggests different

ending years for this group, ranging from 1977 to 1981 (see Barzilai-Nahon & Mason, 2010; Deal et al., 2010; McCready, 2011; Olson et al., 2007; Reynolds et al., 2008). The 1970s induced characteristics of Generation X, or "GenX." Faber (2001) said the uprising of AIDS, their parents' primary focus on career-life, television with color, increasing divorce rates, and the Watergate scandal all shaped GenXers. Olson, Coffelt, Dougherty, and Gynn (2010) added the influence of violence in gangs and drugs on this generation. In particular, television impacted how many of them viewed the world and created opinions. Ironically, "while genXers' experience of television and media has suggested that a perfect life exists somewhere out there, these individuals do not expect to encounter it themselves" (Faber, 2001, p. 297). This statement demonstrates a common cynical personality that exists amongst Generation X. Their parents' divorces and what they saw occur in the world often made them skeptical in all aspects of life (McCready, 2011). As a result, many tend to question existing social and organizational structures.

Generation X is overall less attached to the workplace than its predecessors. The primary reason for this tends to be the importance they place on free time with family and friends (Faber, 2001). GenXers tend to feel happiness and wholeness in their life outside of work. They come to work and leave when their specific job is done (Olson et al., 2007). GenXers in general do not thrive on the idea of working hard to advance in the company. Faber (2001) said they are less loyal to the workplace, not as competitive with other organizational members, and show less ambition (Faber, 2001; Olson et al., 2007). It is important to note that most do this by choice. Finally, technology is a part of GenXers' lives and most are comfortable with it (Olson et al., 2007). Starting with Generation X, technology had a significant impact on generational cohorts.

Millennials

Millennials are the newest generation to enter the workforce and the focus of this research. When attempting to define the boundaries of this generation, researchers seem to disagree and propose numerous answers. Perhaps this is due to the developing nature of the cohort. The literature suggested years 1978 to 1982 as the first birth years and 1994 to 2000 as the conclusion of the cohort (see Barzilai-Nahon & Mason, 2010; Deal et al., 2010; McCready, 2011; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Ng et al., 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Pew Research Center, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2008; Short & Reeves, 2009; Wesner & Miller, 2008). For the purpose of this research, Millennials will be classified as people born between 1982 and 1994. Individuals who are entering today's workforce at 18 and others who are 30 or younger are of interest.

This generation has garnered numerous nicknames, which are used interchangeably with the term Millennial. These include "Generation Me," "Echo Boomers," "Baby Boom Echo," "Generation Y," "Nexters," "Nexus Generation," "Look at Me Generation," "Dot-Coms," and the "iGeneration" (see Deal et al., 2010; Howe & Strauss; 2000; McCready, 2011; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Ng et al., 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Reynolds et al., 2008; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Short & Reeves, 2009; Wesner & Miller, 2008). The defining moments of this generation are still being debated. Howe and Strauss (2000) suggested some of the following occurrences to be unique to the Millennial generation: the Clinton presidency, the Columbine high school shootings, the increasing gap between rich and poor, culture wars, and the Iraq war.

Technology, such as computers and the Internet, has tremendously influenced this group (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Their proficiency in technology is one area most researchers reference when

describing this cohort. This generation is commonly referred to as "techno-savvy" and thought to have a "sixth-sense" for technology (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; McCready, 2011). Their natural technological abilities make them distinct from other generations who must work harder to master this skill. Most Millennials report difficulty trying to recall a world before technology. They typically do not think of technological items as inventions because they are commonplace in their worlds (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008).

Millennials utilize technology, like the Internet and smart phones, to create and maintain relationships, express themselves, and construct identities. While still utilizing face-to-face communication, they are comfortable with these methods. For example, a famous Millennial, Mark Zuckerberg, created Facebook for college students like himself to interact with one another (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Blogging is also popular amongst Millennials. Blogs allow people to share their opinions and express themselves (Kaye, 2005). Hershatter and Epstein (2010) said Millennials use these arenas "to endorse, recommend, and share, but also to reposition, vent, and complain" (p. 214). Some employers are worried about their openness to express such communication. According to Gonzales and Hancock (2008), blogs create a perceived anonymity, but anyone can potentially search for the information. Regardless, it is significant to realize Millennials' comfort with this type of communication.

Millennials are also known for their perceived ability to multi-task with various technological devices. They are at ease utilizing multiple devices at once because they believe they can still function efficiently (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). For example, imagine watching a person play on a cell phone, listen to music, and view a website on the computer all at the same time. Some researchers question how effective Millennials' multi-tasking skills are to people

11

other than themselves. Hershatter and Epstein (2010) wondered if Millennials can "read deeply and between the lines" rather than just scan when they multi-task (p. 213). They either truly understand the message being portrayed or only take in a part of it. These same researchers pointed out the research skills of the Millennial generation. They describe that Millennials search the Internet to find answers and can do so in a matter of seconds. However, Hershatter and Epstein were not certain that most Millennials always look for the best, most reliable source over the most readily available.

The demographical statistics of this generation also indicate some ways Millennials are distinctive from past generations. According to the Pew Research Center (2010) report on Millennials, there are approximately 50 million members of this generation between 18 and 29 years old. Seventy percent of people 30 and older classified themselves as White, 11% Black, 13% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 1% other. Millennials reported themselves to be 61% White, 14% Black, 19% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 1% other. These figures show an increase in Black and Hispanic populations and decrease in the White population for this generation. Millennials "are more ethnically and racially diverse" (Pew Research Center, 2010, para. 2). Many Millennials are perceived to be more open to various social ideals. Anderson (2008) said Millennials "are [more] accepting of gays, bi-racial dating, and societal integration" (p. 13). This demonstrates their social awareness. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) also added Millennials' increasing approval of gender equality. Their political and religious views are representative of their openness as well. They are highly likely to identify themselves as liberals and are less likely than other generations to identify with a particular religion (Anderson, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2010). Overall, Millennials' varied demographics tend to yield more tolerant views of their peers.

Like Generation X, many Millennials experienced unique households as children that have influenced their adult lives. Generation X witnessed increased divorce rates, but Millennials have come to know the single-parent household (Howe and Strauss, 2000; Pew Research Center, 2010). In fact, six out of 10 Millennials identify with this upbringing and have witnessed new family structures like cohabitation without marriage (Pew Research Center, 2010). The single-parent family structure can lead to potential harm for Millennials. Howe and Strauss (2000) said this could include heightened drug use, failing out of school, and suicide. Many Millennials who live in households with two parents are used to seeing both work long hours. However, this generation has not witnessed a lack of available babysitters, whether it was their grandparents, a daycare facility, or work/government assistance (Howe & Strauss, 2000). These authors also noted that divorce is still common, but some parents are trying to work on constructive relationships for the sake of their children. Unlike GenX, there is not usually an issue with not spending enough time with the children.

Millennials' level of education also makes them distinct. According to the Pew Research Center report on Millennials, they "are on course to become the most educated generation in American history" (2010, para. 9). The demand of increased knowledge in American society contributes to this occurrence. Howe and Strauss (2000) discussed how President George Bush organized the first education summit for the United States in 1989 to increase education goals of the graduating high school class of 2000. Ultimately, the president wanted these students to be world leaders in science and math. This national goal affected state and individual household goals. States imposed standardized testing to measure academic achievement and numerous parents debated over what type of school (i.e. private, public, home school) would provide the

finest education for their Millennials. Further, educational achievement has been engrained in Millennials from a young age. Recent economic challenges have also encouraged Millennials to return to school (Pew Research Center, 2010). In order to receive jobs and pursue careers, they are determined to complete their degrees and/or return to school for advanced degrees.

Millennials and Work

While Smith, Christoffersen, Davidson, and Herzog (2011) as well as Longest and Smith (2011) acknowledged the positive and dark values of emerging adults (18 to 29 years old), values specific to the Millennial generational cohort are still developing. Millennials' technological abilities, demographical composition, upbringing, and education are all telling of Millennials and have contributed to development of their value systems (see Kowske et al., 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Real et al., 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). The following section provides communication-based needs and values business scholars have discovered for this generation when studying them in the workplace.

Feedback and supportive communication appear important to this generation. Most Millennials require feedback from adults, especially their supervisors (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). The notion of feedback serves as a method of affirmation for Millennials. When people tell them how they are doing, they have a means to gauge their success. In the workplace, Hershatter and Epstein (2010) said these comments reinforce whether or not they are on the right path for advancement in the company, which is also important to many of them. Ng et al. (2010) added that they also need this type of communication because of their desire for a "human aspect of work" (p. 283). When in the workplace, many Millennials want to feel like they have relationships at work, and feedback often validates the existence of such relationships.

However, Millennials are not usually receptive to all types of feedback. They like to hear constructive and supportive messages. The need for these types of positive messages may stem from similar messages that were provided to them as children. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) stated how many parents of Millennials delivered encouraging messages to them. These authors added how parents also provided them with straightforward messages, which have influenced their workplace communication message needs. Overall, Millennials do not thrive on criticizing or abstract comments (Anderson, 2008; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). When they enter the workplace and demand feedback, yet have stipulations about the kind of feedback, other generation organizational members may think they come off as demanding because positive and tailored messages should be earned.

The literature presents contrasting views on whether Millennials attach more importance to individualism or collaboration. Supporting the idea of collaboration, Ng et al. (2010) stated that Millennials' desire to work in groups, results from their childhood classroom atmosphere. The authors say that many teachers encouraged these students to work together in the classroom to accomplish group projects. The preference for working in teams has also carried over to the workplace. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) discussed how most of this generation is more content with working together than other generations were. The reasoning for this preference is the fun and social aspect added to a group dynamic. More importantly, they discuss Millennials' ability to "avoid risk" when working in a group. They can work together to produce a product or idea in which they are all responsible for creating.

Other researchers have found that many Millennials desire individualism. The Millennial generation is said to value "individualistic expression" and put "the greatest importance on

15

individualistic aspects of a job" (Anderson, 2008, p. 12; Ng et al., 2010, p. 281). Although

contradicting the statements above, these preferences also make sense. Even though Millennials

work in teams, they may want individual feedback. Yet, this desire for both ends of the spectrum

may communicate mixed messages to supervisors. Hershatter and Epstein (2010) said managers

usually want "to take off the Millennial water wings, throw them in the deep end, and see if they

drown. After all, that is how all previous generations were treated" (p. 218). In other words,

some members of other generations do not think Millennials should have access to everything

they claim to need.

Researchers are finding that the individualistic characteristic of Millennials is often

linked to narcissism – overconfidence and heightened self-importance (Judge, LePine, & Rich,

2006; Twenge & Campbell, 2008). Penney and Spector (2002) further explained people with

narcissistic tendencies as "hold[ing] a positive self-image that is not grounded in objective

reality" (p. 127). Twenge and Campbell (2008) argued individualism is increasing with the

younger generations. They stated that individualism was important to Baby Boomers as well but

not until they were young adults. However, younger generations, like Millennials, tend to

experience the need for individualism sooner, which makes them more individualistic than other

generations. Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, and Bushman (2008) said narcissism can have

a short term positive effect but is negative to the self and others in the long term. The "all about

me" attitude can develop, with higher expectations and need for praise in the workplace (Twenge

& Campbell, 2008, p. 864). Further, the narcissistic characteristic is often counterproductive in

organizations, particularly with managers and younger organizational members.

Along with narcissism, incivility is also associated with Millennials in the literature. Twenge and Campbell (2009) stated how "Americans have become inured to the incivility, exhibitionism, and celebrity obsession caused by the narcissism epidemic" (e-book location, pg. 817), and how incivility is one of "narcissism's negative outcomes" (e-book location, pg. 1380). These authors implied that incivility is often a result of narcissism and said narcissism is only increasing with younger people. Andersson and Pearson (1999) described incivility as people who act rude or without regard for others in interactions, which may take place in all contexts including the workplace. Researches tend to associate uncivil behavior with Millennials by discussing students in college classrooms. For example, Stork and Hartley (2009) found that college students perceived professors differently based on the individualism the professor granted them, since this is an important characteristic to students. Similarly, other scholars looked at how characteristics of professors, like gender, and classroom environment, such as class size, can lead to more incivility in the college classroom (Alberts, Hazen, & Theobald, 2010). Bjorklund and Rehling (2010) studied the behaviors college students believe to be most uncivil in the classroom, which included their peers text messaging, talking loudly to others, and allowing a phone to ring. Overall, Millennial generation people are often included in the latest studies on incivility showing an association of this behavior with the cohort.

As a means to bring all of these ideas together, the literature presented the importance of studying communication in the workplace. Conrad and Newberry (2011), for instance, studied the skills both human resource managers and instructors from business schools deem important in the workplace. Both human resource professionals and business instructors agreed that communication skills are essential to organizations' and organizational members' success.

However, evidence exists that long-term organizational members and those just entering the work force from college still lack these skills (p. 5). Also, Gallois, McKay, and Pittam (2005) noted how supervisors and their subordinates might have conflicting perceptions about appropriate communication in the organization. These statements provide more support as to why it is important to understand the differences of communication expectations from employees and supervisors who have been a part of the organizational culture longer than Millennial employees. With their needs for feedback and teamwork, Millennials have very different communication expectations than other generations who think organizational members should learn everything they want. Thus far, practical findings from the literature have been presented. Herein, literature that focuses on organizational communication and communication concepts and theory needs to be explored to provide a deeper understanding of this research.

<u>Organizational Communication</u>

The term organizational communication provides a theoretical area of study whereby scholars may analyze the interactions and interpersonal relationships that occur in the workplace context among various stakeholders including employers and employees. It is a "complex and continuous process through which organizational members create, maintain, and change the organization" (Keyton, 2005, p. 13). All organizational members, managers and subordinates, affect organizational communication. In simplest terms, it is the synchronization of human action (Cushman, 1977). Schall (1983) asserted how "organizing" does not occur without some sort of communication amongst the people who work within the organization; and a systematic unit is established. However, shared meanings are not always attained amongst members of the organization (Keyton, 2005). There are common understandings within the organization that may

18

be interrupted differently by certain organizational members. While the research on organizational communication is vast, attention turns to studying two aspects of organizational communication: culture and assimilation.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is unique to each place of businesses (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983). It distinguishes the way people operate and occurs naturally to the people within the culture. According to Eubanks and Lloyd (1992), organizational culture results when organizational members share patterns of expectations, beliefs, and values. It composes of "the taken-for-granted assumptions that people make about how work is to be done and evaluated and how employees relate to each other and significant others, such as customers, suppliers, and government agencies" (p. 29). Overall, organizational culture contributes to how norms are established. Culture is simultaneously "confining and facilitating" (Keyton, 2005, p. 18). Moreover, it limits how people will interpret the environment they are in, but also allows them to make sense of occurrences happening in that environment. Communication, both positive and negative, influences the organizational culture. As Kramer (2010) said, "the organization continually creates and performs its culture through communication" (p. 99).

In order to study organizational culture, certain organizational elements must be considered. Keyton (2005) discussed the analysis of organizational symbols. She mentioned how all organizational symbols need to be studied, including those used intentionally and others that occur in everyday, ordinary communication in the workplace. The symbols that occur in ordinary communication provide deeper insight into the organizational culture. Specifically, symbolic expressions of organizational culture might include rituals (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo,

19

1983; Martin, 2002; Smircich & Calas, 1987), stories, performances (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983), artifacts (Keyton, 2005), and values. Martin (2002) claimed that the physical aspects of an organization are also significant in understanding organizational culture. For example, the architecture and dress are telling of the culture.

Organizational culture is bound to shift and change; technology is an element that can cause such organizational alterations. Keyton (2005) touched on how technology is affecting today's organizations. She suggested its impact on work roles and relationships. For example, many organizations incorporate the use of technology without considering the impact it has on individuals and groups within the workplace. Keyton pointed out how technology has assisted organizations in reaching global markets. Both Keyton (2005) and Kramer (2010) agreed that technology has heightened the monitoring of organizational members. Supervisors can watch Internet and e-mail usage of their organizational members more so than in the past. Kramer (2010) added that technology has also changed organizations because entry-level organizational members can find information that would not be available to them otherwise, and workplace relationships are depersonalized with more conversations occurring through e-mail. Organizational change will later be discussed in terms of social constructionism.

Organizational Assimilation

In addition to organizational culture, assimilation is an important aspect of organizational communication to consider. Assimilation is significant because it is how people are incorporated into their organizational culture (Keyton, 2005). Organizational members become integrated into the organization's "reality" and begin to understand their roles (Jablin, 1987). They become familiar with the organizational communication and organizational culture. Hess (1993) said,

"the ultimate goal of assimilating newcomers into an organization is to achieve good person-organization fit," or for the organization's and individual's values to match (p. 189). Although there is no research on generational assimilation to the organizational culture, the literature reviewed on generational differences suggests generational assimilation may be a fruitful area of study.

Two processes are involved in organizational assimilation: socialization and individualization or personalization (Hess, 1993; Jablin, 1987; Kramer, 2010). Socialization occurs when the "organization attempts to influence and change individuals to meet its needs," (Kramer, 2010, p. 3). The organizational insiders try to influence the newcomers (Wanous, 1992). With interactions influencing socialization, it is interpersonal in nature.

Socialization occurs in both obvious and discrete manners (Kramer, 2010). For example, co-workers might tell a newcomer how things are done around the organization to disclose organizational rules. On the other hand, a newcomer might observe that his or her co-workers take shorter lunches than "allowed," so he or she does the same. Newcomers also seek information about the organization. Miller and Jablin (1991) said they do so in a more deliberate manner than when they feel adjusted to their roles and environment. Some sources of inside information include supervisors, co-workers, and people connected to the organization (i.e. clients). Specific tactics are asking overt and indirect questions, observing, and testing the limits. The latter includes "the creating of situations to which information targets must respond" where information seekers closely monitor targets' responses (Miller & Jablin, 1991, p. 106). Information seekers commonly use two main methods to test the limits, including intentionally breaking rules to test whether they are actually enforced as well as deviating from rules to see

21

how much the other person will withstand. Costs are associated with this tactic, such as the target creating negative feelings toward the information seeker because of the confrontational nature of limits testing. Thus, Miller and Jablin (1991) suggested using it "only as a last resort" tactic (p. 108). Overall, there is no set length of time that socialization occurs for organizational members (Wanous, 1992). It may occur in the beginning of the position, for a few years, or through an organizational member's entire career with an organization.

There is much less literature about the individualization process because it is harder to study individual organizational members and their personal adjustments (Hess, 1993; Wanous, 1992). However, it is always taking place in organizations. It occurs when organizational members begin to individualize and alter their roles and environment within the organization to fulfill their needs and values as an organizational member in their place of work (Jablin, 1987). The level of individualization varies. It might be simple, such as decorating one's workspace (Hess, 1993; Kramer; 2010). Individualization also occurs on a larger level, like customizing one's work schedule (Kramer, 2010).

Individualization does not change the organization significantly because the alterations organizational members negotiate usually fall within the organization's norms (Kramer, 2010). They are not typically asking for something that is non-negotiable. However, during the process of assimilation, organizations are typically more influential than individuals are on the organization (Hess, 1993). Even with the organization's impact, organizational members are not passive which makes them take part in individualization. It occurs through all stages of assimilation, and often makes organizational members more satisfied while at work.

The relationship between socialization and individualization is significant to consider. Hess (1993) discussed how scholars previously viewed these parts of the assimilation process as linear: socialization then individualization. However, he suggested that it is not linear because at one time both elements might occur. This is the case because both socialization and individualization are "dynamic, interactive processes" (Jablin, 1987, p. 693). They impact one another. Kramer (2010) expanded on the relationship between the two parts of assimilation by stating that they are in frequent tension with one another. For instance, a potential organizational member might enact individualization early on and demand that the company accepts, if they really want the potential person to work there. Also, co-workers might try to socialize an organizational member who has worked in an organization for many years. Tension also occurs between role-taking (socialization) and role making (individualization). Role negotiations are continuous. Overall, socialization and individualization have a non-linear relationship.

Social Constructionism

Social constructionism, or the social construction of reality, is the perspective used throughout the study. It explains how people become who they are and believe what they do as a result of human interaction (see Gergen, 2003; Leeds-Hurwitz, 1995; Littlejohn, 2006; Pearce, 1995; Shotter, 1993). A single, universal definition does not exist for this perspective. According to Pearce (1995), "social constructionism scarcely suffers from overly precise definitions" (p. 88). Establishing a fixed definition defies the freedom the perspective presents; most social constructionists believe the term should be left open for interpretation to create dialogue about its meaning amongst people.

To understand the nature of social constructionism, some assumptions of the perspective do exist. Not all scholars agree with each element, but they provide an overview of the general ideas behind the approach. Gergen (1999) stated four assumptions of the process of social construction. First, there are multiple ways to describe and explain how people understand themselves and the world. There is not a requirement for a singular way these elements should be viewed; also, everything people learn and know may alter. Second, the ways people learn to utilize language is through their relationships with others. The individual mind does not know how to process truths of the world on its own. Rather, human interaction helps shape these thoughts (Gergen, 1999; Gergen, 2003). Third, "as we describe, explain or otherwise represent, so do we fashion our future" (Gergen, 1999, p. 48). Shared language with others is an important element in establishing social life. For example, the terms Millennial and Baby Boomer are needed to understand the concept of intergenerational communication and interaction. Without these terms, the interaction would not make sense. Lastly, people reflect on their truths to continue tradition or create new meanings and futures. A key element in this assumption is reflexivity, which deals with questioning one's own reality and perhaps seeing the world and self in a different way as a result. Overall, Pearce (1995) believed that all social constructionists would agree that reality does not exist without language because the way people come to know the world is through social interaction with one another.

