

2023

Lived Experiences of Millennial Employees Engaged in Mentorship in Their Workplaces for Turnover Reduction

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Shaundra Rochelle Webb

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2023

Abstract

Lived Experiences of Millennial Employees Engaged in Mentorship in Their Workplaces
for Turnover Reduction

by

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MPhil, Walden University, 2023

MSc, Walden University, 2012

Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance, Houston Baptist University, 1998

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Management

Walden University

September 2023

Abstract

While the Millennial generation is steadily taking over jobs that were previously assigned to Baby Boomers, it is unclear how the current job market and modern work environment are adjusting to accommodate this new and unique generation. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The research question was: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplace's turnover reduction. Employing a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach and purposive sampling technique, the researcher recruited 16 participants to complete semi structured interviews using Zoom. The interviews were 60 to 90 minutes in length. The researcher identified six themes through Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. Participants expressed that mentorship was helpful because it allowed them to do the following: ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow. The conclusions in this study included the development of policies and programs that keep Millennials motivated to work. The potential positive social change outcomes include reduced turnover and improved organizational retainment.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to my late mother, Patricia A. Hopkins-Paul. I could not have come to this point in my life without your teachings, upbringing, words of wisdom, and most of all, LOVE. I will never forget when I told you that I wanted to be a doctor when I was a little girl; you have always believed in me and told me that I could do that—and even more. You gave me the confidence to be more than what my fears would try to tell me. My work is a testament to your prayers that God continues to answer even though you are not here with me. There were many times when I didn't think that I would complete this journey, but I would hear your voice saying "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Mommy, I love you forever.

I would like to thank my father, Roosevelt Paul, Sr. Thank you for your sacrifice and always making sure that I had everything that I needed. You are one of my biggest supporters and have always been such a man of integrity that I admire. I am also forever grateful to my dear and closest friends who have been rooting me on since the beginning of this journey. The way that all of you celebrate my efforts and encourage me overwhelms my heart with gratitude.

A special dedication to my entire family, who have been there being my cheerleaders on the sidelines telling me not to quit. Thank you for always encouraging me to take care of myself during this journey. To my nieces, I hope that you are inspired and will go even further than I could dream of. I wish I could name every family member and friend that has been a part of my journey, but I would fill this page up with your generosity and names. You all know who you are and what you mean to me.

I want to thank my Pastor, Lorenzo Ewing, and First Lady Kandice Ewing and the

Fellowship of Love Church family for over 20 years of your continued prayers, declarations, and support. You have no idea the amount of strength I draw from you each day. There were times that you believed in me more than I believed in myself.

Acknowledgments

Foremost, I would like to extend my sincerest expression of gratitude to my committee Chairman, Dr. Paul Frankenhauser. You have been my mentor and advisor as I have prepared my study for the past few years. You were also so encouraging in telling me I could do it, and you pushed me even when I was slacking. Thank you to my committee member, Dr. Lisa Barrow, who helped me dig deeper into my research to complete a well-thought-out research study.

I would also like to thank those who were a part of this research. Your support will always be remembered and appreciated.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my mom, Patricia A. Hopkins-Paul and Dad, Roosevelt Paul Sr., for the sacrifices you made to make sure that finished college time after time again. The way you would brag on me to everyone pushed me to be more and do more. I love you with all my heart. I will continue to make your proud and be more than what I could dream of.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The Millennial generation has begun to replace the previous generational workforce in the United States (Dimock, 2019); however, it is not known what strategies organizational leaders can use to improve Millennial employees' job engagement. The Millennial generation includes individuals born between the years 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2019). Recent scholars have predicted that the Millennial generation currently represents 34% of the current workforce (Brown, 2018). Current researchers have found that the Millennial workforce is significantly more likely to separate from their jobs than previous generations (Firfiray & Mayo, 2017; Purba & Anata Dwi, 2018; Walden et al., 2017). The previous generation, Generation X, were born between 1961 and 1981, while baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 (Walden et al., 2017). Multiple investigators have documented rising turnover rates correlated with the induction of the Millennial generation into the workforce (George & Wallio, 2017; Hammond et al., 2019). Hammond et al. (2019) noted that excessive turnover leads to financial loss and disruptions in the daily workflow. Turnover rates vary by corporation and industry, but recent turnover-related deficits for entry-level positions (e.g., receptionist) cost an estimated \$6,000 to \$12,000 for a single employee (Mohammed et al., 2016). Thus, increased turnover rates within the Millennial generation are problematic for large corporations and small businesses (George & Wallio, 2017).

Multiple researchers have attempted to investigate the reason for increased turnover within the Millennial generation (Bottomley & Willie Burgess, 2018; Carter & Walker, 2018). Previous researchers focused on the personality and work characteristics

of the Millennial generation (Carter & Walker, 2018; Kaplan et al., 2018). Academic researchers noted that early characterizations of the Millennial generation were based upon stereotypes of laziness, narcissism, and the desire for constant praise (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). More recent researchers, however, have noted that while these stereotypes may be true for a percentage of the population, the Millennial generation can be more accurately characterized by their desire for different goals than previous generations (Baek & Bramwell, 2016; Humphries et al., 2018). These include a high priority for an appropriate work-life balance and improved quality of life (Campione, 2016).

High turnover rates disrupt organizations financial stability and productivity (A. Smith et al., 2019; U.S. Department of Labor, 2019), requiring exploration of how engagement and mentorship strategies affect their turnover rates (Fry, 2018). Job turnover across the United States is significantly high (Brougham & Haar, 2020; Fry, 2018). In particular, high job turnover is documented most significantly among the Millennial generation (Fry, 2018). Previous researchers indicated a critical need to reduce turnover rates through the process of mentorship programs (Fry, 2018).

This chapter includes (a) background, (b) problem statement, (c) purpose of the study, (d) research questions, (e) theoretical framework, (f) nature of the study, (g) definitions, (h) assumptions, (i) scope and delimitations, (j) limitations, (k) significance, and a summary. My goal in this first chapter is to provide context and sound reasoning for the importance of addressing engagement and mentorship strategies as used by organizations to target job engagement among Millennials.

Problem Statement

The evidence illustrates successful mentorship strategies in fields such as education and medical-related work (Kumar & Kumar, 2018; Naim, 2018). Mentorship researchers have demonstrated that it is possible to positively influence job satisfaction, improved retention, and engagement in the workplace (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019). Previous scholars have indicated that Millennials hold unique skills and values that make them an asset to any organization (Jayadeva, 2018; Kumar & Kumar, 2018; Naim, 2018; Suh & Hargis, 2016); however, Millennials are also more likely to leave their jobs (Jayadeva, 2018; Suh & Hargis, 2016). Millennial turnover rates are significantly high across differing workplaces (Suh & Hargis, 2016). The financial cost of hiring, training, and maintaining a salary for each employee is high; however, each time an organization loses an employee, the cost is increased substantially in generations (A. Smith et al., 2019; U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Data from the U.S. Department of Labor illustrated that job separations cost organizations in 2019 a total of 5.5 million. Such an assessment is critical, as job turnover represents a significant economic cost to organizations (Jayadeva, 2018; Purba & Anata Dwi, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017).

The general problem was that high turnover rates disrupt organizations financial stability and productivity (Fry, 2018; Haider et al., 2020; A. Smith et al., 2019). The specific problem was the lack of knowledge regarding how employed Millennials engaged in mentorship experiences turnover reduction in their workplaces (Fry, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Suh & Hargis, 2016).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The phenomenon of interest was engagement strategies and mentorship programs for Millennial employees in Houston, Texas. I collected data using participant interviews and conducted thematic analysis of the data to produce conclusions for the study.

Research Questions

I developed the following research question to guide this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees regarding engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates in Houston, Texas?

Conceptual Framework

The phenomenon that I investigated in this study was the engagement and mentorship of Millennial employees to address high turnover rates. I examined the positive impact of engagement and mentorship, as informed by transformational leadership, on turnover rates for Millennials in Houston, Texas. I used the concepts of transformational leadership to understand how engagement and mentorship approaches are used to improve turnover rates of Millennial employees.

Engagement refers to the interest and continued commitment to an organization by Millennial employees (Kaplan et al., 2018; Walden et al., 2017). Researchers have highlighted the importance of engagement to reducing turnover (Chang et al., 2021;

Pattnaik & Panda, 2020; Zhang et al., 2018). A fully engaged employee tends to allocate their physical, cognitive, and emotional resources to their role and responsibilities at work, influencing overall employee performance (Ghazawy et al., 2021). When employees are willing to devote their efforts to do well in their work, they are likely to stay in their jobs rather than leave them (Ghazawy et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2018). In this manner, turnover intentions are reduced.

The second component of the framework is mentoring. Formal mentoring is a structured process that is typically conducted at the workplace or in a professional setting (Hamilton et al., 2019). Mentorship has been found as a possible method for retaining employees and decreasing job turnover (Hechl, 2017; Jyoti & Rani, 2019; Rohantinsky et al., 2020). Rohantinsky et al. (2020) found that formal mentorship programs had positive impacts on workplace relationships, which included positive leader-follower relationships. Carrison (2017) claimed that mentoring programs ensure that employees are trained and are committed to their employer. Mentorship, however, has been used less extensively for the purpose of business strategies (Hamilton et al., 2019).

The third component is reduced turnover. Job turnover refers to the voluntary and involuntary separation of an employee from their employer (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Job turnover can be related to multiple factors, including decreased job satisfaction, job burnout, dissatisfaction with employee benefits, or changes in career directions (Gittleman, 2019). Such high turnover has corresponding financial costs (A. Smith et al., 2019), which makes exploring this topic relevant to an organization.

The fourth component of the conceptual framework is transformational

leadership. Transformational leadership is a style of leading wherein leaders are most effective when they empower and inspire followers (Burns, 1978; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). According to the transformational leadership theory, the effective means for being a leader is through engaging with followers, focusing on workers' intrinsic needs, and raising consciousness about new innovative ways of achieving specific outcomes (Burns, 1978; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Moreover, researchers have explored the relationship between leadership style and practices and the turnover intentions of employees (Manoppo, 2020; Oh & Chhinzer, 2021; Pattnaik & Panda, 2020).

In this study, I explored engagement and mentoring related to Millennial employee turnover. I used the conceptual framework of transformational leadership to focus on the implementation of engagement and mentoring of Millennial employees to reduce turnover.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach to explore employed Millennials' lived experiences with mentorship in their workplaces and determined whether this affected their turnover rates. The qualitative methodology was ideal for this study because my goal was to gather data about a phenomenon (see Tracy, 2019). I did not use a quantitative methodology because I did not intend to gather numerical or statistical data.

I used a descriptive phenomenological design to gather rich data about employed Millennials' lived experiences of engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates. Scholars employ a phenomenological design to

gain an understanding of how participants perceive their experiences and their construction of meaning from these events (Moustakas, 1994). In a phenomenological approach, researchers gather data that are specific to these events and then consider how participants construct meaning based on their reflections (Moustakas, 1994).

I explored the lived experiences of Millennial employees in Houston, Texas and their experiences of mentorship and turnover rates. My goal was to understand how mentorship impacts individuals and reduces their job turnover. I used purposive sampling and a series of inclusion criteria to determine my participant pool (see Lavrakas, 2008). The sampling criteria included (a) employment in the Houston area, (b) familiarity with engagement approaches in their organization, (c) familiarity with mentorship approaches in their organization, (d) being over the age of 18 years old, and (e) willingness to be audio-recorded and interviewed for 60 to 90 minutes. I did not need site authorization, as I conducted all interviews through Zoom. The organizations within the Houston, Texas region requested a recruitment flyer. I used the electronic distribution of the recruitment flyer throughout a large corporate organization in the Houston area. To analyze the data, I used the thematic analysis procedure of Braun and Clarke (2019).

Definitions

Engagement: Engagement in the context of this study refers to the interest and continued commitment to an organization by Millennial employees (Kaplan et al., 2018; Walden et al., 2017). Engagement is essential for workplaces, as it ensures that each employee is productive and willing to continually work within the organization (Kaplan et al., 2018).

Mentorship strategies: Mentorships can be employed in formal or informal manners. Informal mentorship can involve a friend, a co-worker, or a family member. Informal membership can take place anywhere. Formal mentorship is a structured process that is typically conducted at the workplace or in a professional setting (Hamilton et al., 2019).

Millennial: Millennials are a generation that was born between 1980 to 1995 (George & Wallio, 2017). This specific generation holds differing personalities and characteristics (George & Wallio, 2017). The Millennial generation is more likely to enjoy a work-life balance and align with workplaces that hold similar values as themselves (George & Wallio, 2017).

Turnover: Job turnover refers to the voluntary and involuntary separation of an employee from their employer (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019).

Assumptions

Research assumptions are variables that researchers must assume as true but cannot empirically verify (Tracy, 2019). My first assumption was that participants were honest in their reflections. The participants may have felt that they needed to respond in a way that I desired, which means that they would not be providing honest reflections. This was an essential assumption, as it was not possible to know the individual participants' underlying feelings. It was not possible to verify this, but I made all efforts to ensure that participants were comfortable.

The next assumption was that all participants reflected honestly on the inclusion criteria for this study, which was necessary for participants to be included in the study. I

did not seek out any proof of the individuals' employment or use of mentorship and engagement strategies. I believed that this approach would be difficult to gather, as well as likely to impact the individuals' personal information. It is important to note that all participants' responses to the inclusion criteria were based on their honesty and their integrity.

The next assumption was that the guiding research questions addressed the purpose of this study. It was not possible to verify this assumption prior to the conclusion of this study. I ensured that the guiding methodology, design, and methods for data collection and analysis were appropriately aligned with these foundational elements of the qualitative research study. Additionally, I reviewed and considered all elements of the study design in the context of methodological literature for qualitative research.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was employed Millennials in Houston, Texas that were familiar with engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates. This delimitation was necessary to constrain the research to a geographic setting that is appropriate for me to gather data in a sufficient period. The phenomenological approach necessitates a small sample size, which is appropriate for the geographic constraint.

Data collection was delimited to semistructured interviews with 16 participants. This sample size was delimited due to the recommendations for a phenomenological sample set (Moustakas, 1994). If sample saturation was not met, I would have continued to collect data through semistructured interviews per recommendations (see Moustakas,

1994; Tracy, 2019). The study was also delimited to the use of Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-step guide to thematic analysis. This delimitation was chosen as a means of thematic analysis that provides a guideline for novice researchers. This approach allowed for the gathering of textual data and analysis through a thematic approach that provided information to address the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Limitations

The limitations of a study area are important to acknowledge as they can impact the findings of the study. The first limitation is that this study was constricted to Houston, Texas. This limitation was necessary to ensure that the study was completed promptly. This also the findings in terms of transferability. The study was also limited in terms of the small sample size, which—although appropriate for the phenomenological design—may limit the transferability of the findings. When using a phenomenological approach, the sample size is expected to be smaller than a quantitative or other qualitative approach (Tracy, 2019). This limitation was necessary and appropriate for the purpose of this study.

The study limitation is also towards qualitative data, which was aligned with the purpose of this study. The qualitative data focused on the lived experiences of the individuals (Tracy, 2019). As a result, this information was limited in terms of generalizability. I employed a discussion in Chapter 5 to extend the findings by discussing congruent literature. In this chapter, I also clearly discuss the methods used for this study to extend the findings of the study to future explorations.

Significance of the Study

The study has significant contributions to three aspects. First is the significance to practice. Second is the significance to theory. Third is the significance to social change.

Significance to Practice

Previous studies have addressed the effect of mentoring programs for Millennial generations as a method for decreasing job turnover. Currently, mentoring has received mixed reviews within academic literature. Park (2015) found that mentoring was successful in increasing work relationships and job satisfaction. Conversely, Fogarty et al. (2017) argued that their statistical analyses indicated that mentoring had little impact upon job turnover reduction. Mentoring remains a pervasive idea within current methods for improving corporate structures and business strategies (Cole, 2018). The current study is significant in terms of practice as the findings may extend the understanding of employed Millennials lived experiences regarding engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates, in Houston, Texas. Leaders and organizations in these settings may employ similar strategies as a means of reducing job turnover. This is important for practice, as this can improve the job turnover rates while also improving the financial cost that is associated with this phenomenon. As a result, reducing job turnover and the financial costs can be positively associated with positive social change through improving organizational ability to retain qualified participants and ensure that business costs are appropriate.

Significance to Theory

This study may also contribute towards the theoretical framework of

transformational leadership by providing information for leadership that seeks to better employee productivity and reduce job turnover. The findings of this study may benefit theory through demonstrating mentoring as a means of reducing turnover through the efforts of leadership. The findings of this study may add to the current theoretical knowledge and expanding the understanding of the application of leadership knowledge towards mentorship strategies among Millennial populations.

Significance to Social Change

This study is significant, as the findings may positively contribute to social change. Positive social change may occur through improved awareness of people on the effective mentorship strategies for reducing turnover among Millennial employees. Job turnover is a costly phenomenon that impacts all organizations. Therefore, improving the awareness on effective measures for reducing turnover may be used in providing opportunities for organization to minimize financial expenses associated with employee turnover. The findings of this study may also contribute positively to the career and professional development of Millennial employees, through better identifying the strategies that can engage them in the workplace and ensure that they are satisfied with their jobs in the organizations they serve.

Summary and Transition

In Chapter 1, I provided an overview of the study, including the problem, purpose, and research question to be addressed. The problem that I addressed in this study was that Millennial employees lived experiences regarding the engagement strategies and mentorship programs used by organizations in the Houston workforce had

not been established in previous literature (Fry, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative interpretive phenomenological study was to explore lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction in Houston Texas. The main research question was: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees regarding engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates in Houston, Texas? An overview of the conceptual framework was also provided. The details of the framework are present in Chapter 2. The research methodology and design were also discussed briefly in this chapter. I collected data through interviews with participants in a web-based call. Data analysis occurred through thematic analysis guidelines as presented by Braun and Clarke (2019). Chapter 2 contains a literature review related to the study topic and problem.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative interpretive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction in Houston, Texas. The problem of Millennial turnover has been increasingly discussed within academic literature (George & Wallio, 2017; Koppel et al., 2017; Schaefer, 2017; Rodriguez et al., 2019). The Department of Defense, real estate companies, and the healthcare industry have expressed concern for increased job turnover associated with the Millennial generation. Thus, significant research has been completed to understand the characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of Millennials (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2019). Appel-Meulenbroek et al. provided a thorough exploration of the personalities and work ethics of Millennials. Other authors have explored the responsiveness of Millennials to different leadership styles (Bottomley & Willie Burgess, 2018; Carter & Walker, 2018).

Extensive research has been conducted to understand the variables that lead to Millennial job satisfaction (Carillo et al., 2017; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017; Hassan et al., 2019). Researchers have also considered initiatives to meet Millennial turnover rates and raise motivation (Coffey et al., 2018; Koppel et al., 2017; Morrell & Abston, 2018). Recently, scholars turned away from negative stereotypes of Millennials and have argued that businesses should adopt strategies to support their needs (Philip et al., 2017; Purba & Anata Dwi, 2018; Walden et al., 2017). Researchers have provided foundational knowledge concerning what Millennials need and desire, as well as what attracts them to employers (Zaharee et al., 2018). The findings of many of these studies connect the

changing needs of Millennials to their socio-economic backgrounds, which greatly affect their work habits and likelihood to stay employed (Purba & Anata Dwi, 2018). For instance, Millennials are frequently referred to as lazy and likely to leave employment (Chaudhuri, 2019).

Multiple authors have shown that Millennials are more assertive concerning receiving recognition for long-work hours (Chaudhuri, 2019). Instead of laziness, Millennials desire to spend quality time with their families and themselves (Chaudhuri, 2019; MacKenzie & Scherer, 2019; Strawser et al., 2018). These realizations within academia have been vital for the development of business strategies designed to target committed employees (Zhao, 2018).

Despite the findings, Millennials continue to separate from their jobs more frequently than previous generations (Hoffman, 2018; Ng et al., 2018; Phillips, 2018). As turnover rates have failed to be reduced, researchers have turned to workplace strategies such as mentoring programs (Phillips, 2018). Mentoring is one methodology for increasing retention and gained academic attention recently (Carrison, 2017; Hernandez et al., 2018; Naim, 2018). Fortune 500 CEOs have suggested that mentoring is a key strategy in attracting and retaining Millennial employees (Carrison, 2017). Since the early-2000s, mentoring has been extensively suggested as a methodology for increasing the retention of employees (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018).

The success of mentoring is less commonly examined in academic literature. Hernandez et al. (2018) assessed mentoring strategies from a theoretical standpoint but noted a lack in terms of empirical evidence for Millennials specifically. Similarly, Naim

(2018) argued that mentoring is key for Millennials but noted a gap in terms of how the strategy is effective for motivation and for increasing retention of employees. Currently, only a few scholars have argued against the efficacy of mentoring to reduce job turnover (Fogarty et al., 2017). Fogarty et al. tested formal mentoring programs to aid in the development of value congruence (organizational and employee satisfaction) to reduce job turnover. These authors' statistical analyses indicated that mentoring did not reduce the likelihood of employees separating from their jobs (Fogarty et al., 2017). The scope of their study was limited to the self-reported surveys of their participants. Furthermore, the authors did not employ a qualitative approach to understand the lived experiences of the participants who were involved in a mentoring program (Fogarty et al., 2017).

Currently, there is a gap regarding the relationship between Millennial turnover and mentorship programs in the financial industry. The currently available body of literature does not reflect a qualitative phenomenological exploration of the perceptions of Millennial employees towards mentoring. Thus, the methodology and purpose of the current study enabled me to address the current gap in academic literature. It was my intention to further the understanding of the efficacy of mentoring and the applicability of mentoring to reduce Millennial generational job turnover. In the following section, I introduce the purpose of the study and provide specific statements concerning the aim of this research.

