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Strategies to Engage Multigenerational Workforces, With a Focus on Millennials

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Talisha Turner

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Walden University
2024

Abstract

Strategies to Engage Multigenerational Workforces, With a Focus on Millennials

by

Talisha Turner

MA, Southern New Hampshire University, 2017

BA, Johnson C. Smith University, 2013

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial Organizational Psychology

Walden University

February 2024

Abstract

A problem that continues in the blue-collar industry is the lack of strategies to keep a multigenerational workforce engaged, especially millennials. The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. The study examined the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the construction blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the blue-collar industry and show the impact that millennials have and will have on the blue-collar industry. The two research questions addressed (a) how experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs and (b) what strategies experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials. The study consisted of six participants chosen through purposeful sampling. The dominant themes that emerged from the research questions were (a) leadership, (b) organizational culture, (c) talent management, and (d) training. Organizations will need to adjust to the needs of millennial cohorts or face an alarmingly high level of job turnover. Findings may be used for positive social change by workplace administrators to better serve their employees.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Ella, whom I love so much. She has taught me the love of Jesus Christ, and I am forever grateful. It is my mother who taught me how to be resilient, the value of working hard, and how to be grateful in all things. I would also like to dedicate this study to my sister, nieces, and nephew. You guys have encouraged me to keep going and finish the race, always asking, “How much longer?” I also dedicate this study to my church family, close friends, and family—especially my spiritual father Dr. Pastor Gabriel Rogers. I thank you for all the words of knowledge and the encouragement to keep chipping away at this research. I am grateful for my village.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Social change is altering behavioral patterns, cultural values, and norms over time (Edberg & Krieger, 2020). It is also described as a change in human interaction and relationships that transforms culture and society (Dunfey, 2019). Social change is a social issue because it is the force to reconstruct or repair societal issues (Dunfey, 2019). In this, it brings awareness to the good and not-so-favorable things contributors to society face. Identifying areas that cause society to be disenfranchised is beneficial for the sake of communities becoming united with one common goal, to make this world a better place (Edberg & Krieger, 2020). With more contributors looking for ways to improve positive social change, we help fulfill our forefathers' mission and values (Magnet, 2015).

This era has been described as an epic turning point in the workforce (Tulgan, 2017). This turning point further explains how more changes will occur in the workplace in the next 20 years (Wayne, 2015). Despite organizations spending 70% of operating costs on attracting and retaining employees, voluntary employee turnover costs large U.S. businesses an average of \$41.3 million per year (Wayne, 2015). Post COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations were forced to close or reduce staff (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021). Further research needs to be done to determine all the effects of COVID-19. The exodus of baby boomers from the workplace will leave millennials with the title of the largest generational cohort in the workplace (Ferrell & Hurt, 2017). Baby boomers, once known as the largest generational cohort and the largest population of employees, have reached retirement age (Ferri-Reed, 2015).

Baby boomers, a population of individuals born in the period running from 1946 to 1964, are leaving the workplace and leaving that environment to millennials permanently (Ferrell & Hurt, 2017). Baby boomers work hard and long, and their work ethic is legendary (Fishman, 2016). There were 79 million baby boomers born after World War II (Fishman, 2016). Also described as resistant to change (Cox et al., 2018), baby boomers are said to be busy people juggling grandchildren, children, aging parents, jobs, and their own lives (Fishman, 2016).

Generation Xers are described as the survivor's generation (Fishman, 2016). Generation Xers are individualistic and tend to be independent and more career focused (Statnickè et al., 2019). History forced them to become self-reliant, brash, in your face, practical and politically incorrect (Fishman, 2016). Generation Xers are known to appreciate whatever a company can do to give them peace of mind (Fishman, 2016).

Millennials, comprised of individuals born between the 1980s and 1990s, are rightly expected to form the largest source of the workforce by 2025 (Heyns & Kerr, 2018). This population cohort, forming a group equally identified as the "digital natives," are more integrated into technology than any other known identified professional working group (Padayachee, 2018). Millennials are the first generation raised in a digital world (Fishman, 2016). Millennials, also referred to as Generation Y, have placed stronger emphasis on extrinsic work values than baby boomers (Heyns & Kerr, 2018). Described as having a lack of experience and high expectations, this generation is still labeled as a unique generation (Arredondo-Trapero et al., 2017). Understanding retention

strategies for multigenerational workforces will become more of a priority as millennials are being fully integrated at the corporate level (Arredondo-Trapero et al., 2017).

It is essential to create a workplace environment flexible enough to suit the different work styles and attitudes across age groups (Wynn & Rao, 2020). My passion has always been to be solutions-driven on improving the workforce through understanding the employee. Clare (2015) explained how more changes will occur in the workplace in the next 20 years. There is a real transition happening in the workforce, and all workers must be engaged. Engagement in the workplace leads to increased productivity, high morale, return on investment, and high retention rates (Shah & Gregar, 2019).

Background of the Study

Ferri-Reed (2015) stated that baby boomers, once known as the largest generational cohort and the largest population of employees, are starting to reach retirement age and will soon be leaving the workforce. Wiedmer (2015) indicated that identifying and retaining valuable intellectual capital among a multigenerational workforce are critical goals for leaders who understand the tremendous amount of institutional wisdom possessed by workers of all ages and generations. Cote (2019) stated that organizations are faced with a diverse multigenerational workforce that may require different strategies for motivating employees to be engaged in their job and increase job satisfaction. There is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and environmental factors; cleanliness and communication impact job satisfaction in the manufacturing industry (Ozturkoglu et al., 2016). McCollum and Na'Desh (2015) stated that current

structures in many organizations do not support millennials' behavior. Rani and Samuel (2016) stated that work values affect choices, attitudes, and goals and are closely connected to motivation. Johnson (2015) indicated that successful companies implement programs, policies, and practices that respond to cross-generational desires for flexibility, respect, and fairness in the workplace. Goecke and Kunze (2018) stated that blue-collar jobs have less growth, less development of perspectives, and less ambition. Skilled trade jobs have become the most difficult for organizations to fill in the blue-collar industry (Duska, 2019). This study was needed to develop strategies for engaging the next generation in the workforce.

Problem Statement

The changing times surrounding generational changes in the workplace bring various dimensions to human resource sustainability in organizations. Coexistence or lack thereof can either award benefits or accrue demerits based on the overlying psychological realities (American Psychological Association, 2017). Kapoor and Solomon (2011) argued that literature created a lot of fear and mistrust between multigenerational workforces, stating that multigenerational workforces would be very challenging, and the reality is that the reduction in the workforce is a challenge that hurts companies and organizations. The blue-collar industry has already taken a dip economically; this occurred even when the baby boomers dominated the workforce, due to jobs relocating overseas for cheaper labor. Generational differences impact every aspect of the workplace (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). The departure of baby boomers from the workplace scene and the firm arrival of millennials defines a substantive

research query. Each generation being heavily influenced by events of their time, companies and organizations can no longer stand for by traditional rules in leadership or management (Jenkins, 2019). The problem that continues in the blue-collar industry is the lack of strategies to keep a multigenerational workforce engaged, especially millennials.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. This study examined the literature gap regarding the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the blue-collar industry and show the impact that millennials have and will have on the blue-collar industry. Through this research, I sought to identify how generational shifts in the blue-collar industry are birthing high human resource turnovers. While the workforce shifts, various dimensions arise about how organizations can manage to attain a reliable employee retention rate (Shah & Gregar, 2019). Organizations, in the current workplace context, are seeking ways of achieving a high millennial retention rate (Walters, 2019). Therefore, they focus on the impact that millennials will have on workplaces and possible retention strategies.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

RQ1. How do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs?

RQ2. What strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this doctoral study was trifold, consisting of generational cohort theory, job satisfaction, and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The first concept consists of generational cohort based on a timeframe in a specific environment that predictably shapes attitudes, values, and behaviors (Fisher, 2016). Generational cohort theory asserts that people born in a similar time tend to display common behavioral characteristics (Sanders, 2018). The generational cohorts that were examined in this study were broken down into three eras, baby boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), and millennials (1981–1996) (Dimock, 2018). Baby boomers are known for being the largest cohort in the workplace and are characterized as being workaholics. Generation X is known for being independent/autonomous in the workplace. Millennials are known for the use of technology and social networking in the workplace.

Baby boomers are expected to apply the same behavioral pattern of being workaholics in their professional lives. Equally, millennials should exist in a recognizable workplace trajectory consistent with their mental formations. A common behavioral denominator among millennials is the absolute reference to technology in all facets of their lives such as social media and the use of many paperless options, from paying bills to eating out at restaurants (Berge & Berge, 2019). This excessive indulgence has substantially extended into their work lives. In the election of workplaces, it is highly likely that millennials will troop to organizations embracing technologies far more than

those with sparse references to tech apparatus (Parry & Urwin, 2017). The implication of this truth, regarding the research problems, is a high turnover for companies slow at absorbing technologies. Specifically, tech companies, primarily in the developed world, attracted a high number of millennial employees. These employees had to exit from their then-places of work to join environments with a high prevalence of technology (Padayachee, 2018). The reality transformed into a high turnover point for many facilities between the years 2004 and 2010 as progressive technology was on the rise (Padayachee, 2018). The general cohort theory posits that millennials will gravitate towards facilities that embrace their love for technology-supported responsibilities.

Generational cohort theory, concerning technology, confirms that organizations will struggle to retain millennial employees (Padayachee, 2018). The baby boomer generation did not mind working in environments with typewriters, physical offices, and extensively used paper files. Their special needs rotated around remuneration benefits such as insurance and pension. The millennial generation is categorical on the provision of freedom brought about by the persistent use of technology (Padayachee, 2018). If a global multinational competing with Google and employing millennial cohorts fails to provide technical facilities, it is expected that most millennials may prefer working for Google at the former's human resource expense. Tesla, a latter-day company, attracts millennial applicants in the thousands. These applicants are highly qualified professionals, all desiring to work in a facility that awards them a high sense of freedom. This pattern of technology absorption is highly evident across all organizations. The general cohort theory confirms that it is getting harder for organizations to achieve a high

retention rate amongst millennial employees. More detail on generational cohort theory will be presented in Chapter 2.

