

2016

Exploring Millennial Retention Strategies and Methods in the Workplace

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Alphonso Simmons

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Walden University
2016

Abstract

Exploring Millennial Retention Strategies and Methods in the Workplace

by

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Masters Certificate, Villanova University, 2013

MBA, American Public University, 2012

BA, American Military University, 2011

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

June 2016

Abstract

Many U.S. organizations fail to retain Millennials for longer than 3 years. The purpose of this case study was to explore the strategies and methods leaders have used to retain Millennial employees within a small business in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. The leaders of this small business have retained their Millennial employees for the last 3 years. The conceptual frameworks for the study were Bass's transformational leadership theory and von Bertalanffy's general systems theory. Data were collected from semistructured interviews with 4 participant leaders with a successful record of retaining Millennials. In addition, company documents including policies, training records, company website, and peer-reviewed journals were gathered to supplement the semistructured interviews. All data were analyzed using the modified van Kaam method. The findings revealed that these 4 leaders employed specific strategies for career growth opportunities, communication plans, organizational level community involvement, high compensation packages, high functioning and fun culture, regular feedback meetings, training opportunities, and respect for opinions to solve the low retention rate among Millennials within an organization. The leaders also reported 3 methods that they employed to retain Millennials were maintaining open lines of communication, establishing positive relationships with management, and providing targeted training throughout the employees' tenure. Social change implications include organizational leaders increasing retention rates of Millennial employees by enhancing employee motivation and improving relationships. Results may benefit organizations by reducing turnover costs.

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Dedication

I dedicated this study to my sons, Giovanni and Ajani. I know you may not understand now, but the completion of this study shows that with hard work you can accomplish great things in this world.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my chair, Dr. Matthew Knight. Without your hard work and pushing me for excellence, this accomplishment would not have been as possible. I will be forever grateful. I would also like to thank my other committee members, Dr. Tim Truitt and Dr. John House. It is evident that to complete this process you need individuals that can bring out the best in you.

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Last, I thank my wife, Janisa, for her support throughout the past 3 years. She has shown great patience and willingness to sacrifice time with me and take over some of the responsibilities with the kids to allow me to accomplish this feat. She also provided excellent feedback on my study, which allowed me to get through reviews much faster.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Section 1: Foundation of the Study..... | 1 |
| Background of the Problem | 1 |
| Problem Statement | 2 |
| Purpose Statement..... | 3 |
| Nature of the Study | 3 |
| Research Question | 5 |
| Interview Questions | 5 |
| Demographic Questions..... | 5 |
| Interview Questions | 5 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 6 |
| Definition of Terms..... | 7 |
| Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations..... | 7 |
| Assumptions..... | 7 |
| Limitations | 8 |
| Delimitations..... | 8 |
| Significance of the Study | 9 |
| Contribution to Business Practice..... | 9 |
| Implications for Social Change..... | 9 |
| A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature..... | 10 |
| Generational Retention | 11 |
| Causes of Turnover | 18 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Retention Challenges | 21 |
| Job Satisfaction | 23 |
| Organizational Commitment..... | 24 |
| Benefits | 26 |
| Work–Life Balance | 27 |
| Job Embeddedness | 27 |
| Motivation and Stress | 28 |
| Management..... | 28 |
| Education and Skills | 33 |
| Retention Strategies and methods..... | 33 |
| Collective Turnover | 38 |
| Frameworks and Theories..... | 39 |
| Transition and Summary..... | 43 |
| Section 2: The Project..... | 46 |
| Purpose Statement..... | 46 |
| Role of the Researcher | 47 |
| Participants..... | 48 |
| Research Method and Design | 49 |
| Method | 49 |
| Research Design..... | 50 |
| Population and Sampling | 52 |
| Ethical Research..... | 54 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Data Collection | 55 |
| Instruments..... | 55 |
| Data Collection Technique | 56 |
| Data Organization Techniques..... | 58 |
| Data Analysis Technique | 59 |
| Reliability and Validity..... | 61 |
| Reliability..... | 61 |
| Validity | 61 |
| Transition and Summary..... | 63 |
| Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change | 64 |
| Introduction..... | 64 |
| Presentation of the Findings..... | 65 |
| Main Theme: Essential Strategies for Leaders to Retain Millennials..... | 66 |
| Main Theme: Most Effective Methods Leaders Use to Retain Millennials | 74 |
| Summary | 77 |
| Application to Professional Practice | 78 |
| Implications for Social Change..... | 79 |
| Recommendations for Action | 80 |
| Recommendations for Further Research..... | 81 |
| Reflections | 81 |
| Conclusion | 82 |
| References..... | 84 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Appendix A: Informed Consent for Participants Over 18 Years of Age..... | 112 |
| Appendix B: Semistructured Interview Questions | 114 |
| Appendix C: Consent to Use and Reproduce | 116 |
| Appendix D: Interview Protocol..... | 118 |

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The U.S. Millennial generation consists of 76 million employees and is the fastest growing section of the workforce (Murphy, 2012). With the increased number of Millennials entering the workforce, understanding and focusing on retention and attracting this generation are important (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014). The phenomenon of generational retention, especially among Millennials, needs exploring due to its importance within organizations. Retaining Millennials is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage and to sustain or improve relevance in an industry (Murphy, 2012).

Background of the Problem

Millennials are individuals born between 1980 and 1999 (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Millennials began entering the workforce in 1998. The percentage of Millennials in the workforce will continue to grow until it makes up approximately 25% of the workforce (Murphy, 2012). Business leaders may need to change their management style, compensation, and other benefits to ensure this generation remains within an organization (Yang, Wan, & Fu, 2012). Many issues relate to the low retention of Millennials. The U.S. Department of Labor (2014) found from 2004 to 2014, the average employee between the ages of 20 and 24 stayed with an organization for 1.3 years, whereas the average employee between the ages of 25 and 34 stayed with an organization between 2.9 and 3.2 years. For the Millennial generation, keeping employees may require more strategies than previous generations, especially considering that members of Generation X (or Generation Xers) and baby boomers were more loyal to their organizations and

dominated the job market for an extensive amount of time (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Employers have consistently found it difficult to retain Millennials. Organizations' loss of Millennials' skills and abilities could cause a loss of innovation and personnel funds (Murphy, 2012). Many Millennials will not stay with one employer for their career (Vasquez, 2014). Due to these circumstances, there is a need for more research to understand the impact the behaviors that this generation has on organizations and the reasons individuals want to move from one job to the next. Understanding this trend could lead to greater retention of Millennials. The goal of this study was to describe why turnover is so common among Millennials, to explore the impact their high turnover has on organizations, and to identify useful Millennial retention strategies for business leaders.

Problem Statement

Hiring managers have found it difficult to appeal to Millennials' employment needs, which correlate to results of a 5-year study stating that 34.4% of Millennials left their organization within 16 months (Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, and Pierotti, 2013). Results from a national sample show the average employee between the ages of 25 and 34 stayed with an organization between 2.9 and 3.2 years from 2004 to 2014 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2014). The general business problem was that Millennial employees voluntarily leave organizations quickly after employment. The specific business problem was that business leaders lack strategies and methods to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies and methods to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. This study involved collecting data by interviewing four senior leaders who supervise three or more Millennial employees within a small-sized company in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area for 3 years and who have not had Millennials between 21 and 35 years old quit voluntarily from a position in the last year. Senior leaders who supervise Millennials participated in semistructured interviews to identify strategies for retaining Millennials. This study may contribute to social change by increasing awareness of common issues related to employee turnover for Millennial employees. Businesses in the United States could benefit from an increase in knowledge regarding effective retention strategies for Millennial employees.

Nature of the Study

The nature of my study was a qualitative case study to research the strategies and methods suitable to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. A qualitative case study research method with purposeful sampling was suitable for interviewing senior leaders of a business organization employing Millennials in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. I explored Millennial employee turnover, the significant factors that impact employee turnover, and the strategies and methods leaders can use to reduce Millennial turnover. This qualitative research study involved investigating and measuring traits and characteristics, which should provide an understanding of the lack of motivation and other retention problems (Solnet, Ford,

Robinson, Ritchie, & Olsen, 2014). The study involved an attempt to determine what strategies enhance employee retention.

The qualitative case study research design was appropriate for this study because this method involves an attempt to understand the relationship between the phenomenon, process, and experiences within a sample (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). Case study researchers explore single or multiple phenomena (Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2014). The quantitative approach was not appropriate for the study. Quantitative research involves examining a theory, considering relationships, and analyzing statistical data (Hoe & Hoare, 2012). My intent was to explore real-life events with in-depth questions to business leaders to understand why employees consider voluntarily quitting their job. Mixed-methods research involves both qualitative and quantitative research methods in tandem to enhance a study (Hoe & Hoare, 2012). The mixed-methods approach was not appropriate due to enough data being available with only the qualitative method.

Other qualitative designs were not suitable for this study. Ethnography is a strategy used by researchers to study a cultural group of people in their natural setting over an extended period of time by gathering data through interviews and observations (Kriyantono, 2012). Phenomenological research involves an investigation of human experiences of a phenomenon as described by different participants (Savage-Austin & Guillaume, 2012). Ethnography and phenomenological studies involve collecting data from groups or individuals through interviews over an extended period (Kriyantono, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2014). Due to time constraints and the different data collection techniques, these were not appropriate for this study.

Research Question

The central research question for this study was the following: What strategies and methods do business leaders need to implement to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years?

Interview Questions

The following interview questions were used to answer the research question, based on the study completed by Thomas (2015).

Demographic Questions

1. How many years have you served as a leader of Millennial employees?
2. In the past 2 years, how many Millennial employees have voluntarily resigned from your department?
3. How many direct and indirect employees (reports) are you responsible for leading?
4. What is the average tenure of Millennial professionals in your organization and department?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies and methods do you use to retain Millennial employees?
2. What are the critical factors you use to retain Millennial employees?
3. What retention strategies and methods do you use to retain Millennial employees in your organization?
4. What strategies and methods do you use that are least effective in retaining Millennial employees in your organizations?

5. What strategies and methods do you use that are most effective in retaining Millennial employees?
6. What other strategies and methods and leadership characteristics do you use that are beneficial in retaining Millennials?
7. In your experience, what barriers prohibit retention strategies and methods from being successful?
8. What other information would you like to provide that we have not addressed already?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this qualitative study increased the understanding of the strategies and methods that senior leaders should be practicing to retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. The two conceptual frameworks used were Bass's transformational leadership theory and von Bertalanffy's general systems theory. The key concepts of Bass's transformational leadership theory include understanding individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influences (Peng et al., 2015). The key concept in Bertalanffy's general system theory is to meet the goals of a whole organizational system using human capital, social expectations, and technology to reach its full potential (Wilson, 2012). Both theories provided the structure needed to explore and identify the strategies senior leaders can use to retain Millennial employees. Von Bertalanffy's (1972) general system theory provides a view of the meaning of understanding strategies that leaders of Millennials need to retain these

employees. I used Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theory to focus on the issues that require these strategies.

Definition of Terms

Job satisfaction: An employee's attitude toward his or her job (Chen, Ployhart, Thomas, Anderson, & Bliese, 2011).

Method: A specific open-ended process in use to accomplish a goal that requires learning from experiences (Hottecke, Henke, & Riess, 2012).

Millennial: An individual born between 1980 and 1999, also known as Generation Y (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

Organizational commitment: The loyalty an employee has for his or her company (Gutierrez, Candela, & Carver, 2012).

Retention: The result of an employer maintaining good workers to preserve the success of the organization (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).

Strategy: The development and implementation plan for solving a problem (Hottecke, Henke, & Riess, 2012).

Turnover: The challenges for organizational leaders to retain qualified individuals so they do not quit their jobs (Chen et al., 2011).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are things that researchers take for granted while conducting research (Hibbert, Sillince, Diefenbach, & Cunliffe, 2014). My study had five assumptions. The first assumption was that the number of active leaders of Millennial

employees in the Washington, DC, area would be sufficient. The second assumption was that leaders of Millennial employees would feel comfortable sharing their experiences and perceptions regarding Millennial employees voluntarily leaving their organization. The third assumption was that the participants would be honest about their experiences and perceptions of the strategies used to retain this generation of employees. The fourth assumption was that responses would arrive soon after solicited. The fifth assumption was that data saturation would occur after two to five participant interviews.

Limitations

Limitations are uncontrollable problems that may affect the validity of a study (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013). Four limitations could have restricted the ability to complete this study. The first limitation was finding two to five leaders of Millennial employees in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area to participate in my study. The second limitation was not being able to obtain consent from all participants. The third limitation would have been time off, travel time, and time commitment for the participants and me to complete the study. The last limitation would have been not reaching saturation for my study.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries of the research (Yin, 2014). The delimitations of this study were the population of participants and location. I delimited this study only to a population of participant leaders who manage Millennial employees between the age of 21 and 35 who have supervised members of the generation for 3 years and have not had Millennials quit voluntarily from a position in the last year. I delimited participants to the

Washington, DC, metropolitan area, including counties in Maryland and Virginia that surround Washington, DC.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

This study could have a significant impact on business practices because it may provide business leaders with effective strategies on how to retain Millennial employees. It may be vital for business leaders to understand that every generation of employees has had unique experiences that have contributed to their way of approaching employment and long-term decisions. Considering that Millennials will be the largest group of individuals in the workforce by 2020, there is a great need for organizational leaders to learn how to motivate and retain this generation. A lack of effort may cost companies lots of money in a constant effort to replace Millennial employees who voluntarily leave a job. If business leaders can understand the way Millennials communicate and think, perhaps they could significantly reduce their turnover rates.