Literature Search Strategy

I searched the following academic databases: Google Scholar, EBSCO, Science Direct, SpringerLink, JSTOR, EBSCOHost, and Online Research Databases. I used the

following keywords to find relevant literature: *Millennial generation characteristics, job turnover historically, Millennial generation work ethic, Millennial generation work preferences, generational differences in work ethic, generational differences in job turnover, job turnover effect on business practices, business practices, and the Millennial generation.*

The search terms yielded 92 peer-reviewed research articles. A total of 84 articles were from 2016 to 2019, while eight articles were from prior to 2016. In sum, 91% of reviewed literature was from 2016 to 2019, and only 8% was prior to 2016. I used articles prior to 2016 because they were seminal literature on this topic. I only referenced two dissertations, with all other studies being peer-reviewed. The following section is an outline of the organization of the chapters and of the forthcoming sections. The next section contains a discussion of the search organization of this chapter and of the proceeding sections and subsections.

In the following section, I will present a thorough review of the literature that is relevant to this study. The first section is a definition of the known personality characteristics of the Millennial generation. The following subsection contains an exploration of the work ethics and work characteristics of the Millennial generation and how these relate to modern business practices. I then discuss the foundational literature pertaining to job turnover and the impact of turnover on the financial success of corporate structures. In the following section, I begin the review of the literature with an introduction of the characteristics of the Millennial generation.

Conceptual Foundation

Transformational leadership theory served as the central theory in the conceptual framework for this study. Burns (1978) defined a transformational leader as “one who raises followers’ level of consciousness about the importance and value of desired outcomes and the methods of reaching those outcomes” (p. 141). This was the central theory that I used in this study, together with the components of turnover, engagement, and mentoring for Millennial employees.

Turnover of Millennial Employees

Based on the conceptual framework, the use of mentorship and engagement strategies, as guided by the constructs of transformational leadership, predict reduced turnover rates for Millennial employees. Millennial employees most likely perceive their jobs as a dispensable and temporary aspect of life (Lewis, 2019). Hence, turnover is an issue for the Millennial employee population (Carter & Walker, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Purba & Anata Dwi, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017).

Recent researchers have investigated leadership values, organizational values, job satisfaction, and salary as contributing factors to turnover rates (Baek & Bramwell, 2016; Carrison, 2017; Cheryl, 2019). Despite a renewed understanding of the desires of the Millennial workforce, turnover rates continue to rise (Cheryl, 2019; Ngotngamwong, 2019). Different predictors have been the focus of existing research. For example, Carter and Walker (2018) found that Millennials desire to work for companies that have similar values and morals. In some cases, a Millennial employee does not need to feel dissatisfied to leave a job (Ngotngamwong, 2019). Having better opportunities outside

the company is reason enough to resign from a position (Ngotngamwong, 2019). Other authors have found that attracting Millennials is dependent upon connecting with generational values (Campione, 2016; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017).

Engagement and Mentorship of Millennial Employees

To understand turnover intentions of Millennial employees, it is important to identify the needs and drivers of satisfaction within this population (Abate et al., 2018). In this study, the conceptual framework for reduced turnover only concerned engagement and mentoring, as these two concepts are important to the satisfaction and sense of fulfillment for the Millennial generation. Through this study, I applied the dynamics of the conceptual framework to Millennial employees.

In terms of engagement, researchers have found Millennial employees to value engagement in relation to job satisfaction in order to commit or remain in a specific job (McCarthy, 2019; Walden et al., 2017). Millennials prefer a career where their interest and work align (Jalnawala, 2018). These types of jobs elicit high work engagement from these individuals (Ngotngamwong, 2019). A workplace that values work-life balance is also an important consideration for Millennials to become more engaged with their jobs (Afif, 2019). These are some of the considerations for ensuring positive work engagement of Millennials, which in turn improves their tendencies of remaining in their current jobs.

Through mentoring, employees reported lower levels of stress and burnout (Cavanaugh et al., 2022). Lowering levels of stress and possibilities of burnout for Millennials is an important consideration for turnover reduction (Abate et al., 2018;

Plamann, 2019). Bushardt et al. (2018) argued that Millennial employees have to focus on finding mentoring within their organizations in order to improve performance. Millennials, given the new opportunities and challenges of the current career market, need more mentoring and advocacy from upper management to encourage commitment to an employer (Bushardt et al., 2018). Scholars have yet to explore the role of mentoring in the context of transformational leadership for Millennials as a means to reduce turnover.

Transformational Leadership and Millennial Employees

The transformational leadership theory contains four key constructs: (a) leadership by example, (b) vision-inspired motivation, (c) intellectual development, and (d) individualized guidance. In the first construct, the leader produces change through guiding by example (McCleskey, 2018). In the second construct, the leader inspires change through motivation that is created from a top-down perspective (McCleskey, 2018). In the third construct, a transformational leader encourages self-learning of followers (McCleskey, 2018). In the final construct, individualized guidance is created through specific strategies that are aimed at employee motivation and productivity (McCleskey, 2018). I used these constructs as the basis for understanding and assessing how engagement and mentoring strategies reduce turnover intentions of Millennial employees.

Based on transformational theory, leaders are most effective and impactful when they empower and inspire their followers (Burns, 1978). Such empowerment is achieved through the promotion of personal growth and development among followers (Burns,

1978). Transformational leadership cultivates intrinsic motivation and improves moral values and ethics among followers (Bass, 1985). Based on the core concepts of transformational leadership, this theory is useful in terms of exploring effective leadership for Millennials in the workplace. I used transformational leadership theory in my data collection and analysis regarding effective strategies of engagement and mentorship of Millennial employees.

Studies have been conducted about transformational leadership theory and Millennial employees (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Lusiana, 2021; Yap & Badri, 2021). According to Ibrahim et al. (2022), transformational leadership has a positive and significant impact on Millennial employees' motivation—which, in turn, has a significant positive effect on Millennial employees' performance. Similarly, Lusiana (2021) claimed that transformational leadership has a significant impact on the performance of Millennial employees. In a related study, Yap and Badri (2021) stated that transformational leadership promotes the wellbeing of Millennial employees at work, thereby improving their performance. Overall, transformational leadership has a positive impact on Millennial employees' work performance; however, scholars have yet to fully explore the role of transformational leadership on the strategies for engaging and mentoring Millennial employees to reduce turnover rates.

For this study, the leadership efforts, such as engagement and mentorship strategies, are created from a top-down perspective and ideally implemented to reduce job turnover. Transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on work engagement (Buil et al., 2019). Hence, in this study, I explored engagement strategies in

terms of the constructs of transformational leadership. The use of this theory aided in the understanding of how these theories inform leadership and the assessment of how to reduce job turnover. This theory guided the assessment of this study by providing an understanding of how such approaches may best improve Millennials' job satisfaction and result in reduced job turnover rates among this population.

Literature Review

In the following section, I discuss job turnover and the influence upon corporate structures. The information presented throughout the following section enhances the understanding of empirical literature appropriate to understanding how job turnover influences organizations, decreases employee satisfaction, and can ultimately increase financial adverse outcomes.

Job Turnover and Corporate Structures

The following section contains a definition of foundational terms and a detailed view of job turnover. This section and associated subsections are reviews of the impact of job turnover on corporate financial success. Job turnover refers to the voluntary and involuntary separation of an employee from their employer (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019 [BLS]). Job turnover can be related to multiple factors, including decreased job satisfaction, job burnout, dissatisfaction with employee benefits, or changes in career directions (Gittleman, 2019). Involuntary job separation includes terminations and layoffs (Hyatt et al., 2017). Job separations are tallied by private and federal categories by the U.S. Department of Labor (2019).

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2019), job separations in 2019

totaled 5.5 million. Thus, multiple researchers have turned their attention to job turnover intentions (A. Smith et al., 2019). Job turnover intentions refer to the likelihood that an employee will choose to stay with their current employer or will choose to leave for a different employer (A. Smith et al., 2019). Job turnover research methods have focused upon an individual's job turnover intentions, but fewer studies have focused upon the job turnover intentions of a business organization (Nair & Salleh, 2017). For instance, job turnover intentions for a singular employee can only provide information on that employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Falatah & Salem, 2018; Scanlan & Still, 2019). Those scholars that approach job turnover intentions on an organizational scale may be able to detect the general effectiveness of business strategies to reduce job turnover (Nair & Salleh, 2017). Researchers regarding job satisfaction have demonstrated the impact of internal and external factors. Kim et al. (2016) reviewed turnover in the hotel and international chains and linked job satisfaction with organizational commitment and turnover intention. Kim et al. emphasized the link between the internal company benefits and the intention and individual characteristics of the employee.

The authors of most articles reviewed throughout this paper will interchangeably discuss job turnover and job turnover intention statistics. Notably, job turnover is considered vital statistical knowledge for business strategies; however, predicting turnover has proved to be a variable and often subjective process (Gittleman, 2019). Recent researchers have reported statistics indicating that job turnover is a significant financial burden to businesses (A. Smith et al., 2019). Thus, it is important to consider the financial cost of job turnover in various industries. The following subsection contains a

review of the financial cost of job turnover for large corporations and small businesses.

Financial Cost of Job Turnover

The cost of job turnover is variable by individual industries (A. Smith et al., 2019). The cost of employee separation is traditionally calculated by considering the following variables: the cost of hiring an employee, training, time loss of management for training, the loss of engagement and productivity, errors created by the employee, cost of training material, and the impact of employee separation on existing employees (Haider et al., 2020). It is important to note that the variables and costs associated with job turnover are variable by each firm (Haider et al., 2020). A few examples of the cost of employee turnover are provided by Brougham and Haar (2020) that presented a country-wide analysis of the impact of job turnover rates, as well as turnover intentions. Brougham and Haar (2020) explored the relationships between job insecurity and impact on technology fields and found significant outcomes for the employee's job mobility, as well as the financial success of various industries.

According to Friedman and Neutze (2020), one example of the financial cost of turnover is found in medical assistant turnover rates. Friedman and Neutze performed a retrospective analysis of medical assistance turnover rates and impact financially on clinics. The researchers gathered data from financial status regarding salaries, benefits, hiring, training, and termination during 2017. The authors reported that during 2017 alone, the turnover rate was 59% and cost approximately \$230,000. Friedman and Neutze (2020) reported that the turnover for each individual medical assistant was \$14,200. Job turnover researchers have commonly suggested improved prevention

methods; however, most studies also noted that turnover is highly variable by industry (Friedman & Neutze, 2020). In sum, the loss of an employee, voluntarily or involuntarily, is an extreme financial cost to corporations and small businesses (A. Smith et al., 2019). Variables such as productivity loss and workflow disruptions are invaluable losses to the general success of businesses (Brougham & Haar, 2020; Friedman & Neutze, 2020; Lazear & McCue, 2018). All businesses and corporations accept a marginal degree of turnover (A. Smith et al., 2019); however, the methodologies to decrease excessive turnover are continually debated within academic literature (Lazear & McCue, 2018). The following subsection contains a discussion of the modern turnover crisis in relation to recent generational shifts.

Modern Job Turnover Rates

In this subsection, I will review the status of job turnover rates. I also discuss the variation of job turnover rates as a reflection of generational changes. There are three main generations within the United States workforce (Andrade & Westover, 2018). The baby boomer generation is typically defined as individuals born between the years 1943 to 1960 (Buerhaus et al., 2017). Incoming generations within the workforce include Generation X (1961–1981) and Millennials (1982–2000). Stark differences exist between these three generations and their perceptions towards working (Andrade & Westover, 2018). The personal values and personality traits of the baby boomer generation are typically characterized as committed to a strong work ethic and a decreased likelihood of separating from their jobs (Andrade & Westover, 2018).

Researchers have collected extensive information regarding the characteristics of

the baby boomer generation and Generation X; however, less information is available concerning the work characteristics of Millennials (Andrade & Westover, 2018). LaPoint and Liprie-Spence (2017) explored generational differences and noted that the socio-culture, political, and economic trends surrounding each generation heavily influence their performance in life and the workplace. Andrade and Westover (2018) similarly argued that job satisfaction and work quality characteristics are differing for each generation. The characteristics of the Millennial generation will be further developed in the following subsections; however, it is important to note generational differences when exploring modern job turnover statistics.

Characteristics of the Millennial Generation

Each unique generation holds specific values that, to an extent, differ from the previous generations. In popular media, social media, and on TV, it is common to hear remarks of generational differences. baby boomers versus Millennials, or Millennials versus baby boomers. These stereotypes of generational differences generally lack empirical evidence (Dimock, 2019); however, generational characteristics do exist and require academic examinations to understand how each generation changes, considering their cultural and social background and upbringing. Ideologies of generational differences is a conceptualization that different generations have different values due to the historical and socio-cultural experiences of their generation (Kettler et al., 2016). Stewart et al. (2017) discussed how generational values differencing influence individuals based upon the values associated with different generations. Stewart et al. similarly noted that generational values are influenced by historical and socio-cultural

factors that lead to differences in behaviors, skills, and characteristics. Generations in the United States are most colloquially and academically identified as baby boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Stewart et al., 2017).

The perception of generational differences has led to numerous research regarding specific generations. These ideations of generation are variably incorporated into popular media as well. Various stereotypes of generations are visible in popular media (Clark, 2017). Previous generations have been investigated towards their differences and how these kids are different (Clark, 2017). Academic research has been pointed towards the role, behaviors, skills, and characteristics of the baby boomer, Generation X, and Millennial generations in the workplace and in society (Clark, 2017). Generational research is abundant when examining baby boomers and Millennials (Clark, 2017). An examination of baby boomer literature is expansive due to their experiences with the Vietnam War and financial and economic crises (Clark, 2017). Similarly, Millennials dominate academic literature. Many studies attempt to assess how to reach Millennials and engage them in the workplace (Dimock, 2019).

The characteristics of the Millennial generation are different than previous generations (Vargas-Hernández & Gómez, 2019). This section is intended to provide a review of the characteristics, perceptions towards socio-economic issues, and work-ethic values of the Millennial generation. This section will critically evaluate each of these characteristics in reference to the issue of the increased likelihood of Millennials separating from their jobs. Early stereotypes for Millennials included characteristics of laziness, poor work ethic, and a constant need to be praised (Dimock, 2019). Recent

researchers, however, have reviewed relationships between the cultural origin of the Millennial generation and their work tendencies (Dimock, 2019).

Dimock (2019), in his review of generational characteristics, noted that Millennials entered the workforce during a time of recession. Prior to entering the workforce, Millennials were surrounded by events such as 9/11, the triumph of legalization of gay rights, and the election of the first black president (Dimock, 2019). Dimock (2019) noted that these events led to an ethnically and politically diverse Millennial generation who value technology, conservation, social rights, and diversity. Furthermore, the Millennial generation values self-importance more than previous generations, which has led to some academic debate regarding the impact of selfishness on the productivity of the Millennial generation (Dimock, 2019).

Several researchers have framed Millennial selfishness as a positive trait, which has traditionally led Millennials to care more about their families, themselves, and their personal growth (MacKenzie & Scherer, 2019). Other authors have noted that these tendencies indicate that Millennials are less likely to commit to a job (Dimock, 2019; McCarthy, 2019; Pyöriä et al., 2017). Vargas-Hernández and Gómez (2019) argued that Millennial priorities are based around consumption, but for the means of a happier social life and balanced work-life. Further, Dewi et al. (2020) argued that Millennials lack financial literacy due to the economic and social conditions that shaped the early 2000s. Conversely, research from Yunita and Saputra (2019) emphasized that the Millennial generation feels extreme stress in the workplace and are often lacking self-esteem despite the previous stereotypes of narcissism in Millennial generations. The representations in

this paragraph represent a mixed perception of Millennials that requires empirical research to improve upon our understanding of stereotypes. In the following subsections, I will further examine the academic discourse related to Millennial performance within corporate sectors.

Work Loyalty Characteristics of Millennial Generation

Loyalty is vital to the success of a large corporation or a small business. Loyalty indicates an employer will not suffer financial loss due to job separation and will ensure continued workflow and productivity (Miller, 2017); however, employee loyalty is difficult to predict (Lewicka et al., 2018; Miller, 2017). In the previous section, I noted that popular depictions of Millennials are lazy, selfish, and lacking loyalty to an industry or employer (Chaudhuri, 2019; Dimock, 2019; McCarthy, 2019; Pyöriä et al., 2017). Academic research within the past decade has explored the accuracy of these stereotypes towards Millennials' perceptions of work loyalty (Chaudhuri, 2019; MacKenzie & Scherer, 2019; Strawser et al., 2018).

Researchers have demonstrated the importance of work loyalty to the Millennial generation. Rodriguez et al. (2019) explored Generation Z and Millennials' work loyalty and entrepreneurship in sales-based fields. Thematic analysis was conducted with 51 hiring managers to assess their perceptions of each generation. The hiring managers remarked that both generations demonstrated high qualities of loyalty, grit, and entrepreneurship. The manager noted that despite previous stereotypes that Millennials are committed to the workplace when they are provided with benefits and motivation to stay in their field. The findings of Rodriguez et al. indicated evidence for the importance

of managerial perspectives but also demonstrated the lacking studies that explore the findings from the perspective of Millennial employees.

Similarly, Bushardt et al. (2018) found that Millennials are more likely to leave their employment, not as a lack of work loyalty but as a reflection of a lack of career advancement opportunities. The authors provided, based upon their literature review and personal experiences, twelve factors of consideration to Millennial individuals in management positions (Bushardt et al., 2018). Bushardt et al. argued that Millennial employees should focus on finding mentoring within their organizations, be assertive, and be open-minded to harsh criticism. The authors noted that Millennials are facing new challenges to career advancement than previous generations, which may require more mentoring and advocacy from upper management to encourage Millennials to commit to an employer. It is noteworthy that the author's examination, although useful, was theoretical, which limits the evaluation of the effectiveness of the author's advice (Bushardt et al., 2018).

The investigators of some studies have applied similar concepts to participant sample sets and achieved similar findings as Bushardt et al. (2018). Walden et al. (2017) explored the connection between job turnover, job satisfaction, and employee organizational relationships (EOR) for 539 Millennial employees. These authors gathered data from a series of online surveys within multiple consulting firms. The resultant participant responses were assessed thematically and critically assessed (Walden et al., 2017). The authors found that Millennials who connected with an employer and had strong employee organizational relationships were more likely to have loyalty to their job

(Walden et al., 2017). Conversely, Millennials who did not connect with their employer were unlikely to be committed to their employment (Walden et al., 2017). These researchers' findings indicate that employees who are engaged with their work and the values of their employers are more likely to be committed (Walden et al., 2017).

The purpose of the Walden et al. (2017) study was not to establish the work loyalty tendency of Millennials, but instead to elucidate the variables behind job turnover and lack of work loyalty, which has become a concern for modern corporations. Furthermore, these findings directly disagree with previous abetments of Millennial laziness (e.g., Pyöriä et al., 2017) and reveal that the Millennial generation values engagement and organizational relationships differently than previous generations (McCarthy, 2019; Walden et al., 2017). Multiple researchers have agreed that the commitment of Millennial generations is dependent upon their job satisfaction.

It is important to note that the reviewed studies assessed within this section collected data via online surveys, which indicates that all responses were self-assessed based upon questions predetermined by the authors (e.g., Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017). Though this methodology is effective, especially for large-scale explorations, it should be noted that these authors did not employ a phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of Millennials' perceptions. Furthermore, other studies assessed in this section provided critical analyses, literature reviews, or theoretical explorations towards Millennial perceptions towards job loyalty (e.g., Bushardt et al., 2018). These methodologies are useful and enable a critical examination of the current discourse towards Millennials; however, these methods are limited to the exploration of

common qualities and characteristics of Millennials versus phenomenological explorations. In sum, the findings of the reviewed studies found that Millennials are more likely to leave their jobs if they are not engaged, satisfied with pay, and have career advancement opportunities (Bushardt et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017). These trends differ from previous generations, who were committed to employers, despite a lack of satisfaction with pay or career opportunities (Walden et al., 2017). The findings of these studies are foundational knowledge towards the variables which may lead to increased job turnover in the Millennial generations (Bushardt et al., 2018; Walden et al., 2017). The following section contains a review of the leadership characteristics for Millennials and an exploration of the academic connections between Millennial leadership and increased job turnover.

Millennial Perceptions of Leadership

There are multiple characteristics that are at the center of academic discourse pertaining to job turnover and the Millennial generation. Multiple scholars have noted generational changes in the perception of Millennial workers towards leadership (Anderson et al., 2017; Barron & Novak, 2017; McCleskey, 2018). Leadership theory is consistently evolving for effectiveness, and recently researchers such as Barron and Novak (2017) and Anderson et al. (2017) emphasized the impact of changing generational perceptions on leadership theory. McCleskey (2018) similarly argued for a renewed focus on the Millennial views towards leadership to improve Millennial employee retention. McCleskey reviewed Millennial leadership perceptions and found that Millennials placed importance on work-life balance. Indicating that work, although

important to maintaining lifestyle choices, is not the central focus of Millennials' lifeways. McCleskey further noted that Millennials prefer to work in environments that are social and have flexible boundaries between superiors and subordinates. The findings of McCleskey indicated that changing generational perspectives have influenced their expectations of employees towards leaders and desired work environments. McCleskey and Barron and Novak (2017) shared the argument of needing changing leadership practices to reflect the needs and behaviors of Millennials. McCleskey's (2018) study did not connect Millennial perceptions of leadership with job turnover rates; however, this author noted that generational changes are impactful variables for considerations of Millennial needs in modern workplaces.

Other scholars have argued that not all the perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes of Millennials should be adjusted for in the workplace. In the Rudolph et al. (2018) review of Millennials in the workplace, the authors noted that some generational attributes could not be incorporated into every industry. They noted that generational views of leadership are problematic as they generalize the needs of individuals into monolithic wholes. Rudolph et al. further argued that Millennial perceptions are variable, and case-by-case methodologies may be more applicable when adjusting work-place practices.