Language is a central component in the way people construct their realities. It is utilized when people interact with one another; therefore, language is a product of people and also socially constructed. In support of this claim, Rorty (1989) said, "languages are made rather than found" (p. 7). Language does not exist without human beings using it in their communicative

interactions. Stewart (1995) stated, "it [language] is the human's way of being-in-the-world" (p. 29). When people group certain words together and state ideas in distinct ways while communicating, they are creating meaning and making sense of the world. Rorty (1989) also explained the relationship between truth and sentences. He said, "since truth is property of sentences, since sentences are dependent for their existence upon vocabularies, and since vocabularies are made by human beings, so are truths" (p. 21). Humans develop sentences, which supports that they also create their truths. Taken as a whole, the use of language truly makes humans' realities, "real."

The use of language and the interactions that occur between people contribute to the construction of a social identity. Further, the social process can help individuals grow as social beings. Littlejohn (2006) discussed the "unfiltered experience" (p. 399). This simply states that it is impossible for human beings to go through this journey of life without interaction with other humans and for the interactions to not affect them in some manner. According to Gergen (1991), "relationships make possible the concept of the self" (p. 170). People assume a large part of their identity through interaction, which can alter their truths. It is important to note that the ways in which and types of people humans interact with is highly influential on one's social identity, such as in an organization or with members of other generations.

<center>The Socially Constructed Organization</center>

The organization is a socially constructed entity. According to Harris and Cronen (1979), "organizations are dynamic, shared, social constructions" that can be lived and shifted by the people who create their reality (p. 13). It is a place where organizational members come together and use dialogue to create an organizational identity. All of the assumptions of social

<center>25</center>

constructionism apply to the organization, including shared language and reflexivity (Gergen, 1999). Like organizational culture, it is when organizational members share the same scripts and understand their environment in similar ways that they can work together to accomplish organizational goals (Gallois, McKay, & Pittam, 2005). The key to constructing a reality of shared meanings is through communication. Eisenberg et al. (2010) also contributed to this idea with discussion about the interpretive view of organizational culture; the culture is constructed through every-day talk amongst the organizational members. The 'reality' and 'identity' of the organization emerges from the social interactions within it.

Organizational change was touched upon earlier, and is relevant to the socially constructed organization. Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) stated how organizations always change and are constantly reconstructed though social construction. Additionally, Gergen and Gergen (2003) discussed how people create meaning together, and how these shared meanings can lead to change. Furthermore, these scholars said organizations are perfect examples of where change can occur through conversation, which often leads to the initiation of new meanings. Gergen and Gergen discussed how antagonism might result when different realities come together in the same arena. They may feel competitive against the other, not wanting to create a "we" organizational identity. Additionally, Harris and Cronen (1977) stated how meanings are socially constructed and shared in an organization but are done so in an imperfect way. Different experiences may lead to this less than perfect understanding and perception of one another, especially in the workplace. Gergen and Gergen (2003) hoped that people in all contexts

…begin to see the possibility for multiple realities and values, each legitimate and

desirable within its own interpretive community. And, rather than seeking ways of

determining which way is 'the right way,' we are drawn into searching for forms of

dialogue out of which meanings can be transformed (p. 161).

Moreover, these authors encouraged readers to consider multiple truths and engage in

conversation about differences that do exist.

The Socially Constructed Generation

Generational cohorts are also socially constructed through their members' experiences

and interactions with one another (see Kowske et al., 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Real et al., 2010;

Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). The behaviors members of generations enact contribute to the

construction of their generational realities and identities (i.e. overall values and communication

needs). However, the interesting factor in the social construction of generations is the idea that a

reality is created for members of a generational cohort. The reality of a generation shifts over

time as more is known about the behaviors and characteristics of its members. For instance, the

Traditionalist generation evidenced this shift when journalist Tom Brokaw coined "The Greatest

Generation" nickname. Traditionalists were well into the elderly portions of their lives when this

new label was assigned (Brokaw, 1998). The term represented how many members of this

generational cohort were influenced by experiences of fighting hard to rebuild their country after

World War II. Like Kowske et al. (2010) said, they do not choose to be a part of the

generational category. It is dialogue that occurs outside of the generation, including the

perceptions constructed that affect the generation of interest, in this case Millennials. All

generations experience this outwardly socially constructed reality, but Millennials are important

to focus on because they are more prevalent in current publications. The Millennials' supposed

truths are evidenced throughout the reviewed literature (see Kowske et al., 2010; Olson et al.,

2007; Real et al., 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Millennials' preconceived realities will likely

impact their identity in the workplace and how others perceive and create expectations of them.

Membership Categorization

It is normal for humans to understand their realities by grouping people together into

categories, especially when in the workplace. In fact, Sacks (1972) argued people should

construct "an apparatus which will provide for how it is that any activities, which members do in

such a way as to be recognizable as such to members, are done, and done recognizably" (p. 332).

People begin to make sense of what is occurring around them through membership categories.

Placement into these categories occurs early on in interactions (Silverman, 1999) and is

accomplished through talk (Edwards, 1998). The initiation stage is critical, even in organizations,

to the development of relationships. It is when people began to interact that they describe

themselves as members of particular groups. They may disclose self-membership to father,

sister, or graduate of a particular university. Pomerantz and Mandelbaum (2005) said that people

design conversations based on the categories they notice the other person shares. Not all people

are receptive to the categories they hear another person present about themselves (Scott, 2007).

The receiver has the choice to accept or reject the categories. Given this option, people can

"better structure their social environment" (Spreckels, 2008, p. 397).

When certain categories are grouped together that appear logical, they are referred to as

membership categorization devices or MCDs. Drawing on the work of Sacks (1972), Silverman

(1998) defined these devices as "a collection of categories" that has rules for application (1998,

p. 79). For instance, Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials are categories that fit in to the larger collection of 'generation.' It is sensible to assume such categories entail some relationship to one another. They tend to "go together" (Sacks, 1972, p. 332).

Economy and consistency rules are two rules Sacks mentioned for application. The economy rule allows people to recognize one category as a part of a larger collection (Sacks, 1972; Silverman, 1998). For example, a person can hear only the term Millennial and infer that it belongs to the collection "generation." Consistency rules occur when "one category from a given collection has been used to categorize one population member, then other categories from the same collection *may* be used on other members of the population" (Silverman, 1998, p. 80). For instance, a manager calls a young organizational member a "Millennial" in a derogatory manner. The manager should be aware that the employee could in turn call the manager a Baby Boomer due to his distinct workplace behaviors. Both Millennial and Baby Boomer are fair categories to utilize because they are in the same collection. Schegloff (2007) pointed out that MCDs are used to either defer or describe something. Whichever purpose they are utilized for, MCDs help people understand the world around them, in this case, the world of work.

Category-bound activities, CBAs, are "way[s] in which many kinds of activities are commonsensically associated with certain membership categories" (Silverman, 1998, p. 83). They are the actions people demonstrate that assist others in creating suitable categories for them. Sacks (1972) stated how CBAs help people "hear" the associations. Once these connections are made, categories and memberships are given. For example, a woman who works in a large company and has the task of answering the phone all day would frequently be

categorized as a receptionist. Her actions lead to conclusions about her position. In addition, a manager who observes a group of young employees he supervisors multi-tasking and requiring frequent feedback may categorize the group as Millennials. Breaches and violations of expected behaviors can occur (Silverman, 1998). People prove to not fit in the original category considered. As Psathas (1999) suggested, categorization is always in motion and through talk categories can be verified or violated, particularly in the organizational setting.

<div align="center">Communication Rules</div>

People follow various communication rules that coincide with a particular context. According to Jabs (2005), "rules surround us and fill our communal world" (p. 265). Rules frequently appear in human interaction and provide a set of meanings and/or norms for given situations. Two types of communication rules exist. Scholars refer to these as code (constitutive) and normative (regulative) rules (Carbaugh, 1990; Harris & Cronen, 1979). Code rules "specify patterns of meaning" through symbols during interaction (Carbaugh, 1990, p. 139). They assist in socially constructing shared meaning in certain contexts. Harris and Cronen (1979) referenced an example of this with lunchtime talk. If a group is at lunch and the topic of discussion is about business, the woman who changes the topic to family is violating a code rule. The group would not like the violation because they share the same opinion that her topic was incongruent with their topic. Carbaugh (1990) said code rules are developed conversationally and provide the meaning behind a rule.

On the contrary, normative rules pertain to how people need to appropriately act in a particular context. People are expected to coincide their behavior with the larger cultural norms and are evaluated in return. These are the rules prescribing what people "should" do. Normative

<div align="center">30</div>

rules follow a top down implementation due to the established, appropriate norms in the relative culture. It is through social interaction that people learn rules instinctively and simply (Jabs, 2005), which teach them what they ought to do in particular situations (Schall, 1983). It is important to realize how peoples' diverse experiences can lead to differing opinions on what is deemed appropriate behavior and rules (Schall, 1983; Shimanoff, 1980). For added clarity, code rules focus on the coordination of meanings and presume that there are social and cultural patterns for sense making, while normative rules center around proper models of behavior (Carbaugh, 1990).

As reviewed earlier, different cultures construct different sets of rules (Schall, 1983). Communication rules have been studied in the organizational context (see Cushman, 1977; Gilsdorf, 1998; Jabs, 2005; Schall, 1983). As with any culture, rules exist in organizations to guide the behavior of the people in it and create shared meanings (see Alvesson, 2002; Eisenberg et al., 2010; Gilsdorf, 1998; Harris & Cronen, 1979; Kramer, 2010; Littlejohn & Foss; 2011; Schall, 1983). People quickly learn the obvious rules of the organization in which they work. For example, Jabs (2005) referenced employees acting professional when asking supervisors for a raise and not using curse words in workplace dialogue. Other organizational rules are harder to discover. According to Gilsdorf (1998), "some organizations give employees excellent guidance on how they expect them to communicate; some organizations give little or none" (p. 173). The rules may or may not be written, formal, explicit, specific, or positively implied.

Research Questions

Based on the literature, the following research questions were posed:

Membership Categories and Category-Bound Activities

1. How do managers characterize Millennials?

    a. What membership categorization devices do managers use in characterizing the

    Millennial?

    b. What category-bound activities do managers associate with Millennials?

Communication Rules

2. Which organizational rules do managers believe Millennials are violating?

    a. Which rules are strongly enforced?

    b. Which rules violations are allowed?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Participants

Through use of a convenience snowball sample, 25 interviewees were selected to participate in the study. The criteria for inclusion in the study were participants 31 years of age or older and managers in the hospitality industry who were supervising Millennial workers at the time of interviews. The inclusion of managers from the hospitality field provided participants who interacted with Millennials in similar organizational contexts, which served as a means of comparison. Eleven of the interviewees were male and fourteen were female.

Procedure

Qualitative research method was used to collect and analyze the data. This approach was appropriate due to the scare amount of empirical, communication research that specifically studied manager and Millennial employee relationships in the workplace. As Cochran and Dolan (1984) stated, qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning of something and not necessarily the measure of it, like quantitative research. These authors described how qualitative research "explores" a certain topic of study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) said, "qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known" (p.19). Thus, the researcher in this study also sought to explore a topic that is underdeveloped from a communication standpoint and is better studied from a qualitative approach. The purpose was to understand the language and grammar managers use to construct the Millennial workers' organizational reality. It is important to note that as with any qualitative research, the researcher did not strive to generalize the findings beyond the scope of the

participants studied. The findings yielded a starting point in the examination of a communicative occurrence that is neglected in communication literature.

Data were produced through a moderately scheduled interview of open questions that invited discussion from non-Millennial managers characterizing their Millennial employees' behaviors and expectations for assimilation to the organizational culture. A funnel approach to questioning was used where questions in each of these areas elicited more general information and became more specific and focused. In order to create a universal categorization of the Millennial category, interviewees were read the birth years that this study identified. The interviews typically lasted between 30 minutes and one hour, producing about 944 minutes of data. Interviewees were assigned pseudonyms to protect anonymity. Exact names of organizations and names of organizational processes that were specific to the organization were also altered to maintain anonymity. All of the interviews were recorded by the researcher and were transcribed. A modified version of Jefferson's (1984) transcription system was utilized due to its discourse analytic approach that delves into the meanings behind the data. Instead of using a detailed recording of pauses or overlapping speech, only noticeable and significant occurrences were included. However, verbatim transcriptions of data were provided for the 25 interviews producing 468 pages of single-spaced data.

The data analysis involved study of membership categorization devices of the Millennial, and also patterns in the use of membership categorization devices, category-bound activities, and communication rules in the data. The final data were reviewed multiple times with all instances of membership categorization devices and category-bound activities isolated. Patterns were then noticeable amongst those data. In order to more clearly identify patterns of membership category

devices, category-bound activities, and communication rules, Owen's (1984) criteria for identifying a theme was used. These criteria include recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (p. 275). First, recurrence occurred when two or more parts had the same meaning. The second criteria, repetition, surfaced when key language, including words, phrases, and sentences were repeated. This criterion is more explicit, while recurrence is implicitly stated. Thirdly, the forcefulness criterion "refers to vocal inflection, volume, or dramatic pauses which serve to stress and subordinate some utterances from other locutions in the oral reports" (Owen, 1984, p. 275). In other words, interviewees' opinions became evident through their use of forcefulness. Overall, the criteria for identifying a theme assisted in recognizing uses and meanings of language devices.

Additionally, Shimanoff's (1980) nature of rules and Carbaugh's (1990) criteria for identifying rules were used. Shimanoff (1980) declared the following characteristics must be met to identity communication rules: "followable, prescriptive, contextual, and they pertain to behavior" (p. 39). They are also explicitly or implicitly stated (Schall, 1983; Shimanoff, 1980).

Shimanoff (1980) expanded on the meaning of these identifiers. First, rules are associated with action/behavior. Since a rule is synonymous with behavior, people may carry out or not go along with the rule. There is an option to following the established rule because they are not synonymous with laws (Schall, 1983; Shimanoff, 1980). Second, the prescriptive, or authoritarian, trait of a rule makes people accountable for their behaviors (Shimanoff, 1980). Judgment or consequence may ensue if violated. Additionally, communication rules are contextually relevant. Those rules intended for organizational interactions are not necessarily applicable to communication while dining out. Finally, explicit rules "prescribe behavior [and]

implicit rules are unstated prescriptions for behavior" (p. 54). Regardless of how the rule is stated, violations may occur. It is usually through the mistakes people make in interactions that certain rules are noticed. The violator may realize such mistakes because the other person shows signs of embarrassment or verbally acknowledges the mistake. Jabs (2005) added to the importance of implicit rules by stating how people are not always consciously aware of them, which may lead to unplanned consequences.

Carbaugh (1990) proposed four criteria for classifying communication rules. These included communication rules that are reportable by participants, repeatable and recurrent patterns in the participants' dialogue, "widely intelligible" and not questioned, and "invoked as repair mechanisms" when dissension occurs (Carbaugh, 1990, p. 122). Schegloff (1972) used another technique to look for "deviant cases" that disconfirm the communication rules. These occurrences are significant because they assist in better understanding the rules in place. "Deviant cases" provide further insight into some nuances of the rule that may go unnoticed otherwise. The deviations also assist in identifying if the disconfirmation is indicative of different organizational cultures or if they are informative about the nature of the rule (Shimanoff, 1980) under consideration. Overall, the study of membership categorization provides insight into the social construction of Millennials in the workplace and into an organizational culture. Additionally, the study of rules furthers the insight into organizational culture, and also provides some indication of managerial perceptions of employee assimilation.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS OF MCDS AND CBAS

Membership Categories

The first research question asks how the participants characterized Millennials in their organizations. Through various portions of the interviews, the managers' categorizations or usage of membership categories became evident. For instance, a question early in the interview schedule addressed how managers referred to young organizational members. This assisted in analyzing the categories participants were aware they used. After this question, the Millennial term was introduced and used by the interviewer throughout the remainder of the discussion. Many interviewees also adopted this term thereafter when characterizing the generational cohort although many acknowledged having little awareness of the term prior to the interview. The discourse was then analyzed for participants' usage of additional categories that perhaps they were not consciously aware they use as well as the repetition and recurrence of the term "Millennial." The data analysis showed that the most popular additional membership categories used by participants were "kid(s)" and "age group." Also, the data provided insight into how participants did or did not use the Millennial category in their discourse. All membership categories invoked provided insight into how participants used these categories as sense-making devices about the particular Millennial group (Sacks, 1972).

Kids

The most common membership category used across participants was "kid(s)". Some managers used this identifying term when initially asked about ways they refer to their young

organizational members. For example, Nigel, Guest Services Manager at BB Hotel, discussed his

usage of the "kids," or, more specifically, "my kids," membership category.

1 N   Young employ<u>ees</u>. Well sometimes I call them my kids. Umm, mm-but I u-usually stick

2   to (organization-specific term for organizational member).

3 I   Mmhmm.

4 N   I usually don't but every now and then I'll call them my kids. Ya know let me go check

5   on my kids.

6 I   Right.

7 N   Cause I truly feel they are sometimes.

Similarly, Kathy, Human Resources Director at HH Hotel, invoked the category of "kid."

8 K   Kid. (hh) I guess. Umm, well, I don't really have names for them. (2) I don't really have

9   names for them, but I guess we may, offhand, refer to someone as a kid if they're young,

10   but that's all.

Both participants recalled their use of the "kids" category to reference young organizational

members. It is notable that there was no hesitancy in their recollection of using the category

"kids," but there was hesitancy in their admittance to frequency of the term. For example, Nigel

spoke the words "sometimes" (line 1) and "every now and then" (line 4), while Kathy offered the

disclaimer, "I guess" (lines 8 and 9). Looking at these excerpts together points to two possible

assumptions. The quick recollection of the "kids" category for young organizational members

may show that the term is one that they readily use. However, the admittance of limiting the term

demonstrated how they might be aware of possible negative connotations of the term "kids"

and/or of the appropriateness of the term for workplace discourse. The managers may also be

demonstrating an awareness consistent with Scott's (2007) idea that they do not think the "kids" category is representative of them. This would be particularly true in a workplace environment where young adults forge a professional identity.

Several participants did not state their use of the "kids" membership category in the beginning of the interview, but used it in later parts of the interview. Some managers noticed their use of the term when they previously claimed to use only the organization's normative professional terms or claimed to use no terms specific to the young organizational member group. Teresa, Interim Director of Communications at AA Convention's Bureau, said she would just refer to young organizational members by their names. However, she began to use "kids" to identify the Millennial group later in her interview. Two different portions of the interview demonstrated this occurrence. Earlier in the interview she asserted that she did not reference Millennial employees by terms referencing their age because that would be "rude."

11 T   Throughout the year or as kids I get kids callin' me all the time

12 I   (h)

13 T   We'll call em' kids now.

14 I   (hh)

15 T   But I get them callin' me all the time. Ya know

16 I   mmhmm

17 T   lookin' for internships ↑and that's primarily where I'm seeing ya know the work habits

18   and and everything and it's been quite interesting. So (hhh)

(…)

19 T   and stuff but ya know these kids they all want to be:::. I'm callin' em' kids

20 I   mmhmm

21 T   but I don't call them kids when they come into work. But (they're kids h) to me now

The same occurred throughout the interview with Jill, Human Resources Director at JJ Hotel. Earlier in the discussion, she said there were not names she used to refer to Millennials, if anything, she might refer to their lack of experience. She then proceeded to discuss some examples of poor manners that she had observed:

22 J   Please and thank you I don't know if it's, it's in the vocabulary anymore. The f word

23   certainly is. Ya know. And I don't know that it's them anymore. I think we've all become

24   hardened.

25 I   Mmhmm.

26 J   And I don't know that it's them anymore than any any one else. But if you think about it

27   these kids

28 I   Mmhmm.

29 J   okay. We'll call them that because ya know that's what they are.

Both participants demonstrated a mindless use of the "kid" membership category followed by acknowledgement that they did in fact use the term to identify a segment of their workforce (lines 11-13; 19-21; 27-29). Both Teresa and Jill provided explanation as to why they feel the need to refer to this group as "kids," which gave evidence into how the participants made sense and grouped these individuals together. It appeared that they felt this youngest generation felt like "kids" to them, thus making it an appropriate "apparatus" to identify the group (Sacks, 1972).

There was another group of participants who used the membership category "kid" to refer to their own children who were representative of the Millennial generation. It was common for managers to answer the interview questions with a combination of experience from observing their Millennial employees and "kids" or children at home. For example, Teri, Director of Sales and Marketing at AA Attraction Park, referenced her offspring to answer the interviewer's question about Millennials and narcissism.

30 T   Mmm. (4) In a way I do. Yeah. I didn't think that yeah. I do. Umm it's just a different

31   generation. It is a different generation. My kids now are 26 and 24. My daughter's very

32   confident but she's not narcissistic.

Kathy, Director of Human Resources at HH Hotel, mentioned her "kids" when explaining the influence of peoples' upbringings as well as her opinions on Millennials and teamwork.