Implications for Social Change

The implication of social change for this doctoral study was the ability to understand a growing part of the U.S. population. Millennials have many issues with traditional employment, including staying at organizations after 3 years (U.S. Department of Labor, 2014). This information could be of great value to business leaders. If employers want to be able to maintain market efficiency, they must look at the trends of each new generation and work to include these individuals in the organization. Understanding this information could mean the difference between retaining highly

skilled workers and losing them to the competition (Goud, 2014). Leaders will need to be able to engage the Millennial generation and learn what makes them want to maintain their employment for more than 3 years to ensure the success of all organizations in the United States.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This qualitative research case study involved exploring the retention strategies used by leaders of Millennial employees through a review of the literature in professional journals, academic journals, and government sources on Millennial employee turnover and retention. The literature review includes the following topics: generational retention, causes of turnover, retention challenges, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, benefits, work–life balance, job embeddedness, motivation and stress, management, education and skills, retention strategies and methods, collective turnover, and frameworks and theories. The literature found on these topics came from Google Scholar, academic libraries, books, websites, and databases. The 186 references that compose this study include 178 scholarly peer-reviewed articles representing 95.69% of the total, one government website representing .54%, and seven books representing 3.78%. The total references published within the past 5 years are 166, which is 89.24% of the total number. The literature review contains 87 references, with 74 references published within the past 5 years, representing 85.06%, and 74 from scholarly peer-reviewed sources, representing 85.06%. The research databases used to find literature were ProQuest and Business Source Complete. Searches in Google Scholar and the databases included the terms *generational retention*, *Millennial job satisfaction*, *organizational commitment*,

turnover, work–life balance, Millennial retention, and Millennial turnover. The following subsections include a synthesis of each covered topic to show how it connects to my study.

Generational Retention

The literature on generational differences includes many perspectives of the relationship between the behaviors of certain groups of individuals born in a set of years and the common experiences among them (Lyons & Kuron, 2013). The personality traits developed for individuals in their developmental years shape their behaviors and decisions over a lifetime (Lyons & Kuron, 2013). Viewing some of the differences and characteristics of each generation will provide a deeper understanding of the distinct issues Millennials face. The members of the four generations are matures, baby boomers, members of Generation X, and Millennials. The traditional view of careers was for employees to maintain employment at one organization for an extended time. The individual and organizational view has changed since the 20th century, possibly due to economic, social, political, and technological issues and improvements (Baruch, Szucs, & Gunz, 2015). It is important for organizations, individuals, and human resource professionals to understand career patterns to make the changes necessary for the latest and future generations (Baruch et al., 2015).

Mature generation. The mature generation includes individuals born before the end of World War II (Lyons & Kuron, 2013). This generation had less education and was more conservative. *Traditional* is also a term used to define the mature generation. Matures are the most committed to their organizations throughout their careers, as seen in

Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, and Gade's (2012) quantitative meta-analysis study. Matures are now past the age of retirement and experience difficulty working a normal work schedule due to health issues, which is a deterrent to those who remain employed (Tourangeau, Wong, Saari, & Patterson, 2015). Lyons et al. (2012) showed that matures had fewer organizational transitions than all younger generations. Members of the mature generation did not frequently move to different organizations. The traditional view of organizational loyalty refers to staying within one organization for an entire career.

Baby boomers. The baby boomer generation includes individuals born between 1946 and 1965 (Brunetto, Farr-Wharton, & Shacklock, 2012). Some characteristics of baby boomers include their belief in high values, growth, work ethics, title, and promotions (Brunetto et al., 2012). The baby boomers were a large cohort generation that engulfed entire industries, and employees often had to leave their organizations so they could advance in their careers (Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015). Baby boomers still compose more than half of the nursing workforce in Canada (Tourangeau et al., 2015). Because the baby boomer generation is so large, when baby boomers leave their positions or retire, they will leave a gap that will be hard to replace.

Generation X. Generation X includes individuals born between 1966 and 1980 (Brunetto et al., 2012). The members of this generation are independent. Costanza et al. (2012) noted that Generation Xers felt satisfied with their jobs and were more likely to commit to their organizations than Millennials. Generation Xers value work-life balance and high compensation. Members of this generation were the first who significantly changed the previous concept of career paths within one organization (Tourangeau et al.,

2015). Generation Xers had more career mobility than members of previous generations between the ages of 25 and 44 (Lyons et al., 2012). The decrease in organizational commitment from generations starting with Generation X has been significant (Costanza et al., 2012). Baby boomers and Generation Xers are more likely to have dedication, be strong workers, and stay engulfed in the tasks given to them (Park & Gursoy, 2012).

Millennials. Millennials are individuals born between 1980 and 1999, also known as members of Generation Y (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). The rate of turnover among Millennials is significantly higher than in older generations of workers. Previous generations centered work on the labor workforce and made a career path for their employees that rewarded them for loyalty within one organization (Chudzikowski, 2012). Results from Seibert et al.'s (2013) time-lapse study of 337 participants with an average age of 25.5 years showed that 34.4% left employers within 16 months. Comparatively, results from Becton, Walker, and Jones-Farmer's (2014) study of job applicants indicated that Millennials had more jobs in the 5 years before the study than all older generations and spent less time in their longest position held.

Millennial comparison with previous generations. The older generations' retention ranged from 5 years for those ages 35 to 44, 7.5 years for those ages 45 to 54, and 10 years for employees ages 55 and older (U.S. Department of Labor, 2014). In comparison, Becton et al. (2014) measured the length of employment of each generation based on the 5 years leading to each participant applying for a new position. Becton et al. showed that baby boomers had significantly fewer job changes during the 5 years than Millennials and Generation Xers. Baby boomers also showed the lowest amount of career

mobility between the ages of 25 and 44 when compared to younger generations (Lyons et al., 2012). The increased number of retiring baby boomers is leaving a void of knowledge and experience that is forcing organizational leaders to review their ability to hire and retain qualified individuals to keep them competitive (Govaerts et al., 2011). Older employees are more likely to stay with an organization while younger employees are more likely to leave because it is harder for older workers to get new employment (Govaerts et al., 2011).

According to a study by Tourangeau et al. (2015), baby boomers were more likely to leave if they had poor leadership and an unreasonable workload. Due to the age of this generation, work–life balance has been necessary (Tourangeau et al., 2015). Members of the mature and baby boomer generations do not make the decision to leave as they age but gravitate toward positions with a healthy work environment and culture that prevent voluntary turnover (Holtom, Tidd, Mitchell, & Lee, 2013). A review of the literature showed that researchers studied baby boomers' career patterns and the reasons for their behaviors more since the mid-1990s.

Compensation. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman's (1959) two-factor theory is one of the bases for retention theory using motivation based on two sets of factors: satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The six satisfaction factors are recognition, advancement, achievement, interest in job, growth, and responsibility (Herzberg et al., 1959). The eight dissatisfaction factors are working conditions, salary, supervision quality, status, job security, company, company policies, and relationship with supervisors and peers (Herzberg et al., 1959). Some of the hygiene factors that can affect

career success and reward organizations with reduced turnover include compensation, location, and benefits (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Ruys (2013) contradicted Herzberg et al.'s assertion that compensation is a hygiene factor that cannot motivate but can help preserve an employee's satisfaction with a job. Ruys showed that Millennials were more likely to leave an organization if the organization was not flexible, the Millennials had no respect for the supervisor, pay was not acceptable, or the organization or management was immoral. Sturman, Shao, and Katz (2012) showed a correlation between compensation and turnover. Lastly, Millennials perceived compensation as a motivator to job satisfaction and essential for retention (Ruys, 2013).

Economy. Millennials lived in the economic recession. Organizational leaders focused on downsizing employees during the last recession (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). One of the reasons Millennials have acted differently is the 2007 recession, which occurred when they graduated college and tried to enter the workforce but there were few or no positions for them (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Millennials and Generation Xers also experienced a significant increase in involuntary turnover (Lyons et al., 2015) that could have transformed the traditional view of working in one organization due to lack of loyalty from organizations. Millennials found it hard to be loyal after seeing others downsized during tough economic times (Froese, 2013). Living through a recession and the lack of employment after reaching prerequisite educational requirements made Millennials think differently than other generations.

Behaviors. Millennials have entitlement issues, which create problems for managers and the ways they manage this group of employees (Harvey, Harris, Gillis, &

Martinko, 2014). Twenge, Campbell, and Gentile (2012) noted that Millennials are less concerned with others and less likely to give their time and money to help their communities. Twenge et al. (2012) also noted that the things that mattered to Millennials and Generation Xers were status symbols such as money and high reputation, but not helping their community.

In contrast, Gilbert (2011) noted that philanthropy and volunteering time to causes that help the community and the world are significant to 70% of Millennials. Some of the characteristics also found in Millennials include valuing their development, identifying new opportunities, learning more skills, and moving positions more frequently (Mendes & Stander, 2011; O'Shea, Monaghan, & Ritchie, 2014). Lyons et al. (2015) showed that Millennials were making more career moves than older generations but were leaving to find advancement. In comparison to baby boomers, Millennials are leaders in their communities and workplaces, have more money, and live closer to extended family (Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012).

Career expectations. Millennials have come to expect encouraging feedback from people in authority, a lack of negative feedback, involved parents, and countless advances in technology (Thompson & Gregory, 2012; Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2012). The increase in technology has changed employees' work processes, especially because people can now work from anywhere due to access to computers and the Internet (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Millennials tend to require environments that allow them to have a good work-life balance, work in teams, interact with others, feel challenged by the tasks assigned, and provide quick advancement (Gilbert, 2011).

According to Park and Guroy (2012), the work values of Millennials include high leisure and low work importance, which could cause them not to be adaptive to high job demands. The opportunity to dress casually for work is another change that Millennials have come to expect (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). When evaluating performance, Millennials believe that the quality of work is much more important than the clothing they wear (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

Perceptions. A common perception of Millennials is that they have a high level of narcissism, are self-absorbed, have low work ethic, and feel entitled (Gallicano et al., 2012; Twenge, 2013; Westerman et al., 2012). Nonclinical narcissists can have a difficult time being a part of a team and receiving criticism (Westerman et al., 2012). Narcissistic behavior in Millennials leads to expecting favorable treatment while thinking that other people should do what they want (Westerman et al., 2012). Millennials believe they will have more success in their careers, have an easy time finding jobs, have higher salaries, and receive promotion opportunities (Twenge, 2013; Westerman et al., 2012). Millennials also believe that they will excel academically. Twenge (2013) discovered that 60% of high school students believed they would receive a graduate or professional degree, but only 9% had earned those degrees thus far.

Jobs in the workforce require employees to be able to work in teams and have excellent social skills, which may be an issue for Millennials that are narcissists (Westerman et al., 2012). Millennial narcissists do not base their expectations of success in the workplace on how good their academic record is but on a swollen self-worth (Westerman et al., 2012). When Millennials graduate from college, they do not think they

will have trouble finding jobs that will meet all of their expectations, such as high salary and promotions. This expectation may be difficult to meet, which can cause depression and anxiety (Westerman et al., 2012). Millennials' success depends on them using their voice to contribute to retention, performance, and organizational success (Spiva et al., 2013). Millennials' perceptions of the workplace are important, and leaders must create strategies to ensure they respect and address Millennials' concerns (Gallicano et al., 2012).

Career mobility. Lyons et al. (2015) used descriptive statistics to assess the number of job changes per year and compared that number with each generation. Lyons et al. (2015) evaluated five types of career moves and compared them according to each generation. These career moves were organizational mobility, upward mobility, downward mobility, lateral career moves, and changes of career track. The results revealed that matures and baby boomers had a similar number of career moves, although baby boomers had fewer career moves annually than Millennials and Generation Xers. In comparison, Millennials had more career moves annually than Generation Xers. Lastly, Millennials had more than twice the number of career moves than Generation Xers, three times the moves of baby boomers, and 4.5 times as many as matures (Lyons et al., 2015).

Causes of Turnover

Yang et al. (2012) showed that employees voluntarily left their jobs because of five reasons: company factors, salary and benefits, individual emotional conditions, industry work style and responsibilities, and work content. The correlation between age and retention is significant when it involves the intention of employees to leave a job

(Govaerts et al., 2011). The important factors that go above normal turnover drivers in Millennial employees are reliance on career goals, plans, and job satisfaction that unexpected events like a mentor leaving or the ability to be successful can affect (Seibert et al., 2013). The absence of promotions, job security, challenging and exciting work tasks, training, and development of new skills affects employee turnover (Goud, 2014).

Performance. The more responsibilities a position has, the more resources organizational leaders must provide employees to retain employees' skills (Grimlanda, Vigoda-Gadot, & Baruch, 2012). High performance can cause an issue within organizations. The better employees perform, the more likely they will leave an organization because representatives from other establishments that need their skills will lure them (Goud, 2014). In the organizations that take into account the importance of employees' morale and welfare, a positive relationship exists between maintaining performance and reducing voluntary turnover (Sturman et al., 2012). Performance feedback is important to Millennials' success and can help create and maintain a relationship to increase retention, especially because Millennials have a lower level of engagement at work when compared to past generations (Park & Gursoy, 2012).