The job satisfaction conceptual framework raises several workplace dimensions concerning various general groups. From one end, there is a section of generational cohorts fully satisfied with their work environment. On the other hand, some employees are looking out for job opportunities that can satisfy them or are deemed satisfactory. Another perspective presents that work environments and associated benefits determine if a job is convincing or not. Several realities arise in the millennial category (García et al., 2019). According to multiple research sources about millennials, the standard definition of meeting employment opportunity rotates around absolute freedom, great use of technology, flexible management, and pay enough to warrant socially approved lifestyles. This interpretation takes the focus back to organizations. Can they afford to offer all these amenities with a view to retaining millennial employees? Therefore, it is a factual representation of the millennial generation desiring absolute job satisfaction while presenting the organizations with the task of availing themselves of such an environment. Against this argument, organizations will have a hard time achieving a high job retention rate among millennial employees. More detail on job satisfaction will be presented in Chapter 2.

The hierarchy of needs is a theoretical framework created by Abraham Maslow for analysis of the staircase of human desires as evident in individuals. The five-tier construction displays that human necessities start with taking care of physiological needs such as air, water, shelter, and everything else qualified as necessary in life. It then

progresses into safety needs incorporating personal security, employment, and health and material resources. The third level represents a sense of love and belonging. In the fourth tier, human beings seek to fulfill the needs of esteem and respect. Finally, at the self-actualization level, human beings desire to reach the highest peak of achievement in ways that no other human being can (Stewart et al., 2018).

The Maslow hierarchical model best explains the desires of millennial groups insofar work issues are concerned (Krueger et al., 2020). To most millennial cohorts, a work opportunity is a platform to achieve all the needs captured in the hierarchy of needs. One, employment guarantees the achievement of fundamental issues in life (Stewart et al., 2018). At this stage, a millennial will desire the best living environment, the latest fashion trends, and the most delicious food (Krueger et al., 2020). Further up the ladder, they want their jobs to help them attain the best material resources available at the earliest age possible. They also wish to achieve love and admiration in society. TD Industries (2018) stated that in the construction industry, there is a lack of millennial participation in skilled labor, and this puts the future economy at risk.

The hierarchy of needs illustrates that organizations may have a difficult time retaining millennial employees in their workplace if they are unable to determine their needs and an appropriate way to execute fulfillment of their needs while maintaining the company's integrity and business goals/needs. More detail on Maslow's hierarchy of needs will be presented in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The research was qualitative, using interviews as the data collection method. Semi structured interviews were used to provide deeper insights into the phenomenon under study. Interviews were favored for this study due to their high capability to extract person-to-person information and provide diverse perspectives on the research problem at hand (Hammarberg et al., 2016). A basic qualitative design was important as observed and recorded during the study while exploring and understanding the personal experiences of experienced managers in the construction industry and their strategies to engage and retain employees in multigenerational workforces. A basic qualitative descriptive design was an appropriate methodology for understanding generational differences in workplace engagement as it helped identify and make meaning of the blue-collar industry world and those who share those experiences (Kahlke, 2014). I collected data from various workplaces across the blue-collar industry in construction. I am a professional who had access to many workforces through LinkedIn and other social platforms, but most importantly, I was currently working in the blue-collar industry and had access to many managerial and supervisory roles. The sampling method for this study was purposeful sampling used for a targeted population. Each question gathered data concerning experiences, needs, demands, expectations, and the psychological aspects of millennials in the blue-collar industry. Additionally, the data collection focused on employer expectations and demands concerning the new generation of the workforce in the blue-collar workplace. This research applied basic qualitative descriptive design as its

methodology template to discover and allow natural unfolding of the retention realities among millennials in the workplace.

Operational Definitions

This subsection consists of key terminology to assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of the terms. Key terms and definitions include the following:

Baby boomers: Individuals born between 1946 and 1964 (Dimock, 2018).

Blue-collar: Type of employment involving manual labor and compensation by hour; this category includes manufacturing, construction, maintenance, and mining.

Employee retention: Preventing good employees from leaving the organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021).

Employee turnover: Employees who are leaving the organization to the extent number of the employees in the organization during a described period of time (Devi & Krishma, 2016).

Experienced supervisor: Supervisor with at least 3 years as a supervisor, with a team of 10–20 employees.

Generational cohort theory: Asserts that people born in a similar time tend to display common behavioral characteristics (Sanders, 2018).

Generation X: Individuals born between 1965 and 1981 (Moore et al., 2014).

Job engagement: Positive mental state that is characterized by vigor and dedication (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021)

Job satisfaction: Pleasurable feelings that an employee experiences as a result of the fulfillment of their important job value (Agarwal & Sajid, 2017).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs: A theory that uses a series of needs to advocate employee happiness (Stewart et al., 2018).

Millennials: Individuals born between 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2018).

Organizational commitment: The employee's psychological state with respect to their relationship to the organization (Agarwal & Sajid, 2017).

Assumptions

In research, assumptions are details assumed to be true but not verified (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). One assumption was that participants were willing and able to share their experiences and perceptions of millennials in the workforce. A second assumption was that participants were able to provide accurate and truthful responses during the interview process. I informed the participants of the purpose of the study and assured the participants of the high level of confidentiality. The third assumption was that participants had the skill and knowledge necessary for the research.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of a study identifies a group in which the research may be applicable (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The scope of this basic qualitative descriptive design study included experienced supervisors with at least 3 years as a supervisor, with a team of 10–20 employees, working in the blue-collar industry in construction. This study focused on supervisors and how they engaged multigenerational groups, with an emphasis on millennials. Delimitations are boundaries or limits to which research is deliberately confined (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). This study was delimited by not studying participants who were millennials in the blue-collar industry. The reason I did

not include these participants was because I focused on employer expectations and demands concerning the new generation of the workforce, instead of the employee.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses of a study that may potentially limit the validity (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first limitation was participant bias. A participant may attempt to hide or not disclose data that could present them in a negative way. The interview questions were structured to limit researcher bias and leading questions. The second limitation was that participants were from the southeast region of the United States. The third limitation was that ethnicity and gender were not addressed; these factors could have affected the viewpoint of the participant.

Significance of the Study

Significance to Practice

The current workplace environment is filled with human resource challenges regarding generational transition (Tulgan, 2017). As a generation intertwined with technologies, one common need feature of millennials is the absolute desire for freedom, desiring the dimension of job satisfaction (Mahmound et al., 2020). Organizations will need to adjust to the needs of millennial cohorts or face an alarmingly high level of job turnover.

This study was significant because insight was gained on how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. The research was based on examining multigenerational workforce strategies and approaches concerning needs, demands,

cultural changes, and expectations in the blue-collar industry. The key stakeholders were millennials in the blue-collar workforce.

Significance to Social Change

There were several research avenues that could bring about social change. The 2008 economic crisis resulted in increased competition, and it put a lot of pressure on organizations to perform, such that employees had to increase their productivity (Golden, 2009). Tough economic times put businesses under pressure to cut expenditures, decrease the number of staff, and increase the workload for the few remaining employees. Understanding what employees value most in the workplace may help increase mental stability for employees and become very profitable for any organization, as they will be able to see a real return on investment because there will be a decrease in turnover (Shah & Gregar, 2019).

Summary

The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. Organization leaders have been tasked with making sure they know how to attract and retain millennials (Adkins, 2023). Because the baby boomers have been in mass exodus due to retirement and now COVID-19, which requires further research, millennials now are the focus for keeping a strong workforce. Chapter 2 of this study provides an in-depth synthesis of the topics related to the phenomena and previous research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

While much research has been done on employee turnover and generational attributes, little has been done to identify generational shifts in the workplace leading to high turnover in the blue-collar industry. The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. To achieve the purpose of this study, the framework utilized parts of generational cohort theory, job satisfaction, and the hierarchy of needs. Chapter 2 will consist of the literature search strategy, framework, and literature review.

Literature Search Strategy

The following topics were included in the literature review: generational cohort theory, baby boomers, Generation X, millennials, the blue-collar industry, job satisfaction, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, organizational commitment, organizational culture, talent management, employee retention/turnover, person-organization fit, and leadership styles.

Literature Review

Generational Cohort Theory

Strauss and Howe (1991) created generational theory through a reoccurring cycle of cohorts showing how social events and trends affect thought processes and behaviors. Generations can be viewed from different social and cultural perspectives (Van Rossem, 2019). Cohorts are representative groupings based on birth year such as baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, also known as millennials. Birth year cohorts allow the analysis of differences across categories as well as similarities (Van Rossem, 2019).

Better understanding of generational differences of employees can lead to retention, success management, and employee engagement (Dencker et al., 2008). Not acknowledging generational differences can lead to a lack of understanding (Sanner-Stiehr & Vandermause, 2017). Sanner and Vandermause (2017) saw generational differences through age, social placement, and societal changes.

Moore et al. (2014) conducted a study to learn whether generational differences extend equally to white- and blue-collar employees. This study had 3,665 participants, 2,284 from a blue-collar union and 1,129 from a white-collar union. This study hypothesized that Generation Y (millennials), compared to Generation X and baby boomers, would have the lowest level of work emphasis, job involvement, and expectations to work from home (Moore et al., 2014). This study also hypothesized that blue versus white collar would interact with the generational cohorts (Moore et al., 2014). Using an online survey to conduct the study, Moore et al. found that both hypotheses were supported, showing Generation Y having the lowest level variables also correlating to the blue-collar union. Generational cohort theory was relevant in this study, in which I explored the unique skill set of millennials in learning how to engage them in the blue-collar industry.

Baby Boomers (1946–1964)

Baby boomers are known for being the largest cohort in the workplace and are characterized as being workaholics. Frederick (2018) said that since 2008, baby boomers have made up 55.5% of the blue-collar industry and have been retiring at a rate of 10,000 a day since 2011. The number of baby boomers in the workforce will continue to trend

downwards, which will cause 25% of the industry to go out of business due to unqualified staff (Frederick, 2018). Baby boomers are less likely to leave a job and more inclined to follow rules and regulations (Dimock, 2018).