33 K   It may just be how people are brought up and it and it's also generalization. I have two

34   kids one's like that and one's not. Ya know so who's to say what it is but it's the, they

35   don't understand. It's like what do you mean ya know if I have a doctor's excuse why am

36   I not why do I get docked for attendance? It's like well you still weren't here.

(…)

37 K   And my agenda may be all about me but it is what it is so I I don't know about interacting

38   with others. I can't think of (2). Mh, I was just thinking of my own kids too

Teri and Kathy exhibited a natural ease in using their "kids" to represent behaviors of the Millennial generation. In the beginning of Teri's excerpt, when asked about whether or not she had noticed an increased level of narcissism with her Millennial employees. The "mmm" and four-second-pause she took showed some struggling with the question (line 30). She continued to

think through an answer and then thought of her children, which led her to a conclusion. Kathy also used her "kids" to answer questions. She struggled with recalling how her employees work together. Kathy proceeded to admit she thinks of her own "kids" and how they interact together (line 38). Overall, it seemed they were comfortable talking about their children because they were also members of the Millennial generation and could serve as examples. Thus, the "kid" membership category was utilized while referencing young organizational members and offspring.

The natural recollection of their children's' behaviors might also lead to another finding. Managers with children in the Millennial generation might have preconceived beliefs about the behaviors of these employees. Their experiences with their own children, positive or negative, may affect the outlook they have on employees of that generation at their workplace. Silverman (1999) stated that placement into categories occurs early on in an interaction. By placing Millennial employees in a category which the speaker is already familiar with, some of the inference rich properties of that category may be invoked.

<div align="center">Age Group</div>

Another pattern in membership categories that emerged during data analysis involved participants' use of some variation of the category "age group" to refer to members of the Millennial generation. Managers utilized the category during different points of the interview. For example, some identified this group when discussing their positive and negative characteristics as well as their workplace needs.

Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, made use of the "age group" membership category in the following excerpt when answering a question regarding Millennials

most positive workplace characteristics. He specifically referred to one employee in this group who had worked in the military and now was a part of his security team.

39 M   =to be deployed so you have a military side to them one of our newest (organization-

40   specific term for organizational members) is um just got back from Iraq

41 I   right

42 M   but they're in that age group so you get that kind of look to it so they're looking for

43   <u>for</u>ward they're ↑hopeful

He used "that age group" to describe this particular employee and the overall group of employees in this category. He continued to employ this membership category in other parts of the interview. In this section, he spoke about the interviewer's question pertaining to Millennials and feedback needs.

44 M   it always comes up very every year (.) from <u>that</u> age group in particular (.)

45   ↑more↓feedback more often

He was able to think of the Millennial group of employees, use "that age group" to identify them, and associate a particular behavior with the group.

     Another participant, Allison, Director of Human Resources for AA Hotel, also used the term "age group" to make sense of Millennials. She was asked for a specific example of a Millennial employee who exhibited the positive workplace behaviors she had observed of Millennials as a whole. After giving the example, she gave the statement below.

46 A   He's actually, he's the best example that of anybody that I've seen of his age group but I

47   mean he blew everybody away.

It appeared that Allison made sense of the Millennial group by thinking of them as an "age group."

Usage of the term "age group" as a membership category by the participants points to some potential implications regarding their selection of this category. It appeared that participants did not associate a difference in definitions of generational membership and "age group" membership. The participants' use of "age group" as a synonym of the Millennial generation was surprising due to the literature's emphasis on how other factors contribute to generational membership (see Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Real et al., 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). The literature discussed how people transition through different "age groups" but are only members of one generational cohort. However, hearing the participants' use of the "age group" category to refer to Millennials showed how people do not always separate these two categories from one another. In other words, the salience of the term "Millennial" may not have as much meaning for some people in the workforce as it does for those who commonly publish information about Millennials and other generational cohorts.

Tammy, Front Desk Manager at II Hotel, showed another, more extreme example of how managers are making sense of Millennials through identifying them as an "age group." The statements below resulted from asking Tammy if she had anything else to add to the discussion.

48 T   (2) It's I don't ya know (*deep breath*) I have a hard time try ya know coming to the

49   realization where that I'm not (in that age group anymore↑).

50 I   Yeah.

51 T   So it's so difficult like I try to relate things in my life now from when I was ya know

52 I   Mmhmm.

53 T   even 30 and it's it seems like, it seems like a lifetime away.

54 I   Mmhmm.

55 T   And, ya know I don't know umm, I'm trying to figure out ya know from all these things

56   that you're asking me

57 I   Mmhmm.

58 T   was I like that? Did I have those qualities when I was in that age group

It is evident that she thought about the question through her pause (line 48) and then reflections about when she was one of them since she was not "in that age group anymore" (line 50). It appeared in this case that Tammy associated the Millennial category with that given "age group." Further, she was able to place herself in the category and think of her behaviors at the time.

Again, this showed how the literature might state a distinct difference in generations and "age group," but the managers might have a different outlook regarding what those categories mean. All of the examples in this section showed some background into how the participants made sense of Millennials through labeling them as an "age group." Much of the literature did not focus on empirical data, which may explain why popular perception of how to define a Millennial is age driven rather than understood by historical or birth year influences. It also points to a problem confronted by interviewees responding to questions about this generational cohort. There is a normal maturation process in aging and participants were confronted with trying to distinguish between those behaviors that could be associated with the unique historical contexts experienced by members of that generational cohort.

Whether or not the participants chose to use the membership category "Millennial" in their discourse yielded additional findings. The interviewer introduced the term "Millennial" to participants early on in the interview. Participants had the option to continue using this membership category in their responses or utilize other identifiers that they saw better fit for the group. As evidenced above, "kid" and "age group" references were some of those other membership categories used in place of or in addition to the "Millennial" membership category. Overall, the data showed a large disparity with the "Millennial" category with participants comfortably using the term, others using variations of Millennial or not using it at all, and even a single case of a participant refusing to label this group.

Most participants appeared comfortable with utilizing the "Millennial" membership category as evidenced in their inclusion of the category in their discourse. In fact, "Millennial" was the most recurrent membership category across all the data. The popularity of this membership category was expected due to stated research purpose focusing on the Millennial population and in the interviewer's use of the term. However, some managers demonstrated their comfort with using the term. Joey, Food and Beverage Manager at HH Hotel, is an example of a participant who used "Millennial" freely.

59 J   It's gonna be easier. I don't have to work for it. Umm those are some of the the negative

60   connotations that I get with the Millennials, more so perhaps but even even a lot of

61   Generation X I've been kind of embarrassed by my fellow generation as well. Umm

62   again I I was raised by ya know uh a Marine and uh my family we we work hard and ya

63   know so I-'ve never been able to understand and grasp ya know o-other people and their

64   mentalities sometime of ya know this is owed to me. It's ya know it's not the case so. But

65   umm very prevalent I think, umm at times not with everybody obviously but uh with

66   many of the Millennials is that umm ya know things have been a little bit easier for them

67   umm and-and so they have a little bit of that uh, that sense to them.

It appeared Joey utilized the "Millennial" category with ease because there were no pauses or

signs of deep thought before he spoke it. Julie, Director of Internal Communications for BB

Theme Park, provided another example of utilizing the "Millennial" category.

68 J   Ya know my three years of having a a high concentration of Millennials in three years

69   we've had one one umm (specific term for organizational member) who was in that

70   Millennial category that umm

71   wasn't showing up for work and we ended up having to terminate them.

(…)

72 I   Is there anything you'd like to add to the discussion or think should be asked if there's a

73   future interview?

74 J   Umm hmm. I don't think so. I umm ya know I it's funny that we're having this

75   conversation cause we we have team umm kind of team talks with, ironically the

76   Millennials although it's not positioned as the Millennials. It's positioned as team talks

77   with our interns.

78 I   Right (h)

79 J   Umm but that's the Millennials! Umm and I just had one with uh a group of five of our

80   Mil-Millennials our interns couple weeks ago. And umm, ya know it was just ya know it

81   was just great to be around the energy and the excitement and, umm the newness of,

82   starting,

In the excerpt above, Julie said "Millennial" six times (lines 68, 70, 76, 79, and 80), which

showed comfort and fluency of the term. She also made an interesting point that the company

conducts team talks with the "Millennials" (line 75). She made it sound as if the company was

fine referring to this group as Millennials, but that they would never tell these "Millennials" they

refer to them by this membership category. Julie said they refer to this group as interns when

speaking directly to them. She emphasized through forcefulness of the word that the interns are

"Millennials" (line 79), which makes them fit in both groups.

Joey's excerpt also showcased membership categorization devices and the consistency

rule. He used a membership category from the collection of generational cohorts, "Generation

X" (line 61). His usage of "Millennial" and "Generation X" together might show his overall

familiarity with the membership category device "generations." It seemed like Joey thought

these categories had a relationship to one another. Or, like Sacks (1972) said, they "go together"

(p. 332). Joey, like other participants in the study, evidenced use of the consistency rule by using

terms for generational cohorts by contrasting Millennials with their own generational cohort

MCDs. Silverman (1998) stated that when one category is used to identify a group a person

might employ another category in the membership category device because it is part of the same

collection. In this case, Joey used "Millennial" and then "Generation X," which showed

consistency with the generation collection. Overall, Joey and Julie demonstrated two examples of

participants who were comfortable and familiar with the "Millennial" membership category.

Other participants utilized the "Millennial" term in their interviews, but seemed to

display some discomfort with the term by using a variation of the category. Subsequent to the

48

interviewer's reference to the "Millennial" membership category, some participants used a different version of the word when they spoke it in their interview. For instance, Thad, Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, showed inconsistency in his different uses of "Millennial."

83 T   Uh and even people that are married. Ya know there's always emergencies and umm so

84   that's the main reason we allow them to use their phones. But very often especially with

85   the Millenniums they'll ya know they'll be texting and chatting and and on the phone,

86   during work time.

(…)

87 T   people spend a lot of money to to purchase here. So their expectations are very high and

88   sometimes the Millennials they don't really get that.

(…)

89 T   with your supervisor. And again as that relationship grows there's ya know more

90   understanding of what's what's expected. But I think at first it's probably not not a

91   realistic. The Millennials probably get picked on a little bit more.

(…)

92 T   Umm, I think because of cell phones and computers and all the the gadgets that are out

93   now the, the Millenniums come in with a greater knowledge of of how to do things.

Various sections of Thad's interview were combined to showcase his shifting use of the "Millennial" membership category. Thad switched from "Millenniums" (line 85) to "Millennials" (lines 88 and 91) and back to "Millenniums" (line 93) throughout the excerpt above. The inconsistency might demonstrate how Thad was not familiar with the category but

used it to follow the interviewers' lead. Unfamiliarity with the term also appeared during an interview with Assistant Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, Christina.

94 C   They always get certain uh issues with attendance. Uhumm maybe they come late. They

95   have issues with coming leaving early.

96 I   Mmhmm.

97 C   That's very common in that Millennium↑

98 I   Millennials.

99 C   Millennials. Umm until you call them in and tell them hey look what's going on. And

100   then oh okay. I need to watch out that that.

Christina showed her uncertainty with the term when she used a questioning tone while speaking the word "Millennium" (line 97). It was evident that Christina was unsure and therefore uncomfortable with using this membership category because it was not a term she commonly used. However, Christina's usage did appear to follow the economy rule (Sacks, 1972; Silverman, 1998). She may have thought that consistently using the interviewer's term, "Millennial," would constitute an economical reference to the "Millennial" population. Christina might have recognized the category as part of the larger "generation" collection. Christina did tell the interviewer prior to the interview being recorded that her English was not perfect. This might show how the "Millennial" membership category is more of a term used in the English language. Jerry, Regional Director of X Area Hotels, admitted he was unfamiliar with the term close to the beginning of his interview.

101 I   Okay great. And then before I had contacted you had you heard the term Millennial

102   before?

103 J   Umm I had heard the term before but not necessarily associated with young adults of 18

104   to 20 so.

105 I   Okay.

106 J   More so in maybe the Millennia Mall or Millennium just the Millennium (what had

107   happened). But

108 I   Right.

109 J   I didn't really associate it with students or young adults.

Jerry said he had heard the "Millennial" term before but never associated it with the generational

context (lines 103-104). Also, he misunderstood the term with the definitions he provided (lines

106-107). When Jerry did use the "Millennial" category in his interview, he used a version of the

word that he said he was familiar with prior to the interview.

110 J   They can pick that up as well. It's just that umm I think the Millennium employee doesn't

111   always. There's a percentage of them who don't have the verbal communication skills

112   anymore because they tend to text to each other for instance and use technology to

113   communicate versus face-to-face communication.

Jerry's variation of the "Millennial" category was interesting because he seldom used anything

close to the "Millennial" term but did use it here when discussing technology, which was one

way he had heard the term before the discussion. All together, the participants showed

discrepancy in the use and comfort with using the "Millennial" category. There were also six

participants who never used the "Millennial" membership category or a variation of the category

in their discourse. The variations and not using the term were unexpected because of the

popularity of this term in the literature.

One participant used a variation of "Millennial" and expressed her discomfort with using any category at all to identify a group of people. Although her beliefs were not shared commonly amongst participants and she provided a disconfirming instance in the data set, her discourse was worthy to include and explore. Jill, Human Resources Director at JJ Hotel, demonstrated this occurrence in the excerpt below.

114 J   And I'm sure as a Millenian

115 I   Mmhmm.

116 J   people are looking at that thinking I'm paying my social security to pay for these, ya

117   know I'm paying into social security to support all these people out there, ya know who

118   are on social security and the group of us who are getting close to social security think we

119   we did this our whole life.

(…)

120 J   When using our servers as an example cause that's where we have most of these folks. I

121   think they they work okay together. I think sometimes some of our employees who have

122   been here a long time do not but that's been the case sense day one. It's not just the

123   Millennians. It's the people before that but sometimes people don't welcome them with

124   open arms.

This was a part of her interview where she used a variation of the "Millennial" membership category (lines 114 and 123). However, in other sections of her interview she expressed discomfort with labeling anyone as a member of a group. She repeated the discomfort multiple times, with the following excerpt as one example about not being able to group Millennials in the workplace.

125 J   Okay. Umm, but every group of employees and again I don't like to group them into

126   groups. That's really hard for me to even say that or think that.

127 I   Mmhmm.

128 J   Because when I think of a group of employees here at JJ Hotel I think

129 I   the group.

130 J   as a whole. I don't break them into this group does this and this group does this. And-and

131   just ya know. I conceptually I can't do that.

132 I   Mmhmm.

133 J   It's hard for me to do that. So, I would like at it and for me it's on an individual basis. I

134   couldn't say group does this.

Jill said it was hard for her to distinguish between groups in her workplace because she thought of all the organizational members as a collective (lines 126-130). She also said it was hard for her to conceptualize grouping people together with behaviors (lines 130-131). However, she did comfortably categorize this group by referring to them as "kids" showcased in an earlier excerpt (lines 22-29). Jill also stated she was fine with using newer employees instead of "Millennials" in another section.

135 J   But let's just say our newer employees.

As Sacks (1972) stated, it is normal for people to place others into categories as a sense-making tool, which Jill did through using other labels. It appeared that using "Millennial" felt like a stereotypical label for Jill. The strong disconfirming instance displayed in this single interview warrants pointing out. She went from utilizing a variation of the "Millennial" category to stating her refusal to group people together at all and also using other membership categories that did

group people in her workplace. Other participants stated subtle aversions to stereotyping behaviors with the Millennial group. This particular disconfirming case demonstrated the large variation in the participants' popular uses of membership category devices. Participants who were comfortable with the term incorporated it into their discourse, while other participants might have adopted the term to match the interviewer's discourse.

Analyzing the "Millennial" membership category yielded valuable information. It showed participants who were comfortable with the "Millennial" membership category and used the category frequently throughout their interviews. Studying the "Millennial" membership category also showed how there is some misunderstanding of the term, which resulted in variations of the term and/or participants not using the term at all in their discourses. Finally, this analysis demonstrated how some people might demonstrate discomfort with openly admitting they group people together, even though grouping and organizing are natural, universal processes. Most of the interviewees are employed in large organizations thus enhancing the need to find a method of organizing the work environment around them to promote efficiency.

<u>Category-Bound Activities</u>

The second part of the first research question addresses the category-bound activities managers associate with their Millennial employees. In order to seek this information from the participants, the interviewer asked them to provide both the positive and undesirable or inappropriate behaviors they observe of the Millennials they supervise. Participants also mentioned category-bound activities freely throughout the interview.

The literature heavily focused on the innate technological skills of Millennials and how such skills influence their behaviors and characteristics (see Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers

& Sadaghiani, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Due to the literature's emphasis, similar patterns were expected during data analysis. In fact, participants' discourse paralleled with the literature. Numerous comments by managers affirmed Millennial fluency with technology use. Examples of managerial references to Millennial use of technology included statements such as: "Uh I just and then am amazed at how quick they learn the stuff and lucky for them;" "They pick up the register like that…that's definitely a plus with the younger kids;" "You name it they do it. Even with the system they learn the system fast;" "I-I actually umm like umm the interns to do is uh really assist with the social media…that's what we look to them for in particular more than anything;" "It it's instinctually where they go to make things happen." Another manager discussed how his department ordered new, top-of-the-line communication radios. They received the radios and could not figure out how to use a particular function. Subsequently, a Millennial employee solved the issue by inputting a code into the radios. Managers interviewed affirmed the literature's depiction of Millennials.

Although Millennials' proficiency with technology and the positive impacts on the workplace emerged as a prominent pattern in the data, three other themes are discussed in greater detail due to their illumination of factors beyond that which is covered in the existing literature. These three major patterns that emerged amongst participants included managers noting Millennials' desire for learning and training, positive and negative trends in Millennials' teamwork, and Millennials' requests for frequent and specific feedback.

<center>Learning and Training</center>

An unanticipated pattern emerged when participants were asked about the positive workplace behaviors they observe of their Millennial employees. Multiple participants spoke

<center>55</center>

about Millennials' desire to learn in their positions as well as their interest in obtaining and

seeking workplace training. The literature did not discuss these as characteristics of the

Millennial generation. However, managers in this study discussed it as being a prominent,

positive and desirable characteristic of the generation. For instance, Ronald, Restaurant Guest

Service Manager at BB Theme Park, spoke to his Millennials' interest in learning.

136 R   They're <u>eager</u> to learn. So when they're eager to learn and they request that, then I'm all

137   about giving them that opportunity.

Slightly after this portion of the interview, the data from Ronald showed repetition as he made

similar comments in response to a question about Millennials and what they request in the

workplace. Again he mentioned requests for learning opportunities.

138 R   So as far as requests, when it comes to that I do have (specific term for organizational

139   member). especially (organization-specific term) program (organization-specific term for

140   member) that'll come up and say, "I'm really interested in learning↑ this. I love quick

141   service but I have passion in table service."

He recalled Millennial employees telling him how they were interested in learning another area.

It was not that they did not enjoy learning their current position, but they wanted to learn more as

well (line 140). The Assistant Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, Christina, also spoke of her

Millennials wanting to constantly learn more.

142 C   They are very seeking for opportunities to do more than they're required. Uh they're

143   looking for things to do. They're looking for ways to learn. Umm, they want to move on.

144   They're not the type of person that want to stay stuck in a specific place. They want to do

145   more.

146 I Mmhmm

147 C They want to learn. They want to help and that's kind of like the most important part of

148   them.

Christina addressed not only their desire to learn but associated such a desire with opportunity

(line 142) and moving forward (line 143). Another participant, Allison, Human Resources

Director for AA Hotel, had similar comments as Christina.

149 A People who have been here a longer time, older people, they get very comfortable and

150   settled

151 I Mmhmm

152 A they don't want to try anything new. They don't wanna change departments. They're

153   happy where they are. But, the younger people, they just want to keep, keep doing new

154   things. And part of it I think is to keep them challenged and not be bored. And some of it

155   is obviously, you know if you start at the bottom you wanna work your way up

(…)

156   And most of the time when there's open positions, it it's the younger people who are

157   trying for those positions. Even if they don't have any background in it. They're like I'll

158   try anything. I'll, ya know, you can teach me.

159 I Mmhmm

160 A So they're very gung-ho about learning.

Thus, it appeared these managers believed that Millennials thought having the ability to learn

granted them access to advancement and growth in the workplace. This is interesting insight

because it expands on one finding in the existing literature. Hershatter and Epstein (2010)

mentioned the importance of advancement to the Millennial-generation employee. This may

provide insight into the Millennial motivations for interests in on-the-job learning opportunities,

according to the managers' perceptions. It points to a more specific way Millennials might try to

advance in the organization. Perhaps they associate gaining more knowledge with increased

possibility for advancement. Christina said this was "the most important part of them" (lines

147-148), which speaks to her awareness of this trait in her Millennials.

When asked if she could recall a specific example where she has seen a Millennial want

to learn more, Christina discussed her employee Andrea. She said Andrea always asked about

learning new aspects of the position. Andrea wanted to know how to operate dispatch and

expressed interest in learning about becoming a supervisor. Again, the example may be

indicative of Andrea's use of learning to garner a higher position.