Unsuccessful mastery of soft skills such as adaptability, working under pressure, self-confidence, ethics, communication, and time management can push employees away from an organization (Joshi, 2012). Organizational failure is common when leader do not practice and develop soft skills in themselves and their employees (Gibb, 2014). Providing a soft skill assessment can increase knowledge of employees' views and behaviors (Gibb, 2014). Weedon and Tett (2013) found that employees appreciate soft

skills training. After learning these skills, employees could become more efficient in their positions.

Policy issues. Human capital management refers to the expertise in acquiring and maintaining the best employees to keep an organization successful (Joshi, 2012).

Organizations with poor policies for retaining human capital will suffer when it comes to Millennials (Park & Gursoy, 2012). Respondents in Yang et al.'s (2012) study noted the most common reasons for turnover were unfair management, organizational instability, poor relationships with peers, overbearing management style, gender discrimination, and destructive criticism or comments. Voluntary turnover and social relationships in organizations whose leaders decide to execute downsizing can affect the businesses plans for success (Sturman et al., 2012). The cost of turnover for a valuable employee can cause great losses for an organization (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011).

Ethics. Organizational ethics can have a positive or adverse effect on turnover (Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2014). An ethical environment shows employees and consumers the overall beliefs of the organization (Palanski et al., 2014). Ethical influences affect organizational commitment and trusting management (Palanski et al., 2014). When management within companies punishes individuals for unethical actions or practices, Millennial employees will often respect the action (Gallicano et al., 2012). The importance of having an organization and managers with values and ethics that are like their own is essential to Millennials (Ruys, 2013).

Retention Challenges

Retention has been a problem for managers for a while due to the increase of competition of skilled employees (Goud, 2014). Millennials, who have an inclination to move from one job to another, will comprise approximately half of the workforce by 2020 (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014). Organizational leaders should use different retention approaches in managing each generation, especially Millennials since they have so many unique characteristics that differ from past generations (Lyons et al., 2015).

Personal career planning. Employees receive encouragement to manage their career path because the previous standard of careers has changed (Briscoea, Henagana, Murphy, & Burton, 2012). As the trend for employees to create their personal career development plan increases, organizational leaders should receive encouragement to become a partner in the planning process (Seibert et al., 2013). Managers should look at knowledge management initiatives and team with employees on their individualized career plans so that the organization's goals can align with the employees they wish to retain (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Employees focus on the resources provided to them to reach their career goals. Employees, especially Millennials, may want to pursue higher education goals. Seibert et al. (2013) noted that in the pursuit of retaining Millennials, leaders, and human resources managers should create and share policies and programs with this generation of employees to show they will not lose organization status when pursuing educational goals such as graduate degrees.

Organization challenges. Millennials think about employment differently because of traits like education, tech-savvy, confidence, and multitaskers, and they have

the drive (Gilbert, 2011). Organizational leaders need to understand what is causing their valuable employees to leave and provide incentives to prevent them from going to competitors (Goud, 2014). The ability to retain Millennials will require planning based on the behavior of this generation by giving them a clearer path to move up in organizations faster (Lyons et al., 2015). Human resources personnel and supervisors also will need to cater their engagement and recruitment policies and procedures for each generation, especially Millennials (Gilbert, 2011). When thinking about the future, human resources professionals and leadership must create policies that account for short- and long-term projections of staffing needs (Lagarde & Cairns, 2012). Organizational leaders that cannot find skilled human talent within their firm will have to search for talent outside the organization (Kiessling, Harvey, & Moeller, 2012).

Cost of turnover. Turnover can come at a high cost to organizations and reach more than 150% of a lost employee's annual salary (Gilbert, 2011). Turnover of talented team members can be dangerous to an organization because it can make reaction time to business needs slow and allow competition to take advantage (Kiessling et al., 2012). Turnover with the Millennial generation can affect many businesses. Because the Millennials are now the same size as the baby boomers, their actions can change competition in the future and affect the U.S. economy (Westerman et al., 2012).

The recruitment process involves replacing employees with new workers, which affects relationships built between consumers and the organization in supplying services (Goud, 2014). Correspondingly, Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, and Pierce (2013) found that a negative relationship exists between turnover and organization performance.

The social and human capital costs are greater than the costs of exchanging leaving employees with more or less expensive new hires (Hancock et al., 2013). Last, Hancock et al. (2013) showed that there are little differences in voluntary turnover and total turnover.

Job Satisfaction

A common predecessor to turnover is an individual's job satisfaction (Yang et al., 2012). Job satisfaction relates to general life satisfaction (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012). Many employees gain higher satisfaction when given opportunities for personal and professional advancement through learning, developing skills, and experience (Festing & Schäfer, 2014; O'Shea et al., 2014). Theories show that the intention for employees to leave an organization relates to job satisfaction (Liu, Mitchell, Holtom, & Hinkin, 2012). The ability for employees to feel satisfied with their role and organization depends on the employers' understanding of the characteristics of the job and career attitudes (O'Shea et al., 2014).

Chen et al. (2011) showed that contrary to previous theories, turnover intentions did not show a major difference when compared to job satisfaction levels. The relationship between the reasons why employees make the decisions to leave and what caused that choice is difficult to understand and fix (Chen et al., 2011). The fluctuations in work expectations within an organization have a positive relationship with job satisfaction due to employees believing more changes will follow (Liu et al., 2012). Millennial turnover intentions will require more research in the specific areas of job satisfaction and work expectations.

Organizational Commitment

Organization-citizenship behavior. Organizational-citizenship behavior (OCB) occurs when an employee believes in an organization's values and works harder to improve the organization as a whole (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014). Employee OCBs have been the focus of research on OCBs due to the effects OCB has on functioning businesses (Oren, Tziner, Sharoni, Amor, & Alon, 2012). The focus of research on understanding supervisors' effect on OCB by Ambrose, Schminke, and Mayer (2013) was on social beliefs and relationships with employees. Leaders appreciate OCBs because of their attention to resources and ability to help organizations be competitive and innovative (Oren et al., 2012).

The benefits of OCB involve the better performance of an organization, lower turnover, absenteeism, and costs (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014). Likewise, higher organizational commitment based on the relationship between job satisfaction and work expectations for the employee who have the longest tenure (Chen et al., 2011). The ability for organizations to keep Millennials engaged directly relates to the employees' commitment. Organizational leaders have been aware of retention problems such as keeping employees engaged but have used one policy to address the problem (Gilbert, 2011).

Corporate social responsibility. Employees are usually more willing to stay and interact with their organization if the organization practices corporate social responsibility (CSR). The CSR practices include interacting with an organization's community while being a considerate and accountable member (Deegan & Shelly, 2014).

CSR shows an organization's values and ethics, which helps employees understand the direction of the business (Deegan & Shelly, 2014; Korschun, Bhattacharya, & Swain, 2014). Aguinis & Glavas (2012) found that when employees thought social responsibility was higher in their organization, they were less likely to consider leaving for new employment. The need for organizations to earn their employees' trust is also a factor in increase retention (Deegan & Shelly, 2014). Korschun et al. (2014) found that several unprompted Millennial employees believed CSR is important. It is common for employees to sacrifice either their time or their earnings to the organization's cause as a way of giving back for personal reasons and contributing to their organizational goals of philanthropy (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012).

Mobility. Mobile employees can gain many different skills and experiences so that they may be more marketable throughout their career (O'Shea et al., 2014). Organizational commitment is higher in employees that feel satisfied with their position and progression in their career due to their experiences in an organization (O'Shea et al., 2014). Young employees in bad economic times are looking for more organizational mobility, whereas employees who do not prefer organizational mobility the ability to gain more skills could have a negative effect on job satisfaction (O'Shea et al., 2014).

Boundaryless career theory is a term used to describe moving from the traditional organizational career path (Guest & Rodrigues, 2014). The boundaryless theory refers to employees who have an external relationship for support in their goals while searching for new employment. Although when employees do not fit into their job, leaving and finding new opportunities can be a good thing for both employers and staff (Briscoea et

al., 2012). An association exists between positive results and understanding the internal and external drivers for an employee. Individuals who function on a high level are producers, are social at work, and plan for their futures. Organizational leaders need to encourage these employees to network to retain top producers (Briscoea et al., 2012).

Benefits

Among employees that voluntarily end, their relationships with employers do so because the companies' benefits package is not acceptable to them (Yang et al., 2012). Fringe benefits have a stronger capacity to reduce turnover intention than the direct costs of the benefits themselves if paid by the employer (Kang, Huh, Cho, & Auh, 2014).

Tuition reimbursement. One benefit that organizational leaders can use is tuition reimbursement. Tuition reimbursement can improve retention. Employees at companies that have tuition reimbursement are 80% more likely to stay, which reduces turnover by 20% (Manchester, 2012). Manchester (2012) conducted a study using a group of employees that began working for an employer after the organizational leaders created a tuition reimbursement program. Researchers assessed the retention rate of the employees hired before and after the program started (Manchester, 2012). Results showed that turnover rates were lower for employees hired after implementation of the program (Manchester, 2012). Many organizations have policies and requirements for employees wishing to take advantage of tuition reimbursement programs, such as earning passing grades, the total amount the employer will cover per year, and eligibility (Manchester, 2012). A misconception exists that many organizations have a service requirement if an employee receives these benefits, but most organizations do not have this requirement

(Manchester, 2012). A service requirement might indicate that for every \$4,000 spent by the organization for the employee's education, the employee will stay an allotted amount of time, such as two years.

Work–Life Balance

Employers and employees have learned to manage their time and geographic issues using technology, which has increased organizational leaders' ability to maintain relationships (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Teleworking has allowed employees to work in many different locations based on employees' personal needs. The ability to switch from work and personal responsibilities throughout the traditional workday can be beneficial to Millennials if the organization uses a performance-based work model (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). The work–life balance movement started with members of Generation X and continued with the Millennials (Festing & Schäfer, 2014; Thompson & Gregory, 2012). The work–life balance is one of the many variables that organizational leaders must take into account when trying to reduce Millennial turnover. When looking at variables that affect employee turnover, it is also important to understand off-the-job factors such as work–life balance (R. N. Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, & Callan, 2014).

Job Embeddedness

The concept of job embeddedness is an alternative way of thinking about retention. The concept comes from the idea that employees need to have employers who understand both on-the-job and off-the-job factors so that leaders can make turnover unappealing (R. N. Robinson et al., 2014). Embedded employees are less likely to leave voluntarily (Holtom et al., 2013). The commitment to an organization revolves around

the perception and the decisions of the employees regarding how the direction of the organization is progressing (R. N. Robinson et al., 2014). Holtom et al. (2013) showed that embeddedness and satisfaction could help predict turnover over time because tenure with an organization increased in the first 3 years.

Motivation and Stress

Receiving praise improves motivation and reduces stress for employees and managers. Some employees require a certain level of rewards and praise. Supervisors often receive the blame when subordinates do not get the amount of praise they need, which leads to poor employee–manager relationship and communication (Harvey et al., 2014). For instance, employees who have a working relationship and respect for their direct supervisors are more willing to interact with organizational goals, help other employees, and work overtime (Oren et al., 2012). Understanding what is affecting the motivation of high-performance workers will ensure they continue to provide quality and valuable work (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). Engaged employees are proud of their organization and driven to succeed (Gilbert, 2011). Lastly, the lack of rewards does not contribute to turnover, but workers may have poor productivity, absences, and detachment from the workplace culture (Whelan & Carcary, 2011).

Management

Managing talent and retention is an essential portion of high-level managers' jobs (Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011). The leader's role in making a worker feel appreciated and challenging them can increase the level of OCB. In challenging the worker through tasks, the leader can make the worker feel the value the worker brings to the organization's

mission and goals (Joshi, 2012; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014). Leaders who motivate employees and provide role clarity will affect the mental capacity, intent to leave, and task engagement of their employees (Mendes & Stander, 2011). Developing subordinates by ensuring role clarity can help employees have the ability to understand organizational leaders' expectations of them and allow them to perform at that level (Mendes & Stander, 2011). Mendes and Stander (2011) showed that delegating authority provides strength in the capabilities of both managers and subordinates. Millennials view respect of management as an important trait because they need to know a leader can lead by example and has the respect of the employees (Ruys, 2013).

Costs. When an employee quits a job, managers must recruit, choose, train, and allow new hires' time to gain the experience needed to be successful (Goud, 2014). Recruiting new talent is a time-consuming process that adds more complications due to technology (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Organizational leaders worry about indirect costs such as organizational performance and direct costs of recruiting and training new employees (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011; Goud, 2014; Hancock et al., 2013; Nyberg & Ployhart, 2013). Some of the indirect costs associated with losing talent include knowledge, which can affect long-term competitive success, performance, and organizational goals (Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011). An organization's indirect costs could be greater than direct turnover costs such as replacing staff (Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011). The ability to recruit, motivate, and retain Millennials is up to management (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Managers must maintain a balance between high and low turnover. Hancock et al. (2013) showed low turnover might lead to similarities that are

not helpful to an organization, expensive benefits costs, and low growth; employees who do not perform at expected standards will not leave.