Generation X (1965–1981)

Generation X is known for being independent/autonomous in the workplace (Dimock, 2018). The desire for work/life balance was first introduced by Generation X (Mahmoud, Fuxman, et al., 2020). Generation X is known to live to work and to be more entrepreneurial (Crowe, 2016). Mahmoud, Fuxman et al.'s (2020) research was conducted to determine whether the paths from multidimensional work motivation scale dimensions to employees' overall work motivation are valid but not invariant across Generations X, Y and Z. The research determined that Generation X was the only generation to value extrinsic social regulation as a source of overall work motivation, valuing respect and recognition to their subordinates (Mahmoud, Reisel et al., 2020). No research was found to substantiate the need for Generation X in the blue-collar industry, as this generation was described as America's neglected middle child (Neal & Wellins, 2018).

Millennials (1982–1996)

Millennials are known as the technology and social networking generation in the workplace (Dimock, 2018). They are more focused on exploring opportunities and being challenged than establishing a traditional career (Crowe, 2016). Baby boomer parents have preferred for their millennial children to work in a different industry outside of blue collar to pursue education and move into white-collar careers (Ranjan, 2020). Millennials

dominate and will continue to dominate the workforce for the next 30 years. Butler (2019) argued that the perception that millennials do not like hard work is a myth, contending and perception of millennials not working hard has more to do with the shift that is happening in the economy.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory that uses a series of needs to advocate for employee happiness and is comprised of a five-level hierarchy (Stewart et al., 2018). The five need levels are physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. When applied in the workplace, Maslow's theory brings together wages, company culture, and how management is performed, and it also advocates for happiness (Stewart et al., 2018). Wiggins's (2016) research examined millennial reactions when leaders of the service industry try to motivate their teams, what factors cause millennials to leave their organization, and what role the employer plays in retaining millennials in the service industry. The results of the research showed that millennials had themes of work/life balance, importance of achievement, and career growth, indicating that they are the common themes of their needs (Wiggins, 2016). Ristovska and Eftimov (2019) researched the most important factors that determine job satisfaction or needs of the employees in a manufacturing company. The results showed that the needs varied but were consistent with the climate of The Republic of Macedonia, in which employment was very hard to come by and many workers do not quit (Ristovska et al., 2019).

The theory shows essential contributors to job satisfaction following human needs. When applied in the workplace, Maslow's theory indicates that employees' job

satisfaction is motivated by the provision of the compensation package and health care, which enable an employee to meet physiological needs such as water, food, and shelter (Hoff, 2018). Once physiological needs are fulfilled, job satisfaction is then contributed by the provision of physical and job security that is availed in the workplace. Thus, safety needs are satisfied once the employee feels safe in terms of physical security, safety structures, and policies that guide and regulate them. Once the safety needs are satisfied, the employee begins to seek a sense of belonging in the company by developing positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors in the workplace. As the employee gains acceptance, affection and affiliation are satisfied, and the employee begins to seek self-esteem (Wiegers, 2018). The employee is then motivated to seek appreciation, approval, and respect from the employer company, which can be in the form of a job promotion. Once the employee gains recognition, they begin to seek self-actualization to find the places they need to adjust to becoming the best version of themselves through achieved goals.

Needs Theory

The needs theory based on managerial context is a motivational model that is used to describe how the needs for achievement, association, and power affect the actions of every individual as proposed by psychologist David McClelland in 1960. McClelland stated that there are three motivational types regardless of culture, age, sex, or race, which are needs for achievement, power, and affiliation (association). This model was introduced in 1960, just two decades before Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which was first proposed in the early 1940s (Cooper et al., 2015). Needs theory is used by every

company today because it is the most effective and appropriate method to motivate employees (Stephen et al., 2015). The problem is a current and recurring one because every employee goes through different life experiences every day, and these affect them in different ways. One of the main gaps that exists in the study of the theory is that the theory focuses more on problematic behaviors. Maslow was more interested in learning what makes people happy and what they do to remain happy (Cooper et al., 2015).

According to Maslow's theory, if people grow up in an environment where their needs are not met or recognized and they remain uncomfortable, then their development will be disrupted. Research using Maslow's theory has supported the differences between deficiency and growth needs. However, the theory also indicates that many people are not able to satisfy their higher order needs in the workplace. Managers and employees of higher organizational rank can satisfy both their growth and deficiency needs in the workplace. On the other hand, those employees and workers of lower rank may find it difficult to satisfy both their needs and are only able to satisfy their deficiency needs. Adie et al. (2015) argued that Maslow's theory has not received a lot of support from other psychologists because the theory is entirely based on individuals' hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was relevant in this study, as I sought to determine the needs of a multigenerational workforce at a time when millennials lead the workforce and are declining in number in the blue-collar industry.

Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Hertzberg's two-factor theory of motivation has also been applied to explain the link between employee satisfaction and the organizational bottom line. According to this

theory, two factors influence workers' motivation and satisfaction: motivator and hygiene factors (Brown, 2010). Motivational factors increase employee satisfaction and morale, encouraging them to work hard. When employees are enjoying their work, have a chance of career progression, and are feeling recognized, they are more likely to be productive (Salvendy, 2012). On the other hand, hygiene factors are those that lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction and lack of morale if they are not provided. For instance, lack of fair pay, company policies, benefits, and relationships with superiors and other workers could reduce employee productivity at work. Therefore, the theory implies that if an organization needs to keep happy employees and increase productivity, then the management should work to improve the two factors of motivation and satisfaction (Niehaus & Price, 2013).

According to Herzberg's theory, when employees are appreciated and supported, then they are likely to be motivated and contribute to the company bottom line (Weiner, 2013). For instance, giving employees feedback and making them understand how they can grow in the company are directly tied to a company's performance. Poor working conditions and unfair pay often lead to dissatisfaction, hence hindering performance (Niehaus & Price, 2013). At the same time, it is also important to balance the cost of fully satisfying employees with the company bottom line. Therefore, those in management should ensure that they offer the right mix so that they are able to keep the right employees while maintaining a healthy bottom line (Niehaus & Price, 2013). As a way of balancing these needs and the bottom line, employers should also be wary of offering blanket benefit packages. The benefits should not be one size fits all; organizations

should properly assess the needs of each employee but at the same time consider the company bottom line (Niehaus & Price, 2013).

Blue-Collar Industry

The blue-collar industry is a type of employment that involves manual labor and compensation by hour; this category includes manufacturing, construction, maintenance, and mining (Conklin, 2020). Conklin (2020) stated that manufacturing and construction are facing severe worker shortages that will get worse as young people fail to fill positions vacated by retiring baby boomers. Higher college enrollment rates have led to fewer younger workers participating in the labor market (Conklin, 2020). Feffer (2019) suggested that employers who neglect their blue-collar workers are risking poor retention and recruiting. Lowe and Vinodrai's (2020) research indicated that manufacturing firms that provided high-quality technology and protected the environment produced great gains in adopting the values of millennial consumers.

Employee Retention/Turnover

The workplace forms an environment bringing in people to render human resource services in a professional workspace. While these places carry laid out practices and defined codes of ethics, they still incorporate all types of needs as psychologically assigned to human beings. Further, the current modern set-up brings with it ever-dynamic changes. One of the primary and consistent changes evident in most workplaces revolves around turnover. General changes amplified by the increasing role of technology in the workplace have brought far-reaching implications. Baby boomers, a set of individuals born in the period from 1946 to 1964, are set to exit the workplace and leave that

environment to millennials permanently. The generational transition in the workplace presents exciting developments.

The blue-collar industry must be able to compete with the white-collar industry, offering competitive salary packages, work flexibility, upskilling, and career growth opportunities to attract and retain millennials (Ranjan, 2020). The blue-collar mass exit of employees from the workforce has been due to retirement by baby boomers and work disability (Tonnon et al., 2018).

According to Hyman and Summers (2007), employee turnover can cost a company about 3 to 5 times the annual salary of the involved employee, and it is important for a company to address such costs. Employee turnover exerts a lot of job pressure and imposes long working hours on the few employees remaining; the cost of turnover need to be examined by business leaders. However, employees' job satisfaction can only be determined by the positive or negative attitude they have towards their jobs (Hyman & Summers, 2007).

According to Borah (2012), employees' positive attitude is very important to increase their productivity in organizations. This also affects their balancing of the demands of the job and family life, which are associated with their physical, psychological, and mental well-being, depending on occupational variables such as turnover intentions, absenteeism, performance, and job satisfaction (Murphy, 2006). Human nature is complex, and there is a need to understand human priorities in life as well as in the work environment. On the other hand, job satisfaction creates loyalty, enhances confidence, and improves job quality for employees (Arezes et al., n.d., 2010).

Therefore, there is a need to establish a work environment where employees can reach their maximum potential and enhance their job satisfaction.

According to Noone (2013), the construction industry will have a shortage of skilled workers, and keeping them employed as long as possible should be a priority in the United States as well as the United Kingdom. Injury impacts turnover as the baby boomer generation have seen many injuries and those 50 or above are more at risk for injury with reduced physical capabilities in the areas of strength and balance (Noone, 2013).

