

NEXT GEN BUSINESS: SMART BUSINESS FOR SMARTER MILLENNIALS

Maria Vennila

*Student, PG Department of Commerce, Mount Carmel College, Bangalore.
Email ID: mariavennilaresearchmcc@gmail.com*

Abstract—*A cognitive enterprise is an organisation that initiates machine learning, automation and AI that is leveraged into businesses into its operations to learn, adapt and act more intelligently, going beyond simple data analysis to make proactive decisions and improve stakeholders, employees and customer satisfaction. The objectives of the study are to explore the concept of a cognitive enterprise and AI enabled business transformation; to investigate the impact of AI tools on Millennial creativity, decision making and workplace efficiency; to explore the dynamic interplay between human cognitive abilities and AI in driving business innovation, decision-making and strategic growth; and to develop a conceptual framework linking Millennial mediation, AI transformation and cognitive enterprise performance outcomes.*

Keywords: *Next Gen Business, Smart Business, Cognitive Enterprise, Artificial Intelligence, Business Innovation.*

INTRODUCTION

Cognitive thinking refers to the mental ability to understand, learn, remember, reason and solve problems. It enables individuals to process information, interpret experiences and apply required knowledge through and across various situations.

A cognitive enterprise is an organisation that initiates machine learning, automation and AI that is leveraged into businesses into its operations to learn, adapt and act more intelligently, going beyond simple data analysis to make proactive decisions and improve stakeholders, employees and customer satisfaction.

In today's fast-paced business world, how organizations innovate adjust and maintain growth plays a crucial role in management thinking, entrepreneurial values and new technologies. Scholars have discussed how strategic decision making is influenced, starting with the key work by Mason in 1984. Demographic traits, experiences and values directly affect organizational results. This lays the basis for understanding of how thinking and leadership shape strategy.

Building on this basis, research on entrepreneurial thinking has improved our understanding of how entrepreneurs think, make decisions and act when faced with uncertainty (Article, 2002)emphasises that cognition plays a pivotal role in opportunity recognition, risk evaluation and venture creation, establishing a clear link between mental models and entrepreneurial behaviour. More recently, researchers have turned their attention to cognitive business evaluation where (Mekl, 2022) highlight the managerial human capital and social capital as antecedents to managers ability to cognitively process and evaluate business models, underlining the critical role of managerial decision making in sustaining competitive advantage.

Complementing this cognitive perspective the rise of digitalization and AI has introduced new layers of complexity and opportunity. ((Sufyan, 2023) argues that AI functions as an external enabler of entrepreneurship by altering the environment in which entrepreneurial activities occur reshaping the availability of information, resources and opportunities. In addition (Frank M Fossen, 2024) explore how AI not only transforms entrepreneurial processes but also creates entirely new pathways for venture creation, therefore, reinforcing the symbiotic relationship between technological advancement and entrepreneurial dynamism.

Recent research has illuminated the concept of entrepreneurship as an increasing trend for millennials and thus the attention of many scholars and practitioners on entrepreneurship by millennial. Millennial business owners place value on creating business with an entrepreneurial spirit through creativity, collaboration, and/ or sense of social responsibility according to a recent study (Minter, 2019).

Additionally, there is research on how millennial business owners operate their businesses over time and have adapted their businesses to changing customer needs and business climates as well as strategic management of their resources. Accordingly, millennial entrepreneurship is characterized by values that drive their entrepreneurial efforts and provide for the long-term viability of their businesses by strategically adapting to create sustainable, profitable enterprises.

The current business environment changes continuously, it consists of both challenges and opportunities. For instance while firms benefit from automating repetitive tasks and use AI to make better decisions through predictive analysis, they also face challenges related to the growing skills gap between those who understand AI and those who do not. According to (Baldacchino, 2015). Business owners and managers must consider both analytical skills and creativity as it is one of the most critical components of creating new opportunities (Lex, 2017)).

Change from Analytical Organizations to Cognitive enterprises requires a shift from being analytical to dynamic learning systems which allows companies to continuously adapt instead of adapting at a particular point of time. It establishes shared mental models that guide how companies operate, adapt their business models and interpret technology signals according to (Heubeck, 2022). However the transitioning into a cognitive enterprise requires integrating human creativity with AI.

