

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT TURNOVER INTENTIONS AMONGST MILLENNIAL  
EMPLOYEES: USING IRELAND AS A CASE STUDY**

**BY**

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## **Abstract**

Employee turnover intention and consequent turnover is an important issue because of the many disadvantages of voluntary turnover. Now millennials are the largest cohort in the workforce; however, they have higher turnover rates than other cohorts (Generation X and Z). It is necessary to identify the factors that influence millennial employee turnover intention in order to reduce millennial employee turnover intentions and turnover. In this dissertation, the factors that influence millennial employee's turnover intentions and the factors with the most influence on millennial employees' turnover will be identified. The measures that may be taken to eliminate these factors will also be found. To achieve the objectives of this research the interpretivist paradigm was adopted because it is based on the belief that various perspectives may explain a single phenomenon. The qualitative approach to research was employed, and semi-structured interviews were used for data collection. Data was collected from seven research participants who resided in Ireland and had voluntarily left their employer at least twice; this ensured that the participants could provide the information needed for this study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected by the researcher.

The aim of the first research question was to identify the factors that influence millennial turnover intention. The findings from this research show that many factors may influence millennial employees' turnover intentions. These factors include the opportunity for training and career growth, employee recognition, management practices, person-organisation fit, job satisfaction, work environment and inclusion. The second research question aimed to identify the factors that had the most influence on millennial employee turnover. The research findings showed that of all the factors mentioned earlier, the opportunity for career development, employee recognition and management practices were the factors with the most influence on millennial employee turnover. The third research question sought to identify the measures that could be taken to reduce millennial employee's turnover intentions. The measures that can be taken include providing a clear career growth path for employees, employee recognition and appreciation programs and training managers to manage the millennial workforce. Additionally, adopting morally right values, ensuring a good working environment and promoting inclusivity in the workplace can help to prevent millennial employee turnover intentions.

**Keywords:** Employee Turnover, Turnover Intentions, Generation, Millennials, Millennial Employees

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will provide a background knowledge which would give a detailed justification for the choice and relevance of the selected topic. In addition, the research objectives and questions would be identified, the approach used for the research would be briefly explained also.

The purpose of this study is to investigate and ascertain the factors that influence/impact millennial employee turnover intentions, with Ireland being used as a case study. A considerable amount of academic research has been done on employee turnover, and a few have focused on millennial employee turnover. This research will focus on identifying the factors that may influence millennial employee voluntary turnover in Ireland. This research is important as millennials currently account for a majority of the workforce in most parts of the world (Appel-Meulenbroek, Vosters, Kemperman, and Arentze, 2019; Naim and Lenka, 2018).

#### **1.1 Background of Study**

Employee retention and turnover are commonly researched areas in human resources. A plethora of factors exist which may affect an employee's decision to remain at or leave an organisation (Zeffane, 1994). Also, the subject of turnover and retention is continuously researched because of the importance of employee retention and the implication of high employee turnover rates (Mobley et al., 1979). High turnover rates have been noted to have multiple negative effects on an organisation. High turnover rates cost more financially (Ongori, 2007). In organisations where extensive training of employees is important for employees to function effectively in their work roles, high turnover affects the efficiency and productivity of the organisation (Kim et al., 2017; Ongori, 2007). Grotto et al. (2017) estimated that replacing an employee costs about 90% to 200% of the previous employee's salary. Productivity is also affected while new employees are being trained. Similarly, Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill and Pemberton-Jones (2015) stated



that high turnover rates affected the morale of other employees in the organisation. Hence, it has become important that organisations focus on reducing their turnover rate or ensuring employee retention. For any organisation to function properly, employee retention is important.

Now, it has become important to examine the factors that affect millennial employee turnover. This is because of the role of millennials in today's labour or the workforce. Millennials have gradually become the largest population in the workforces around the world; this may be attributed to the retirement of the Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) and the creation of more job openings and employment opportunities (Appel-Meulenbroek, Vosters, Kemperman, And Arentze, 2019; Naim and Lenka, 2018). According to the Pew Research Center (Fry, 2020), Millennials are the largest generation in the United States labour force. It has been argued that by 2025, millennials could make up to 75% of the workforce (Deloitte's Millennial Report 2019). Hence, it is important that organisations know the cohort that will dominate the workforce and identify the factors that may influence millennial employee turnover.

Significantly, Millennials have also been identified as the cohort or generation with the highest turnover rates. In research conducted in Malaysia, Queiri et al. (2014) established that the average millennial tends to remain at their jobs for up to 18 months.

The generational cohort theory (Lim and Parker, 2020) provides a foundation that may be used to explain millennials and their unlikeliness to remain at a particular organisation for a long time, especially when compared to other cohorts. The generational cohort theory is based on the stance that individuals within the same age group or generation have experienced the same life-shaping events, which consequently influenced the social, religious and moral views of the individuals in the same age group (Padayachee, 2017). For Millennials, some of these events include growing up with the internet, technology, social media, increased environmental awareness and even terrorism or violence. Naim and Lenka (2018) assert that these events shaped millennials, their values and ethics. Similarly, Queiri et al. (2014) asserts that these shared experiences also shaped individuals' work values in the Generation Y cohort (1981-2000). Hence, millennials' work values are quite different compared to those of Generation X (1966-1980) and baby boomers (1946-1964).

A survey of Irish millennials conducted by Deloitte's (2019) showed that 47% of respondents intended to leave their jobs within two years. However, 22% of the respondents intended to stay at their job for at least five years. This data supports the stance that millennials have a high turnover rate in the workplace. This was reiterated in a report that was developed using surveys conducted by M3S and Morgan McKinley (O'Flaherty et al., n.d.). M3S and Morgan McKinley conducted an online survey with over 3,400 participants which comprised of millennial professionals in Ireland. The survey showed that 72% of millennials intended to leave their employer within three years while 62% would leave within five years

(O’Flaherty et al., n.d). Hence, there is further confirmation that there is high turnover rate of millennial employees in Ireland.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

This research aims to identify the factors that influence millennial employee turnover intentions in Ireland.

### **1.2.1 Research Questions**

This research will answer the following questions:

- i. What factors influence millennial employee turnover?
- ii. What factors have the most influence on millennials turnover intention?
- iii. What measures are being taken to curb high turnover rates among millennials?

To answer the research questions, the study will examine the following objectives.

### **1.2.2 Research Objectives**

The research objectives stated below will guide this research. Achieving the objectives

Is essential to answer the research question and achieve the overall aim of the research.

- i. To identify the factors that cause millennial employees to have turnover intentions.
- ii. To ascertain what factors have the most influence on millennials turnover intention.
- iii. To identify measures that may be taken to mitigate the problem of high turnover of millennial employees.
- iv. To provide suggestions for areas of future research.

## **1.3 Rationale for this Study**

Proper management of human resources is essential for the success of any organisation. Hence, preventing high turnover rates has become an area of focus for organisations. Now, millennials account for most of the workforce and have a higher turnover rate than other generational cohorts; this study is of significance. A continuous loss of millennial employees could result in a loss of talent, income, productivity and reduce employee morale. All these are detrimental to any organisation. High turnover rates could impact an organisation's ability to meet its goals (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill and Pemberton-Jones, 2015).

Having established the implication of high turnover rates and seeing the statistics that highlight the high turnover rate of millennial employees who make up most of the workforce, it can be argued that this area of research is important.

Notably, the population of millennials in the workforce is not the only reason why retention is important. Ahmad and Ibrahim (2015) state that of all the generational cohorts in the workplace, Generation Y and Z have the most technical competence. Hence, millennials are needed in organisations. Similarly, Appel-Meulenbroek, Vosters, Kemperman, and Arentze (2019) state that millennials make up a well-skilled and educated population in the workforce that can acquire knowledge with ease; this makes millennial employees valuable assets in organisations.

With the growth of a new generation, the workforce changes. Values and work ethics shift in accordance with the generational cohort that dominates the workforce. Hence, companies and human resources departments must understand their workers, their values and adjust accordingly to ensure reduced worker turnover (Appel-Meulenbroek, Vosters, Kemperman, and Arentze, 2019).

Much research has focused on employee turnover, retention and its causes. However, less research has been done on what factors may influence millennials turnover intentions or increase millennial turnover rates. This dissertation will address this gap in research and Ireland will be used as a case study to gain a better insight on the subject of this dissertation.

This research seeks to identify the factors that influence millennial employee turnover. By doing this, it will be possible to identify the reasons why millennials have a high turnover rate, especially when compared to other generational cohorts. Importantly, discovering what factors influence millennial employees to leave their job is the first step to finding solutions to mitigate these factors and ensure millennial employee retention. This research will focus on millennials in Ireland; however, this dissertation will provide insight into the reason for high millennial employee turnover, which is an important issue in the industry currently.

#### **1.4 Research Approach**

A qualitative research approach will be applied to write this dissertation. This is because the qualitative approach to research is suited where the researcher does not seek a single objective response but is trying to understand a phenomenon (Atieno 2009; Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas 2013). Also, qualitative data is suitable where the researcher wishes to explore various perspectives or use detailed information that cannot be quantified numerically (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017). Hence, the qualitative approach is suitable for understanding what factors affect millennial employee turnover in Ireland.

Interviews will be used to collect data for this research. Due to the Pandemic, interviews will be conducted via phone and skype. The information will be recorded and transcribed for analysis. Semi-structured interviews will be employed because they will allow the researcher to collect the necessary information and ask further questions or ask for clarification if necessary (Bisman and Highfield, 2012; Jamshed, 2014). Open-ended questions will be used to ensure that the research participants provide detailed information needed. Purposive sampling will be used to choose the participants in this research. Purposive sampling

will ensure that participants in this research can provide detailed and relevant information needed by the researcher (Robinson 2013). The research participants will be millennials who reside in Ireland and have worked for at least five years.

The data collected from the sample population will be analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is useful where the researcher wants to analyse a large amount of data, identify patterns and anomalies (Attride-Stirling 2001; Nowell et al. 2017). Importantly, this method of analysis is ideal for researchers with little experience; the six steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) will be followed to analyse the collected data.

In the third chapter of this dissertation, the research methodology will be explained further. The reasons for the methodological choices made during the research process will be explained in detail.

## **1.5 Structure of the Dissertation**

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

The first chapter of this dissertation will contain a background of this study. Here the relevance of this research topic will be explained. Justification will be provided for choosing to examine the factors that affect millennial employee turnover. The research gap that this research will be addressing will also be highlighted. The research questions and objectives of the research will also be stated.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

In the second chapter, the researcher will examine secondary data that focus on turnover and millennial employee turnover. The researcher will examine turnover, turnover intentions and millennial turnover in Ireland. The theoretical framework (the generational cohort theory) that is applicable to this research will be explained. The factors identified after examining secondary data will be analysed and evaluated.

### **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

Here, the research methods used for this dissertation will be explained. The research choices made throughout the course of this dissertation will be justified. In this chapter, the research paradigm and approach adopted will be explained. The method of sampling, data collection and data analysis will be explained as well. The ethical consideration and limitations of this research will be stated in this chapter. Lastly, the steps that may be taken to ensure research trustworthiness will be explained.

### **Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings**

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, the result of data analysis will be stated. This data will be summarised, interpreted and analysed alongside the data gotten from the secondary data or the data assessed

in the literature review. This will enable the researcher to identify any themes or patterns in the secondary research data or primary data collected by the researcher. In this chapter, any anomalies discovered after analysis will also be highlighted.

#### Chapter Five: Discussion

Here, the findings of this research will be discussed. The answers to the research questions will also be explained and linked to similar secondary data. Recommendations for future research or to address the limitations of this research will be given. Limitations encountered during this research will also be stated in this chapter.

#### Chapter Six: Conclusion

In the last chapter of this dissertation, a summary of the key findings will be provided. Furthermore, a summary of the answers to the research questions will be stated. Plans for action and their cost implication would be recommended. The significance of the findings will also be explained.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In the first chapter of this dissertation, the background and rationale of this study were provided. The aims, objectives and research questions were also outlined. In this chapter, the key concepts in this dissertation will be highlighted and defined. The theoretical framework of this research will be stated, and its link to the research topic will be explained. The academic pieces of literature that addressed the factors that influence millennial employee turnover intentions will be analysed. This will allow the researcher to

understand the different perspectives of what has been written concerning the research topic. The literature review will also highlight areas that require further research, which may be within or outside the scope of this study.

## **2.1 Definition of Concepts**

### **2.1.1 Turnover**

Turnover is often used to explain the rate at which employees enter and leave a company within a period of time, usually one year (Ongori, 2007). Employee turnover is either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary turnover refers to when an employee makes a decision to leave the organisation where they work. Involuntary turnover refers to when the organisation decides to relieve an employee of their position or terminate their employment (Alla and Rajaa, 2019; Kovner et al., 2014). In this dissertation, the researcher is referring to voluntary turnover. Hence, this work is examining the voluntary turnover of millennial employees. To ascertain why voluntary turnover occurs, it is necessary to examine factors that influence the turnover intentions of an employee.

### **2.1.2 Turnover Intention**

Turnover intention garners attention from researchers and organisations because it is the prelude to actual turnover. It is seen as the process that precedes an employee making a voluntary decision to leave their present job or employer (George and Wallio, 2017; Kim et al., 2017). Alternatively, Belete (2018) explains turnover intention as the likelihood of an employee to leave their current job. When examining employee turnover intention, it is important to acknowledge that this is a planned behaviour or action by the employee. Hence the employer has little control over the employee's choice (Bothma and Roodt, 2013). Voluntary turnover has been noted to have more negative effects on the organisation than involuntary turnover, especially if the employees that are leaving the organisation are experienced or skilled workers (Belete, 2018). The impact of high turnover rates has made it necessary for employers to ascertain what factors may cause turnover intentions and consequently high turnover rates. Identifying the factors that influence turnover intention is a step to mitigating these factors (Oh and Kim, 2019). For the purpose of this study, turnover intention refers to the process in which an individual decides to leave their current employer and find alternative employment (Bothma and Roodt, 2013).