Most studies, such as McCleskey (2018) and Anderson et al. (2017), have focused upon the behaviors and attitudes of Millennials towards leadership. Less common are critical examinations of the connection between Millennial perceptions of leadership and increased Millennial job separations. A. Smith et al. (2019) addressed the connection between authentic leadership and job turnover intentions within the healthcare field;

however, they did not address variables by a generational scope. Similarly, Bottomley and Willie Burgess (2018) argued that interdisciplinary methods should be developed to teach Millennials key leadership skills, but their study did not address connections between the Millennial perception of leadership and job turnover intentions.

Currently, academic explorations of Millennial turnover intentions and leadership perceptions are constrained to developing generalized characteristics of Millennials within the workforce (Rudolph et al., 2018). In sum, the critical analysis by Rudolph et al. noted that generational studies had presented mixed findings regarding the perception, behaviors, and attitudes of Millennials towards leadership. Overall, connections between job turnover and Millennial perceptions towards leadership have been understudied within academic literature. Studies towards job turnover and Millennial perceptions of leadership are limited (Bottomley & Willie Burgess, 2018); however, multiple studies have been conducted to examine the methods developed towards managing the Millennial generation. The following subsection reviews the academic discourse related to Millennial generational management.

Challenges to Managing Millennial Employees

The increased job turnover associated with the Millennial generation has led some authors to discuss possible issues related to managing Millennials. Robison (2019) argued that increased Millennial turnover might be related to difficulties in managing the Millennial generation. Similarly, Zhao (2018) examined businesses' strategies for managing Millennial employees in China and found that generational changes have created problems for effectively retaining employees. Zhao surveyed 589 employees and

interviewed 150 employees to examine Millennial characteristics within China, finding that disagreements between human resource departments and employees created dissatisfaction within the Millennial employment base. Furthermore, this author found that Millennials within China had differing perceptions towards management than previous generations. Zhao argued for improved human resource management strategies to assist employees and management with reducing turnover and improving job satisfaction among Millennial employees. Although based in China, Zhao placed importance on the need for creating new business practices for Millennial management practices.

Previous assessments also demonstrate that the Millennial generation is best managed through compassion and engagement. Meng et al. (2017) explored the management of Millennials through an assessment of 39 working Millennials in differing organizations. Interviews with participants demonstrated that Millennials are aimed at engaging jobs with detailed communication and flexibility. Participants also noted that the use of independent working assignments with clear instructions is key towards their engagement in the workplace. The findings of Meng et al. (2017) are a unique contribution to the literature by demonstrating the importance of gaining the perspectives of Millennials. Means of learning about their strengths and challenges faced in the modern workforce.

Rodriguez et al. (2019) interviewed 51 hiring managers to explore their perceptions towards the new generational workforce. Participant hiring managers remarked that Millennials are generally more relaxed in their conduct than previous

generations. Millennials were also remarked to be loyal and able to independently guide themselves within the workplace. Similarly, Baker Rosa and Hastings (2018) argued that it is vital to disregard generational stereotypes and instead focus on the potential within individual employees. These authors interviewed 25 managers within the healthcare industries and found that participants remarked that Millennials were excellent at teamwork and desired to advance through training and work opportunities (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018). It is important to note that the Baker Rosa and Hastings study is one of few studies which based their observations upon interview data versus critical analyses or surveys. Baker Rosa and Hastings argued that their findings could lay the foundation for more qualitative explorations of the perceptions of hiring managers towards their Millennial staff.

In reviewing the perceptions towards Millennials, mixed results are evident. Robison (2019) argued for the difficulty of managing Millennials. More recent researchers, while acknowledging these stereotypes, have found that Millennials can be led to be effective and productive employees (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019). Furthermore, studies that employed interviews versus critical analyses of available literature found that hiring managers perceived Millennial traits as positive additions to the modern workforce (e.g., Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019). It should be noted that these studies did not utilize a phenomenological exploration of Millennial perspectives. Additionally, the reviewed studies did not correlate job turnover with the variables of managing Millennials. Some authors have assessed job turnover in relation to the Millennial generation's work-life balance and

work environment preferences. The following subsection contains a review of the interest of work environments and work-life balance within the Millennial generation.

Millennial Preferences to Work Environments and Work-Life Balance

The preference for more flexible work-life benefits is among the many changes that researchers have documented within the Millennial generation. The work environment desired by the Millennial is characterized as engaging (Larasati & Hasanati, 2019) and flexible (Wolor et al., 2020). Millennial work environments are often depicted as fun and creative space with a designated office or space (Capnary et al., 2018). Authors such as Jain and Dutta (2019) and Valenti (2019) have agreed with a definition of a flexible and technological work environment preference for the Millennial generation. Similarly, Carter and Walker (2018) argued that the creation of more generational specific workspaces is key to attracting and retaining Millennial employees. Valenti (2019) noted, however, that work environment preference is variable by industry.

Conversely, Appel-Meulenbroek et al. (2019) argued that the work preferences of the Millennial generation are not necessarily different from previous generations. These authors surveyed 302 employees across three generational gaps to investigate work preferences and attitudes towards the work-life benefits of each generation. Appel-Meulenbroek et al. (2019) defined work-life balance as the time spent at home and at work or other leisure activities. These authors performed ANOVA statistical Analysis to explore for differences in responses between baby boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2019). They found that the Millennial participants in their study did not have significantly different needs in terms of the work

environment. However, the Millennial generation preferred a more flexible work-life balance that allotted more time for friends, family, and hobbies. Notably, Appel-Meulenbroek et al. found that previous generations are also technologically savvy and in some ways overlap attitudes towards the work environment as Millennials in terms of needing technological outlets at work. The findings of Appel-Meulenbroek et al. have not been replicated in academic research; however, this author's publication is recent, and more research is needed to replicate the study findings.

Work-life balance, the need for a balance between work and outside activities, has been significantly attributed as a method for employee retention and job turnover reduction (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2019; Campione, 2016). Campione analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS), finding that the work-life balance was key to Millennial satisfaction and retention. Similarly, Firfiray and Mayo (2017) reported work-life benefits to attracting Millennials. These authors surveyed 189 Millennial job-seeking MBA students and found participants were most likely to place work-life benefits as a primary objective when comparing job offers. Firfiray and Mayo (2017) did present theoretical conditions to each participant, which provided information regarding attracting Millennials, but did not specify information towards the use of work-life balance to retain employees.

Despite the analyses of Firfiray and Mayo (2017), it is not clear what work-life benefits are currently offered by major corporations or small businesses. Jayadeva (2018) noted that the Millennial generation is working increased hours compared to older generations and sacrificing work-life benefits to gain career advancement. The findings

of the Jayadeva study tentatively suggest that while work-life benefits are desirable, they are not always attainable for Millennial employees (Jayadeva, 2018). Researchers in the bulk of academic literature have indicated that considering the work-environment and work-life balance are key variables to attracting and possibly retaining Millennial employees (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2019; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017). Notably, the investigators of the studies reviewed within current literature did not employ interviews to conclude their data but instead gathered data via surveys (e.g., Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2019; Campione, 2016; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017). Although surveying is a valid methodology, there is a notable lack of literature utilizing interviews to obtain the lived experiences of Millennials towards work environment and work-life benefit preferences. The following section will summarize the review of Millennials in the workplace, considering the characteristics discussed in the previous sections.

Millennials and the Workplace

The Millennial generation has been referred to as lazy, entitled, apathetic, and job-hopping (Robison, 2019). Recent scholars have indicated that the Millennial generation is motivated by cultural and socio-economic factors that simply differ from previous generations. Currently, researchers are divided on an accurate set of characteristics to define the Millennial generation. Authors such as Dimock (2019) have noted that characteristics are difficult to generalize on a generational level and are problematic for assessing the work tendencies of new workforces. Considering mixed-findings, researchers have investigated the loyalty of Millennials towards their job (Lewicka et al., 2018; Miller, 2017). Some researchers have argued that Millennials are

likely to leave their employment as a reflection of poor job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities (Bushardt et al., 2018; Walden et al., 2017); however, the understanding of Millennial job loyalty remains unclear (Walden et al., 2017).

Other investigations of Millennial characteristics include Millennial perceptions of leadership (e.g., Anderson et al., 2017; Barron & Novak, 2017) and the challenges of managing Millennials (e.g., Robison, 2019). Some authors have argued Millennials to be unmanageable (Robison, 2019); however, more thorough explanations have argued that Millennials are competent and professional (Zhao, 2018). In terms of Millennial perceptions of their work environment, Millennials value work-life balance and place importance on work environments, which allow them to utilize technology creatively (Capnary et al., 2018; Wolor et al., 2020). These preferences differ, however, according to employee and industry (Valenti, 2019). Jayadeva (2018) noted that Millennials often choose to work excessive hours to fulfill the financial need; thus, work-life benefits are not necessarily accessible to all Millennials.

In sum, the Millennial generation has been historically stereotyped as lazy and noncommittal, but more recent research has found that the Millennial generation can be a positive addition to the workforce (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018). In terms of methodology, most studies utilized a qualitative approach (e.g., surveys or federal data), provided a critical analysis and literature review, or utilized statistical analysis to search for generational differences. Very few studies utilized interviews to gain the lived experiences of Millennials, or hiring managers, towards the issues of job turnover related to the Millennial generation. More research is needed to garner an understanding

of how Millennial characteristics, attitudes, and lived experiences are related to their tendencies to separate from a job. The following section is a review of the application of mentorship programs. The following subsections contain descriptions of the implementation of mentorship to address the new generational workforce.

Mentoring Programs

In this section, I introduce the concept of mentoring and provide a historical background of the usage of mentoring in business. I also discuss job turnover within the following sections as it relates to mentoring practices. Mentorships can be employed in formal or informal manners. Informal mentorship can involve a friend, a co-worker, or a family member. Informal membership can take place anywhere. Formal mentorship is a structured process that is typically conducted at the workplace or in a professional setting (Hamilton et al., 2019). Formal and informal mentorship has been extensively used in academics, education, and social sciences (Hamilton et al., 201); however, mentorship has been used less extensively for the purpose of business strategies (Hamilton et al., 201). Mentorship has recently been suggested as a possible method for attracting and retaining employees and decreasing job turnover (Hamilton et al., 2019; Hechl, 2017).

As lifespans have increased in the United States, more generations than ever are interacting and working with each other. This may result in generational conflict, which scholars have intermittently studied in academic literature. Significant research has been applied towards the Baby Boomer and Millennial Generations in the workplace. Due to the major value differences (e.g., political, and socio-cultural) of baby boomers and Millennials, researchers have provided detailed reports of respective differences and

similarities (Clark, 2017) and examinations of the needs, behaviors, and traits of Generation X within the workplace.

Hamilton et al. (2019) examined mentorship programs and empathized their importance for students. These authors explored formal university mentorship programs in undergraduate student mentees from the associated industries. The authors similarly examined the sense of community, job search self-efficacy, and psychological sense of community. According to Hamilton et al., mentees gained job interview skills, confidence, resume development, and increased self-efficacy about transitioning into the workplace. While Hamilton et al. focused on students, their findings hold an emphasis on the importance of using formal mentorship programs.

In terms of the workplace, Romansky et al. (2021) reviewed mentorship programs and their usefulness for workers. The authors reviewed a population of mentees and mentors in rural areas of Canadian. The mentors were observed and provided surveys to respond to their experiences with mentorship. The key outcomes were communication, increased support within the workplace, and a mentorship program that strengthened the relationship with the community, which was key due to the rural nature of the clinic. These findings are essential, as they demonstrate the outcomes of a formal mentorship program in the workplace. The findings also demonstrate a gap in the understanding of how different generations may or may not, experience mentorship programs differentially.

Carrison (2017) argued that mentoring should be incorporated into workplace strategies. This author reported that the establishment of mentoring programs ensures that

employees are trained and are committed to their employer. Carrison (2017) argued that mentoring is beneficial to the employer and the mentee. For instance, the mentor may receive the benefit of understanding issues within the corporate sphere that would have gone unnoticed to seasoned employees. Camilleri (2016) concurred with Carrison (2017) by noting that mentoring programs connect new employees to company values and increase the human capital of new hires. Both Carrison (2017) and Camilleri (2016) reviewed the available literature and provided valuable personal experiences regarding mentoring. Some scholars have attempted more intensive research to investigate the true efficacy of mentoring programs.

Research from industrial fields demonstrates the positive results of mentorship programs. Bjursell and Sädbom (2018) reviewed mentorship programs in the manufacturing industry as a means of exploring how workers reported benefits, if at all, from innovative programs. The systematic literature reviewed demonstrated 16 total articles discussing the importance of mentorship programs in the industrial manufacturing field. The authors summarized key themes as increases in communication, bettered relationships with coworkers, and improved confidence among mentees. The findings of Bjursell and Sädbom (2018) reinforced the importance of mentorship programs, but also demonstrate a lack of evidence from Millennial specific perspectives due to the generalization of workers in various industries.

The findings of Giancola et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of mentorship programs. These authors explored the implementation of a mentorship program within a pediatric mentorship program. The aim of their research was to understand how these

mentorship programs improved communication, as well as provided support for the personal life balance of new junior faculty. Giancola et al. evaluated 71 pairs through survey and objective data (e.g., board pass rates and retention rates). The authors reported that individuals enrolled in the mentorship program were more likely to stay in their jobs as well as recommend the program to other faculty. The authors noted that there is a need to require more in-depth exploration from participants to understand their relationship with mentors in the workplace as well as assess how these programs can be improved or changed. The findings of Giancola et al. demonstrated the outcome of mentoring programs for some participants while illustrating a gap in the understanding of how these participants individually reflected their mentorship experiences.

Kumar and Kumar (2018) explored the connection between mentorship and effectiveness within a start-up company located in India. These authors conducted interviews with employees involved within the company mentorship programs. Kumar and Kumar noted that mentorship is a method to connect with Millennial employees and to ideally increase employee satisfaction. Culturally, the authors found that an employee's caste title (a form of cultural-social status within India) did not appear to negatively impact mentorship relationships. They additionally found that protégées who utilized the assistance of multiple mentors gained unique work connections and acquired different skills from each mentor. Overall, Kumar and Kumar recommended the use of mentoring for the Millennial generation; however, they noted that mentoring success is dependent upon the attitudes and behaviors of mentors and protégés.

According to some researchers, the key outcome of mentoring programs is the impact on the psychological behavior and perceived confidence of participants. Eby and Robertson (2020) presented an overview of the workplace mentoring relationships that are underpinned by organizational psychology. According to Eby and Robertson, the findings illustrated that workplace mentorship programs are based on the creation of an interdependent attachment, as well as self-expansion. The participants involved in mentorship programs are more likely to expand their own horizons while relying on the expertise and support of surrounding colleagues. In turn, a beneficial relationship is formed between the mentor and the mentee that can increase the overall satisfaction among both employees in the workplace. Eby and Robertson's discussion was important to this study because it provides a discussion that is critical to understanding the intersection between individual characteristics and the impact of mentorship programs.

Mentoring has also been incorporated within the healthcare field to assist new employees in adjusting to new protocols. Tiew et al. (2017) explored the use of mentorship to guide graduate nurses. These authors noted that nurses in school might experience unique challenges when entering the field as a professional upon graduation. Tiew et al. used a quantitative approach to assess the effectiveness of mentorship differed from previous studies. The participant nurses were administered pre and post psychometric tests designed to test for differences in experiences during and after mentorship. *T*-tests were used to search for statistical differences between before and after groups (Tiew et al., 2017). The authors noted that the testing scale that they utilized is an open-source test that could be used for future mentoring research. Tiew et

al. found that graduating nurses expressed that mentoring was helpful for them to transition between student and practitioner. They argued that the use of mentoring could serve to retain employees. They also remarked that mentoring programs require extended company resources, such as the cost of employees offering their time and services as mentors. Tiew et al. were unable to provide extended feedback on the efficacy of mentoring due to the statistical nature of the study. Similar studies have been conducted within the healthcare field utilizing quantitative approaches (Smeds et al., 2017).

Mentoring within the healthcare field has also been explored as applicable to surgical trainees within the United States. Smeds et al. (2017) explored the efficacy of mentoring to assist new surgical trainees. Smeds et al. noted that mentoring has been frequently explored within nursing but has not been employed within the surgical fields. These scholars gathered data from completed surveys. Each survey allowed the participant to rank the effectiveness of the mentor or protégée. They subsequently translated these scores into *p*-values, which were used to identify the significance of variables such as compassion and approachability. Notably, the authors did not find significance between surgical trainees who had mentors or those who did not have a mentor. Smeds et al. noted that mentor relationships are useful for establishing connections, building confidence, and reviewing techniques; however, the authors did not find statistical usefulness to mentor relationships. In the Smeds et al. article, although useful in establishing foundational mentorship data for surgical fields, the authors did not explore the lived experiences of participants. Notably, a statistical approach limits the understanding of why a mentor was, or was not, useful to an individual. In the following

section, I address the use of reverse mentoring to reduce generation gaps within corporate structures.

Reverse Mentoring

Reverse mentoring is a tactic to reduce generational gaps and increase employee comradery (Cheryl, 2019). Reverse mentoring has been frequently employed by corporations as new technology is introduced, and the Millennial generation is often equipped with the knowledge for successfully trading these skills to individuals who need further education. Cheryl (2019) argued that reverse mentoring could equip employees with new skills while developing improved professional relationships between generational workforce groups., Cheryl also noted that the usage of reverse mentoring could allow business leaders to gain insight into the diverse needs of the new Millennial workforce.

Other researchers (Hechl, 2017) have not found reverse mentoring to be a successful technique. Hechl investigated the effect of reverse mentoring on organizational commitment and reduction in Millennial turnover. This author argued that reverse mentoring would positively increase an employee's connection to their employer and effectively reduce turnover rates. Hechl gathered data by surveying 333 online participants within the Millennial generation to assess their perceptions towards reverse mentoring and their subsequent commitment to their present employer. This scholar measured employee commitment based upon the present time at an organization and intent to stay employed. Hechl subsequently completed an ANOVA analysis to test for correlations between mentoring, job commitment, and turnover reduction. Hechl did

not find a statistical difference in the effect of traditional or reverse mentoring on the organizational loyalty of employees. This author noted that these results might be related to the novel statistical approach employed within his study; however, the study was cautioned as a preliminary application of statistical methods to measure employee organizational commitment in relation to job turnover.

Despite significant attention towards the use of mentoring as a successful technique. Some authors have also found that mentoring knowledge is limited within modern Millennial populations. Kaplan et al. (2018) reviewed the perceptions of Millennials towards mentoring and mentors. These researchers reviewed 598 collegiate Millennial survey respondents to garner their understanding of the definition of mentorship and previous experiences of mentorship. They found that most respondents did not understand the meaning of the term 'mentor.' Participants who did have experience with mentorships noted that mentors were family or friends. Kaplan et al. argued that the use of family or friends as mentors could be useful as a role-model but fail to provide a professional mentorship, which may connect individuals to career opportunities and networks. Kaplan et al. indicated that students were largely unaware of mentorship benefits within a collegiate or professional sphere. It should be noted that the authors surveyed students who were collegiate students and may not have been subjected to mentorship concepts, practices, or programs within formal workplaces. These authors' findings also revealed, however, that the induction of mentorship within the Millennial generation is not an established process.

Overall, mentoring has been suggested to be a successful tactic to improve

workplace comradery, decrease generational gaps, and increase job satisfaction (Carrison, 2017; Kumar & Kumar, 2018). Reverse mentoring has been argued to be a useful technique to create bonds between generations (Cheryl, 2019). In most studies encouraging mentoring as a business strategy, however, the investigators have not applied ascertains concerning mentoring to population sets. Furthermore, these studies (e.g., Carrison, 2017) did not explore the impact of mentoring via phenomenological explorations of the lived experiences of mentors and/or protégés. Research has turned to apply to mentor towards business-specific strategies for the efficacy of job turnover. The following subsection will review mentoring strategies as they have been employed within corporate structures.

Mentoring for Reducing Millennial Job Turnover

Carrison's (2017) review on the necessity of mentoring emphasized the growing interest within the business community to utilize mentoring to assess mentoring as a tool for reducing turnover. Naim (2018) authored a piece concurring with Carrison's (2017) recommendation of mentorship. Naim (2018) argued that the key to reducing turnover is increasing job satisfaction, which requires appealing to the diverse needs of the new Millennial workforce. Naim further argued that the use of mentoring connects new employees with the values and goals of the organization, which serves to retain interested employees. This author did not employ a methodological analysis, but instead proposed a conceptual framework to guide future researchers to research mentoring as a technique to reduce job turnover. The suggested conceptual framework is based upon social exchange theory, which is based upon the concept of exchange of information (e.g., mentorship)

can lead to strengthened social and professional bonds. In all, Naim was among the first authors to suggest the use of a conceptual framework to guide researchers to analyze connections between mentorship and decreased job turnover. Despite the strength of the author's argument, the following reviewed literature does not employ conceptual frameworks (Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018). Naim's research serves as seminal research on the use of mentoring to reduce job turnover (Naim, 2018).

Cole (2018) argued that formal mentoring programs are for the betterment of new employees and the corporate structure. This author interviewed leaders of mentoring programs through *WorldWide Wyndham*, a successful hospitality chain in the United States. Wyndham Worldwide has extensive training programs for mentors and protégées, which are designed to prepare both parties for the process of mentoring.

Participants remarked that mentoring programs are key to quality training initiatives, which serve to create employees who are dedicated to their employers (Cole, 2018).

Mentors further remarked that mentoring had been used to decrease employee turnover by increasing employee satisfaction (Cole, 2018).

