

**IMPACT OF TALENT MANAGEMENT ON RETENTION OF
MILLENNIALS IN THE IT SECTOR
CASE STUDY OF GOOGLE IRELAND**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Retaining employees is an issue that has been of great concern to both employers and scholars studying the phenomenon. As literature concerning the research area became extensive, it gave rise to other areas of research concerning employees: talent management. Talent management has been proven as a useful strategy in retaining employees, till the rise of millennial employees. This notion is what this study set out to assess while using a sample group drawn from the millennial employees who work at Google's European Headquarters in Ireland (Google Ireland, for short). While reviewing the literature on talent management and employee retention, it was discovered that ensuring employee satisfaction with the talent management fosters a higher retention rate and lower attrition rate. Even though this has been proven to be true for employees of the previous generation, the same cannot be said for millennial employees. This research employs the quantitative research design for the data collection and analysis. Surveys containing 6 Likert scale as well as 5 Likert scale questions were distributed to the sample group. Linear regression analysis used for analyzing the data and creating models for predicting the impact of talent management on the retention of millennial employees. The results of the analysis show that indeed, talent management can engender the retention of millennial employees. Also, the results show that employer brand is another major factor that can influence the rate at which companies can retain their millennial employees. Based on the findings of this research, more studies on the specific talent management strategies that can foster the retention of millennials should be carried out. Also, further investigation should be made on how much the image and brands of companies can influence the retention of millennials. This study concludes that talent management remains a pivotal strategy in retaining employees, regardless of the age or background.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to God almighty and to my parents for their love, guidance and support

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SECTION ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

According to Finnegan (2017), millennials (individuals who were born between 1981 to 1996) are likely to change jobs 7 times by the age 28 and change companies and jobs 10 to 14 times, by the time they reach age 38. Based on this fact, employee retention (especially as regards the millennial segment of the labour force) is a colossal problem for numerous companies; considering the fact that millennials currently make up about 47% of the global workforce (Ruiz & Davis, 2017). Employee retention has always been a principal challenge that the human resource department has always faced; nonetheless, the problem has become exponentially amplified with the influx of millennials into the workforce (Phillips & Connell, 2004).

To understand the concept of employee retention, one must understand the core factors and tenets that underline it. 'Retention' is a term in the Human Resources field that refers to the capability of an organisation to create a work environment that employees will be comfortable in and potential employees will be drawn to (Klippert, 2014). The opposing term of 'retention' is 'turnover' which refers to an organisation's loss of its employees. These two terms are pivotal to the understanding of the core of employee retention. The main tenets of employee retention have been explained; in this case, employee retention can now be defined. Employee retention is the rate at which an organisation can retain its employees, either through incentives, encouragement or the prospect of career growth, over a given period of time (Carsen, 2005; Giri, 2008). In other words, it is the ability of an organisation to obtain and preserve employees' loyalty and interest in the organisation while also receiving excellent input from the employees in that same organisation.

According to Graber (2008), employee retention does not only culminate in keeping employees and ensuring their productivity. It also encompasses attracting potential employees that have the skill set and competencies that an organisation requires to thrive. This facet of employee retention demands a clear layout of the responsibilities of the jobs available, creating an appealing work culture, identifying the strengths of employees and utilising those strengths as well as appreciating the employees.

Deb (2009) notes that employee retention as well as employee turnover are determined by the same factors which include employee compensation, clearly defined organisation goals, assigning roles relating to employees based on their capacities, confidence factor, growth opportunities, communication and leadership of the organisation. The right exploitation of these factors can either result in employee retention instead of aiding employee turnover. Verma (2007), on the other hand, notes that building relationships with employees is a major reason behind the success of companies with high retention rates. As the scholar opines, establishing a strong and long-lasting relationship with employees is the best way to retain employees. Yet, the notion of establishing a relationship with the employees is only a fragment of the umbrella term of the factors that Deb (2009) highlights for employee retention. This concept that Deb (2009) highlights cannot be dealt with by only relating with the employees, as it requires careful planning and strategizing. The factor is talent management, or as Deb (2009) puts it, ‘assigning roles to employees based on their capacities’.

Talent management is an aspect of employee retention and Human Resource management that is often overlooked. This is perhaps due to the lack of consensus on what talent really means in the Human Resource context. Some scholars like Deb (2005) opine that talent refers to the individuals that who possess the capability to contribute significantly to progress and future of an organisation. On the other hand, scholars like Hatum (2010) argue that talent is the sum total of a person’s skills and capabilities which enable them to perform certain duties. This

dissension in the definition of talent alone could have incited the indifference that the Human Resource departments of organisations show to talent management.

By virtue of the various definitions of talent that exists, the concrete and general definition of talent management also remains elusive to scholars. Leisy & Pyron (2009) define talent management as the process of managing the knowledge and skills of the employees in an organisation. Hatum (2010) states that talent management is an activity aligned with an organisation's goals of retaining their employees. Oppong & Gold (2013) go further to give a more comprehensive definition as they conclude that talent management is the process of seeking out and harnessing talent (which encompasses training, deployment and rewards) in order to mould this talent into a means of achieving organisational goals. In spite of the variations in the definitions, these definitions all have the same underlying concept of utilising the knowledge and capabilities of their employees. Nonetheless, the working definition of talent management for this research will be that of Oppong & Gold (2013) due to its comprehensive nature and the versatility it possesses as regards managing talent.

As it has been stated earlier, talent management is an important strategy and activity needed to ensure that a company's retention rate is high. Yet, one must not be quick to acquiesce that talent management works for a company's retention goals at all times, with all kinds of employees. This notion is what this research is based on. Earlier on, it was stated that millennials who are taking up a huge part of the global workforce are more likely to have worked with over 15 organisations within the space of 15-20 years. This is a great challenge to organisations, especially in the age of heightened competitiveness in human capital.

For the sake of specificity, the researcher will narrow this study to millennial employees in the Information Technology (IT henceforth) sector. This is because the IT sector is home to many

millennial employees by virtue of their status as digital natives¹ and core content creators, according to Nandalikar (2019). Thus, the IT sector is the perfect fit for this study as the actual impact of talent management on how well organisations can retain millennials. In this research, therefore, the focus is on ascertaining the impact of talent management on employee retention in the IT sector, especially employees who are millennials.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of Research

The aim of this study is to assess and ascertain the impact of talent management on the rate of employee retention of millennials in the IT sector.

The objectives of the study, on the other hand, are to:

- (i) assess the viability of talent management when managing the retention rate millennial employees at Google Ireland
- (ii) investigate the significance of talent management on the affinity of the millennial employees to the organisation (Google Ireland)
- (iii) highlight the significance of talent management on the retention of millennial employees at Google Ireland

1.3 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the questions below:

- (i) Does talent management have any impact on the Google Ireland's retention of millennial employees?
- (ii) Do talent management practices of Google Ireland foster any degree of employee loyalty of its millennial employees?

