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Research Paper

Monetary Incentives Versus Fringe Benefits: The Motivation Behind Generation X and Millennial Employees

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Abstract

This study focused on the lived experience of employees in the Department of Science and Technology-Forest Product Research and Development Institute as to the motivation from monetary incentives or fringe benefits. The research design used was qualitative, with phenomenology as an approach. The study explored the experiences and motivation of Generation X and millennial employees in the Department of Science and Technology-Forest Product Research and Development Institute. Based on the results, employees reflected on their overall experiences that they manifest on non-monetary benefits or fringe benefits rather than monetary incentives they received. The employees were acquainted with the experience that arose from the testimony, which showed that motivated employees were more likely to be productive, happier in their jobs, and remained with their company for a longer amount of time by creating a great work atmosphere. Giving employees chances to learn and develop, enough incentives and benefits for excellent performance resulted in their satisfaction with their work. The researcher considered the employees experiencing job satisfaction and dissatisfaction based on Frederick Herzberg's theory, also known as the Two Factor Theory that developed to better understand an employee's attitude and drive toward the job. As an output, the researcher suggested establishing a committee of employees at the Department of Science and Technology – Forest Products Research and Development Institute named 4C's or Cope Capacity Counseling Committee, which aimed to promote financial, emotional, physical, social, and psychological concerns of the employee's motivation at their workplace.

Keywords Monetary Incentives, Fringe Benefits, Motivation, Millennial, Generation X

INTRODUCTION

The motivation behind our actions is what keeps us going. Internal and external stimuli motivate people to act and accomplish a particular aim or target. Personal interests, a desire for success or accomplishment, praise or reward, or a sense of meaning or purpose are just a few examples of the numerous things that motivate people. It keeps people motivated, inspired, and concentrated on their current tasks.

Generation X employees tend to be autonomous, self-sufficient and appreciate work-life balance. Given that they were raised in an era of rapid technological advancement, they are more likely to be resourceful and adaptive. They frequently favor a more flexible work environment where they can work from home or on their own terms. On the other side, millennial workers typically exhibit greater levels of collaboration, digital knowledge, and social conscience. They value openness, criticism, and appreciation. They frequently seek employment environments that reflect their values and enable them to have a positive impact.

Monetary incentives are given to employees in return for their performance or when they meet predetermined objectives. Bonuses, commissions, profit-sharing, and stock options are a few examples. Cash rewards may be the ideal motivator for workers if they offer a clear and concrete reward for their efforts. Contrarily, fringe benefits are non-cash rewards provided to workers in addition to their pay or compensation. Benefits like health insurance, retirement plans, wellness initiatives, paid time off, and flexible work schedules can be among them. Organizations can



demonstrate their concern for the well-being of their staff and work-life balance by offering fringe perks.

Based on this background issue, this study wants to learn about this issue and answer the main research question, namely, what is the essence of lived experience among Department of Science and Technology – Forest Products Research and Development Institute Generation X and Millennial employees as to motivation gotten from monetary incentives or fringe benefits?

Through this study the researcher believes that this study is important and timely; this is not only true in the present but also in the far future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation at work is essential to an organization's growth since it boosts worker effectiveness and productivity. The authors looked into the effects of people's competence, autonomy, and social connectedness on their work motivation to deepen their understanding of why people are motivated to do their jobs. These connections' moderating factors at the national level were also investigated. Data from 32,614 people from 25 different nations were analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), according to the World Values Survey (WVS). Results showed that while competence negatively impacted job motivation, autonomy, and social relatedness positively impacted it. Additionally, the country-level political participation, humane attitude, and in-group collectivism affected the relationships at the individual level. The discussion moved on to contributions, practical ramifications, and future research objectives.

Motivation within the workplace is seen as a crucial driver for an organization's success since it encourages efficient performance from its workforce. Employers rely on the performance of their workforce to meet organizational goals. Employees who lack sufficient motivation perform poorly even though they are competent. Therefore, employers require employees who are fully committed to their work rather than those who simply show up. Work motivation is still a crucial component of organizational psychology since it explains the reasons for individual behavior in organizations. Theoretical foundations on the origins of personal and real-world social situations that enhance people's performance and well-being can be derived from studies on the factors that promote job motivation.