A study was conducted of 400 construction workers in the Greater Toronto Area using the Quantifying Intangibles (Qi) value system, evaluating their perception of themselves, the work they do, and what would cause them to leave (Callegher, 2019). The survey revealed the many different factors that would persuade workers to change their mind about their profession or how others view construction. According to the survey (Callegher, 2019), 73% of the construction workers were influenced in the career by family members. Callegher (2019) said that the issue is that generations are no longer passing down the information or the need to be in a construction industry type of job, with 96% believing that there is a shortage in the construction industry because of stigma and negative parental influence. Parents are pushing more appealing jobs such as nurse, accountant, and attorney. Among those surveyed, 88% believed the trade to be too tough and hands-on for most people, with 70% believing that people lack knowledge about the trades (Callegher, 2019). Many will leave the construction industry because of seasonal work or starting their own businesses; millennials are at the greatest risk of leaving due to

seeking status in this age of social media (Callegher, 2019). The solution to high turnover rates and lack of exposure to certain professions is earlier introduction in schools to shape perceptions (Callegher, 2019). Netzer (2019) makes the case that robots cannot do it all. With automation and jobs being shipped overseas there are still many opportunities for unfilled roles with five million open trade positions in construction and energy industries with the exit of baby boomers (Netzer, 2019). For every one person who enters the trade, five retire with not many seeking apprenticeships and two-year degrees which leave a large gap. Many high schools have dropped these types of courses which has limited the exposure to these types of hands-on trades (Netzer, 2019). The solution is early exposure and state programs that bring awareness (Netzer, 2019).

Boudreau (2016) expressed the lack of skilled employees saying the industry hasn't done much to prevent it. Boudreau (2016) recommended five long term solutions for the lack in skilled laborers. Boudreau (2016) suggests (1) working together as an industry to solve the problem, (2) building positive perception, (3) implementing school to work programs, (4) educating high school and college students about construction careers, and (5) celebrating the work of skilled laborers.

Job Satisfaction

According to Azeem & Altalhi (2015), job satisfaction is the degree to which an individual likes his or her job. Some people might enjoy their jobs and find them to be the best part of their lives while other people might hate their jobs and attend to them because they need to make a living or have nothing else to do. Job satisfaction in other terms can simply mean how different people feel about their jobs in different aspects. Therefore,

job satisfaction is the extent at which an individual likes (satisfaction) or how they dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs. Job satisfaction is based on an attitudinal variable. Employee Job Satisfaction refers to the general attitude of employees towards their job. If the attitude of employees is positive, it leads to job satisfaction whereas if it is negative, it leads to dissatisfaction of the job (Schmidt, 2018). Employee job satisfaction can differ from one person to another. Traditionally, job satisfaction was viewed from the perspective of the extent to which the job met the employee psychological and physical needs (Fayyazi & Aslani, 2015). However, this approach has been abandoned by current researchers, and they focus attention on the employees' cognitive processes and not the underlying needs. Job satisfaction is now being approached from an attitudinal perspective.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the theories that have been used by most researchers to evaluate the need for employee satisfaction (Brown, 2010). According to this theory, an individual's most basic needs must be met if they are to attain higher-level needs. Based on this theory, an individual needs are grouped into five levels (Brown, 2010). According to the hierarchy of needs, an employee must be in good health, safe and protected, have a sense of belonging, and confident before they can get the most out of them. The bottom line of this theory is that employees will be motivated to seek higher levels of needs and achieve organizational targets once their current levels of needs are satisfied (Niehaus & Price, 2013). For instance, helping employees understand the meaning of their roles is one way of assisting them in achieving their higher-level needs. Organizations have realized the need of making employees feel that their job are

important to the company by showing them the value of their jobs (French, 2011). By doing so, employees feel respected and motivated to achieve more by working harder. Therefore, to get the most out of employees, organizations should make sure that workers are supported in other aspects of their lives besides work. For instance, flexible working hours can ensure that employees have time to focus on their families. At the same time, fair compensation can make them feel financially stable (Salvendy, 2012). However, organizations should ensure that there is a proper balance of employee needs and the bottom line.

Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

According to Borah (2012), job satisfaction is the positive or pleasurable emotional feelings felt by the employee. Azeem and Altalhi agree that job satisfaction is the reaction of a person towards the job (Azeem & Altalhi, 2015). The definitions of job satisfaction vary widely but it can be termed as a job-related emotion that affect the employee's behavior which can influence the overall organization operation, hence, the need to clarify different levels of job satisfaction and the factors that influences it (Jaskyte, 2004). Employers have also focused on the employee's job satisfaction depending on the relationship of the organizational survival and the continued drain of employee intellectual ability and what could be lost if an employee quit the work. The employer considers employee's quitting as a great loss due to the lost experience the employee has gained over time and the skills brought by that employee. Some company leaders and employees may leave a revolving door of skill and knowledge (Paludi & Neidermeyer, 2007). According to Hyman & Summers (2007), employee turnover can

cost the company about three to five times the annual salary of the involved employee, and it is important for the company to address such costs. Employee turnover exerts a lot of job pressure and long working hours on the few remaining, and the cost of turnover needs to be examined by business leaders. However, employees' job satisfaction can only be determined by the positive or negative attitude they have towards their jobs.

According to Borah (2012), employee's positive attitude is very important to increase his or her productivity in the organization as well as balancing the demands of the job and family life that are associated the employees' physical, psychological, and mental well-being depending on occupational variables such as turnover intentions, absenteeism, performance, and job satisfaction (Murphy, 2006). Human nature is complex, and there is the need to understand human priorities in life as well as in the work environment. The work-life balance only measures human appraisals that regard to success or satisfaction with a balance between family life and work (Gregory & Milner, 2011). According to Konrad and Mangel (2000), job satisfaction can be increased among employees through the implementation of work-life balance policies with will aim of reducing the conflict between work and family. On the other hand, job satisfaction creates loyalty, confidence, and improves job quality from the employees (Arezes et al., n.d., 2010). Therefore, there is a need to establish a work environment where employees can reach their maximum potential and enjoy their job to enhance their job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has been divided into three categories: the content theorists, the process theorists, and the situational theorists (Plantenga, 2003). The content theorists related to job satisfaction to needs fulfilment (Hyman & Summers, 2007). The process

theorists described job satisfaction as the interaction of the employee, job, and work variables (Gangwisch, 2014). Therefore, the real job satisfaction according to these theorists could be realized when employees are allowed to exercise their responsibility with discretion to enhance their mental growth (Owolabi, 2015). Previously job satisfaction was measured using employees' behaviors and factors such as employee performance, absenteeism or even job turnover. However, this perspective has changed, and employees' job satisfaction is measured by identifying factors that may predict or influence employees' performance. Work-related and personal characteristics are the main influence of job satisfaction. Employee turnover is influenced by individual demand, and if the employee does not feel job satisfaction, the work demand will always upset his or her personal life schedules (Gangwisch, 2014).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment is reached by identifying the behaviors of employees that will enable an organization to adopt a given commitment aligned with the employee behaviors. A relevant organizational commitment dictates job attitudes. Job satisfaction is a vital variable in human psychology as it determines job attitudes (Inuwa, 2015). Jung & Yoon (2021) conducted research to see if employees work engagement positively influences their satisfaction, if employee's satisfaction positively influences employee's commitment, and if employees generation moderates the effects of workplace flexibility on work engagement. Employees work engagement positively influencing satisfaction and employee satisfaction positively influencing employee commitment, was statistically

significantly (Jung & Yoon, 2021). Employees generation moderating the effects of workplace flexibility on work engagement had no significant difference.

In the research conducted by Malone and Issa (2014) the aim was to see what elements lead to enhanced organizational commitment of female employees staying in the construction industry. The study argued the need for integration versus balance, changing from work life balance to work life integration being able to change under certain circumstances (Malone & Issa, 2014). The survey was conducted at the National Association of Women in Construction with 744 women participants. The results presented that having children in the house was a predictor for six-month short-term employee commitment, but not for a five-year long-term commitment (Malone & Issa, 2014). Marital status and retirement benefits were the predictors for long term commitment (Malone & Issa, 2014). The limitations of this study were the National Association of Women in Construction were not a collective overview of women represented in the construction industry. The predictors presented would help build on work life balance and add to the retention of women in this industry.

Organizational Culture

The world has over the past few decades witnessed a shift in virtually every environment. This ranges from the industrial revolution to the present where there has been a swift change in the environment, a factor that has changed how the world functions. The more evident industry that has changed significantly is the corporate environment as organizations have to deal with a more diverse workforce than ever before. This is because technology has changed the world into a global village thus

making leaders expand their operations to the international market and this means working with people with diverse backgrounds. This expansion due to globalization has had many benefits and presented many opportunities to the corporate world, but it has also led to diversification in the organization a factor that if not dealt with care could lead to the fall of an organization (Fougère & Moulettes, 2007).

Organizations are currently trying to make changes in the way they are structured and manage to incorporate the changes in the environment. The current situation requires that organizations be flexible and ready to embrace the changes in the environment and the innovations that are introduced to their environment each day. Other scholars also add to the literature by arguing that not one single change or innovation can fix a problem in an organization (Bramson, 2000). They are all done by people, and thus organizations should also consider the human element or else nothing will work out for them. The human element in the organization allows the administration and the organizational staff to align their values (Austin & Ciaassen, 2008). Austin and Ciaassen (2008), cover the literature associated with both the organization change and organizational culture. Thus, it draws its analysis based on findings from private, profit sector and non-profit sector fields. The article focuses on the significance of organizational culture and its implication. Organizational change, and innovation managing organizational culture and change and applying results to the implementation of the evidence-based practice. The study assumed that organizational change is the key impact on the organizational culture.

This is done by being able to make tough decisions; the dedication of the necessary resources improved communication among other qualities that lead to the

incorporation of the human element into the organizational culture. Organizational cultures are characterized and assessed using the values that are present within the culture. The values are used to classify and describe the culture of an organization and also to measure and manage cultures more effectively. Studies have proposed several approaches that can be used to characterize and assess organizational culture and the most common are Organizational Culture profiling. This approach assesses how different an organization is when compared with the industry (Schein, 2010).

According to Schein's work on organization culture, it is extremely important to review organization culture because it influences employees' attitude and behaviors in many ways (Schein, 2010). Organization culture is the pattern of the shared assumptions that are learned by a group when solving and external problem through internal integration that has worked well to be considered valid and it must be taught to all new members as the perceived correct way to think and feel towards those problems (Schein, 2010). Therefore, organization culture is used to teach new employees the acceptable behaviors and habits to help them acclimate within the organization. Organizational culture is a mechanism of social control, and it's passed from one organization employee generation to the other. The established routine sets the expectation of new employees, such as working for longer hours.