Significantly, in most cases, turnover intention leads to actual turnover (Chiu and Francesco, 2003). Voluntary turnover has become an issue of concern because of the effect it has on organisations. In many cases, voluntary turnover means the loss of skilled or trained employees. The loss of human capital leads to reduced productivity and effectiveness (Belete, 2018; Bothma and Roodt, 2013). Turnover also impacts the remaining employees who may have to take on additional work. Furthermore, the remaining employees may become demotivated at work (Frian and Mulyani, 2018). The organisation also suffers financially when voluntary employee turnover occurs. The organisation will have to engage in a new recruitment

process and may train new staff to replace the ones that left. Training new staff can cost an organisation up to half of an employee's yearly salary. Hence, high employee turnover means that the organisation loses what it cost them to train the employee (Alla and Rajaa, 2019; Frian and Mulyani, 2018; Emiroğlua, Akovab and Tanriverdi; 2015)

Despite the many disadvantages of voluntary turnover and high turnover rates, Oh and Kim (2019), state that turnover has its advantages as well. Turnover is useful for understanding the nature of an organisation's HR, management and employment practices. Experiencing high turnover rates can improve communication between an organisation and employees in order to identify the causes of high turnover or turnover intentions (Belete, 2018). Therefore, experiencing high turnover may birth better management and communication policies as well as the development of strategies to mitigate against employee turnover intention and high turnover rates (Kim et al., 2017).

Significantly, millennials have the highest turnover rates among other generational cohorts in the workplace (Elian et al., 2020). For this reason, it can be inferred that the factors that influence millennial turnover intentions may differ from the factors that affect other cohorts. The differences between millennials and other generational cohorts may be explained using the generational cohort theory (Jones, Murray and Tapp, 2018).

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Generational Cohort Theory**

The generational cohort theory may be used to explain how individuals born within a certain period may share certain traits or beliefs. The generational cohort theory explains that individuals born within a certain period experienced similar life-shaping events in their childhood and adolescent years (Lim and Parker, 2020). Hence the individuals have somewhat similar lifestyles, beliefs, values, mindset and stance on particular issues. These traits help to identify people from the same generation but also distinguish people from different generational groups or cohorts (Ting et al., 2018).

There are four main generational cohorts which are the baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z (Lester et al., 2012). The baby boomers refer to individuals born between 1946-1964 (Lu and Gursoy, 2013). Generation X was born between 1966-1980. While generation Y, also known as millennials, were born between 1981-2000 (Lim and Parker, 2020). In the last few years, the number of Generation X employees in the workplace has reduced. Millennials have become gradually began to dominate the workplace (Putriastuti and Stasi, 2019). Due to the different traits of the cohorts, the workplace has begun to change as well (Komari, 2019). Evidence of this is visible in high millennial employee turnover rates.

The generational cohort theory provides a foundation for this research because it establishes a relationship between age (generation), work behaviour, and turnover intention. Pitts, Marvel, and Fernandez (2011)

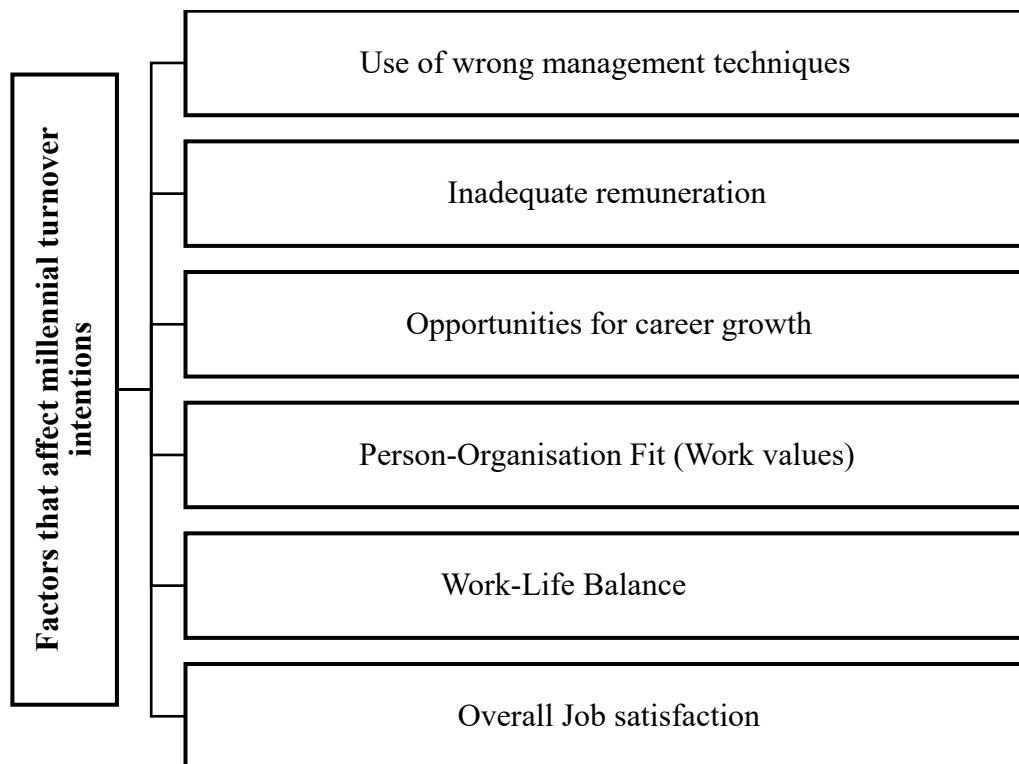


buttress this point by stating that; demographic traits play a role in employee turnover decisions. They stated that younger employees were more likely to leave an organisation than older employees. This study reiterates that millennials were more likely to leave their work than individuals that belong to the Generation X cohort. The relationship between cohort and turnover intention is further reiterated by Lu and Gursoy (2013), who states that baby boomers valued stability, job security and were loyal to their employers; so they were less likely to leave their jobs than members of generation X or generation Y cohort.

A high turnover rate is common among the younger generation, Millennials (Yuniasanti, Abas and Hamzah, 2019). Hence, it is necessary to take the factors that influence turnover intentions of the concerned cohort into consideration when trying to mitigate the causes of high employee turnover rates. It is also necessary to adjust the methods used to ensure employee retention, as it has been stated earlier that the different generational cohorts have different traits (Wan et al., 2013). Only the millennial cohorts will be examined in this research and in the primary research.

### **2.3 Factors that Affect Millennial Turnover Intentions**

**Figure 2.1: Factors that affect millennial turnover intentions**



**Source: Author (2021)**

There are many factors that may affect a millennial's turnover intention and consequent decision to leave their current employer. These factors vary, a few of them are common, other factors are mentioned casually in literature and require further research. The primary study will be helpful in identifying less common factors that influence a millennial employee's turnover intention. The common factors that influence millennial turnover intention include job satisfaction, remuneration, opportunities for career growth and poor managerial techniques. (Ngotngamwong, 2019; Queiri, Yusoff and Dwaikat, 2014). Other factors that have been said to influence millennial turnover intentions include person-organisation job fit, poor work-life balance, values and the job-hopping culture (Queiri et al.,2015). For this dissertation, the factors that influence millennial turnover intention will be examined. Notably, there are other factors that influence millennials turnover intention; they were mentioned casually and require further study.

### **2.3.1 Use of Wrong Management Techniques**

A factor that is reiterated in numerous academic pieces of literature is the use of wrong management techniques in dealing with millennials (Campione, 2015; Ngotngamwong, 2019; Rani and Samuel, 2016). Millennials are a generational cohort that entered the labour force around 1998 (Wesner and Miller, 2008). Hence, many managerial positions are held by the older generation (Rani and Samuel, 2016). The presence of Generation Y in the workforce is beneficial because this cohort is knowledgeable about technology and is made up of fast learners (Hershatter and Epstein, 2010). However, because Generation Xers lead and manage many organisations, there may be an incompatibility between the two cohorts. Generation X and

Y do not share the same values, and this may lead to misunderstandings in the workplace (Rani and Samuel, 2016).

Ngotngamwong (2019) goes further to explain that the leadership techniques employed by the bosses (usual members of the Gen X cohort) may be the problem. This is because the leadership style is meant for individuals that belong to Generation X, who previously dominated the workforce and not millennials. The different generational cohorts have different identifying traits; hence new management techniques are needed when dealing with millennials (Fishman, 2016).

Lee, Mullins and Cho, (2016) expatiate on this, stating that there are three leadership styles; authoritarian leadership, transformational leadership and laissez-Faire leadership. Using surveys, they were able to reach a conclusion that millennials thrived under transformational leadership. Furthermore, transformational leadership helped employees feel empowered, independent, and this improved their job satisfaction (Wong and Laschinger, 2013). Job satisfaction improves employee retention (Ehksan, 2019). Transformational leadership is vastly different from authoritarian leadership, which was more commonly used when Baby boomers and Generation Xers dominated the workforce. Hence, if a leader who belongs to the baby boomer or Generation X cohort is working with millennials, using the authoritarian leadership style could cause the millennial employee to have turnover intentions. Similarly, Hassan (2014) explained that millennials prefer to be treated like partners rather than employees. Hence, millennials like the flat management system.

Ngotngamwong (2019) conducted an interview with 30 Millennials in Bangkok, and the interviews were beneficial in providing data on what elements of leadership or managerial practices influenced turnover intentions. Participants In the interviews explained that they disliked being micromanaged and the absence of support for employee-led projects. Participants also stated that they disliked managers that did not listen to suggestions from younger people and bosses who assigned their jobs to junior employees. These elements are considered as practices in management and leadership that can increase employee turnover intention. While Ngotngamwong (2019) provides valuable insight into how bad leadership or managerial techniques can influence millennial turnover intention, this work has its limitations. Interviews that were used to reach a conclusion were conducted in Bangkok, and 30 millennials were interviewed. The number of people interviewed, as well as their location, makes it difficult to generalise the outcome of this study. However, the research is insightful.

Significantly, Campione (2015) shared a different perspective on how management techniques may be influencing millennial turnover intentions. Campione (2015) did not blame the leadership style or the use of a different generational cohort to manage the millennial workers. Rather, Campione (2015) stated that individuals that are placed in supervisory positions are not necessarily people who would make good managers. Instead, they are people who excelled in their previous positions. Hence, the supervisors or managers lack the training and skill to work with and motivate the now dominant millennial workforce.

With the tendency of millennials to leave organisations where they do not like the managerial practices or feel job satisfaction, it is important that supervisors and new managers receive training on how to work with and lead the millennial dominated workforce (Kaifi et al., 2012).

Notably, Lee, Mullins and Cho (2016) state that where a company is comprised of people from different generational cohorts, finding the right leadership style or management techniques, may become a challenge. This is because the needs of the employees vary.

Here, it can be seen that the managerial techniques used by organisations should be tailored to fit the individuals being managed to reduce turnover intentions (Kraus, 2017). A key area to be explored in the primary research will be how managerial techniques have influenced turnover intentions amongst millennial employees.

### **2.3.2 Inadequate Remuneration**

One factor that has been repeatedly said to influence millennials turnover intention is poor remuneration. Queiri et al. (2015) assert that millennials value extrinsic rewards and that this makes remuneration one of the most influential factors that affect turnover intentions. They stated that the absence of sufficient remuneration might negatively affect job satisfaction and lead to employee turnover. Queiri et al. (2015) argue that for millennials, extrinsic rewards are of a higher priority than values due to the need for millennials to keep up with rising costs of living. The assertion that millennials value extrinsic reward is also buttressed by Moreno et al.'s (2017) assertion that millennials are major consumers and tend to be influenced by other individuals to make purchases. Hence, the value millennials place on extrinsic rewards is understandable.

This view that remuneration influences turnover intention is supported by Hayes (2012), who stated that inadequate remuneration, is a factor that increased the turnover of Nurses that belonged to Generation X and Y cohorts. The perspective on the impact of inadequate remuneration on employee turnover intention was also shared by Ngotngamwong (2019), who interviewed millennials for a study. The results of the interview showed that inadequate payment was the second most mentioned reason why millennials left an organisation for an alternative job. However, some participants in the study provided a slightly different perspective on how remuneration affects millennial's turnover intentions. These millennials did not want to leave their organisations because of inadequate remuneration. Rather, turnover intentions were created because they saw that moving to a different organisation was a fast way of increasing their income. Hence, turnover intentions were created whenever they found a job opportunity where the offered salary or benefits were more than their current income. The view that remuneration affects turnover intentions is buttressed by Putriastuti and Stasi (2019), who state that millennials are highly influenced by extrinsic rewards. This will be further explored in the primary research.

Campione (2015) shared a slightly different perspective stating that; Millennials value extrinsic reward but not enough to sacrifice their personal lives. Campione (2015) argued that extrinsic rewards and higher pay were effective in attracting millennial employees. However, these were not effective ways of mitigating millennial employee turnover. Millennials value other things, such as some freedom in the workplace, vacation time (Twenge, 2010). This is another area where the difference between members of the different cohorts is made obvious. Older generational cohorts such as baby boomers valued the extrinsic rewards at the cost of their family life, leisure and work-life balance. Whereas millennials may be unwilling to sacrifice their families in exchange for higher income. From this perspective, it may be argued that inadequate remuneration may not necessarily cause millennial employee turnover, and higher payment cannot mitigate against millennial employee turnover intentions. This will be further explored in the primary research.