¹ Digital natives are people who were raised in the digital era and began being thoroughly acquainted with digital devices and the internet from an early stage of their lives.

- (iii) Can talent management be the major determinant of the retention of employees in Google Ireland?

1.4 Statement of Problem

It is undeniable that talent management has found its spot in the limelight with the advent of the digital era and the knowledge economy (Nilsson & Ellstrom, 2011). Talent management has always been among the strategies that Human Resources Management area has employed to secure the fulfilment of the goals of organisations. Yet, not much attention had been paid to talent management and its intricacies in field of academia until recent times. Indeed, most (if not all) of the studies on talent management are characterised by inconsistency in defining the concept and lack of in-depth exploration of the concept (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Burbach and Royle, 2010; Nilsson & Ellstrom, 2011). However, this scarcity of research on talent management may not be without good reason.

Cappelli & Keller (2014) point out the primary reason for the lack of attention paid to talent management might have stemmed from the work culture and structure that was birthed during the rise of large corporations in mid-20th century. They note that the owners of the corporations usually took up the executive roles, so only those required for other responsibilities were hired. Furthermore, in the event of change of leadership, the replacements for those in the executive roles usually came from other employees in the lower rungs on the organisation ladder. Thus, recruitment was strict and done only for employees in the lower strata of the organisation and only when absolutely necessary. This resulted in very few retention problems and by virtue of that, very little need of talent management in the workplace and the academia; after all, there was no need for incessant sourcing for the right employees for the right job, if the employees in an organisation held their jobs for 15 years or more and there was no need to study a phenomenon that rarely occurred. Talent management only began to receive any form of attention in the 80s with the collapse of the rigid workplace structure (Cappelli, 1995). From

that period till the 21st century, the need for external hiring, employee retention skills and managing talent has risen at an unprecedented rate and with it, the snail-speed study of talent management.

Currently, the studies on talent management and its impact on employee retention have shown that talent management, when handled properly, is a positive force on employee retention of any organisation. Tiwari & Shrivastava (2013) and Johennesse & Chou (2017) analyse the strategies and practices of talent management and how they impact employee retention and effectiveness. They conclude that certain talent management strategies, such as creating a motivating and equal environment for growth, matching employees with certain roles based on their capabilities and rewarding them accordingly, foster a higher retention rate in companies.

Based on available research, though, the actual impact of talent management on employee retention based on a certain demographic group such as the millennials has not been extensively studied. There are a number of studies of the effect of talent management on employee retention, however (see Alias, Noor & Hassan, 2014; Oladapo, 2014; Deery & Jago, 2015). Considering the fact that millennials are quickly dominating the global workforce and the difficulty of organisations to retain them as employees, there is very little research on the impact of talent management on the retention of millennial employees. This problem is precisely what this study aims to solve concerning the research on talent management and employee retention.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The crux of this study is to assess the impact of talent management on the employee retention of millennial employees. The focus on millennial employees lies in the scarcity of research done on talent management and employee retention as regards the millennial demographic group of the global workforce. This research is also streamlined to the workforce IT industry

based on the large presence of millennials in the said industry (Nandalikar, 2019). Focusing on the IT industry enables the researcher to get a firm grip on the how impactful talent management can be on employee retention especially in a field that many millennials have an affinity with considering their nature as digital natives.

The case study is Google's European headquarters in Dublin, Ireland. This particular organisation was chosen because of its close proximity to the researcher's locale and by extension, the ease of data collection. The data collection will be facilitated via self-administered questionnaires to the employees in the millennial demographic of the organisation as well as selected members of the Human Resource department of Google Ireland.

One possible limitation of the study is reluctance or refusal of some of respondents to answer the questions in the questionnaire. Nonetheless, this ought not to affect the overall study as the responses of other participants would suffice for the study. One other limitation would be the absence of some insights to the motivations behind the behaviours and choices of millennial employees as regards retention issues. However, this is compensated for by the generalised and actionable results that this study is set to achieve. Other than these limitations, the research is expected to sail smoothly while maintaining the accepted structure of general introduction, literature review, research methodology, analysis and findings and conclusions.

1.6 Research Methodology

The researcher adopts the quantitative research design for this study for the purpose of ensuring an objective analysis of the material and data available. The quantitative research design involves the analysis of the data via numerical and statistical means. In other words, the analysis of data will be done via the use of statistical tools such as charts and tables. Thus, the responses of the participants from Google Ireland will be collated and analysed using quantitative design while the.

The researcher adopted the clustered sampling technique for this study to accommodate the two groups of population of this study which include the female and male subgroups of the millennial employees. The independent variables of this research are talent management strategies, duration of employment and employee salaries. On the other hand, the dependent variables of this include retention rate, supplementary retention strategy (employer branding) and employee satisfaction.

1.7 Justification of Study

The core of this study is to assess the impact and effects that utilising and managing talent has on the ability of organisations to retain their millennial employees. A comprehension of this impact on retaining millennial employees who have earned the reputation of being hard to retain will incite a deeper understanding of how to employ talent management in retaining millennial employees.

This study will also add to the body of research on talent management and employee retention. Nilsson and Ellstrom (2011) define talent management in various dimensions; concluding that if organisations are to use talent management as strategy to retain employees, then, their outlook on talent must include an all-round perspective of what talent means to the organisation and the employees. Tiwari & Shrivastava (2013) assert that talent management does help in retaining employees. From the millennial and IT focal points, few studies have been conducted; among which include Ruiz & Davis's (2017) study on the strategies which can be used to retain millennial employees in restaurants. In their work, they note that hygiene and motivation are huge factors that could facilitate millennial employee retention. On the other hand, Alias, Noor & Hassan (2014) assess the impact of talent management on employee retention of employees in the IT industry in Malaysia. They also assert talent management along with employee

engagement is indeed helpful in reducing the rate of employee turnover, in spite of the high turnover rate in the IT industry.

From the available research on employee retention and talent management on IT sector and millennials, there are no studies on the impact of talent management on employee retention of millennials in the IT sector. Thus, this study aims to fill that gap in this area in Human Resource management.

1.8 Outline of Chapters

Section One: This chapter is the general Introduction to the study. The chapter includes background of the study, the research objectives as well as the statement of problems.

Section Two: This chapter entails the review of literature on the core areas of the research: employee retention, talent management and millennials in the workforce.

Section Three: In this chapter, the hypotheses derived from the literature review are discussed extensively.