Organization cultural assumptions are rarely questioned, and organizations take advantage of it and implement stressful and difficult changes in the organization (Schein, 1996). Leaders are reluctant to break organizational culture in fear of losing control of the organization; their effort to adopt healthy work-life balance is held back by fear of losing

organizational culture and stability (Efron, 2017). Leaders must learn to stop the bad organizational cultural practices such as working for longer hours and bring cultural change that promotes balancing work and personal life as the main priority (Efron, 2017).

Talent Management

Talent management can be considered a process for identifying, deploying, and managing individuals to successfully implement a business strategy, being a crucial strategic element of organizational survival (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021).

Recruiting is not one interaction, recruiting is the act of attracting, engaging, assessing, and onboarding talent (Frederick, 2018). Organizations need to strategize how to get the talent, as well as keep them. The purpose of Abdullahi, Adeiza, Ahmed, Khalid, Gwadabe, & Fawehinmi (2021) research was to investigate the effect of talent management practices on employee engagement in a Malaysia private university. The results showed that talent management practices such as talent recruitment, training and development, and compensation have a significant effect on employee engagement (Abdullahi, et al., 2021). Talent management is relevant in this study; the survival of the blue-collar industry is in jeopardy as the leading millennial workforce has neglected this industry.

Person-Organization Fit

Person- Organization (P-O) Fit describes the similarity between the objectives of an organization and the individual goals of the employees. Therefore, the personal-organizational fit is one of the critical determinants of job attitudes. According to Cable and Judge (1996), P-O fit to influence the way people make job choices. Job seekers

often select organizations whose attributes align with their characteristics. These attributes include values congruence and demographic similarities between the organizations and individuals. Values are a set of beliefs that determine how people conduct themselves, and therefore, they guide individuals' judgments, behaviors, and attitudes. Values congruence, thus, influences both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The degree to which value attainment can be achieved in a work environment affects job satisfaction. Values congruence between employees and organizations can lead to positive work outcomes (Deeds Pamphile & Ruttan, 2022).

Demographic similarities refer to the similarities between workers in an organization in terms of race, gender, age, and socio-economic status (American Psychological Association [APA], 2017b). Workers with similar experiences and attributes benefits enjoy effective communication as well as liking, hence, affecting organizational outcomes and job attitudes (Deeds Pamphile & Ruttan, 2022).

Demographic similarities affect performance ratings, role ambiguity as well as turnover (Guillaume et al., 2015).

Employment relations are greatly affected by psychological contracts (Cammann et al., 1983). Psychological contracts express the perceptions of employees concerning the things the employers own. Therefore, changing psychological contract play contributes more to psychological contract breach. Workers no longer consider job security as a determining factor of their loyalty and hard work. As a result, employers constantly renegotiate, alter, and manage employment agreements. According to Robinson (1996), trust plays an essential part in psychological contracts. Psychological

contracts are the set of employee beliefs about the conditions and terms of employment.

These beliefs entail things that employees believe they should receive or be entitled to as they think that the employer made a promised to them (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Psychological contract breach is often subjective and usually depends on psychological as well as social factors related to the existing employment relationship. Trust in one's employer will decrease the probability of a psychological contract breach manifestation.

Employees experiencing psychological agreement breaches mitigate their contributions to the group, and trust can act both as a cause or mediator of psychological agreement breach.

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles are not something to be tried on like so many suits, to see which fits. Rather, they should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the particular challenges facing the organization (Guillaume et al., 2015). Leadership styles represent a set of behaviors that one chooses to best fit a situation, (Boyle et al., 2018).

Transformational

A transformational leader goes beyond managing day-to-day operations and crafts strategies for taking their company, department, or work team to the next level of performance and success (Hamstra, 2011). Transformational leadership styles focus on team building, motivation, and collaboration with employees at different levels of an organization to accomplish change for the better. Transformational leaders set goals and incentives to push their subordinates to higher performance levels, while providing

opportunities for personal and professional growth for each employee. Guillaume et al., (2015) found majority of cases with diverse teams are better off with transformational leaders. This type of leader helps develop the employee more than incentives but helps develop a better-rounded person.

Transactional

A transactional leader is a style of leadership that is based on the setting of clear objectives and goals for the followers as well as the use of either punishments or rewards to encourage compliance with these goals (Kastenmüller, 2014). People perform their best when the chain of command is definite and clear. Workers are motivated by rewards and punishments. Obeying the instructions and commands of the leader is the primary goal of the followers. While transactional leadership can be effective in some situations, it is generally considered insufficient and may prevent both leaders and followers from achieving their full potential.

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring and coaching have come to be used more frequently in organizations to improve leadership competencies and provide employee support (Allen, 2006). It has benefits for the employer and employee. The role of the mentor is to build capability. Its purpose is to develop the individual not only for the current job, but also for the future. This distinction differentiates the role of the immediate manager and that of the mentor. Provides a safe environment where the mentees share whatever issues affect his or her professional and personal success. Although specific learning goals or competencies may be used as a basis for creating the relationship, its focus goes beyond these areas to

include things, such as work/life balance, self-confidence, self-perception, and how the personal influences the professional (Levine, 2002). Mentoring can be successful, requires time in which both partners can learn about one another and build a climate of trust that creates an environment in which the mentee can feel secure in sharing the real issues that impact his or her success. Research suggests flexibility in leadership style being able to adapt to different situations and the people being lead which makes it smart and strategic (Boyle, Gonyeau, Flowers, Hritcko, Taheri, & Prabhu, 2018).

Training

The goal of training is to provide knowledge and expertise to achieve a desired outcome. Nuwan, Perera and Dewagoda (2020) conducted a study to identify training methods and approaches that will help develop construction managers. Activity that influences people behavior can be defined as training, and help develop individuals (Nuwan, Perera & Dewagoda, 2020). 44 construction managers were surveyed, and knowledge, skill, and attitude were revealed to be the most significant competencies, with the most significant attitude being supportive leadership. Transformational and supportive leadership are the styles a construction manager should possess. This study was meant to highlight areas that would help a manager perform and lead well.

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. In this chapter, I have reviewed literature related to multigenerational workforces. More exclusively, historical events and social trends that influence workplace satisfaction, balance, and culture. I also evaluated literature

regarding leadership styles and how specific styles may satisfy the needs of a particular cohort. Generational differences were evaluated thoroughly, the workforce is multigenerational but placing more emphasis on the millennial as the leading worker class. However, further understanding of the generational shift in the workplace, leading to high turnover in the blue-collar industry is needed to effectively strategize to engage a multigenerational workforce, with a focus on millennials.

Chapter 3 contains the methodologies of the study and rationale for a basic qualitative descriptive design.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design study was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. This study examined the literature gap regarding the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the construction blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance the understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the blue-collar industry and show the impact millennials have had and will have on the blue-collar industry. The problem that continues in the blue-collar industry is the lack of strategies to keep a multigenerational workforce engaged, especially millennials. Chapter 3 includes the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, and methodology, addressing the participant recruitment and selection logic, instrumentation, procedures for data collection, and data analysis plan. This chapter also addresses the study's trustworthiness and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

The three types of research methods are (a) qualitative, (b) quantitative, and (c) mixed methods (Cresswell & Plano, 2011). Qualitative research is designed to understand the lives of participants, the why and how of human behavior in situations (Vashishtha, 2019). The focus is complex and broad. Quantitative research is used to describe, test relationships, and examine cause-and-effect relationships (Cresswell & Plano, 2011). The focus is concise and narrow. Mixed methods are used to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data in the same study (Cresswell & Plano, 2011). A qualitative method

was chosen to seek, explore, and explain human behavior, which was most appropriate for this research.

After reviewing the different research designs, I concluded that a basic qualitative descriptive design would be most suitable. Descriptive design was the most appropriate design because it aligned with my research questions: (a) How do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs? and (b) What strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials?

A basic qualitative descriptive design was the most practical and flexible way to address the problem in this field of study. Interviews were helpful as common experiences of supervisors gave insight and helped expose areas and form strategies for supervisors to successfully manage multiple generations and specifically retain millennials.

Role of the Researcher

I was the primary collection instrument for this study. My role as the researcher was to use reliable sources and select participants from whom I collected data that aided me in fulfilling the research questions. For this study, interviews were the only source of data. I prepared for recordings, recorded the interviews, posed the interview questions, went back, and listened to the recording and took notes/analyzed. My role as the interviewer was to read the guidelines of questions provided, not go off script, and be careful not to probe or have any leading questions. Participants consisted of supervisors in the construction blue-collar industry who neither worked directly with me nor worked

as one of my direct reports. I am the human resource professional for a Swedish manufacturing company, working mainly on projects with no direct impact on the direct client groups. I set aside all personal experiences and views from having worked in two blue-collar industries, construction and manufacturing.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The following criteria were used to select the participants: (a) those who were in the construction blue-collar industry, (b) those who resided in the southeast United States, (c) those who were experienced supervisors for a minimum of 3 years, (d) those who supervised teams of 10–20 employees, and (e) those who had multigenerational teams. Following these guidelines ensured that the participants selected aligned with the overarching research questions. Though I worked in human resources in the blue-collar industry, I did not have any personal relationships with any of my participants.

Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are knowledgeable about or have experience with the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano, 2011). Purposeful sampling was the best recruiting method because the criteria were very specific. I used my connections from previous employers and LinkedIn to recruit participants. I indicated the criteria in a posting on LinkedIn (see Appendix B) to solicit participants through social media, where I had over 2,500 followers. The posting was reposted and shared by whomever saw the posting, so it was not limited to my connections. Other participants were selected or referred to by trusted personnel in the construction blue-collar industry. Qualitative researchers have

recommended a sample size as small as six, as the goal is saturation, not sample size (Burkholder et al., 2016). The goal was to select a minimum of six participants to participate in the study. Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued that there is not a set number when saturation occurs; in the case of interviews, they recommended narrowing to reduce the number of interviews. As the participants were selected and they agreed to participate, they were emailed the participant consent form. This process was aligned with IRB requirements and ethical standards.