Allison's discourse demonstrated how her Millennial employees utilize learning to

advance in the hotel. She added that the younger organizational members like to be challenged

and not feel bored in their positions (line 154). This was telling of their interest in learning to

keep the workplace stimulating. In this excerpt, Allison contrasted older and younger

organizational members, clearly indicating that she associated learning with the Millennial

generation but not so much with other generations.

Participants also explained that Millennial employees seek out training opportunities in

their organizations. After also mentioning their interest in learning as a positive workplace

behavior, Debra, Human Resources Associate Director at CC Hotel, described Millennials'

desire for training.

161 D Umm, probably:::, umm their willingness to eagerness to learn.

58

(…)

162   Umm also training opportunities. We have a management training program where if

163   you're in a management position we put you through this managemen-training program.

164   I'm finding that a lot of ya know Millennials a lot of times ya know rather than us going

165   to them they're coming to us.

166 I Okay.

167 D Ya know, (hey can you put me in that program↑)?

It seems like Debra's Millennials hear of the opportunities and want to partake (lines 164-165).

Their motivator for training may be that it will put them in a position for advancement since

they have more knowledge, which is similar to what participants Christina and Allison said. Or,

this may show that some other Millennials enjoy the process of learning. Perhaps the process

feels similar to school, which is definitely familiar to them as such an overall educated

generation (Pew Research Center, 2010).

      She spoke about a specific program the hotel developed that helps women and minorities

fast track their careers into upper management. Debra recalled two Millennials as ones who:

168 D would reach out and ya know call me where as they were a lot of other people

169   were exposed and you know I never got those calls.

She made it clear that everyone had the opportunity to be a part of the program but the

Millennial employees were the ones calling her to make sure they were a part of it.

170 D So (Hhh). So very interested and excited about ya know more education more learning.

In this line, Debra laughed as she finished providing the example. The laughter seemed to show how she was surprised that more people were not taking advantage of such a program and that those who did, Millennials, were seeking out the opportunity.

Overall, data showed that managers noticed their Millennials seeking further opportunities to learn in their organizations and even seek training opportunities. Some of the managers' discourse suggested the Millennials might have an innate desire to learn based on their schooling. Other discourse proposed the desire for learning and training might serve as a way to advance within the organization. This was an unexpected finding because it was not discussed in the literature, but a clear pattern (in repetition and recurrence) amongst participants.

<p style="text-align:center">Teamwork</p>

Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) and Anderson (2008) presented contrasting views regarding whether Millennials prefer to work together to accomplish a task in the workplace. Since the literature was mixed, the question of whether Millennials prefer to work in a team or independently was asked of the participants to understand their observations. The current research also found that managers provided mixed opinions on Millennials and teamwork. However, a majority of managers believed their Millennial employees do work well together and provided various reasons for their thinking.

One participant, Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, gave his observations of Millennials working together and also used examples of his own Millennial-generation children to arrive at these conclusions.

171 M (1) y::: ↑yeah you know and they do really well it's gr: ↑I wouldn't call it a groupthink=

172 I   = MmHmm

173 M cause there's diversity of opinion

174 I right

175 M but they <u>work</u> really <u>well</u> in groups

176 I MmHmm

177 M th: in fact I think that's their preferred way

178 I that was my next question

179 M hhh

180 I Hhh

181 M I think they would rather (1) do do that and I've <u>seen</u> that in my own children

182 I MmHmm

183 M they (1) um (.) they can work fine indi↑vidually

184 I MmHmm

185 M but there's a lot more enjoyment in doing it together

186 I MmHmm

187 M m; my <u>third</u> son just graduated School X chemistry (.) his fiancé is (.) ↓ci↓vil

188   engineering and I've (.) it's just a hoot when they get together (.) cause they sit around

189   and talk numbers (.) and formulas and stuff and it's like (.) you guys are so::::o out there

190 I Hhhhhh

191 M then it's that to see that <u>com</u>fort that that they get at work together how they problem

192   solve together

193 I MmHmm

194 M that's what I've noticed in our Millennials here is that they can problem solve in a group

195 I   MmHmm

196 M   much better than they can actually individually

197 I   MmHmm

198 M   and they're not a<u>fraid</u> to ask for help

199 I   right

200 M   um (.) which is great (.) uh particularly in investigations and stuff they'll un<u>cover</u> things

201 I   M↓mm

202 M   uh (.) because they're working together with someone else and so you get a diversity of

203   of uh (.) opinions and view

The discourse above offers a few key relevant points. Mitch's emphasis shows his certainty in stating that Millennials work well with one another (line 175). He did not hesitate with his opinion on this matter and had arguably a lot to offer to solidify his opinion. He observed that the Millennials he oversees are productive when working together by providing diverse opinions

Mitch discussed how his Millennials enjoy the experience of working together (line 185), and they are comfortable in doing it, which agrees with Myers and Sadaghiani (2010). Again, he emphasized part of the word comfort (line 191), which suggested he is impressed with the ease in which they work with one another. He was not the only manager to notice the social aspect of teamwork; Debra, Human Resources Associate Director at CC Hotel, also noted this observation.

204 D   Yeah so umm, and the <u>team </u>isn't so much for, the team the project.

205 I   Mmhmm.

206 D   It's more for the socializing.

207 I   Uhuh.

208 D If that makes any sense.

209 I Oh yes.

210 D (hH). Yeah. Because or a good example would be our orientation.

211 I Mmhmm.

212 D And a lot of people participate on and I know that ya know when I first started umm. Ya

213   know we ah you know there wasn't as much social-h-h it seems it ends up being more

214   socializing. Umm, but the thing about it is they can socialize and still get the work done.

215 I Right.

216 D You know(h)

217 I Uhuh.

218 D   kind of going back to ya know.

219 I Multi-tasking.

220 D The multi-tasking and do it ya know and do it well.

221 I Mmhmm.

222 D So, yeah.

Debra focused on Millennials not wanting to work together for the sake of the project, but rather for the ability to be together and socialize. Again, Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) suggested this same interest by Millennials in using teamwork for socialization. Her discourse provided an interesting perspective that Millennials are still productive when they work together and interact or multi-task. Earlier in the interview, she talked about their ability to multi-task with technological devices, which confirmed Shaw and Fairhurst's (2008) work. At this point in the discussion, she said their communication is also part of their multi-tasking. However, it is

important to note that the literature heavily focused on multi-tasking, while only two participants referenced this in their interviews. Nevertheless, Debra observed socialization occurring in combination with their group work and saw it as a positive behavior. Thad, Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, summed up the socialization aspect well when he said, "they love interaction."

Loretta, Food and Beverage Director at EE Hotel, discussed Millennials working well together and their enjoyment of chatting. In addition, she offered the perspective of Millennials enjoying teamwork for the sake of all being a part of something together. The example below about her Millennial employees working together to turn rooms after a convention demonstrates this.

223 L They want to work as a team

224 I Right.

225 L and I sometimes think it's because if one gets in trouble they're all in trouble.

226   (…)

227 L And after that we had another huge children's convention so consequently every room in

228   this department was destroyed.

229 I Mmhmm.

230 L Not destroyed as far as the walls and stuff but I mean as far as being dirty, and trashed.

231   And they've all worked as a team, for three days to take a certain area of the department

232   and everything had to be done (at it)

233 I Mmhmm.

234 L and they did a they did an excellent job. But they they work better as a team

235 I   Mmhmm.

236 L   as far as they're concerned because they don't feel like they're ya know pushed aside.

Aspects of Loretta's discourse (line 225 and 236) point to the idea of an "all in it together"

mentality and Millennials find a sense of community when working together, which may be a

result of the socialization behaviors in the group as discussed above. This was a new perspective

that was not offered in the literature. However, it also seems to be related to Myers and

Sadaghiani (2010) literature about working together to avoid risk in the workplace. The idea of

being in it all together creates community but also allows not one person to have negative

attention directed toward him or her, but sharing the blame with others. Another example of

avoiding individual risk is seen in discourse from Dennis, Front Desk Manager at FF Hotel,

when he discussed Millennials' preference for teamwork.

237 D   I think individually would scare them.

238 I   Mmhmm.

239 D   Yeah. I think the (like I said) that guidance and they need somebody there to show them

240   what to do or to be there for em. Cuz if they if someone's in the PBX area gets a phone

241   call and there's nobody around them to help them

242 I   Mmhmm.

243 D   they don't know the answer. Whoa they got to get up and they gotta they gotta they gotta

244   find somebody.

245 I   Mmhmm.

246 D   Ya know. Umm when it comes to company related information.

247 I   Mmhmm.

248 D Umm but yeah definitely in a team.

It appears that when Millennials work together they have a peer group that can help them answer questions and like Mitch suggested, work together to solve a problem. From the statements above, when alone and responsible for solving a problem Dennis said they become scared. It seems like when they work together they rely on their peers to have a mix of knowledge about the organization. Further, they may ask one another and come to a conclusion. It may be seen as a way they avoid risk. However, this is not an option when working individually. It appears his Millennials are uncomfortable and less confident when working alone.

As an educated generation, the literature said education was likely to influence Millennials' workplace habits (Pew Research Center, 2010). Bobby, Director of Recreation at GG Hotel, provided input that was similar to the literature.

249 B One of the things that I noticed, when I was going to school they were testing out a new
250   way of teaching in-in classes and that was small groups.

251 I Mmhmm.

252 B Ya know. Ya know before me my mom's generation and before it was the lines of the
253   desk and ya know listen to the teacher. Lecture lecture lecture. Take your notes. Read
254   your book. Highlight your book. Take your test. And then I was even ya know in high
255   school and junior high school they started with okay let's group up into four things and I
256   love that! I love that! And now I'm seeing in schools that most
257   of the teaching is done in groups like that. Small groups and talking and sharing ideas
258   collaborative ideas.

259 I Mmhmm.

260 B And uh I think that's that might have, a (2) and again I don't want to get off topic there

261   but I-I think that that just kind of came to me where-where-where I've seen a big

262   difference there.

He mentioned how learning in groups and sharing ideas in the classroom has likely carried over to today's workplace, which agrees with Ng et al.'s (2010) claims about Millennials working in groups at work because of their classroom atmosphere incorporating numerous group projects. It was noteworthy that Bobby talked about his own experiences with this type of learning first. He contrasted his mother's generation, one of standard learning, to his exposure to a new, collaborative learning later in his grade school. He emphasized his love for, at that time, this new style of learning (line 256). Bobby acknowledged that schools have adopted this as a primary teaching tool, which is the style Millennials know best. With familiarity to this type of learning, it makes sense that they continue to want and need collaboration and learning in groups.

Although a majority of participants thought Millennials prefer group work and interact well together, there were also managers who said Millennials prefer group work but do not work together successfully. The reasons provided for this were so similar that another unexpected pattern was found. Participants provided insight into the dark side of Millennials' strong preferences for group work and socialization. Merchandise Coordinator at GG Theme Park, Carol, discussed her observations of the negative impacts of this.

263 C Well they're all so quick to if there's someone that doesn't fit in. They're quick to isolate

264   them.

265 I Mmhmm.

266 C And umm we-we had a new girl a couple of weeks ago and she wound up not working

67

267   out and she voluntarily quit.

268 I   Mmhmm.

269 C Umm, which might have been a good thing for everybody because they had already

270   decided that this girl was not in their group and, umm the gossiping.

(…)

271 C When this girl came they didn't help her.

272 I   Ohh.

273 C They didn't team up with her at all. They had already decided in their head that she was

274   annoying to them and

275 I   Mmhmm. And they were done.

276 C Yes. So

277 I   That was one of my next

278 C the teamwork works both ways with that.

While previous data revealed that teamwork built a sense of community, Carol's responses indicated that the community formed may, at times, be exclusionary. As noted above, it may become difficult to accomplish tasks when no one will help or teach the newcomer what is needed to succeed. In Carol's example, the girl quit because of the isolation she experienced. The power in these groups Millennials are creating was showcased in the excerpt. They work well together *when* they like one another. This finding was not seen as prominent in the data as some other themes were, however it was recurrent across interviewees.

The importance of liking one another and isolating those who are not liked is also

exhibited in Joey's, Food and Beverage Manager at HH Hotel, dialogue below where he used his

Millennial servers as an example.

279 J   Umm but again i-it they can work together well in certain aspects umm only truly if they

280   like each other. Umm but but again there's that there's that social stigma that's attached if

281   ya know again ya know you don't like someone as much then ya know what are you

282   going to do to to not help that person.

283 I   Mmhmm.

(…)

284 J   I want I want the people that interact with people to be happy. So umm they don't

285   necessarily get that as much. Umm they could definitely be a little more uh more petty

286   and-and not as helpful and avoid that teamwork that we talked about so much in culture.

(…)

287 J   But again it-it really goes back to, who they work with and whether or not they're friends

288   or whether they're umm ya know they're buddies or they're getting along. Umm that-that

289   really is is-is their driver.

290 I   Mmhmm.

291 J   Uh cuz ya know just because you have other people working around you it's almost like

292   (ya know (I can't work with those two)↓).

Like Carol, Joey said the teamwork follows once the individuals like each other or essentially

make friends. These data show a link between Millennial teamwork, liking, and helping. If they

are not getting along, they do not help one another as readily and there is not the same level of

teamwork. From Joey's discourse, it appears that if the group has decided they do not like certain individuals, it is the responsibility of the members of that group to uphold the decision and not assist outsiders. If they help someone they are not supposed to, it seems they might also risk becoming an outsider. It is a method of proving membership and loyalty to the group.

Some other participants believed Millennials preferred working individually in the workplace. Kathy, Human Resources Director at HH Hotel, took a significant pause before responding to whether or not Millennials prefer to work together or alone.

293 K (5) That's funny. I-I would think the answer would be off the top of my head that they

294   would work together as a team but it's like I think about it. I think what I've observed is

295   they really do work individually. Because, w-well it's I'm just thinking like Halloween

296   cabana or pumpkin carving or the stuff. It's it's it seems to be individual achievement

297   whereas they come and this person with this particular skill or talent did this. And I don't

298   see that they actually work together as a team but that so it's more that they want an

299   individual well I don't know if they want but they get individual recognition. I can't

300   really say that they work as teams. I think it's more individual. That's that's an

301   interesting question. (hh)

Kathy talked her way through this question before arriving to her answer of Millennials preferring to complete their work individually. It was noteworthy that she said on the surface it seems the answer would be that they do prefer teams but that when truly thinking about it they are more independent. She acted surprised by her own answer due to laughing and stating, "that's an interesting question" (lines 300-301). Even so, she observed Millennials working alone when they did have the option to work together, such as with the Halloween activities. She

thought it might be that they like the individual recognition that results when working alone. This relates to the literature's findings of individualism linking to narcissism, or desire for the focus to be on them as an individual (Judge, LePine, & Rich, 2006; Twenge & Campbell, 2008).

While Kathy associated working alone with a desire for individual recognition, Tammy, Front Desk and Sales Manager at II Hotel, noticed her Millennials are just happier with doing tasks their own way.

302 T I think they'd prefer to work as an individual.

303 I Yeah.

304 T And just something came to mind when you said that. We had umm I think it was

305   Memorial Day weekend. We had a like 90 something check-ins.

306 I Mmhmm.

307 T And the way they organized the check-ins umm ya know alphabetical order pre-key the

308   keys. Ya know but one-one person was doing it one way and then the second person

309   came in for the mid-shift and then she started to move stuff-and the other one was like

310   (ahhh no:::↑).

311 I (h)

312 T So it seemed to me like she was just happier just

313 I Doing her own

314 T she had it under control and she didn't need any help.

In this excerpt, Tammy observed that her Millennials like to work individually so they can carry out their own processes. Although the other viewpoints were much more prevalent than Tammy's opinion, this defies everything stated earlier about needing interaction, avoiding risk,

and continuing working like in the classroom. The leadership and organizational culture may lead Tammy's Millennials to prefer individualism, which is an outlier in this sample. However, it is worth noticing the discomfort the girl in the example experienced when her process was interrupted.

The teamwork findings were surprising due to the literature's consistent portrayals of Millennials enjoyment of working together. Although participants did notice their Millennials working well together because they need social interaction with one another and have the ability to avoid individual risk when in a group, some other participants pointed out how they had some Millennials who did not work well together. Some managers noticed Millennials only working well together when they liked one another. When they did not like one another, managers saw Millennials isolating those they did not like and not assisting them in any way. This was quite unexpected. Other managers said they observe their Millennials preferring to work individually so they can get individual recognition for their accomplishments. Overall, there was a wide range of opinions from the managers, which offered many points along the spectrum of teamwork. The varying reports of teamwork may tell more about the type of supervising styles managers have and what they allow as well as the organization's stance on teamwork.

<div align="center">Feedback</div>

A majority of the participants acknowledged a difference in the feedback they provide to Millennial employees versus organizational members who belong to other generational cohorts. Specifically, they identified differences in the amount of feedback and types of feedback their Millennials prefer. The recurrent descriptions of Millennials and desired types of feedback,

which exhibits much similarity to the existing literature, constituted another major theme in the data.

Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, discussed the higher levels of feedback Millennials he supervises desire.

315 M Uh <u>quan</u>tity they need more that (.) we do (specific term for organizational member)

316   surveys (.) uh every year it's a big survey at BB Hotel does (.) then they it's an outside

317   company comes and does it (.) it's they dissect the the information and <u>really</u> helpful for

318   us <u>all</u> the way down to the department level

(…)

319 M it always comes up very every year (.) from <u>that</u> age group in particular (.)

320   ↑more↓feedback more often

It is relevant to note that the interviewer asked Mitch a general question about any differences in feedback that he noticed. Without a direct prompt about level of feedback for Millennials, Mitch forcefully (through using emphasis) talked about quantity as something he noticed about this generation (line 315). He then provided further evidence of this difference by stating results of the organizational member survey.

Another manager at BB Hotel, Nigel, Guest Services Manager, spoke about the amount of feedback his Millennial employees need. The differentiation in Nigel's interview is that he was directly asked about noticeable generational differences in the amount of feedback.

321 I   Great. How about with the level of feedback do you feel like, they need that feedback

322 N They've <u>asked</u> for it

323 I   a lot?

324 N many times. They've uh we do a (specific term for organizational member) opinion

325 survey

326 I mmhmm

327 N and the uh one of the things that <u>came</u> back was that we did not get enough feedback.

Without hesitation, Nigel also referenced the organizational member survey. In Nigel's excerpt,

he said Millennial employees ask for feedback (line 322). The notion of asking managers for

feedback was not directly mentioned in the literature. However, references to requests for

feedback appeared in other interviews and makes sense based on the literature saying Millennials

value feedback (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Ronald, Restaurant Guest Service Manager at BB Theme Park, provided a statement that

directly aligns with the literature when he discussed how much his Millennials appreciate

feedback.

328 R And I think that that's (.) one of the number one thing that when (organization-specific

329 term for member) leave from the (organization-specific term for member) program

330 they tell me that the thing they loved the most was just getting that feedback or that

331 recognition or that just acknowledgement that you that you that you're noticing <u>who</u> they

332 are and what they're doing. So.

Ronald's excerpt spoke to how much his Millennials value feedback. He explained that they

value it for recognition and acknowledgement (line 331). He respected the kind of feedback his

Millennials needed, and they were thankful for that.

Allison, Human Resources Director for AA Hotel, further discussed the occurrence of

Millennials seeking feedback.

333 A I think they they need (2) more.

334 I Mmhmm

335 A Whether it's constructive or positive, I think they really need to know where they stand a

336   lot more than and some if it I think with with people at least in my ya know here. The

337   people who are older if they've been here a long time. As long as things don't really

338   change a standard or something they know what to do they know they're doing it right

(…)

339 A And, if they're doing not doing something correctly, if they can find out about it because

340   they want to do things. They really want to do em right. So I think feedback is is very

341   important

342 I Mmhmm

343 A Because, I mean sometimes they'll come down here and they're like ya know I've been

344   here I've passed my 90 days aren't I supposed to get a review?

345 I Mmhmm

346 A A lot of people aren't banging down the doors for those reviews.

347 I (hh)

348 A Ya know they know there's no money attached.

349 I Mmhmm

350 A So, m-a lot of people don't care. They want to know. They want to know where they

351   stand.

352 I Mmhmm

353 A And getting feedback often is very important to them. I think.

The first half of Allison's response, similar to Mitch and Nigel, opened with statements about

Millennials needing more feedback. Allison believed the reason they need more feedback is to

know "where they stand" (line 335). She contrasted feedback needs of older and younger

organizational members, attributing Millennials' needs for more feedback to reduce uncertainty

about their places in the organization. This agrees with Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) stating

Millennials need feedback as affirmation to know how they are doing in the organization.

Overall, it seemed both Allison's and Ronald's Millennial employees needed this type of

feedback as a way to evaluate themselves.

In the second half of Allison's excerpt (lines 340-341), she gave an example of how she

knows feedback is important to her Millennial-generation employees by making a comparison

amongst organizational members. She explained how Millennials ask for reviews while other

generation employees do not seek reviews.

Mitch also noticed feedback was used as an evaluation device with his Millennial

employees, but added it was to evaluate more than their success in the position. He saw

Millennials searching for assessment that was more personal in nature.