Section Four: In this chapter, the research methodology and design are discussed. This chapter also contains details of the population and the sample

Section Five: This chapter contains the analysis of data and the discussion of findings

Section Six: This is the concluding chapter which contains the summary of the study and the conclusions of the research as well the researcher's recommendations.

SECTION TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Talent in Human Resource Context

Talent is a ubiquitous word and concept. It is such a widely used concept that Google records the number of times it appears in search queries, at a sum total of 800 million times. However commonplace the word may be, it does not imply that there is a definite and general understanding of the word and concept ‘talent’. According to Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries & Cruz (2013, p. 291), the etymology of the word ‘talent’ takes root in the Greek word *talanton* which denoted ‘weight, balance and sum of money’. Consequently, talent bore the denotation of money or a means of exchange of goods and services. Later, in the Middle Ages, talent bore the connotation of human capital following the spread of Christianity and by consequence, the Christian interpretation of the parable of the talent².

From then on, talent began to be viewed as innate abilities that the bearers (the talented people) are supposed to cultivate and utilise for their own good and that of others. This definition is what has engineered the various perceptions of talent that exist in the field of Human Resources. According to Starner (2015), talent in human resources could connote the entire workforce of an organisation and how competent each employee is, at performing their duties. Some other stakeholders in HR field have a contrary opinion on what talent connotes as they assert that talent refers the special ability of an individual to carry out tasks related to a specific area (Workforce Group, 2020).

² The parable of talent is a Christian story about a master, his three servants and the talents (in this case, money) he gives them to invest when he goes on a journey. All servants except one obey the master; they invest the talents and make profits. The disobedient servant is stripped of his talent and is thrown into the lake of fire where there is gnashing of teeth and eternal weeping.

Other scholars project the concept of talent on the individual, as the source of the talent. This is in line with the late Middle age perception of talent as a God-given ability rather than a skill or competence that can be learnt and developed. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) define talent as “recurring pattern of thought, feeling or behaviour that can be productively applied”. Anderson (2013) also encapsulates this particular worldview in defining talent as a person who has special skills and abilities that are cumbersome to imitate or duplicate in another employee; this talent is also defined by their excellent performance in the field rooted in their special abilities and the loss of such a talent would be a gross disadvantage to the organisation they belong in. Following Buckingham and Coffman’s line of reasoning, Ghazal (2018) maintains that talent is a natural capability that an individual possesses in a certain area, which by virtue of its natural state, is recurrent and cannot be learnt or picked up.

This inconsistency in the definition of talent is very detrimental to the progress of attaining a consensus in the effective means of managing talent. Anderson (2013) does note that the approach one selects in defining talent is important in the developing strategies on how to develop and manage it. Yet, all that has been gleaned from available research is that talent discovery, attraction and management is vital to the success and growth of any company. Even in the Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod’s *The War for Talent*, which is often referenced in studies on talent management, talent is not explicitly defined. One gets a sense of talent having the connotation of innate ability and capacity for excellence but there is no actual and specific definition for talent and how organisations can identify talent.

In essence, talent, as viewed by various academics and Human Resources experts, is extremely subjective. The only consensus on talent is that is extremely pivotal to the growth and development of any organisation; all other facets of the definition of talent requires individual specificity and streamlining into the criteria that work for the researcher or the company (see Myers, Woerkom, Paauwe and Dries, 2019).

2.2 Talent Management

Talent management is a phenomenon that is directly hinged on the perception of talent as people with capabilities and capacities that cannot be encoded in other people. Indeed, talent management encompasses various strategies on utilising talent for the purpose of growing the company and the employees themselves. In the review of literature on talent management, one realises that the best way to approach the concept of talent management is attempt a definition of it and to subsequently, study the issues arising around the phenomenon.

Talent management can be viewed as a set of efforts aimed at recruiting, retaining, developing employees to achieve set objectives in the organisation (Silzer and Dowell, 2009). Talent management is a collection of efforts aimed at identifying talent and ensuring that the company is attractive enough to potential employees to elicit their desire to be part of the organisation (Deb, 2005). That being said, many scholars view talent management as a ubiquitous and multi-faceted aspect of Human Resources (Hoare and Leigh, 2012). For talent management to be effective, it must run deep in all the aspects of the organisation. Many companies make the costly mistake of placing the entire burden of the Human Resources department. What those organisations fail to realise is, talent management starts at the top of the organisation (Deb, 2005).

Mambo (2017) notes that the administrative level of any organisation that aims to utilise talent management as a tool for organisational growth must first imbibe the mindset of talent management. Company executives must realise that talent management transcends attracting and recruiting employees; it also involves creating an organisational culture around the tenets of talent management, as most scholars point out (Thornton and Povah, 2012). Creating an environment on the favourable side of talent management involves putting numerous and strategic work culture ideals in place. One of those ideals include creating a work environment

that leaves room for failure and the accompanying lessons that the employee learns from their mistakes, according to Mambo (2017). What this shows the potential talent, is that the company supports innovation, creativity and employee ingenuity; all of which inevitably lead to uber excellence and experience at handling projects pertaining to the growth of the organisation. Sheridan (2011) proposes another ideal that might invoke a work environment drawing talent like bees to honey. The scholar's proposition is for companies to create platforms where employees can develop capacities with support from the company or the company provides the avenues to build capacities and competences. Other ideals include efficient reward systems, creating mentoring platforms as well as effective performance appraisal systems (Deb, 2009). Companies who take note of these and blend them into their work environment tend to attract more employees and reduce their turnover compared to companies that ignore these ideals, as noted in the studies reviewed previously.

One subtle but essential tenet in talent management is the ability to recognise and differentiate 'top talent' from other calibre of employees (Cutt, Flynn, Mowl and Orme, 2012). This enables an adequate allocation of responsibilities to the employees who are capable enough to handle them. It also serves to improve the talent mindset that pervades the culture of the organisation, as this filtering of top talent from the rest could result in an improvement of performance of the other employees who could draw inspiration from the top talent (Oakes and Galagan, 2011). These scholars touch on an important aspect of talent management that does not receive enough attention even as talent management is now in the limelight. Still, as important this aspect of talent management is, one must peruse the concept of top talent and the parameters that define it. Is 'top talent' defined by natural abilities or competence? Is it defined by potential or results? Is it determined by aptitude tests or what lies in the resume of the employee? Essentially, the concept of top talent does hold some significance in the sub-field of talent management but the nebulous nature of the concept hinders any further consideration of it in this research.