Instrumentation

Qualitative researchers are the primary instrument for collecting data (Burkholder et al., 2016). Therefore, I was the primary data collection instrument for this study. Interviewing can be a very dynamic approach to collecting data and can be fruitful (Burkholder et al., 2016). Semistructured interviews were the secondary instrument, as interviews are the most common way of collecting data in a qualitative research study (Burkholder et al., 2016). For this study, I developed an interview protocol that included 10 interview questions, which is included in Appendix A.

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to motivate a multigenerational workforce?
2. Do you use a different approach with different generations? If yes, how? If no, why not?
3. What challenges have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce? Is there any generational group that stands out to you the most in being the most difficult to manage?

4. What generational differences have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
5. Tell me more about what makes them difficult to manage.
6. How do you handle disengagement on your team? Please share an experience or story about how you did this with your team (or an employee).
7. Please tell me about turnover with millennials in your organization. What organizational strategies have you implemented to keep them?
8. Do you think there is a difference in managing a millennial compared to Gen X or BB? Why/Why not?
9. What strategies have you implemented that engage millennials in the workforce? Of these, which has been most effective and why?
10. Is there anything else you would like to include that I did not discuss?

These questions encouraged the participants to share about their experience as supervisors and how they did business and managed a multigenerational workforce.

Using open-ended questions created an environment for further reflection on engaging the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. As the primary instrument for data collection, I had the main objective of gathering and extracting as much relevant information as possible for the study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The criteria for participation applied to (a) those who were in the construction blue-collar industry, (b) those who resided in the southeast United States, (c) those who were experienced supervisors for a minimum of 3 years, (d) those who supervised teams

of 10–20 employees, and (e) those who had multigenerational teams. This study focused on supervisors and how they engaged multigenerational groups with an emphasis on millennials. Once the response came in from the posting to LinkedIn or through a reference, potential participants were emailed to schedule a time and date to verify that they met the criteria to participate. After being accepted into the study, they were emailed an informed consent form. Once the informed consent form was returned, a convenient time and date were set for the interview. I used Apple Calendar for organizing all scheduled interviews. I allowed 40 to 60 minutes for each interview as explained in detail in the informed consent form. After receiving IRB approval, I began recruiting participants. The interview was conducted by telephone and recorded. I used a voice recorder application on my iPhone to record all questions and responses from the participants. This method was used mainly for the convenience of the participant. Afterward, I used the recording from my phone and played the recording to dictate to Microsoft Word as a backup in case it was deleted from my recorder from my iPhone. I took minimal notes, using this as a method of referring to key points and phrases I picked up on, but the main focus was making sure all questions were asked in a clear and concise manner. After the recording was transcribed, the transcription was loaded into NVivo for analysis and interpretation.

After data collection was complete with the participant, as explained in the interview protocol in Appendix A, I thanked the participant for their participation and the valuable information provided. I reminded the participant that the information shared would solely be used for the study purpose as stated in the informed consent form. I

reiterated all contact information for them to use if they were to ever have questions later. Lastly, I stated that copies of their transcript should be requested and would not automatically be sent to them.

Data Analysis Plan

The purpose of data analysis is to reveal patterns and attach meanings to the data collected (Burkholder et al., 2016). The descriptive design approach that was used was interviews. The collection of data from the semistructured interviews was recorded and transcribed. Then, the steps of data analysis were carried out. In the data analysis process, Yin (2018) suggested using a five-phase cycle:

1. *Compile*. The first step in compiling data involves data organization by examining existing data collected from semistructured interviews. Data were organized and compiled in Microsoft Word.
2. *Disassemble*. Once the data organization is complete, researchers need to disassemble the data and assign codes to relevant data. I used NVivo to organize data into themes, code, and interpret raw data from the interviews. I also used NVivo to group the participant codes, map themes, and identify various relationships among the themes in the data.
3. *Reassemble*. I reassembled and reorganized the data according to various themes.
4. *Interpreting*. The fourth step consists of conducting thematic analysis to validate the interpreted data against the interview transcripts.

5. *Concluding.* Engaging in thematic analysis helps researchers to identify patterns and themes in the data to answer the study's overarching research question (Yin, 2018).

I used NVivo, a software program to assist with data analysis and interpretation. NVivo was used while conducting this qualitative research to sort and organize data into categories by words and themes according to frequency. I used the recorder application on my phone and Microsoft Word to record and transcribe the semistructured interviews. It was important to take this approach to backup and secure all critical data to protect all participant information acquired. All of the data were saved to a USB drive and will be stored away in a locked cabinet for 5 years until they can be shredded by a professional shredding company. NVivo also had the capability to store and upload information with identified themes. No names were used for confidentiality and privacy reasons, but letters and numbers were used as identifiers for the participants. The coding coincided with the recordings on the iPhone and Microsoft Word; I used Microsoft Word to dictate and transcribe the recordings. I used NVivo to assist with coding functions and patterns, creating diagrams, and determining theme characteristics (Hobaugh, 2019). Using open-ended interview questions was the wisest approach. Also, using inductive coding letting the data evolve to develop codes, was the right approach as the conversations were unpredictable, so I went with the flow of the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is confidence in a study showing (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

Credibility is believed from the perspective of the participants in the research to convincingly rule out alternative explanations (Venkatesh et al., 2013). In this research, credibility was established through data saturation. Member checks helped with the analytical coding; I used my phone to record data and transcribed the data in Microsoft Word. Implementing the interview protocol also assisted in obtaining credibility. This provided consistency throughout the interview process so that each interview followed the same guidelines and script.

Transferability

Transferability shows that the findings of a study can be applied in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). External validity is the transferability of the findings. An example is thick description, which is a detailed account of the field experience through which the researcher can show patterns of relationships (Holloway, 1997). One example is transferability of the population sample; the specifics can allow another researcher the ability to transfer to another group.

Dependability

Amankwaa (2016) explained that dependability involves showing that findings are consistent and able to be repeated. One technique for establishing dependability is an inquiry audit. An external audit evaluates accuracy and whether the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by the data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). One way this study audit was conducted was by having multiple systems record through the use of a phone recorder and Microsoft Word to make sure that words were consistent

before uploading the data into the NVivo system. I also listened to the recording while reviewing the transcript to check for accuracy.

Confirmability

The findings of a study should be shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One technique for establishing confirmability is reflexivity. Reflexivity is an attitude of attending systematically to the context of knowledge construction, especially to the effect of the researcher, at every step of the research process (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Reflexivity involves making the research process itself a focus of inquiry, laying open preconceptions and becoming aware of situational dynamics in which the interviewer and respondent are jointly involved in knowledge production.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics is described as the ability or knowledge of distinguishing what is right from what is wrong (Rasch, 1980). Every field has its own ethical expectation. The testing of people's ability has ethical rules that should be followed. One should allow professional judgment when psychology is involved. When testing intelligence and ability, it is essential that the individual being tested should not be so stubborn when judged. When the workplace is being examined, the people involved should be reassured to get a satisfactory place.

One should be able to eliminate injustices that occur without modifying. The testing process may have some errors. These errors may lead to inequality in the results. "Some psychologists who exhibit bias can cause significant problems. In my research, I

decided to use neutral people for the test so as to increase fairness, to ensure that the broad range of activities by the psychologist is applicable. "Each test conducted during the research had significance and meaning, as stated by (Thompson, 2004). The researcher should be able to guard against a set of rules that might be outdated. The researcher should be able to examine all rules and understand their history (Rasch, 1980). The researcher should avoid following rules that might make their work look old and consider those that are considered to be long-lasting. In my research, I was able to examine the rules and ensure that all of them were the right ones to use and would not make my research look outdated.

Section 8.08 (APA, 2017b) is titled "Research and Publication," and it addresses institutional approvals and informed consent. Due to the inclusion of human subjects and the protocol of my doctoral program, I received IRB approval prior to collecting data. I included the consent form that was emailed and signed for each qualified participant who (a) was in the construction blue-collar industry, (b) resided in the southeast United States, (c) was an experienced supervisor for a minimum of 3 years, (d) supervised teams of 10 or more, and € had multigenerational teams. The consent letter was emailed and detailed the purpose of the study, rights of the participant, risks, benefits, and confidentiality.

Summary

The objective of this chapter was to present the research design and rationale. This chapter included the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, and methodology, including the participant recruitment and selection logic, instrumentation, procedures for data collection, and data analysis plan. This chapter also addressed the

study's trustworthiness and ethical procedures. Chapter 4 of this study will include a detailed summary of the research findings.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. This study examined the literature gap regarding the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the construction blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance the understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the construction blue-collar industry and show the impact that millennials have had and will have on the construction blue-collar industry. The two research questions were as follows: (a) How do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs? and (b) What strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials? In this chapter, I present the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results of the final study, and a summary.

Setting

Participants were recruited to participate in this study through LinkedIn, a social media platform, or by referral by trusted personnel in the construction blue-collar industry. A purposeful sampling method was utilized to gain participants for this study. Potential candidates for this study reached out via LinkedIn message or directly through Walden email. Having over 2,500 followers on LinkedIn, I received 1,024 impressions for my post and 11 reposts. Of the seven individuals who responded on LinkedIn to express interest in participating in this study, all seven met the criteria for this study; however, only five responded back with consent. The two candidates for participation

who did not respond back with consent were no longer considered for the study because consent was required to participate. One participant was recommended through referral from a participant who had already been part of the study.

Demographics

The study consisted of six participants (a) who were in the construction blue-collar industry, (b) who resided in the southeast United States, (c) who were experienced supervisors for a minimum of 3 years, (d) who supervised teams of 10–20 employees, and (e) who had multigenerational teams. Gender, age, and race were not considered for this study.