A similar stance is taken by Patil (2017) who stated that millennials are more prone to be affected by intrinsic rewards rather than extrinsic rewards. Patil (2017) further stated that, compensation and salary were less effective than appreciation at providing job satisfaction. From this, it can be deduced that monetary rewards may not play a major role in influencing turnover intentions. This fact was expressed by Naaidu and Mahfar (2019), who conducted a study with 108 millennial participants. The aim of the study was to identify the impact of motivation on turnover intention. The results of this study showed that extrinsic motivation or compensation had very little influence on millennial's turnover intentions. White (2018) further explained that millennials were not always motivated by money, unlike older generational cohorts. Rather, this group preferred communication and verbal appreciation for their efforts. Provision of monetary rewards instead may be seen as superficial. White's (2018) assertion is buttressed by Luthans (2000) stance. Luthans (2000) stated that employee recognition was important for motivating employees and ensuring employee retention. Again, this will be examined further in the primary research.

A plethora of academic work has been examined, and it is not easy to ascertain what effect remuneration has on millennial's turnover intention (Gan and Yusof, 2018). However, the various articles establish that monetary reward or verbal appreciation has an impact on turnover intention. Further research is needed to ascertain if millennial's turnover intentions is affected by monetary rewards or verbal appreciation; hence this will be explored in the primary research.

### **2.3.3 Opportunities for Career Growth**

Millennials value a clear career path when working in an organisation. Mayangdarastri and Khulna (2020) assert that this is because opportunities for career growth and development contribute to job satisfaction. They also state that opportunities for job development encourage engagement and inspire commitment to an organisation or employer. Ramli and Soelton (2019) support this but provide a slightly different reason why millennials value growth and career development. They attribute this trait to the era that millennials grew up in; Millennials were raised in the era of technological advancement. Hence, they are accustomed

to the varying opportunities provided by technological devices. So, maintaining a single job and doing the same tasks repeatedly without any possibility of career growth and development could easily bore a millennial or affect their attitude to work. The above-stated stances show why millennials value career development and growth. It could be argued that career development and growth are crucial factors that affect a millennial's commitment to an organisation (Mayangdarastri and Khusna 2020). In the absence of development opportunities, millennials may reconsider their current place of employment.

Mappamiring, Akob and Putra (2020) state that career development is a major factor that affects millennials' turnover intentions. However, they examine career development from the organisation's perspective. They state that millennials, especially new employees, value training and development programs provided by the organisation. The training provided helps millennials become competent employees; this increases the job satisfaction of people who belong to this cohort and increases their commitment (Jaworski et al., 2018). Further opportunities for training and skill acquisition can consequently help employees get promotions at work. This stance is buttressed by Abuhashesh Al-Dmour and Masa'deh (2019), who states that employees have a better attitude towards organisations that help them acquire skills or knowledge that prepares them to advance in their careers or help them advance in the same organisation. Millennials appreciate new challenges and the responsibilities of occupying a new position (Rani and Samuel, 2016). If the opportunities to advance their career does not exist in their current place of employment, Abuhashesh Al-Dmour and Masa'deh (2019) state that the employee begins to look for that in another organisation; this reaffirms that career growth or development opportunities are a factor that influences millennials' turnover intentions (Ngotngamwong, 2019).

For this reason, Hassan (2014) states that to retain an employee, it is necessary to promote them. Promoting employees makes them feel appreciated and helps them see the possibilities for career advancement to strive for. Afterwards, employees may feel motivated and more committed to the organisation. A similar opinion is shared by Friani and Mulyani (2018), who state that employee development may have a more significant influence over turnover intention than other factors such as remuneration, compensation and employee engagement. They argued that turnover intention might be created when employees see other organisations are willing to give them development opportunities that their current employer or organisation does not provide. For this reason, Friani and Mulyani (2018) suggest that companies and organisations have development programs for millennial workers to reduce turnover intentions.

In slight contrast, while Holtschlag et al. (2019) agree that lack of opportunities for career development may cause turnover intentions, they have a differing opinion on how this occurs. They argue that millennials value being able to strive for personal goals in their office. These personal career goals lessen the likelihood of turnover intentions. They go further to say that organisations that support and help millennials reach their career goals not only improves job performance and productivity but increases commitment to the organisation. The ways organisations may help workers meet individually set goals include mentorship,

training programs, development opportunities (Franco and Lyapina, 2016). From this perspective, it can be seen that millennial employees appreciate corporations that help them in their attempts at career development and the goals that they personally value. This stance varies from those assessed previously because there is a reduced focus on the role of the organisation in providing opportunities for career development. Rather, the organisations plays supporting role in helping millennial employees reach personal career goals.

This stance is buttressed by Mayangdarastri and Khusna (2020), who states that millennials only commit to things that are of their personal interest. Hence, millennials are more likely to remain committed to an organisation that helps them achieve their personal work goals. Significantly, Mayangdarastri and Khusna (2020) state that the more satisfied a millennial employee is, the stronger their commitment to an organisation will be.

The academic literature analysed in this section explains different ways that career development and the availability of opportunities for development may affect turnover intentions. While the perspectives vary, there is a common stance that a visible career path in an organisation or individual work goal can ensure a millennial employee remains committed to the organisation. Hence, development and growth programs are needed to retain the millennial cohort that makes up a majority of the workforce. This assertion will be examined further in the primary research.

#### **2.3.4 Person-Organisation Fit (Work values)**

Person-Organisation Fit (P-O fit) is another factor that influences turnover intentions. However, it is not a factor that affects millennials or generation Y alone. P-O fit may affect any generation's turnover intention (Cronley and Kim, 2017). Irrespective of the workplace, P-O fit influences job satisfaction, which in turn influences turnover intentions (Farooqui and Nagendra 2014).

P-O fit refers to how much an individual's values, goals, and even personality align with that of the organisation where they work (Sutarjo, 2011). Research has shown that individuals who have high compatibility with the organisations they work for are less likely to have intentions to leave (Franco and Lyapina, 2016). However, where there is low compatibility, the individual is more likely to leave their employer or organisation in search of one that is more compatible (Sutarjo, 2011). This may be the case with millennials as it has been asserted that millennials are impatient and require immediate results. In the absence of the results they require, millennials are willing to leave their employer in search of another (Queiri, Yusoff and Dwaikat, 2014).

Franco and Lyapina (2016) provide a detailed insight into how P-O fit may influence turnover intentions. They state that P-O fit has a direct relationship and impact on job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation, both of which may influence turnover intention. This is supported by data collected by Zhang

et al. (2017). Using questionnaires, data were collected from 656 individuals in China. The results of this research showed that P-O fit directly influenced job satisfaction. Furthermore, it was proven that the more compatibility existed between an employee and organisation, the likelihood of having turnover intentions was reduced.

The importance of P-O fit for reducing turnover intentions was also buttressed by Cennamo and Gardner (2008). However, Cennamo and Gardner (2008) placed more importance on the compatibility of work values and why the employee and organisation's work values need to be compatible. The concept of work values is difficult to define as there are a plethora of opinions on what it means. However, Lyons, Higgins and Duxbury (2010) describe work values as good or desirable work behaviour. Work values are often used to describe the ethical nature of organisations and their employees (Lyons et al., 2010). While work values are not the most popular cause of turnover intention among millennials, this factor is mentioned in a few academic literatures as an influencer of turnover intentions. Ng, Lyons and Schweitzer (2012) explain further that work values are stable and have an influence on an individual's career, work and non-work-related decisions. Therefore, it is possible that where an individual's values do not align with that of their workplace, they may be influenced to leave their current place of employment. Rani and Samuel (2016) provide a more in-depth explanation of the impact of work values in the workplace. Work values influence decisions, commitment and job satisfaction; all of these affect a millennial's turnover intentions.

This view is supported by Kraus (2017), who state that millennials are heavily influenced by their values. For this reason, their choice of employer is influenced by their values. A millennial may prefer that their employer has similar values that they do so that they can stick to their own values and ethics even at work. This view is further explained by Rani and Samuel (2016), who state that individuals of an older generation usually occupy influential positions in a company or organisation; their values shape the organisation and influence the culture of the organisation. For this reason, millennials may find the organisation a poor fit and are more likely to want to change their employer.

Person-organization fit is a factor that influences millennial turnover intention. Furthermore, where the organisation is led by individuals of an older generational cohort, the incompatibility of values may negatively affect turnover intentions. The extent to which P-O fit influences turnover intention will be explored further in the primary research of this study.

### **2.3.5 Work-Life Balance**

Research has shown that sometimes employees encounter difficulties trying to manage their work and their personal affairs. Work-life balance may be used to describe an individuals' desire to allocate sufficient time giving their best to their work and their homes (Jaharuddin and Zainol, 2019). It may also be used to describe individuals' desire to sufficiently engage in both aspects of their life without being overwhelmed by either work or personal responsibilities (Jaharuddin and Zainol, 2019). Smith (2010) stated that



millennials attach much importance to work-life balance, so much that work-life balance may affect a millennials career choice, performance at work and job satisfaction. This view was further bolstered by Van den Bergh and De Wulf (2017) in a study. The results showed that many millennials would accept reduced pay, fewer work opportunities and fewer work hours in exchange for work-life balance.

Buzza (2017) supports the assertions made above but goes on to explain how work-life balance may affect millennials turnover. Buzza (2017) states the impacts of a poor work-life balance include employee burnout, poor mental health and poor physical health; these cause employee turnover. Hence, organizations and employers have to implement policies and programs that allow employees to handle their personal lives and work lives evenly and also ensure that employees enjoy the benefits of having a good work-life balance (Buzza, 2017; Jaharuddin and Zainol; 2019). Buzza (2017) conducted a study, the results from the questionnaire filled by 166 millennials helped reaffirm the importance of work-life balance. The study shows that while millennials cared about career advancement, they placed more importance on work-life balance. Hence career seekers considered work-life balance when considering organizations to work for. This study was insightful as it involved millennials and explained how work-life balance influenced millennials' career choices.

A slightly different opinion is shared by (Jaharuddin and Zainol, 2019). Buzza (2017) talks about the impact of poor work-life balance such as bad mental health and physical health. However, Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) explore how work-life balance affects the employee 'at work'. They argue that poor work-life balance may lead employees to become less interested in their work and disengaged, especially when the job was not their preferred choice initially. This disengagement could consequently lead to employee turnover. This is echoed by Friani and Mulyani (2018) who state that employee engagement at work may also influence turnover intention; they argue that the more an employee is involved or engaged at work, the more unlikely it is for the employee to have turnover intentions.

Larasati, Hasanati and Istiqomah (2018) provide an in-depth explanation of how poor work-life balance may lead employees to want to leave their employers. They asserted that employees were more committed to companies with good work-life balance policies. Larasati, Hasanati and Istiqomah (2018) stated that employees felt more cared for and supported when working for employers with good work-life policies. Hence, they reciprocated with engagement, a better attitude to work and dedication. Therefore, an excellent work-life balance makes turnover intentions less likely. This will be explored further in the primary research.

All the academic literature examined above support the argument that work-life balance influences employee turnover. Furthermore, they provide different perspectives of how work-life balance influences millennial employee turnover intentions.

### 2.3.6 Overall Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to how pleased or content a worker is with their job (Judge et al., 2017). Job satisfaction is also used to refer to an individual's attitude towards their job (Kong et al., 2018). There are many means through which job satisfaction can be obtained in the workplace. Some of these include salaries, completing challenges, promotion, training, work environment and interaction with superiors and co-workers (Elian, 2020; Mueller and Kim, 2008). The ability of an employee to gain satisfaction from the factors mentioned above will influence their decision to leave or stay at their current place of employment (Cronley and Kim, 2017; George and Wallio, 2017).

According to Ng, Lyons, and Schweitzer (2012), while job satisfaction is affected by the organisation, the working conditions that the individual endures also has a considerable impact on job satisfaction.

Ivanović and Ivančević (2019) assert that there is a direct link between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Hence, job satisfaction may be used as a way to identify the likelihood of turnover. A survey conducted by Ivanović and Ivančević (2019) confirmed this; results from the survey showed that millennials were most likely to leave their job when dissatisfied compared to other generational cohorts. This is buttressed by a study conducted by Ramli and Soelto (2019) in Indonesia. 159 millennials participated in this study. A majority of the participants stated that they were willing to change their current job if they could get an alternative job with a more satisfying environment. While indicative of the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, the limitation of this study is that it focuses on millennials in Indonesia (Ramli and Soelton, 2019; Yuniasanti, Abas and Hamza, 2019).

The importance of job satisfaction is echoed by Hassan (2014) who states that job satisfaction not only affects turnover intention but also affects effectiveness and productivity. Hence, employers need to implement strategies aimed at increasing job satisfaction. This is further buttressed by Elian (2020), who asserted that the increase in job satisfaction is directly associated with decreased turnover rates (Purba and Ananta, 2018).

AbouAssi, McGinnis Johnson and Holt (2019) provide a different but supporting view on the impact of job satisfaction on millennials turnover intention. While AbouAssi, McGinnis Johnson and Holt (2019) agree that dissatisfaction can affect turnover. They argue that the more dissatisfaction a millennial employee feels, the more the employee is likely to think of leaving their job. From this perspective, a millennial's turnover intention may not be a result of a single factor. Rather the turnover intention is a result of cumulated areas of dissatisfaction at work. Significantly, a study conducted by AbouAssi, McGinnis Johnson and Holt (2019) showed that millennials in the non-profit sector or organisations were less likely to experience dissatisfaction in the workplace and leave their job because of this. According to Abuhashesh, Al-Dmour and Masa'deh, (2019), this is because job satisfaction is more prominent when doing difficult or demanding jobs with high expectations (Mappamiring, Akob and Putra, 2020).