According to Schiemann (2009), talent management is primarily divided into three components namely: talent acquisition, talent development and talent retention. Talent acquisition, as the name suggests, is the set of activities set at attracting talent to an organisation (Shukla, 2009). Even before the process of talent acquisition begins, organisations must take steps that ensure that their efforts aimed at the recruitment of the talent is successful (Bhattacharyya, 2015). One of these steps is to create insightful plans on the kind of talent they need and the concordant positions that will enable these potential employees to maximise their skills and knowledge, according to Bhattacharyya (2015). Another alternative is to create what is known as an employer brand (Garavan, Carbery, Rock, Kuchеров and Zavyalova, 2012). An employer brand is more or less the reputation and image that a company carves out for itself on the axis of its capabilities as an employer, according to Meier (2006). Having a great brand and mapping out the talent that is needed can help companies obtain whatever talent is needed without going off course (Garavan *et al*, 2012).

Talent development entails the attempts of an organisation to improve and develop the skills and competences that employees have, to ensure that their development invariably tallies with the growth and development of the company (Garavan *et al*, 2012; Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Talent development involves numerous activities such as mentoring, encouraging synergy in the workplace by periodically pairing employees with similar dispositions on projects.

Talent retention is more or less a cumulation of the efforts in talent acquisition and development processes. Talent retention could also often be referred to as ‘employee retention’ in many scholarly papers (Philips and Edwards, 2008). As plausible as this might seem, talent retention is not necessarily a result of the first two components. Nonetheless, one must understand that talent retention is a collection of the efforts directed at retaining competent employees and reducing turnover over a long period of time (Deb, 2009). Talent retention involves a constant

improvement of the organisational culture to foster an environment where employees would consider viable to grow their career (Madueke and Emerole, 2017).

All in all, talent management is a field whose acceptance and recognition in the Human Resources domain is now over twenty years old, according to Wilcox (2016); this indicates the need for more studies need to done in this area to before this area can be considered an enriched research area.

2.3 Employee Retention

Employee retention is simply the ability of an organisation to retain its employees and reduce the rate of turnover while still ensuring the maximisation of the skills of the talent in the company to ensure the progress of the organisation (Mallick, 2020). Rouse (2018) argues that when defining employee retention, scholars and organisations must consider the kind of employees that efforts are being made to keep. In her definition of talent management, Rouse (2018) states that “employee retention is the organisational goal of keeping **talented** employees and reducing turnover by fostering a positive work atmosphere to promote engagement, showing appreciation to employees, and providing competitive pay and benefits and healthy work-life balance (p. 1). Contrarily, Taylor (2002) notes that employee retention rests on frequent surveillance of the organisation by those at the managerial levels. Studying the levels of turnover and general employee input/output informs the company executives of the steps to be taken in order to improve their retention activities which is more effective than competing with other companies and studying their retention practices.

The factors affecting the employee retention rate of companies run deeper than the surface factors of rewards and stable work environment. Smitson (2019) maintains that companies that want to keep their retention rates high (which cumulates retaining productive talent for as long as possible) must look past the conventional methods of rewards and employer branding. These

methods are also important, the scholar affirms; yet, employers must go the extra mile in retaining their employees. Smitson (2019) states that the efficient utilisation of employee capability is one the ways that organisations can cement high employee retention. Employees love to work in an environment when they are given tasks and responsibilities that align their areas of strengths and expertise. If the employees are being handed tasks that are not challenging or tasks that do not fit in their areas of expertise, they might become unproductive, lose interest in the company and leave the organisation. The scholar also highlights the importance of organisations helping employees achieve a work-life balance as this is also another motivating factor for employees to remain a part of an organisation.

Zono and Kiptum (2017) also highlight the importance of communication, openness and trust in fostering high employee retention. In their study of the factors affecting employee retention at the University of Eldoret, Kenya, these scholars discovered that communicated policies and a clear statement of objectives set by the university played a pivotal in retaining employees. This shows that organisations need to ensure that there is a channel for open communication with the employees to increase the chances of retaining their employees. Muir (2014) notes that factors that affect employee retention have the underlying influences of gender and ethnic diversity. The scholar explains that there might be disparities in the way that organisations deal with the factors that influence employee retention based on the employees' gender, race and other demographic features.

In conclusion, available research shows employee retention requires commitment and reassessment of organisational culture and talent management practices to ensure that employees view the company as a haven for career growth and productive input.

2.3.1 Strategies of Employee Retention

Employee retention strategies are principles and practices that influence organisational decisions and conducts that are aimed at reducing increasing the chances of employee retention (TalentLyft, 2020). The strategies of employee retention are as numerous as they are diverse. In this section, nonetheless, the researcher will review the literature with the common employee retention strategies.

Available research shows that the first employee retention strategy is to hire the best employees for the positions available and the company as a whole (Thaker, 2016; Halvorson, 2018; Florentine, 2019 and Malguri, 2020). At the initial stage of recruitment, employers must ask the right questions to uncover the employee's interests and dispositions and also discover if these fit the goals of the organisation otherwise, the organisation ends up hiring a disillusioned and unproductive employee. Thus, employers must get the recruiting process properly and this includes getting employees suited for the job and company.

One other strategy is to create a sense of direction and ensure good leadership in the organisation (Russo, 2000). Good leadership encompasses creating the channels that enable open communication and direction in the organisation. Apart from these, good leadership also inspires the loyalty of the employees and invariably leads to a high retention rate.

Creating efficient reward systems, motivating work atmospheres and ensuring that the immediate supervisors do their job right are other generic strategies for employee retention. Conclusively, employee retention strategies serve to reduce attrition rate in companies.

2.3.2 Challenges of Employee Retention

The challenges that companies face while attempting to widen employee retention and reduce turnover are quite numerous; thus, organisations which strive to preserve and maximise their human capital must be aware of these challenges as well as the strategies to overcome the challenge (Warner, 2020). The challenges of employee retention as Warner (2020) states, extend from the economical atmosphere of the country to the competition in the industry and to the internal culture in the organisations embarking on the task of employee retention.

Ideally, a booming economy ought to be a blessing to organisations in all sectors of the economy. Yet, great economies can often pose a challenge of employee retention to organisations (Ward, 2020). A good economy implies that there are better opportunities for job seekers and by implication, for the employees of an organisation, should they decide to leave. Yet, this observation appears to have been made without serious thought, good economies should not be identified as a challenge that affects organisation's abilities to retain their employees. The presence of more job opportunities is a more specific challenge to employee retention that companies can tackle and strategize to overcome. Nordmeyer (2020) also suggests lack of adequate compensation packages, rewards and recognition as challenges that hinder the retention of employees.

According to Centrecom (2019), leaving employees with a monotonous job can also create a huge problem for employee retention. Employees who keep doing the same job for years become too comfortable and grow indifferent about the job. Eventually, these employees get dissatisfied with their jobs and go in search of new ones with fresh challenges; which results in turnover and its attending costs for the organisation.