Data Collection

Upon receiving Walden University IRB approval number 08-25-230748078, I commenced the study. I posted my invitation (Appendix B) seeking research participants through LinkedIn. Using a purposeful sampling method was the best way to allow participants to self-identify with the posted criteria for participation. Five participants were selected from LinkedIn; one participant was a referral. Once responses were received from the postings to LinkedIn or through a reference, the candidates were directed to email my Walden email listed on the posting, stating that they met the criteria and would like to participate in the study. After being accepted to the study, candidates were emailed an informed consent form. The candidates were only required to respond to the email “I consent” if they were inclined to participate. Once the informed consent was received, a convenient time and date were set for the interview, with date and time availability listed through Apple Calendar for optimal organization. Before I got started

with questions, I read through my interview protocol (Appendix A), greeting all participants. Then I asked all participants for verbal recording consent, saying, “I would now like your verbal consent to record this interview using my Apple device, so that I will be able to create a transcript of our conversation. [Wait for response.] Now I will begin recording.”

I concluded my interviews within 2 weeks. Data saturation was achieved by emitting the same information repeatedly. Participants responded to all 10 semistructured questions aligned with the research questions. Each interview was scheduled for 1 hour as explained in detail in the informed consent; however, the actual time was 20 to 35 minutes for each interview, depending on the response. The interview was conducted by telephone and audio recorder. I used a voice recorder application on my iPhone to record all questions and responses from the participants. This method was used mainly for the convenience of the participant. Afterwards, I used the recording from my phone and played the recording to dictate to Microsoft Word as a backup in case it was deleted from my recorder from my iPhone. After I transcribed the recording, the transcription was loaded into NVivo for analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this data analysis was to gain meaningful insight to answer the research questions. I analyzed the data to understand the effects of the generational shift in the construction blue-collar industry and strategies on how to maintain that workforce. The collection of data was from semistructured interviews that were recorded and transcribed. I organized the data to analyze the responses using Yin’s (2018) five-phase

cycle data analysis cycle: (a) compiling the data, (b) disassembling the data, (c) reassembling the data, (d) interpreting the data, and (e) concluding the data.

The first step was compiling. I used my iPhone audio recording and Microsoft Word to transcribe the semistructured interviews. During the interview process, I recorded each session and saved it to a USB. It was important for me to backup and secure all critical data to protect all participant information acquired.

The second step was to disassemble, so after the data were organized, I disassembled the data and assigned codes to the semistructured interviews. I used NVivo to organize the data into themes, code, and interpret the raw data from the semistructured interviews. I also used NVivo to group the participant codes and identify various relationships among the themes in the data. General words that supported the sentence structure but were not aligned with the research questions were not used in the frequency count. I then reassembled and reorganized the data according to various themes.

In the fourth step, I conducted a thematic analysis to validate the interpreted data against the interview transcripts. Engaging in thematic analysis helps researchers to identify patterns and themes in the data to answer the study's overarching research question (Yin, 2018). I used NVivo, a software program that assisted with data analysis and interpretation. Lastly, I concluded. The codes were combined to create categories and categorized to generate one theme (see Table 1).

Table 1*Codes, Categories, and Themes*

Codes	Categories	Themes
Democratic, leadership style, approach, synergized, voice, strong teams, lead, communication, strategy, manager, support	Styles, characteristics	Leadership
Career paths, seeking relationship, culture, attached, loyal, time off, bonus, cook out, games, incentives, 401k	Benefits, incentives, culture, needs	Organizational culture
Identity, time, engaging, demographics, workforce, interns, college, new hires, pre-experience, certification, technical school	Recruiting, school, talent	Talent management
Programs, seasoned people, mentor, assist, training, skills, empower, daily activity, process	Development, programs, skill set	Training

Table 2*Themes and Respective Definitions*

Themes	Definition
Leadership	A set of behaviors that one chooses to best fit a situation
Organizational culture	Set of values, beliefs, attitudes, systems, and rules that outline and influence employee behavior in an organization
Talent management	Identifying, deploying, and managing individuals to successfully implement a business strategy
Training	Methods and approaches that will help develop an employee

Evidence of Trustworthiness**Credibility**

I implemented an interview protocol that assisted in obtaining credibility. This provided consistency throughout the interview process so that each interview followed the same guidelines and script. Credibility was also established through data saturation. Participants were saying the exact same responses, which helped demonstrate authenticity and accuracy.

Transferability

I ensured this study's transferability by assuring that the information could be transferred or applied in future studies. Utilizing thick descriptions provides adequate details on collections, participants, and methods, so the process can be duplicated precisely.

Dependability

I ensured this study's dependability by using multiple systems to record. I used a phone recorder and Microsoft Word to make sure that words were consistent before uploading the data into the NVivo system. I also listened to the recording while reviewing the transcript to check for accuracy.

Confirmability

I ensured confirmability by having a great awareness for reflexivity. I knew that my role in this research was to be a researcher. Member checking was done to help with the analytical coding, I used my phone for audio recording and then to transcribe in Microsoft Word.

Results

The research questions were as follows: (a) How do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs? and (b) What strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials?

Several themes emerged regarding the exploration of strategies to engage multigenerational workforces, with a focus on millennials. The dominant themes that emerged from the research questions were (a) leadership, (b) organizational culture, (c) talent management, and (d) training (see Table 3) as the codes were combined based on the research questions to develop the themes.

Table 3*Research Questions and Themes*

Research questions	Themes
How do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs?	Leadership, organizational culture
What strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials?	Talent management, training

Theme 1: Leadership

The dominant theme that arose from the data analysis was leadership. Leadership is defined as a set of behaviors that one chooses to best fit a situation (see Table 2).

Appropriate leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved, and the particular challenges facing the organization (Guillaume et al., 2015). Five of the six participants responded to this theme.

P2 stated, “The strategy I use is bringing breakfast in the morning. Something small like donuts. Sometimes when I have extra time in the schedule you know I bring a big plate like bacon, eggs, cheese, and grits something like that.” P3 stated,

Well to be honest with you I love to use lead by example. I would never ever tell you know anyone of the guys that's under me to do anything that I have not already done, not already attempted, or is not willing to myself so that's the first thing. You gotta lead by example. Which makes it a lot easier for me to get guys to do the smallest or the largest tasks, or they want to take some of those task off

my hands. To where I can go to do more stuff such as have a meeting, or maybe go ahead and check on something, check on anything that one of the contractors may need.

P4 stated, “Oh goodness. I guess communication is a very important strategy. I guess, I guess the biggest strategy I use would be simply me leading by example. Me getting out there and doing it.” Additionally, P4 explained, “So, to speak my management style if someone does not seem like OK, they're up to the task at hand typically I'm gonna get out there with them and work hand in hand side by side again.” P5 stated, “I am that manager with that go get it kind of attitude. Hey!!! I'm here to support, just do it.” P6 stated,

A leadership style you really want to employ a democratic approach. When you're dealing with cross generational teams and in that approach, it actually allows everyone to have a say and everyone to basically act as a team synergized towards one goal. I found that by having that democratic approach and also bringing my young guns in and allowing them to get their voice in the room, while still relating to the you know the baby boomers and the Generation X and adhering to you know their concerns as well, it's helped us to build I would say and the strongest teams you know in our company.

Theme 2: Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is defined as a set of values, beliefs, attitudes, systems, and rules that outline and influence employee behavior in an organization (see Table 2).

According to Schein's work on organizational culture, it is extremely important to review

organizational culture because it influences employees' attitude and behaviors in many ways (Schein, 2010). Five of the six participants responded to this theme.

P1 stated,

We're really trying to develop career paths, we are actively seeking relationships with some of the high schools and the local community colleges so we can kind of find these people early and kind of marry them to the culture or the agency and hopefully the culture of organization keeps them with us a bit longer, so they feel the bit more attached or loyal to the organization.

P2 stated, "We do company cookouts you know giving free tickets to the baseball games, you know stuff like that." P3 stated, "We get significant time off you know like coming to the door you get two weeks of vacation, Also six or \$7,000 bonus once a year that comes into your bank account." P5 stated, "Incentives, performances incentives." P6 stated, "Give additional incentives to find and keep good talent because we have the traditional structure again where hey you know you got your basic 401K you've got PTO you've got a great salary."

Theme 3: Talent Management

Talent management is defined as identifying, deploying, and managing individuals to successfully implement a business strategy, which is a crucial strategic element of organizational survival (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Recruiting is not one interaction; recruiting is the act of attracting, engaging, assessing, and onboarding talent (Frederick, 2018). Four of the six participants responded to this theme.

P1 stated,

We're really trying to identify who's in our workforce, so we spent a lot of time just kind of engaging in like what is what, the workforce is composed of. So, we've probably spent the last year and a half just really diving into the demographics of who that workforce is.

P2 stated, "We do use different approaches like this past summer or every summer we bring in the group of interns from surrounding colleges." P4 stated, "Yes, I definitely believe our intern program is very effective. We have several whether it's you know project engineers, project managers, you know in our office staff." P5 stated,

So, I have a millennial that I'm actually getting ready to hire next month. He is actually the millennial that I'm looking for, I mean I mentored him myself. I want them with some experience pre-experience before. Whether it's technical school which is pretty experienced to me or two years of some kind of certification.

Theme 4: Training

Training is defined as methods and approaches that will help develop an employee (see Table 2). Activity that influences people behavior can be defined as training, and help develop individuals (Nuwan, Perera & Dewagoda, 2020). Five of the six participants responded to this theme.

P1 stated,

We're in the process of actually creating the ambassador's program where you can get seasoned people to kind of reach out and mentor and not even mentor just from relationships with them, you know kind of figure out what they want, what

they like, what they dislike, what moves them, and what doesn't move them, you know. It's almost like reverse mentoring.

P2 stated, "You know like I have them assist me with you know my daily activities anything I need to handle." P4 stated,

With a younger generation I suppose I probably take on more of a role as a mentor until I am certain that you know they understand the task that I'm asking them and understand the process of how to accomplish the task.

P5 stated, "My younger crew I usually bring them in on the hourly rate, where I actually do more training with them to build their skills." P6 stated, "I like to empower them. I've felt when I empower them and get them from being disengaged, empower them to think, empower them to let them know that their choices and their ideas do mean something."