In contrast, Ngotngamwong (2019) states that while millennials may leave a job if they feel dissatisfied, unhappy or bored, they do not need to experience dissatisfaction before thinking of leaving their workplace. Ngotngamwong (2019) opined that millennials will leave their current employer if there is a better offer, irrespective of loyalty. This is why Queiri et al. (2015) state that job-hopping is a cultural factor that may influence millennial turnover intention. Furthermore, millennials are willing to leave an organisation if they find their job unchallenging. This stance implies that while dissatisfaction may cause employee turnover intentions, it is not the dominant factor that causes turnover intention.

An evaluation of the examined data shows that a common factor influencing millennials' turnover intentions is job satisfaction. However, further research is needed to ascertain if turnover intention is influenced by dissatisfaction in one area or if turnover intention is a result of dissatisfaction in various work elements.

Some other factors may influence a millennial's turnover intention. However, these factors are not as common as others mentioned above; they were mentioned casually in academic literature. Some other factors that may affect turnover intentions include entrepreneurship, ease of finding other job opportunities and job-hopping culture (George and Wallio, 2017; Ngotngamwong, 2019). The primary research may provide some data or further understanding of these factors. However, to get an in-depth understanding of how these factors influence millennial employee turnover intentions, further research is needed. However, an in-depth research of these factors is outside the scope of this research.

Significantly some of the factors mentioned above, such as remuneration, opportunities for career growth and person-organisation fit, has a direct impact on job satisfaction and indirect influence on turnover intentions. Job satisfaction is a major factor that influences millennials turnover intentions. The academic literature reaffirms the importance of job satisfaction for reducing turnover intentions.

#### **2.4 Mitigating the Factors That Influence Millennial Turnover Intentions**

With the increase in turnover rates, it has become necessary for organisations to take measures or employ strategies designed to eliminate the factors that influence turnover intention. Elian (2020) asserts that to counter high millennial turnover rates, it is necessary to employ measures targeted at this generational cohort. These measures include providing opportunities for employee training and development as well as providing outlined and clear insight on how career growth is possible. Elian (2020) further stated that improved remuneration, better work-life balance and relationship would reduce millennial turnover intention. This academic literature provides an insight into possible measures that may be taken to reduce millennials turnover intention.

However, in the last few years, few academic pieces of literature have examined what measures are actually being taken in different parts of the world and the effect they had. Queiri, Yusoff and Dwaikat (2014) stated that despite millennials making up more than half of the workforce in Malaysia, tackling this cohort's

turnover rate was difficult. This problem was attributed to the difficulty in understanding the needs of millennials. Since this assertion was made in 2014, numerous studies have been conducted to try and understand the factors that influence millennial turnover intention. In this dissertation, data will be collected from respondents to determine what measures have been taken by their workplaces that have reduced turnover intentions. The primary research will be especially useful for identifying the measures that have been taken to retain millennial employees in Ireland.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and outline the methods used in relation to the research provided in this dissertation. In this chapter, the aim and objectives of this research will be stated clearly. The researcher's methodological choices while conducting the primary research will be explained and justified. Also, the research design, methods of data collection and data analysis will be explained. Lastly, the ethical considerations and limitations of this research will be explained.

#### **3.1 Objective of the research/Research Aim**

This research aims to identify the factors that influence millennial employee turnover intentions and ascertain what measures may be taken to mitigate these factors, Using Ireland as a case study. To achieve this aim, the objectives of this research will be used as milestones for the researcher. Below are the objectives of this research:

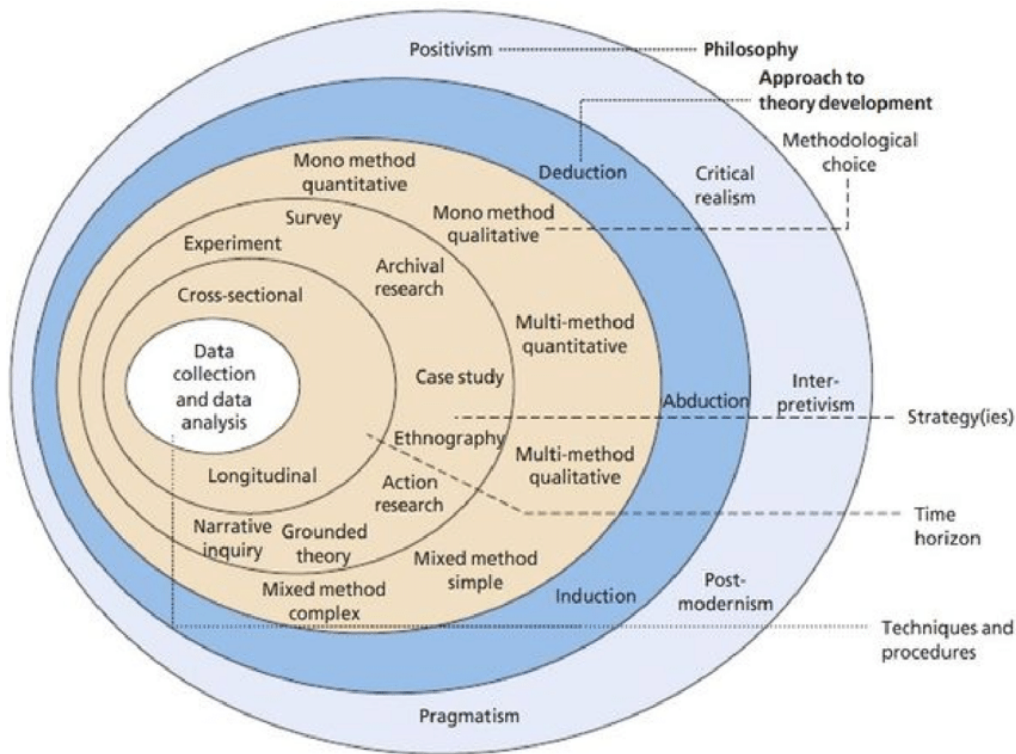
- i. To identify the factors that cause millennial employees to have turnover intentions.
- ii. To ascertain what factors have the most influence on millennials turnover intention.
- iii. To identify measures that may be taken to mitigate the problem of high turnover of millennial employees.
- iv. To provide suggestions for areas of future research.

The objectives of this research will be achieved by collecting data from the sample population. This data will then be analysed to provide sufficient information or a conclusion on the research problem.

#### **3.2 Research Framework**

The researcher has decided to use Saunders research onion as a framework for the methodology of this dissertation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Referring to Figure 3.1, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) research onion uses different layers when defining the different steps of carrying out research methodologies. The layers include philosophies; approaches; strategies; choices; time horizons and techniques and procedures.

**Figure 3.1: Saunders Research Onion**



**Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016**

A summary of the choices made are:

Firstly, the research philosophy adopted for this dissertation would be interpretivism; this is because a single factor is not responsible for millennial employee turnover intentions. Hence, various factors may influence millennial's turnover intentions. The inductive research approach was employed, as well. The inductive approach was used because the researcher is not trying to debunk or confirm theories on what causes millennial employees' turnover intentions. Instead, the researcher seeks an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence millennial employee turnover intentions. Furthermore, the researcher is trying to ascertain how these factors may be mitigated. Ireland will be used as a case study for this research.

Also, a qualitative research strategy will be used because it is consistent with the interpretivist philosophy and inductive research approach. Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect data from research participants; it is ideal for collecting the detailed and nuanced data needed to answer the research questions and achieve the study's objectives. After the data collection process, data analysis will be done using thematic analysis. This will allow the researcher to identify themes and patterns in the primary data collected using interviews.

The researcher will use Saunders research onion as a guideline for the research design and as a structure for methodology chapter (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The next section will focus on the research philosophy.

### **3.3 Research Philosophy**

A research philosophy refers to the world view or belief system of the researcher. The philosophy guides the way the researcher goes about the study (Willis, 2007). The three main research philosophies include post-positivism, critical theory and Interpretivism (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

For this research, it was decided that interpretivism was best suited. Interpretivism is based on the perception that reality is socially constructed. This means that experiences vary, and individuals can all experience different outcomes or reactions to a single phenomenon (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Hence, interpretivism's ontological position is that reality is relativist (Saunders et al., 2012). This is the case in this research. The aim here is to discover the factors that lead to millennial employee turnover intention. However, a single factor may have a different effect on each millennial that experiences it. Hence, the reality is that there is no sole factor that causes millennial employee turnover intention. Furthermore, this philosophy can help researchers acquire in-depth and diverse information on a research topic (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020); therefore, it is suitable for this research.

Epistemology refers to how knowledge is obtained. The relativist nature of interpretivism makes it necessary for the researcher to talk to other individuals to acquire knowledge (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020; Saunders et al., 2012). Researchers who adopt the interpretivist philosophy tend to use questionnaires, interviews, and surveys to collect information; this enables them to collect data on varying realities and experiences (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Hence, the research philosophy provides a guide on how to approach this research.

### **3.4 Research Methodology Approach and Research Methods**

#### **3.4.1 Research Approach**

Two main approaches to research are the deductive and inductive approach. The deductive approach refers to research based on already existing theories or premises. This top to bottom process entails testing pre-existing premises to reach a conclusion (Liu, 2016). Alternatively, the inductive approach entails exploring various perspectives or observations to identify themes or patterns that may consequently be used to create theories. While the inductive approach does not rely on existing premises, it is necessary to know the existing theories or hypothesis that concern the topic of research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The inductive approach also allows the researcher to use pre-existing theories or hypotheses to guide their research and create their research questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

This dissertation shall take an inductive approach to research. It is more suited for the reasons outlined below: First, the inductive approach relies on exploring an individual's experience and perception of the world (Liu, 2016). This research that focuses on the 'factors that influence millennial turnover intention' relies on the experience of individuals in the workplace. Secondly, where the researcher is unsure of the

findings at the end of the research and the researcher is not trying to confirm or debunk the hypothesis, the inductive approach may be used (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Therefore, the inductive approach is ideal for this research.

### **3.4.2 Research Method**

This dissertation will use the exploratory research method. This research method was chosen because of the correlation between the uses of the exploratory research method and the aim the researcher hopes to achieve with this study. Exploratory studies are helpful where the researcher may not be looking for a conclusion but seeks an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Hence, exploratory research may be used by the lecturer to clarify their understanding of a topic. This is the case in this dissertation. There is contrasting information on what factors influence millennial employee turnover intention, and the researcher seeks to ascertain and understand what factors influence millennial turnover intention in Ireland. Furthermore, exploratory research is beneficial for identifying areas for further research (Maholtra, 2010). One of this research's objectives is to identify areas concerning the factors that influence millennial turnover intention for further research.

### **3.5 Data Collection Approach**

It is crucial to choose the right research approach and research strategy (Basias and Pollalis, 2018). Some factors that may influence the researcher's strategy and data collection approach include the research paradigm, research topic, the aim of the research, and the type of data required for research. The three main approaches to research are the quantitative approach, qualitative approach and mixed approach (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

The quantitative approach refers to the process of gathering and analysing numerical or statistical data to reach a single conclusion or an objective answer. This research approach uses scientific methods for data analysis; therefore, the results from the quantitative approach are generalisable (Eyisi, 2016). The quantitative approach uses scientific methods for data collection and analysis; hence the researcher is somewhat detached, and their bias is less likely to influence the research (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017). Alternatively, the qualitative approach relies on using textual data to interpret, analyse and understand phenomena or get subjective results, which is deemed more suitable for this dissertation. This approach employs observations, interviews and questionnaires for data collection (Eyisi, 2016). When using the qualitative research approach, the researcher plays an active role in interpreting and analysing the collected data (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017).

For this dissertation, the qualitative research approach will be employed. Interpretivism is based on the absence of a single reality and the need for respondents to provide data on their reality (Teherani et al., 2015). The qualitative research approach aligns with the interpretivist paradigm because the qualitative approach may be used to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon, identify different



reactions to a particular phenomenon or the subjective experiences of research participants (Palmer and Bolderstone, 2006; Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017).

The qualitative approach helps explore the different sides of reality that cannot be quantified numerically (Palmer and Bolderstone, 2006). The qualitative approach is useful when the researcher wishes to answer questions of What, Why and How? (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas 2013). These are questions that require detailed information, images; hence interviews, questionnaires and surveys are often used with the qualitative research approach. Furthermore, where the researcher seeks to identify themes and patterns, the qualitative research approach is ideal (Ochieng, 2009).

The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to identify the factors that influence millennial employees to have turnover intentions. Answering the research questions and achieving the research objective requires the collection of detailed data on the personal experiences of research participants. The collected data may then be used to identify themes; this is essential for answering the research questions. Furthermore, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state that qualitative research uses descriptions to explain human experiences and alternate realities or determine causation. Therefore, this approach is more suited in order to ascertain the causes of turnover intentions.

The qualitative approach also has its limitations. There is a risk of statements being misconstrued by the researcher. The use of ambiguous language may cause the researcher to misinterpret data (Ochieng, 2009). It is also more difficult to generalise data collected and the findings from the qualitative research approach (Ochieng, 2009). This research approach may be time-consuming because it involves collecting a lot of data (Palmer and Bolderstone, 2006). Lastly, there is a risk that the research results may be influenced by the researcher's prejudice (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### **3.6 Data Collection Method**

Interviews will be used to collect data for this research. Interviews are often used with the qualitative research approach (Peters and Halcomb, 2015). This is because interviews allow the researcher to collect detailed and nuanced data, which will enhance their understanding of the research problem (Gill et al., 2008). In this case, the researcher would like to identify the factors that influence millennials' turnover intentions, ascertain if these factors are common among millennials and identify the measures taken to mitigate these factors. Hence interviews will be helpful for getting detailed and nuanced data that can answer these research questions.