Similarly, Jayadeva (2018) argued that mentoring is a useful tactic for reducing job turnover within the Millennial generation. This author utilized participant interviews from baby boomer generations directed towards Millennial subordinates as an example of the need for the establishment of formal mentoring programs. Within the sample, baby boomer participants remarked that Millennials were lazy, unwilling to take on extra duties, and frequently distracted or late. Jayadeva noted that these negative perceptions of Millennial results in discord within a business structure. The author argued

that these stereotypes have continued to affect the relationships between subordinates and superiors. Jayadeva argued that the incorporation of mentoring had been shown to be a successful method for connecting younger and older generations within the workforce. This author's research is a rare example of the use of participant interviews to review the applicability of mentorship to decrease generation gaps, increase job satisfaction, and decrease job turnover. Ukeni and Reynolds (2017) echoed the same perceptions of mentoring as Jayadeva (2018) while also offering detailed advice towards the use of mentoring to reduce job turnover.

Ukeni and Reynolds (2017) noted that Millennial turnover rates have become a concerning issue globally and present extreme financial costs to corporations. These authors suggested that mentorship is a possible solution to decreasing Millennial turnover within businesses. To assess their hypotheses, the authors sampled 101 Millennial age individuals to assess their self-reported preferences and/or past experiences with mentorship. Their findings were that Millennial individuals within their study had only been mentored by a primary supervisor, which did not provide one-on-one advice or training. Typically, training was provided by co-workers, or assistant supervisors depending upon the industry. These authors argued that these informal methods of mentoring do not deliver the desired results as formal mentorship programs, which are designed to nurture the growth of a singular employee and decrease turnover rates within the corporate structure.

Ukeni and Reynolds (2017) noted that if Millennial employees are uninterested in mentorship programs, then these programs are not likely to be successful. Ukeni and

Reynolds's (2017) exploration is an uncommon exploration of the efficacy of mentorship considering Millennial traits. This is markedly one of the few studies to address Millennial perceptions towards mentoring; however, study participants had not previously engaged informal mentoring programs, which limits the applicability of the study to examining business mentorship programs. Despite the findings of Ukeni and Reynolds (2017), Jayadeva (2018), and Cole (2018), some scholars have disagreed with the ability to mentor to positively impact job turnover rates.

Some studies have argued that mentoring, though useful in some business strategies, does not have a direct impact on job turnover rates. Yang et al. (2019) explored the result of turnover in hotel industries through also examining mentorship programs. These authors collected data from a set of 354 employees across hotel industries in China. For data analysis, a structural analysis method was used to explore the organizational and occupational embeddedness and impact of turnover on organizational mentorship programs. According to Yang et al., the mentorship programs created strength in the psychological variables of career and psychosocial support. These variables were strengthened, the turnover rates were decreased. Employees that were more likely to feel they were supported were also more likely to report their likelihood of staying in the organization. The findings of Yang et al. (2019) point towards the need to focus on mentorship strategies for turnover reduction; however, like previous assessments, there was a lack of direct consideration of lived experiences of participants in terms of their mentorship experiences.

Similarly, Fogarty et al. (2017) explored the usage of mentoring, both formal and

informal programs, to reduce problematic turnover rates. These authors argued that typical mentoring programs are not aligned with the concept of value congruence, which is a methodology for aligning the personal needs of an employee with the organizational support system. Fogarty et al. further noted that mentoring is essentially an extension of role modeling, which may be flawed dependent upon the mentor's personality and work ethics. Their hypotheses questioned whether protégés would experience value congruence based upon the role modeling of the mentor. They also questioned whether protégés were gaining career development opportunities by engagement in mentoring programs. A survey was used to explore the perceptions of participants towards the posed hypotheses. The resultant data indicated that career development was positively correlated with mentoring relationships; however, protégés who attempted to role model their mentors were less likely to reap mentoring benefits. The authors argued that their results indicated that mentoring is only useful when combined with value congruence, which fits the needs of the protégé and the organization. Indicating that mentoring, while providing the opportunity to be beneficial, does not guarantee job satisfaction or reduced job turnover. This is one of the few current studies in which the authors cautioned against the ascertain of mentoring as a solution to job solution. Furthermore, the authors noted that previous literature did not qualitatively or quantitatively confirm job turnover reduction related to mentorship programs.

The rise of job turnover associated with the Millennial generation has led multiple authors to explore the use of mentoring to reduce turnover (Carrison, 2017). As previous studies have noted that increased job satisfaction will decrease job turnover, the

likelihood of mentorship as an effective tool for increasing satisfaction and employee retention appears to be self-evident. In fact, multiple studies reviewed in this section argued that a mentorship is a successful tool for decreasing job turnover (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017). Besides providing participant perceptions towards mentoring, the studies did not indicate the impact of mentoring upon corporate-specific turnover rates (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017).

Criticism from Fogarty et al. (2017) argued that mentoring, though useful, is not fully established as a method for decreasing Millennial job turnover. Despite these criticisms (Fogarty et al., 2017), multiple researchers continue to emphasize the usefulness of mentoring for increasing job satisfaction and retention (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017). It is also noteworthy that the reviewed studies (Cole, 2018; Fogarty et al., 2017; Jayadeva, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017) utilized participant interviews primarily to assess the effectiveness of mentoring.

These future studies, however, did not specifically focus on Millennial perspectives towards mentoring programs. Ideally, future studies will address the perspectives of Millennials towards mentoring and garner an understanding of the applicability of mentoring programs to lessen turnover intentions for Millennials. This section concludes the review of literature pertaining to job turnover and mentoring programs. The following section is a summary and critical analyses of the reviewed topics as they relate to the purpose of this study.

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, relevant literature about high turnover, engagement strategies, and mentorship programs of Millennial employees have been discussed. The themes included in the literature review were: (a) job turnover and corporate structures, (b) financial cost of job turnover, (c) modern job turnover rates, (d) characteristics of the Millennial generation, (e) Millennial perceptions of leadership, (f) challenges to managing Millennial employees, challenges to managing Millennial employees, (h) Millennials and the workplace, (i) mentoring programs, (j) reverse mentoring, (k) mentoring for reducing Millennial job turnover. Through the literature review, I identified a gap in terms of the role of engagement and motivation for improving retention of Millennial employees. The lived experiences of Millennials had not been adequately explored within the current body of academic literature. Chapter 3 contains a discussion and justification of the selected research method and design.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. In the United States, high job turnover is an issue that is significant among the Millennial generation (Fry, 2018). There has been a growing need to use mentorship programs that may decrease turnover rates (Fry, 2018). The general problem was that high turnover rates result in disrupted organizations financial stability and productivity (Fry, 2018). The specific problem was the lack of knowledge on the lived experiences of employed Millennials regarding the engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates (Fry, 2018). As a result, this study's phenomenon was the exploration of mentorship programs and strategies for engagement in organizations for employed Millennials.

In this chapter, I discuss the sampling techniques, as well as the justification for choosing the qualitative methodology and research design. I also outline the recruitment, data collection, and data analysis procedures. In the following section, I discuss the research questions that guided this study.

Research Design and Rationale

In the current study, I employed a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces to reduce their turnover rates. In this section, I present the rationale for the use of the qualitative methodology. I chose the qualitative methodology because it is appropriate for gathering a specific form of data through interviews with

participants. A qualitative approach is ideal for exploring a phenomenon through participants' perceptions, lived experiences, and opinions (Tracy, 2019). Scholars use qualitative methodologies to explore phenomena from cultural value perspectives, participant reflections, lived experiences, or opinions (Tracy, 2019).

I considered the quantitative approach when exploring methodologies for this study. Scholars use this approach to measure relationships between single or multiple variables (Bernard, 2017). The use of a quantitative methodology involves collecting data (either secondary or primary) and analyzing the findings by testing hypotheses (Bernard, 2017). The use of quantitative approaches leads to relatively objective results that point towards mathematical findings related to defined variables. Conversely, a qualitative methodology results in descriptive, often narrative data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In reviewing previous literature, I determined that it was unknown how Millennials perceive the engagement and mentorship strategies used by organizations to improve engagement for employed Millennials. Thus, a qualitative methodology was ideal for exploring a phenomenon that required participant reflections. The problem that I addressed through this study was not appropriate for a quantitative approach, which would have required statistical analysis or measuring a specific phenomenon in a population (Tracy, 2019). The phenomenon under study was not measurable, making a qualitative approach most appropriate (Tracy, 2019).

The research design that I chose for this study was descriptive phenomenological. I first discuss the rationale for why other alternative designs were not appropriate for this study. I considered a range of designs for this study outside of a descriptive

phenomenological approach. The possibilities included phenomenological, ethnography, and case study. First, I considered an ethnographic design to examine cultural values and settings through observation and participation (Atkinson, 2016). I did not choose an ethnographic design because I did not aim to examine or document cultural values or settings. Next, I considered a case study approach, which includes documentation of a phenomenon within multiple sites and data sources (Yin, 2012). I did not choose a case study approach because the understanding of the study phenomenon was lacking, which requires that researchers first describe it through lived experiences rather than conduct a case study.

Finally, I considered a descriptive phenomenological approach, which is ideal for exploring the lived experiences of individuals towards a particular phenomenon (see Moustakas, 1994). Using a descriptive phenomenological design, researchers gather individuals' lived experiences to provide a rich analysis of a particular phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). A descriptive phenomenological approach is ideal for using participants' lived experiences towards a particular phenomenon and providing rich data that addresses posed research questions in a qualitative study (Moustakas, 1994; Tracy, 2019). Phenomenology is appropriate for studies that involve the exploration of how individuals make sense of personal and social world (Gill, 2020).

I considered a descriptive phenomenological design to be most appropriate for addressing the research questions and the study's purpose. This design provided rich narrative data regarding the phenomena the lived experiences of Millennial employees regarding engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces to reduce

their turnover rates, which had yet to be described in previous literature. Specifically, an interpretive phenomenological approach (IPA) was appropriate for this study. In IPA, the focus is on interpreting lived experiences and how individuals make sense of their experiences (J. Smith, 1996). Based on the purpose and research question of this study, the focus was on understanding how participants make sense of their experiences within the context of the phenomenon being explored. This focus contrasts with describing an experience in general, which is the purpose of the descriptive phenomenology of Giorgi (1985).

Role of the Researcher

In this study, my role as the researcher was to gather and analyze data. For this purpose, I designed the study methodology and approach. I also assessed relevant literature regarding the methods that are considered ideal for the purpose of collection and analysis of data. As the researcher, I assessed my own bias throughout the entire data collection and analysis process. Researcher bias can impact the outcomes of study assessments due to their personal opinions or perspectives. For this purpose, I performed bracketing, which is a form of reflexive journaling that aided in my attempt to ensure that I correctly addressed the participants' reflections through my guided approach (Tracy, 2019). I employed researcher bracketing throughout this study as a means of noting my own bias.

Methodology

The process for data collection first involved site authorization and IRB authorization. After these processes were complete, I commenced data collection through

the participants' recruitment.

I first obtained permission to conduct the study . The site permission involved providing a request letter to two large-corporate organizations selected for this study in the Houston area. As the sample size of this study was small, two large corporations were used for recruitment. The organizations chosen for this study were two car dealerships: the Gulfgate Dodge Car Dealership and the Acura Sugarland Car Dealership. The desired total of 10 to 12 participants was considered a reasonable number to recruit from two organizations. My aim was not to review differing strategies across different organizations. As such, I used only one type of corporate organization (i.e., car dealerships). The flyer contained the study's purpose, the inclusion criteria for participants, and information regarding IRB approval. I provided a letter to the individuals that had sufficient authority to grant access to the employees for the study (Appendix B). After permission to gain access to participants, I provided this information and the study procedures to the IRB board for review. After site and IRB approval, I began the recruitment procedures.

The recruitment for this study involved distribution of a recruitment flyer (Appendix A) detailing the study's purpose, the posed significance of the study site permission, and IRB approval through email within the two large organizations in Houston, Texas. I provided their contact information through email and phone number on the flyer. I distributed the flyer across the two corporate organization via email to limit human contact per COVID-19 regulations. Participants that were interested in completing this study contacted me to be included in the study.

I thanked the individuals that contacted me for their time and asked them a series of questions to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria: (a) being employed in either the Gulfgate Dodge Car Dealership or the Acura Sugarland Car Dealership located in Houston, (b) familiarity with engagement strategies in the organization, and (c) familiarity with mentorship programs in the organization. I also thanked those that did not meet these criteria for their time. Individuals that met these criteria received an emailed informed consent form to fill out before any interviews. Afterward, we set a time for an online semistructured interview via Zoom for social distancing measures. In the event that more than 10 to 12 participants contacted me, I would have placed them on a waitlist in the case that participants withdrew from the study. The sample size was in alignment with previous phenomenological studies regarding business and mentorship strategies that used the same sample size and deemed the number of participants as ideal for gathering data (see Cheryl, 2019; Cole, 2018; Fogarty et al., 2017).

I collected data through semistructured interviews in an online Zoom format. I conducted the interviews after participants filled out the informed consent forms. Participants received details regarding their risk to be involved in the study and their right to withdraw at any point without consequences. Interviews lasted 60–90 minutes and were audio-recorded for future analysis. I coded all interviews using pseudonyms such as P1 or P2. These codes ensured that all personal names and identifiers were absent from transcripts for the participants' ethical protection. After the interviews, I sent the audio files to Rev.com for transcription. I obtained a confidentiality letter for this purpose. After transcription, I provided each participant's summary to corresponding

participants for member checking. Member checking was key to ensuring the dependability and credibility of the findings, which I discuss further in future sections regarding trustworthiness (see Tracy, 2019). Participants had 5–10 days to review the summaries and provide feedback, if any. After this period, I conducted data analysis.

Participant Selection Logic

The population of interest for this study included employed Millennials at two organizations in Houston, Texas. Targeting organizations in the Houston area was ideal for this study because it is a large urban setting in which many Millennials live and work within a vast array of organizational settings. The organizations that I targeted for this study included the Gulfgate Dodge Car Dealership and the Acura Sugarland Car Dealership. I chose these dealerships because they are large organizations that employ primarily Millennials and have existing mentoring programs. The target group from these two organizations was employed Millennials at either of these facilities. The participants chosen from either the Gulfgate Dodge Car Dealership or the Acura Sugarland Car Dealership were familiar with the engagement strategies of their organization and the mentorship programs available at their organization. Selecting participants from two organizations was ideal, as the small sample size desired for this study was possible through the recruitment within these two large organizational settings. I delineated the following inclusion and exclusion criteria for this study:

1. Being employed in either the Gulfgate Dodge Car Dealership or the Acura Sugarland Car Dealership located in the Houston area.
2. Familiarity with engagement approaches in the organization.

3. Familiarity with mentorship approaches in the organization.

The unit of analysis for this study was employed Millennials' lived experiences regarding the phenomenon of engagement strategies and mentorship programs in the Houston area. This study's sampling method included purposive sampling (see Lavrakas, 2008). Purposive sampling involves selecting participants from the target population through a nonrandom sampling technique that uses specific sampling criteria (Lavrakas, 2008). Purposive sampling was ideal for this study because it involved selecting individuals for the study that holds the relevant experience to address the posed interview questions.

For this study, site authorization was not necessary because all interviews occurred through Zoom. For this purpose, however, it was still necessary to ensure that there was permission to gain access to the participants through the distribution of the recruitment flyer throughout the organization. For this purpose, I sent an email request by reaching out to the human resources department of a large corporate organization in the Houston area. For this purpose, a permission letter was granted from the individual with sufficient authority in the organization. The site permission included a letter that provided an overview of the study, the IRB approval letter, and my contact information. Further, I conducted all interviews online through Zoom to ensure that the participants' confidentiality was not violated. After obtaining IRB and site approval, I recruited participants from the study site. Before interviews, I provided informed consent forms to each participant. Data collection included online interviews with 16 employed Millennials in the Houston area of the United States.

Instrumentation

This study's primary source was semistructured interviews that I conducted with 16 participants in a web-based call and audio recorded. The interviews were considered appropriate because this was in line with the previous recommendations regarding phenomenological qualitative studies (Tracy, 2019). The use of 10-12 participants, or until data saturation, aligned with previous recommendations regarding gathering data through semistructured interviews as well as with a phenomenological design (Tracy, 2019). Further, the use of this number of participants was ideal to gather information that would directly contribute to a rich exploratory study that considers the shared lived experiences of participants. The semistructured interview was ideal for the research design and addressed the research questions because it provided rich and descriptive data. The use of an interview guide (Appendix F) ensured that the provided questions aligned with the research questions and provided detailed data (Tracy, 2019).

I used an expert panel to validate the interview guide developed for this study. The expert panel included three professional colleagues that hold terminal degrees in business or a related field. The three reviewers received the interview guide and had 5–10 days to provide feedback to me. I then incorporated the feedback to ensure that the interview guide was credible, flowed logically, and was appropriate for addressing the research questions and the purpose of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Data Analysis Plan

For data analysis, I conducted thematic analysis guidelines as presented by Braun and Clarke (2019). The key objective of thematic analysis is to use transcripts and

provide themes derived from coding relevant reoccurring phrases, words, and ideas. The thematic analysis results are themes related to participants coded responses that address the posed research questions. I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo, an organizational software that allows researchers to code and group analogous text. I only used the software for organization and conducted all coding procedures manually. The thematic analysis process has six steps, which I discuss below.

Phase 1

In the first phase, I obtained familiarity with the data through reading and re-reading the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This process was essential to ensure that I was familiar with the transcripts and comfortable with the next process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Phase 2

In Phase 2, I formed initial codes by reviewing the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2019). I reviewed each transcript and mark analogous texts as “codes.” These codes were key to developing themes. Codes could include, for example, “management strategies” or “engagement strategies.” I logged these codes in the NVivo software as a group and linked back to each participant to ensure the credibility of the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Phase 3

Phase 3 of the thematic analysis occurred through searching for themes amongst the noted codes developed in phase two (Braun & Clarke, 2019). In this process, I reviewed whether the codes had similarities grouped into themes. Simultaneously, I

grouped similarities in codes into themes, which I reviewed in the following phase (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Phase 4

In Phase 4, I reviewed the developed themes and assured that these linked back to the codes discussed by each participant (Braun & Clarke, 2019). I reviewed themes with the dissertation committee to ensure that the process objectively represented the findings discussed by participants (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Phase 5

In this phase, I named the identified and reviewed themes. The names were short and accurately capture the themes' meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2019). I summarized the themes and used these summaries for presenting the themes in Chapter 4 (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Phase 6

In this final phase, I used the themes and codes developed to present the findings. In Chapter 4, I present these findings by theme and relevance to the research questions. The themes were accompanied by the codes relevant to each theme to ensure that the findings represented the transcriptions.

Issues of Trustworthiness

A qualitative research design must adhere to multiple trustworthiness variables (Korstjens & Moser, 2016). It is possible to establish a study's trustworthiness through the following variables of trustworthiness: dependability, transferability, confirmability,

and credibility (Connelly, 2016). In this section, I discuss each of these variables in terms of the strategies used for this study.

Credibility

The process of credibility ensures that the study presented findings accurately represent the perspectives provided by participants (Connelly, 2016). Threats to credibility include misrepresenting data, researcher bias, sampling strategy, and the design used to collect and analyze data. For this study, my bias served as a threat to credibility. To address this bias, I employed bracketing, a form of reflexive journaling used during data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings. I used reflexivity to discuss the findings in comparison to previous findings, as well as to mitigate my bias.

This study's sampling design also is a threat to credibility (Connelly, 2016). The purposive sampling strategy was ideal for gathering information from participants that hold relevant information expressed in interviews. To ensure that this sampling method did not present as a threat, I ensured that each participant complied with relevant inclusion criteria before including them in the study. The chosen approach was a qualitative phenomenological approach in terms of the research design and methodology. A qualitative approach is ideal to gather data from individuals' lived experiences (Tracy, 2019). I also provide the results in context with previous literature and discuss how the findings may be better explored by future researchers using other designs and methodologies.

Transferability

Study transferability refers to the findings' ability to be generalized beyond the

target population. For this study, the findings' transferability is limited due to the use of a qualitative phenomenological approach that relies on the individual experiences of participants (see Tracy, 2019). To mitigate this risk, I discussed the findings compared to previous empirical literature. I highlighted the findings that agree or disagree with previous research. I also provided clear recommendations for future research, practice, and limitations of the study design (see Tracy, 2019).

Dependability

Dependability is a threat to trustworthiness, including the findings being represented accurately across different geographic places and times (Connelly, 2016).

The threats for this study include presenting the findings in a manner that is accurate to their expressions in the interviews. For this study, this threat will be mitigated by providing interview questions validated by an interview guide (Appendix F). The interview guide will allow future researchers to replicate the future findings.

Additionally, in this chapter, I presented the study protocol to provide details for future replication. I maintained an audit trail to ensure that the study presented dependable findings (Tracy, 2019). The audit trail included a clear presentation of the study procedures and an empirical method for thematic analysis. The findings were linked to participating expressions through tables presenting thematic codes and excerpts from the interviews. The use of the audit trail ensured context and the transparency of the results to validate the study's rigor (Tracy, 2019).

Confirmability

The confirmability domain refers to the ability to ensure that the findings are

replicable by future researchers (Connelly, 2016). For this study, I addressed the threat of confirmability by providing a clear research protocol. I clarify any and all changes to this protocol with justification in Chapter 4. I performed member checking during the data collection process to ensure that the findings represented the participants' reflections accurately before data analysis.

Ethical Procedures

The ethical considerations are critical to consider per the Belmont Report, which guides that participant is treated ethically and protected from risk to harm. The Belmont Report's three principles include persons, beneficence, and justice (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). For this study, participants' ethical treatment occurred by first ensuring that the study is not completed until site and IRB approval. After this process, I provided informed consent forms to participants, which ensured that they were aware of the harm present in this study, which was minimal. They were aware that they could withdraw at any time without consequences.