Relationships. Millennials will be loyal to their manager when they receive personal attention when they can develop skills, and when their relationship can grow (Murphy, 2012; Thompson & Gregory, 2012). The dedication level of employees affects their intention to leave an organization, especially when they like the work they do and the environment they work in (Mendes & Stander, 2011). The relationships built at work may be good or bad. Good relationships can go beyond work whereas bad relationships could cause employees to leave (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The relationship between employees, leaders, and other stakeholders can affect the overall success of a company. Oren et al. (2012) showed staff and supervisors with the same type of personality could have low-quality relationships that could decrease organizational success. Oren et al. noted the best way for organizational leaders to combat these issues is to incorporate organizational justice or fairness in the subordinate–supervisor relationship to attract and keep motivated employees.

Mentoring. Having a mentor–mentee coaching relationship can have a positive impact on organization commitment (Kim, Im, & Hwang, 2015). Mentor programs in business can establish better performance and knowledge in the mentee (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The best mentor–mentee match takes place when the relationship results in increased retention, job satisfaction, productivity, and knowledge (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The negative part of mentoring happens when mentors hold back knowledge or sabotage mentees (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011).

The leaders of more companies should establish formal mentoring programs to develop and expand knowledge to younger and less experienced employees (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The concept of social learning is essential to the mentor relationship because social learning takes place through observing, modeling actions, emotional responses, and approaches (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Socially learning from others was the core concept of Vygotsky's social development theory. The negative part of Vygotsky's theory was the understanding of training and mentoring behaviors that could teach mentees the mentors' unethical behaviors (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Matching mentors to mentees should center on cognitive style, personality, and temperament (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The basis of the social characteristics of both parties is the cognitive style and the way they think and process information (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). The similarity in cognitive styles is essential because mentors feel that the mentees are like them, and the mentors would be more willing to help mentees to succeed (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). A temperament and personality test would be good to use in understanding the way each person responds to others, looks at situations, and makes judgments (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Matching mentors and mentees are one of the worst issues related to mentorship programs (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Not matching individuals properly can cause the relationship not to progress in a way that will reach organizational goals.

Sustainable leadership. Management should survey employees several times to understand their turnover intention to maintain job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2011). Sustainable leadership is an approach that helps minimize employee turnover and increase innovation (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). When leaders do not capitalize on

resources successfully but only look at the short-term values to increase profits, it is likely to have adverse effects on the organization's future (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). Leaders of organizations can reduce turnover and disengagement when they practice servant leadership (Hunter et al., 2013). Organizational leaders can use many of the concepts of managing knowledge workers to retain Millennials because managers who supervise knowledge workers have to make sure they pay attention to their needs to keep them satisfied and motivated to continue to work with the organization (Schultz & Schwepker, 2012).

Sustainable leadership has four different levels: foundation practices, higher-level practices, key performance drivers, and performance outcomes (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). All these elements affect one another and can produce an ethical environment that employees are seeking (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). One of the most important elements is staff retention and focusing in conjunction with all the above elements (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). The ability to keep employees supports other aspects of the elements such as customer satisfaction, staff, trust, innovation, and support (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). Coaching is a good way to help Millennial employees. Oren et al. (2012) and Kim et al. (2015) showed that managers who provide a good coaching relationship through understanding the employee, establishing an atmosphere where good feedback can take place, and trust were more successful in retaining talent. The interpersonal skills developed in this process can lead to high retention within an organization (Joshi, 2012).

Education and Skills

Millennial students grew up in educational systems that involved judging teachers and schools and allotting budget funds based on performance, and Millennials received feedback to make sure they understood the material (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Likewise, the relationship between immediate successes in the classroom may have an effect on Millennials' competitiveness that shows in their work behavior (Westerman et al., 2012). Westerman et al. (2012) found that Millennials who graduate from college are entitled, selfish, and too confident which affects the economy, environment, and organizations. In the past, organizational leaders could hire low skilled, easily trained and cheap employees but now the leaders need more advanced training, education, and knowledgeable employees (Hancock et al., 2013).

Millennial undergraduate students who are in fields that do not help people are more likely to have higher narcissism, which will affect U.S. businesses (Westerman et al., 2012). Govaerts et al. (2011) showed that education and seniority do not have a positive correlation to retention. Job dedication has less of an effect on the work performance of white-collar employees who have more education (Ersoy et al., 2015).

Retention Strategies and methods

Self-managing career. Career self-management deals with setting career goals, making and executing plans for career success, and receiving feedback on how leaders have advanced to reach their career goals (Seibert et al., 2013). Organizational leaders should look at ways to provide career self-management for their employees (O'Shea et al., 2014) and should try to predict the turnover of newcomers and increase job

embeddedness through leadership training on this topic (Holtom et al., 2013). Leaders should be making a position more challenging and developing tasks that involve knowledge and social aspects in the earlier part of Millennials' careers. The job design and plan for employees and positions can help increase the satisfaction of young employees in the work they complete, whereas employees who do not believe in managing their career themselves will like more autonomy and feel more satisfied with that approach (O'Shea et al., 2014).

Millennials' characteristic-related strategies. Some of the traits of Millennials will remain over time, and hiring professionals and managers should address them so that they may recruit, retain, and engage this generation of workers (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Some of the ways to increase the engagement of Millennial employees is by recognizing their accomplishments, through team building, and by training through transfers and organizational learning (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014; Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012). Millennials feel valued when they receive opportunities to advance and gain more responsibility (Ruys, 2013).

The OCB approach appeals to Millennials because they seek swift advancement to make a difference and grow personally. Offering training courses can increase the retention of Millennials. Developing employees through training often causes problems because organizational objectives may not align with personal training goals (Whelan & Carcary, 2011). Managers within organizations should capitalize and focus on meeting the expectations of employees while doing the same for organizational commitment (Grimlanda et al., 2012). Variable turnover factors such as job satisfaction can be good or

bad based on the level of importance a leader puts on understanding those factors (Holtom et al., 2013). If leaders and organizations create organizational commitment and career success, they will have to make employees a priority (Grimlanda et al., 2012).

Employees are more likely to feel satisfied with their jobs when they can complete work tasks when they can make progress with their personal work goals, and when their organizational leaders can meet their work conditions and support resources (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012). The ability to retain employees requires managers to identify the reasons their employees leave (Goud, 2014). Moral and social responsibility became important in business, even though it once was standard (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). Providing feedback through methods such as giving mentorship, checklists, rewarding innovation, and team environments can produce positive results for organizations with Millennials (Gilbert, 2011). The feedback given must be easy to understand and follow (Gilbert, 2011).

Organizational approach. Organizational leaders will constantly have to re-engage Millennials to remind them why they should stay with their organization and have them look at the benefits available within their current organization instead of going to competitors to provide their knowledge and skills (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011; Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Govaerts et al. (2011) provided evidence that employees like managers who are appreciative and allow them to work with more authority and support. Rewards and support from organizational leaders can also increase employee loyalty for both blue- and white-collar workers (Joshi, 2012).

Millennials have a strong correlation to the level of sustainability of an organization and to organizational leaders' ability to retain and recruit them (Goud, 2014). In contrast, Twenge (2013) noted that Millennials were less likely to care about the environment and saving energy on an individual level. Employees want more of an individual approach to their needs and want to know that supervisors care about their needs (Joshi, 2012).

The relationship between management and employees is a significant component of maintaining OCB because this relationship is unique to the maintenance of a social bond (Ambrose et al., 2013). Management needs to spend more time understanding the culture of their business and the country in which they do business. To understand the needs of different generations, the ability to separate the way members of different generations stay engaged is important for overall retention of their workforce (Gilbert, 2011). Organizational leaders should invest in recognizing the appropriate Millennials' characteristics while refining the culture and resources they need to retain younger workers (Park & Gursoy, 2012). Innovation affects many aspects of organizations and involves using culture and teamwork to share knowledge that affects long-term success (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011). Cultural differences will need interpreting to develop a better understanding of multicultural organizations (Fitzsimmons, 2013).

Talent management. Talent management leads to good results in commitment and job satisfaction and to low intention for voluntary turnover (Festing & Schäfer, 2014; Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011). Managers need to pay more attention to maintaining high job satisfaction levels throughout an employee's tenure, especially after the first year, as

the turnover risk increased from a steady 30% average in Years 1 and two to a 50% chance of turnover in Year 3 (Holtom et al., 2013). Millennials have a high desire to advance, which organizational leaders can try to curb by understanding this expectation and using job rotation opportunities, collaborating with other companies to temporary assignments, and rehire former personnel (Lyons et al., 2015).

Reverse mentoring and networking. A positive way to engage Millennials is through reverse mentoring, which allows the young to train senior managers on technology and social networking while the managers train the Millennials on organizational knowledge and experiences (Gallicano et al., 2012; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2014; Murphy, 2012). Reverse mentoring could develop Millennials and help bridge cross-generational difficulties (Murphy, 2012). In reverse mentoring, younger employees can give their expertise in technology to more experienced leaders within an organization. This concept could help build Millennial leadership through successful mentorship. Reverse mentorship could improve intergenerational relationships, diversity, and innovation (Murphy, 2012). Focusing on the strengths of the generations and using their experiences in one-on-one relationships can also remove misconceptions about different generations (Murphy, 2012). Last, organizational leaders can use reverse mentoring to reward the best Millennials within an organization so that they may stay and develop as leaders.

Organizational leaders should network with other companies so that employees will develop the social aspect of social capital (Grimlanda et al., 2012). Organizational leaders and staff need to be aware of the ill effects that networking can have on an

organization (Grimlanda et al., 2012). Employees could decide to leave after receiving advice, feedback, or opportunities from the individuals in their network.

Collective Turnover

Collective turnover is the total number of employees who leave an organization or work group (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011). Based on this definition, collective turnover observes a unit's total turnover created by individuals' decision to leave and seeks understanding of that loss due to costs, employee roles, social relationships, knowledge, skills, and abilities (Nyberg & Ployhart, 2013). Reilly, Nyberg, Maltarich, and Weller (2014) showed that understanding collective turnover is the most important instrument for unit cohesion. Likewise, collective employee turnover and organization performance have a positive impact on human capital and costs (Hancock et al., 2013).

Viewing collective turnover at the organizational level allows leaders to see the undesirable effects of this concept on a larger level by observing the coordination and disruptive losses as a whole instead of viewing just the individual views (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011). The collective turnover concept reveals how losing human capital can affect an organization. Several theoretical perspectives indicate the relationship between performance within an organization and collective employee turnover and the cost of human plus social capital (Hancock et al., 2013). Collective turnover can cause problems within an organization due to the loss of employees, increase in recruitment and selection costs, and training (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011; Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011). The use and understanding of the factors that affect voluntary turnover should allow leadership

and organizations to place more importance on those issues (Holtom et al., 2013). In this study, I will focus on the effect of Millennial turnover on business units.

Frameworks and Theories

Hausknecht and Trevor (2011) reviewed 115 articles on organization performance about adverse effects of turnover. Turnover has been of interest in sociology, business, management, and psychology literature since the 1950's (Hancock et al., 2013).

Transformational leadership is a good way for multiple generational organizations to function due to the focus on employees. Researchers have used general system theory to study turnover but rarely to study generational turnover within one organization.

Bass's transformational leadership theory. As previously discussed, one conceptual framework used in my study is transformational leadership, which will help to explore retention strategies. Moynihan, Pandey, and Wright (2012) noted that James MacGregor Burns was the first person to develop the definition of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is the process used by leaders to make significant positive change in individuals, groups, teams, and organizations (Dinh, et al., 2014). Many scholars have studied the literature on transformational leadership theory because of its importance within organizations (Dinger, Thatcher, Stepina, & Craig, 2012). The focus of Bass's (1985) transformational leadership was to influence knowledge stimulus, motivation, and individual consideration through the influence of leaders. The four dimensions of transformational leadership are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Moynihan et al., 2012).

Idealized influence creates charisma in subordinates in high moral decisions and personal goals (Sosik, Blair, Chun, & Fitzgerald, 2013). Millennials can benefit from leaders who adopt the idealized influence concept because of Millennials expectations to advance in their careers (Lyons et al., 2015). Leaders that value Millennials' ability to choose their career path and provide them tools to reach their personal goals will empower them to make good moral decisions for the organization. Gaining the respect and sense of pride in Millennials requires discussions of expectations, organizational and personal values, and fostering relationships by sharing mutual interests (Grant, 2012).

Inspirational motivation refers to influence through communication that produces the desired results from subordinates (Sosik et al., 2013). Leaders must be able to communicate in a way that Millennials can understand and receive the information. The most efficient way to get employees to follow a leader is by showing them a plan for the future through inspiring words (Grant, 2012).

Intellectual stimulation involves solving problems (Grant, 2012). Piccolo et al. (2012) defined intellectual stimulation as leaders who take risks, incorporate the ideas of subordinates, and make challenging assumptions. Leaders that provide Millennials with a challenge through difficult issues and changes may be able to use intellectual stimulation to retain them (Gilbert, 2011).

Individual consideration is the relationship between leaders and subordinates based on individual needs, including mentoring (Piccolo et al., 2012). Bass's last transformational leadership dimension, individual consideration, focuses on leaders coaching and mentoring their employees through personal interactions that develop the

individual as the leader supports the organization's goals (Grant, 2012). Millennials crave the attention of leaders and the development of their personal goals continuously throughout their tenure within an organization (Whelan & Carcary, 2011).

Bass (1985) discussed how transformational leadership could make business units successful in areas and tasks that are unpredictable and challenging. A supervisors' transformational leadership can affect the performance of a team (Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013). A strong relationship exists between transformational leadership and successful performance (Bass, 1985). In contrast, Antonakis and House (2014) noted that transformational leadership theory does not successfully work using outside industry or business environments and resources. Antonakis and House viewed transformational leadership as only one way to look at what is taking place in an organization, but the theory provides little information on what happens outside of that one organization.