The dynamics that spark work-related behavior have been the subject of decades of investigation. Motivation is the main consideration in this area since it explains why people act in certain ways. The fundamental psychological demands have served as an essential justification for individual variations in work motivation. Humans' inherent resources and intrinsic psychological nutrition are thought to be psychological requirements. They are closely related to how people behave as individuals and have a clear, important meaning for how well they perform at work. Due to the enjoyment gained from meeting them, many needs are crucial factors in determining how each human functions. The social context has also been considered to have implications for job motivation in addition to individual-level antecedents. Individual social connection and exchange emphasize the significance of work motivation.

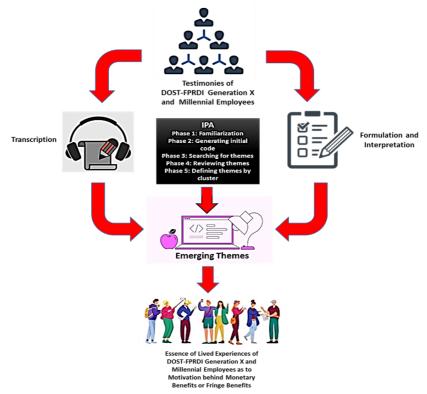
The word VUCA, which stands for "volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous," has been used to define our current reality. Organizations and individuals must continually learn in this rapidly changing world. Organizations must establish organizational learning to get a competitive edge, which can be done by hiring smart people. According to the latter, it is becoming increasingly important for employees to continue learning to improve and preserve their employability. According to earlier studies, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of persons participating in lifelong learning (Corrales-Herrero & Rodrguez-Prado, 2019).

Souders (2019) mentioned that motivation reflects something unique about each of us and allows us to gain valued outcomes like improved performance, enhanced well-being, personal

growth, or a sense of purpose. The ability to influence our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors is accomplished through motivation. The ability to modify behavior, improve competencies, be creative, set goals, expand interests, make plans, develop talents, and increase involvement all depend on our ability to stay motivated.

Economy (2014) stated that extraordinary, motivated people are driven to go above and beyond; others trust them, are focused, and have great confidence in their own abilities. They typically have much life satisfaction and dream of infinite possibilities. They have longer relationships, are more likely to get promoted or recruited than their unmotivated friends, and are more likely to acquire a raise or a dream project. Their motivation comes from an innate desire to thrive and be their best selves. They enjoy pushing themselves, learning, and discovering. They are not forced but rather intrinsically motivated toward new experiences, the unfolding path, and the potential outcomes. Instead of criticizing or comparing oneself to others, one objectively evaluates one's shortcomings, triumphs, and learns from them. They also do not waste time with gossipy, judgmental people.

Herrity (2023) revealed that highly motivated individuals know they can set high standards for themselves and accomplish their goals. Whatever the circumstances, motivation will inspire people to work hard and accomplish their goals. Motivated people may better overcome obstacles and challenges at work because they can stay focused on their goals. Motivated employees frequently put in more effort to ensure they finish crucial tasks and reach their objectives.



Research Paradigm

Figure 1. The paradigm of this study

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was guided by an in-depth face-to-face interview in line with qualitative research and incorporating a phenomenological approach. This was to explore the participants'

experiences and their experience of the phenomena of Department of Science and Technology – Forest Product Research and Development Institute millennial employees through monetary incentives or fringe benefits. The researcher's focus was on the important point about the objective of this method was to give a detailed description of the experience: its hows and whys. Specifically, the study made use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in interpreting data. According to Smith and Fieldsend (2021), Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a wellestablished qualitative approach developed to investigate individuals' lived experiences. To comprehend lived experience. It is interesting in the experiences people have and the meanings they create in connection with those experiences. Rather than being a theory-driven investigation, IPA is collaborative since it investigates experiential meanings through the interpretive effort between the researcher and the participant.

The population of this study would comprise the Department of Science and Technology – Forest Products Research and Development Institute Generation X and millennial employees. The participants consisted of 5 Generation X and 5 millennial employees of DOST-FPRDI. Considering that this research used a qualitative method in the phenomenological approach, this study utilized homogeneous sampling in choosing the participants. In research and statistics, homogeneous purposeful sampling is frequently utilized when the population being sampled has a uniform distribution. The researcher wants to be sure that the little variety within the population being studied accurately represents it. The goal is to select participants who can provide valuable insights and perspectives on the topic of interest while also ensuring that the sample is diverse enough to represent a range of perspectives and experiences.