Telephones and Skype interviews will also be used with some of the participants of this research; this is because of the Coronavirus pandemic. While these methods of conducting interviews may not allow the researcher to observe the participants expressions, these methods are ideally used where distance is an issue (Bolderstone, 2012).

There are three main types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Gill et al., 2008). For this dissertation, a semi-structured interview will be used to collect data from research participants. A semi-structured interview refers to a situation where the researcher asks the participants standard questions but may ask other questions for clarification or better understanding of the research participant (Peters and Halcomb, 2015).

The benefit of a semi-structured interview is that it allows the researcher to ask essential questions. However, it allows the participant to provide more information without the interview being derailed (Gill et al., 2008). This is why semi-structured interviews will be used for this research.

The semi-structured interview will use open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are useful for exploring research topics as well as identifying causations. Open-ended questions will allow the research participants to answer the questions in detail if necessary (Weller et al., 2018). Notably, when using interviews for data collection, there is a risk that there may be errors when the recorded data is being transcribed (Easton, McComish and Greenberg, 2000).

The interview questions were chosen because they could allow the participants to provide information that would be useful for answering the research questions. Some of the research questions were also chosen because they provided clarity and an in-depth understanding of some issues noted in the literature review. The questions that research participants were asked can be found in Appendix A.

Before participants were asked these questions, they were provided with an information sheet and consent form. A sample of the cover letter participants were given can be found in Appendix B.

### **3.7 Pilot**

Prior to conducting the interviews, a pilot interview was carried out with two (2) participants to determine whether or not the research instrument and asked questions were appropriate.

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), pilot interviews are essential for highlighting any issues with the research instrument and/or questions, enabling the interviewer to make changes before conducting real time interviews.

Having conducted the pilot, the following changes were made; first, the researcher noted a reluctance of individuals to participate in the study because it entailed talking about their previous jobs. To reach to sample size for this study, 30 instead of 15 individuals were contacted to participate in this study. Out of the 30 individuals contacted, 7 individuals agreed to be participants in this study.

Secondly, the research question ‘Do you know what job satisfaction means?’ was changed to ‘what do you understand by job satisfaction?’ The change was done to encourage participants to provide detailed data. This change also allowed the researcher collect data on millennials different perceptions on job satisfaction

and how it influenced turnover intention. Apart from these changes, the instrument for data collection (interviews) was efficient for collecting the data needed to achieve the objectives of this study.

### **3.8 Sample Selection**

There are two major sampling strategies. They are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling refers to sampling, which allows everything to have a chance of being represented in the sample population. This is in contrast to non-probability sampling. In non-probability sampling, the participants in research are chosen according to the researcher's judgement; hence some subsets of the population may not be represented in the sample (Etikan and Bala,2017).

For the purpose of this research, non-probability sampling will be used. A crucial part of sampling is choosing the appropriate participants for the research. Suppose the researcher is studying a particular topic. In that case, the sample population should be people that know the topic being researched, can provide relevant information and increase the researcher's understanding of the topic (Marshall, 1996; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). In this case, the research concerns' millennial's turnover intentions. Hence the researcher requires the participants to be millennials who have changed their jobs voluntarily in the past.

There are different methods of non-probability sampling. However, for this research, purposive sampling will be used to choose participants. Purposive sampling entails selecting research participants who meet specific criteria (Tuckett, 2004). The criteria are set by the researcher and ensure that research participants are knowledgeable about the research topic and can provide relevant and nuanced data that can help the researcher answer the research question (Marshall, 1996).

For this study, the sample population will include millennials who have worked for at least five years and have voluntarily left their employer at least once. This sample population will be able to provide information on what factors led them to think of leaving their employer. These individuals will also be able to provide information on what measures have been or should be taken to reduce turnover intention.

Participants in this research were found using LinkedIn. The researcher used LinkedIn to identify millennials in Ireland who meet the stated criteria. This sample can provide the information needed for this study.

#### **3.8.1 Sample Size**

Researchers must decide the sample size before undertaking a study (Burmeister and Aitken, 2012). However, there is no set rule for choosing a sample size; various factors determine the sample size used by the researcher. These factors include the purpose of the research, the nature of the research topic and the scope of the research (Israel, 1992; Morse, 2000). The time available to conduct the research also influences the sample size.

There are varying opinions on the sample size to use for qualitative research. It may be tempting to decide on the sample size based on what it takes to reach data saturation. This is not always advised as reaching saturation is time-consuming and does not tell you how many participants you need (Saunders et al., 2016). This is not suited for this study which has a time limit. Alternatively, Weller (2018) explains that qualitative research aims to identify and collect the most important themes, not all the themes; hence salience is a better way to decide the sample size.

Significantly, Morse (2000) states that the sample size may be as small as 6 or as large as 60. Similarly, Tuckett (2004) states that qualitative research entails collecting detailed information from a small sample size. This is supported by Moser and Korstjens (2017), who state that when phenomenological research is conducted, and interviews are used to collect data, 10 or fewer participants may be required.

Therefore, this research has a sample size of 7 participants. This is because this research seeks to identify the themes that influence millennial turnover intention; hence salience and detailed data are important. Furthermore, the research seeks to identify some measures that are being taken to curb turnover intention. Each research aim can be achieved by collecting detailed information from a smaller sample size.

### **3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis**

Qualitative research is often presented using text. The data and the findings from this research will be presented using narrative text. The research findings will be presented in text, and the supporting data collected from research participants will be quoted verbatim and put in Italics. The key findings will be categorised and placed under different themes (Anderson, 2010; Burnard et al., 2008). A thematic approach has been deemed the most suitable when analysing the data due to the exploratory nature of this dissertation. Furthermore, the findings and discussions will be presented in different chapters of this dissertation.

#### **3.9.1 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is a term used to describe different strategies used to analyse large amounts of textual data and identify patterns (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013). In this research, a thematic analysis will be used as a strategy for data analysis.

Thematic Analysis is a method that can be used to identify and analyse themes or patterns in data. (Alhojailan, 2012; Castleberry and Nolen, 2018; Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013). This method of data analysis is useful for analysing and summarising large amounts of textual data (Nowell et al., 2017). Interviews usually yield large amounts of data, and to answer the research questions of this dissertation, it is necessary to identify themes from the primary data. This is why thematic analysis is an ideal choice for this research. Using a thematic analysis, the researcher will also be able to identify meaningful, interesting or unique features in the collected data (Clarke and Braun, 2014); these will help the researcher answer the research questions.

Another reason why the thematic analysis will be used is that it is a good choice for researchers with little experience in data analysis. It is a straightforward method of data analysis (Javadi and Zarea, 2016). Furthermore, the process of conducting a thematic analysis is clearly outlined. Thematic analysis can be completed by following the six steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

**Step 1:** Data familiarisation: Here, the researcher transcribes the data gotten from the interviews and reads them.

**Step 2:** Generating initial codes: The researcher summarises relevant key data into representative short phrases.

**Step 3:** Identification of themes: Here, similar initial codes are grouped under the same theme (Crowe, Inder and Porter, 2015).

**Step 4:** Review the themes: The researcher then checks if the codes underneath a particular theme are similar. If diverse codes are placed underneath a particular theme, the researcher can divide a single theme into two.

**Step 5:** Name the themes: The themes are renamed appropriately to represent the codes and content underneath them.

**Step 6:** The collected data and themes can be used to produce a report (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013).

### **3.10 Research Trustworthiness**

Research trustworthiness refers to the confidence in a research process, the data used, the interpretation, and the methodology employed by the researcher (Connelly, 2016). Establishing research trustworthiness affirms that the research can be studied and referenced by other researchers or students. To establish trustworthiness, research must meet specific criteria; this includes credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability (Rolfe, 2006).

Credibility refers to how truthful the data presented by the researcher is and how well it reflects the opinion of the research participants (Shenton, 2004). Credibility may be established using member checks, especially if interviews were used to collect data (Nowell et al., 2017). Dependability refers to how reliable the research is. If the same research were conducted again in a similar situation, similar results should be reached. Dependability can be achieved by detailing all the steps taken during research. Confirmability refers to the extent to which other researchers can confirm that your research findings are a product of the collected data (Cope, 2014; korstjens and Moser, 2018). Confirmability can be achieved through an audit trail or providing a detailed and transparent account of the research process (Cope, 2014).

Transferability refers to the degree to which the research findings may be generalised or applicable to other research. Transferability may be achieved by providing thick descriptions that other researchers can use to determine if findings from your research are applicable to theirs (Elo et al., 2014; korstjens and Moser, 2018).

### **3.11 Ethical Consideration**

Ethical issues may arise while research is being undertaken (Saunders et al., 2016). It is important that the researcher abides by the rules of conduct and engages in research without being unethical or endangering the privacy of the participants. First, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the ethical committee of the National College of Ireland. During this study, the issues outlined below were considered.

**Informed Consent:** In accordance with Researcher Development Initiative's Research Ethics Guidebook, the research participants were informed of what the research was about and were provided with information sheets. Afterwards, participants were given informed consents forms which they completed before they were interviewed. Research participants were not offered incentive and were informed that they were free to withdraw whenever they wished (Burles and Bally, 2018).

**Privacy:** The privacy and confidentiality of the research participants were also taken into consideration. As recommended in the SRA research ethics guidance, research participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity. Also, the researcher did not collect any identifying information or include such information while writing this dissertation.

**Data protection:** Researchers have a duty to protect the information provided by the participants (Goodwin, Mays and Pope, 2019). Data provided by research participants were stored in a password protected computer for the period the research lasted in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (SRA, 2021). Afterwards, all data collected by the researcher was deleted.

### **3.12 Limitations of the Study**

There are limitations to every research. A limitation of the qualitative research approach is the possibility of the research being influenced by researcher bias. Qualitative research is reliant on the interpretation provided by the researcher. Hence, the risk of researcher bias is existent (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). Furthermore, because the qualitative approach uses a lot of information or data, there may be ambiguities in the data collected by the researcher (Atieno, 2009). Critics of this research approach also state that a significant amount of data loss may occur during analysis. Therefore, the researcher must be careful and reflective while conducting the research and analysing the collected data (Krippendorff, 2013).

### **3.13 Conclusion**

The third chapter of this dissertation focused on the research methods employed by the researcher. These methodological choices were made because they are useful in achieving the aims and objectives of this dissertation. Here, the research approach, philosophy and approach used were stated. The data collection method, sampling strategy, method of analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the research were also stated. In the next chapter, the research findings will be reported.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA PRESENTATION, FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter of the dissertation, the findings from the seven semi-structured interviews will be presented. Because Ireland is used as a case study, participants in this study are all residents of Ireland. They were asked questions aimed at answering the research questions of this dissertation. Below are the questions that will be answered in this research work:

- i. What factors influence millennial employee turnover intention?
- ii. What factors have the most influence on millennial employee turnover?
- iii. What measures may be taken to curb high turnover rates among millennials?

Research participants were also asked interview questions with the aim of achieving the research objectives stated in the first chapter of the dissertation. Each section in this chapter will focus on a research objective.

Here, the findings will be analysed and compared to the data found in the academic literature reviewed in the second chapter of this dissertation. Using a thematic analysis, themes or patterns will be identified for further discussion in the next chapter. Furthermore, the thematic analysis will allow the researcher to identify distinctive data that requires further research.

The sections of this chapter will reflect the objectives of this study

- i. To identify the factors that cause millennial employees to have turnover intentions.
- ii. To ascertain what factors have the most influence on millennials turnover intention.
- iii. To ascertain what measures may be taken to mitigate the problem of high turnover of millennial employees.



## 4.1 Factors That Influence Millennial Employee Turnover Intention

**Table 4.1 Profile of Research Respondents**

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Number of times engaged in voluntary turnover
Arthur	M	34	4 (2013-2019)
Ada	F	26	2
Elizabeth	F	27	2
John	M	29	7 (in 10 years)
May	F	30	3 (2015-2020)
Tom	M	38	7 (2010-2021)
Polly	F	25	3-4 (2015-2021)

**Source: Author**

One of the objectives of this dissertation is to ascertain what factors caused millennials to have turnover intentions. To get data that addressed this issue, research participants were asked how many jobs they had in the past and what made them voluntarily leave their jobs. The researcher then went on to ask the participants how other factors that were noted in academic literature affected their decision to leave their employers. Using a thematic analysis allowed the researcher to extract the factors that participants stated influenced their decision to leave their former employer. While some of the factors stated were relatively popular, others were uncommon. Below are the factors that influence millennial employees' turnover intention:

### 4.1.1 Opportunities for Training and a Clear Employee Career Growth Path

A considerable number of participants in this research stated that a clear career growth path was a deciding factor when they thought of leaving their employer. Elizabeth stated that career growth played a crucial role in her decision to leave her sales job. She stated:

*Because in (Company name redacted) I thought there was no growth for me. It was like I'll be stuck. You're into sales or business development, probably for next two to three years. Because I didn't know where I was going...I was so demotivated it affected my performance as well.*

Similarly, May stated that opportunities for career growth largely influenced her decision to leave her employer. However, May stated that she expected career growth to begin at an even shorter time than Elizabeth perceived. May said:

*When I get into a job for instance, I always have like a road map where I see myself in the next 12 to 24 months and in the jobs I've had previously, I left because I just couldn't see a clear picture of the employer giving me what I needed.*

The statements echo the view shared by Soelton (2019), who stated that millennials value career development and growth. The importance Elizabeth and May place on career growth when considering changing their employer also buttress the assertion made by Mayangdarastri and Khusna (2020). Mayangdarastri and Khusna (2020) stated that the inability to get the desired career growth could lead millennials to search for a new employer that provided opportunities for career growth.