As the driving force behind modern enterprise cognition, technology, specifically AI, serves as a catalyst for this process. By leveraging AI's full potential, organisations are able to find new opportunities and create personalised customer experiences, accelerate their decision-making processes and analyse data for predictive analytics thus enabling organisations to gain a strategic advantage instead of simply using AI as an automated tool (Impact of AI on Contemporary Entrepreneurship, 2022). Yet, literature suggests that the value of technology as an advantage is contingent upon the human interpretation, ethical context, and contextual application of technology, rather than on automation alone.

In terms of workplace relationships, there is an emerging trend among millennials to be more active mediators than previous generations. Due to their increased comfort with technology, experimentation and evaluation of technology in terms of value, millennials have a significant influence on the use of AI and automation in the workplace.

Millennials, as both employees and entrepreneurs, combine a variety of characteristics including intuition, creativity, systems thinking, and technological assurance that make them uniquely suited to aid in cognitive enterprise transformation instead of just benefiting from cognitive enterprise transformation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Variables: - Cognitive Thinking

Upper Echelons: Org as a Reflection of Top Managers- Hambrick & Mason- (1984) The paper is based on how the organisation is a reflection of the top managers. It also emphasises how managers experience, age, education, values and cognitive base plays a crucial role in the working, success or failure of a business, and how it is not completely dependent on the external environments. It highlights the differences of how the young managers may push for innovation while older prefer stability.

Entrepreneurial Cognition Research-Mitchell, Busenitz, Lant, McDougall, Morse & Smith- (2002) The authors help readers understand that, we must study how entrepreneurs think (their cognition), and not just their traits and environments. It focuses on a theoretical foundation for studying decision making, It emphasises the role of mental models, heuristics and cognitive biases (Like over-confidence, planning fallacy, risk perception) in reverence to opportunity recognition and venture creation.

Antecedents To Cognitive Business Model Evaluation-Tim Heubeck and Reinhard Meckl- (2022) The paper analyses the challenges that the business environment face due to the increased technological dependence on AI and other relating factors, it also emphasises on how the managers are under constant pressure to redesign business model. It highlights irrespective of the effort, technology and economy as well as social realities do not align. The paper also indicates how the managers use their dynamic managerial capability perspective, in simple terms how the (Senior/ top level managers think and process information) and how the information is central to the BMI decisions

Variables- AI In Building a Business

What does AI think of AI as an external enabler EE framework-Davidsson, Per & Sufyan Muhammad- 2023 The paper emphasises on AI not as a tool inside firms, but as a bigger environment change that creates opportunities for entrepreneurship, It also talks about the external enabler (EE framework) perse how Chat GPT provides new means, markets, and cost structures that entrepreneurs can exploit.

Echelons-Heubeck & Meckl, Mitchell et al-(2024) The paper elucidates how AI is transforming entrepreneurship, in terms of opportunity recognition, decision making, efficiency and innovation. It talks about how Ai reduces uncertainties, allocates resources efficiently, at the same time the paper argues on the contradictory force of AI raising concern based on the dependency on technology, ethics and loss of human creativity.

Artificial intelligence technologies and entrepreneurship-(2025) The paper talks about how startups are making use of AI to accelerate their growth terming it as growth hacking, by providing mostly all business support at a low cost by generating fresh content, automating processes and uncovering data driven insights.

Variables- Millennials Building a Business

Millennial Business Owners Strategies to Survive in Business-(2019) The study examines how millennial small business owners keep their business alive beyond the critical early years, it identifies practical survival strategies such as networking, customer focus, financial planning, adaptability and innovation. The paper emphasises on how millennials adapt and manage resources determines whether they sustain their ventures

Millennials Entrepreneurs value affect the growth of their new venture-(2021) The study shows entrepreneurs values affect the growth of their new ventures, it argues that these entrepreneurs value innovation, social responsibility, and collaboration. Influence venture growth by the way they build entrepreneurial networks, they translate into real business growth.