The participants of this qualitative research were selected through the homogeneous purposeful sampling strategy. It found a more closely defined group for whom the study was conducted.

Participants	Generation	Gender	Age	Years in Service	Salary Grade		
Employee 1	Generation X	Male	52	12	19		
Employee 2	Generation X	Male	51	25	6		
Employee 3	Generation X	Male	55	30	4		
Employee 4	Generation X	Male	52	5	3		
Employee 5	Generation X	Male	53	2	5		
Employee 6	Millennial	Female	34	9	11		
Employee 7	Millennial	Female	31	4	9		
Employee 8	Millennial	Male	28	4	16		
Employee 9	Millennial	Female	28	6	9		
Employee 10	Millennial	Female	25	1	10		

Table 1. Participants of the Study

The researcher utilized researcher-made guide questions, which were derived and inspired

by the theory and concepts used as the framework of the study. To ensure the validity of the researcher-made guide questions, these were given to five (5) significant individuals who were perceived to have enough expertise regarding the study. The two (2) validators were the researcher's adviser and an expert in a qualitative research paper. The three (3) others were the Research Director, MSP professor, and MBA professor, who have experience validating instruments. The researcher improved the items in accordance with the suggestions given by the validators. Subsequently, the researcher presented the improved guide questions to his adviser for final revisions.

Content validity and expert validity were implied in the study as part of the psychometric soundness of the guide questions, and the computed content validity index was 1.00. Lawshe (1974) explained that content validation was a method that ensures that an instrument (checklist, questionnaire, or scale) assesses the content area that it was supposed to measure. A panel of subject matter experts examining the value of specific elements within an instrument was one method of obtaining content validity, content validity ratio would be applied afterward.

Data Gathering Procedure

For the research to have a sequential and proper flow, the researcher prepared the interview protocol, which was approved by a panel of experts so that the data gathered were rich and significant. The researcher created a letter for the participants. Then stated inside the letter were the purpose and objectives of the study to the identified participants. Second, after it was approved, the interview session was scheduled according to the participants' availability. Materials needed, such as semi-structured interview questions and recorders, were prepared, and the researcher got the participants' permission before recording. The participants decided on the place or the most convenient phase. The interviews were done via Face-to-face and Messenger application with permission to be recorded by the participants.

Furthermore, before the research interview, the researcher established rapport with the participants to lighten up the mood and atmosphere and make them feel relaxed about the procedure, thus giving them a high chance of getting accurate responses. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher transcribed the responses word per word, including the fillers and expressions. The researcher did transcription and tabulation of data for easy qualitative analysis. Afterward, the researcher terminated and deleted any video, audio, and/or taped recorded material after it was transcribed for the data privacy of the participants. The transcribed data were put in a Microsoft Word file and categorized to analyze the responses conveniently.

The study used the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) developed by Jonathan Smith, which gained traction and could be argued to have assumed a dominant position in qualitative research. Then, after collecting pertinent and necessary information and data from the semi-structured interviews, the researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim. Then, alike responses gathered from the participants were extracted and categorized by themes, code, and cluster.

Instead of attempting to "fix experiences in predefined or overly abstract categories," we study experience in its own terms in IPA (Smith et al., 2022, p.1). Therefore, IPA is what we would refer to as a bottom-up strategy in that we work from the data up, keeping it participant-centered rather than applying top-down categories to the data to complete our analysis.

As a result, an IPA researcher's responsibility was to investigate and utilize the various prospects and possibilities that the tradition (approach) provides. It was critical that the researchers be allowed to tell the story of the research findings through their own "life experiences." As such, an IPA researcher's responsibility as a qualitative researcher was to investigate and exploit the potential prospects and possibilities that the tradition provided. The

research was extremely essential.