354 M more fee:: (.) now ↑type of feedback too is not just work performance

355 I   MmHmm

356 M Um it's: (.) it's (.) gets into (.) do you like me as a person

357 I   MmHmm

358 M uh: (.) are you happy with me not just in my performance (.) but are you ↓happy

(…)

359 M we'd pi and w: just me my age group I started hearing those things I started to get

360   suspicious oka↑y I get it but is this really authentic is this really real

361 I   right

362 M what are you up to

363 I   right hhhh   Hh

364 M   Hhhhh HH (.) <u>what</u> are you asking me here

Mitch said his Millennial employees wanted to know how managers liked them as people. It was not feedback just about performance (line 354), but also do you like me for me? Mitch contrasted how members of his generation, which he identified with Baby Boomers, would be suspicious if someone at work provided feedback about who they were as people and not organizational members. This demonstrates similarity to the literature when Ng et al. (2010) said Millennials need a human aspect to the workplace. Additionally, Mitch's laughter (line 364) along with his questioning of what the person is getting at (lines 360-364) demonstrated how Mitch finds Millennials needing this type of affinity-based feedback perplexing.

The data have shown Millennials who desire higher levels of feedback and seek feedback about how they are liked by their managers. However, participants also noticed that Millennials are not receptive to all types of feedback. Allison acknowledged some Millennials' dislike of certain kinds of feedback.

365 A They, it's taken so personally

366 I   Mmhmm

367 A That just like that positive comment puffs them up and makes them really feel proud

368 I   Mmhmm

369 A You could, they're devastated.

370 I Mmhmm

371 A And something that's probably this big gets blown into something that's huge. And, it

372   really just knocks the wind out of their sails. And way more so than it should be. So

373   definitely the way it's delivered. And ya know you can't sugar coat everything but you

374   don't need to just blast somebody either.

375 I Mmhmm

376 A And, I think some maybe people who have been in the same job or-or people who are

377   older are used to taking constructive criticism less constructively and more criticism.

378 I Right

379 A But I think younger people definitely need a softer touch with that.

380 I Mmhmm

381 A They really need it to be wrapped up in something positive and not be personal

382 I Mmhmm

383 A It's more the action not what was behind it.

384 I Mmhmm

385 A So they don't take it personally. Cause sometimes I think that they feel like they're a bad

386   person because they did something wrong. Where that's not the case it's just they did

387   something wrong.

388 I Right

389 A It doesn't mean they're they're not a good person or their ya know they did it on purpose.

Since some Millennials are utilizing feedback as an assessment as to whether or not their

managers like them as people, it makes sense that negative feedback or criticizing remarks might

be taken personally. Allison has seen the effects various types of feedback from managers have on Millennial employees and how they blow criticism out of proportion. With such reactions from Millennials, Allison noticed that Millennials are sensitive to the delivery of the actual feedback message relating to Myers and Sadaghiani's (2010) statements of how Millennials are used to encouraging messages from their parents. Non-encouraging messages might be harder for Millennials to digest, so Allison focuses on actions. Bobby, Director of Recreation at GG Hotel, talked about varying reactions from Millennials when they received corrective feedback.

390 B   Ya know. Uh hey I got a call uh from engineering that said that this table was left out

391   outside and they walked by it and you were on (the event list). Oh I know I know I know.

392   Knowing where I'm going with it but not wanting to hear it. Knowing that they messed

393   up and knowing that they got caught and before they can hear the the constructive

394   feedback or the negativity, they will say I know where you're going. I didn't do it. I know

395   I didn't do it. Sorry I'm gonna take care of it. Or please don't finish because I don't want

396   to hear I don't want to hear you put me down kind of a thing. Ya know I know it's

397   coming.

This excerpt is another example of how Millennials might react so they do not hear they are disappointing to their managers. Bobby described an instance where another department noticed his employee had left something out that should have been put away. When Bobby confronted the Millennial employee, the Millennial acted like he knew what Bobby was going to say and attempted to circumvent the discussion (lines 394-397). This need for feedback but preference and acknowledgement only to positive feedback, is why some managers may see Millennial employees as entitled or narcissistic. The managers may be perplexed as to how their Millennial

employees only want positive feedback and not the entire picture of how they are performing at work, whether it is in their duties or as a person.

Participants detected that Millennials did not react well to all types of feedback, so some offered their opinions about the types of feedback Millennials tend to prefer from managers. Bobby noted their inclination to feedback that provides explanation and specifics.

398 B (Umm↑) regarding feedback I think it's best uh this generation to the

399　old adage do as I say not as I do or or to just say hey you really messed up sign here and

400　that's it. I think those things are falling by the wayside. Those are done. You

401 I Mmhmm.

402 B can't do that anymore. I think you really, at least I try to really explain myself

403 I Mmhmm.

404 B and-ex not only say this this is what I saw. You have to speak with specifics.

405 I Mmhmm.

406 B This is what I saw with my eyes not what I heard or this. This is the rule or this is the

407　expectation. This is how you did not follow the expectation or the rule or live up to the

408　expectation or the rule. This is what I need to see from you moving forward in this same

409　situation.

410 I Right.

411 B Talking about the one situation. Talking about the behavior not the not the person.

Bobby said his Millennial employees want exact details when given feedback. Similar to Anderson's (2008) and Hershatter and Epstein's (2010) findings, it appears that Millennials do not do well with abstract feedback where they have to form their own conclusions about what the

manager meant by the feedback. He made the point that the Millennial generation is not satisfied with being called into an office because they expect to have a conversation with their manager about the rules, how they did not meet the rule, and what is needed from them in the future (lines 406-409). With specific feedback, Millennials can construct a plan to move forward successfully and are more likely to not take the feedback personally.

Thad, Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, agreed that Millennials need specific feedback, with a particular focus on the "why."

412 T Ya know they definitely want to know the why.

413 I Mmhmm.

414 T Uh uh which is different than the other generations. Ya know the other generations we
415   could manage with this is the direction we're going period. Ya know so we spend a lot
416   more time explaining the direction. Why we're moving in that direction. How they tie
417   into that direction.

Thad repeated that his Millennials desire the "why" when given feedback during his interview, which showcased his strong belief this is a difference with Millennial employees. He even made note of it in the excerpt above by contrasting the Millennial generation to other generations. Jill, Human Resources Director at JJ Hotel, reiterated this same point in her interview.

418 J I think that umm, they appear to, people of an older generation I would say just used to
419   do things just because they were told to do them.

420 I Mmhmm.

421 J And so that was you know that-that was what they did and there was no question about it.
422   And I think that with the age group of people that you're talking about they want answers

423   to things. They don't want to just be told this is what you do.

(…)

424 J   That they don't want to just be told to do something. They want to be told why ya do it.

Jill also used generational contrasts to validate her opinion.

Christina, Assistant Executive Housekeeper at BB Hotel, also shared her observations of the clear feedback her Millennials need in the workplace when she was asked specifically if her Millennials need a different type of feedback than other organizational members.

425 C   (6). The feedback that they need. (2) I think you need to be very clear with them

426 I   Mmhmm.

427 C   and the expectations that you want from them.

It is significant that Christina took a six second pause before responding to her experience with Millennials needing a different type of feedback. Although her pause suggests that she had not thought about this extensively, her answer was very similar to the other participants; Millennials do need a different type of feedback and they value managers who speak to them with clarity. Again, it helps them avoid receipt of abstract feedback (Anderson, 2008; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

Kathy, Human Resources Director at HH Hotel, also spoke about Millennials' needs for clear expectations when given feedback, but added her opinion as to why they might need this type of feedback.

428 K   I think they do need feedback for those things it's just kind of maybe paint the

429   expectations and the picture a little more clearly. Umm and I think it needs to be direct

430   because they've been so buffered or mothered or I-I don't know what it is. So umm it

431   does need to be direct but I'm also careful to do it. I-I actually do find myself parenting.

432   You know it's like ugh okay. And maybe maybe it's because of my age I can't help it and

433   I have kids that age. I'm like alright try to see it from their point of view and be careful

434   how you say it. Umm but it but it doe the message needs to be sent and it needs to be sent

435   and it I think clearly. You know and I do think they appreciate that I don't I don't baby

436   them. I don't mother them. I, but I will try to do it nicely.

437 I   Mmhmm

438 K   But you know I tell em you're an adult and I'm gonna talk to you like an adult and this is

439   this is really the expectation. This is not we're going with this. This is this is where you

440   need to be.

Kathy's observation about Millennials' being "buffered or mothered" (line 430) resonates with

the literature indicating that parents were a major part of providing feedback to their Millennial

children and did so in a clear manner (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Now that Millennials are on

their own in the workplace, it makes sense that they would thrive on this same concrete, clear

feedback and direction from a manager since the parent is not necessarily there guiding their

workplace actions and behaviors. Kathy is another participant who mentioned the importance of

delivery, or direct but careful (lines 433-434) feedback. Kathy went back and forth about saying

she feels like a parent to some of them (line 431), yet treats them like an adult when

communicating to them (lines 435-436). This showed another example of how managers with

children who are in the Millennial generation have a hard time separating their role as parent and

manager.

Overall, a majority of the participants discussed differences in the feedback needs of their Millennial employees. They noted Millennials needing higher levels of feedback and even some asking for feedback when they did not receive it. Participants said they desired feedback to know not only how they were performing, but also how managers liked them as people. This seemed to blur the lines between work and personal identities. Some of the managers realized Millennials were not receptive to negative or criticizing feedback, but provided types of feedback Millennials tend to prefer, including explanation, "why," and clarity. These preferences might stem from their dislike of abstract feedback and their need for clear direction since their parents provided them with such feedback. A deviation from the literature is that none of the managers directly associated wanting feedback as a means to seek advancement (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS OF RULES

Rules

The second research question addresses organizational rules; specifically, the perceived rules Millennials tend to violate and managers' insight into how their organizations react to those violations. During each of the interviews, participants were asked to describe their organizational culture and the expectations they have for organizational members. Following these two questions, managers were asked about their Millennials' inappropriate or undesirable behaviors. The combination of questions provided a deeper look into the organizational culture, code rules or shared meanings that guide the organizations, and normative rules or rules that garner organization-appropriate behaviors. The answers participants offered evidenced both recurrence and repetition, which formed noticeable patterns in the data. Managers identified numerous rules in the interviews, including adhering to the dress code, embodying positive attitudes when in front of customers, and following proper protocol for advancement. However, three prominent rule patterns comprise the focus of the analysis: cell phone policy, time off requests, and incivility. The first two rules reviewed comprise the most recurrent themes of discussion across managers and organizational boundaries. Managers also pointed out noticeable distinctions from other generation organizational members to Millennial employees, which made these patterns significant. Among the numerous remaining rule patterns identified, the issue of incivility was chosen as a point of analysis due to the departure of these data from the existing literature on Millennials and the level of crystallization across organizations.

Cell Phone Policy Resistance

The literature clearly stated that Millennials are typically associated with the strong influence technology has on them, superior technological abilities, and use of technology as a means of communication (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). With the concentration on technology and Millennials in the literature, it was expected that technology would also serve as an important function in Millennials' organizational lives. To delve further into managers' opinions specifically on their Millennial employees and technology, questions were asked about any notable negative effects that result from Millennials' strong technology skills, examples of times they saw Millennials using technology inappropriately or in a way managers did not like, and whether or not they think their Millennials over-relied on technology. Even before these questions were posed, however, managers frequently began to discuss Millennials and technology.

Some interviewees described their Millennials' use of technology at work, but discussed how their organizational cultures were not bending to accommodate Millennials' preferences. In other words, the normative rules/policies that existed in the organization were maintained despite Millennials' connectedness to technology. Josh, Supervisor of Guest Relations for CC Theme Park, provided an example of upholding a clear-cut cell phone policy despite the trouble some Millennials might have abiding by it.

441 J   Not so much here but definitely out in the park there's a lot of write ups done for having

442   your phone out because it's against pol company policy to have uh your using your cell

443   phone in the park.

444 I   Mmhmm.

445 J   Even if it's just checking the time.

456 I   Right.

457 J   That's what clocks and watches are for.

458 I   Mmhmm. Right.

459 J   And definitely those uh write ups are 90 percent in that age group.

Josh provided the organizational policy (lines 442-443) and mentioned its saliency (lines 445-447). He demonstrated Millennials' resistance to this particular rule when he said most of the write ups that result from not following this policy are given to "that age group" or the Millennial cohort (line 459). Director of Internal Communications at BB Theme Park, Julie, provided a similar example of this rule violation in her organization.

460 J   we have a BB Theme Park look.

(…)

461 J   And you can't have a phone.

462 I   Mmhmm.

463 J   Ya know you can have it in your pocket. It can be served as a time piece but you can't be

464   (organization-specific word for working in front of customers) texting and you can't

465   be (organization-specific word for working in front of customers) reading your phone

466   and making phone calls

467 I   Mmhmm.

468 J   and so I think that that's something that's been a bit of a challenge to, umm to help

469   educate our Millennials that are so used to being tied to it.

Julie specifically identified that this particular policy is challenging for the Millennials to follow, which demands more time from company members to educate Millennials on the policy (lines 468- 469). It is evident that there is disconnect between the organization's reasoning for the policy and Millennial employees understanding of the reasoning.

Participants shared the normative rules of the organization as well as some of the code rules that render the normative rules sensible. Some participants stated the company cell phone policy and gave some reasoning behind the policy. In other words, their discourse explained some of the code rules that inform the normative rules in their organizations. Jill, Human Resources Director at JJ Hotel, talked about the cell phone policy and its importance of acting as a professional organizational member.

470 J   Well I think there's some some when you talk about the generation you're talking about.

471   The biggest problem we have with people in that generation is that they don't know to

472   turn their cell phone off. Okay so they come to work and they still bring, bring outside

473   with them.

474 I   Mmhmm.

475 J   Okay and we have to tell people over and over again not to use your not to use your cell

476   phones ya know. Unmm, I think that's-that's one of the biggest issues and-and of course

477   with all of the media there is out there it's kind of hard to do.

478 I   Mmhmm.

479 J   So one of the things we we focus on is being professional.

480 I   Mmhmm.

481 J   Uh if giving a full days work for a full days pay.

482 I   Mmhmm.

483 J   Okay that people need to come in to go to work prepared I mean come to work prepared

484   to go to work and we try to instill those kinds of things in people so they understand that

485   those are what the expectations are.

486 I   Mmhmm.

487 J   And we try to be very upfront about that. We haven't changed those rules. Umm, and we

488   just want people to be professional in the way that they handle things.

Jill said Millennials constantly need reminding of the cell phone policy. She further offered
meaning behind the policy as she mentioned the word "professional" twice in the excerpt (line
479 and 488). Obviously, she enforces the code of professionalism by expecting organizational
members not to have their phones out at work. Jill also said the normative rules are not changing
(line 487), and they make sure organizational members know the expectations (lines 484-487).
Again, despite issues Millennials might have with the policy, cell phone policies still exist and
are an expectation for *all* organizational members.

A second code rule identified by participants involved offering good customer service.
Joey, Food and Beverage Manager at HH Hotel, stated his company policy and explained the
importance of it to the code rule of providing customer service.

489 J   Umm ya know we we've had I've had to document people in the past uh ya know

490   for cell phone policy. Umm ya know if-if it's in any way shape or form if it hinders my

491   guest service,

492 I   Mmhmm.

493 J   umm then they receive documentation.

494 I Mmhmm.

495 J Umm we had to make a few examples of some people and and it typically works after

496   that. Umm but uh i-i-it-it-it rears its ugly head. It's the big bell curve so ya know once

497   once you document somebody it drops off. You don't see people for a while then

498   everybody starts to get comfortable again. You start seeing cell phones flipped out and

499   umm ya know once that happens then it's ya know right back to it and what do we need

500   to do to (swap) them around and-and and get that bell curve all the way back down again.

Joey explained that there is an explicit cell phone policy at his organization. He discussed the

enforcement of the normative rule through a documentation process that begins when

organizational members are using their cell phones in a way that "hinders my guest service"

(lines 490- 491). The code of "guest service" foregrounds the shared importance within the

organization on customer service, which has led to the creation of such rules, like a cell phone

policy. Despite the set policy, he described some interesting patterns in policy adherence and

resistance with the policy. His examples show how the organization has difficulty maintaining

cell phone policy with Millennial resistance.

Some managers clearly associated difficulty with cell phone policies with the Millennial

generation in particular. In this instance, managers clearly appreciated the unique historical

influences of this generational cohort. Carol, Merchandise Coordinator at BB Theme Park, also

identified how cell phone policies are challenging for her Millennials to follow.

501 C Which they are way more attached to their cell phones than than older people. And, ya

502   know umm I didn't get my first cell phone till I was almost 30.

503 I Mmhmm.

90

504 C Because really that's when they started to become mainstream. But I think they were this

505   was like the first group of people that they had their own phone that they could carry

506   around with them, from a very young age. So, they don't umm they don't see it as rude or

507   whatever if they pull out their phone in front of a customer and

508 I Right.

509 C so, umm, that's more a challenge with the younger ones.

510 I Mmhmm. And how do you deal with those situation when you

511 C Well that ones

512 I see those?

513 C real cute and try because at BB Theme Park we have ya know no cell phone

514   (organization-specific word for working) so that one I can say ya know you have to put

515   that in your locker. Turn it off. Put it in your pocket.

516 I Mmhmm.

517 C And that one ya know there is a definite rule to back that up.

518 I Mmhmm.

519 C So umm we did have uh one of our college students about six months ago was actually

520   fired for it for being

521 I Okay.

522 C So they do know that if they continue and they get caught (2).

523 I That's it.

(…)

524 C But ya know like I said they do. They'll ya know you'll see them out there texting in their

525   pockets.

Like the other managers, Carol stated the definite rule about cell phones in her organization (line

517) and the organization's response when it is not followed. Carol compared how her

generation did not rely on cell phones. She implied that Millennials might not understand the

normative policy because technology is such a historical influence on them. These statements

suggest that Millennials may have different ideas about meanings of behaviors, such as cell

phone use, on the work site. She spoke to the code rule of professionalism and customer service

in her organization that has led to a normative rule about cell phones.

The extent of Millennials' determination to use cell phones on the job is also evident as

Carol explained that some Millennials try to covertly violate the normative rule by still texting

"in their pockets" (lines 524-525). Allison, Director of Human Resources at AA Hotel, described

the same phenomenon.

526 A They they learn the ways to to ya know. Their, they I think they can text in their pocket

527   (HHhh) without looking or something (hh).

528 I   (hh)

529 A (hhh) You see funny things going on. Sometimes you don't ask (hhh)

Through Allison's continuous laughter and use of the word "funny", it was evident that she is

amazed by her Millennials' methods of finding ways to go around the policy (lines 527and 529).

Her observation aligned with Miller and Jablin's (1991) discussion of employees testing the

limits. By finding ways to defy the policy in place, they appear to "test" the saliency of the

policy.

While the managers above were employed at organizations that refuse to change policy, it appears that other organizations are experiencing a shift. Keyton (2005) said this is a natural process in organizations and that technology has a significant influence on shifting organizational culture. Some study participants acknowledged how Millennials' connectedness to technology are influencing their organizations, which lead to reconstructed company policy/rules that still enforce the code rules in their organizations. Allison explained how her organization had to adapt policy.

530 A   And then, ya know, the other one is they've grown up with a cell phone stuck to their

531   hand.

532 I   Mmhmm

533 A   And trying to get them to stop being on a phone or wanting to have an iPod in their ears

534   or texting is, is almost impossible.

535 I   Mmhmm

536 A   You know they're they're you know like this. Ya know, all the time. They'll go to the

537   bathroom just so they can text.

538 I   Mmhmm

539 A   It's just it's crazy. Ya know, nobody calls me that that much that's that important. But

540   everything to them it seems like in that communication is so important because I guess in

541   school they can get away with it I don't know, but it's that's a big challenge for us. And,

542   ya know the rule is technically that we're not supposed to have cell phones. And ya know

543   we gave that up a long time ago knowing that that's just impossible because all you'd do

544   is chase people around all day.

545 I   Mmhmm

546 A   So now the challenge is to just not do it while you're working. But it's just, it's hysterical

547   because it's like they're addicted to doing it. Even if it's not anything important (hh).

548 I   Right (hh)

(…)

549 A   But it's just it's hysterical because there are some people who you just you could follow

550   them around and say put it away put it away and soon as you turn the corner they got it

551   back out again (hh).

552 I   (hh)

553 A   That is seriously our biggest challenge.

554 I   Mmhmm

555 A   And everyb, it's everywhere. Ya know, it's not in one depart, it's everywhere.

556 I   Mmhmm

557 A   So it's just, it's funny. And that's obviously, you know, a generational thing.

(…)

558 A   So, ya know. And I'm just, ya know, it's just funny because you just watch them. And

559   it's like they can't live without it. It's almost like air or something.

Like Carol, Allison noted how Millennials' connection to technology is a historical influence of

the generation. She acknowledged that since it is a historical influence it is difficult to detach

them from technology. Allison delineated a shift in organizational rules from one where no cell

phones were allowed at work (line 542) to where they are more tolerated. She mentioned that

managers would not have time to chase people around all day in order to enforce this policy. She

also implicitly contrasted this behavior with those with which she is familiar by deeming the connectedness to the cell phone as "crazy" (line 539), "hysterical" (line 549), and by laughing (lines 547 and 551). It seems evident that the normative behaviors of the Millennial generation employees entering the workplace spurred a change in her organization's enforcement of the rule.

