

An Assessment of the Need for Millennial Engagement in the Construction Management Practice in Nigeria

DANIEL OLUWATAYOMI FADUMO¹, NGOZI MARYKATE OKOYE², EJIKE MBANEFO OKEKE³

^{1,2} Department of Building, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State-Nigeria

³ Chukwuemeka Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State –Nigeria

Abstract- *To attract more millennial into the practice, high school students or the younger generations must be targeted before they choose a lifetime career path so that they can be recruited and train via apprenticeship programs. The study adopted a secondary data through related journals to review the Need for Millennial Engagement in the Construction Management Practice in Nigeria. Relevant literature that address: the Need for Millennial Engagement in the Construction Management Practice in Nigeria, assesses the Construction as a Career Choice, Characteristics of Millennial, Need for Millennial in the Construction Practice in Nigeria, Targeting Millennial Admittance into the Construction Practice and Measures to Attract More Millennial To the Construction Industry were reviewed. The construction industry is had been facing a talent shortfall crisis as its workforce ages without replacement, the millennial generation have the largest age group and need a major adjustment in engagement models with different set of strategies for Motivation, engagement and retainment. It concludes and recommends that there is a need for thorough conscious mentoring from the older generation if the construction management practice will be sustained. The industry must like other organizations invest in creating a positive image and brand in the mind of the millennial (internal customers) and external customers; this will create a dynamic and an attractive industry where younger cohort or millennial's can enter.*

Indexed Terms- *Millennial Engagement, Construction Management Practice, Career Choice, Construction Industry*

I. INTRODUCTION

According to GoContractor (2017), the Construction industry is facing severe talent shortage due to frequent retirement of its older worker force with little or no replacement from the newer generation or millennial; thereby creating an engagement gap. Considering how much the industry contributes to the economy of any nation, there is need to look for proactive measures to encourage the younger generation to take an active career role in the industry. Millennial are known to look at career choice that is trending and that offers sustainable personal expressions and innovations; stakeholders in the industry and the younger talent must therefore promote this ideals and go beyond traditional compensation plans. Strauss and Howe (1991) defined a generation as “the aggregate of all people born over a span of roughly twenty years or about the length of one phase of life: childhood, young adulthood, midlife, and old age. A generation shares “age location in history, key historical events and social trends .Each generation that experiences the same passionate drive, similar values, world views, shares cultural, political and economic experience, is called a generational cohort The millennial or younger generations want a workplace where creativity, innovation, diversity, continuous learning and career progression abounds; the 2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey therefore supports this earlier assertion by showing that, 81% of millennial believe continuous professional development opportunities will help them excel at work but keep them engaged over time. This study therefore investigates the need for millennial engagement, solve the generational gap and provide detail measures to help organizations and human resource management to better attract, deal and appeal to their younger workforce. This new net generation, called the Millennial or Generation Y, have been known to clash with the older generation X who is

ahead of them in experience, some research have uncovered distinct perspectives concerning Generation X and Generation Y, while have found none but argues that they have similar pragmatic outlook on life (Gaye, 2015).

According to Ayodeji and Clinton (2018), the desire for sustainable construction has been on the increase and one of the identified challenges is the inadequacy of skilled workforce to understand and execute projects in line with sustainable goals. Shortage of young talents has been found to have the most effect on sustainable construction which then leads to other problems like cost increase, time overrun, decrease quality, high accidents rate and more rework, which are related to the three elements of sustainable development, that is, economic, social and environment. Agencies shouldered with the responsibilities of managing and regulating skilled workforce in the construction industry must therefore find this study useful in their quest for attracting talents and maintaining existing ones. The millennial or young people are known not to associate the construction management practice or the construction industry with iconic buildings, structures nor any unique or fascinating stories of innovations; they have little idea of any public and trending role models in the field except hearing that the industry contributes to national economy through real estate. The industry, government and the tertiary institutions have not done enough collaborative work in proper publicity of the industry

The need to promote current innovations and breakthrough in design, construction and sales will also attract and retain the millennial's workforce. The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) in 2014, however asserts that an education in construction courses are oversubscribed citing that for an available 6,000 apprenticeship, they received over 40,000 applicants to suggests rapid and improved interest in the industry, despite this assertion there is still a large gap in perception to correct which this study offers. There is still a large gap in the millennial public perception on the realities of working in industry which have affect recruitment and retainment of young workers with the right skills. This research intends to assess the level of engagement of millennial's in the construction management practice in Nigeria with a

view to provide sustainable measures to attract, retain and recruit young talents to pursue a career in construction. The research questions guiding this study are: What are the need for millennial in the Construction Practice in Nigeria, why should Millennial be targeted for admittance into the Construction Practice is important, how can Millennial's be mentored in order to achieve Retaining them In the Construction Practice and what measures should be recommended to attract more millennial to the Construction Industry.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0.1 Construction as a Career Choice

The construction industry is had been facing a talent shortfall crisis as its workforce ages without replacement. The older talents are retiring without enough new and younger talent replacement. A report by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Populations Survey (2022), states that in 2002, 11 percent of construction workers were 55years and older, which increased to 20.7 percent by 2015. It further added that 10.7 percent of workers were between 20 and 24 years, but that number declined to 7.3 percent in 2015. These trends suggest that about 20 percent of workers will retire over the next 10 years, and, a total of 12 percent leave the industry within the next five years. This ageing factor has created a demand for new talents to handle construction, renovation and infrastructural development services.