The generally referred to as theme-centered or category-based analysis was applied for the treatment of qualitative data. The procedure of data analysis using IPA by Braun and Clarke (2006) was a recurrent process where the researcher proceeds through several systematic phases: Phase 1: familiarization with collected data; Phase 2: generating initial codes; Phase 3: Searching for themes; Phase 4: Reviewing themes; Phase 5: Defining and naming themes by clusters; then Phase 6: Presenting and discussing analysis of data. Further explanation regarding these phases will be explained in the following subsection.s

Phase 1: Familiarization with collected data

This phase involved familiarizing oneself with the facts. Before beginning to analyze certain things, it was important to get a complete overview of all the data that had been collected. Transcribing audio, reading the text, and making quick notes, and generally looking through the data to become familiar with it were all included in this process.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes

In this phase, concise labels (codes) were created to denote significant aspects of the data that might be pertinent to addressing the research question. It entailed coding the full dataset, followed by gathering all the codes and pertinent data extracts for further analysis.

Phase 3: Searching for themes

This phase focused on going over the developed codes, finding connections between them, and beginning to develop themes. At this point, it was time to decide whether to delete some codes because they were too nebulous or irrelevant. While other codes might develop into themes of their own and decide what would vary according to what to find out. Then, it was relevant to think of potential themes that could reveal anything useful about the data.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes in this phase

The potential themes were compared to the dataset to see if they provided a plausible explanation for the data and provide a response to the research question. Themes were frequently split, mixed, or eliminated during this phase, which was when they were refined. According to the TA method, a theme was a pattern of shared meaning that was supported by a primary concept or idea.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes by cluster

This phase involved developing a detailed analysis of each theme, working out each theme's scope and focus, and determining each story'. It also encompassed deciding on an informative name for each theme. Defining themes involved formulating exactly the meaning of each theme and figuring out how it helped in understanding the data. Likewise, naming themes involved coming up with a concise and easily understandable name for each theme.

Phase 6: Presenting and discussing analysis of data

Writing up the analysis of the data was part of this last phase. Including all academic texts, the methodology section describes how the researcher collected the data through a semi-structured interview questionnaire and explains how the thematic analysis was conducted. The researcher utilized deductive coding, which involved starting with a set of established codes and then assigning those codes to additional qualitative data. These codes could come from past studies, and some people might already know what subjects they want to investigate. As per Linneberg and Korsgaard

(2019), deductive coding is also called concept-driven coding. The codes came from the theoretical and conceptual framework.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the phenomenological study on the lived experiences of the Department of Science and Technology–Forest Products Research and Development Institute Generation X and Millennial employees as to motivation gotten from monetary incentives or fringe benefits, ten (10) themes emerged that aimed to target lived experiences of Department of Science and Technology – Forest Products Research and Development Institute generation X and millennial employees as to motivation through monetary incentives or fringe benefits. As presented in Figure 2, the themes were placed in an image of the staircase, symbolizing the study's target. The staircase or path symbolizes taking upwards, which shows evolution towards a higher level of consciousness and understanding. Like a staircase, employees' life at work had ups and downs.

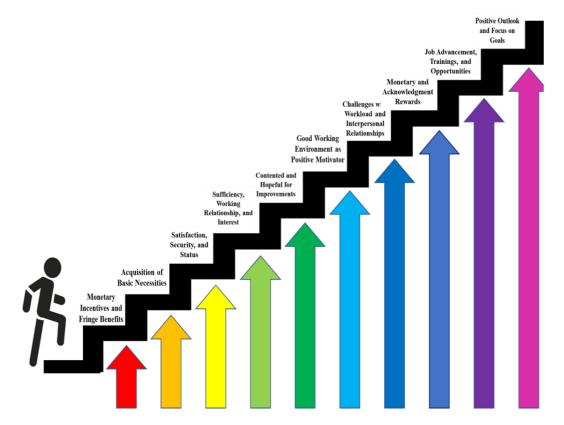


Figure 2. The Emerging Themes

First Theme: Monetary Incentives and Fringe Benefits

Under the first theme, the employee participants shared their incentives and benefits in their working institution. The answers fell under different kinds of monetary incentives and fringe benefits. It showed that the participants remembered the incentives and benefits they possessed. In fact, it showed good memory retention, and it was a sign that the participants were interested in giving their insight and motivated to take part in the research.

Second Theme: Acquisition of Basic Necessities

For the second theme, the participants explained the importance of incentives and benefits due to their basic needs in daily life and additional compensation. It showed that employees were

attracted to the firm while sharing how they maintained their commitment and boosted their job satisfaction. Indeed, these incentives and benefits raised employee satisfaction, motivation, and output, increasing the organization's success.