Secondly, I protected the participants in the study by ensuring their confidentiality through using pseudonyms during the entire collection and analysis process. Through this process, I assured that participants' names and personal identifiers were not present in the study at any point. I protected the data by storing all data on a password-protected USB drive kept in a locked cabinet in my office. Only I could access this information on my personal password-protected computer. After 3 years, I will permanently destroy the data per IRB requirements.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I outlined the purpose, the research design, the role of researcher, and the rationale for selecting descriptive phenomenology. I discussed how I used a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach to address the research questions, outlined the interview guide validated by reviewers, addressed the issues of trustworthiness, and ensured the confidentiality of participants by observing institutional ethical review before starting the research process. I also explained the participant recruitment process, sampling, data collection, and analysis. Chapter 4 contains a presentation of the collected data and the emerging themes.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

There has been a growing need to use mentorship programs that may decrease turnover rates. The turnover rates of Millennial employees are substantially high across various workplaces (Suh & Hargis, 2016). The cost of hiring, training, and maintaining a salary for each employee is high, and each time a firm loses an employee, the cost increases significantly (A. Smith et al., 2019; U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Researchers have reported that mentorship positively influences job satisfaction, employee retention, and employee engagement in the workplace (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019). The general problem that I addressed in this study was that high turnover rates disrupt organizations' financial stability and productivity (Fry, 2018; Haider et al., 2020; A. Smith et al., 2019). The specific problem was the lack of knowledge regarding how employed Millennials engaged in mentorship experience turnover reduction in their workplaces (Fry, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Suh & Hargis, 2016). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. In the United States, high-job turnover is an issue that is noted most significantly among the Millennial generation (Fry, 2018). I sought to answer one RQ: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces and turnover reduction?

In this chapter, I neutrally and objectively present the findings of the research study that was conducted. Chapter 4 contains the following sections: (a) setting, (b)

demographics, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, (e) trustworthiness of data, (f) results, (g) evaluation of the findings, and (h) a summary.

Setting

The setting for this study was specific large-corporate organizations within the Houston, Texas area. The participants were influenced by some organizational or personal conditions. The main organizational condition that might have influenced them pertains to retention programs adopted by companies during the COVID-19 pandemic. I carried this study out at a time when the world was just recovering from the coronavirus pandemic. It is notable that during this period, a lot of businesses had been shut down temporarily. Others were even closed down permanently. Therefore, a lot of people, including many Millennial employees, were out of work during the pandemic. As businesses began to re-open when cases of COVID-19 started to decline, more and more people became reemployed. Thus, the participants might have been influenced in one way or another as many companies started offering employee retention programs after the pandemic in order to attract and retain highly talented Millennials (Wolor et al., 2020). Some of these retention programs include mentorship programs, higher pay, and various benefits.

No other organizational and/or personal conditions influenced the experience of the participants at the time of study since there were no budget cuts, changes of personnel, or other trauma. When conducting this particular study, I allocated the budget that had been set aside at the start of the research throughout the duration of the study. Besides, no changes in personnel occurred. I was the sole researcher from the beginning

until the end of this study. Overall, the interpretation of the results of this study was not significantly influenced by organizational or personal conditions.

Participant Demographics

The participants in the current study included 16 people and were all Millennials. They work in specific organizations within the Houston, Texas area. Moreover, the participants are familiar with engagement approaches and mentorship approaches in the companies in which they work. This was important because not being Millennials and not being familiar with engagement and mentorship approaches of their organizations would have meant that the participants could not provide the relevant data that is needed for this study. I concealed the identity of the participants with the use of pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality and anonymity. The pseudonyms used were Participant 1 to Participant 16. Each of the 16 participants stated that they were willing and prepared to engage in the semistructured interviews that lasted for a period of 60 to 90 minutes. Approximately half of the participants were White. They were a mix of female and male. Most of them were in their 30s in terms of age. Table 1 summarizes the demographic information of the study subjects.

Table 1*Participant Demographics*

Participant pseudonym	Identify as Millennial	Gender	Age	Lives and works in in Houston	Ethnicity	Familiar with company's engagement and mentorship approaches
Participant 1	Yes	F	20-29	Yes	White	Yes
Participant 2	Yes	F	40-49	Yes	Black	Yes
Participant 3	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	Hispanic	Yes
Participant 4	Yes	F	30-39	Yes	Hispanic	Yes
Participant 5	Yes	F	20-29	Yes	Black	Yes
Participant 6	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	White	Yes
Participant 7	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	White	Yes
Participant 8	Yes	M	40-49	Yes	Hispanic	Yes
Participant 9	Yes	F	40-49	Yes	Hispanic	Yes
Participant 10	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	Black	Yes
Participant	Yes	F	20-	Yes	White	Yes

Participant pseudonym	Identify as Millennial	Gender	Age	Lives and works in in Houston	Ethnicity	Familiar with company's engagement and mentorship approaches
11			29			
Participant 12	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	White	Yes
Participant 13	Yes	F	20-29	Yes	Black	Yes
Participant 14	Yes	M	30-39	Yes	White	Yes
Participant 15	Yes	F	30-39	Yes	Black	Yes
Participant 16	Yes	M	40-49	Yes	White	Yes

Data Collection

For the collection of data to answer the research question, I recruited 16 participants to take part in semistructured interviews. I collected data with the use of only one type of data collection instrument, namely interviews with open-ended and semistructured questions. This was the appropriate number because I was able to easily conduct in-depth interviews. Regarding location, I conducted the 16 interviews online via Zoom. This was necessary owing to the lack of availability of the participants for face-to-face interviews because of their work schedules. Due to their work demands, they could

not meet with me physically for face-to-face interviews; hence, Zoom meetings were necessary. I also chose Zoom meetings as a precautionary measure in order to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Regarding the frequency of data collection, I conducted the semistructured interviews after every 2 to 3 days depending on the availability of the participants. Each of the interviews lasted for a period of 60 to 90 minutes, with the majority of the interviews lasting for a period of 65 to 75 minutes.

I recorded the interviews with the use of the default Zoom recorder. I obtained permission from the participants before the recording. They all agreed that the interview sessions could be recorded. For backup, I took notes in the old-fashioned way with the use of paper and pen in each interview. Moreover, for further backup, I also stored the digital data in the cloud, which comprised servers in off-site locations. A third-party provider maintains the servers and they also host, manage, and secure data stored in their infrastructure. Overall, backing up the collected data was important in case something happened to the Zoom recorder and all the digital data were lost.

There were slight variations in data collection from the plan presented in chapter 3. As described in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, my plan was to collect data through the use of semistructured interviews from 10 to 12 participants, but I recruited and interviewed a total of 16 participants. This variation was because I was not able to reach data saturation with only 12 participants; hence, there was a need to continue interviewing more and more participants. Data saturation refers to the point in data collection at which little or no relevant new categories and/or codes are found in the data (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). In addition, it is the point during the collection of data when

significant insights or issues have all been exhausted from data. In qualitative research, saturation of data is a guiding principle that is commonly used to assess the adequacy of purposive samples (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). After I had conducted 12 interviews, new insights were still emerging, including new themes which continued to come out thus suggesting that data saturation had not been reached. After conducting 16 interviews, I noticed that the same themes were coming out repeatedly. Because I stopped finding new patterns, opinions, ideas, or themes after interviewing 16 participants one-on-one, I concluded that I had reached saturation of data.

During the semistructured interviews, I employed an interview guide and asked probing follow-up questions. This was particularly appropriate when I had not fully understood a given response, when the answers were ambiguous or vague, and when I wanted to obtain more detailed or more specific information. I did not encounter any unusual circumstances when collecting data.

Data Analysis

I conducted thematic analysis to move inductively from coded units to larger representations including categories and themes, with the use of NVivo 12 software. The process involved several steps as described by Braun and Clarke (2019). I first became familiar with the collected data. I achieved this by reviewing the transcript from each study subject individually. Phrases, paragraphs, and sentences that I found to be meaningful to the topic were highlighted. I then reviewed the highlighted data in order to establish whether it could help answer the research questions. Data that I had highlighted but then found to be unrelated to the research question were removed and stored in a

separate file.

The second step was generating initial codes or development of codes. Braun and Clarke (2019) pointed out that after researchers have familiarized themselves with the data, they then identify preliminary codes, which are the features of the data that appear meaningful and interesting. I generated initial codes during this phase and systematically coded interesting features of the data across the whole data set, collating data that were relevant to each code. The codes were a lot more and specific than themes, and provided an indication of the context of the conversation. I started the coding process by referring to the descriptive text that were highlighted in the first step. I identified codes to which the string of descriptive texts from the previous step may belong. If a descriptive text did not have a match predetermined code, I added a new code to the coding scheme. Overall, several codes emerged from the data.

In the third step, I developed themes and formed groups from codes that were alike. These groups formed the themes that were used to answer the three research questions. I clustered data that were related or were connected in one way or another together. I then labeled each group with the use of a statement or phrase describing every distinct pattern.

Revision of themes was the fourth step. As patterns began emerging in the data, I identified data that were related to a particular pattern. I placed the data from the clusters created earlier to make up relations or patterns. To explain the pattern, I used direct quotes from the data/transcribed interviews.

The fifth step involved finalization and definition of themes. I looked for the

emergence of overarching themes in the patterns. I combined related patterns and clustered them into themes. After identifying themes that were more meaningful, I assigned a more abstract descriptor to them. After analyzing all the data, I arranged the themes in a matrix with their corresponding supportive patterns and codes for each data cluster. I then synthesized the data to create a composite synthesis of data gathered as regards the research questions. The specific codes, categories, and themes that emerged from the data with their corresponding quotations are shown in Appendix E. In the final step, I generated a report. There were no discrepant cases.

Several themes emerged from data after the coding process and analysis of all the gathered data. First, mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow.

Participant 2 stated, “I think if you have a good mentor and they're willing to help you learn. It's great.” Participant 3 indicated, “I think they're important so that somebody that's already been working and has more experience can kind of show us how things go so that we can be more acclimated when we first get out of school.” According to Participant 7, “having the mentorship programs will definitely prepare you for the day-to-day expectations of you of your actual job.”

Second, Millennial employees who are engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges. According to Participant 5, “Some challenges are being belittled. Unheard. And I would say, not taking serious seriously.” Participant 6 mentioned,

I think pay is the biggest challenge. Constantly negotiating the salary rate of

something that you may feel that you're worth, you might have experience in other fields, but because you have, you're younger than the competition, that could kind of be the with the biggest challenge.

Participant 10 posited, “Some of the challenges in a lot of companies is that they think that we're younger, so we don't know anything.”

Third, many different factors affect turnover. There are several quotes from the participants that support this theme. Participant 1 stated, “I think we're in a culture where there's not really that loyalty to companies anymore. So, like my parents, they worked for how things for 25–30 years. I think with my generation you know, being in a job for five years is like a huge deal.” Participant 10 mentioned, “I definitely think it's the pay. Before, a lot of people are getting laid off, a couple of people were leaving just due to the pay. The pay rate is really.” Moreover, Participant 11 reported, “I think accountability. Lots of times, one of the things that I hear from staff who are leaving is that the management team can operate in a certain way and they try to hold you to a standard that they're not held to themselves.”

Fourth, mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, has a voice, provides assistance, teaches them important things, and makes them feel valued. Several quotes from the participants support this theme. Participant 1 noted, “I think that if a, if a Millennial has someone in leadership that is fostering them, that is able to really help them navigate their career.” Participant 3 indicated, “From my perspective it reduces turnover because when you have somebody that's already been in the position that you're in for years, they can

kind of like tell you what to expect and how to deal with certain things. So that you are not as overwhelmed.” Participant 10 mentioned,

So I think it's very important to have a great mentor and you know the workplace or like anywhere as Millennial because she's obviously like I said I'm the youngest on the team and she's helping me a lot and teaching me a lot of things that will help me in the corporate world and to be able to you know, my resume and stuff.

Fifth, other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs. There are participant quotes that support this theme. Participant 14 mentioned, “Offer free therapy sessions.” Participant 10 noted, “We do have like weekly team meetings that help us talk about any issues we may have. It's supposed to help us interact since we do work from home.” According to Participant 12, “Having more open-door policies. It's easy when they say, of course, my door is always open, but is it really? You know, so I think having a voice where you are working will definitely stop turnovers.”

Sixth, suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keeping them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback. Several participant quotes support this theme. Participant 10 spoke about “The pay. A lot of companies aren't paying employees enough. They're not paying employees with their worth.” Participant 11 mentioned, “For me, it's important to be as transparent as possible, to let me know what's going on, let me

know why. Otherwise I'm less likely to buy into it.” Participant 12 reported, “I would say be more open and allow space for people to feel comfortable talking about things.”

Trustworthiness of the Data

Trustworthiness is understood as the level of confidence in data, interpretation, as well as methods utilized to ensure the quality of a given research study. It also refers to the truthfulness, authenticity, and quality of findings (Morrow, 2005). There are four specific criteria that are usually used to judge the soundness of qualitative research: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Credibility is the internal validity of qualitative studies. This term refers to how congruent the findings are with reality (Amin et al., 2020). It is also a measure of the truth value of qualitative research, or whether the findings are accurate. In the current study, several strategies were utilized to establish this criterion of trustworthiness. One of them is triangulation, which entails the use of different sources of information or procedure from the field to repetitively establish identifiable patterns (Morrow, 2005). Moreover, member checks were utilized for establishing credibility. This is also commonly referred to as respondent or participant validation. After collecting data from the study subjects, I returned it to them to check for accurateness as well as resonance with their experiences. I returned the results to them to check for the same. All the 16 participants confirmed that the data gathered from them were accurate, establishing credibility.

Another procedure that I employed for the purpose of increasing the study's

credibility was deviant case or negative case analysis. This broadly refers to a technique for ensuring the validity of the interpretation of qualitative data by analyzing outlier data. Through this technique, a researcher actively seeks out and scrutinizes data that do not support or fit their interpretation of the data (Johnson et al., 2020). By conducting negative case analysis, I identified elements of the data which disconfirmed emergent findings. The procedure was done by finding and discussing data which contradicted the explanations that were emerging from the research. Data analysis was refined whenever a new negative case arose, and this revision went on until the study could explain most of the data captured in the research. In essence, this procedure helped me to refine all the conclusions reached until they accounted for all the known cases without exception.

Transferability

Transferability is the second major aspect of trustworthiness. It is understood as the generalizability of inquiry. This only concerns to case-to-case transfer in qualitative research (Amin et al., 2020). For this study, this criterion of trustworthiness was established through thick description, which is provided as follows. The respondents in the current study were Millennial employees in Houston, Texas. They are engaged in mentorship programs within the organizations in which they work. Moreover, they have familiarity with engagement and mentorship approaches in their respective organizations and are aged over 18 years. By collecting data from the participants through one-on-one semistructured interviews, I gained an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction.

Dependability

Dependability is utilized in demonstrating or measuring the reliability and consistency of the results of the study. This criterion of trustworthiness is mainly focused on whether the same results would be attained if the same study is conducted two times (Morrow, 2005). For this study, dependability was established such that if someone else wanted to replicate it, they would have adequate information from the research report to do so and obtain similar findings as the current study did.

The strategies that were used to establish dependability are triangulation and inquiry audit or audit trail. An audit trail, according to Nowell et al. (2017), refers to a transparent description of the steps taken in a research study from the beginning of the project until when the findings were reported. In the current study, eight steps were followed. The first step entailed determining what to research. I sought to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The second step was identifying how to research the identified problem. In the current study, this step involved looking through secondary data and research including research reports and studies carried out previously. The methodology to use was also determined, which was the qualitative approach with descriptive phenomenological study as the appropriate design. Semistructured interviews with open-ended questions were selected for collection of data. After determining what I would research and how I would carry out the study, the third step was writing up a research plan, which provided more information regarding the timelines, goals of the research, dependencies, and participant scope.

In Step 4, the research was prepared. I did so by selecting the participants, scheduling interviews and preparing the necessary equipment. Step 5 was about executing the research, which was accomplished within a period of roughly 2 weeks. Interviews were conducted with 16 participants via Zoom. I recorded the interviews using a digital voice recorder and took notes using pen and paper for backup. An audit trail was kept of all the notes that were taken in each of the 16 interviews. I asked follow-up questions during each interview.

The sixth step was about coding and synthesizing the data to find insights. Thematic analysis was the approach used to code the data with the assistance of NVivo 12 software. Themes were found that resulted in the generation of insight which helped to answer the research question and achieve the goal of the study. In the seventh step, the research output was created. This was a report outlining major findings from the study in a document format. It encompassed an executive summary, insight themes, as well as supporting evidence. The final step is sharing the findings with key stakeholders. I kept important records regarding what I did during the investigation. These include information on how the data collection instrument was developed; all raw data and notes taken during each interview; trustworthiness notes pertaining to confirmability, dependability, credibility, and transferability; and codebook showing a listing of all the codes that were utilized in the data analysis process.

The aforementioned audit trail describes all the steps that I took to complete this research project successfully from the beginning until when the findings were reported. By following it, other researchers would be able to obtain the same results. Therefore,

dependability is established.

Confirmability

The final component of trustworthiness that I established in this study is confirmability. This term refers to the degree of neutrality in the findings of a given research study (Amin et al., 2020). Simply put, this concept denotes that the findings are founded upon the responses of the study subjects and not on my personal motivations or bias. In the current study, this criterion of trustworthiness was established through an audit trail, which is provided. It highlights each step that was taken during the analysis of data so as to provide a justification for the decisions that were made. Specifically, I completed six steps in analyzing the data consistent with the thematic analysis process of Braun and Clarke (2019).

Results

Through the current study, I sought to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees who are engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The high rate of employee turnover in workplaces across America has been identified as an issue that mostly affects Millennial workers (Fry, 2018). Researchers have demonstrated that mentorship programs can be effective in lowering turnover rates by increasing job satisfaction (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018). During the initial moments of the interview, I asked the participants to describe their experiences in mentorship programs in their places of work. They also described what they think mentorship programs helps Millennials like themselves in the place of work. In total, six main themes emerged from the analyzed data. The results of the data analysis are

organized by the research question and main themes.

The themes were arrived at through a coding process and analysis of the data through thematic analysis. The process involved six steps, namely: familiarization with the gathered data, development of initial codes, development of themes, revision of themes, finalization and definition of themes, and report generation. NVivo 12 software aided the data analysis process. Table 2 below summarizes the main themes and subthemes.

Table 2

Research Question and Corresponding Themes

Research Question	Themes used to address the research question
RQ: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces turnover reduction?	<p>Theme 1: Mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow</p> <p>Theme 2: Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges</p> <p>Theme 3: Many different factors affect turnover</p> <p>Theme 4: Mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, having a voice, provide assistance, teaches them important things, makes them feel valued</p> <p>Theme 5: Other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs</p>

Research Question	Themes used to address the research question
	Theme 6: Suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keep them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback

Research Question

The central research question was as follows: *What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces turnover reduction? Six themes emerged from the data that help to answer this question. These are: (a) Mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer them guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow; (b) Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges; (c) Many different factors affect turnover; (d) Mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, has a voice, provides assistance, teaches them important things, and makes them feel valued; (e) Other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs; and (f) Suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keeping them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback. The table below illustrates the number of participants who mentioned each theme.*

Table 3*Research Question Themes*

Theme	<i>n</i> of participants contributing to this theme (<i>N</i> =16)	<i>n</i> of references to this theme in the data
Theme 1: Mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, learn things they did not know before, offer them guidance, become acclimated to work, and grow	16	29
Theme 2: Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges.	14	20
Theme 3: Many different factors affect turnover.	15	21
Theme 4: Mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, having a voice, provides assistance, teaches them important things, and makes them feel valued	14	22
Theme 5: Other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs	11	14
Theme 6: Suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keep them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback.	16	31

Theme 1

The first theme was: Mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer them guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow. The first theme that emerged from the analyzed data is that according to the interviewed participants, mentorship programs are helpful to them as they provide guidance to these Millennials, allow them to ask questions, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow. This was mentioned 29 times by all the 16 participants. I present theme 1 and corresponding responses/quotes in this section. Participant 1 noted:

To me, I feel like it just gives me a safe space to be able to ask questions. It gives me I think just an area to where I can learn from other people's mistakes. When I'm with a mentor they'll tell me, hey, this is what I did, this is what I learned from it and I can take that so that you know it's not as difficult of learning process or learning curve. So, I think having that mentorship is just having that person that I can bounce questions off of and have that feedback of what the lessons learned is.

Participant 2 stated, "I think if you have a good mentor and they're willing to help you learn. It's great." Similarly, Participant 10 mentioned,

When you have a good mentor, people who already experienced certain things, it helps a lot because they can guide you and help you with whatever you need to do. If you have any questions, a mentor is supposed to already have experienced certain things, or even if they haven't experienced certain things, it's always good to talk to someone and get their input. Finding a mentor at the workplace that does

have a positive mindset and can help you and teach you some things.

According to Participant 3, “I think they're important so that somebody that's already been working and has more experience can kind of show us how things go so that we can be more acclimated when we first get out of school.” Participant 13 indicated,

I think mentorship programs are great for personal and professional development, being able to go to someone. To get feedback from them or to help like help with the project. Right now, in my role, I am learning smart sheets for example. And so, the person that I've asked to mentor me at the current company that I'm working at is really an expert in Smartsheets. So, we're able to partner and he's able to give me feedback in terms of how to use the platform most efficiently to get the data that I need.

Moreover, Participant 14 reported,

I think it'll be good for people that want to move up in the company. So now just somebody will pretty much guide you, turn things that you just can't learn on their own. Certain things they are I feel like easier way to the easier way to do things, a better way to understand things that you probably can't just figure out on your own.

Participant 4 stated,

I think it's very important to have that relationship with a mentor because they can, you know, show you the ropes. They can, you know, teach you how to do certain things that you may not maybe have known, or they may be able to teach you a better way of doing something, especially if it can help save time. If it can

help you know the greater group just depending on the situation of course. But I think it's very important to have those type of relationships in the workplace.

Likewise, Participant 5 mentioned,

It helps us because many of us are not experienced. A lot of jobs in the workforce are asking for one or two years, three to four years' experience and so to know that it could be taken as a hand in hand, situation. You know, us helping out jobs with you know, ideas and new things to take over to help Millennials stay in it would actually be good.