Summary

The research questions this study sought to answer are (a) how do experienced supervisors retain millennials while also addressing workplace needs? (b) what strategies do experienced supervisors in the construction industry use to maintain workplace engagement with millennials? Table 3 provides a summary of how each research question is related to the themes that emerged. This chapter provided a description of the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results of the final study. Chapter 5 provides the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative descriptive design was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. This study examined the literature gap regarding the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the construction blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance the understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the construction blue-collar industry and show the impact that millennials have had and will have on the construction blue-collar industry. In this chapter, I provide my interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications, and then I conclude the study.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, each theme is discussed within the context of Chapter 2, the literature review. The findings of this study confirmed and stretched the knowledge obtained as I interpreted results to gain an understanding of strategies to engage multigenerational workforces, with a focus on millennials. Findings include four dominant themes that emerged from the semistructured interviews. The dominant themes that emerged from the research questions were (a) leadership, (b) organizational culture, (c) talent management, and (d) training.

Participants noted the need to lead by example as well as the need to communicate clearly. P6 noted that a desirable leadership style employs a democratic approach. Also stating that when one is dealing with cross-generational teams, a democratic approach actually allows everyone to have a say and everyone to basically act as a team synergized towards one goal. Stating that by having that democratic approach

and also bringing my young guns in and allowing them to get their voice in the room. Research suggests that a flexible leadership style allows a leader to adapt to different situations and the people being led, which makes it smart and strategic (Boyle et al., 2018).

According to Schein's work on organizational culture, it is extremely important to review organizational culture because it influences employees' attitude and behaviors in many ways (Schein, 2010). P1 described,

really trying to develop career paths, and actively seeking relationships with some of the high schools and the local community colleges so we can kind of find these people early and kind of marry them to the culture or the agency and hopefully the culture of organization keeps them with us a bit longer, so they feel the bit more attached or loyal to the organization.

This further supports Efron (2017), as leaders must learn to stop bad organizational cultural practices such as working for longer hours and bring cultural change that promotes balancing work and personal life as the main priority.

The purpose of Abdullahi et al.'s (2021) research was to investigate the effect of talent management practices on employee engagement in a Malaysian private university. P1 stated,

We're really trying to identify who's in our workforce, so we spent a lot of time just kind of engaging in like what is what, the workforce is composed of. So, we've probably spent the last year and a half just really diving into the demographics of who that workforce is.

The results showed that talent management practices such as talent recruitment, training and development, and compensation have a significant effect on employee engagement (Abdullahi et al., 2021). P1 helped to validate this research as research was being conducted to see who was in their industry and what better ways they can develop what they have to generate engagement.

Nuwan et al. (2020) conducted a study to identify training methods and approaches that will help develop construction managers. P6 stated that he liked “to empower them. I've felt when I empower them and get them from being disengaged, empower them to think, empower them to let them know that their choices and their ideas do mean something.” Activity that influences people’s behavior can be defined as training and helps to develop individuals (Nuwan et al., 2020).

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study was participant bias. A participant may attempt to hide or not disclose data that could present them in a negative way. Although all six semistructured interviews appeared to go well, participants could have embellished, underdisclosed, or overstated their responses. They could have gone off how they felt in the moment, or what they thought that I would want them to say. No participant said that they were not a good leader, which could have been true; however, no participant painted themselves in a negative light. The interview questions were structured to limit researcher bias and leading questions.

The second limitation was that participants were from the southeastern region of the United States. Even though the responses were very similar, a more localized

population like a specific state or city could have been targeted more on a micro versus macro level.

The third limitation was that demographics were not considered for this research study. Ethnicity and gender were not addressed as these factors could have affected the viewpoint of the participant.

Recommendations

In exploring strategies to engage multigenerational workforces with a focus on millennials, this study showed that further research could be helpful in expanding knowledge and understanding of these strategies. This was the first step, but more exploration could be achieved. This research was generalized to the southeastern region. Therefore, the first recommendation is for researchers in the future to consider specifying one state, or more specifically, one city or town. The southeast region was a great start; however, the targeted region was broad. With a more localized target, more themes may become more dominant for that area of interest. The second recommendation is to target specific companies or organizations directly. Working directly with an organization or company in future research will specifically emphasize the theme of organizational culture and show why some experienced supervisors are more successful than others and really help in shaping the organizational culture. The third recommendation is to consider targeting one specific department in an organization or company, to ensure that tasks and responsibilities are aligned in likeness. Data was not collected in reference to job title; however, the criteria applied to participants (a) who were in the construction blue-collar industry, (b) who resided in the southeast United States, (c) who were experienced

supervisors for a minimum of 3 years, (d) who supervised teams of 10–20 employees, and (e) who had multigenerational teams. Therefore, expanding the criteria to be role specific would be my recommendation. The fourth recommendation is to consider demographics such as gender and age, as demographics were not considered for this research. Further research in this area could really illuminate differences in experienced supervisors through generation and gender. Taking a look at responses for one gender compared to another could give insight on how genders differ in strategy for maintaining a multigenerational workforce.

The four major themes that emerged from this study—(a) leadership, (b) organizational culture, (c) talent management, and (d) training—align with other findings based on the literature review found in Chapter 2. Even though data saturation was met, a larger pool of participants could lead to the emergence of another set of dominant themes.

Implications

There are many possibilities for this research to result in social change. The 2008 economic crisis resulted in increased competition, and it put a lot of pressure on organizations to perform and employees to increase their productivity (Golden, 2009). The tough economic times put businesses under pressure to cut expenditures, decrease the number of staff, and increase the workload for the few remaining employees. Understanding what employees value most in the workplace can help increase mental stability for employees and become very profitable for any organization, which will be able to realize a real return on investment because there will be a decrease in turnover (Shah & Gregar, 2019).

The current workplace environment is filled with human resource challenges regarding generational transition (Tulgan, 2017). As a generation intertwined with technologies, millennials have the common need feature of an absolute desire for freedom, desiring the dimension of job satisfaction (Mahmound et al., 2020). Organizations will need to adjust to the needs of millennial cohorts or face an alarmingly high level of job turnover.

This study was significant because insight was gained on how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. This research was based on examining multigenerational workforce strategies and approaches concerning needs, demands, cultural changes, and expectations in the blue-collar industry.

Reflexivity

The present study was conducted to explore strategies to engage multigenerational workforces, with a focus on millennials. As the researcher, I had the role of using reliable sources to build a literature review that would support the research questions. In selecting participants based on the criteria created, I collected the necessary data in support of the research questions. Participants consisted of supervisors in the construction blue-collar industry who neither worked directly with me nor worked as one of my direct reports. As a human resource professional for a Swedish manufacturing company, working mainly on projects with no direct impact on the direct client groups. I set aside all personal experiences and views from having worked in two blue-collar industries, construction, and manufacturing. For this study, interviews were the only source of data. I prepared for recordings, recorded the interviews, posed the interview questions, went back, and

listened to the recording and took notes/analyzed. My role as the interviewer was to read the guidelines of questions provided and not go off script, being careful not to probe or have any leading questions.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative study was to learn how to engage the millennial workforce in the blue-collar industry. I examined the literature gap regarding the generational shift in the workplace leading to high turnover in the blue-collar industry. The goal was to enhance understanding of the effects of the generational shift in the blue-collar industry and show the impact that millennials have had and will have on the blue-collar industry.

Four major themes emerged from this study: (a) leadership, (b) organizational culture, (c) talent management, and (d) training. Millennials, comprised of individuals born between the 1980s and 1990s, are rightly expected to form the largest source of the workforce by 2025 (Heyns & Kerr, 2018). Understanding retention strategies for multigenerational workforces will become more of a priority as millennials are being fully integrated at the corporate level (Arredondo-Trapero et al., 2017). Organizations, in the current workplace context, are seeking ways of achieving a high millennial retention rate (Walters, 2019). Therefore, the focus on the impact of millennials in the workforce is needed and should continue to be developed for retention strategies.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Date _____
Participant Identification: _____
Informed Consent received: _____ Yes _____ No

Script

Good Morning/Afternoon

My name is Talisha Harrison, and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting my doctoral study researching how supervisors manage multigeneration in the Construction Blue-Collar Industry, which I will present in partial fulfillment of the requirements to complete my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. Before we get started, I would like to thank you for your participation in this study. I would now like your verbal consent to record this interview using my apple device, so that I will be able to create a transcript of our conversation (Wait for response). Now I will begin recording, I will repeat the request to record. If at any time during this interview you would like me to stop recording, please feel free to let me know.

Record Interview Start Time _____

1. What strategies do you use to motivate a multigenerational workforce?
2. Do you use a different approach with different generations? If yes, how/If no, why not?
3. What challenges have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
Is there any generational group that stands out to you the most on being the most difficult to manage?

4. What generational differences have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
5. Tell me more about what makes them difficult to manage.
6. How do you handle disengagement on your team? Please share an experience or story about how you did this with your team (or an employee).
7. Please tell me about turnover with Millennials in your organization. What organizational strategies have you implemented to keep them?
8. Do you think there is a difference in managing a Millennial compared to Gen X or BB? Why/Why not?
9. What strategies have you implemented that engage Millennials in the workforce? Of these, which has been most effective and why?
10. Is there anything else you would like to include that I did not discuss?

Stop Recording

Record Interview Stop Time _____

Thank you very much for your time once again. I appreciate your assistance and the valuable information you provided. Please be reminded I will keep your responses confidential and the information you provided will solely be used for this study purpose as stated in the informed consent form. Copies of your transcript will not be automatically sent to you but can be provided only if requested by you.

Appendix B: Social Media Post

Greetings!

My name is Talisha Harrison. I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting my doctoral study researching how supervisors manage multigenerational teams in the Construction Blue-Collar Industry, which I will present in partial fulfillment of the requirements to complete my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree.

I am looking for participants (a) who are in the Construction Blue-Collar Industry, (b) who reside in the southeast of USA, (c) those who are experienced supervisors for a minimum of three years, (d) those who supervise teams of 10-20 employees, (e) those who have multigenerational teams. If you fit this criteria, please email me talisha.harrison@waldenu.edu.

Thank you in advance for your participation and support!

Talisha Turner Harrison
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