RESEARCH GAP

The existing literature/ articles or research paper explores the impact of AI- driven business transformation in the business spectrum and the emergence of cognitive enterprises, there remains a notable gap in understanding the mediating role of AI in relation with Millennials within this dynamic. Millennials are in a unique position as they tend to influence the manner in which AI is used, adopted and integrated into business practices to increase cognitive capability. While the available literature is limited to understanding how attitude, behaviour and competence affect the way the millennials accept and use technology (specifically AI), it does not explore what role these factors play during this transformation, creating a major gap in both theory and practical discourse.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- i. To explore the concept of a cognitive enterprise and AI enabled business transformation.
- ii. To investigate the impact of AI tools on Millennial creativity, decision making and workplace efficiency.
- iii. To explore the dynamic interplay between human cognitive abilities and AI in driving business innovation, decision-making and strategic growth.
- iv. To develop a conceptual framework linking Millennial mediation, AI transformation and cognitive enterprise performance outcomes.

DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurship literature and cognition are the two main factors that help people arrive at decisions, especially when business environment is dynamic in nature. Cognition involves careful thinking and intuition involves quick and experience based judgments. Instincts also plays a crucial role as it helps to recognize past patterns and spot opportunities. However, it becomes a challenge to clearly understand the difference between true expert instincts and mere guessing, which leaves room for more precise operationalization in empirical research.

Creativity is the prime force of this instinctive judgement. It fuels problem solving, idea generation, and openness to novelty, and very often overlaps with intuitive cognition in practice. It implies that in educational and organizational contexts it is deliberately cultivates creative capabilities alongside managerial skills and are more likely to produce founders and managers who can navigate uncertainty productively.

At an organizational level, cognition scales up through shared brainstorming of how a business should work. When Global Markets shift, these frames shape whether firms stagnate or persist, and if they do, how they re-make their business models. The dynamic managerial capabilities perspective involve- sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring, it also connects these cognitive frames to concrete outcomes, showing that managerial cognition develops through experience and feedback rather than remaining static.

Studies based on millennial entrepreneurs emphasises that how, there is a differential blend of constraints, such as low initial investment and low manufacturing reach on one hand, however high mobilization of connectivity of global

networks and digital platforms on the other hand. Millennial value orientations, sustainability, authenticity, and community are not merely soft traits, they are interfaced strategic filters that basically guide resource partnership choices, and brand positioning. However, this enhances how millennials navigate industry barriers while reshaping norms in this process

The contemporary entrepreneurship literature connects on AI as a general-purpose technology that reconfigures both the opportunity landscape and the operating core. Start-ups and growth firms use AI for predictive analytics, personalization, and automation for the capabilities that compress cycle and enable scaling. However there is need for underscoring AI with human oversight for instance (privacy, labour displacement and over automation risks).

A second stream reframes AI from tool to strategic asset within organizations. In this context, AI is leveraged to detect unmet needs, tailor value propositions and craft novel revenue architectures. Crucially these effects are strongest when AI augments entrepreneurial ingenuity and intuition rather attempting to replace them, again echoing the complimentary theme algorithmic inference and human creative-cognitive strengths.

The focus of this research is cognitive enterprises organisations that leverage data-enabled learning, adaptive decision making and continuous renewal of capabilities and examines how Millennials act as mediators for linking AI transformation and cognitive outcomes. The existing literature indicates that Millennials are in a unique position to support the generation of these new cognitive enterprises due to their digital fluency, experimental mindset and familiarity with using technology (Brydges & Hrats, 2021). In contrast to prior generations, Millennials engage with AI not simply for purpose of efficiency but rather as a partner in strategic thought that allows for increased creativity, faster decisions and greater awareness of opportunities through a combination of using the analytic capabilities of AI (Mitchell et al., 2002; Lex & Gielnik, 2017). By utilising AI tools, Millennials are able to overcome traditional limitations imposed by lack of resources and insufficient experience as they can create rapid prototypes, develop custom strategies and have supportive judgment backed by data. Therefore, Millennials have a unique and disproportionate advantage from the use of AI, due to this amplification of their cognitive strengths and alignment with an entrepreneurial mindset that will enable them to transform the potential of AI into significant innovations and facilitate ongoing organisational learning as part of cognitive enterprises.