Third Theme: Satisfaction, Security, and Status

Under the third theme, the employee participants discussed their experience as an employee through satisfaction, security, and status. Truly, job satisfaction was based on how employees feel about security, entails a sense of defense against things like layoffs, economic downturns, and other potential employment-impacting issues, then the type of employment relationship. It showed that participants found ways to enjoy their work while focusing on everyday tasks. Even if there was no guaranteed way to ensure complete job security, constant progress in knowledge and abilities will make them feel like a valued employee.

Fourth Theme: Sufficiency, Working Relationship, and Interest

For the fourth theme, the employee participants described instances and experiences about conflicts at work that influenced their motivation. Prominent answers were related to sufficiency, interest, and working relationships. Being self-sufficient as an employee is a skill you can develop over time; it does not require prior expertise. When a circumstance that benefits an employee also has an impact on your business, it is said to be in a conflict of interest. The relationships with coworkers and bosses might not be as close as those with your family and friends, but they are still very important.

Fifth Theme: Contented and Hopeful for Improvements

Under the fifth theme, the employee participants shared about working conditions at work. Indeed, working conditions are influenced by working hours, legal rights, and responsibilities. It involves both the environment in which the work is done and the employee's performance. As working individuals, having a pleasant workplace can significantly increase employee satisfaction, motivation, and output. Good working conditions are influenced by various factors, including a welcoming workspace, suitable facilities and equipment, positive interpersonal interactions between employees and management, and a sense of identity and purpose. Organizations can gain from more efficiency, better work quality, and fewer layoffs with content and productive personnel.

Sixth Theme: Good Working Environment as Positive Motivator

Under the sixth theme, the employee participants emphasized working conditions affect motivation at work. Prominent answers were related to company policies, administration, and supervision. Indeed, employers and employees both gain when an organization has clear policies in place. Outlining the rights and obligations of employees within your organization aids in establishing performance and behavior expectations. Additionally, company regulations protect the company and contribute to a secure and pleasurable workplace for all employees. The company policies should be comforting and not too harsh on employees. The workplace environment can significantly impact employee motivation at work, so enthusiastic and interested employees in their jobs are more likely to work in a secure and pleasant workplace.

Seventh Theme: Challenges with Workload and Interpersonal Relationships

Under the seventh theme, the employee participants shared various experiences regarding the challenges of being motivated at work. Even if employees can manage to complete all assignments on time, get along well with coworkers, and impress supervisors, unexpected difficulties may still occur in working life. There could be simple problems that can be solved immediately or more complicated problems that call for a detailed resolution strategy. Indeed, to prevent negative reactions when deciding, it can be crucial to keep emotions in check and maintain professionalism. Before deciding or reaching a conclusion, it can be started by carefully weighing the material and taking time to collect thoughts.

Eight Themes: Monetary and Acknowledgment Rewards

Under eight themes, the employee participants shared their achievements or recognition of their work. Prominent answers were related to their accomplishments. Employees feel appreciated at work, engagement, productivity, and even brand loyalty all increase. Employees who receive recognition are made to feel important and visible. Indeed, that strong motivator is appreciation and recognition for a well-done job. Employees are more likely to stay engaged and inspired to continue delivering high-caliber work when they believe their efforts are being noticed and valued.

As perceived, the employees who participated in this study seemed very happy and excited as they shared their experience of being recognized and rewarded by the institution. These findings aligned with Wickham's (2022) article that explained employee recognition is the open acknowledgment and praise of employee behavior or achievement. Organizations use it to show employees how much they are appreciated, to motivate them, and to reinforce desired behavior.

Ninth Theme: Job Advancement, Training, and Opportunities

Under the ninth theme, the employee participants shared various opportunities such as increased responsibilities or potentials the work provides them and how their motivation is affected. Everyone can strengthen their areas of weakness to increase their skill sets and professional competence. Employees can increase their chances of getting engaged and advancing within the organization by recognizing and solving career-related aspects that need improvement. Job advancement, opportunities, and training all include motivation factors.

To support the responses of employee participants, Kaado (2023) mentioned an attractive salary entices job seekers, but it will not guarantee employee retention, motivation, and engagement. Examples of tangible and intangible rewards include flexible work policies, dependable connections, professional development, and more. Encourage a safe, secure workplace where team members are free to make judgments to retain and engage them.