Leadership should show how leaders affect an organization or team of people, but Hoffman and Lord (2013) noted a gap exists regarding information on leadership effectiveness. Transformational leadership and the individual consideration approach are effective with Millennials, which includes developing personal attention (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Transformational leadership involves increasing the relationship between employees and managers and meeting each employee's needs (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). The resources leaders have to motivate and reduce Millennial turnover include policies, retention programs, and improved practice (Hoffman & Lord, 2013).

Von Bertalanffy's general system theory. Researchers use Von Bertalanffy's general system theory to view the whole organization or system as greater than its parts (Von Bertalanffy, 1972).

Since the fundamental character of the living thing is its organization, the customary investigation of the single parts and processes cannot provide a complete explanation of the vital phenomena. This investigation gives us no information about the coordination of parts and processes. Thus, the chief task of biology must be to discover the laws of biological systems (at all levels of the organization). (Bertalanffy, 1933, p. 64)

The general system theory has evolved from a biological concept to take into account-organized entities such as groups, personality, and technology working together to make sure organizational leaders reach established goals (Wilson, 2012). Thomas (2015) described each business as an organization of multiple subsystems that all have to work together to meet the goals of the organization. The basis of investigating an organization as a whole system rather than just the behavior of its individual components was the organizational culture and the effects it has on the whole unit (Chen et al., 2014).

Three concepts that Bertalanffy's general system theory covers when discussing the whole organizational system are human capital, social expectations, and technology. Human capital is important within an organization because every individual has their knowledge of the tasks completed for the whole (Nyberg, Moliterno, Donald Hale, & Lepak, 2014). In this process, individuals are crucial for making the whole organization successful. The need to include humans (especially leaders of Millennials) and

understand their ability to have an effect on Millennials' behavior is essential to this study.

Social expectation is the second fundamental concept of using in Bertalanffy's general system theory. Leaders and employees have social expectations based on their life experiences (Lawson, 2012). Social interactions have connections to success within an organization. Unit performance can be traced to the expectations and interactions developed in relationships (Nyberg et al., 2014). Individuals are expected to behave certain ways in an organization. Employees are supposed to be ethical and non-violent while at work.

Technology, also known as mechanism or structure in Bertalanffy's general system theory, is important to all organizations. The complexity of the organization determines the structure (Valentinov, 2013). Technology affects organizations and the employees that work within them because individuals within the unit must understand the hierarchy (Von Bertalanffy, 1972). Millennials need to understand the structure of the organization through the direction and mentorship given by their leaders. These concepts relate to my study on Millennial retention by showing how constantly losing the Millennial generation of employees affects an organization as a whole. The differences in generation work attitudes can have a lot to do with systematic differences within organizations (Lyons & Kuron, 2013).

Transition and Summary

The retention of personnel is essential to staying competitive within an industry (Murphy, 2012). Millennials are individuals born between 1980 and 1999 (Thompson &

Gregory, 2012). Due to the size of the Millennial generation, which is 76 million (Murphy, 2012), the retention of the Millennial workforce is essential to the success of organizations. Millennials are leaving organizations before staying 3 years (U.S. Department of Labor, 2014), which can cause organizational issues with obtaining a return on the investment of Millennials brought into the company.

Some of the things that effect Millennials voluntary choosing to leave are compensation, opportunities to learn new skills, advancement, relationship with management, work–life balance, and job satisfaction. The literature included a discussion on these issues about turnover. Leaders may explore retention strategies and methods through Bass’s transformational theory and Von Bertalanffy’s general system theory. These two theories will serve as the conceptual framework for this study and will lead to an understanding of the strategies and methods for retaining Millennial employees and the leadership characteristics leaders need to possess to increase the retention of Millennials (Thomas, 2015).

A qualitative case study will be suitable for obtaining a better understanding of the Millennial retention strategies and methods within one organization. In this study, I will conduct semistructured interviews with leaders of Millennials in one organization in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Section 2 includes a discussion of my project that includes a restatement of the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments and technique, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 will include the findings of this study and will include

the following subsections: introduction, presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

The focus of this qualitative exploratory case study was to understand strategies and methods for retaining Millennial employees from the perspective of their leaders. I used semistructured interviews to collect data from leaders in a professional environment who are currently managing Millennials. I collected data by reviewing corporate documents such as the company's human resource (HR) policies, completed training, and company website (Thomas, 2015). The ability to understand the strategies leaders and managers use to retain Millennials may provide information that can help retain Millennial employees, with the intent that more Millennials will continue employment within organizations. The following topics presented in Section 2 include: the restatement of the purpose, the role of the researcher, research participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization techniques, and reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies and methods to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. Data collection involved interviewing four senior leaders who supervise three or more Millennial employees within a small-sized company in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Senior leaders with hiring responsibilities of Millennials participated in semistructured interviews, which provided an opportunity to identify strategies for retaining Millennial employees. This study may contribute to social change by increasing awareness of

common issues related to employee turnover for the Millennial generation. Leaders of businesses in the United States may benefit from an increase of knowledge in retaining employees and building loyalty in this younger generation of employees.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I was the main data collection instrument. I conducted my study in the geographic location in which I live, the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Based on Raglan and Schulkin's (2014) recommendations, I ensured trustworthiness in data collection by completing the National Institute of Health (NIH) Human Research Protections course and by minimizing bias through bracketing. I did not conduct the study in any of my previous or present workplaces. Being a Millennial, I used the method of bracketing to eliminate any bias that relates to this identity and the experiences that come with this identity. Chan, Fung, and Chien (2013) defined bracketing as researchers not using their previous knowledge or bias when conducting research on a phenomenon. I maintained clear expectations while remaining unbiased throughout this study.

I had no previous bias in understanding the retention strategies of leaders who manage Millennial employees. The ability of researchers to understand and accept their personal viewpoints and bias will allow them to understand other people's views (Sinatra, Kienhues, & Hofer, 2014). I used appropriate interview procedures with all participants in this study (Doody & Noonan, 2013). The qualitative interview protocol as seen in Appendix D ensured construct validity (Chetty, Partanen, Servais, & Rasmussen, 2013). The ethical standards used in this study aligned with the protocols used in the *Belmont*

Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

Participants

Yin (2012) noted that completing a multiple-participant qualitative study using one unit in the same setting could provide accurate results. This study included a single-unit within a small-sized company in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. The size of the organization was the basis for determining the sample of leaders to interview. I was able to identify the sample size of five potential participants and account for ideal and practical sampling (O. C. Robinson, 2014). I interviewed four managers within a small-sized company who had successfully managed Millennial employees for a minimum of 2 years. In qualitative research, the preferred sample size is between five and 50 participants (Dworkin, 2012). The criteria for participating was leaders who had used strategies and methods to reduce turnover in Millennial employees. The participants did not have any voluntary Millennial employee turnover in the year leading up to the interview. Leaders who met the above requirements qualified to participate in this study.

The strategy for gaining access to participants was using professional networking such as professional contacts, LinkedIn, and company officials from information gathered using Google. The ability to initiate and maintain a working relationship with participants was crucial to completing this qualitative study (Swauger, 2011). My strategies for establishing a working relationship with participants included making them feel comfortable throughout the research process, not abusing my position to control

participants, and using the ethic-of-care approach to ensure participants knew my principles and responsibilities throughout the process (Swauger, 2011).

Research Method and Design

I explored the perspective of leaders of Millennial employees and the strategies that organizational leaders need to follow to retain Millennial employees. Management has the responsibility to motivate and retain Millennials (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). To explore these experiences, I interviewed leaders who had managed Millennial employees successfully. The study included a qualitative exploratory single case study design and followed a standardized interview protocol (See Appendix D).

Method

Qualitative research involves an attempt to understand the perceptions of a phenomenon based on participants' experiences through an in-depth review of the research topic (Coenen, Stamm, Stucki, & Cieza, 2012). Researchers have not used the qualitative approach when addressing collective turnover of Millennials, and quantitative methods could not provide an understanding of this issue within one organization (Nyberg & Ployhart, 2013). The focus of this study was finding ways to retain Millennials using the perceptions of leaders of Millennial employees. Researchers who use a qualitative research method can look at an individual's behavior in a descriptive way (Thomas, 2015). Exploratory interviews include questions that allow researchers to examine the details of a participant's experiences (Brédart, Marrel, Abetz-Webb, Lasch, & Acquadro, 2014). Holt, Marques, and Way (2012) studied Millennial retention

strategies and motivation through a qualitative method, which justifies the method of my study but I chose to use a different design.

Quantitative researchers address the relationship between variables and include many participants to confirm or disconfirm a hypothesis, whereas qualitative researchers explore historical outcomes and case-oriented information (Hoe & Hoare, 2012). The quantitative method has been an important driver in scientific research, and its influence has affected method selection (Goodenough & Waite, 2012). Despite its importance in research, the quantitative method was not appropriate for this study. A qualitative, case study design was suitable for determining the leaders' views on Millennial retention strategies and methods (van Dijk-de Vries et al., 2012).

I considered using mixed methods. However, because mixed methods is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, researchers use mixed method only when one of the methods cannot provide enough data by itself (Ostlund, Kidd, Wengstrom, & Rowa-Dewar, 2011). Researchers use mixed methods to analyze quantitative surveys in more depth than with qualitative techniques (Ostlund et al., 2011). Mixed methods research was not necessary because I was able to gather enough data with only the qualitative method. In my study, it was best to obtain information from a qualitative method; mixed methods would have been appropriate if I had used a larger sample to test a hypothesis (Thomas, 2011).

Research Design

Researchers select a research design based on the research question so the researchers can answer the question properly. A case study is a detailed analysis of a

group, person, event, or organization (Aydın & Yıldırım, 2012). Lyons et al. (2015) noted that research within one organization would provide a useful assessment of career moves among generations. Based on this information, my study was necessary to understand Millennials and the strategies to retain them. Researching a company with successful leaders through a single case study method may help other leaders assess the strategies and methods needed to retain Millennial employees (Doherty, Ashurst, & Peppard, 2012). The case study method involves examining a current event or period within an organization, which was what I wanted to do in my study (Thomas, 2011). The case study design was suitable because exploring the successes and failures of one organization may provide additional understanding of the identified problem. Case study design is appropriate when trying to understand organizational processes and social research questions (Moll, 2012).

Ethnographic and phenomenological studies involve collecting data from groups or individuals through interviews over an extended period (Kriyantono, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2014); due to time constraints and the different data collection techniques, these were not appropriate for my study. Ethnography is a qualitative design that involves observing the culture, perspective, and practices of participants to understand shared experiences (Kaplan et al., 2014). Researchers usually use an ethnographic design to understand a culture based on how and why questions (Goffin, Varnes, Hoven, & Koners, 2012). Ethnography can be a costly and time-consuming research method in which researchers must spend lots of time engulfed in the lives and spaces of those they are

studying (Siwale, 2015). Based on the nature of my study, it was not appropriate to use an ethnographic design due to time constraints and financial limitations.

I contemplated a phenomenological design for my study, but I deemed it less appropriate than the case study. The phenomenological design was not suitable for my study because this method involves an attempt to understand a human problem from different perspectives on making decisions (Savage-Austin & Guillaume, 2012). The focus of the phenomenological design is the lived experiences of the individuals studied through their perceptions of events (Yin, 2015). The phenomenological approach would have been appropriate if I had planned to explore the personal views and experiences of individuals (Bonnett, 2013); however, organizational retention process in the natural environment was the purpose of my study.

Population and Sampling

I used leaders of Millennials within a small-sized company in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. I used an exploratory single case study design to understand the retention strategies of participating leaders of Millennials within their natural environment (Bonnett, 2013). The case study interviews included the purposive sampling strategy (Hoeven, Janssen, Roes, & Koffijberg, 2015). Purposive sampling allows researchers to select participants that meet the specific requirements of the study (Boardman & Ponomariov, 2014).

The basis of qualitative explorations is more on the quality of the sample than the size associated with quantitative methods (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012). Yin (2014) noted that when using the case study design, the researcher may collect data from several

sources including interviews, direct participant observations, and documents. The purpose of data saturation in qualitative research is answering the research question, and researchers should use a sufficient sample size to complete this task (Malterud, 2012). Dworkin (2012) noted that researchers could attain saturation within five to 50 participants in qualitative studies. To reach data saturation, I analyzed all of the data to ensure my conclusion would answer the research question.

Leaders of Millennials with a proven history of executing retention strategies in their small-sized company participated in this study. Leaders managed Millennial subordinates and a business unit within their organization. Participants met the following criteria: the organization must be in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, including the counties closest to Washington, DC, in Maryland and Virginia; and the participant must have been a leader of two or more Millennials in the previous 3 years without the voluntary turnover of a Millennial employee within the previous year. The number of participants selected depended on the leaders found in the organization who met the requirements, which totaled five individuals.

The interview settings were in a neutral environment, and all participants were comfortable. Allowing the participants to pick the setting for the interviews reduced interruptions for the duration of the interview (Thomas, 2015). The interviews were completed at a time and place set by the participant (Morgan et al., 2013). Face-to-face or Skype interviews were preferable to record participant responses. Face-to-face and telephone interviews are similar in the quality of data produced, and video Internet technologies have been expanded (Hanna, 2012). Using these technologies reduces the

cost of research by eliminating travel, and participants can be comfortable in any environment they choose (Hanna, 2012). I scheduled the interviews to be 120 minutes long based on the interview questions.