According to Participant 6, "I think it's very important to have people that have the experience. I think it's important that we have, you know, a balance of experience and then also having new insight on how we can make a job more efficient." Likewise, Participant 7 mentioned, "I do believe that although formal education is very important, there is nothing like the tangible real-life practical experience and so having the mentorship programs will definitely prepare you for the day-to-day. Expectations of you of your actual job." Participant 8 noted,

So, mentorship helps by giving information and access, and I think those are really key to any corporate environment. You may think you're doing the right thing. You may think you know the ends and outs. But if you come out of, you know, a college setting where things are completely theoretical, and then you go into a corporate setting where they're more practical, you tend not to really know how to merge the two. But yeah, so I think mentorship is crucial. Because it gives you, you know, key insights. It gives you the experience of others, where they had

their pitfalls so you could avoid them, where they had their biggest games so you can emphasize and strengthen yours.

Similarly, Participant 9 mentioned,

I think it helps a lot, not just with learning how to do the job, but also getting familiar with the culture of the job. You can observe things like, what do they wear to work? What's the dress code? How do they interact with others? How do they conduct themselves in open settings. So, not just learning how to do the job from her, I also learned social cues. I do think that was very beneficial. So, you know, having someone that can ask personal questions or things about her experience as well. I really think that helped integrate me into the position, because I felt comfortable asking all sorts of questions since we were in the same position. So that was nice to have someone to ask questions.

Theme 2

Theme 2 was: Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges. This theme suggests that the Millennial employees who are engaged in mentorship are confronted with many different challenges. These range from being belittled at the workplace because of younger age and getting lower pay compared to other employees to being disrespected and working with older employees who are used to old ways of doing things among other challenges. This was mentioned 20 times by 14 out of the 16 participants. The challenge that many of the interviewed participants talked about is the different ways of doing things owing to different ages. I present Theme 2 and its corresponding responses/quotes in this section.

According to Participant 1,

I think that one of the challenges is just the wide range of ages that I am working with. So, I can be working with someone that's 20 or 30 years older than me that would be used to doing things a certain way. They're set in their ways. They're used to working in a certain specific way and maybe just kind of acclimating myself to different learning styles. So, if you have someone that's you know in their 50s to 60s, they may not be so computer savvy, they may not know all of the new products that we use as far as like sharing electronic, like doing these Zoom meetings and like you know all the different platforms. So, I think just having that, that's a challenge. So, kind of working with just different age groups would be the biggest thing of a Millennial.

Likewise, Participant 10 noted,

Some of the challenges in a lot of companies is that they think that we're younger, so we don't know anything. I feel like it's harder to get a job for a Millennial. We're getting older now, but I do feel when you try to get into certain companies, they don't train you anymore. They feel you should already know certain things and a lot of people don't know. It's kind of hard to get jobs or when you do get jobs, they feel like you don't know anything because you are a Millennial, and you are young.

Participant 11 indicated that at the workplace, employees of the older generations prefer doing things in a particular way that younger, Millennial employees do not prefer.

Specifically, Participant 11 mentioned,

I think, outdated methods of operations. There have been times for me, specifically as a manager, that they want me to send an e-mail, you want me to fax it over, you want me to take a picture. You want me to do all these different things, and it's like you have an iPhone. You should be able to do all of these on your own and it starts to feel redundant and it starts to feel like a waste of time. And I know that for the people my age, if we feel like it's a waste of time, I'm not trying to do that.

Likewise, Participant 7 talked about having to deal with old rules:

Having to go or having to having to deal with the rules of old. Basically, the way Corporate America has always run is not necessarily the way that we really think about things, you know in the days' time. Say for instance Covid, Covid pretty much shook up the entire world. And so having the ability to work from home is great because we worked with some of us work that are like that. But you still have corporate America wanting people to be in the office. So am I in my opinion that's the terms or that's the rules of old. So, it's challenging to try and match what we know to be today's times which what has already been instituted by you know the foundation of the company and trying to bridge those two together. They don't always, they don't always mesh. If that makes sense.

Similarly, Participant 15 stated,

Well, I guess I would say. Having to battle the generation before us when it comes to like management and things of that nature, they tend to think we're not as mature as maybe you know someone that's twenty years older than me or

something like that. So, I think that's the only challenge.

The challenge that Participant 12 talked about pertains to the lack of appreciation at the workplace. Specifically, this individual noted,

Being recognized for your accomplishments. That's one that stands out for me. Not based off of numbers or whatnot, just a simple thank you every day would go a long way. I don't see that much in a law firm where I am now or been in previous firms. You don't get too many of thank you's and I think that would go a long way.

Participant 13 mentioned that Millennial employees tend to look for different things than employees of older generations at the workplace. According to Participant 13,

I think, one of my biggest challenges as a Millennial is sometimes reporting to management or the C-Suite being of a different generation. And I think that as a Millennial, I have a different outlook on work satisfaction, job satisfaction and the things that it takes to keep me retained. Whereas I think in older generations, they were more loyalty based, so they had a job, they worked it, they stayed the company for years. Whereas for me, I'm looking for more than just somewhere I can stay for a long time. I'm looking for, a variety of different things, leadership, development, culture, you know, how do I feel coming into work every day, whereas I don't necessarily think that those in leadership who come from a different generation. I don't think they see things that way, so sometimes it can be a challenge.

For Participant 14, the main challenge that he faces is that the company does not care

about its employees. He noted,

For me, I would say, understanding from the actual company, will, I don't think the company really care about the actual employee, but I do have certain supervisors in my job that do. I'm a single mom, Millennial too, and I work from home. And I have daycare for my kid. I was forced to get daycare or lose my job so I don't know, it's kind of challenging.

Participant 16 talked about a few challenges:

Challenges? Well. One, I would say, the previous generation, one, not assisting. And just remaining in their roles. And. So I guess the lack of a better term would be just kind of moving out of the way to. Millennials get into their positions as they venture into retirement. That's one thing that's very challenging. Um, leaning back into mentors, if we had mentors or an organized mentorship program that would help us navigate through career development and climbing the corporate ladder, if available to us. Also pay. A lot of times with inflation I personally don't feel like I'm getting paid for what I'm worth. And I think mentorship would help as well with that. You know how to negotiate your salary and things of that nature. So those are some of the challenges.

Participant 2 talked about Millennials not being given opportunities. This person stated that:

Um. Kind of what I was saying, the last one, not being given the opportunities because when you go look on LinkedIn and stuff, the entry level position, which would most of the time be the positions that the younger Millennials, because I'm

a younger Millennial are looking for and we're not. We're expected to have all these years of experience as an entry level position, so I think it's pretty hard. To even get positions. So, I think the biggest hard should we're the biggest challenge would be being put in the positions to prove ourselves that we can do it because a lot of Millennials have the candy. Attitude, but it's just being given the opportunity to show it.

For Participant 3, the challenges include being disrespected of age and low salary compared to peers at the workplace. This individual reported that:

I would say for me it's been like not getting respect from some people because of like my age. And when I first started, I'm in the mental health field, so lot of times like doctors and nurses didn't like necessarily respect what I was saying because I was younger than them. So, I guess that would be like a challenge, the main challenge. Uh. My first job I don't know if that has to do with me being a Millennial but I feel as far as my salary and I didn't realize that till after working with my mentor and she was mentioning her salary. But I don't know, you know, if they had anything to do, but that was fighting for more money.

Participant 6 also talked about low pay as a challenge, stating,

I would say it would be pay. Not feeling, you know, oh you're younger so I think. It might be pay. I think pay is the biggest challenge. Constantly negotiating the salary rate of something that you may feel that you're worth, you might have experience in other fields, but because you have, you're younger than the competition, that could kind of be the with the biggest challenge.

Participant 5 indicated, “Some challenges are being belittled. Unheard. And I would say, not taking serious seriously.” Participant 8 mentioned,

I think the challenges are that the world has changed a lot from where people would stay at jobs 20, 30, 40 years and with that mentality they really don't understand that in order to get the pay and the position that you would like you do have to hop around. I know that was the same for me, I couldn't stay it. I couldn't stay at a company for 15 years, 20 years and expect to get the pay that I'm getting right now. And I think maybe people in the boomers or Generation X'ers they had that mentality. They had the mentality of you go to college, you get in this job and stay there until you retire, and you take retirement. Go to college, you get it in this job, and you stay there until you retire and then you take a retirement.

Theme 3

Theme 3 was: Many different factors affect turnover. The third theme shows that according to the participants, the turnover of Millennials is affected by a variety of factors. These factors range from low pay, a lack of accountability on the part of managers, and Millennials not being loyal to companies unlike members of the older generation who were loyal and could stay with the same organization for decades, to a lack of recognition and flexible working hours, not being valued and lack of job satisfaction, and not being appreciated. Other reasons include a lack of career development and growth, not providing the Millennial employees with adequate training, lack of effective communication, and unrealistic expectations. This was mentioned 21 times by 15 participants. This section contains a detailed discussion of Theme 3 and its

corresponding responses/quotes.

Participant 1 mentioned that unlike employers of older generations, who are loyal to companies and would stay in an organization for many years, Millennial employees are not loyal to their companies; hence, they are unlikely to stay with one company for long.

This participant stated,

I think we're in a culture where there's not really that loyalty to companies anymore. So, like my parents, they worked for how things for 25–30 years. I think with my generation you know, being in a job for five years is like a huge deal. Like, that's a big accomplishment. So, staying at a job for a length amount of time, a long amount of time. I think you're always looking for that steppingstone to add to your, you know, skill set. So, if that comes through in another job or maybe a promotion, I think, I think the younger generation is looking for ways to acquire all their tools and add to their, like you know, their bucket and that's what causes, you know, high turnover rate because you've got people that are now, you see, invested maybe a year's worth of time and then there are on to another job or another area in the in the company.

Participant 10 believes pay is the reason for the turnover. This respondent noted,

I definitely think it's the pay. Before, a lot of people are getting laid off, a couple of people were leaving just due to the pay. The pay rate is really low. I do feel that a lot of people in customer service don't get paid enough and the cost of living out here in Houston is very high. The pay rate isn't high enough. A lot of people are trying to leave and find something better for them.

Likewise, Participant 4 mentioned that “Probably salary. OK, I would say salary.” Participant 16 indicated that in addition to low pay, the lack of career development and growth opportunities also contribute to turnover. This participant noted that “In my organization, I would say pay. Also career development and career growth and not being appreciated in their role.” Participant 11 talked of accountability on the part of the managers as a reason for the turnover of Millennial employees. According to this respondent,

I think accountability. Lots of times, one of the things that I hear from staff who are leaving is that the management team can operate in a certain way and they try to hold you to a standard that they're not held to themselves. Or the managers are very lazy to try to put all of the work on the workers and the managers are just standing around, walking around. In my opinion on the management side, I felt that I would be the manager who has to pick up all of that flack. But because they, the staff, know that those managers are not reliable, it falls on me. And now I feel that I'm being overworked and no one's holding the rest of the management team accountable. And yes, I can speak up and say things about it, but because I'm not someone who can reprimand you, it's kind of like those words fall on deaf ears.

For Participant 12, the lack of recognition and flexible working hours are some of the major reasons for employees leaving an organization:

Not being recognized for the hard work that you do. For the work that you put in. Like I said, an easy thank you goes a long way, especially when you're a trial paralegal. There's so much that's entailed into that career, so most of the time the

work is on you. At the end of the day or the end of the trial, just the easy thank you for everything that you've done to get prepared for this trial will go a long way. Flexible working hours as well. I would think that would play a big factor also.

According to Participant 13, not being valued and a lack of job satisfaction contribute to the turnover of Millennial employees. This participant reported,

So, I think that a lot of Millennials are being hired into the workplace now into the roles that we're hiring and I think that, I can't speak for everyone, but I do think there's a trend where if an employee does not feel valued in their workplace, or they feel a sense of dissatisfaction with management, or just the culture of the work, the company, they're going to leave.

Similarly, Participant 2 mentioned that:

Job satisfaction 100%. I think it's job satisfaction and it may be management. I think people leave jobs because of management. In my personal opinion, that is my personal opinion. So I think that employers need to do a better job of satisfying their employees.

For Participant 14, the lack of work-life balance contributes to turnover. This participant noted that:

These are just people's personal lives not being able to. I don't know. It's like sometimes it's mentally challenging, sometimes it's like time wise. You could scratch that, you can't, you really can't work. And it goes back to understanding they don't really understand or care. They're just somebody else that will

accommodate their schedule.

Participant 3 believes that stress at work and not getting any help contributes to employees leaving an organization. According to this individual, “As far as the people who don't say stay, I would say it's because of this of the stress of the job and not having as much help.” Participant 5 feels that not providing Millennial employees with adequate training plays a role in the high turnover rate of these workers. Specifically, this participant reported,

Um, again kind of going back to Upper management not having patience with workers that are younger than them, pretty much not going into too much in depth with training and that's a problem as well. Kind of rushing trainings and expecting the best of the best to be done, as far as, performance wise and QA. Or getting onto the floor or dealing directly with customers. So, I believe, yeah, just kind of not going into much depth into trainings as well as not having patience once the job has started after trainings.

Participant 6 talked about performance as a factor contributing to the turnover. This respondent stated that, “Performance, definitely. Performances. That's literally what it boils down to.” Moreover, Participant 7 believes that poor communication and the lack of standardized procedures are among the factors that contribute to the turnover. This participant stated,

So, when I think outside of my actual department, just dealing with some of, you know, the people that I work with then I would say it would be communication. And then the lack of standardized procedures. Not knowing you know, people not

knowing what to do or how to do is frustrating. So. For those that are dealing with the turnover, I think that that would that that would probably be the leading cause. Participant 8 talked of poor planning, unrealistic expectations, and poor communication as some of the reasons for turnover. Specifically, this participant indicated,

I think that's the hugest one that unrealistic expectations and also planning. Planning in my workplace is a huge thing. Everything is an emergency because they haven't planned well for it. And when you when everything is emergency, nothing is an emergency right? Like the priority levels are kind of all over the place in other departments. And I think. Poor communication, interdepartmentally.

Participant 9 reported,

From my IT department, it was experience. Even though our position is very teachable. I came in not knowing much and was taught everything through the mentorship that I talked about earlier. The times that I have seen us hire someone and they just didn't work out, they didn't have the experience or the desire to learn, because that's all it takes. As long as you're willing to learn, we teach you everything. Not having that go getter spirit and wanting to learn and do and not taking initiative, it's very noticeable. You're surrounded by people that get things done and are very efficient and all that, so if you're not doing that, you stick out like a sore thumb.

Theme 4

Theme 4 was: Mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a mentor who

helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, having a voice, provide assistance, teaches them important things, and makes them feel valued. This fourth theme demonstrates that the participants believe that mentorship decreases turnover rates when a Millennial employee has a great mentor who offers encouragement, helps the employee navigate his or her career, provides the necessary assistance, teaches the Millennial employee important things and makes him or her feel valued, and allows him or her to have a voice. This was mentioned 22 times by 14 participants. Theme 4 and corresponding responses/quotes are shown in the following table.

Participant 1 talked about how having a mentor who can help a Millennial navigate his or her career, advocate for that person, and make him/her feel valued can help to make that employee stay. Specifically, this respondent indicated,

I think that if a, if a Millennial has someone in leadership that is fostering them, that is able to really help them navigate their career or be an advocate for them when maybe they see mistreatment in the workplace, or if they are. I just think advocating would be something that would keep a Millennial like feeling like they have. Everybody wants to have like a purpose, like they're feeling like they're being valued, that they're being seen and so if that's the person that needs that, then I would that would keep them there.

According to Participant 10,

Mentorship can help because someone comes into the company, and they can tell you their experiences. For instance, with the company that I worked for, the pay rate is low. If I had a mentor who worked for the company, they could have

mentored me and said, it gets better the longer you stay, the more money you make. Or I know the script is hard or dealing with customers is hard, but this is how I handle them. This is how I deal with it. If I had that encouragement, or if other people have that encouragement during the job [because there's a lot of stuff that they may not necessarily like during the job], you have a mentor. That will help people stay. You have someone to talk to every day, someone who you can, you know, vent to or someone who can encourage you. I feel like that'll make someone stay longer.

Participant 11 noted that a mentor can help a mentee learn new things within the organization, as the mentor will teach the new Millennial employee important skills that will allow him or her to perform his or her job better and consequently help to decrease turnover rates. Specifically, this participant indicated,

I think that they will significantly reduce turnover because the employees feel that they're part of whatever is happening. So if we're mentoring you to develop better customer service skills or to develop better cash handling skills, whatever the case may be. During the internship program, we should be asking the employees what do you think? Does this work for you? What are some of the struggles that you found? And then you should be able to circle back to that and show how in this program we're going to give you better skills to combat the issues that you're dealing with. And lots of times I think with Millennials, we just want communication. Communicate with us, communicate effectively to where we can understand, and you probably got us for a long time.

According to Participant 13, a mentor can actively invest in the development of an employee. This will make that employee feel valued, which in turn increases his or her likelihood of staying with the organization. This participant reported the following:

So, I think that mentorship programs can reduce turnover because there is an active a person that's actively investing in that employee's development. And I think sometimes just with the day-to-day business of everything, managers might not have time between their tasks and their meetings. To really sit down and focus on developing their team, even though I do think they should be able to manage it, but sometimes they're not able to and so. When you have someone, at least for myself, when you have someone that you can go to and someone that's actively investing in your development, it makes you feel valued and. And feeling value that makes employee like more likely to stay with the company.

Participant 14 talked about how having a mentor who is understanding and makes the Millennial employee feel valued can help to keep the employee and prevent turnover:

I just recently had a supervisor that we just didn't mesh at all. But now I have one that is more understanding. She doesn't like talk to me as if I'm a kid, so I was gonna quit and me being able to be with somebody that I feel like it's more understanding or more gentle and not trying to chastise me or treat me like a kid. They kind of made me stay little bit more and now I'm being offered another position. And that's helpful. OK, maybe let's do personality tests to see what type of supervisors should be with certain workers.

According to Participant 2, having a great mentor can teach a Millennial employee a lot

of important things that he/she did not know before:

So I think it's very important to have a great mentor and you know the workplace or like anywhere as Millennial because she's obviously like I said, I'm the youngest on the team and she's helping me a lot and teaching me a lot of things that will help me in the corporate world and to be able to you know, my resume and stuff. So, it's very important to have that mentorship program for Millennials.

According to Participant 3, mentorship can help to decrease turnover rates when a Millennial employee has a mentor who offers the mentee the necessary assistance like showing him or her how to deal with certain things. Specifically, this participant indicated,

From my perspective it reduces turnover because when you have somebody that's already been in the position that you're in for years, they can kind of like tell you what to expect and how to deal with certain things. So that you are not as overwhelmed. I know that that helps me like because I'm the type of person that wants to try to get it all done and handle everything. And you know, people that have been like mentoring me and kind of like had been in my position kind of showed me how to like prioritize and to show me how to, like prioritize. They are able to tell me that you don't have to get everything done just because it's presented to you. So, they help, they help you kind of learn how to deal with certain things that you're going to deal with in the workplace.

Participant 4 mentioned that having a mentor allows a Millennial employee to have someone to lean on, especially when there is work pressure, and this helps to reduce

turnover. Specifically, this participant described,

Umm... I think when you're comfortable and when you're when you feel like you have, um, the skills that or the knowledge to be effective in your life, work, they're just then at certain level of comfort there. And knowing that you have a mentor or someone that you can lean on, reach out to when you are not privy to certain things, I think it makes it even better because there's no pressure if you well. There's no pressure to perform. There's no pressure to perform, for lack of better words, idiotically, because you have that mentor to go to, that you can lean on when you don't know certain information.

Participant 6 believes that a mentor can help a Millennial employee grow and improve on his or her performance. This responded stated that “the mentorship will be able to. I don't know. Like port into that person, figure out what their weaknesses are, what their strengths are, and then be able to help them grow in in in and enhance their performance.” Likewise, Participant 7 talked about how a mentor, who has worked within the organization for a longer time than the new Millennial employee, can teach the Millennial certain things about work performance, which may help to make his/her stay. In particular, Participant 7 reported,

Your mentor should be able to offer you the information that will that will give you the staying power or the sticking power and give you the tools necessary to deal with the nuances that would normally drive someone away had they not have the inside knowledge. In my opinion if they been there for a while, they can tell you some work arounds that you may not necessarily see just sitting there and just

working within your own, you know, your confines.

Similarly, Participant 8 noted,

I think access and information allows people to feel comfortable in the position there they're doing. So, if I'm a person, coming to the job straight from university, I can be coupled with a person who has the experience, who has the knowledge base, who has the years, who has the practical application, and I can learn from them and I don't have to weigh the waters by myself. It's almost like having a coach, having a coach who has been on the team. You're new to a team and then you have a coach who has the expectation, and they can walk you through what they need. Now of course you need to have knowledge of the game previous, but you don't know what this specific team, with its specific skill sets, expects from you and with a coach, they can align that out perfectly, so the mentor can serve as that. They can serve as a person who lines out expectations perfectly for you.

According to Participant 9, a mentor can help to reduce turnover since the new Millennial employee will have someone to learn from and confide in:

I think it reduces it by having someone that they can build a camaraderie, rapport, and a relationship with so you don't feel so alone and so isolated, like you have no ties to a company. I think a mentorship program is great to build ties with someone who has your same position, or within your same department so you can get some experiences from them with experiences that might tell you what you have to look forward to in the future so there's not as much guessing. You can get some insight into what it will be like to stay with the company and what their day-

to-day is, what maybe some of their gripes are, or what they do like about the company. I think it's very valuable to have someone that you can confide in and learn from and helps with sticking with the job and being loyal to that job if you have someone that you can confide in.