Salary dissatisfaction is another huge problem that employers tackle when aiming for a high retention rate (Malguri, 2020). When employees are displeased with their salary rate, it often

results in joining an organisation with better pay options, especially if the present organisation takes the grievance with levity. Centrecom (2019) and Malguri (2020) also note that employee's desire for self and career development could also stand as an impediment of organisation's retention of its employees. If employees conclude that their current work environment does not leave room for growth and development, they might opt to switch their job for a more favourable one.

In summary, the factors that might impede an organisation's ability to retain its talent revolve around employee satisfaction and development. Any organisation that aims to reduce employee turnover must understand this and utilise it to create its retention strategies.

2.4 Millennials in the Workforce

Ever since millennials have begun to emerge in the workforce, there has been so much negativity around their general preferences and the perceptions of them (Inc, 2019). Common perceptions of millennial employees are that millennials are lazy; millennials are too entitled and millennials are too demanding (Schnieders, 2020). These perceptions are what prevent numerous employers from understanding how to deal with millennial employees. These perceptions also hinder organisations from making the best out of millennial employees, their strengths and their skills (Centre for Creative Leadership, 2020).

It is worth noting that there is some lack of consistency in the criteria that qualifies anyone who is to be addressed as a millennial. Nonetheless, millennials are those who were born between the eighties and the late nineties (or the year 2000, according to those who disagree with the earlier categorisation of the millennial age bracket). Millennials now comprise about 75 percent of global workforce, which is why it is crucial that the millennial demographic group and their influence on the workforce are understood.

Millennials are redefining the workforce and all the tenets of work. As they take up more than half of the employee group around the world, they have begun to reshape the culture and practices of the conventional work environment (Kurter, 2018). Thus, companies that want stay ahead of the competition must devise new ways to handle their employees and employee policies. One of the major peculiarities of millennial employees is the desire for open communication and feedback which is often mistaken for dependence and complaining, according to Gilbert (2011) and Foster (2019). Gilbert (2011) and Foster (2019) state that millennials want constructive and comprehensive feedback on their work. In addition, millennial employees desire frequent assessment and feedback of the work. The conventional method of assessing performance annually and biannually does not align with the millennial perception of assessment as they want to know the areas that require improvement so that they can act on it with immediate effect (Fond, 2019).

Millennials in the workforce also prioritise a work-life balance above many other benefits that organisations can offer them (Emmons, 2018). Organisations that can also place employee personal lives on their list of priorities earn the loyalty and commitment of millennial employees. Flexibility is the other side of the coin for millennial employees, according to Emmons (2018). Many millennials eschew physical work environment for working remotely from home. Organisations that recognise and encourage this need for flexibility definitely get the best out of their millennial employees. Organisations like Yahoo who failed (and fail) to accommodate these proclivities end up being consumed by creative destruction (Kurter, 2018).

No generation of employees has cared more about the social impact of their work than millennials. Millennials want to ensure that the places that they choose to work have values that resonate with the ideals that they do stand for. Millennials are very concerned about how the operations of their organisation work for the greater and collective good (Morel, 2019). This is where the alignment of employee value and organisational values come in. According

to research, many millennials do not even consider organisations that stand for values dissimilar to theirs. This also extends to the place and role of technology in the workplace (Foster, 2019). Millennial employees are more open to tech approaches to solving their tasks and handling work challenges. The more millennials are being studied; the more researchers suggest that organisations should embrace the technological revolution that is engulfing the workforce instead of fighting it.

In conclusion, millennial employees are a different kind of employees from those that the industries are used to. Considering this, the tenets of workforce need to be reworked from top to bottom to ensure the maximisation of all that the millennial employees have to offer.

2.4.1 Redefining Talent Management to Accommodate the Millennial Workforce

Many researchers and organisations are beginning to come to terms with the uniqueness of millennials as well as what it would take to maximise what they have offer, more effectively (Bruce, 2017). Even though scholars have not extensively stated the parameters of redefining the tenets of talent management, the issue remains a matter arising in the literature intermarrying the millennial generation and talent management (Poole, 2017).

Weyland (2011) points out that taking the conventional approach to managing employees might not work effectively with millennial employees. Thus, employers should consider creating a more flexible work environment for millennial employees and also creating more open channels for feedback, performance appraisal and communication (Weyland, 2011). Aperian Global (2020) also highlights that the organisations need to begin to rethink their values and organisational policies as it relates to work-life balance. Mentoring should also become an important aspect of organisational culture, as research shows that millennial employees appreciate a show of support of their development in the workforce (KPMG, 2017).

On the other hand, there are some scholars who are convinced that all the fuss about generational differences in the workplace do not warrant a reconstruction of a concept that has not been clearly defined in the first place. Rodell and Ocsko (2018) wave off the concerns in the research body on talent management as it pertains to millennial employees. They note that the generational differences between the millennial generation and the Generation X are not significant enough to engender changing the strategies of talent management. This is majorly because there is no uniform view on the differences in millennial employees and older generations. The scholars state that the focus of employers and researchers alike, should rather be on diversifying the talent management practices of employees at different levels of the organisational hierarchy. In addition to this, Ritschel (2018) notes that about 43% of millennials have plans to switch jobs within two years. According to the study, the reason for this might be due to the ethical image of the organisation where they work. Another reason could be the diversity and inclusion policies at the companies where they are employed. So, this study suggests that talent management might not be enough to retain millennial employees. Cheng (2019) also suggests that millennials view ‘job hopping’ as beneficial strategy for success in their chosen field. She notes that, even though millennials understand the benefits of extending their employment duration at a company, millennials might become disillusioned if they do not achieve what they had hoped between 12 months to 24 months on the job (for example, promotion).

In summary, even though talent management may have worked for the previous generations of employees, it is not a bona fide and tested strategy for retaining millennial employees. This also lends importance to the goal of this research.

2.5 Impact of Talent Management on Employee Retention

This section is aimed at reviewing the literature on the impact of talent management on employee retention as well as other attendant implications of the interconnection of the two concepts. According to Isfahani and Boustani (2014), the idea of imagining talent management without considering the consequences on employee retention is inconceivable. From their review of literature on the effect of talent management on employee retention, they conclude that talent management and employee retention share a cause and effect relationship. That is, the level and quality of talent management that an organisation has directly affects the organisation's rate of retention. Contrarily, Weerasinghe (2017) cautions that scholars should be too hasty in declaring talent management as the direct determinant of employee retention. The scholar notes in their literature review that research has also shown that employee retention (and turnover) could also be affected by social factors and the personal lives of the employees. Nonetheless, the author concedes that talent management plays a huge role in the retention rate of the organisation.