IMPLICATIONS

AI introduces new possibilities- Like predictive signals, and automated insights), altering the information structure that managers operate within. However, these possibilities do not guarantee better cognition, they help simplify and ease the process at a faster pace and improves optimization and ethical exposure.

Millennial translate possibilities into action- With the supporting characteristics of three attributes that are frequently documented in literature:-

Digital Fluency and platform literacy- it enables rapid/fast-paced sensing and experimentation with AI-enabled tools and channels.

Value filters (sustainability, authenticity and community)- these shape how data is interpreted and which opportunities are pursued- therefore influencing the cognitive frame of the enterprise

Creativity and intuition synergy- which supports swift, pattern-based judgements while remaining open to recombination and reframing as feedback arrives.

Enterprise cognition is updated through dynamic managerial capabilities-

Analyzing relevant signals from AI outputs, seizing through design choices and resource commitments and configuring structures and processes. Millennials mediation is visible precisely in how they guide these steps: which signals are trusted, which experiments and learning is encoded into new routines.

Therefore, this study emphasises that AI benefits are conditional and not automatic, intuition and creativity matter most under uncertainty and organizational learning depends on cognitive firms, that are actively maintained and revised. Millennials distinct profiles make them persuasive “cognitive integrators” who convert AI’s technical potential into enterprise-level learning and agility.

CONCLUSION

The synthesis satisfies the objectives of the present study. First it clarifies the contours of a cognitive enterprise and shows how AI contributes to transformation by reshaping information flows, business models, and innovative cycles. It also

identifies the impact of AI tools on millennial cognition enhancing efficiency and creativity while continually testing the limits for over resilience on automation. Third, it provides a conceptual framework for understanding how millennials mediate the AI cognition, therefore linking AI transformed capabilities to enterprise level performance and outcomes.

There is also an emphasis that AI's transformative potential in business cannot be realized in isolation, it is cognigent on persons who interpret, integrat and apply it. Millennials serve as cognitive integrators, embedding AI outputs into decision making logics, and aligning them with entrepreneurial values and adaptaions by organizations. Hence, this study provides a contribution as to the how entrepreneurship, technology and cognition offers a framework that explains not only what drives cognition but how and through whom these transformations are enacted. Ultimately, this highlights that all three factors work together, and an organization can achieve meaningful success when it intentionally develops both of these interconnected elements that is AI and Cognition in respect to the Millennials growth in the organization any stature.

REFERENCES

- [1] Mitchell, R. K., Busenitz, L., Lant, T., McDougall, P. P., Morse, E. A., & Smith, J. B. (2002). Toward a theory of entrepreneurial cognition: Rethinking the people side of entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 27(2), 93–104. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-8520.00001>
- [2] Heubeck, T., & Meckl, R. (2022). Antecedents to cognitive business model evaluation. *Journal of Business Models*, 10(2), 34–52.
- [3] Sufyan, M. (2023). Artificial intelligence as an external enabler of entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 20, e00358. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2023.e00358>
- [4] Fossen, F. M., & Sorgner, A. (2024). Artificial intelligence and entrepreneurship: Opportunity creation, productivity, and inequality. *Small Business Economics*, 62, 1201–1223. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-023-00787-1>
- [5] Bryant-Minter, K. (2019). Millennial business owners: Values, entrepreneurship, and business sustainability. *Journal of Small Business Strategy*, 29(2), 45–58.
- [6] Baldacchino, L., Ucbasaran, D., Cabantous, L., & Lockett, A. (2015). Entrepreneurial decision making: Insights from cognitive and behavioral perspectives. *International Small Business Journal*, 33(3), 212–233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242614534286>
- [7] Lex, M., & Gielnik, M. M. (2017). Creativity and analytical thinking in entrepreneurship: A dual-process perspective. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 8, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2017.08.001>
- [8] Heubeck, T., & Meckl, R. (2022). Antecedents to cognitive business model evaluation. *Journal of Business Models*, 10(2), 34–52.
- [9] Impact of AI on contemporary entrepreneurship. (2022). *International Journal of Innovation and Technology Management*, 19(5), 2250031. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S021987702250031X>
- [10] Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Academy of Management Review*, 9(2), 193–206. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1984.4277628>