Tristan, Executive Housekeeper at FF Hotel, provided an example of policy change in his hotel that has been influenced by the Millennial employees.

560 T   (6) Ya know cell phones evolved so quickly.

561 I   Mmhmm

562 T   Uh, that I don't think there was really that time, ya know over the generations to build up

563   what's acceptable and what's not acceptable.

564 I   Mmhmm.

565 T   Uh, (2) ya know so, four years ago we was on a huge push and this was everywhere

567 I   Mmhmm.

568 T   associates aren't allowed to carry cell phones in the workplace. It's not acceptable. Ya

569   know now here we are today and it's uh ya know it was just a really losing battle. I mean

570   you were continuously chasing people down going no no no you can't have a cell phone

571   because they either run or you hear them vibrating or you caught them in a closet talking

572   on one.

573 I   Right.

574 T   I mean it's a battle that you just can't win from a management perspective or a human

575   resources perspective.

95

576 I   Mmhmm.

577 T   Someone always has someone in the hospital or this or that. It just became so convoluted

578   that that's all you were talking about all day long and you-you really wanna rub people

579   the wrong way over cell phone but it's just so mainstream now that ya know I see

580   peoples' cell phones all the time. Most of them have iPods or

581 I   Mmhmm.

582 T   ya know so now the message is from you can't have a cell phone to you can't have a cell

583   phone in guest areas.

584 I   Right.

585 T   So it's that it's-it's such a grey area.

586 I   Mmhmm.

587 T   Uh or ya know we can't hear your cell phone ringing

588 I   Mmhmm.

589 T   ya know all the way from you shouldn't have it. It should be in a locker.

590 I   Mmhmm. So grey areas about

591 T   Ya know pep-people are not

592 I   those expectations.

593 T   gonna unplug from their cell phones and take it and and-and put it in the locker. Ya know

594   I haven't been in a line-level employee since ya know I can't remember and then it was

595   only for 12 months.

596 I   Mmhmm.

597 T   Ya know so I've always had like a smart phone or a Blackberry or something. Uh I can't

598   imagine if I had to take my cell phone and leave it in a locker

599 I   Mmhmm.

600 T   for eight hours.

601 I   Right.

602 T   Uh and neither could all these associates working throughout all these resorts.

Tristan's excerpt showed how the former policy has evolved in response to the influx of

Millennial employees. Millennial resistance tactics like going into a closet to use the phone (line

571) made it untenable for the organization to keep enforcing such a rule. He even discussed

how he is affected by technology, which suggests that technology is, to a lesser extent, perhaps,

affecting all organizational members.

Debra, Human Resources Associate Director at CC Hotel, gave detailed how her

organization is influenced by the Millennial generation and has engaged in conversations about

policy change.

603 D   Ya know because we've ya know we've had meetings and we've addressed it

604 I   Mmhmm

605 D   ya know and we've kinda maybe relaxed our standards a little bit

606 I   Mmhmm

607 D   because they're getting the work done.

608 I   Right.

609 D   If they weren't getting the work done I think that it would be umm a bit more of a-a

610   challenge. And as an employer, we're learning that we're gonna probably going to have

611   to be a little more flexible.

612 I Mmhmm

613 D Ya know even with policy.

(…)

614 D Umm we have policies in place. Umm to once again ya know let people make people

615   aware of our expectations. And policies are tending to change based on the different ya

616   know generations like probably about two or three years ago we ruled out the umm a soc

617   our social media policy.

618 I Mmhmm

619 D Umm ya know and once again ya know kept in mind that ya know umm our-our cell

620   phone policy. We ya know we've tweaked that. Ya know back in the day we had a-a cell

621   phone policy that said ya know you can't even bring your phone on property.

622 I Right.

623 D You need to leave it in your car or in your locker. Umm and we realized that that's just

624   unrealistic in-in this day and age. So ya know so we ya know tweaked that. Social media

625   umm. One that we haven't umm is our tattoo policy.

626 I Hmm

627 D And that's I can I definitely see that changing. Umm and I mean a-a huge the-the umm

628   umm generation the Millennials umm definitely ya know we see that ya know we have

629   more of those discussions

Debra's excerpt, like the ones before, showed a shift in organizational rules regarding cell phone

use. Debra's tolerance of cell phone use is due to her code of seeing work getting done. Debra

clearly tied the policy changes to the Millennial generation (lines 615-616). Thus, generations'

needs as a collective in the workplace may garner organizational change. It is possible that the common individualization process (Jablin, 1987) within organizational assimilation is also occurring on a larger scale, through the collective generational cohort.

Overall, the collective Millennial resistance to existing cell phone policies has met with two different responses from the organizations: strict enforcement of the policy and some organizational adaptation of the policy. Both responses, however, speak to how organizations are socially constructed entities that are constantly reconstructed and influenced by the members communicating within them (Harris & Cronen, 1979; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983). As Gergen and Gergen (2003) said, people share meanings that are capable of leading to alterations. In this case, the meanings shared between Millennials, in particular the importance of connectedness with their technology, are beginning to lead to changes in the organizations they work within. Even within organizations that are not changing policy, managers are forced to more actively "police" the Millennial employees and are thereby actively working to maintain specific organizational social reality.

<center>Time Off Request Standards</center>

While discussing expectations with participants, it was clear that managers had certain opinions on what they believed were appropriate requests for time off. These normative rules for requests for time off stemmed from their organizations' codes. Millennial employees were often seen as violating organizational expectations because of their types and amounts of requests for time off from work, which was perceived as an overall decreased commitment to their workplaces. However, this was an area where managers expressed a consistent unwillingness to change its normative rules in response to Millennials resistance. Due to the nature of the

<center>99</center>

hospitality industry, organizational member presence is needed year-round on weekdays, weekends, evenings, nights, and holidays. Presence was required year-round due to the type of business in which they are employed.

Many participants discussed how the code rule, "hospitality" guides the expectation to come in as scheduled or provide adequate notice or reason for absence. For example, Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, explained how expectations at his hotel are affected by the industry, and that Millennials sometimes do not understand what the business is about.

630 M ones that think eh::: eh eh ↓mon↑day ↓through Fri↓day (.) uh eight to five uh::m you

631   know you have ↑they'll ↑work hard when they're hrere (.) they don't last long

632 I MmHmm

633 M because (.) that's one of the biggest expectation I think to overcome is someone

634   ↑does↓n't have a realistic expectation that they'll come in it's eight to five I'll set my

635   hours from now on

636 I MmHmm

637 M of course I have the weekends off

638 I MmHmm

639 M (1) no I'm sorry it's twenty-four seven kind of thing we have to look at so ↑that's a: again

640   successful one's have very realistic expectations=

Mitch said it is an expectation for organizational members in the hospitality business to be available when they are needed. He noticed that Millennials often have a misperception of the business when they think they only have to work select times and days (line 630). He elsewhere

in the interview noted that Millennials who refuse to adhere by the hospitality code "don't last long." The rules regarding having organizational members show up is highly salient in this industry.

Likewise, Maria, Director of Sales at NN Hotel, stated her organizations expectation that organizational members are present during their peak season. She also hinted to her organizations code of special events.

641 M Like, one of them requested time off during the (local event).

642 I Mmhmm.

643 M You just don't do that. All hands on deck. Especially if we've already told you when you

644   were hired don't ask for time off

645 I Right.

646 M during the (local event).

647 I Right.

648 M Ya know we're special events. You're not gonna get it! Unrealistic expectations of

649   Millennials

Maria said organizational members are told that they are expected to work during special events because that is when the hotel is busiest. However, she does receive resistance from some Millennials, which she said shows they have unrealistic expectations and violate the rule.

Kathy, Human Resources Director at HH Hotel, said that when organizational members work at a resort they should know that the industry requires working holidays and weekends or days that most people might have off.

650 K Or, umm, ya know, I don't want to work on the 4th of July. It's like it's that's your

651   department. That's what you do. This is the business. So, and I'll think what did you

652   think was gonna happen when you applied for this job? You're working in a resort where

653   people come on vacation and you didn't think you're gonna have to work on holidays?

654   Ya know or well actually I have every holiday off because I worked every other day.

655   Well it's like there are other people in your department and they've been here longer and

656   maybe they want the holiday off. But they don't, they're very self-centered. They don't

657   seem to be able to think beyond themselves.

Kathy discussed how the business they choose guides these expectations. They should know

what they are getting into when they accept a position in the industry. It is a shared meaning in

any sector of hospitality that organizational members will have to work holidays and weekends

to help the organization best accommodate their customers. She suggested that violations occur

when some Millennials enter the organization and have the mindset that they will not have to

work during these times because they worked during the week (line 654). Kathy indicated that

time off during these times is earned and should not be expected by newer organizational

members like Millennials.

        These three participants offered insight into how their organizations' codes steer the

norms for time off. This showed how organizations in the hospitality industry use its codes to

influence organizational member behavior. It is one way socialization may be occurring in the

organizations. In particular, Kramer (2010) mentioned organizations find ways to influence

organizational members to assimilate a certain way into the organization. Here, the organizations

highly regard attendance and encourage their organizational members to follow the expectation.

Some participants provided how their Millennial employees do violate these rules and they believe it is because they do not place the same importance on work. For example, Allison, Director of Human Resources at AA Hotel, identified how her Millennial employees do not place high importance off work, which results in requesting time off.

658 A The two things that stand out. Umm, one is funny. It's the of the attendance issue because

659   a lot of times I think that while they, ya know, it is work and everything. Sometimes it's

660   easier for them to blow it off a little bit for something that's not, that's more important to

661   them at the time. And, I think part of our job is to help teach them that that work is work

662   and it is important.

663 I Mmhmm

664 A And ya know, you can still go out and have a good time but ya know if you've got to be

665   at work at 6 o'clock in the morning maybe that's ya know the night before's not the night

666   to stay out partying till 2.

667 I Right

668 A Do it the next night. Ya know, so that's kind of the challenge. Sometimes, people, it's

669   just it's easier for them to blow things off. Because it's not their complete livelihood. It's

670   spending money or whatever.

671 I Mmhmm

672 A So that's that seems to still kind of be an issue.

Allison stated that attendance is an issue she observes with the Millennial employees (lines 658). She explained that they act this way because they do not see work as "their complete livelihood" (line 669). Her organizations response to violations is to educate them about the importance of

103

work. They are not changing the policy of needing organizational members to be available, regardless of if the organizational member is a Millennial.

Jerry, Regional Director of X Area Hotels, acknowledged that the Millennial employees do have less of a commitment to work because of their focus on social aspects of their lives. However, his organizations response to those who cannot find a balance is moving into the discipline phase.

673 J   Umm I think at times depending on on how long they have been in the workforce. They

674   feel that their social life is important more important than their work life.

675 I   Mmhmm.

676 J   And-and they need to just find an-an proper balance. And if we see that way too many

677   requests for certain times or certain days off is there then we'll sit down and and becomes

678   a progressive discipline as well and say hey you need to realize that you need to now

679   make a choice.

680 I   Mmhmm.

681 J   It's either work. It's either ya know school. Or make sure they get create a perfect

682   balance with it all.

Like Allison, Jerry discussed how Millennials do have other aspects of their lives that are important to them. However, he provided an example of how the organization will not tolerate continuous violations or misunderstandings of their codes. He said the Millennials are responsible for making the choice whether or not they will follow the rules of the organization. If not, he implied they will either be disciplined or not last.

Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, also mentioned the discipline process when their Millennial employees cannot find a balance. However, he provided examples of how he had observed Millennials push the limits of the policies to satisfy their desire for personal time. He stated that the examples he was providing stemmed from his time as Resort Manager in the same hotel when he worked closely with front desk (Millennial) employees.

683 M hey I wanna do ↑this or you know there's a <u>par</u>ty I want to go to <u>that</u> so (.) blow

684 ↑<u>work</u> ↓o:ff I wanna go do <u>this</u>

685 I MmHmm

686 M and if you tell them ↑<u>no:</u> (.) I need you here (1) you you stood a pretty good chance of

687 them calling off that night or just not showing up

688 I right

689 M <u>U</u>sually calling in because if they ↓<u>don't</u> call in then they're in trouble

690 I MmHmm

691 M and they know ↑they ↓know that <u>line</u> that they're very aware of what that <u>li::::ne</u> is and

692 how close to get to it

693 I MmHmm

694 M yeah (.) uh we had <u>one</u> (.) it's uh (.) if they <u>call</u> out over a certain amount of times or if

695 there's a <u>pat</u>tern to it (.) we can ↑<u>do::↓cument</u> that

696 I MmHmm

697 M uh::::m we have one (.) one Millennial who would come up (.) I ↑think it was like f: if

698 they did it four times in ninety days

699 I MmHmm

700 M it wa it could be document and (.) <u>three</u> days and he knew when the ninetieth day was

701   always

702 I Hh::

703 M and with that that ninety-first (.) ninety-second d↑ay would drop (.) not show up <u>bam</u>

704 I he'd start it again

705 M he'd start it again (.) he <u>knew</u> he kept great track (.) so

706 I H↓mm

707 M he's kind of grown out of it fortunately (.) he's still ↑here

At the beginning of the excerpt, Mitch showcased how Millennials value personal time away

from work. He spoke as if he were a Millennial and used the word "I" to show the way some of

the Millennial employees believe they deserve time to fulfill their personal, social needs (lines

683-684). He also used forcefulness while enacting the Millennial role. Mitch emphasized

"party," (line 683) "that" (line 683), "work," (line 684) and "this" (line 684). The distinction in

these words insinuated some sarcasm in Mitch's tone, which resulted from his potential

disagreement with this type of reasoning for time away from work. A significant part of Mitch's

discourse is when he suggested that most Millennials are aware of what they are doing and are

almost in violation of the policy. Mitch's example also demonstrated how Millennials might "test

limits" in the organization (Miller & Jablin, 1991). The key term is how Millennials are "aware"

of the policy and get just close enough to challenging it in order to see how other organizational

members react. Since they realize the discipline process is in place they know where to stop, but

such a reaction is learned through their testing of organizational limits.

Nigel, Guest Services Manager at BB Hotel, provided specific ways some of their Millennial employees push the limits of these policies and disrupt operation for a period of time until their behavior is addressed and halted. Throughout the excerpt, Nigel refers to issues with PTO or paid time off.

708 N That't the only thing yes that's the main thing that might be a little challenging especially

709   in our department. We have a lot of students

710 I mmhmm

711 N usually (as is). And there be certain issues.

712 I mmhmm.

713 N And ya add PTO that's already approved. Tthen you add special requests that ya know I

714   want to go out of town. I want this this and that. So it becomes a little little tight on on

715   scheduling. And then that's when you need to let again we set guidelines

716 I mmhmm

717 N and we do have a request book. That's not guaranteed.

718 I Right.

719 N Request is a request. You can put it in there if you really want it guaranteed the time off

720   you put PTO for it. You take vacation. Once it's approved it's locked in.

721 I Mmhmm

722 N If you want to take the chance at it than put your PTO ((unclear murmur)). Put your

723   request and we'll see how it goes.

724 I mmhmm

725 N Umm that's one of the things that they, complain about on and off. When it doesn't go

726   with their life

727 I   Right

728 N   style.

729 I   Their plan (h)

730 N   What they want to do.

731 I   (hh)

732 N   Yes. Yeah. And sometimes this is a another challenging part is when you have, few of

733   them befriend each other here and all of the sudden they wanta do things together.

734 I   mmhmm

735 N   Well when you <u>work</u> together you can't <u>all</u> have the same time off.

736 I   mmhmm (hh)

737 N   It becomes challenging. (Or↑) they'll go okay well you work in PM (I) work in AM.

738   Let's switch (with somebody).

739 I   mmhmm

740 N   Then they'll start to look into switching schedules and all that stuff.

741 I   mmhmm (h)

742 N   Which sometimes <u>affects</u> our operations.

743 I   mmhmm

744 N   So you gotta keep a close eye on that.

745 I   mmhmm (h)

746 N   And they try to manage the schedule. They do.

747 I   (h)

748 N Yeah.

749 I I can imagine that (h)

750 N (Oh↑) yeah behind the scenes they'll try. Once you put the schedule out they'll be calling

751   each other (hey↑) can you switch with me?

752 I uhuh

753 N (Can you) switch with me? And sometimes we schedule strategically. We'll put two of

754   the new team members with two

755 I mmhmm

756 N of the veterans so they can support them and all that stuff.

757 I Right.

758 N Uh and (you) might end up with all four new team members who know nothing.

759 I uhuh

760 N They all switch.

761 I Right (h)

762 N So we try to keep that under control.

763 I mmhmm

764 N But that's one of the main things that I would say. They have unreasonable expectations

765   about. And they want their PTO to be approved

766 I Mmhmm

767 N (no matter what)

768 I Mmhmm

769 N (I don't care↓).

770 I   (hh)

771 N   (I don't). (It's my PTO. It's my↓) vacation.

772 I   (h)

773 N   You don't approve it for them they get a little upset but they get over it.

774 I   mmhmm

775 N   (Yeah. They'll get over it↓).

Nigel's excerpt described the policy that is in place within his organization for PTO. However, he said the Millennials navigate around these expectations and embody somewhat of an entitlement to receiving time off.

Again, Ng. et al (2010) stated, Millennials need a "human aspect of work" (p. 283). This reinforces the idea that Millennials also value friendship in the workplace. Nigel said his Millennial employees make friends with one another and want the same shifts or time off. Nigel used forcefulness in his delivery of "work" and "all," which stressed how it is impossible for organizational members in the same department to have the same time off schedules (line 735). Otherwise, there would be days when no one is available to work. Even though his organization will continue to have its expectations in place, he said the Millennial manipulation of this expectation is "challenging" (line 737) and "affects our operations" (line 742).He said those Millennials who do not like his disapproval of unreasonable requests will need to get over it or the organization will react.

Kathy, Human Resources Director at HH Hotel, expressed her frustration with Millennials who ask off time when they are young and able to work.

776 K   So you graduated. You have your degree. Or, maybe you're in college and and then you

777   come and, oh yes, I can do anything. I want this job. I want this job. And then you get the

778   job and it's like here's the thing. I'm, I can only work Tuesday, you know I can't work

779   Tuesday and Thursday nights because I have another job. I I have to babysit. Or, ya

780   know, I have whatever club I go to and ya know I need to be able to be with my family

781   on the weekends, my family on the holidays. Or ya know it's it's this is my life and they

782   want the work schedule to fit in around that. And they don't get it. It's like no, this is

783   your job (h). And unfortunately your life has to be scheduled around that. And esp what I

784   find frustrating is when they're, they're young, They're single. They're healthy. They're

785   single so they don't even have a family obligations and yet the expectation is the

786   schedule will, ya know, work around them. It's like if you came to me and said here's the

787   thing my husband and I trying to or ya know or I'm a single parent and it's a daycare

788   issue or if it's the scheduling issue. I'd like to see my husband once in a while or there's a

789   medical issue. You have to take care of this person. That, ya know, or I'm going to

790   school and we know you have that time can you work around this schedule. All that's

791   fine.

792 I Mmhmm

793 K Ya know but the expectation. It's like well, I need to go to the beach on Saturdays. That's

794   what I do. Ya know, it's like well (hh) you're not going to the beach this Saturday. And

795   then they'll call out. So, yes it's very frustrating.

Kathy said she does not understand how some Millennials enter the organization eager to work

(line 777) then begin to give stipulations about when they can work because of other priorities.

She showed frustration throughout the excerpt by her short laugh (line 783) and use of "frustrating" (line 784).

Largely, the participants' discourse showcased how organizations in the hospitality industry value organizational members who prioritize work over personal, non-emergency requests for time off. The managers identified that organizational members are aware of the type of work they are getting into and should not expect their personal lives to guide their schedules. This process of the organization influencing its members to adhere by and understand these expectations is an example of how the organization is trying to socialize its members in the assimilation process. Despite some Millennials pushing the limits of these expectations and sometimes violating the expectations, organizations will not change their expectation and will react to members who continue to violate the normative rules that reinforce their codes of guest service.

Incivility Forbidden

While reviewing literature for the research, there was significant mention of how incivility or behaving with a disregard for others was associated with Millennials. The association between incivility and Millennials led to the creation of a question on the interview schedule. It was assumed that managers would discuss how their Millennial employees violated organizational rules due to their uncivil actions toward one another. However, a majority of managers explained how their organizational codes would not tolerate this type of behavior from Millennials or any of their organizational members. This was a significant pattern amongst participants that demonstrated a shift from Millennial characterizations in the literature. The questions on incivility, while expected to be a significant source of rule violation, provided

insight into how strictly organizations enforce rules around civility and terminate those who are in violation.

Multiple participants provided code rules that exist within their organizations that would regulate Millennials from acting uncivil. For instance, Bobby, Director of Recreation at HH Hotel, stated how he does not observe incivility because his industry does not allow it.

796 I   Do you see that amongst this generation, opposed to other generations?

797 B   No. Not-not in what we do.

798 I   Mmhmm.

799 B   Mmm not in the hospitality. We-we wouldn't allow it.

800 I   Mmhmm.

801 B   Ya know this company wouldn't allow a lack of respect or a lack of regard for anybody.

802 I   Mmhmm.

803 B   Umm, something that we're trained to to lead by example.

804 I   Mmhmm.

805 B   Ya know my boss would never do it. I would never do it. My supervisors would never do

806   it and we wouldn't tolerate it.