Ethical Research

I ensured the ethical protection of participants by getting approval from Walden University's IRB before conducting any research. Because I conducted research within an organization, it was important to obtain permission from an organization official to conduct research using the organization's employees. I sent potential participants who met the criteria of the study a survey to assess their willingness to participate voluntarily through the informed consent form (see Appendix A). I told participants that they could withdraw at any time from the study with no penalty by telling me verbally or in written form. None of the participants withdrew. I offered a \$10 Visa thank-you gift card, which was not enough of an incentive to create coercion. Providing small monetary gifts can persuade participants who would not normally participate to agree to an interview and can increase the participant's responsiveness (Singer & Ye, 2013). I hand delivered the gift card to the participants after the interview.

The basis of the ethical protection of participants was providing the confidentiality of the participants and the information that they provide to the researcher (Fisher, 2015). I discussed the measures to ensure confidentiality in Appendix A. I did not use participants' personal information for any purposes outside this research project. I did not include participant or organization names or anything else that could identify the parties in the study report. I stored the electronic information on a password-protected

flash drive, and I kept documents related to the study in a locked file storage cabinet to which only I maintain access. Data will remain in these locations for at least 5 years, at which point I will destroy them.

Data Collection

This qualitative case study used interviews to collect data, which is a common method of collecting data (Yin, 2014). Triangulating data was necessary for this case study and involved various potential sources that include journal articles, company documents, government data, and archival records. Before collecting data, I obtained IRB approval, and participants signed informed consent forms.

Instruments

As the researcher that conducted this qualitative case study, I was the primary data collection instrument. I asked eight open-ended interview questions to obtain participants' experiences and perceptions of the strategies and methods senior business leaders use to motivate and retain Millennial employees (see Appendix B). I used a semistructured interview instrument for collecting data based on the research completed by Thomas (2015), who wanted to discover the perceptions and experiences of participants on the strategies senior information technology leaders needed to retain information technology professionals at a mid-sized utility company in the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. The interviews included two different groups of questions. First, an association exists between Von Bertalanffy's (1972) general system theory and Questions 1-6 and 8. The basis of interview question seven was Bass's transformational leadership theory. After the interviews with participants, I triangulated the data through

company documents, archival records, external business journals, and other related sources (Yin, 2014).

It was my goal that the responses to the interview questions would answer the central research question of this study. Expert validation, which involves experts giving their views on an instrument (Scheepers-Hoeks, Grouls, Neef, Ackerman, & Korsten, 2013), will serve as the basis of the instrument's reliability. Based on the study completed by expert Thomas (2015), the instrument was reliable.

After receiving IRB approval, the study began by asking all potential participants to sign the consent form, which will include an explanation of the research process (see Appendix A). The next step involved scheduling single face-to-face interviews with each participant who agreed to take part in the study. The participants had a second chance to indicate that I could interview them, and I answered any concerns or questions at the time of the interview.

Data Collection Technique

The semistructured face-to-face interviews followed a standardized interview protocol which I recorded (See Appendix D). De Casterlé, Gastmans, Bryon, and Denier (2012) discussed interviewing participants, transcribing what interviewees stated, and providing non-verbal signals such as facial expressions and body language. Setting a meeting in a neutral place will allow for fewer distractions from the participant (Mikecz, 2012). A disadvantage of conducting the interview at a neutral site was the location may not be the most comfortable environment for the participant. I scheduled interviews at a time and place where the participant would be most comfortable, and that meet the

participant's and my schedule. I used public areas, business offices, and Skype for all semistructured interviews. All interviews lasted between 30 to 90 minutes. In addition to the face-to-face interviews, I collected data from company documents, archival records, external business journals, and other related sources (Yin, 2014).

Recording participant answers for qualitative research helps establish quality by using transcription and field notes (Xu & Storr, 2012). The location used to complete the interview was important because it can affect the quality of the recording (Beach et al., 2013). Bolderston (2012) suggested testing recording equipment in a similar area before interviews begin and ensuring the sound quality was appropriate while making sure to minimize any technical problems.

After conducting the interviews, I transcribed what the participants stated into a Word document. The process, called member checking, will take place as described by Harper and Cole (2012), which may improve quality control in the qualitative research. To conduct member checking, I sent each participant my interpretation of the information collected to ensure the true representations of the participants data gathered in our interview (Harper & Cole, 2012). Participants were able to comment on the findings. The qualitative software NVivo was suitable for translating the information from raw data to manageable concepts (Casterlé et al., 2012). Once I received the qualitative data, I assessed them as individual units before understanding the whole sample (Casterlé et al., 2012).

Data Organization Techniques

The system for keeping track of data began with creating a folder for each participant. Each participant had a generic code to ensure anonymity and privacy (Gibson, Benson, & Brand, 2013). To accomplish this task, the codes for each participant were Participant 1, Participant 2, and so on to disguise their identities. The folders contained all the information related to each participant, including a Microsoft Word document transcribed from each participant's interview, a signed informed consent form, e-mail conversations, and any other written material's (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). I collected researcher notes and keep them in a folder notated as researcher notes. I used NVivo 11 software to decipher and examine themes through coding. I completed this process in a manner that would maintain the privacy of each research participant. Last, I stored the participants' confidential information to protect the gathered data (Snell et al., 2012). I secured all documents received in the research process and will keep them for five years on a password-protected flash drive in a locked safe.

A pilot study was not necessary for this study. Pilot studies are necessary when researchers want to identify whether it is practical to conduct a large-scale study (Craig et al., 2013). This research study does not require a large-scale study to provide an analysis of a single organization's strategies and methods for retaining Millennial employees. Researchers use pilot studies to check questions to ensure they fit the interview group (Rowley, 2012). Thomas (2015) used the instrument selected for this study in a similar study on retention, which was another reason for not conducting a pilot study.

Data Analysis Technique

Doody and Noonan (2013) discussed the importance of using open-ended semistructured questions in qualitative interviews. A researcher can use semistructured questions to ask questions not considered before the interview (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Based on the interview procedure described in Appendix B, all participants answered the demographic and interview questions.

I sought more clarification and details during the interview when the opportunity or need arose. Data collection took place through interviews with participants and data triangulated through company documents, archival records, external business journals, and other related sources (Yin, 2014). The face-to-face interviews and triangulated data helped to understand the themes from the central research question. The implementation of the data analysis process was essential to qualitative researchers (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Data analysis was the structure that gave understanding to the strategies leaders can use to retain Millennial employees in organizations (Thomas, 2015).

Based on Thomas's (2015) research, I organized the data retrieved in categories associated with retention strategies. I separated leadership qualities and retention strategies, as both are important to understanding the strategies and methods needed to retain Millennial employees. The categories for the strategies were "compensation and benefits, opportunities for promotion, training and development, work-life balance and flexible schedules, management relationships, and managing organizational culture" (Thomas, 2015, p. 68). The categories for leadership qualities were "motivation,

creativity, relational, consideration for others, supportiveness, coaching, encouraging, inspirational, charisma, visionary, self-confidence, and decision-making” (Thomas, 2015, p. 68). These categories changed based on the data received from participants because of the categories that arose while analyzing data (Thomas, 2015). Based on Yin (2015), data analysis involved a five-phase cycle that included (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. Thomas (2015) used this method for data analysis in a qualitative single case study, which confirmed its suitability for this study.

First, I transcribed all participant interviews into a Microsoft Word document and then import them into NVivo 11. Transcribing interviews were involved playing back each interview from the recording device and typing the words spoken by the participants. I read the transcribed interviews while listening to the audio recordings several times after initial transcription to ensure the accuracy of the participants’ words. Yin (2015) described compiling data sorting notes made in the field and other collection areas and organizing the gathered data. Next, I disassembled the data by coding the data in a formal procedure (Yin, 2015). Coding is the process of finding information that may provide answers to the research question (Merriam, 2014). Wilson (2012) noted that coding required tagging sections of data to recognize descriptive words and then to group the data to have a better understanding of themes and commonalities.

After disassembling the data, the process of reassembling data will involve analyzing the data to assess the themes (Yin, 2015). Interpreting the data involved evaluating the significance of the data received (Yin, 2015). The last cycle in the data

analysis process was concluding. Concluding involves describing the findings from the data and presenting the connection between the themes and patterns to the central research question (Yin, 2015).

After inputting, storing, and coding was complete I used NVivo 11 software for analyzing data to assist me in exploring themes and patterns (Thomas, 2015). NVivo 11 also provided easy access to data and different data coding methods (Davidson, Simpson, Demiris, Sheikh, & McKinstry, 2013). The query coding methods in NVivo 11 are text search, word frequency, coding, and matrix coding (Davidson et al., 2013). Sotiriadou, Brouwers, and Le (2014) noted that NVivo increased the rigor of qualitative data analysis procedures.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability means another researcher can use the same methods to reproduce a study and get a comparable outcome (Ali & Yusof, 2012; Grosseohme, 2014).

Dependability results are from member checking the transcribed data. The participants received the transcripts of their interview and the interpretation to review and to correct any issues with the documents. I annotated the information changed by study participants to ensure I maintain the original transcribed document. Lastly, I annotated the research procedures that occurred throughout the study in a research journal (Grosseohme, 2014).

Validity

I determined validity based on creditability, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility in qualitative research refers to the ability for others to understand the

participant's experiences (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I was responsible for comparing the similarities of the participants to provide analysis for others to understand (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Confirmability occurred by repeatedly checking the procedures for gathering data while ensuring the analysis does not include researcher biases (Cope, 2014). The research will be transferable to readers by allowing them to follow the instrument for their research and use it for other groups or settings (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Readers may be able to understand the research and the ways it applies to generational retention issues. Readers should be able to understand the research context and assess the findings for themselves using the gathered data and research (Cope, 2014).

Data saturation occurred when no new themes emerge through the data collection process that included multiple sources such as peer-reviewed articles and government sources. The number of organizational leaders who met the criteria within the small-sized company was five, and the actual number of participants was four. This study included data saturation in determining validity (Osborne et al., 2014). I used other sources to triangulate data. Case study design depends on gathering data from multiple sources and integrating the data within the study analysis (Bennett et al., 2013). Potential sources include organizational archives and other company documents, peer-reviewed journals, and government data. Triangulation procedures increased the validity of the research while increasing the depth in the analysis (Hortensius et al., 2012). Yin (2013) noted case study method triangulation improves validity.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to assess the retention strategies and methods that leaders of Millennials can use to retain Millennial employees. This study involved analyzing data based on Yin's (2015) five-phase cycle consisting of (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. Semistructured interviews were suitable for collecting data and discovering the strategies and methods from participants' experiences and perceptions. I also triangulated the data through journal articles, company documents, government data, and archival records.

I found five potential participants using purposeful sampling. I used this method to find leaders who have led two or more Millennials for the past 3 years but have not experienced the voluntary turnover of a Millennial employee within the past year from a small-sized company in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Before collecting data, I obtained authorization to start gathering data from Walden University's IRB. I conducted face-to-face interviews in person and through Skype. I recorded and transcribed the interviews exactly as the participants described their experiences, sent the transcribed interviews and interpretation to the participants for member checking, and annotated any changes made by the participant. Lastly, I uploaded the transcribed data to NVivo 11 qualitative software to analyze patterns and themes. Section 3 will include the findings of this study and the following subsections: introduction, presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

In the previous section, I provided a plan and justification for the process I would use to conduct my study. I described data collection procedures and the procedures for analyzing themes. This section contains the themes and categories that emerged from the analysis of the data, which revealed the strategies and methods for retaining Millennial employees according to the perspective of their leaders. The following topics presented in Section 3 include introduction, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and conclusion.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies and methods to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. I conducted semistructured interviews with four Millennial leaders from a small-sized company to explore their experiences and perceptions of strategies on retaining Millennials from within the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Each participant met the criteria for this study based on professional experience. The four interviews took place in an environment that was comfortable for the participants and allowed them to give detailed responses to the interview questions. Participants responded to four demographic questions and eight interview questions (see Appendix B) and provided potential strategies and methods leaders could use to retain Millennial employees. Strategies are general plans that leaders can follow to accomplish the goal of retaining Millennials. While methods are more

detailed actions or techniques for reaching the goal of retaining Millennials. Participants gave detailed responses to the interview questions (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

I based the data analysis on Yin's five-phase cycle as described in Section 2. To follow this process, I conducted interviews and transcribed them. I received company documents and compared them with the participant responses. I imported both the transcribed interviews and company documents into NVivo 11 for coding (Thomas, 2015).

Through this process, 21 themes for strategies that leaders could use to retain Millennials employees emerged to answer the central research question. The central research question guided the data analysis of participant responses and company documents. Next, I grouped the eight recurring themes into two main themes: (a) essential strategies for leaders to retain Millennials and (b) most effective methods to retain Millennials. The essential strategies leaders use to retain Millennials were (a) career growth, (b) communication, (c) community involvement, (d) compensation, (e) culture, (f) feedback, (g) training, and (h) respect. The most effective methods to retain Millennials were (a) open lines of communication, (b) relationship with management, and (c) targeted training.