Tenth Theme: Positive Outlook and Focus on Goals

Under the last theme, the employee participants shared how they keep motivated at work. Workplace motivation is seen as an essential factor for an organization's success since it encourages people to perform well. Organizations rely on the performance of their workforce to meet their objectives. Employees who lack sufficient motivation perform poorly even though they are competent. Therefore, employers require employees who are fully committed to their work rather than those who simply show up.

This result also aligned with the Vo et al. (2022) work motivation is considered an essential catalyst for the success of organizations, as it promotes employees' effective performance. Organizations depend on the performance of their staff members to meet their goals. Nevertheless, even when they are skilled, undermotivated people perform poorly.

Work motivation is still a crucial component of organizational psychology since it explains the reasons for individual behavior in organizations. When employees reflect on their overall experiences, they manifest on non-monetary benefits or fringe benefits rather than monetary incentives they received. They are more satisfied and happier with the responsibility, personal development, achievements and accomplishments, interest at work, job advancement, and growth opportunities that belong to fringe benefits or non-monetary. Indeed, the employee participants come with motivational rather than hygiene factors. It is obvious that employees clearly experienced Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, proving it is accurate (Herzberg, 1987).

CONCLUSIONS

Work motivation is still a crucial component of organizational psychology since it explains the reasons for individual behavior in organizations. When employees reflect on their overall experiences, they manifest on non-monetary benefits or fringe benefits rather than monetary incentives they received. They are more satisfied and happier with the responsibility, personal development, achievements and accomplishments, interest at work, job advancement, and growth opportunities that belong to fringe benefits or non-monetary. Indeed, the employee participants come with motivational rather than hygiene factors. It is obvious that employees experienced Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, proving it is real.

The study showed that motivated employees are more likely to be productive, to be happier in their jobs, and to remain with their company for a longer amount of time by creating a great work atmosphere, giving employees chances to learn and develop, providing incentives and benefits for excellent performance, and being honest with their work. The researcher can infer from the study's findings that motivating factors currently are more intrinsically linked to achievement, personal growth, and recognition. Contrarily, despite their importance, hygienic variables like compensation, bonuses, and the workplace are insufficient to motivate employees to put out their best efforts. It is reassuring to know that these motivational factors, rather than merely fundamental hygiene considerations, are assisting people in finding fulfillment and enjoyment at work. When employees reflect on their overall experiences, they manifest on non-monetary benefits or fringe benefits rather than monetary incentives they received. The employees are acquainted with the experience that arose from the testimony.

The researcher believes that the driving force behind employees at work is the need or desire to do a task or job as well as possible. Truly, many employees find motivation in doing their jobs well and motivated at their work with satisfaction. As an output, the researcher suggested establishing a committee of employees at the Department of Science and Technology – Forest Products Research and Development Institute named 4C's or Cope Capacity Counseling Committee, which aimed to promote financial, emotional, physical, social, and psychological concerns of the employee's motivation at their workplace.

On the other side, this study also provided some recommendations from several parties. Firstly, executive management may retain and increase monetary incentives like bonuses and performance-based rewards to motivate employees for better performance. Whereas human resource management may promote training, job advancement, and opportunities to enhance the knowledge and skills of employees.

Other parties, such as the government and non-government, may establish programs that can support and cater to the needs of employees, especially in giving psychological and psychosocial support in terms of motivation, like insisting on programs or extension services to help them.

Employees may help them to acknowledge the feelings and difficulties that they are experiencing in their workplace. They must know that seeking emotional and social support is not bad. The researcher already presented her proposed committee, which can be contacted in difficult times.

Lastly, aspiring employees may have proper employee assistance privileges that will prepare them for the difficulties and challenges they experience at work. They should assess themselves for adjustments and have the necessary help from the institution.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Besides the findings of this study that contribute to this issue, this study also has limitations that can be an insight for future studies. The limitation comes from the participants of this study, namely the Millennials and Generation X employee of the Department of Science and Technology-Forest Products Research and Development Institute. Future research can involve other participants from different backgrounds and characteristics to enhance this topic's findings. However, it is hoped that this initiative study can help future studies to learn and understand employees' motivation.

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