2.0.2 Characteristics of Millennial

According to Douglas (2017), Millennial (*Millennial generation, Generation Y*) is a phrase used to generally describe persons; born between 1980 and 2000, who reached adulthood in the early 21st century. Millennial are those who grew up with modern technological facilities like electronics, smartphone the internet and online social communities. Other studies identifies that millennial generation have the largest age group and need a major adjustments in engagement models with different set of strategies for Motivation, engagement and retainment. The U.S. Census Bureau defines a millennial as a person born between 1982 and 2000 with the following characteristics:

1. They are more diverse generations with 44.2 percent minority race or ethnic group.

2. Those in developed countries often feel more pessimistic while their counterparts in emerging markets are optimistic.
3. They are the most educated generation in American history, ages 18 to 35 and are likely to stick with their employers as their older counterparts in Generation X when they were young adults if well motivated.
4. They embrace and connect with brands on social media and favour companies on social media networks.

2.0.3 Need For Millennial In the Construction Practice in Nigeria

Millennials have different requirements from any employment experience since they are distinct in education, skilled in technology, very self-confident, able to multi-task, and have plenty of energy. This characteristic creates for them a quest for higher personal expectations, team dynamism, and environmental adaptability. Beyond providing these requirements, there is a need for thorough conscious mentoring from the older generation if the construction management practice will be sustained. The following five areas why new generation is needed in the construction industry:

1. Loyalty and Dedication. This group when given good opportunities to advance through education, collaborative culture and an offered competitive pay and benefits, they are known to be loyal and dedicated to driving organizational success.
2. Innovative thinking. With the emerging technologies and new delivery systems, millennials are better suited to provide input and new ideas that promote through software developments, tools or company protocols chains etc.
3. Tech-savviness with a personal touch. Many Millennials have adopted new technologies and adopt digital media to learn, interact and drive global change across continents with fresh new perspective.
4. Balance. Millennials are team players who create and seek healthy work-life “integration.” The state of the industry notwithstanding, when motivated they can beat the challenge of working long hours in a remote work or challenging work conditions via virtual reality and artificial intelligence.

5. Collaboration and Communication. Many have been raised under role model and team work scenarios and so as natural team players they collaborate on common purpose, utilize modern and effective processes, create real time excellent communication, and build solid relationships that will help transform the industry.

2.0.4 Targeting Millennial Admittance into the Construction Practice

To attract more millennial into the practice, high school students or the younger generations must be targeted before they choose a lifetime career path so that they can be recruited and train via apprenticeship programs. Most young person had never consider a career in construction due to the negative public perception of the sector, some even see it as a last resort for people who may have tried a four-year college and fail. He suggested that organizations should better brand and market these career opportunities by clearing misconceptions on the industry and educate students and their parents of the benefit of a first-choice career option in construction. In addition, since the industry on the face value and media had not been popular due to poor promotions of its superheroes, using media headlines to expose its impact in everyday operations, business and living is important. The industry must like other organizations invest in creating a positive image and brand in the mind of the millennial (internal customers) and external customers; this will create a dynamic and an attractive industry where younger cohort or millennials can enter. Gaye (2015), supports the need for an exceptional customer (internal and external) experience as the key driver of performance

2.0.5 Measures to Attract More Millennial To the Construction Industry

The popular talk in the construction industry is on the growing skills gap between new and seasoned workers due to the severe lack of millennial entering the industry. Since his age group forms the majority of the general workforce, the construction industry must identify measures to attract and to fill important empty roles with the younger workforce. The short and easy answer is that employers will need to be exceptionally diligent about trying to recruit millennial, but doing so is much easier said than done, though it's not impossible. If you're looking for a few ways to rev up

your own strategy when it comes to targeting the younger demographic, here are a few ideas to help you out:

1. Understand Pay and Benefits Matter
2. Targeting Millennials`
3. Good Pay and Other Benefits
4. Flexibility Is Important
5. In-Depth Training and Opportunities for Advancement
6. Create an Impactful Online Presence
7. Hop on the Technology Train
8. Emphasize Your Dedication to Construction Safety Practices:
9. Create Interest in Construction Careers from a Young Age:
10. Roll out New Hiring Practices:
11. Re-evaluate Company Culture:
12. Leaders and managers with integrity

III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a secondary data to review the Need for Millennial Engagement in the Construction Management Practice in Nigeria. Relevant literature that address: the Need for Millennial Engagement in the Construction Management Practice in Nigeria, assesses the Construction as a Career Choice, Characteristics of Millennial, Need for Millennial in the Construction Practice in Nigeria, Targeting Millennial Admittance into the Construction Practice and Measures to Attract More Millennial To the Construction Industry were reviewed.

CONCLUSION

The construction industry is had been facing a talent shortfall crisis as its workforce ages without replacement, the millennial generation have the largest age group and need a major adjustments in engagement models with different set of strategies for Motivation, engagement and retainment. There is a need for thorough conscious mentoring from the older generation if the construction management practice will be sustained. The industry must like other organizations invest in creating a positive image and brand in the mind of the millennial (internal customers) and external customers; this will create a dynamic and an attractive industry where younger cohort or millennia`s can enter.

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