Muriuki (2017), operating with Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs³, tries to ascertain the influence of talent management on talent management on a media organisation in Kenya. The author concludes that if talent management is properly undertaken in organisations, then organisations will have a very low rate of turnover. The author further notes that the components of proper talent management are so important that that they can be compared to needs that employees have in the workplace. This is where the theory of hierarchy of needs comes in. If the needs of employees are met through the lens of talent management, then, employees will be motivated to stay. Baharin and Hanafi's (2018) study also aligns with

³ Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory that is used to analyse how people can be influenced by behavioural motivation. The theory states that a person has a hierarchy of needs that requires that each stage of needs must be met, before the higher needs in the next stage can influence the person's behaviour.

Muriuki's stance of using talent management as a means of meeting employees' needs. They assert that the extent and quality of talent management that an organisation inputs can also send a message to the labour force that the organisation is a comfortable and profitable space for potential employees to expend their capabilities. Thiriku and Were (2016) select a few strategies of talent management such as employee motivation, compensation and effective reward systems and study their effects on the retention rate of employees. Based on their conclusions, even a handful of strategies of talent management do influence the retention of the employees in an organisation. This impact is asserted all throughout the works of Hanif (2013), Ochieng (2016) as well as Weerakoon and Dilanthi (2019).

On the aspect of managing millennial employees (which is the crux of this research), not much research has been done on how talent management can influence this, according to available research. The focus, however, is on how these millennial employees can be retained in organisations without no attention paid to talent management (see Aruna and Anitha, 2015; Ertas, 2015; Thompson and Gregory, 2012).

2.6 Employee Retention in the IT Industry

This section of the review of literature is to investigate the state of employee retention that employers in the Information Technology industry face. In addition, this section seeks to uncover any factor that might cause of difference of the employee retention in the IT industry compared to that faced in the other industries, as presented by the studies.

According to CIO (2019), the IT industry faces fewer issues of employee retention than many other industries with the turnover rate in 2017 being 14.9 percent. Yet, this turnover rate is high enough to raise concerns as it keeps expanding year after year. Employee retention issues in the IT are more catastrophic than retention issues on other industries due to the huge amount

of training required to develop employees to the level of proficiency as well as the difficulty in acquiring new talent due to the few numbers of IT talent (Rohava, 2017).

Ridzyowski (2019) notes that the IT industry is not only experiencing a shortage of skilled workers, it is also facing problems of gender equality in its workforce. Ridzyowski (2019) explains that this gender gap is an underlying factor in the unavailability of adequate workers in the industry. Moreover, the constant improvement of technological devices and approaches calls for constant upgrading of skills and competence which could be costly to companies that cannot retain their employees long enough to make the profit from their human capital investment.

Mohlala and Goldman (2012), in their study of retention of the employees of the IT annex of a South African bank, discovered that the retention of employees in the IT industry requires a unique approach than that of other industries. They reiterate the importance of hiring the precise employee they need for the job instead of hiring candidates with experience in a related spectrum of the tech field. They also emphasise the need for ensuring that up-to-date equipment are provided for those in the IT field to carry out their responsibilities adequately.

Dixon's (2016) findings also concur with those of Mohala and Goldman (2012) as the scholar highlights the pressure on employees in the IT industry to constantly update their skills in order to combat the speedy rate at which certain IT skills and knowledge become obsolete. The researcher also highlights the importance of ensuring pay satisfaction among the employees, giving frequent and constructive feedback on job performance, creating a positive work environment and establishing forums for teamwork and open communication.

All in all, retention in the IT industry is very crucial as the war for talent in the IT industry is fiercer compared to many other industries.

2.7 Conclusion

In this section of the research, the literature on talent and talent management, employee retention, millennial impact on the workforce and the IT industry was reviewed. From available research that was reviewed, talent management is very instrumental to maintaining a high employee retention rate. Indeed, some of the employee retention strategies are rooted in the concepts of talent management. Likewise, dealing with millennials, regardless of the industry they are in, requires creation of a favourable work environment, flexibility, cultivating an excellent organisational image and satisfactory pay. All these still boil down to the tenets of talent management and maximisation of talent. Thus, the concepts of talent management, employee retention and millennial attitude to work are interrelated. This discovery serves as a steppingstone to this research's aim of assessing whether talent management does foster the retention of millennial employees in the IT industry.

SECTION THREE

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the hypotheses derived from the literature review will be presented and discussed. There are six hypotheses, in total; all of which emerged from various aspects of the review of literature in Section Two. Subsequently, each hypothesis will be stated and explained in full detail.

3.2 Presentation of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (H1): This hypothesis assumes that *adapting the talent management practices to suit employee proclivity aids in strengthening the retention ability of an organisation*. The literature, as shown by the works of Weyland (2011), Smitson (2019) and Aperian Global (2020), on employee retention that were reviewed attest to the notion that organisations that ensure that talent management practices are tailored to suited the work needs of their employees are more likely to retain their employees for a longer period of time compared to those who do not consider their employees when drafting their talent management policies.

As a new group of employees (which have a divergent mindset on the conventional approach to work) are taking over the global workforce, there is the need for new studies to be done on the concept of talent management and how it can impact the retention of these new brand of employees. In light of this, this study will contribute to the emerging studies on the intermarriage of talent management and employee retention as it concerns millennial employees.

This hypothesis is a simple hypothesis that focuses on the two variables that exist in the hypothesis. The data from the survey which was created in the format of a quantitative research

design will aid the researcher in validating or refuting this hypothesis. In other words, what will be used to address the hypothesis is the mean derived from the numerical value of the first 17 questions of the second section of the questionnaire and the employment duration of the respondents.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): This hypothesis assumes that *millennials in the workforce will have loyalty and affinity towards organisations that have a talent management structure caters to them as employees*. This hypothesis was constructed from the studies reviewed on millennials in the workforce and the retention issues faced by companies that hire millennial employees. Majority of the studies conclude that many millennial employees are drawn to organisations that have an environment that fosters flexibility, work-life balance, contribution to society as well as regular feedback and opportunities for growth (Kurter, 2018; Foster, 2019 and Morel, 2019). This assertion by multiple scholars facilitated the cultivation of this hypothesis.

In spite of the emerging studies on the need to cease the demonization of millennial employees and redraft the tenets of traditional talent management, there are few scholars that believe the assertions are not valid and there are very few differences in the millennial employees and those of the earlier generations. This study aims to assess if the former or latter claim is true and to contribute to research on the concepts of talent management and employee retention of millennial employees.