A slightly different perspective is provided by Tom, who links the importance of training to career development. Tom explained that training in the workplace helped employees perform better and consequently develop their careers. Hence opportunities for training influenced his turnover decisions. Tom said:

*Training is key for my development so the lack of it has played a big role in leaving an employer. Without training there will be little chance of progression so it has definitely made me decide if it's worth staying with such employer.*

This statement made by Tom supports the argument made by Abuhashesh Al-Dmour and Masa'deh (2019). They said that employees were more committed and less likely to leave organizations that provided them with training targeted at helping employees advance their careers.

All the participants of this research stated that at some point, opportunities for career development were a factor that influenced their intention to leave the company where they worked.

#### **4.1.2 Employee Recognition**

A reoccurring view from the interviews was that millennial employees liked to receive recognition from their superiors at work. This factor is significant because while it does not affect the employee's choice of company to work with, this factor may heavily influence the millennial's turnover intention. Arthur provided a detailed explanation on how employee recognition affected his turnover intention. Arthur stated that appreciation for his work made him feel valued; hence he was reluctant to leave companies where his hard work was acknowledged and appreciated. Arthur said:

*I think every single one likes to be acknowledged that you're doing a good job. And I was in places where I thought you know what I'm doing a good job, but nobody's saying*

*anything... (Company name redacted) was fantastic in doing that so I didn't leave (Company name redacted) because of that.*

This view is further supported by John, who explained how lack of employee recognition could lead to turnover, John said:

*When I'm not appreciated my drive/motivation for the job is affected. And if I can recall, I've left two jobs because my managers hardly acknowledged the work I was doing.*

Both of the statements made by research participants reaffirm what White (2018) opined. White (2018) asserted that millennials preferred verbal appreciation even when compared to monetary rewards. In the next chapter, this assertion will be discussed further. Notably, millennials value for verbal appreciation or acknowledgement is reaffirmed by the number of millennials that stated this factor influenced their turnover intention or decision. The seven participants in this research stated that their turnover intentions were influenced by verbal appreciation.

On the other hand, Tom explained that verbal appreciation made him feel valued and caused him to remain at a company for more than three years, Tom said:

*I was on a particular job for about three years. And I think the reason why I was on that job for long was because my manager actually really appreciated my work.*

Tom's view supports Patil's (2017) assertion. Patil (2017) argued that millennials looked forward to being appreciated and acknowledged for the tasks that they do. Patil (2017) also explained that a relationship between recognition in the workplace and performance/completion of extraordinary tasks existed.

The statements from the research participants reaffirm the stance that employee recognition is a factor that can influence a millennial's intention to stay with or leave their employer.

### **4.1.3 Employee Remuneration**

Some of the research participants stated that remuneration was a factor that made them consider leaving their employer. However, the research participants had varying perspectives on how the remuneration affected their turnover intention. When asked how much remuneration affected his decision to leave his employer, Tom said:

*I would say a lot, because that's quite key. You know when you're searching for a job; you want to be sure that you've got the right package. So, I would say yes, it was an important factor for me.*

This statement supports the view that their remuneration may influence millennials turnover intention; This view was shared by Queiri et al. (2015) and Moreno et al. (2017). Alternatively, some participants stated

that their decision to leave their employer was not influenced by the remuneration but cited other influencing factors. According to Ada, her decision to leave her employer was more influenced by job opportunities than remuneration. Ada said:

*I don't think I was too influenced by that. Obviously, every time I left the job, I left for somewhere where I would get paid more, but I don't think that was a factor...I really left because of the opportunity more than the pay.*

This stance supports the view shared by Friani and Mulyani (2018). Friani and Mulyani (2018) stated that employee development opportunities wielded more influence over turnover intention than monetary compensation.

Out of the seven participants of this study, three of them stated that, to some extent, employee remuneration affected their decision to leave their employer. Significantly, results of the interviews show that remuneration plays a less prominent role in influencing employee turnover intention than may be imagined.

#### **4.1.4 Management Practices**

The data collected from interviews show that a significant cause for millennial employee turnover intention is terrible management practices. The interviews also provided data that explained how better managers could retain employees despite unimpressive remuneration. May provided a detailed explanation of how management practices caused turnover. May said:

*Yeah! it was kind of a thing. The jobs that I left I didn't like the managers techniques on handling employees... I don't think those people should be managers, that's just my own opinion. Because they were actually promoted from within, and you need to actually develop these skills before you are thrown into the job and they weren't doing a great job. So, I think that was the main reason I left here.*

Here, May explained how promoting a skilled employee to manager or leader is detrimental because of a lack of managerial experience or skills. May stated that consequently, dealing with bad managers contributed to her leaving her job. May's experience at work buttressed the opinion shared by Campione (2015). Campione (2015) argued that supervisory positions should not be given to individuals who excelled in their previous positions because they lacked the skill necessary to motivate the employees. This point is further reiterated by Ada, who stated:

*My first job, I think what they called leader there were actually more managers, so they wouldn't talk to any of the employees. We never had one to one we never had any follow up... nothing. So, you kind of feel like you're on your own in the company and that you don't matter except from your colleagues, your friends.*

The data collected from Ada shows that unengaged managers could make employees feel unimportant and could consequently cause employee turnover.

Notably, in the literature review, a considerable amount of academic literature argued that when the management style was not suited for the millennial workforce, it could cause turnover intentions. However, the collected primary data shows that the appointment of unqualified and unskilled managers was the contributing factors to millennial turnover intentions. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

#### **4.1.5 Person-Organisation Fit**

Person-organisation fit is another factor that influences millennials turnover intentions. However, the millennials interviewed did not categorically state that P-O fit influenced their turnover intention. Instead, most of the research participants stated particular issues (values) that could make them think of leaving their employer if their employer did not share a similar value. Polly stated categorically that shared values played a huge role in her decision to leave or stay with her employer. Polly said:

*I don't think I could work for a company or even work with a team that I didn't feel like we had the same kind of shared values. I just think I'd be miserable going to work every day I just wouldn't enjoy it, so that would definitely be like if I did end up in a job where I felt like that was an issue, I think it would definitely be a massive factor for me considering leaving.*

This statement supports the assertion made by Kraus (2017), who stated that millennials are heavily influenced by their values. Kraus (2017) stated that millennials often preferred when the values of their employers were aligned with theirs; this is because they would be able to maintain their values even at work. John went further to highlight the value he hoped his employer had. John said:

*So, like I just strive for equality like I just want to make sure that I work in a place where inclusivity is something important to them. And that it is considered or reflected in their actions, in the way that they promote people, in the way that they engage with people... the values of the company, what they do reflect whether I want to work with them or not.*

In this case, John asserts that the values (equality and inclusivity) play a role in his decision to work with a company or employer. This supports Ng, Lyons and Schweitzer's (2012) argument that an individual's values may influence their career and work choices. Four of the seven research participants stated that shared values or ethics influenced their decision to leave their employer. Both of the statements shown above buttress the stance that a millennial may choose to leave their employer due to an incompatibility of values or ethics (person-organisation fit).

#### 4.1.6 Job Satisfaction

Some academic literature reviewed in the second chapter of this research work linked millennials turnover intentions to job satisfaction. Hence, the research participant was asked the extent to which job satisfaction influenced their turnover intentions. Six of the research participants stated that job satisfaction affected their intention to leave their employer. Polly said:

*I think if I was in a job where I wasn't getting something like that like it's not necessarily a reward, but just that feeling of I've done something nice for somebody, or like I've helped somebody. I don't see myself remaining there for long, because that kind of encourages me to keep going anytime it's stressful or I'm feeling a little bit overwhelmed, and it makes it kind of worthwhile in the end.*

Polly explained that she gets satisfaction from helping people at work. In the absence of this satisfaction, she would feel demotivated and would not remain in the workplace for much longer. This supports the views shared by Cronley and Kim (2017); George and Wallio (2017), who stated that various things could provide job satisfaction at work and being able to acquire job satisfaction would influence an employee's decision to leave their employer.

Alternatively, Arthur stated that a lack of challenge and consequent boredom caused him to leave his former employer. He said:

*With (Company name redacted) I got bored. And I wanted something different. So that's why I left there.*

This statement reinforces the assertion made by Queiri et al. (2015). Queiri et al. (2015) state that millennial employees may be influenced to leave their employers if they felt bored or their work was unchallenging. Both of the statements above buttress the stance that there are multiple ways employees may get job satisfaction; The impact of job satisfaction on millennial employee turnover is also noted. Significantly, one participant said job satisfaction had no impact on their turnover intention. May said:

*I think the reason why job satisfaction hasn't been for me, is the whole psychology behind being African, we come to work to strive, right? If you are satisfied, good for you if you're not, get on with it... You get into a job you know... you're not satisfied but you, get your pay, you do your job well.*

May's statement implies that job satisfaction is not a factor that can make her decide to leave her employer; instead, remuneration is a deciding factor. This stance supports that of Ngotngamwong (2019), who argued

similarly that many other factors could make millennial employees leave their employers outside job satisfaction. Significantly, May also attached cultural upbringing as a reason why she did not think of job satisfaction as a factor that could influence her turnover intentions. This is an area that requires further research, which is outside the scope of this study.

#### **4.1.7 Work Environment**

A theme generated using the thematic analysis was ‘work environment’. Four out of seven participants stated that their decision to leave their employer was their work environment. In the literature review of this work, the work environment was identified as a means through which an employee may obtain job satisfaction (Elian, 2020; Mueller and Kim, 2008). However, the role of the work environment as a factor that influences millennials turnover intentions has not been extensively researched. The participants of the study stated varying ways that their work environment influenced their intention to leave their employer. The participants cited reasons such as unfair treatment, poor working conditions, toxic environment and stressful, demanding environment as reasons why they chose to leave their employer. Significantly, the research participants did not provide detailed data on their work environment but mentioned it casually.

‘Work environment’ was an unexpected discovery as a factor that affects millennial employee turnover intention. Hence, this is an area where further research is needed.

#### **4.1.8 Employee Inclusion**

Significantly, three out of seven research participants stated that their turnover intentions were influenced by inclusion in the workplace or by the feeling of belonging. This was another unexpected result gotten from the primary data. Research participants stated that the sense of being among a team affected their decision to stay with or leave their employer. When asked what factors led him to leave his previous employer, Alongside other factors, John said:

*a sense of belonging, perhaps and yet the equality and social belonging in a company.*

Similarly, along with other factors, Tom said:

*For me I would say fitting into a team.*

Both statements show that millennials place importance on inclusion and equality in the workplace. However, this is another area that requires extensive research, which is outside the scope of this work. Further research can provide knowledge on if inclusion only affects millennials turnover intention or if it influences other generational cohorts as well.

Significantly, only one research participant stated that work-life balance could influence their turnover intentions. The primary data collected from research participants also provided an insight into the personal reasons that caused millennials to leave their employer. These reasons included a need to travel, the uncertainty of the career they wished to pursue, social pressure, personal growth and the need for something different.

From the primary data, it can be seen that the above-stated factors influence millennial employee turnover intentions.

## **4.2 The Most Influential Factors Affecting Millennial Employee Turnover**

An objective of this research was to identify what factors had the most influence on employee turnover in Ireland. The first section of this chapter identified a plethora of factors that cause millennial employees to have turnover intentions. In this section, ‘the factors with the most influence on millennials turnover decisions’ will be addressed. The most influential factors can be seen as deciding factors that determine if the millennial employee will choose to leave their employer. To identify what these influential factors were, research participants were asked, ‘Of all the factors that have been mentioned today, which has been most influential in your decision to leave your place of work?’ Most research participants stated the two factors that had the most influence on their turnover decision.

Using the data provided by the research participants, the extracted responses were management practices, employee recognition and opportunities for growth.

### **4.2.1 Management Practices**

In the previous section, management practices were identified as a factor that influences millennials turnover intentions. However, this is also one of the most influential factors that influence millennial employees turnover decisions. Three of seven participants stated that this was a factor that helped them decide to leave their employer. Polly provided an in-depth explanation of why management practices was a deciding factor. Polly said:

*management was 60% of the reason I left a job. If management is bad, there is only so much you can do. Sometimes it's like you are working for managers who cannot communicate, bring a team together. Your efforts will be frustrated especially when they cannot direct your colleagues. It can lead to a lot of frustration, late nights working and repeated tasks, so unenjoyable. In that situation, I found it was better to leave.*

Here Polly focused on the use of incapable managers or unskilled managers. However, Polly also provides an insight into the problems associated with bad management. These problems also affected her job



satisfaction, and this prompted her to leave. Polly's statement supports the argument made by Kaifi et al. (2012), who stated that millennials were likely to leave organisations where they did not like the managerial practices or felt dissatisfied. The data collected from Polly also supports the stance taken by Ngotngamwong (2019). Ngotngamwong (2019) stated that bad leadership and bad management practices could influence turnover intentions.

#### **4.2.2 Employee Recognition**

Employee recognition was also identified as a factor that influenced a millennial's decision to leave their employer. Three of the research participants stated that employee recognition or appreciation was one of the most influential factors that helped them decide to leave their previous employers. According to Tom:

*Most importantly, I think is the appreciation, if I'm in a role giving it 110% and I'm not still being appreciated then no one needs to tell me that I don't need to be there.*

Tom stated that the lack of appreciation in spite of his devotion could make him feel unimportant or irrelevant. Hence he would not be hesitant to leave his employer. The importance Tom placed on verbal appreciation buttresses the point made by Luthans (2000), who states that employee recognition plays an important role in encouraging employees and ensuring employee retention. Similarly, White (2018) stated that millennials were more motivated by verbal appreciation than monetary rewards.