807 I   Mmhmm.

808 B   Umm, so no. I with regards to the professional workplace no.

In the excerpt above, Bobby provided two organizational code rules, hospitality (line 799) and professionalism (line 808). He commented how he does not observe incivility at all within his organization because it is not tolerated (line 801). There is a shared meaning of no tolerance for such behavior because everyone is held to the same caliber. He ended the excerpt with mention

of a "professional workplace" (line 808). This led to another code he associated with his organization that also combats the allowance of uncivil behaviors due to its violation of professionalism.

Participants explained how their hiring processes eliminate any Millennials who demonstrate uncivil behaviors. For example, Mitch, Director of Loss and Prevention at BB Hotel, responded to the incivility question by explaining how the interview process at his organization prohibits these kinds of individuals from ever entering the organization.

847 M ↓no (.) I don't see it as much

848 I MmHmm

849 M partly because I think we s:: we kind of really screen for that

850 I ↓right

851 M but the kind of person if they're gonna be (1) uh (1) just if they're gonna lack that

852 ↑civility

853 I MmHmm

854 M they're probably not gonna ↓make it (.) in this business cause again that's ↑part↓ly what I

855 scree::n for=

856 I =right

857 M is there is their people skills and their love of people s0

Mitch used forcefulness in his response to the incivility question that "no" he does not see these types of Millennial employees in his organization (line 847). This showed how salient the codes are within his organization to not allow this type of behavior. He appeared to be aware of how Millennials might be associated with uncivil behavior by saying it is something they specifically

114

screen for in his organization (line 849). If an interviewee lacks the ability to build relationships with people, he or she does not join the organization as a member.

Allison, Director of Human Resources for AA Hotel, said they screen for negative behavior before the interview even begins.

858 A Because ya know when people come in here it's funny because they don't think that I

859   guess the first person you talk to matters.

860 I Mmhmm

861 A Because if you come in here and you have a a less than stellar attitude or you get snippy.

862   Or or ya know you're demanding. You're not getting past us.

863 I Mmhmm

864 A Ya know, and I don't know if people think oh you're just some secretary that doesn't

865   count.

866 I Mmhmm

867 A Or what because or if umm like a manager is coming down to interview them and they

868   see them in the hallway and they're not friendly. I've had my housekeeping director walk

869   in here and say was that that person out in the hallway. No, don't, I'm not even gonna

870   interview them because they weren't friendly.

871 I Uhuh

872 A So, ya know that's how important that is.

In her excerpt, Allison explained how the screening process begins when potential organizational members step into the workplace for their interview. The way they interact with other organizational members is important in the decision process, even before the actual interview

process. She emphasized the importance of civil behavior in her organization and the hospitality industry.

Loretta, Food and Beverage Director at EE Hotel, stressed the importance of friendliness and service in her organization's hiring process.

873 L so that you know but the friendliness in <u>our</u> department the friendliness is the

874   number one thing that we have to do that and the service, because that's what we get

875   rated on.

876 I Mmhmm.

877 L So, that's the main thing when we when we hire.

Her excerpt showed how the codes of acting friendly and providing good service (lines 873-874) guide normative policy of organizational members. Most organizational members have these qualities because they, similar to the other participants' organizations, focus on looking for these qualities when they hire (line 877).

Supervisor of Guest Relations for CC Theme Park, Josh, stated that negative behavior is not a major problem in his organization.

878 J Umm, we don't see a whole lot of negative behavior here.

879 I Mmhmm.

880 J Just because of the screening process.

Again, negative behavior is not an issue because they have an interview process that eliminates these individuals. This shows how organizations spend significant time and effort during their interview process to select the best organizational members they can. They do not want to bring

people on board that will not fit the mission and vision or adhere by such significant codes of their organizations.

It was evident that certain codes within the organizations, including hospitality, family, and guest/customer service, guide normative behavior. Despite literature associating Millennials with incivility, managers said their organizations would not allow organizational members having a disregard for others. The codes explained why incivility is not acceptable and insight into organization's hiring processes explained how these types of people rarely make it into organizations in the hospitality industry. If they do somehow make it, they do not last long because they are in violation with everything the organization stands for. Gilsdorf (1998) explained how certain organizations provide exceptional rules on how they expect organizational members to communicate. The overall discussion from participants about not allowing incivility exemplifies one of these clear organizational guidelines. Additionally, the incivility theme as well as the time off request theme demonstrated how salient organizational rules trump certain tendencies of generational cohort members. Incivility may be associated with Millennials in other contexts like the classroom but not in the workplace because the organization overcomes this potential behavior or attitude. When organizations highly value their code rules to uphold a certain image and culture, the inclination of certain organizational members will assume a secondary status or will not be permitted at all.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The study explored how managers characterize Millennial employees, their behaviors, and the organizational rules they observe Millennials' violating as well as the organization's responses to those violations. The data evidenced an underlying meaning of how Millennials' social interactions growing up have impacted and even carried over to the workplace. The ways in which they were treated by their parents and teachers likely affect how they communicate in their organizations, which the participants described in their interviews. While reviewing the findings of both research questions, the ways in which the social element has carried over to the Millennial employee is explored.

The first research question looked at the membership categorization devices and category-bound activities managers used to characterize their Millennial workers. The membership category "kid" was most recurrent amongst participants. Some managers easily recalled their use of "kid" for this cohort, whereas other managers said they did not use this term, but invoked the term later in their discourse. When this happened, the interviewees gained heightened awareness of their use of the term or expressed how they monitor use of the word around Millennials. Some managers expressed hesitancy with using this category in front of Millennials. Managers also used the "kid" category as a sense-making tool to explain comparisons between their children and their Millennial-generation employees. This explains one way in which managers create perceptions and develop a socially constructed reality about Millennial employees prior to them entering the workplace.

Participants also utilized "age group" or "that age group" to identify the Millennial cohort. When discussing positive and negative behaviors of the generational cohort, managers

used these categories. The major conclusion from this finding was how participants'

understanding of generation differed from that of the literature. While the literature saw a clear

separation between the meaning of generation and age, participants used them interchangeably.

The final pattern involved how managers utilized the actual "Millennial" category

throughout their discourse. Most managers showed familiarity with the term by accurately

explaining their previous knowledge about the term as well as continuing to invoke the category

throughout their interview. Another set of managers showed a lack of familiarity with the term.

This group would shift between the correct use and variations of the term. Some did not know

what the term meant prior to the interviewer explaining it. One participant persistently expressed

her discomfort with using the "Millennial" category. She explained that she did not like to group

people together; however, unknowingly did utilize other membership categories throughout her

discourse.

A second component of the first research question explored CBAs. One significant

pattern emerged that was not mentioned in the literature; many managers observed their

Millennial employees seeking learning and training opportunities. They noticed their Millennials

wanting to constantly learn new information, whether it is for the enjoyment of learning or as a

means to advance in the organization. Other managers expressed how Millennial employees

would ask for ways to get involved in training opportunities, such as management training. It

makes sense that Millennial employees seek out these opportunities because their classroom

environments typically encouraged them to consume themselves in the learning process. Perhaps

when they enter the workplace they feel it is appropriate to show this same devotion to learning.

The managers' characterization of Millennials enjoying learning and training provided a positive

characteristic of the cohort. Often, the literature focuses on negative characteristics of the group. However, this finding slants the literature in a positive direction. Also, organizations and managers could utilize Millennials' interest in development. While other generational organizational members often complain about taking time out of their workdays to attend training, it is an opportunity to mold and groom willing Millennial employees to fit their organizational cultures. Since managers typically perceive this CBA positively, it is a strength Millennials should emphasize in the hiring process and when they enter the workforce.

Teamwork was heavily discussed in the literature with mixed views on whether or not Millennials prefer teamwork. The same pattern existed among participants in this study. A majority of managers said their Millennials prefer to work with one another to have a social aspect to work and emerge themselves in a task with multiple people: an "everyone in it together" mentality. Again, the need for social interaction that stemmed from the classroom experience carried over to their workplace needs. Some managers said their Millennials preferred to work individually on work tasks in order to employ their preferred processes and receive individual recognition for their accomplishments. A surprising conclusion that was not mentioned in the literature involved managers noticing their Millennial employees encountering difficulties with group work when faced with incompatible personalities. Managers explained how their Millennial employees isolated peers they did not personally like. They refused to assist anyone in the group that they did not like. It showed a downside to focusing on a social aspect to work because isolation may also occur. With this knowledge, managers might set new expectations about group work in order for Millennials to not treat their peers poorly in the workplace.

Participants shared similar observations about their Millennials' needs for and value of feedback. Overall, they noticed Millennials wanting more feedback than organizational members from other generational cohorts, and that Millennials wanted feedback that was specific and personalized. Many managers identified Millennials actively seeking this type of feedback from managers and further wanted to know how their supervisors thought of them as people. This might stem from how many Millennials are familiar with their parents and teachers providing them feedback while growing up. However, managers also noted that Millennials showed a pronounced aversion to criticism, often trying to deflect further pursuit of the topic. Again, the Millennial upbringing may contribute to this aversion to criticism because many were given positive feedback to increase their self-esteem. Some managers expressed how they give Millennials the type of feedback they need, but some also said it took time for them to adjust to Millennials' feedback needs because they would not want the same feedback from their supervisors.

The second research question was designed to understand managers' perceptions of how Millennials impact and are affected by organizational culture. Specifically, where do organizations draw the line with violations and where do they give in and adapt rules? The most recurrent and repeated theme involved Millennial employees violating organizational cell phone policies. They observed resistance to adhering to strict cell phone rules. Organizations responded to the violations in two ways: continuing to enforce the policy despite the resistance or adapting policy. Those organizations that did continue to enforce the cell phone policy spent more time monitoring their Millennial employees and continued to receive resistance from them. Organizations that did adapt their cell phone policies allowed for more grey areas with the policy

with emphasis on not allowing cell phone use in front of customers. The latter acknowledged Millennials' connectedness to technology, which they have been familiar with all of their lives.

Another recurring Millennial rule violation that managers described involved time-off requests. They explained how Millennials often requested time off for personal pleasure and non-emergencies and/or asked for time off during peak business seasons. Perhaps Millennials observed how Generation X employees have fought for work/life balance in the workplace and in turn believe they should have personal time away from work as well. Managers explained how these were violations of their organization and overall industry. Organizations need their members present to provide exceptional customer service. Unreasonable time-off requests are not permitted during times that are busiest for the organizations, such as nights, weekends, and holidays. Organizations did not allow these violations to continue in their organizations. Interestingly, managers said all their employees are aware of these expectations, but Millennials know how close they can get before breaching policy and receiving documentation. Those who did try to push the limits with the rule did not last long in the organization.

The final pattern was explored due to its divergence from the literature. Incivility was commonly associated with Millennials in literature and was expected in this study. However, managers consistently expressed how they did not observe uncivil behavior because these people would not even make it through the hiring process. They do not employ people who have a lack of regard for others. Catering to others is an essential component of the code rules within the hospitality industry. If uncivil organizational members did somehow make it through the hiring process, managers said they quickly were removed from the organization. Acting with civility toward one another was a crucial expectation of organizational members that worked in the

organizations; they were not willing to bend for any organizational members that acted in such a manner.

Examination of the normative and code rules helped to establish which organizational rules were negotiable by the Millennial employees and which were non-negotiable. If behaviors contradicted a code rule that defined the organization, such as hospitality, customer service or professionalism, that behavior triggered disciplinary response. Of particular interest is the interplay between competing value systems, such as the Millennial determination to have access to cell phones and the organization's determination to make the customer the focus of organizational member interest. When organizations did adapt to Millennial behaviors, they found ways of doing so that maintained recognition of the code rules that define the organizational culture. With this information, organizations may want to proactively scan their organizations to know the policies that are essential to the operation of their organization and those that may have flexibility with changing needs of organizational members.

The overall study provided important information through its contribution of empirical research on Millennials as well as data analysis and presentation from a Millennial researcher. Extant literature evidenced a shortage of empirical research on Millennial employees. Most published information on this topic came from popular press articles. Scholarly articles stemmed from business researchers and journals. Thus, this was important research because it conducted empirical research and utilized communication frameworks, theories, and concepts. In particular, research was conducted through a lens of social constructionism with MCDs, CBAs, organizational communication and cultural fit, and communication rules (code and normative) as the major theories and concepts. Since generational cohorts are social constructions, this

approach seems compatible with the topic of study. Another significant contribution of the research involved its authorship from a Millennial researcher. Previous research had been produced by members of other generations. This could account, at least in part, for some of the seemingly negative skewing of some of the characterizations of Millennials. Therefore, this study offered an additional perspective that had previously been missing. A Millennial researcher may be less inclined to share the values that other generational cohorts may, therefore reducing possible biases against the Millennials.

<p align="center">Theoretical Issues</p>

The study contributed to theory in two ways: further understanding of MCDs associated with generational cohorts and proposal of an additional aspect of organizational assimilation. Various scholars from the literature reviewed provided similar definitions of a generation, including people with similar years of birth, historical events, and values (see Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010; Olson et al., 2007; Real et al., 2010; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). They explained how age does play a factor in generations, but many other factors contribute to membership in a generational cohort. Other scholars pointed out how intergenerational communication is used differently in aging research; it looks more at how young adults communicate with other age groups (Garrett & Williams, 2005; McCann & Giles, 2007). The data in this study revealed that managers had a hard time distinguishing between age and generational cohort categories. Some participants did not appear to make such a distinction between age groups and the generations. Many seemed to think you define a generation by the age group of 18 to 30 year olds and nothing else contributes to membership in the generation. Thus, many managers used the terms interchangeably. The use of "kid" also pointed to the confusion between categories. Kid

represents a stage of life that is associated with age. It is significant to recognize that this occurrence or tendency of many participants did not surface in review of the literature.

Looking at another layer of the confusion between MCDs, some participants identified "Millennial" behaviors with youth. They implied that despite generational membership, some people act the way they do because they are young. For instance, one manager said all generational cohorts slack when they first enter the workplace. She also experienced confusion identifying if CBAs were descriptive of the entire Millennial generation or just people in their youth. The manager frequently used the "young" descriptor throughout much of her discourse. It also seems that is difficult for some managers to decipher the behaviors of young organizational members and Millennial employees because the generation is still emerging. Managers made note of this by stating that we will all have to wait and see which behaviors are Millennial-specific. This suggests that each emerging generation will experience considerable confusion as youth and social influences both play significant roles in the development of young adults. Further, as a newer social construction, the actual creation of the generational membership category is still in development.

Although some participants experienced difficulty distinguishing between the MCDs, other managers counteracted such difficulty by easily separating the categories. It appeared that these types of participants were able to utilize the categories when discussing behaviors that are specific to members of the Millennial generation. They had trouble distinguishing between Millennial and youth for some characteristics, like energy. This makes sense because Millennials are the youngest generation and "young" people typically have energy. Thus, how can they make such a distinction? However, when managers discussed violations of the cell phone policy they

125

easily employed the "Millennial" membership category. They easily thought of Millennials as a generational cohort. In particular, managers were able to see how historical influences of technology were impacting and shaping this generation. It was a characteristic specific to Millennials because members of other generations did not grow up with the same connectedness to technology. Other generational cohorts did not share this experience.

The ability to easily utilize the "Millennial" category was also exhibited when managers could reference how their own generation was different than the newest generation in the workplace. For example, managers discussed that "Millennials" have an easier time blowing off work because they do not always see their job as a major priority in life. Managers had a hard time understanding this outlook on work because they did not share the same viewpoint. The frustration aligns with the literature discussing how Baby Boomers place high importance on their careers (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). It is important for managers to be aware of when they are imposing value judgments on their Millennial employees. For example, they might want to reflect on how having a different perspective on the importance of work can be a legitimate value position. It is a generational difference and generations have distinct value systems, even within the workplace.

Also, the diversity amongst Millennials could contribute to managers' difficulties with employing these categories. Within the Millennial category, there are Millennials who are associated with being career-focused and students who are interning with the organization. Some are still living at home with their families and might not have the same drive. It must be difficult for managers to differentiate between age, youth, and type of Millennial when discussing this emerging generation.

126

A second theoretical contribution of the study involves examining collective assimilation into the organization. Existing literature describes the assimilation process as having two parts: individualization and socialization (Hess, 1993; Jablin, 1987; Kramer, 2010). However, studying how Millennials violate organizational rules and the organizations' response to these violations may suggest other factors in assimilation. In this study, it was evident how the needs of the collective, Millennial generational cohort affected organizational rules and overall culture. As a result, there is a need for organizations to assimilate to the changing workforce.

Managers discussed how Millennials were entering the organization and resisting the cell phone policies. As a response, some organizations were shifting their policies to accommodate needs of the collective. Thus, it is possible that people not only assimilate into an organization based on their individual needs but also as a group based on the needs of their group as a whole. Collective assimilation is not acknowledged in existing organizational communication literature. In fact, some scholars criticize how an aggregate system of the organization is studied on the interpersonal or individual level. For instance, Miller (2012) critiqued this occurrence by particularly focusing on conflict in the organization. She asserted that, "by far, the most research attention has been to the interpersonal level of conflict, the level at which individual members of the organization perceive goal incompatibility. However, conflict can also be present in form of intergroup conflict and interorganizational conflict" (p. 163). Even though she concentrated on conflict, her argument of looking at other, more macro influences in the organization supports the need of understanding collective assimilation.

If an organization employs numerous Millennial employees, chances are the needs of that cohort will affect the overall assimilation process. Also, in some areas, the organization may not

127

be as influential in socialization. Again, the organization may socialize its employees to adhere

to a certain policy, like cell phone usage, but collective resistance from a group, like Millennials,

interferes. An additional prompt toward organizational flexibility in rules stems from the fact that

managers note the value of Millennial skills with technology. Among the CBAs noted for

Millennials was the proficient use of and adaptation to new technologies. At some levels,

Millennial proficiency with technology is valued, sought, and needed. In these instances,

organizations recognize a need to accommodate the new organizational members. In this respect,

the data show how the organization also assimilates to the changing workforce.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

Throughout the research, there was some noticeable aversion to stereotyping behaviors

associated with Millennials. Participants often included comments about how their observations

of some Millennial employees were not necessarily indicative of the all members of the

generation. Managers tended to us disclaimers before providing their opinions of Millennial

characteristics. It is possible that managers were hesitant to stereotype for two main reasons:

participants were speaking to a Millennial and many worked in human resources. The managers

who made comments about stereotyping may have done so because they were talking to a

Millennial about their Millennial employees. It did not appear to affect managers providing

answers to the interviewer's questions, but might explain the use of disclaimers before answering

questions.

Also, many of the managers interviewed worked in human resources. Since these are

professionals who work with policy and make sure organizational members are adhering to rules,

they might be more careful in their discourse. For instance, they might discipline any supervisor

within their organization who makes an offensive, stereotypical comment to one of his or her employees. Thus, they are more aware of repercussions of such behavior and may not risk marginalizing a specific group in their organization. These were the major methodological limitations of the study. However, these limitations also provided methodological affordances. As stated above, research from a Millennial is scare in the literature, so this study added a new perspective. Also, the participants in human resources are familiar with policy, which allowed them to more easily respond to organizational rules that are typically violated and overall organizational expectations.

Another limitation of the study was focusing solely on the hospitality industry. The intention was to select one industry where participants interacted with Millennials in similar organizational contexts, which allowed for easier comparison. While the focus on a single industry was useful, it limited the scope of the study to one industry. Other industries might offer different opinions of their Millennial employees. Also, it was evident from the participants' discourse that hospitality organizational members are very skilled at adapting to organizational culture, standards, and language because it is engrained in them. Organizational members in this industry may be more aware of what is expected of them than other industries. There might be more and/or different Millennial rules violations in other industries. Additionally, the hospitality industry experiences high turnover with all of its organizational members, which may affect how the organization characterizes its members. Overall, the study provided specific information to the hospitality industry, which provides deep insight to this particular industry but leaves uncertainty to the characteristics of Millennials and rule violations in other types of industries.

A final limitation of this study involved the focal generational cohort including college-age students. This meant that managers interviewed were acquainted with Millennial employees as full-time employees, part-time employees, and interns. Other generational cohorts are less likely to be represented by the same type of diversity in organizational member status. Further, the challenge of age and employment diversity is a challenge in any study of Millennials or any future new generational cohorts entering the workforce.

<u>Future Directions for Research and Practice</u>

This study is one contribution to an area of research that is ripe for study. Numerous opportunities exist for future research. Some of the participants' discourse suggested how they were observing distinctions between different Millennial employees and shifts in the overall generational cohort. Although not included in this study's data analysis, some managers talked about how young Millennials acted differently than older Millennials (25+) in their interviews. They also noted differences in their Millennials who were college-educated versus those with only a high-school degree. Managers said those without a college education had less motivation to advance in the organization, despite most Millennials valuing advancement. Also, other participants noticed a shift in Millennial behavior after the economic recession. They said their Millennial employees did not expect as much to be given to them and worked harder, which had not occurred before the recession. All of these additional points speak to how the generation is still being shaped, and how further research needs to be conducted to understand development of the generation and the diversity within the generation.