Presentation of the Findings

I conducted four semistructured interviews to explore the overarching research question: What strategies and methods do business leaders need to implement to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years? Triangulation was conducted to enhance validity of interview data on retention strategies of Millennial employees

through journal articles and company documents. The semistructured interviews were scheduled and carried out in four different locations. One interview took place in the office of the participant at the company. Two interviews took place at local libraries close to the company. I conducted the last interview via Skype (an Internet video service) where the participant and researcher were both in their homes. None of the interviews lasted more than 90 minutes.

The two conceptual frameworks for this study were general systems theory and transformational leadership theory. The responses of the participants correlated with both theories. The general systems theory focused on the various strategies that come together as a whole system to ensure the company could retain Millennial employees (Montgomery & Oladapo, 2014). Questions 1-6 and 8 were used to gain a deeper understanding through general systems theory, including the characteristics, leaders must exhibit to retain employees (Syrek, Apostel, & Antoni, 2013). Question 7 was used to gain a deeper understanding through transformational leadership. The findings provided an understanding of how leaders need to include Millennials in the goals of the whole organization and create an environment in which all personnel can grow to meet their potential (Wilson, 2012).

Main Theme: Essential Strategies for Leaders to Retain Millennials

The essential strategies leaders can use to retain Millennials constituted the first main theme. The responses to Questions 1, 3, and 6 provided the results for this main theme. Eight strategies emerged during data collection through interviews, company documents, and peer-reviewed articles. The literature supported all of the strategies, and

one of the strategies added information to the body of knowledge on the topic of Millennial retention. The eight strategies were career growth, communication, community involvement, compensation, culture, feedback, training, and respect. All of these strategies were discussed in detail and viewed as vital for Millennial retention in the study conducted by Durocher, Bujaki, and Brouard (2016).

The findings of this main theme show the importance of essential strategies that business leaders can use to retain Millennials. Millennials want opportunities for career growth and want to increase their knowledge and skills to achieve this goal (Kucherov & Zamulin, 2016). The Millennial generation can feel valued when communicated with effectively (Ozcelik, 2015). Mirvis (2012) found that three out of four Millennials want to work for an employer who has a positive impact on society. Millennials with college degrees and those who are managers demand high pay, but those who do not meet this criterion will not leave because their pay is low (Johnson & Ng, 2015). The culture of an organization should be maintained by leadership and human resources to promote an environment in which Millennial employees are not catered to or handed undeserving benefits, but rather includes an open business model that provides incentives to promote retention and performance success (Nolan, 2015). Leaders can provide open feedback to develop Millennials by learning and improving their performance (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Targeted training such as creating the learning experience around the employee, increasing the training time, and ensuring the employees' mentors stay consistent are essential to reduce turnover (Daniels, Mackovjak, Audia, & Richards, 2013). Millennials

want leaders who respect their ideas, listen, and involve them in the decision-making process (Aruna & Anitha, 2015).

Table 1 shows the essential strategies for leaders to retain Millennials. The retention strategies that emerged were (a) career growth, (b) communication, (c) community involvement, (d) compensation, (e) culture, (f) feedback, (g) training, and (h) respect. The frequency of occurrence of the main themes for essential strategies for retaining Millennials found through policies, completed training, company website, and participant responses confirmed by Durocher et al. (2016) research.

Table 1

Frequency of Essential Strategies for Leaders to Retain Millennials

| Theme | n | % of frequency of occurrence |
|-----------------------|----|------------------------------|
| Career Growth | 10 | 10.27% |
| Communication | 17 | 18.64% |
| Community Involvement | 5 | 3.40% |
| Compensation | 23 | 20.78% |
| Culture | 14 | 19.02% |
| Feedback | 11 | 12.60% |
| Training | 5 | 7.00% |
| Respect | 5 | 8.29% |

Note. n = frequency

Career growth. Participant 1 (P1) described the need for employees to gravitate toward those with more experience. The above statement shows how meaningful the

concept of seeking guidance or mentorship can have on the Millennial generation when trying to develop or expand their career. It was evident from the excerpt from P1 that career growth is important to Millennials.

When you are working with someone, that has some experience in the field you want to gain from that person. I am like that if I know you have something I want to work with you because I want to learn something...that is another reason they want to be in this environment. Because they see that this is somewhere, they can learn. I am a teacher by profession so when I do stuff I always ensure people are learning from me so when I am not there, they can run it themselves. Moreover, in the future do their projects and programs.

P1's excerpt illustrates the importance of proper mentorship and career growth through leader mentorship. This narrative also indicates the importance of delegation and ensuring that employees can learn to complete projects that can help them develop skills. P1 also stated that "an efficient leader has to be one that delegates so that there can be a division of labor" (personal communication, January 7, 2016). In connection with previous statements, P4 indicated, "that leaders must be comfortable delegating increasing responsibilities to Millennials" (personal communication, January 21, 2016).

The findings showed that the opportunity for growth within an organization for Millennials was an essential strategy. P3 made similar statements about career growth: "The leader saying that was a great accomplishment for what we are doing. Let us try this now maybe you can help us in this area. People want to feel that sense of promotion potential" (personal communication, January 18, 2016). Srinivasan (2012) found that the

three motivators for Millennials were responsibility and independence, achievement, and reasonable pay.

Communication. All participants discussed the need for Millennials to be able to communicate with all stakeholders within an organization. The impact that this had on Millennial and leaders' relationship had an effect on retention. The following excerpt from P2 shows the importance communication and the strategies that provide comfort to Millennial employees: "We have meetings. Sometimes, we meet after closing or during the week and sending out emails of things that transpired or what is going on in the near future. Everyone now has their say in how the organization should be run" (personal communication, January 14, 2016). P3 and P4 stated that consideration of Millennials' opinions and the value they bring was a reason they leave jobs. The literature review showed that the mastery of soft skills like communication was essential to reducing turnover (Joshi, 2012).

Community involvement. All participants discussed their views as leaders and the need to give back to the community as a strategy to retain Millennials. According to participants, there are several different things that the company does to give back to the community. The leaders donate their personal funds to parents who need it for food, for birthday parties, and to provide services to the low-income community. The Millennial generation looks at the company values and its view of CSR through leadership to make a decision on their continued employment (Holt et al., 2012). According to participants, the Millennial employees within their organization have a "spirit of volunteerism" (personal communication, January 21, 2016).

Compensation. Compensation was one of the most discussed strategies for retaining Millennials, as seen in Table 1. All participants emphasized the impact of an excellent salary on retaining Millennials. P1 stated that they look at their local market for pay rates and then pay 10% more. Employees also receive other compensation such as vacation and health care benefits. P3 stated that Millennial employees want to live comfortably and generally in the Washington, DC, area, which means a salary of over \$65,000. This excerpt from P4 shows the importance of compensation to Millennials:

COMPENSATION! That is the main thing we go to a job for. Even if a person's heart is in it but their compensation is not right. They will find a way to express what is in their heart to an organization if the compensation is not right.

Compensation and how it is handled is the most important and the rest follows that. You know what would be more specific about that compensation answer is I would make sure, that whatever the compensation that I would pay would be within the average for the state that I am. (personal communication, January 21, 2016)

Srinivasan (2012) also identified compensation as a motivator for Millennial employees. The concept that compensation was a motivator contradicts Ruys (2013) who stated that compensation could not motivate employees. Sturman's (2013) findings correlated with my findings showing that compensation is related to turnover.

Culture. Three of the participants discussed the importance for leaders to preserve culture within an organization. The ability to create relationships within the organization and conducting team building events such as going to lunch, movies, happy

hours. The connection that these events and the relationships built with leaders and peers adds value to the way Millennials feel when they come to work. P3 stated that organizations should provide a culture where they are approachable and more than “just a picture on the wall” (personal communication, January 18, 2016). Graybill (2014) stated that Millennials want more of a friendship relationship with their leaders. Two of the four participants also discussed working in a culture where the family was vital to the success of the employee. O'Connor (2015) found that one of the top values for the Millennial generation was family.

Feedback. All four participants discussed the need for leaders to provide meaningful feedback to Millennial employees. P1 discussed giving feedback in several ways annual evaluations, one on one meetings and group meetings. All of these strategies allow subordinates to understand the expectations of the leader and the organization. The leader can also provide the strengths, weaknesses while asking, and receiving criticism on the leaders' performance. The knowledge in the area of feedback with Millennials when leaders can be transparent enough to allow subordinates to give their opinion on how the leader was treating and managing them. This excerpt from P3 shows the importance of feedback to Millennial employees

People do what to see that something noticed. When people are putting in a whole lot, they put their whole heart into it, and it is not significant. You cannot see how it is contributing in any way, and you are not getting the feedback either. That will cause people to leave. However, when people leave that way, it is with dissatisfaction. It is not because life circumstances have made them leave it is

because they have divorced themselves from where they work. They do not see how they are connected anymore, and they leave. I think that is different from other generations because older generations would just stay and tough it out, but nowadays Millennials feel they have many more options. (personal communication, January 18, 2016)

Previous generations did not require the same amount of feedback that Millennials need. The Literature Review covered the need for managers to have coaching relationships and providing feedback and trust were more likely to retain Millennial employees (Kim et al., 2015; Oren et al., 2012). Millennials require a high amount of feedback than previous generations due to growing up in an educational system where teachers provided more feedback to ensure they understood the information because budgets required high performance (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

Training. Two of the four participants discussed the value of proper training. Millennial employees feel valued based on their knowledge of their field. More training benefits such as tuition reimbursement and programs to pay for courses and degrees. P2 discussed the different programs, online courses, and state certification required to keep their job. P1 stated that once employees complete on-the-job training they could complete their tasks without supervision. Along with interviews, the researcher used a training plan and certificates to validate the importance training benefits have on Millennial employees. Benefits such as on-the-job training help Millennials invest in their skills and allowing them to use those skills to provide opportunities to advance within the organization (Hirsch, 2015).

Respect. Two of the four participants discussed the need for leaders to respect Millennials and their opinions. P2 stated, “Employees have to be treated with respect. Yes, that would be it, and there has to be respect between employees and management. Their voice should be heard, and any concerns should be laid down on the table” (personal communication, January 14, 2016). Millennial employees want to feel respected and valuable within an organization. It is the responsibility of the leader to make them feel this respect. P4 also discussed the importance of being a part of the decision-making process and providing value to the employee. Transformational leadership allows leaders to connect with subordinates through an emotional relationship to the values of the leader and the organization (Bass, 1985). The ability to use the method of allowing employees to be a part of the decision-making process allows the leader to provide respect and faith in the goals of the organization and leader (García-Morales, Jiménez-Barrionuevo, & Gutiérrez-Gutiérrez, 2012).

Main Theme: Most Effective Methods Leaders Use to Retain Millennials

The most effective methods leaders can use to retain Millennials is the second main theme. The responses to question number 5 provided the results for this main theme. Through interviews and triangulation of data, there were three themes (a) open lines of communication, (b) relationship with management, and (c) targeted training in which participants identified as the most effective methods to retain Millennials. The findings of this main theme show the importance of the most effective methods that business leaders can use to retain Millennials. Millennials want communication that allows them to reach their goals and career goals (Guillot, 2014). Gallicano (2013) found

that Millennials, who felt they had positive relationships with leaders, also intended to stay with their organization for mentoring, being groomed for management positions, and to meet their long-term goals. Leaders need proper training to connect with Millennials and allow them to deal with the issues of the workplace. Langan (2012) stated that Millennials require more hands-on training that moves at a fast pace.

Table 2 shows the main themes that emerged from the most effective methods for leaders to retain Millennials. The retention methods that emerged were (a) open lines of communication, (b) relationship with management, and (c) targeted training. The frequency of occurrence of the main themes of the most effective methods for retaining Millennials found through Human Resource policies, completed training, company website, and participant responses confirmed by Gursoy, Chi, and Karadag (2013) research.

Table 2

| <i>Frequency of Most Effective Methods for leaders to retain Millennials</i> | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Theme | n | % of frequency of occurrence |
| Open Lines of Communication | 5 | 62.50% |
| Relationship with Management | 2 | 25% |
| Targeted Training | 1 | 12.50% |

Note. n = frequency

Open lines of communication. Three of the four participants mentioned open lines of communication. Another reoccurring quote to communication was the significance of having a flat organization structure and its relation to communication with employees, which P1, P2, and P3 mentioned. P1 stated, “Clear open lines of

communication. We have an email policy. I write many emails. I use my phone a lot. We have meetings, staff meetings, retreats that I told you. The best method is clear communication” (personal communication, January 7, 2016). Leaders must provide feedback that will improve Millennials and allow them to get better (Thrasher, Walker, Hankemeier, & Pitney, 2015). Chaudhuri and Ghosh (2012) found Millennials want a flat hierarchy to receive knowledge from executive leadership. The importance of the flat organizational structure has a correlation to the Bertalanffy’s general system theory by allowing Millennial leaders to connect with employees in a way that will retain them. These findings confirmed the information found in the literature. The structure affects organizations and their employees because individuals within the unit must understand the hierarchy and Millennials need to connect with business leaders to gain that knowledge (Von Bertalanffy, 1972). Organizations do not follow the process of providing direct mentoring to high-level executives in business due to the lack of awareness of this style of mentorship with senior leaders, time availability, and relationship compatibility (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011).

Relationship with management. Two of the four participants mentioned relationships with management as the most efficient way to retain Millennials. The ability for a relationship to build between Millennial employees and their leaders was a major strategy for Millennial retention. This excerpt from P3 interviews illustrates this point.