#### **4.2.3 Opportunity for Career Growth**

The third most influential factor, according to the data collected from research participants, is the opportunity for career growth. Significantly, this factor may even help millennials decide what job offers they should take. Ada said:

*I'll say the career growth because now before I apply to a new company or consider signing a contract of employment I look at the opportunities I'll have to move up the ladder. If I find that there is no opportunity for growth, I will look for other work options.*

Importantly, opportunity for career growth was Elizabeth's single most influential factor that helped her decide if she would stay with her employer. Elizabeth said:

*That has to be opportunities for growth. Because if after spending a number of years and you are not growing I think it is time to change. You know, I believe in experiencing more challenging role... So, if I'm working in like a start-up company, I know after two to three years I have to step up and like upgrade to other company.*

Both of the statements made by the research participants reiterate what Hassan (2014) opined. Hassan (2014) stated that promoting employees was a way to encourage them and ensure retention because employees could see their career possibilities, strive for these possibilities and remain committed to the company.

Two participants of this research also mentioned social pressure and workplace inclusion as factors that helped them decide if they would leave their employers. However, these factors were mentioned without extensive explanation. Furthermore, these factors were not identified in the previously examined literature. Further research is needed to understand how inclusion and social pressure may influence a millennial's turnover intention; however, that is outside the scope of this study.

### **4.3 Measures That May Be Taken to Mitigate Millennial Employee Turnover**

This research aims to identify the measures that may be taken to mitigate the high millennial turnover rates. To achieve this, at the end of the interview, the research participants were asked, 'What measures do you believe should be taken by organisations to reduce the likelihood of you voluntarily leaving your job?'

The data collected from research participants showed that improved management practices, clear employee career progression plan and employee recognition could be helpful in reducing the high millennial turnover rate and ensuring millennial employee retention.

#### **4.3.1 Improved Management Practices**

The management practices of an organisation have been noted as one of the factors with the most influence on millennial employee turnover intentions and consequent turnover. Five out of the seven research participants stated that some aspect of management practices should be improved. Notably, the areas include leadership, treatment of employees and consideration of employees' views. Ada stated that better leadership was needed. She said:

*I would say probably choosing better leaders for teams. Not to look at resumes or trainings that they've had and actually looking at their potential as leaders because there are so many companies that would choose someone over someone else because they had training within the company.*

This statement buttresses Kaifi et al.s. Kaifi et al. (2012) stated that it was important for managers and leaders to receive training in order to equip them to properly work with and motivate the employees.

Alternatively, when referring to management practices, some research participants focused on 'space for management to listen to their employees'. While this issue was not found while reviewing academic literature on this subject, four of the research participants echoed the importance of listening to the employees. Polly said:

*I think employers really need to listen to their employees... if they voice or are expressing any concerns or issues regarding anything in their work life, I think it should be heard.*

The reiteration of the importance of listening to the views of employees and working with the employees as a way of preventing millennial employee turnover is noteworthy. The use of an aspect of employee engagement to prevent millennial employee turnover requires further research.

#### **4.3.2 Employee Career Progression Plan**

In the previous sections of this chapter, it was noted that the opportunities for career growth influenced the turnover intentions of millennial employees. This factor is also one of the most influential or deciding factors that could cause an employee to leave his employer. Hence, when research participants were asked what measures could be taken to reduce turnover, three of the seven research participants stated that training and a clear career progression plan was necessary. May said:

*A company that clearly states how you can grow in like 12 to 18 months. It's very important because if you don't grow in those months, I strongly believe you should just leave.*

May's stance echoes that of Abuhashesh Al-Dmour and Masa'deh (2019), who states that in situations where employees note an absence of opportunities for career advancement, they start to look for employers who can provide them with these opportunities.

#### **4.3.3 Employee Recognition**

Two of the research participants in this study stated that employee recognition or appreciation was a means of reducing millennial employee turnover. May said:

*Firstly, value your employees, when they are working hard, tell them. Sometimes you just need the "good job". If I worked for someone who did not value me, I would not stay in the company for long,*

This same view was shared by Tom who summarily said:

*You know job appreciation, appreciate the people. It's just the little things, because I need to be committed to come into work.*

Both statements made by the research participants emphasize the need for employee recognition. Both statements also create a connection between appreciation or recognition to commitment. Hence, employee recognition may be used as a way to reduce millennial employee turnover.

Significantly, the research participants mentioned other measures that may be taken to reduce millennial employee turnover. However, these measures were mentioned in passing and did not create themes. The measures include; ensuring workplace flexibility and provision of employee benefits. To ascertain the impact these measures will have on millennial employee turnover, further research is needed; however, that is beyond the scope of this study.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, a significant amount of themes emerged and unique perceptions were identified using the data collected from the seven research participants. Some patterns were also identified, such as the link between employee recognition, commitment and reduction in turnover. Furthermore, the importance of a trained manager for the retention of the millennial employee workforce was made prominent. These issues will be discussed in the next chapter. Also, the reduced importance of remuneration as a factor that influences millennial employee turnover will be discussed. In the fifth chapter of this dissertation, the findings will be discussed and evaluated to identify the factors that influence the turnover intentions of millennials in Ireland.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings stated in chapter four of this research work will be analysed alongside the secondary data in the literature review of this dissertation. The findings will also be discussed. The practical implications will be drawn from the research findings; this will provide applicable measures and the cost implications required by organizations to reduce the turnover intentions of the millennial employee workforce. The limitations of this research and direction for further research will also be stated. This chapter will help answer the research questions outlined in the first chapter of this dissertation.

### 5.1 Factors That Influence Millennial Employee Turnover Intention

This research aimed to identify what factors may cause millennial employees to have turnover intentions. The interviews provided a considerable number of factors that cause millennials to think of leaving their employers. These factors include opportunities for career growth, employee recognition, remuneration, management practices, job satisfaction, person-organisation fit, work environment and employee inclusion. The following statistics were drawn from the interviews with seven research participants:

- Seven research participants stated that managerial practices influenced their turnover intention.
- Seven research participants stated that opportunities for career growth influenced their turnover intention.
- Seven research participants stated that verbal appreciation or recognition influenced their turnover intention.
- Six research participants stated that job satisfaction influenced their turnover intention.
- Four research participants stated that work environment influenced their turnover intention.
- Three research participants stated that remuneration influenced their turnover intention.
- Three research participants stated that shared values and ethics influenced their turnover intention.
- Three research participants stated that inclusion at work influenced their turnover intention.

From the primary research, it was found that management practices, opportunities for career growth and employee recognition were the most influential factors as they also affected millennial employees' turnover decisions.

A notable discovery while conducting this study was the prominent role of opportunities for career growth among millennials when accepting job offers and when they decided to leave their employer. Furthermore, most of the participants interviewed stated they sought career growth within a certain period, and when the

pathway is not visible, they started to look for a new employer. This supports the assertion made by Queiri, Yusoff and Dwaikat (2014) that millennial employees were willing to leave their employers in search of other employers who would provide them with the opportunities and results they want. This view was also shared by Mayangdarastri and Khusna (2020), who stated that career growth had a significant influence on millennial employee's commitment to their job. To some extent, this factor reaffirmed the importance of the generational cohort theory, which states that individuals from a certain generation may have similar values or views; here, it can be seen that the millennial workforce values career growth. The researcher also noted that the participants in the research associated career growth with motivation and job satisfaction. This is similar to Elia et al.'s (2020) assertion that a relationship exists between career development, job satisfaction and consequent turnover. Therefore, the absence of career growth could cause demotivation and dissatisfaction, which could, in turn, cause millennials to have turnover intentions. In this case, it may be argued that career growth is a significant concern for millennial employees; hence this is an area where companies should focus on when trying to retain the millennial dominated workforce.

Employee recognition was another factor that was surprisingly prominent in the primary research when compared to other factors that influenced turnover intentions. Significantly, in the absence of employee recognition and appreciation, some research participants felt that they were not valued, relevant and this made them reluctant to remain at an organisation. Even more notable was the fact that to some participants, employee recognition played a bigger role in causing turnover intentions than remuneration. This buttresses White's (2018) stance that offering monetary rewards instead of verbal appreciation may seem shallow and may not be as effective as verbal appreciation.

The management practices of an organisation was another factor that influenced the turnover intentions of millennial employees. However, the findings showed that that the incompatibility of managerial methods of the older generation and the younger workforce was not the actual cause of turnover as implied by numerous academic matters; this is in contrast to the view held by Rani and Samuel, 2016. Rani and Samuel (2016) focused on the incompatibility between leadership methods employed by the older generation of leaders and the younger generation who made up the workforce. Instead, the researcher found that for millennial employees, the leadership and management skills of their managers and supervisors played a more prominent role in influencing millennials turnover intentions. This is consistent with Ngotngamwong's (2019) argument. Ngotngamwong (2019) stated that bad management practices influenced turnover intentions. Significantly, it was noted that the management skills of the managers and supervisors affected communication, productivity and consequently commitment to their jobs.

A pattern noted by the researcher was that the three factors stated above (opportunity for career development, employee recognition and management practices) influenced how committed an individual was to their employer. Significantly, from the primary research, it was also found that the three above mentioned factors were deciding factors that influenced millennial turnover. Millennial employees were

less likely to have turnover intentions when they were committed. Hence, it may be argued that a route to reducing turnover intention is inspiring commitment to an organisation or employer.

### **5.1.2 Practical Implications**

From section 5.1, it was noted that opportunities for career growth influenced turnover intentions and decisions of millennials employees. Therefore, companies and employers of labour need to focus on creating clear growth plans for their employees. This echoes Friar and Mulyani's (2018) stance that in order to prevent millennial employee turnover, companies need clear development programs for their employees. Similarly, Franco and Lyapina (2016) assert that when an organisation helps their employees meet their career and work goals, the performance and commitment of the employees to the organisation may be increased.

The relevance of employee recognition and appreciation as a key to millennial employee retention was also noted. To reduce turnover intentions, it is necessary for organisations to conduct managerial training that stresses the use of employee recognition programs and practices. This supports the findings from the research conducted by Luthans (2000) who also advocates that leaders in a workplace should be trained on administering social rewards or recognition without being vague or pretentious. Luthans (2000) states that these day-to-day rewards can encourage improvement in the workplace. This is supported by White (2018) who stated that it was important for leaders and supervisors to learn to incorporate communicating appreciation into office culture. Other methods such as awards can also be used to show appreciation for employees. Luthans (2000) also recommended the use of personalized letters and gifts for deserving employees. Feeling valued and appreciated has a positive impact on employee performance, commitment and retention (Luthans, 2000).

The effect of bad management practices on turnover intention and decision was also identified during the course of the primary research. This is supported by Ngotngamwong (2019) who stated that a reason for millennial turnover was bad management; hence employees were leaving their managers and not the company; this emphasizes the importance of good managerial practices. Hence, preventing turnover intentions caused by bad management practices requires the appointment of trained managers rather than employees who have shown competence or exemplary performance, thus these findings from the primary research is supported by the findings from Campione (2015). In the event where an outstanding employee is to be made manager or supervisor, it is important that the individual receive training on proper management practices. This training includes how to communicate with, motivate and manage the company's workforce; doing so is essential to retain the millennial workforce. This view is reiterated by Campione (2015) who stated that managerial training should be mandatory for supervisors to reduce millennial turnover.

## 5.2 Other Factors That Influence Millennial Employee Turnover Intention

There were other factors that the research participants stated influenced their turnover intentions. However, these factors solely did not influence the turnover decision of the research participants.

Some research participants also stated that remuneration affected their turnover intentions, but an unexpected discovery was that remuneration was not regarded as a major factor that influenced turnover. This contrasts with Queiri et al.'s (2015) assertion that millennial employees valued remuneration and made it a priority even over their personal values. However, this discovery does not negate the value of remuneration as a way of attracting a qualified workforce. This was echoed by Ngotngamwong (2019), who explained that higher remuneration and benefits attracted millennials to organisations and caused them to leave their previous employer. Still, remuneration may not be an effective way of retaining these employees.

Another factor that some participants stated influenced their turnover intentions was the compatibility of their values with those of the organisation they worked for. This view is in line with what Cennamo and Gardner (2008) mentioned about the importance of shared values between employees and organizations. The person-organisation fit factor may also guide the organisations where millennial employees choose to work. When looking at person-organisation fit, it is necessary to acknowledge the role of values. The participants in this study cited issues such as flexibility, equality and inclusivity as specific values that they expected the organisation where they work to have. This corresponds with the stance taken by Kraus (2017). Kraus (2017) stated that millennials preferred to have employers whose values were similar to their own, and because of this, millennials may consider these values when they choose an employer. However, most organisations cannot align with 'all values', with the hope of retaining their millennial workforce. It also led the researcher to wonder, 'Does the need to retain the millennial workforce require an organisation's adoption of values that are most important to this generational cohort?'. In the researcher's opinion, due to the vast amount of values held by people in this generational cohort, the best attempt at maintaining the millennial workforce through values may be to have morally right values and to act ethically. This is in line with Deloitte (2017) report which indicates that Irish millennials are more committed to employers who behaved ethically.

Job satisfaction was another factor that influenced millennial employee turnover intentions; six of the seven research participants stated that the satisfaction they got from their job could make them think of leaving or staying with their employer. This was highlighted by Ivanović and Ivančević (2019), who stated that there was a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Therefore, where an employee is dissatisfied, it could cause them to have turnover intentions. Notably, the one participant that stated a lack of regard for job satisfaction provided valuable insight into this factor and created an area for further research. The research participant stated that as long as they were paid, they did not think about job



satisfaction. The researcher participant went on to attribute this mentality to being African or having an African upbringing. Hence, this led the researcher to ask, 'Does cultural upbringing influence the relevance of job satisfaction to an employee?' If this research were conducted outside Ireland, would the number of millennials that stated job satisfaction influenced their turnover intentions differ or even drastically reduce? Hence, this an area that would benefit from further research.