Theme 5

Theme 5 was: Other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs. The fifth theme that emerged from the analyzed data is that the participants identified other programs that can also help to reduce turnover, for instance fun activities, having team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, as well as training and development programs. This was mentioned 14 times by 11 participants.

Theme 5 and corresponding responses/quotes are shown in the following table.

Participant 10 talked about the importance having team meetings:

We do have like weekly team meetings that help us talk about any issues we may have. It's supposed to help us interact since we do work from home. It's supposed to help us interact with other employees to help us not feel alone in our workplace even though we are working from home. That's something that we do have where you can talk to your peers weekly, also with your supervisor. We have that meeting for about an hour. Other than that, we don't have any programs. Well, we do have a Wellness program. It encourages us to exercise and do health seminars. If we do all those things, we get a certain amount of points at the end of each quarter. If we get 2500 points each quarter, we get an extra \$100 or \$200 on our

check at the end of the quarter. That encourages us to make more money on our checks. Some people like that and it encourages them to stay.

Participant 11 talked about fun activities such as running a contest. The respondent noted, I'm not sure that it's necessarily a program, but one of the things that I personally like to do when I'm running my shifts is to get buy-in from the staff to get their engagement. So, I'd like to run contests. If you're in a place where there's sales of any kind, "Whoever sells the most will get this," I believe you have to incentivize the sales and you have to incentivize them to do work. Because I guess the way I see it is, you know, obviously you're gonna pay me, it's a job. So, I'm here to do the job. But if you want me to go above and beyond, then there has to be a reason why.

Participant 12 recommended "Having more open-door policies. It's easy when they say, of course, my door is always open, but is it really? You know, so I think having a voice where you are working will definitely stop turnovers." According to Participant 14, employee benefits such as free therapy sessions and childcare services can help decrease turnover by helping to relieve employees' stress. Specifically, this participant reported,

Offer free therapy sessions. I think that was good for me because like I said sometimes it get stressful working at call centers because people like to yell or be very angry so is it can get overwhelming dealing with that day in and day out for like 8 hours a day, every day. I think them offering free therapy is good. They offer a lot of other things, like they offer help with childcare too. That's alright. I'm gonna get you kind of eliminate or reduce some of the stresses that you would

have in your personal life.

For Participant 15, benefits such as paying for employee tuition can help to reduce turnover by motivating the Millennials to stay with the company. This participant stated,

We have like organizations where you can, you know, like sign up for like school and you know, the employer would pay for tuition, or they have these programs where you can get like your GED or your diploma. And of course, with those programs you have to be within the company for certain amount of time.

Something like those, you know, motivate some people to actually stay with the company.

Participant 16 talked about a professional development program called 'gig' that can help with retention of Millennial employees. This participant indicated,

One thing that they have implemented this year is, they call it a gig. So, what a gig is, they allow you to outside of your current role into a role that you think you may want to go into. So, say I am a project manager and I want to look into getting out into human resources. So, they have these gigs or these job opportunities you're not getting paid for it, it's an additional work. But you're able to play that role for a few weeks or a few months to see if that's something you would you would want to get into.

Similarly, Participant 2 talked about training and professional development opportunities.

This responded mentioned,

So even if like because I don't think that I'm paid as much as I should be, but I think that I have a great boss. She was giving me opportunities and teaching

things that will be very helpful from whatever my future holds. She's teaching me a lot of things and she even gives me opportunities like being an administrator of Smartsheets because it'll look good on my resume for the future.

Participant 3 mentioned fun activities and shared governance that help to retain employees:

They try to do like fun activities, like they sometimes will, like pay, meaning the company pay for us to like do something outside of work. They have like mental health workshops to make sure everybody's OK. And then they have a shared governance, shared governance team. They kind of works on activities and things to like implement self-care and to our day-to-day activities. And I think they're working on something where the group is going to be doing something outside of work soon. And then they also do one-on-one. So, like the manager does one on ones to kind of do like a check-in with every employee to make sure that they're doing OK. OK to give their feedback. OK, great.

Participant 4 talked about professional development opportunities and how these could enhance one's personal and professional growth and ultimately aid in retention:

There's a communication tool that we use within our organization called SLACK. And you can dial into these different channels. And so, one of the channels that I am a part of is like general, it's a general channel, but in this general channel there are conversations about career development, professional development, other opportunities that are available to, you know, enhance your career and think you can tap into to better yourself professionally. And so, I think having those type of

applications and platforms available are important for personal and professional growth.

Likewise, Participant 7 noted the importance of implementing training programs. This respondent stated,

And so, we were just, we just implemented some training programs, we just went to a new system. Having those training programs really help because for personal myself I need to know what I'm doing and I don't like to guess about it, so being able to access the necessary resources is key in reducing the turnover, because people know what's expected of them. And so, if they're going to do it, they're gonna do it.

Theme 6

Theme 6 was: Suggestions for reducing turnover include keeping them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, acting on employee feedback, and effective communication including transparent communication. As per this theme, the Millennial participants provided several suggestions that can be implemented by organizations to help decrease turnover rates. The suggestions comprise keeping the Millennial employee motivated, offering them good pay, good management, acting on employee feedback, offering training opportunities, flexible work schedules, and effective communication including being transparent when communicating. This was mentioned 31 times by all the 16 participants. Theme 6 and corresponding responses/quotes are shown in the following table. Participant 1 mentioned the need for good pay. According to this respondent,

People don't really wanna stay on because it's you know taboo. But I think it was transparency and pay rates and salaries amongst you know when you're hiring when you're hired for a position amongst the team. I think if that was the more focus and I think people would stay because, you get what you pay for. Like if you know and you're comfortable with your salary, and you're comfortable with the work that you're doing, and you know that you're contributing to the greater good. Why leave that? It's working for you. But if you don't have the pay and you're not being valued, then you're automatically gonna start looking for something else. So, I think it all really starts at hey, an equal pay amongst genders, amongst race, amongst, you know, merit. You know, considering all of those factors. I think outside of outside of pay, the next thing would just to be to, you know, really be transparent in the description of the role.

Participant 10 also talked about the need to pay Millennial employees what they are worth:

The pay. A lot of companies aren't paying employees enough. They're not paying employees with their worth. Also, a lot of companies, they have a lot of people that are higher up that abuse their power. I have noticed that with a lot of people around my age, they are dealing with that on their job with managers. Also, they're not getting paid enough. Those are some things that I would suggest. Paying people what their worth and then putting people who don't abuse their power in higher positions. People know will work with employees and treat them with respect.

Participant 11 suggested that effective and transparent communication is key:

For me, it's important to be as transparent as possible, to let me know what's going on, let me know why. Otherwise I'm less likely to buy into it. During the internship program, we should be asking the employees what do you think? Does this work for you? What are some of the struggles that you found? And then you should be able to circle back to that and show how in this program we're going to give you better skills to combat the issues that you're dealing with. And lots of times I think with Millennials, we just want communication. Communicate with us, communicate effectively to where we can understand and you probably got us for a long time...communication piece is really important, not being so full of yourself.

Similarly, Participant 12 suggested that communication should be effective:

I feel that people will avoid revealing their fears and visions, if they don't feel the company wants to know about them. I think if they open up the communication then things will go better for everybody in the workplace. Morale will go up. Well, if the communication lines are open, then the collaboration, of course, will strengthen. The employees will get heard and recognized and valued. I think that's a great strategy, strategic strategy to start with.

Likewise, Participant 7 suggested that the communication should be effective and transparent. This respondent stated,

All for effective communication. There is a lot of managers that say they have an open-door policy, but when you come to them then you have to worry about

retaliation. For an example, so I would say open communication and transparent communication without fear of retaliation. Having standard operating procedures. Again, so people know what they're doing, they know what's expected of them, and building and boosting morale don't just always point out what's wrong but be sure to commend people when they are doing right when they are they are really giving you their true effort know that there's a sacrifice being made, or be able to acknowledge that there's a sacrifice being made by your employees and make sure that your team is shining.

Participant 11 also indicated that the management should be good; specifically,

I think definitely it starts with the management team. The fish rots from the head down, you know, so it starts with the management team. One of the things that I do is I try not to take myself too seriously. Yes, I'm your manager, but we're all still people at the end of the day and I think if you focus on building relationships with people. Rather than being the manager and the employee or however whatever position you may hold, I think you get a lot more from the staff. They're willing to buy in, they're willing to do more for you because you built that rapport with them as a person and not as a member of your staff.

Participant 13 indicated that the top managers should learn to be effective leaders:

I think that our managers don't really know how to be effective leaders. I don't think our leaders have the proper tools to manage their employees and to build the to establish the relationship with them that I think is very critical and important in terms of being able to retain talent. So, I think that building out a module for them

would be helpful to develop their leadership so that they're better able to effectively lead their team and to retain, you know, good talent.

Participant 14 recommended more open communication. He stated, "I would say be more open and allow space for people to feel comfortable talking about things." According to Participant 15, it is important to keep the employees motivated. This participant mentioned, "I can get my feet wet, give them little. Not incentives, but you know, make things a challenge for your team to make them feel motivated to, you know, reach daily goals or monthly goals." The suggestions given by Participant 16 include competitive pay and work-life balance. This respondent indicated the following:

One, I would say study the market on pay for any particular role. Um. Work life balance, I think implementing, you know, remote or a hybrid opportunity for Millennials or for anyone, I think that allows us to have work life balance. Appreciation. And appreciation could come through a bonus or salary increase stock. So those are some of the things that I feel.

Participant 2 suggested that there should be work-life balance and benefits. She stated, "There's a lot of things that could be done, I think offering us different schedules I think, or allowing us to choose our schedule, if that makes sense. Giving us better benefit packages that would definitely be helpful. More federal holidays that I think are deserved. Um, as a black woman, I think that we should have holidays such as Juneteenth off. Now that is a federal holiday, especially because we have the 4th of July and that was."

For Participant 3, it is important to listen to employee feedback and act upon it:

Listening to the feedback of employees and actually taking it into consideration and changing policies surrounding what the employees are saying. I think a lot of times or sometimes they have these meetings and they listen to our feedback, listen to the complaints and the changes, it's kind of like we're just being and nothing happens. So, my suggestion would be to actually take it to heart and try to figure out how to. Take heed to what the people are saying so that it can improve the work conditions that are being complained about.

According to Participant 5, trainings and Q&As are necessary. In the context of this study, Q&A simply implies listening to the employees' concerns and acting on them.

This participant indicated,

having monthly refresher training and Q&As for us to be able to voice our opinions rather than maybe once every 6 months. And then it's pretty much just upper management speaking and not really giving room for Q&A. So, I think a Q&A session in all by itself once a month and then in that month as well, not within the same timeframe, but within that month as well having refresher trainings on policy and how to handle calls or how to handle certain situations. So, I think that would help.

Participant 6 suggested open communication, training, and giving feedback:

I would say having the open communication and constant feedback and there's a lot of times where one is given feedback and it's given at a late time. Maybe the training wasn't as efficient as the company would have hoped, so I feel like having that feedback once you understand the. Yeah. The fundamentals of what

the job for requires. I feel like they should, you know, have a constant way to give feedback and then also put in a plan in place to help that person. Do their job better. And when you have that lack and then you're waiting months or however long you're waiting to, to give the feedback, oh, you're not doing your job correctly or you're not doing your job right. I think that gap is kind of what hinders employees and I think that the employer should look into just having a metric of feedback.

Similarly, Participant 8 suggested that training is needed:

They need training now. OK. So, we provide all the training now. And we invest in what they need now so that they're now turns into oh, you've been with this company 5 years, you know, and that has just you now you've been with this company 10 years because we've invested constantly in what you needed at that point and our needs change. So, to ask me what where I see myself in 5 years and not address what I need today, I think is shortsighted.

Lastly, Participant 9 suggested that there should be effective communication, acting upon employees' feedback, and giving them feedback. This participant recommended

Having an open-door policy. Listening to the employee and what they need and desire to feel like a part of the company. To feel like it's a family and like they're contributing and needed. Not just the same old thing every day with no interaction. Also, giving feedback. I think that would be great. Giving constructive feedback with their positive reinforcement as well. What you're doing well and what can be improved so they can know where they stand. Also,

creating a warm environment in the workplace so people want to come to work because that's tough enough in the first place. Doing things for the employees like employee appreciations, food, comfortable offices, just things that make going to work less, you know, less of a pain. I think open communication would help and catering to employees would help as well.

Evaluation of the Findings

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The conceptual framework for this study consisted of four key components, namely: engagement, mentoring, transformational leadership, and reduced turnover. Based on this framework, the central concept for this study was that engagement and mentorship, as informed by transformational leadership, has a positive impact on reduced turnover rates for Millennials in Houston, Texas. The conceptual framework relates to the issue of this research as the concepts of transformational leadership help to understand how engagement and mentorship approaches are used to improve turnover rates of Millennial employees.

This framework has four components of engagement, mentoring, reduced turnover, and transformational leadership. Engagement refers to the interest and continued commitment to an organization by Millennial employees (Kaplan et al., 2018; Walden et al., 2017). On the other hand, formal mentoring is a structured process that is typically conducted at the workplace or in a professional setting (Hamilton et al., 2019). Job turnover is understood as the voluntary and involuntary separation of an employee

from their employer (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019). Transformational leadership is a style of leading wherein leaders are most effective when they empower and inspire followers (Burns, 1978; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). I applied this framework to the current study.

Research Question

The research question was: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces and turnover reduction? Six themes emerged in response to this RQ. As per the first theme, mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow, which in turn helps with retention. This is consistent with the conceptual framework and existing literature. Researchers have reported that mentorship is one method for retaining employees and lower job turnover rates as the employees are offered crucial guidance and become more engaged in their work (Hechl, 2017). They are also taught important skills by more experienced workers, and given opportunity to ask questions that are then addressed adequately by their mentors (Jyoti & Rani, 2019). Moreover, in their study, Rohantinsky et al. (2020) found that formal mentorship programs had positive impact on workplace relationships, which included positive leader-follower relationships. Carrison (2017) claimed that mentoring programs ensure that employees are trained, are committed to their employer, and become more engaged. Similarly, Park (2015) found that mentoring was successful in increasing work relationships, job satisfaction, and engagement.

The second theme was that the Millennial employees who are engaged in

mentorship are confronted with many different challenges. These range from being belittled at the workplace because of younger age and receiving lower pay compared to other employees to being disrespected and working with older employees who are used to old ways of doing things among other challenges. These findings are consistent with existing literature. Chaudhuri (2019) reported that Millennial employees are often belittled by being referred to as lazy—which, in turn, reduces their engagement.

The third theme shows that according to the participants, the turnover of Millennials is affected by a variety of factors. These factors range from low pay, a lack of accountability on the part of managers, and Millennials not being loyal to companies unlike members of the older generation who were loyal and could stay with the same organization for decades, to a lack of recognition and flexible working hours, not being valued and lack of job satisfaction, and not being appreciated. These findings are consistent with existing literature. Lewis (2019) reported that Millennial employees frequently perceive their jobs as a dispensable and temporary aspect of life hence are not loyal to companies. Moreover, Carter and Walker (2018) posited that Millennials desire to work for companies that have similar values and morals and are therefore reluctant to work in companies where they believe there is a lack of accountability on the part of managers. Ngotngamwong (2019) noted that having better opportunities outside the company such as a higher paying job is reason enough for a Millennial employee to resign from a position. According to Afif (2019), a workplace that values work-life balance is key consideration for Millennials to become more engaged with their jobs. The Millennial generation is more likely to enjoy a work-life balance and align with

workplaces that hold similar values as themselves (George & Wallio, 2017). Therefore, a lack of work-life balance is a major reason for turnover. Besides, Walden et al. (2017) reported that the commitment of Millennial generations is dependent upon their job satisfaction. Therefore, a lack of job satisfaction is sufficient reason for them to leave.

The fourth theme demonstrates that the participants believe that mentorship decreases turnover rates when a Millennial employee has a great mentor who offers encouragement, helps the employee navigate his or her career, provides the necessary assistance, teaches the Millennial employee important things and makes him or her feel valued, and allows him or her to have a voice. This is consistent with the conceptual framework and existing literature. Previous researchers have reported that mentoring helps to lower employees' stress levels and decreases chances of burnout (Cavanaugh et al., 2022). Lowering levels of stress and likelihood of burnout for Millennial employees is a key consideration for turnover reduction and helps to improve employee engagement (Abate et al., 2018; Plamann, 2019). Bushardt et al. (2018) reported that when an employee is supported and given encouragement by upper management, that employee is likely to stay and even become more engaged.

The fifth theme that emerged from the analyzed data is that the participants identified other programs that can also help to reduce turnover, such as fun activities, having team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, as well as training and development programs. Other researchers have reported similar findings. Baker Rosa and Hastings (2018) found that Millennial employees were excellent at teamwork and desired to advance through training and work opportunities. Moreover, Gittleman (2019) posited

that job turnover can be related to dissatisfaction with employee benefits. This shows that providing adequate employee benefits can help to make them stay.

Theme sixth theme shows that the participants provided several suggestions that can be implemented by organizations to help decrease turnover rates. The suggestions comprise keeping the Millennial employee motivated, offering them good pay, good management, acting on employee feedback, offering training opportunities, flexible work schedules, and effective communication including being transparent when communicating. Similar findings have been reported by other researchers. Millennial employees generally have preference for more flexible work-life benefits and engaging (Larasati & Hasanati, 2019; Wolor et al., 2020). Moreover, Dimock (2019) mentioned that the Millennial generation is motivated by cultural and socio-economic factors that differ from previous generations. Motivating them can help to increase their retention rates and also improve their engagement. Researchers have also cited that Millennials are more likely to leave their jobs if they are not engaged, satisfied with pay, and have career advancement opportunities (Bushardt et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017).

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The research question was: *What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces and turnover reduction?* The findings reveal that mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask

questions, they offer guidance to Millennials, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow; Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges; and many different factors affect turnover. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, has a voice, provides assistance, teaches them important things, and makes them feel valued. Moreover, other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs. Lastly, the findings show that suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keeping them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback. Chapter 5 contains the research summary, implications, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction. The phenomenon of interest for this study was the engagement and mentorship of Millennial employees to address high turnover rates. The purpose aligned with the problem of the study. The general problem was that high turnover rates disrupt organizations financial stability and productivity (see Fry, 2018; Haider et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019). The specific problem was the lack of knowledge regarding how employed Millennials engaged in mentorship experience turnover reduction in their workplaces (see Fry, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Suh & Hargis, 2016). From the purpose and problem, I developed one central research question: What are the lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces and turnover reduction? In this chapter, I interpret the answers to this research question to identify the implications, recommendations, and conclusions of the study.

The study was a qualitative descriptive phenomenological investigation that enabled me to address the problem and achieve the intended purpose. A qualitative methodology was appropriate for gathering and analyzing data regarding a phenomenon that explores perceptions, lived experiences, and opinions of participants about the phenomenon of interest. More specifically, the use of a descriptive phenomenological design was appropriate for gaining rich data regarding employed Millennials lived experiences regarding engagement and mentorship approaches used in their workplaces

to reduce their turnover rates. I gathered data through interviews with 16 Millennial employees of large-corporate organizations within the Houston, Texas.

I conducted thematic analysis to analyze the data from the participants. I employed NVivo 12 software to aid in the analysis. I followed Braun and Clarke's (2019) procedures for this type of analysis. The first step was data familiarization. The second step was coding. The third step was thematizing. The fourth step was revising of the themes. The fifth step was finalizing the themes. The last step was report generation.

This study had one research question and six emergent themes. Theme 1 revealed that mentorship programs help Millennials by allowing them to ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow. Theme 2 was about how Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges. Theme 3 was about the factors that affect turnover. Theme 4 revealed that mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them navigate their career, offers encouragement, having a voice, provide assistance, teaches them important things, makes them feel valued. Theme 5 was about other programs that may decrease turnover include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs. Theme 6 included suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keeping them motivated, good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback.

In this chapter, I discuss the details of each theme discussed in relation to existing literature in Chapter 2 in an effort to interpret the findings of this study. Moreover,

Chapter 5 contains information about the limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and implications to practice.

Interpretation of the Findings

Six themes emerged from the data after performing thematic analysis. I discuss these six themes in detail in this section. I provide literature support, as applicable, based on the discussion provided in the review of related literature found in Chapter 2.

Theme 1

The first theme that emerged from the data was: Mentorship programs help Millennials. Participants expressed that mentorship was helpful, as it allowed them to do the following: ask questions, offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow. In the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, I found that there were scholars who found that employees reported lower levels of stress and burnout because of undergoing mentoring (Cavanaugh et al., 2022). Specifically, mentorship has also been seen as a possible means for attracting and retaining employees; thus, decreasing job turnover (Hamilton et al., 2019; Hechl, 2017). In terms of its positive impact on the attributes of those who are mentored, different authors have also found relevant information on this matter. Bushardt et al. (2018) further claimed that Millennial employees need mentoring from upper management to encourage commitment. According to Hamilton et al. (2019), mentorship results in improved self-efficacy and confidence. The context of the Hamilton et al. study was within a learning environment of a school. In terms of the workplace, the Romansky et al. (2020) study was more aligned with the current research. Romansky et al. found that mentorship increased

support within the workplace. The findings of Carrison (2017) align with the claims of Romansky et al. (2020), as both claimed that mentoring is useful in the workplace in order to improve the commitment of employees to their work. A more direct link to the first theme is the work of Eby and Robertson (2020), who found that individuals involved in mentorship programs are more likely to expand their own horizons while relying on the expertise and support of surrounding colleagues. Overall, studies, especially those within the context of the workplace, have direct support for the claims of participants in this study about the usefulness of mentorship to Millennial employees.

Theme 2

The second theme was that Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges. Specifically, the challenges that the Millennial employees encountered included being belittled or disrespected and getting lower pay as compared to other employees. The second theme revealed that mentoring has its negative implications to employees as well.