In the current study, the Millennial employees were not in management positions. Managers were interviewed to understand their perceptions of Millennial employees. However,

more Millennials are and will continue to be filling those managerial positions. It is important to understand how their movement into these positions within the organization will further affect organizational culture, specifically policies and rules. The managers in this study spoke about the importance Millennials' place on technology. If Millennial managers use technology to communicate with employees, how will policy further change to adapt to their needs?

Focusing in on managers in the hospitality industry provided a specific and similar sample set. The industry was an appropriate selection due to hospitality's large impact on the community surrounding the University. However, it would be interesting to study how other industries identify the behaviors of their Millennial employees and fit in their organizations. It appears that industries have specific expectations that may not apply in other industries. For example, the hospitality industry did not allow uncivil organizational members, so this was not a behavior managers associated with their Millennials. However, another industry may see this behavior because their organizational members do not work directly with customers. Future studies might compare and contrast industries to understand the MCDs, CBAs, and communication rule violations managers associate with their Millennial employees.

Finally, this research derived from managers' perspectives. Although a Millennial conducted the research, the traits attributed to Millennials and their motivations were those of the managers, not the Millennials themselves. Future research can explain how Millennials understand their motivations and how they perceive organizational culture. Interviewing Millennial employees would provide data to compare and contrast to the perceptions managers. For example, how would Millennials explain their need for more feedback at work? Does the reasoning match the explanation managers provided? This program of research would give

insight into how Millennials' explanations compare with the perceptions their managers create about them.

The thesis research represents how all discourse in interactions affect the ways we experience the world around us. Specific to Millennials, it is evident that managers create perceptions about Millennial employees entering the workforce, whether it be about their overall characterization, behaviors, values, or adherence to rules. Some people might delve through the research and think "well, these are just stereotypes." Yes, they might be considered generalizations about a group of people, but the important factor is that they exist. They have been created through language, which makes them "real." It may even be argued that these outwardly socially constructed perceptions created by members of other generational cohorts hold more power than normal because less is known about this developing generation of workers.

Managers have a choice of what to do with the patterns presented from the research in MCDs, CBAs, and rule violations. It is encouraged that they review the data and act upon it. At the very least managers can understand how some other managers in the hospitality industry commonly perceive Millennials. This may impact how they decide to hire, train, and strategically communicate with Millennials. However, there are some more concrete suggestions about how to practically utilize the findings. Hire Millennials who speak about their desire to learn, train, and grow in the organization. Take this as an opportunity to mold Millennial employees into organizational members that are committed to the organization. They will likely respect an organization that invests in them, and offers a future with the organization. If Millennials need a human aspect to their work, put them in positions that work heavily with customers. They should

132

enjoy the position, and customers will interact with friendly, communicative organizational members. Integrate teamwork when appropriate to allow for opportunities to think together creatively. If necessary, form policies that prohibit estrangement of other team members based on their personalities. Take advantage of Millennials' needs for feedback by explaining the organizational code rules to them. What are the shared organizational meanings that drive the organization? When Millennials understand the "why" or codes they are likely to feel more connected to the organization, and see how their roles contribute to the organization's operation. When they are invested, most will want to be present at work and adhere to the organization's normative rules in order to advance. Managers might try to understand how providing feedback to Millennials can make them more motivated, productive organizational members. Their needs are different than other generational-cohort organizational members, but if managers can learn to deal with them it will help with overall intergenerational communication. Both managers and Millennials need to discover how to work together to contribute to organizational success.

Organizations can also take something away from this study; they should remember they are socially constructed entities as well. It makes sense to think of an organization as a home. The structure of the home stays the same once it is constructed. However, different people might occupy the house, changing the internal décor of the house. The house allows this to happen as long as the structure is not affected. The structure of the house is the organization's code rules. Those shared meanings that must stay the same in order to hold true to the foundation of the company and/or industry. As with décor, organizational members change too. They bring different dynamics to the organization and shift the appearance. Organizations must learn to adapt to this new cohort of members, Millennials, while incorporating its crucial codes.

Moreover, organizational members' discourse and overall interactions affect the socially

constructed organization, which leads to inevitable shifts and changes that the organization must

learn to accommodate. Millennial employees have moved in, and it is necessary to remodel parts

of the organizational house to shift the organizational culture.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Purpose

Read aloud: My name is Nicole Baker, and this interview will be used to collect data for my UCF master's thesis in the Nicholson School of Communication. The main objective of the research is to analyze how managers of various organizations perceive Millennial generation employees. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are 31 years of age or older and are employed in the hospitality industry as a manager who currently supervises Millennial employees (ages 18 to 30). Our discussion should take approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. The information you provide will be presented to the thesis committee and may also be published. Pseudonyms for you and your organization will be used to ensure the information you provide is kept confidential. Please make yourself comfortable and answer the questions as accurately as possible. If you do not want to answer any of the questions, please feel free to decline. If you want to stop the interview at any time, you are free to do so.

Introductory Questions

What are some names you call young employees in your organization?

Have you heard of the term Millennial?

If yes, what have you heard about it?

Read aloud: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials are the four generations in the workplace. Millennials are considered the newest generational cohort to enter the workforce. For the sake of this study, they are considered to be people born between 1982

and 1994 or 18 to 30 years old. Please keep this term and classification in mind for the rest of our discussion.

Please give me an overview of the company in which you work and your role?

How long have you worked here?

How long have you held a managerial role?

How many employees do you supervise?

What types of employees do you supervise (age, job type, etc.)?

How many Millennials do you supervise?

Communication Rules

What are some of the most positive workplace behaviors you have observed among your Millennial workers?

Can you give me an example of a Millennial employee who showcased these positive behaviors especially well?

Why do you consider these positive behaviors?

Each organization is said to have its own "organizational culture." What kinds of expectations are told verbally (spoken and written) to your employees to prepare them for this work environment?

What expectations are verbalized at new-employee orientation? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

What expectations are verbalized during day-to-day operations? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

137

What can these expectations tell me about your organization?

What are some of the most common inappropriate or undesirable behaviors you have observed by the Millennial employees in your workplace?

Can you provide an example of a time when this happened?

Why do you think these are inappropriate or undesirable behaviors?

How have you handled these kinds of behaviors?

What kind of reaction did you receive to your efforts of correcting the behavior?

Membership Categories and Category-Bound Activities

Do you think Millennials have realistic expectations for the workplace?

Do they have realistic expectations about the tasks required of their position?

Do they have realistic expectations regarding their interactions in the workplace? (i.e. social, supervisor-employee, employee-employee, etc.)?

Do they make reasonable requests? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

Do they have realistic plans for advancement? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

Describe the types of feedback your Millennial employees need? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

In your opinion, do the younger employees crave praise more so than the older employees?

Do you provide feedback differently to Millennials than to older employees? (Use as prompt, if necessary)

If yes, how so?

Can you provide any specific examples of someone expecting this kind of

feedback?

Have you noticed any increased incivility or lack of regard for others from Millennials

compared to other generations?

If yes, can you share an example?

How would you describe Millennial workers' skills with technology?

How do these contribute to the workplace environment (positive and negative)?

Have you ever seen them using technology in a way you did not like?

If yes, can you give an example?

Have you ever felt as though the Millennials over-rely on technology?

Have you had an opportunity to observe Millennials interacting with one another in your

organization?

What are some positive and negative behaviors you observe when they interact?

Can you give any examples?

Do they tend to prefer working individually or in teams?

Other

Some researchers have claimed Millennials are showing higher levels of narcissism or

overconfidence and heightened self-importance than other generations. Do you agree

with this statement?

Why or why not?

Have you seen any examples of this occurring at work?

If yes, can you give any examples?

You have given me some wonderful information about your experiences in supervising the Millennials in your workplace. Can you think of anything else that I should be asking that was not included?

Anything else you would like to add?

Conclusion

Read aloud: Again, I appreciate all the information you have shared with me. If you know of anyone else who supervises Millennials whom I could interview, please let me know. I am hoping to complete my thesis interviews this summer, and this interview has been extremely helpful. Thank you for your participation in this study.

APPENDIX B: APPROVAL OF EXEMPT HUMAN RESEARCH

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Nicole M. Baker**

Date: **May 18, 2012**

Dear Researcher:

On 5/18/2012, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from
regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	Communication Perceptions of the Millennial Worker
Investigator:	Nicole M Baker
IRB Number:	SBE-12-08434
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should
any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the
exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research,
please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 05/18/2012 08:21:28 AM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX C: DEFENSE ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcing the Final Examination of Ms. Nicole M. Baker for the degree of Master of Arts in Interpersonal Communication.

Date: March 20, 2013

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Room: NSC 254

Title: Managerial Descriptions of Characteristics and Communication Rule Violations of Millennial Employees: Insights into the Hospitality Industry

Millennials are the newest generation to enter the workforce. When Millennials enter organizations, managers who belong to other generational cohorts construct perceptions about Millennials' communication behaviors, including their characteristics and adherence to organizational rules. These perceptions help managers decide Millennials' organizational fit. A review of literature revealed a scarcity of empirical research in this area with little empirical research from communication scholars who apply communication frameworks, theories, and concepts. This research used the lens of social constructionism to understand the membership categorization devices and category-bound activities managers use to characterize Millennials. In order to better understand how Millennials conform to and change organizational culture, data were reviewed for those normative and code rules managers described Millennials violating. In this qualitative, exploratory study, 25 managers who were 31 years of age or older that worked in the hospitality industry and managed Millennial (18 to 30 years old) employees were interviewed through a snowball convenience sample. Interviews were transcribed and patterns were identified. Data analysis indicated that "kids," "age group," and "Millennials"/variations of the Millennial term were used to categorize Millennials. Analysis of category-bound activities showed patterns in Millennials' desire for learning and training, mixed preference for teamwork often affected by their liking for peers, and needs for frequent, clear, personalized feedback. With respect to rule violations, data showed that some organizations were adapting their cell phone policies in response to Millennial rules resistance; however, organizations were not willing to accommodate Millennials' rule violations in either the area of time-off requests due to it violating their organizational codes or uncivil behaviors in the workplace.

Committee Members:

Dr. Sally Hastings (Chair)
Dr. Ann Miller
Dr. George Musambira

Approved for distribution by Dr. Sally Hastings, Committee Chair, on February 25, 2013.

The public is welcome to attend.

REFERENCES

Alberts, H.C., Hazen, H.D., & Theobald, R.B. (2010). Classroom incivilities: The challenge of interactions between college students and instructors in the US. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 34*(3), 439-462.

Alvesson, M. (2002). *Understanding organizational culture*. London: Sage.

Andersson, L.M., & Pearson, C.M. (1999). Tit for tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. *Academy of Management Review 24*(3), 452-471.

Barzilai-Nahon, K., & Mason, R.M. (2010). How executives perceive the net generation. *Information, Communication & Society, 13*(3), 396-418.

Bjorklund, W.L. & Rehling, D.L. (2010). Student perceptions of classroom incivility. *College Teaching, 58*(1), 15-18.

Brokaw, T. (1998). *The Greatest Generation*. New York, NY: Dell Publishing.

Carbaugh, D. (1990). Communication roles in Donahue discourse. In D. Carbaugh (Ed.), *Cultural communication and intercultural contact* (pp. 119-149). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Cochran, D.S., & Dolan, J.A. (1984). Qualitative research: An alternative to quantitative research in communication. *Journal of Business Communication, 21*(4), 25-32.

Conrad, D., & Newberry, R. (2011). 24 business communication skills: Attitudes of human resource managers versus business educators. *American Communication Journal, 13*, 4-23.

Cushman, D.P. (1977). The rules perspective as a theoretical basis for the study of human communication. *Communication Quarterly, 25*(1), 30-45.

Deal, J.J., Altman, D.G., & Rogelberg, S.G. (2010). Millennials at work: What we know and what we need to do (if anything). *Journal of Business & Psychology, 25*, 191-199.

Edwards, D. (1998). The relevant thing about her: Social identity categories in use. In C. Antaki & S. Widdicombe (Eds.), *Identities in talk* (pp. 15-33). London: Sage. Retrieved April 3, 2011 from http://www-staff.lboro.ac.uk/~ssde/Edwards%20-%20Relevant%20thing%20about%20her%201998.pdf

Eubanks, J.L., & Lloyd, K.E. (1992). Relating behavior analysis to the organizational culture concept and perspective. In T.C. Mawhinney (Ed.), *Organizational culture, rule-governed behavior and organizational behavior management: Theoretical foundations and implications for research and practice* (pp. 27-44). Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press.

Faber, B.D. (2001). Gen/Ethics? Organizational ethics and student and instructor conflicts in workplace training. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 10*(3), 291-318.

Gallois, C., McKay, S., & Pittam, J. (2005). Intergroup communication and identity: Intercultural, organizational, and health communication. In K.L. Fitch & R.E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 231-250). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Garrett, G., & Williams, A. (2005). Adults' perceptions of communication with young people. In C. Thurlow & A. Williams (Eds.) *Talking Adolescence* (pp. 35-52). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

Gergen, K.J. (1991). *The saturated self: Dilemmas of identity in contemporary life*. New York, Basic Books.

Gergen, K.J. (1999). *An invitation to social construction*. London: Sage.

Gergen, K.J. (2003). Knowledge as socially constructed. In M. Gergen & K.J. Gergen (Eds.),

    Social construction: A reader (pp. 15-17). London: Sage.

Gergen, M., & Gergen, K.J. (2003). *Social construction: A reader*. London: Sage.

Gilsdorf, J.W. (1998). Organizational rules on communicating: How employees are –and are not-

    learning the ropes. *The Journal of Business Communication, 35*(2), 173-201.

Gonzales, A.L. & Hancock, J.T. (2008). Identity shift in computer-mediated environments.

    Media Psychology, 11, 167-185.

Harris, L., & Cronen, V.E. (1979). A rules-based model for the analysis and evaluation of

    organizational communication. *Communication Quarterly, 27*, 12-28.

Hershatter, A., & Epstein, M. (2010). Millennials and the world of work: An organization and

    management perspective. *Journal of Business & Psychology, 25*, 211-223.

Hess, J.A. (1993). Assimilating newcomers into an organization: A cultural perspective. *Journal

    of Applied Communication Research, 21*(2), 189-210.

Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. New York, NY:

    Vintage Books.

Jablin, F.M. (1987). Organizational entry, assimilation, and exit. In F.M. Jablin, L.L. Putnam,

    K.H. Roberts, & L.W. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational communication: An

    interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 679-740). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Jabs, L.B. (2005). Communicative rules and organizational decision making. *Journal of Business

    Communication, 42*(3), 265-288.

Jefferson, G. (1984). Transcription notation. In J.M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of*

> *social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. ix-xvi). Cambridge: Cambridge

> University Press.

Judge, T.A., LePine, J.A., & Rich, B.L. (2006). Loving yourself abundantly: Relationship of the

> narcissistic personality to self- and other perceptions of workplace deviance, leadership,

> and task and contextual performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 9*(4), 762-776.

Kaye, B.K. (2005). It's a blog, blog, blog, blog world. *Atlantic Journal of Communication, 13*(2),

> 73-95.

Keyton, J. (2005). *Communication & organizational culture: A key to understanding work*

> *experiences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kowske, B.J., Rasch, R., & Wiley, J. (2010). Millennials' (lack of) attitude problem: An

> empirical examination of generational effects on work attitudes. *Journal of Business &*

> *Psychology, 25*, 265-279.

Kramer, M.W. (2010). *Organizational socialization: Joining and leaving organizations*.

> Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (1995). Introducing social approaches. In W. Leeds-Hurwitz (Ed.), *Social*

> *approaches to communication* (pp. 3-20). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Littlejohn, S.W. (2006). Moral conflict. In J.G. Oetzel & S. Ting-Toomey (Eds.), *The Sage*

> *handbook of conflict communication: Integrating theory, research, and practice* (pp. 395-

> 417). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Littlejohn, S.W., & Foss, K.A. (2011). *Theories of human communication* (10th ed.). Long

> Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Longest, K.C., & Smith, C. (2011). Conflicting or compatible: Beliefs about religion and science among emerging adults in the United States. *Sociological Forum, 26*(4), 846-869.

Martin, J. (2002). *Organizational culture: Mapping the terrain*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McCann, R.M., & Giles, H. (2007). Age-differentiated communication in organizations: Perspectives from Thailand and the United States. *Communication Research Reports, 24*, 1-12.

McCready, V. (2011). Generational issues in supervision and administration. *AHSA Leader, 16*(5), 12-15.

Miller, K. (2012). *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes*. Boston, MA: Cengage Wadsworth.

Miller, V.D., & Jablin, F.M. (1991). Information seeking during organizational entry: Influences, tactics, and a model of the process. *Academy of Management Review, 16* (1), 92-120.

Myers, K.K., & Sadaghiani, K. (2010). Millennials in the workplace: A communication perspective on Millennials' organizational relationships and performance. *Journal of Business & Psychology, 25*(2), 225-238.

Ng, E.S., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S.T. (2010). New generation, great expectations: A field study of the Millennial generation, *Journal of Business Psychology, 25*, 281-292.

Olson, L.N., Coffelt, T.A., Dougherty, D.S., & Gynn, A. (2007). Doing difference: An analysis of fluid and stable age performances in the workplace. *International & Intercultural Communication Annual, 30*, 175-200.

Owen, W.F. (1984). Interpretive themes in relational communication. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 70*, 274-287.

Pacanowsky, M.E., & O'Donnell-Trujillo, N. (1983). Organizational communication as cultural performance. *Communication Monographs, 50*, 126-147.

Pearce, W.B. (1995). A sailing guide for social constructionists. In W. Leeds-Hurwitz (Ed.), *Social approaches to communication* (pp. 88-113). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Penny, L.M., & Spector, P.E. (2002). Narcissism and counterproductive work behavior: Do bigger egos mean bigger problems?. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 10*(1/2), 126-134.

Pomerantz, A., & Mandelbaum, J. (2005). Conversation analytic approaches to the relevance and used of relationship categories in interaction. In K.L. Fitch, & R.E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 149-171). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Psathas, G. (1999). Studying the organization in action: Membership categorization and interaction analysis. *Human Studies, 22*, 139-162.

Real, K., Mitnick, A.D., & Maloney, W.F. (2010). More similar than different: Millennials in the U.S. building trades. *Journal of Business & Psychology, 25*, 303-313.

Reynolds, L., Bush, E.C., & Geist, R. (2008). The Gen Y imperative. *Communication World, 25*(3), 19-22.

Rorty, R. (1989). *Contingency, irony, and solidarity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, H. (1972). On the analyzability of stories by children. In J.J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication* (pp. 325-345). New York: NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Schall, M.S. (1983). A communication-rules approach to organizational culture. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 28*(4), 557-581.

Schegloff, E.A. (1972). Sequencing in conversational openings. In J.J. Gumperez & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics* (pp. 346-380). New York, NY: Basil Blackwell.

Schegloff, E.A. (2007). Categories in action: Person-reference and membership categorization. *Discourse Studies, 9*, 433-461.

Scott, C.R. (2007). Communication and social identity theory: Existing and potential connections in organizational identification research. *Communication Studies, 58*, 123-138.

Shaw, S., & Fairhurst, D. (2008). Engaging a new generation of graduates. *Education + Training 50*(5), 366-378.

Shimanoff, S.B. (1980). *Communication rules: Theory and research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Short, J.C., & Reeves, T.C. (2009). The graphic novel: A "cool" format for communicating to generation Y. *Business Communication Quarterly, 72*(4), 414-430.

Shotter, J. (1993). The conversational background of social life: Beyond representationalism. In J. Shotter (Ed.), *Conversational realities* (pp. 17-31). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Silverman, D. (1998). *Harvey Sacks: Social science and conversation analysis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Smircich, L., & Calas, M.B. (1987). Organizational culture: A critical assessment. In F.M. Jablin, L.L. Putnam, K.H. Roberts, & L.W. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational communication: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 228-263). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Smith, C., Christoffersen, K., Davidson, H., & Herzog, P.S. (2011). *Lost in transition: The dark side of emerging adulthood* [Kindle for Mac version]. Retrieved from Amazon.com.

Spreckels, J. (2008). Identity negotiation in small stories among German adolescent girls. *Narrative Inquiry, 18*(2), 393-413.

Stewart, J. (1995). Philosophical features of social approaches to interpersonal communication. In W. Leeds-Hurwitz (Ed.), *Social approaches to communication* (pp. 23-45). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Stork, E., & Hartley, N.T. (2009). Classroom incivilities: Students' perceptions about professors behaviors. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research 2*(4), 13-24.

Twenge, J.M., & Campbell, S.M. (2008). Generational differences in psychological traits and their impact on the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 862-877.

Twenge, J.M., & Campbell, W.K. (2009). *The narcissism epidemic: Living in the age of entitlement* [Kindle for Mac version]. Retrieved from Amazon.com.

Twenge, J.M., Konrath, S., Foster, J.D., Campbell, W.K., & Bushman, B.J. (2008). Egos inflating over time: A cross-temporal meta-analysis of the narcissistic personality inventory, *Journal of Personality, 76*(4), 875-901.

Wanous, J.P. (1992). *Organizational entry: Recruitment, selection, orientation, and socialization of newcomers* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Wesner, M.S., & Miller, T. (2008). Boomers and Millennials have much in common. *Organization Development Journal, 26*(3), 89-96.