Employee inclusion was an unexpected factor that influences turnover intention. This is because none of the academic literature reviewed mentioned employee inclusion as a factor that could influence turnover intentions. However, three research participants stated that inclusion influenced their turnover intentions. The implication here is that the feeling of belonging in the workplace can encourage employees to stay with their employer or in an organisation.

The work environment is also a factor that influences turnover intentions among millennial employees. The research participants stated that stressful, demanding, toxic and poor work environments caused them to have turnover intentions. This supports Ongori's (2007) assertion that a toxic work environment may lead to voluntary employee turnover. However, few academic literatures reviewed during this research linked a bad work environment to the turnover intentions of millennial employees. Hence, the influence of the work environment on millennial employee's turnover intention and decision is an area that requires further research.

The factors stated in this section are causatives of employee turnover intention. Therefore, organisations should focus on mitigating these factors. While none of these factors was identified as factors that influenced the turnover decision in the primary research, they are still important. A possibility exists that a culmination of these factors may not only cause turnover intention but could consequently influence the turnover decision.

### **5.2.1 Practical Implications**

Despite the fact that the factors mention in section 5.2 were noted to influence turnover intention and not the decision, organisations need to take measures to eliminate or minimise the occurrence of these causatives.

To prevent turnover intentions being caused by remunerations, it is recommended that organisations have clear reward systems or plans. The availability of employee benefits may also have a considerable impact on turnover intention. Queiri et al. (2015) share a similar view, stating that to retain the millennial workforce, organisations have to make an effort to satisfy the workforce with extrinsic rewards. However, Queiri et al. (2015) also highlight the fact that some organisations lack the financial capability to achieve this. Notably, compensations, rewards or employee benefits may cause an employee to feel important or valued and less likely to leave their employer.

As stated above, inclusion can influence turnover intention. Hence, it is necessary for an organisation to make efforts to ensure inclusion and equality in the workplace. This may be achieved by better management practices, programs or events that encourage inclusion. The organisation may also encourage inclusivity through events that acknowledge the diversity of people in the workplace.

Person-Organisation fit, in this case, compatible values, also influences turnover intentions. Significantly, Rani and Samuel (2016) assert that the preventing turnover caused by person-organisation fit starts from the employment process. Rani and Samuel (2016) state that organisations should clearly outline their values and employ individuals who have similar values or fit the organisation's culture. Furthermore, the researcher believes that organisations may need to collect data to ascertain what work values millennial employees have. Consequently, they may adopt the most influential of these work values to reduce the formation of turnover intentions of their millennial employees.

Lastly, job satisfaction plays a significant role in influencing a millennial's turnover intentions. There are considerable numbers of ways that job satisfaction may be acquired. Some of the factors stated above influence job satisfaction. Hence mitigating some factors that influence turnover may also lead to more job satisfaction. For example, better remuneration, rewards, employee recognition, flexibility and workplace inclusion can contribute to an employee's job satisfaction. This view is shared by Hassan (2014) who stated that organisations should endeavour to find ways to improve employees work life and consequently their job satisfaction. Hassan (2014) stated that creation of a clear career path and employment of an open-door policy for improved communication between employees and managers are steps that can be taken to prevent dissatisfaction.

### **5.3 Direction for Further Research**

This research focused on identifying the factors that influence employee turnover intentions. While conducting this research, various areas that would benefit from further research were identified, and these areas will be stated in this section. Firstly, one of the research participants stated that job satisfaction was not a factor that influenced turnover intention because of their cultural upbringing. This is an area that requires in-depth research. Further research will help to determine if the value placed on job satisfaction is determined by culture or if it differs around the world. Hence, job satisfaction may not be a factor that influences turnover intention in some parts of the world.

Secondly, when asked what factors made the research participants think of leaving their employers, they provided some unexpected and distinctive responses. Some research participants stated that factors such as work environment, social pressure and personal growth influenced their turnover intentions. However, little or no academic literature addresses these factors that could influence millennial turnover intention. Hence, these are areas where further research is needed.

Lastly, it was noted that the values adopted by an organisation could influence the turnover intention of their millennial employee. However, it is unclear if organisations must identify the values that are important to the millennial cohort and adopt those values to ensure millennial employee retention. Further research will be helpful for finding ways to mitigate turnover intentions caused by incompatible values or bad person-organisation fit.

#### **5.4 Limitations of This Study**

There were some limitations in this research. First, the sample size was relatively small (seven participants). While seven participants provided an insight into the factors that influenced or caused turnover intention, these seven participants cannot be said to represent the millennial population in Ireland. Furthermore, the data collected from the research participants led to unexpected discoveries. However, it is unlikely that saturation was reached, and there are other factors that need to be considered. Conducting interviews with a larger sample size in the future would be beneficial for ensuring nuanced data is provided.

#### **5.5 Personal Learning Reflection**

The experience while conducting this research study was tasking and overwhelming especially because of the current pandemic situation which caused a limitation in accessing the library and meeting up with colleagues to brainstorm. However, it has been fulfilling as a lot has been learnt through the process.

I chose to collect the primary data needed for the research by conducting semi-structured interviews. This research approach helped me gain knowledge and skills on how to conduct interviews effectively, analyse information critically and it improved my ability to meet-up with deadlines which I would implement in the world of work as a HR practitioner. The time frame was a huge challenge, but my time management and prioritising skills got better as I progressed with this project.

As a millennial myself, I always wondered why turnover intention and decision is common especially amongst the new generation of workers. Embarking on this research has given me insights on the various factors that lead to this high rate of turnover intentions and actual decisions amongst millennial employees. I have also learnt how this issue can be mitigated which would be useful throughout my career.

If I have the opportunity to carry out a research such as this, I will start reviewing and analysing information at an earlier stage which would give me more time to conduct and transcribe the interviews.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

In the previous chapter, the findings from the primary research were discussed in detail alongside the academic literature reviewed in the second chapter of this dissertation. Furthermore, the limitations of the research were also outlined in the chapter. Direction for further research was also be mentioned. This chapter of the dissertation is the conclusion. The findings from this research and the answers to the research questions will be stated, recommendations and the cost implications required for implementation would be outlined.

This research aimed to identify the factors that influenced millennial employees' turnover intentions using Ireland as a case study. The millennial cohort currently is the largest demographic in the workforce (Fry, 2020). However, this cohort also has the highest turnover rates among other cohorts in the workforce (Queiri et al., 2014). Turnover, especially voluntary turnover is costly, affects employee motivation, productivity, and efficiency (Kim et al., 2017; Ongori, 2007). Hence, in this situation where the majority of the global workforce is made up of the cohort with the highest turnover rate, it is important to identify the factors that influence millennial's turnover intentions. This is the first step to reducing or preventing the creation of turnover intention.

To achieve the overall aim of this research, some research questions were used to guide the research. These questions were

- i. What factors influence millennial employee turnover intention?
- ii. What factors have the most influence on millennial employee turnover?
- iii. What measures may be taken to curb high turnover rates among millennials?

To answer these research questions, semi-structured interviews were used for data collection and a thematic analysis was used to identify the themes which answered the research questions.

The first research question was aimed at identifying the factors that influence millennial turnover intention. The findings from this research show that a plethora of factors influences millennial's turnover intentions. These factors include opportunity for training and career growth, employee recognition, management practices, person-organisation fit, job satisfaction, work environment and inclusion. This research also helped to identify other distinctive factors such as social pressure, personal growth and uncertainty of what career to pursue. All these factors may influence millennial employees' turnover intentions.

The second research question aimed to identify the factors that had the most influence on millennial employee turnover. Hence, these could be seen as deciding factors that influenced if an individual left their employer or not. Using the thematic analysis, it was noted that of all the factors mentioned earlier,

‘opportunity for training and career development, employee recognition and management practices’ helped millennial employees decide if they would leave their employer.

The third research question addressed the measures that could be taken to reduce millennial employee’s turnover intentions. The measures that can be taken include the provision of a clear career and growth path for employees, the use of employee recognition and appreciation programs and training managers so that they are capable of motivating and managing the millennial workforce. Furthermore, adhering to morally right values, creating a good working environment and promoting flexibility and inclusivity in the workplace can help to reduce the turnover intentions of millennial employees.

This research has shown that there are many factors that can influence the turnover intentions of millennial employees. Some of these factors are more influential than others, and these influential factors may guide a millennial employee’s decision to leave their employer. Despite the fact that some factors are more influential on turnover intention and decision than others, it is important that organisations take measures to mitigate all these factors. Significantly, turnover intentions may lead to a turnover decision if a millennial employee has various factors influencing their turnover intention. Hence, their turnover decision may be a culmination of these factors.

## **6.1 Recommendations and Financial Implications**

Below are recommended plans for action with their cost implications that can be adopted by employers. Notably, by taking these measures, millennial employees may enjoy job satisfaction, and this will further decrease the possibility of the employees having turnover intentions.

- i. Firstly, in order to create a clear career development plan, HR practitioners would have to evaluate the various positions the millennial employees can be promoted into. A road map for growth needs to be formulated and a definite period it would take to achieve this. Organizations should communicate this to employees from the onboarding stage. In addition to these career growth plans, people professionals can make use of training programs, and also mentorship programs which would aid the development of employees, ensure their career advancement and ensure their commitment to the employer. Depending on the size of the company and its workforce the financial implications for this strategy will be an average of €65,000 annually however this is a long-term investment as it would reduce the higher cost involved when turnover occurs. It is important to carry out these programs within the first 6 – 8 weeks.
- ii. Having discovered the influence managers have on the turnover intentions of employees and noting that millennials could leave the organization because of their manager. It is important that the Board of Directors and the HRM team ensure every employee in leadership positions possess the right qualities needed to drive a team. Additionally, empathy and emotional intelligence are skills that

should be assessed before an employee is given a leadership role. Also, managers at every level should be provided with training sessions every 6 months, the training should project the importance of employee recognition and appreciation, employee-employer relationships, regular communication with all team members, and also employee engagement. The financial implication associated with this plan would be mainly the training cost.

- iii. Furthermore, the changes the Covid-19 pandemic created into the world of work in terms of flexibility and working from home might need to still be in place. The changes have revealed that millennials value flexible working and remote working opportunities, thus organizations would need to ensure that this strategy is combined with the traditional working arrangement when the crisis is over. This plan would have a high financial implication in terms of providing workstations for each employee however, this cannot be compared to the overhead cost involved when working fully at the office. Execution of this plan would take 4 – 6 weeks.

In conclusion, this research is significant as it identifies a plethora of factors that influence millennial employee turnover intention and consequent decision. Identifying these factors is crucial for employers to ascertain what measures should be employed to prevent turnover intention from being formed and retaining the millennial workforce. This research is important to organisations and employers because, currently millennials make up a majority of the global workforce and productivity and profitability could be affected if no effort is taken to understand the millennials approach to work and how it impacts their turnover intentions.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Cover Letter

Title of Research Study:

‘Factors that affect Millennial Employees Turnover Intentions. Using Ireland as a Case Study’

Dear interviewee,

You are invited to take part in a research study to examine what factors may influence millennial employee turnover intentions. This research is part of a master’s thesis in Human Resource Management for National College of Ireland. Before you decide whether to take part in the study, it is important that you understand what the research is for and what you will be asked to do. Participation in this research is voluntary; you will not be offered payment for your participation. Should you decide to participate in this research, you will be given this letter and an information sheet. After reading both documents, you will need to sign the provided consent form. You can withdraw from the study whenever you wish. If you withdraw from the study, the information you have provided will be discarded immediately.

The purpose of the research is to ascertain what factors may affect a millennial employee’s decision to leave their current employer and ascertain how to mitigate these factors. You have been chosen because you are a millennial who has been working in Ireland for more than five years. During the period you have been working, you have voluntarily left your employer at least once. Therefore, you will be able to provide information that is useful for this research. If you take part in this research, the interview consists of about 15 questions and the interview will last for about 40 minutes. The date and time of the interview will be arranged to suit you.

The information from the interview will be used to ascertain what factors influence millennials turnover in Ireland. The data will also be used to ascertain if the identified factors are common among millennial employees and how to reduce these occurrences. This research will also help to identify areas where further study is needed. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. Every research participant will be assigned a pseudonym, and the information they provide will be kept in a password-protected folder.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Afolabi Oyindamola

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## **Appendix B**

### **Research questions**

- How many jobs have you voluntarily left since you started working?
- Can you please tell me what made you think of leaving your employer/s?
- Is it the same factor that influenced you to leave your jobs? (If the participant has left more than one employer voluntarily)
- To what extent did remuneration influence your decision to leave your previous employer/s?
- How has acknowledgement or verbal appreciation influenced your decision to stay with or leave your employer?
- To what extent did the managerial techniques of your boss affect your decision to leave any of your previous employers?
- What impact has the availability or lack of availability of organisational training programmes had on your decision to leave any of your previous employers?
- To what extent has 'opportunities for career growth' influenced your decision to leave your previous employer?
- What do you understand by job satisfaction? (If no, explain)

How has job satisfaction affected your commitment to your job or caused you to think about leaving your job?

- To what extent has person-organisation fit or your compatibility with the organisation you work for influenced your decision to leave your job? (Is shared values a factor that has influenced your decision)?
- If it has, please describe how work-life balance has influenced your decision to leave your employer in the past
- Apart from the factors mentioned earlier, what other factors have made you think of leaving your employer? (Please expatiate on how these influenced your decision to leave your employer)
- Of all the factors that have been mentioned today, which has been most influential in your decision to leave your place of work?
- Thank you for your participation so far. What measures do you believe should be taken by organisations to reduce the likelihood of you voluntarily leaving your job?