This type of hypothesis is a simple hypothesis. All that is required to validate or refute this hypothesis is the analysis of the data from the quantitative survey. What will be needed to address this hypothesis is

Hypothesis 3 (H₀₃): This hypothesis assumes that *talent management (whether suited to millennial employees or not) does not have any significant impact on millennial employees, after all*. Based on studies on the problems of retention that employers of millennials face as well as the reports that show that millennials spend an average of 2 years at organisations (Rotschel (2018) and Cheng (2019)), the researcher is inclined to assume that talent management, no matter how effective, might have no impact on the retention of millennial employees. Coupled with Rodell and Ocsko's (2018) study that concludes that there are no significant differences between employees of generation X and generation Y (millennial generation) to warrant a new style of talent management, this hypothesis states that talent management does not have any significant effect of companies' retention of millennial employees. Therefore, this hypothesis will help in filling the gap in the research that seeks to uncover the motivations behind millennial employees increasing their duration employment at a company. This hypothesis will be tested by calculating the responses of the participants to questions that ask for what their choice would be if presented with jobs with ideal talent management, jobs with above average salary or jobs with a company image that they approve.

This hypothesis is a null hypothesis as it contradicts any hypothesis of this research and nullifies any previous assumptions made in the research. The hypothesis will be validated by the means derived from combining the responses to the first 17 questions in the second section of the questionnaire as well as the responses to the questions in the engagement section in questionnaire.

(H_{A3}): This hypothesis assumes that *talent management, if handled properly, could play a major role in the retention of millennial employees instead of salary and employer branding*. The studies on talent management show that it is one of the predominant tools in retaining employees (Hanif, 2013; Thiriku and Were, 2016; Muriuki, 2019). Therefore, this hypothesis serves as the polar opposite of the null hypothesis previously stated. Considering the volatile

nature of the employment duration of millennials, there is the need to examine if efficient talent management does play a major in increasing the retention of millennial employees.

This hypothesis is a causal hypothesis as it creates an avenue where the independent variable and dependent variable both have a cause and effect relationship. The hypothesis will either be validated or refuted by the data collected from the study as well as the analysis that follows. The data being the mean of the responses of the respondents to the questions that ask about their preference among companies that offer salaries above market average, companies with a good image and those with efficient talent management practices.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter stated the hypothesis that will guide this research. There are six hypotheses, in total and all of them will be validated or refuted by the quantitative analysis that will be done subsequently

SECTION FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Aim, Problem and Questions

This research aims to fill in the gap in the research on the correlation between talent management and the retention of millennial employees. Retaining millennial employees is one of the biggest challenges that numerous organisations face (Abelt, 2017). Considering the enormity of this challenge, there are very few studies on the impact that talent management might have on the retention on these millennial employees (see Weyland, 2011; Bruce, 2017). Thus, this research seeks to add to the literature that exists on the notion of talent management having an impact on the retention/attrition rate of millennial employees.

There are three major things that this research seeks to unveil. Firstly, this research aims to detect any connection that might exist between talent management and millennial employee retention. Secondly, this research aims to assess whether talent management can foster a high rate of employee retention; this is underscored by the uncovering if majority of the employees are retained due to the talent management practices of the organisation. Finally, this research seeks to pinpoint if talent management is the sole contributing force to the retention rate of millennial employees or if there is no consequence of talent management on the retention of millennial employees.

The research questions are as follows:

Research Question 1: Does talent management have any effect on the selected company's retention of millennial employees?

Research Question 2: Do talent management practices of Google Ireland foster any degree of employee loyalty of its millennial employees?

Research Question 3: Is talent management the major factor that engenders the retention of employees of Google Ireland?

The research aims, statement of research problem and research questions all help the researcher in assessing the impact of talent management on the retention of millennial employees in IT organisations.

4.2 Research Design

A research design is an outline of the structure that best suits the task of achieving the aim and answering the questions of any study (McCombes, 2019; Sileyew, 2019). Creating a research design (or adopting a standard research design) is more than creating the structure of a study. It involves determining the data variables, hypotheses and scope of a research study as well as defining the approach and tools for the data analysis (Lavrakas, 2007). Research designs are more or less maps created (or adopted) to help the researcher conduct an objective and plausible research with a methodology that can be adopted by other researchers in subsequent studies.

This study adopts a quantitative research design, solely. Quantitative research design is a research design structured to systematically assess occurrences via gathering data in quantifiable form and analysing them by the means of statistical and/or mathematical techniques (Bhat, 2020). This research design involves the use of surveys, statistical tools such as tables, graphs, trend analysis amongst others. Quantitative research design is the standard research design for fields in the social sciences and business as it can help (with the use of variables and statistical analysis) to test theories, decipher and/or predict behaviours or connections between related entities (Bhat, 2020). Hence, this study will be adopting the quantitative design for the collection, preparation and analysis of data.

4.3 Sources of Data and Data Types

The kind of data to be used in this study is the quantitative data. Quantitative data is a set of numerical values that can be used for analysing information that can be quantified for the purpose of gaining more insight on phenomena in the real world. Quantitative data is pivotal for analysing trends as well as assessing measurable impact of an entity on the other. On the other hand, qualitative data is a collection of observations, interviews and texts on a particular phenomenon in the real world for the purpose of analysing themes related to the phenomenon.

In this study, the quantitative data includes numerical values provided via surveys which were modelled after surveys used in previous studies on talent management pertaining to millennials and employees in the IT sector. The qualitative data is drawn from the transcribed interviews that the researcher conducts with some selected respondents.

It must be noted that the quantitative data gained will be treated in experimental form, that is, the variables will be manipulated and controlled by the researcher instead of only observing the variables, how they interact and the outcome of this interrelation. This is because of the nature of the aim and research questions of this study; this study seeks to identify the cause and effect relationship between talent management and the retention of millennial employee. Due to this, the research is already quasi-experimental in nature; thus, it requires experimental data (Bhandari, 2020; Bhat, 2020).

All the questionnaires will be distributed to the sample group from the millennial employee population of Google Ireland which is located in Dublin.

4.4 Data Collection

Every research has its unique means of collecting the data required to test the hypotheses proposed during the review of existing works on the field or to prove/disprove the theory. This process is what helps the researcher prove theories and foresee phenomena and trends might occur in the future (Mbachu, 2018). Hence, it is essential for the data to be collected accurately so as to exclude any possibility of incorrect analysis.

The data collected for this study is divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. The primary data comprises the documentation of the experiences and phenomena obtained by the researcher personally (Mbachu, 2018; McCombes, 2019). The primary data for this research consists of questionnaires (which comprise 5-point Likert Scale questions and 6-point Likert Scale questions). The secondary data, on the other hand, consists of review of literature on the major concepts of the research objectives, that is, news articles, scholarly articles, books as well as reports published by research institutes. Both the primary and secondary data were useful in formulating the hypothesis, research questions, the mode of analysis as well as the conclusions and recommendations.