The sense of relationship and belonging. Millennials should have a sense that they are needed and important. I guess they should feel their needs matter. That is very important. I think that this particular generation has seen so much. People tend to

take their suffering in silence, and I know that your working relationship is different from your best friend relationship, but I still feel there should be some sense that people care. Even if they need to work out something personal as long as it is not interfering with the job, too much, they should feel that someone cares to give them that room a little bit. (personal communication, January 18, 2016)

Millennials desire a relationship with their managers. All participants spoke about communicating with employees but building a good relationship between leaders and Millennials is essential to retain them. Close relationships with managers improve communication and allows for frequent feedback (Lucas, D'Enbeau, & Heiden, 2015).

Targeted training. Two of the four participants mentioned targeted training with management as one of the most effective ways to retain Millennials. P2 discussed the importance of receiving opportunities to train with individuals with expertise in their field. The ability to receive targeted training can give Millennials the skills to be a better employee but also give them more opportunities for internal and external career advancement (Kulkarni, Lengnick-Hall, & Martinez, 2015). This information is consistent with the information found in the literature review but not always practiced in business. The ability to train employees and continue to peek their interests is a strategy that leaders must focus on to give employees a reason to stay.

Summary

The research findings above were constant with the purpose and significance of this study while connecting to the two conceptual frameworks (general systems theory and transformational leadership). This study added a better understanding of this research

phenomenon transpired due the themes and their representations in Tables 1 and 2, which provided a vital role in addressing the research question. Organizational leaders should use different retention approaches in managing each generation, especially Millennials since they have so many unique characteristics that differ from past generations (Lyons et al., 2015). If business leaders do not take the appropriate steps through strategies and methods for retaining Millennials, they may have issues with turnover of this generation.

Application to Professional Practice

This research could be significant in understanding the appropriate strategies and methods to retain Millennials. Millennials are different from other generations. In understanding, the differences business leaders and Human Resource professionals must take into consideration the need to provide them with benefits that are more comprehensive, higher compensation, increasing opportunities, and a different style of leadership to retain them. Leaders should take benefits into consideration more than only salaries to include more comprehensive benefits packages for Millennial employees (O'Connor & Raile, 2015). The general systems theory representation in the findings showed that business leaders must work as a whole organization (system) to retain Millennials (Shannon, 2013; Thomas, 2015).

The implementation of the strategies discussed by P1, P2, P3, and P4 in theme one such as compensation, community involvement, culture, and career growth are organizational strategies (Idris, 2014) and could help senior leaders to decrease voluntary turnover. Specific retention strategies are needed to improve retention of employees and if strategies are not developed it can affect whole organizational performance (Yang et

al., 2012). The implementation of these strategies can also help an organization improve as a whole since the organization is made up of many units or employees and the improvement of its leaders and staff may result in the betterment of the entire organization.

Leaders can also provide individual growth that could produce organizational improvements based on the findings are targeted training, respect, feedback, culture, and communication. All of these strategies and methods are those that could provide knowledge to business leaders and increase the ability for Millennial retention (Durocher et al., 2016). While most of the strategies and methods mentioned in this study can give business leaders positive retention more than one may need to be implemented for better results. As P4 stated, organizational culture will need to be added to other strategies to be effective. Millennials need an environment where they feel appreciated, respected, and compensated well to improve retention.

Implications for Social Change

The implications of the social change in this research on strategies and methods that leaders can use to retain Millennial employees based on the findings are career growth, communication, community involvement, compensation, culture, feedback, training, respect, relationship. Using the strategies above, business leaders can retain the Millennial generation of employees, which will have a positive impact on society due to a better economy with a higher employment rate. If business leaders use these strategies, it may increase the satisfaction of Millennial employees, which correlates to less turnover (Yang et al., 2012). If leaders achieve higher Millennial retention organizations will be

able to reduce hiring and training costs due to turnover, which will improve the economy (Hancock et al., 2013; Nyberg & Ployhart, 2013). Organizations that use the community involvement strategy will also have additional resources to practice philanthropy. Local communities can benefit if additional resources are available and community engagement happens through organizational level philanthropy. Last, this research may affect social change by providing future researchers with more understanding on retention strategies to use for retaining the Millennial generation.

Recommendations for Action

Organizations and their leaders should pay attention to the results and consider assessing the strategies and methods they use to retain their Millennial employees. Leaders must evaluate and manage generational differences using strategies that will allow them to utilize all members of the organization especially Millennials (Hendricks & Cope, 2012). Organizations, government agencies, business leaders and researchers should pay attention to these results. If the organizational leaders discover that there are no strategies for retaining Millennials, then they should start incorporating some of the strategies in this study. The strategies include career growth, communication, community involvement, compensation, culture, feedback, training, respect, and relationship. Businesses should seek training on these strategies to execute them efficiently. Leaders should continuously develop these strategies through reading literature, attending conferences, and participate in training on these strategies. Leaders that use retention strategies to influence Millennials behaviors and attitude help reach organizational goals (Chacko, Williams, & Schaffer, 2012). I plan to disseminate the results through the

publishing of this doctoral study and by providing training for leaders of small to medium organizations.

Recommendations for Further Research

In future research, I recommend researchers conduct different types of studies to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon. First, I recommend a multiple case study with several organizations within the Washington, DC area. Second, I recommend a single case study with a large organization that has a potential sample size of over 20 business leaders that can provide a better understanding of the significance of my findings. Third, I recommend completing a multiple case study with business leaders across the United States to assess the value the emerged themes has in different parts of the United States. Lastly, I recommend completing a single or multiple case study with business leaders in various countries to discover if the same themes emerge in a different country and culture.

I believe a larger company or using an expanded geographical location can solve the first and fourth limitations of my study. The second and third limitations are all considered normal issues when trying to conduct research. It is hard to know as the researcher if you will be able to obtain consent from all potential participants or if time will allow you to meet the potential participants.

Reflections

The doctoral study process provided a wealth of knowledge for what is required to conduct research. I never realized at the start of this process the actual amount of time, effort, quality, and information that I would learn. The literature review was difficult but

rewarding once I understood how to research and write that sub-section. The data collection process was not difficult but analyzing the data I collected took time because it was challenging to understand what the data analysis represented and how to put the data into words anyone could understand. By using the interview protocol, I was able to mitigate any personal bias that may affect the participants or situations. The only change to my thinking after completing this study is that it takes longer to complete than I previously assumed.

Conclusion

Millennial generation of employees will grow until they make up approximately 25% of the workforce (Murphy, 2012). Due to the percentage, this generation will be of the population; it is essential for organizations to take into consideration, create, and maintain strategies and methods that can retain Millennials. Leaders must assess and manage generational differences as strategies that will utilize all members of the organization especially Millennials (Hendricks & Cope, 2012). The specific business problem for this doctoral study was that business leaders lack strategies and methods to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years. Based on this specific business problem a qualitative case study provided an answer the following research question: What strategies and methods do business leaders need to implement to motivate and retain Millennial employees for more than 3 years? Four senior business leaders from a small-sized company in the Washington, DC metropolitan area participated in semistructured interviews and company documents, and peer-reviewed references triangulated the interview data.

After collecting and analyzing the data, two main themes emerged from the data (a) essential strategies for leaders to retain Millennials and (b) most effective methods leaders use to retain Millennials. The findings revealed eight sub-themes that presented themes for the essential strategies, which were (a) career growth, (b) communication, (c) community involvement, (d) compensation, (e) culture, (f) feedback, (g) training, and (h) respect. The most effective methods to retain Millennials were (a) open lines of communication, (b) relationship with management, and (c) targeted training. The findings reveal what methods organizations and business leaders need to incorporate into their retention plan for Millennials. The general systems theory representation in the findings showed that business leaders must work as a whole organization (system) to retain Millennials (Shannon, 2013; Thomas, 2015). Transformational leadership also impacted this study's findings due to the characteristics leaders must exhibit and maintain to retain employees (Syrek et al., 2013).

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Appendix A: Informed Consent for Participants Over 18 Years of Age

You are invited to take part in a research study of the strategies leaders are practicing to retain Millennials employees (individuals under the age of 34). You were invited to the study because you (a) are serving as a leader in the company in the Washington, District of Columbia Metro Area (b) you have supervisory responsibility for at least two Millennials. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Alphonso Simmons, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background information:

The purpose of this study is to explore strategies leaders are practicing to retain employees. Exploring retention strategies being used by effective leaders may be helpful in developing effective strategies for retaining Millennial employees.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a semistructured, audiotaped interview with the researcher regarding retention strategies leaders are practicing to retain Millennial employees. The duration of the interview will be 60 to 120 minutes.
- Member check the interview data, which is ensuring your opinions about the initial findings and interpretation is accurate.

Here are some sample questions:

1. What strategies do you use to retain Millennials?
2. What are the critical factors you use to retain Millennials?

Voluntary nature of the study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision as to whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and benefits of being in the study:

The time commitment related to this study is that you will be required to complete the 60 to 120 minute interview during or after normal work hours. You will be given a copy of the results of this study for your personal information. There are no other risks related to this study. More importantly, your participation will contribute to the knowledge base relevant to strategies leaders can practice retaining Millennial employees.

Compensation:

A thank you gift of a \$10 Visa gift card will be provided for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

Some individuals in the company may know that you participated in the study by seeing you talk with me. However, any information that you provide (i.e. responses to interview questions) will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. The electronic information will be stored on a password-protected flash drive, and documents related to this study will be kept in a locked file storage cabinet which only the researcher will have access. Data will be kept for a period of at least five years, after which they will be destroyed.

Contacts and Questions:

You may contact the researcher, Alphonso Simmons, at Alphonso.simmons@waldenu.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty mentor and doctoral study chair, Dr. Matthew Knight, at matthew.knight@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210, and her email is IRB@waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is 12-16-15-0470707, and it expires on December 15, 2016.

Statement of consent:

I have read the above information, and I feel that I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing this consent form, I am agreeing to participate in the study based on the terms described above and will receive a copy of the signed consent form for my records.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Printed name of participant | _____ |
| Date of consent | _____ |
| Participant's written signature | _____ |
| Researcher's written signature | _____ |

Appendix B: Semistructured Interview Questions

Demographic Questions

1. How many years have you served as a leader of Millennial employees?
2. In the past two years, how many Millennial employees have voluntarily resigned from your department?
3. How many direct and indirect employees (reports) are you responsible for leading?
4. What is the average tenure of Millennial professionals in your organization and department?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies and methods do you use to retain Millennial employees?
2. What are the critical factors you use to retain Millennial employees?
3. What retention strategies and methods do you use to retain Millennial employees in your organization?
4. What strategies and methods do you use that are least effective in retaining Millennial employees in your organizations?
5. What strategies and methods do you use that are most effective in retaining Millennial employees?
6. What other strategies and methods and leadership characteristics do you use that are beneficial in retaining Millennials?
7. In your experience, what barriers prohibit retention method and strategies from being successful?

8. What other information would you like to provide that we have not addressed already?

Appendix C: Consent to Use and Reproduce

Permission to use and reproduce interviewing instrument

From: Alphonso Simmons <alphonso.simmons@waldenu.edu>

Thu, Mar 12, 2015, at 7:49 PM

To: Shannon Thomas <shannon.thomas2@waldenu.edu>

Hello Dr. Thomas,

I am a doctoral student at Walden University pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration degree. I am writing my doctoral study project tentatively entitled "A Case Study: Exploring Millennial Retention Strategies in the Workplace." I am requesting your permission to use and reproduce in my study some or the entire interviewing instrument (or a variation of the instrument) from the following study:

I am requesting to use and reproduce this instrument under the following conditions:

1. I will use this survey only for my research study and will not sell or use it for any compensated or curriculum development activities.
2. I will send a copy of my doctoral study that uses this instrument promptly to your attention upon final approval.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by emailing a written approval by replying to this email and given your written consent to use.

Thank you for your assistance,

Alphonso Simmons
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University

Shannon Thomas <shannon.thomas2@waldenu.edu>

Fri, Mar 13, 2015, at 3:54 AM

To: Shannon Thomas <shannonjthomas1@gmail.com>,
Alphonso Simmons <alphonso.simmons@waldenu.edu>

Alphonso,

Based on the conditions that you have described, it is an honor to grant you permission to use and reproduce the instrument from the published research project Entitled "Exploring Strategies for Retaining Information Technology Professionals: A Case Study".

Good luck on your research and I look forward to reading your completed doctoral study.

Dr. Shannon Thomas

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

- A. The interview session will commence with salutations, introducing myself to the research participant, after which I will introduce the research topic.
- B. I will thank the participant for taking the time to respond to the invitation to participate.
- C. I will ask if the participant has any questions before proceeding to sign the consent form.
- D. The participant will be given a copy of the consent form for their records.
- E. The tape recorder will be turned on, and I will note the date, time, and location.
- F. The coded sequential interpretation of the participant's name e.g. 'respondent M1..' will be indicated on the audio recorder (or electronic storage device), documented on my copy of the consent form and the interview will begin.
- G. The interview will span approximately 120 minutes for responses to the eight interview questions, including any additional follow-up questions.
- H. I will remind participants of the purpose of the study before asking questions 3 and 6. The purpose of the case study is to explore Millennial retention strategies and methods in the workplace.
- I. Then, I will inform the participant regarding the review of the interview report that I will make available after my transcription.
- J. At the end of the interview, I will thank the research participant for taking the time to participate in the study.