In the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, most of the discussions were about the positive implications of mentoring to individuals, especially the mentees (Carrison, 2017; Hamilton et al., 2019; Hechl, 2017; Romansky et al., 2020). In the study of Fogarty et al. (2017), the investigators found that mentoring did not reduce the likelihood of employees separating from their jobs. Across the different studies included in the literature review in Chapter 2, only Fogarty et al. provided support for claims that mentorship is not always resulting in positive impact on worker retention and positive work performance.

Therefore, it may be stated that the negative implications of mentorship is a counterintuitive result and not a common finding across different literature.

Theme 3

The third theme was about the factors that affect turnover. Specifically, Millennial worker turnover is influenced by low pay, lack of accountability from the managers, lack of loyalty, not being appreciated, and the lack of flexibility in working hours. Therefore, in the third theme, the focus was not on mentoring but on turnover factors.

In the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, there were several instances when retention and turnover were mentioned. In most cases, scholars have established that mentorship is a key component for reducing turnover (Carrison, 2017; Cole, 2018; Jayadeva, 2018; Ukeni & Reynolds, 2017). In some studies included in Chapter 2, the authors mentioned factors of turnover among Millennial employees. For example, leadership values, organizational values, job satisfaction, and salary have been mentioned as the contributing factors to turnover rates (Baek & Bramwell, 2016; Carrison, 2017; Cheryl, 2019). The lack of alignment between the values of the Millennial employee and their superiors or their workplaces could influence his or her decision to leave a job (Baek & Bramwell, 2016; Carrison, 2017; Cheryl, 2019). Millennials are known to give importance to their personal values (McCarthy, 2019; Walden et al., 2017). In relation to the data from the participants, appreciation and accountability from managers, as well as flexibility in working hours are important values to Millennials. Jain and Dutta (2019) and Valenti (2019) agreed that Millennial employees value and prefer flexible and technological work environment. The lack of these components could lead to turnover.

Therefore, it is reasonable to interpret the claims in the literature found in Chapter 2 as supportive of the third theme, specifically regarding the importance of aligning the values of the organization to that of the Millennial employee in order to avoid turnover.

In another study, the researchers mentioned that simply having better opportunities outside the company is reason enough to resign from a position (Ngotngamwong, 2019). In fact, a Millennial employee does not need to feel dissatisfied to leave a job (Ngotngamwong, 2019). This specific claim from Ngotngamwong could be seen as a support for the data from participants that their lack of loyalty, when compared to the older generation of employees, could influence their turnover decisions. Overall, the claims of factors leading to turnover have been supported in existing literature included in Chapter 2. The discussion of these studies was limited, however, as the focus of the literature review was on the role of mentoring to the possible reduction of turnover.

Theme 4

The fourth theme was about how mentorship reduces turnover. Specifically, the participants expressed that mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who has the following traits: (a) helps them navigate their career, (b) offers encouragement, (c) has a voice, (d) provides assistance, and (e) teaches them important things. These factors are important to remaining in the organizations, as these aspects make the employees feel valued.

In Chapter 2, the literature review was centered on establishing the role of mentoring to reducing turnover. Several studies have supported the importance of mentoring to ensure that employees remain in the company (Abate et al., 2018; Hamilton

et al., 2019; Hechl, 2017; Plamann, 2019). Rohantinsky et al. (2020) focused on the reduction of turnover in the context of mentorship. Rohantinsky et al. specified that key components of a successful mentorship are communication, increased support within the workplace, and a mentorship program that strengthened the relationship with the community. These components make mentorship useful in reducing turnover; however, these scholars did not focus on the population of Millennials.

In another study, Kumar and Kumar (2018) recommended the use of mentoring for the Millennial generation. These scholars also noted that for mentoring to succeed, both the mentors and mentees must have compatible attitudes and behaviors. This claim aligns with the findings for Theme 4, as Millennial participants expressed that mentoring is only successful in reducing turnover if the mentors exhibit specific behaviors that satisfy the needs of the mentees.

Theme 5

In the fifth theme, the participants identified other programs were that may decrease turnover. These activities include fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs. These specific activities were separated from the previous theme, as the fourth theme was focused on the mentor's traits and behavior. The fifth theme is about activities that are included in the mentorship process.

In the literature review in Chapter 2, some authors have partially supported the claims found under the fifth theme. For example, it was found that Millennials are more likely to leave their jobs when they are not satisfied with pay (Bushardt et al., 2018;

Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017). This claim may have a direct support for the findings under Theme 5, specifically the part on employee benefits. Having the right benefit could decrease turnover. Moreover, Capnary et al. (2018) depicted Millennial work environments as fun and creative space. This depiction of Millennials may explain the importance of fun activities for Millennials to ensure lower chances of leaving their jobs. Furthermore, Cole (2018) highlighted the importance of quality training initiatives to the development of dedication and engagement of employees to their employers. Cole's claims on the importance of training may support the findings from the participants of this study that trainings for professional development is a key consideration for the reduction or turnover among Millennial employees. Overall, the different programs and activities that Millennial participants of this study have found to influence their turnover intentions are also supported in the existing literature that I reviewed in Chapter 2.

Theme 6

The sixth theme is about suggestions for reducing turnover. These suggestions include maintaining effective communication, keeping Millennial employees motivated, having good management practices, paying well, training, allowing flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback. This theme is associated with Theme 4 and Theme 5.

In the literature review in Chapter 2, I mentioned the components or factors for reducing turnover. Millennials are more likely to leave their jobs if they feel they are underpaid (Bushardt et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017). This claim

from the literature directly supports a part of Theme 6, specifically the suggestion of paying well. Moreover, Rohantinsky et al. (2020) claimed that a successful mentorship involves good communication and feedback between mentor and mentee. This claim is another direct support for the findings under Theme 6—specifically, the need to maintain effective communication in order to reduce turnover. Furthermore, Millennial employees value and prefer flexible and technological work environment (Jain & Dutta, 2019; Valenti, 2019). Therefore, it is logical to include this component of work in the suggestions of Millennials in order to reduce turnover.

Overall, the six themes that emerged from the data have been supported in the existing literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The themes are interrelated; hence the discussion of the interpretations of the findings based on existing literature has also been interrelated. In the succeeding section of this chapter, I discuss the limitations of the study in order to establish recommendations for future research.

Limitations of the Study

I encountered several limitations that may have impacted the findings of the study. The first limitation of the study was that the sampling frame was very specific to those that satisfy the criteria for eligibility. Although the criteria aligned with the topic and requirements of the study, the sample of the study was limited by these criteria. The second limitation is that the study had only one broad research question. Having only one overarching question limited me in the sense that the study could cover a broad aspect of mentoring and turnover among Millennial employees. The third limitation of the study was the focus on transformational leadership as the conceptual foundation of this study.

Having this leadership style helped in managing the scope and focus of the study but also limited the applicability of the study findings; thus, presenting a threat to the transferability of the study. These limitations are the basis for the recommendations of the study.

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the limitations of the study. The first limitation of the study was the sampling frame. For this study, the inclusion criteria for the sample included: (a) employment in the Houston area, (b) familiarity with engagement approaches in your organization, (c) familiarity with mentorship approaches in your organization, (d) being over the age of 18 years old, and (e) willingness to be audio-recorded and interviewed for 60–90 minutes. In future research, I recommend that the sample may be collected from other states as well. In this manner, the findings from different states may be compared. Moreover, in future research, I suggest that specific industries be of focus. Conducting this same study with a focus on different industries could provide further insight into the mentoring and turnover of Millennial employees, rather than collecting data from a broad target population.

The second limitation was the study's broad research question. In future research, it is recommended to conduct a similar study, but with specific research questions, possibly theory-driven, in order to ask more targeted or specific questions. Moreover, having specific research questions may allow researchers to easily explore the answers of participants in-depth; thus, increasing the insights from the data and possibly creating a deeper understanding of the topic and the phenomenon.

The third limitation centered on the use of transformative leadership as the conceptual foundation of the study. In future research, other leadership styles or theoretical foundations may be used in order to have a different perspective of the phenomenon. Moreover, with different studies that cover different leadership styles or other relevant, possible comparative research or analysis may also be performed; thus, advancing the scientific knowledge on mentorship and turnover among Millennial employees. After the recommendations for future research, the next section is about the implications to future practice based on the findings of the study.

Implications

In the findings of the study, six themes emerged. In the last theme, a summary of the suggestions for reducing turnover among Millennial employees was identified. These suggestions are aligned with the other five themes that were identified from the data. Therefore, the suggestions in Theme 6 of the findings will be the basis for the implications to future practice.

The first practical implication is that policies and programs that keep employees motivated to work must be developed. Ensuring employees are motivated would mean having a dedicated and committed workforce (Zhao, 2018). Millennial employees value engagement in relation to job satisfaction and the commitment to remain in a specific job (McCarthy, 2019; Walden et al., 2017). Therefore, the findings imply that in the context of mentoring, leaders and mentors must make an effort to know the aspects that motivate these employees in order to reduce their likelihood of leaving their jobs.

The second practical implication is that Millennial employees must be paid reasonably well. Millennials are more likely to leave their jobs if they have a perception of being unfairly paid (Bushman et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2019; Walden et al., 2017). Therefore, having a system of knowing the appropriate pay for the role that a Millennial employee has is important to minimize turnover.

The third practical implication is the need for proper training for professional development. Cole (2018) highlighted that having quality training for professional development is important in order to have a dedicated and engaged set of employees. Having a dedicated Millennial employee would mean higher likelihood of him or her remaining on the job or in the company rather than leaving.

The fourth practical implication is having flexible work arrangements. Millennial employees have high preference for flexible and technological work environment (Jain & Dutta, 2019; Valenti, 2019). Therefore, being able to offer such arrangements, without sacrificing the quality of work and employee performance, is an advantage to a company, as it may promote the retention rather than turnover of employees. The fifth practical implication is having an effective and efficient communication and feedback mechanism between mentors and mentees, or leaders and followers. In the context of mentorship, Rohantinsky et al. (2020) specified that one of the key components of a successful mentorship is proper communication and feedback. Therefore, being able to have a policy or dedicated practice for ensuring proper communication and feedback in the context of mentoring and leadership for Millennials will be useful in retaining these employees.

Conclusion

Mentoring is a potentially useful practice that could reduce turnover of Millennial employees; however, the proper implementation of mentoring must be in place. Mentors and leaders of organizations must focus on the needs of these employees in order to improve their motivation and dedication to their respective jobs. Moreover, Millennials have specific values and preferences that they consider as the determinants of their likelihood to stay or leave a job or an organization. Examples of these values include work-life balance, accountability, and good communication. Therefore, knowing these important values and preferences could aid in developing policies, programs, and practices that would promote retention of Millennial employees rather than increase turnover of this work population. In order to determine the important components of work for Millennial employees, the findings of the study have revealed that the concepts of good management, good pay, training, flexible work schedules, acting on employee feedback, and effective communication including transparent communication are key components of employee retention for the Millennial work population. It is important to consider these aspects of the workplace in order to ensure that the organization maintains their worthy Millennial employees.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

Exploring the Strategies Organizations Use to Improve Job Engagement for Millennial Employees

Dear Potential Participant,

A research study opportunity is seeking full-time employed workers between the ages of 25-32 years old and working at least 40 hours per week for an organization of 100 or more employees. The purpose of this qualitative interpretive phenomenological study is to explore lived experiences of Millennial employees engaged in mentorship in their workplaces for turnover reduction in Houston, Texas.

Participation in this study involves:

- A time commitment of a 1-hour interview.
- Being interviewed via Zoom video conferencing.

For more information about this study, please contact the principal investigator, Shaundra Webb, by phone at [REDACTED] or email at [REDACTED]@waldenu.edu.

Thank you,

Shaundra Webb Principal Investigator

Study Title: Exploring the Strategies Organizations Use to Improve Job Engagement for
Millennial Employees

Appendix B: Permission Letter

Date

Recipient's Name

Company Address

Phone/Email

Subject: Data Collection for Research Study

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter is in regards to collecting data for a research study. I am Shaundra Webb and currently working on my Ph.D. dissertation in Management at Walden University. I am in charge of research and am formally requesting permission to access data by recruiting 10-12 participants at your organization for this study. My performance task in this subject is to explore the strategies organizations use to improve job engagement for millennial employees.

If approval is granted, online questionnaires will be sent out to the participants to be done at their convenience with a deadline date. We intend to use the data collected to assist in composing my dissertation and the results of the study will remain absolutely confidential and are to be used for educational purposes only.

On behalf of myself, I heartily express my gratitude for examining my request for data. I assure you that all protocols will be followed and privacy regulations adhered to.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns, my contact information is [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]@yahoo.com.

Best Regards,

Shaundra Webb

PhD Candidate, Walden University

Appendix C: Permission Letter Agreement from Organization 1

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Fri 12/3/2021 7:06 AM

To:

Hello Shaundra,

I talked to [REDACTED] and he's on board with allowing you to conduct your on-site survey with the millennial workforce that's employed at our dealership. Unfortunately, I'll miss out on the opportunity to be a part of the survey by a year or so. LOL

Let me know when you plan on scheduling a day and time to be here. Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Houston, TX 77017

[REDACTED](office)

[REDACTED](direct)

[REDACTED](fax)

Email: [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com

□

From: Shaundra Webb <[REDACTED]@waldenu.edu>

Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 1:39 AM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@G[REDACTED].com>

Subject: Research Study Request - [REDACTED]

Good morning [REDACTED],

It was a pleasure speaking with you on yesterday. Thank you so much for considering my request.

November 29, 2021

Mrs. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Houston, Texas 77017

Subject: Data Collection for Research Study

Dear Mrs. [REDACTED]:

This letter is regarding collecting data for a research study. I am Shaundra Webb, and currently working on my Ph.D. dissertation in Management at Walden University. I am in charge of research and am formally requesting permission to access data by recruiting participants at your organization for this study. Recruitment will be conducted through on-site surveys completed by the participants.

My performance task in this subject is to explore the strategies organizations use to improve job engagement for millennial employees in the automotive industry. This study will include ways to decrease job turnover rates and explore the possibilities of mentorship programs within the workplace. Through my research, I will dig deeper into various layers of job engagement within the millennial workforce.

If approval is granted, interviews (surveys) will take no longer than two (2) hours and be done at your convenience. We intend to use the data collected to assist in composing my dissertation, and all participants will remain confidential and be used for educational purposes only. Once the research has been completed, I will share my completed dissertation with you and your organization.

On behalf of myself, I heartily express my gratitude for examining my request for data. I assure you that all protocols will be followed, and privacy regulations adhered to. If you have any questions or concerns, my contact information is [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]@waldenu.edu.

Best Regards,

Shaundra Webb

Shaundra Webb

Ph.D. Candidate, Walden University

Appendix D: Permission Letter Agreement from Organization 2

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Sun 12/12/2021 2:36 AM

To:

I AGREE

From: Shaundra Webb <[REDACTED]@waldenu.edu>

Sent: Saturday, December 11, 2021 2:21 PM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Subject: Fw: Ph.D. Research Request

From: Shaundra Webb <[REDACTED]@waldenu.edu>

Sent: Monday, December 6, 2021 9:26 PM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Ph.D. Research Request

Good morning Mr. [REDACTED],

I am following up on the request I sent on last week for permission to include your organization as a participant for my research study.

Thank you, Shaundra

Ph.D. Candidate Walden University

From: Shaundra Webb

Sent: Friday, December 3, 2021 2:56 AM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Research Request

Good afternoon Mr. [REDACTED],

Thank you so much for speaking with me earlier. If you could reply to this email stating that your organization agree to participate in this study that would be great.

Thank you so much!

December 2, 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

Sugarland, Texas 77479

Subject: Data Collection for Research Study

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]:

This letter is regarding collection data for a research study. I am Shaundra Webb, and currently working on my Ph.D. dissertation in Management at Walden University. I am in charge of research and am formally requesting permission to access data by recruiting participants at your organization for this study. Recruitment will be conducted through on-site surveys completed by the participants.

My performance task in this subject is to explore the strategies organizations use to improve job engagement for millennial employees in the automotive industry. Through my research, I will dig deeper into the various layers of job engagement within the millennial workforce.

If approval is granted, surveys will take no longer than two (2) hours total and be done at your convenience. We intend to use the data collected to assist in composing my dissertation, and all participants will remain confidential and be used for educational purposes only. Once the research has been completed, I will share my completed dissertation with you and your organization.

On behalf of myself, I heartily express my gratitude for examining my request for data. I assure you that all protocols will be followed, and privacy regulations adhered to. If you have any questions or concerns, my contact information is [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]@walden.edu.

Best Regards,

Shaundra Webb

Shaundra Webb

Ph.D. Candidate, Walden University

Appendix E: Codes, Categories, and Themes that Emerged from the Data

Quotes	Codes	Categories	Themes
P1: To me, I feel like it just gives me a safe space to be able to ask questions.	Allows them to ask questions	Mentorship allows millennials to ask questions	Mentorship programs help millennials by allowing them to ask questions,
P2: “I think if you have a good mentor and they're willing to help you learn. It's great.”	Mentor helps millennials learn		offer guidance, learn things they did not know before, become acclimated to work, and grow
P3: “I think they're important so that somebody that's already been working and has more experience can kind of show us how things go so that we can be more acclimated when we first get out of school.”	Allows millennials to become acclimated	Mentorship allows them to become acclimated and grow	
P7: “having the mentorship programs will definitely prepare you for the day-to-day. Expectations of you of your actual job.”	Mentor allows millennials to learn things they did not know before	Mentorship offers guidance to millennials	
P5: “Some challenges are being belittled. Unheard. And I would say, not taking serious seriously.”	Not taken seriously because of being young	Not being taken seriously and being belittled because of younger age	Millennial employees engaged in mentorship experience multiple challenges
P6: “I think pay is the biggest challenge. Constantly negotiating the salary rate of something	Being belittled	Lower pay	

<p>that you may feel that you're worth, you might have experience in other fields, but because you have, you're younger than the competition, that could kind of be the with the biggest challenge.”</p>	Being unheard	compared to older colleagues	
<p>P10: “Some of the challenges in a lot of companies is that they think that we're younger, so we don't know anything.”</p>	Low pay		
<p>P1: “I think we're in a culture where there's not really that loyalty to companies anymore. So, like my parents, they worked for how things for 25-30 years. I think with my generation you know, being in a job for five years is like a huge deal.”</p>	Lack of loyalty to companies	Not loyal to companies	Many different factors affect turnover
<p>P10: “I definitely think it's the pay. Before, a lot of people are getting laid off, a couple of people were leaving just due to the pay. The pay rate is really.” P11: “I think accountability. Lots of times, one of the things that I hear from staff who are leaving is that the</p>	Huge deal for a millennial to work for one company for long	Low pay	Leaders and senior managers lacking accountability
	Management lacks accountability		

management team can operate in a certain way and they try to hold you to a standard that they're not held to themselves.”

P1: “I think that if a, if a millennial has someone in leadership that is fostering them, that is able to really help them navigate their career.”

Fosters the millennial

Mentor who helps millennial navigate his/her career

Mentorship reduces turnover when the employee has a great mentor who helps them

P3: “From my perspective it reduces turnover because when you have somebody that's already been in the position that you're in for years, they can kind of like tell you what to expect and how to deal with certain things. So that you are not as overwhelmed.”

Help navigate career

Mentor teaches mentee important things

navigate their career, offers encouragement, having a voice, provide assistance, teaches them important things, makes them feel valued

Mentor tells you what to expect

Mentor shows you how to deal with things

P10: “So I think it's very important to have a great mentor and you know the workplace or like anywhere as millennial because she's obviously like I said I'm the youngest on the team and she's helping me a lot and teaching me a lot of things that will help me in the corporate world and to be able to you know, my

Teaches you a lot

resume and stuff.”

P14: “Offer free therapy sessions.”	Free therapy	Employee benefits such as free therapy	Other programs that may decrease turnover include free therapy, fun activities, team meetings, employee benefits, shared governance, and training and professional development programs
P10: “We do have like weekly team meetings that help us talk about any issues we may have. It's supposed to help us interact since we do work from home.” P12: “Having more open-door policies. It's easy when they say, of course, my door is always open, but is it really? You know, so I think having a voice where you are working will definitely stop turnovers.”	Weekly team meetings	Team meetings and fun activities	
P13: “I think that mentorship programs can reduce turnover because there is an active a person that's actively investing in that employee's development.”	More open-door policies	Having a voice	
P10: “The pay. A lot of companies aren't paying employees enough. They're not paying employees with their worth.”	Invest in employees development	Shared governance	Training and professional development
P11: “For me, it's important to be as	Pay	Increase pay for millennials	Suggestions for reducing turnover include effective communication, keep them motivated, good management,
	Transparent communication	Open and transparent communication	
	Open		

<p>transparent as possible, to let me know what's going on, let me know why. Otherwise I'm less likely to buy into it."</p>	<p>communication</p> <p>Management team</p>	<p>Good management</p>	<p>good pay, training, flexible work schedules, and acting on employee feedback</p>
<p>P11: "I think definitely it starts with the management team."</p>	<p>Work schedule</p>	<p>Flexible work schedule</p>	
<p>P12: "I would say be more open and allow space for people to feel comfortable talking about things."</p>	<p>Monthly refresher trainings</p>	<p>Training</p>	
<p>P2: "And there's a lot of things that could be done, I think offering us different schedules I think, or allowing us to choose our schedule,"</p>			
<p>P5: "having monthly refresher trainings"</p>			

Appendix F: Interview Guide

1. Tell me about your experiences in mentorship programs in your workplace.
2. How do you think do mentorship programs help Millennials like you in the workplace?
3. What are the challenges of being a Millennial employee in the workplace?
4. How is the turnover ratio in your workplace? What do you think are the factors affecting turnover in your workplace?
5. In your perspective, how do mentorship programs reduce turnover among employees?
6. What other programs are there in your workplace to reduce employee turnover?
7. What suggestions do you have to reduce turnover?
8. Any other experiences with regards to mentorship that you like to share?