In creating the questionnaire, the researcher modelled the questionnaire after Aune's (2018) study on how organisational culture might be preferred to salary when millennial employees are seeking out jobs. The 6-point Likert Scale questions used in the questionnaire were also adopted from the questionnaire used in the aforementioned study. The other sections in the questionnaire were composed after considering numerous studies on the impact of talent management. These sections also required the responses of the participants to be given by choosing any of the options in the 5-point Likert Scale Questions.

4.5 Data Analysis

Since this research adopts quantitative research design, the mode of analysis will be done in quantitative form. All the research questions can be answered via the generalised results that the quantitative analysis engineered. Therefore, only quantitative analysis is required to generate generalised perspectives on the relationship between talent management and retention of millennial employees.

4.5.1 Quantitative Analysis

The specific manner of analysis of the quantitative data collected for this research is regression analysis. Regression analysis involves studying the impact of independent variables on dependent variables to arrive a well-defined conclusion (Bhat, 2020). Thus, every aspect of the quantitative analysis in this study draws influence from the format of regression analysis.

For the regression analysis in this study to be accurate, the independent and dependent variable need to be defined precisely. An independent variable is a variable that a researcher purposefully alters or controls to examine the effect of the modification on the dependent variable (Helmenstine, 2019). Any modification of the independent variable has an automatic effect on the dependent variable. The independent variables in this research are average salary paid to millennial employees at Google Ireland, number of benefits in employee package, number of training and development platforms available to employees. Dependent variables, on the other hand, are variables that respond to the modification made to the independent variables (Helmenstine, 2019). The effect that the modification of the independent variables has on the dependent variables is what is assessed, documented and ultimately forms the assertion made by the researcher. The dependent variable in this study is the duration of employment of millennial employees.

For the computation, representation and analysis of the data, the researcher will use IBM SPSS Statistics (version 19.0). This statistical analysis platform enables the researcher to validate the data, and conduct regressions estimates. Also, the IBM SPSS Statistics analysis package is a standard software for analysis in research; thus, the software is the most suitable fit for analysing the data in this study.

For the statistical test determining the validity of hypotheses proposed in the study, the researcher will employ linear regression analysis. This analysis is best suited for this research because in this study, one needs to examine if there is any effect talent management on employee retention of millennials; this criterion is what qualifies any research data for linear regression analysis. This analysis will also be done via IBM SPSS (19.0). Also, descriptive statistics will be used to analyse and interpret the statistical qualities of the population, sample as well as the variables. To measure the impact of talent management on retention, compared to salary and employer brand, the means of independent responses to salary, employer brand and talent management will be compared manually.

In conclusion, the quantitative analysis for this research will be done via linear regression and comparison of means, with the aid of IBM SPSS (19.0).

4.6 Population and Sample

The population for any research covers the broad group of people that the researcher aims to make generalised assertions about (Statistics Solution, 2020). Thus, the results of a research ought to apply to certain phenomena about these individuals that the researcher is studying. In this research, the millennial employees in the Google Ireland (a company in the Information Technology sector) serve as the population of this study.

The sample of this study, on the other hand, refers to the individuals who do participate in the study (Statistics Solutions, 2020). In other words, a sample is a subgroup of people drawn from the broader population that the research centres on. The responses that these individuals give to the questions in the questionnaires and interviews are what make up the data that the researcher analyses to arrive at the conclusions of the research.

In this research, the sample is drawn from the millennial employees at Google Ireland. In the selected company mentioned previously, there are 3,200 millennial employees (all of whom constitute the sampling frame for this study). To form the sample group, the researcher employs stratified sampling techniques and divides the selection process into gender, job role and income range. However, to reduce selection bias, simple random sampling was used to select the respondents to form a sample group of 200 respondents.

In conclusion, the sample group for the quantitative data collection comprises 200 respondents. In gathering the 200 respondents, the researcher created three strata (gender, job role and income range) for proper representation. Then, the respondents were selected randomly from each category.

4.7 Justification for Methodology

For the purpose of further research, it is necessary that adequate justification is given for the methodological approach chosen for the study (McCombes, 2019). Following the style of numerous studies in the social sciences, this research adopts quantitative design. The researcher adopts the research design to ensure that this study is objective in its analysis and the conclusions it arrives at. Quantitative research design helps the researcher stay objective during the data collection and analysis. It also makes it easy for other researchers who might want to study related phenomena to replicate the methodological approach for analysis.

In summary, adopting a quantitative research creates a study in which objectivity can be applied to the analysis of the data gathered about a phenomenon as well as arriving at the conclusions (and solutions) that can be applied to the target population.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Every respondent was informed of the nature of the research and the significance of their responses to the questionnaire and the interview. The respondents who filled the questionnaires were informed of the amount of time required to answer the questions while those who were interviewed were briefed on the likely questions that would be asked.

The link to the questionnaires were sent to the respondents via email and the interviews were conducted virtually. For the sake of confidentiality, the respondents were not mandated to disclose their identity, even during interviews. The identity of the respondents will be concealed during the analysis and in the presentation of the final dissertation.

4.9 Limitations

There are several limitations to this research work including time constraints, the respondents were also very reluctant to fill out the questionnaires for the fears of the research been published and their identities disclosed, hence why the sample size is quite small compared to the employee population of the case study. Qualitative survey in form of interviews were to be conducted but due to the current pandemic situation and insufficient time it was really difficult to organize interviews as individuals were very reluctant to meet up and also everyone is trying to protect their jobs in these trying times and didn't want to have one on one interviews.

SECTION FIVE

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The goal of this study is to determine whether talent management has any effect on millennial employees. Thiriku and Were (2016) as well as Hanif (2013) assert that talent management (whether holistically or a part of it) has a significant effect on the rate at which companies can retain their employees. From their studies on diverse industries, talent management practices can be helpful in expanding the retention rate of organisation. However, few studies have assessed the relationship between talent management and employee retention regarding millennial employees. These studies, in spite of this, do not provide any substantial results on whether there is any significant relationship between talent management and employee retention of millennial employees. This is the gap that this study aims to fill. This current study aims to ascertain if talent management does work as a means of retaining millennial employees. To answer the questions posed by this research, an online survey that was modelled after the study of Aune (2018) on millennials was distributed.

As noted in Section 2, talent management is one of the major strategies used to retain employees; if utilised properly, talent management might weed out any other strategy (such as employer branding and salaries that are above the average salary in the industry) that companies use to attract and retain employees. Studies also show that a large percentage of millennials (roughly 47 percent) plan on leaving their jobs between 12 months to 24 months if their aims are not achieved or if the company has some ethical issues. So, to ascertain the actual effect of talent management on the retention, the following questions that guide this research are: (1) Does talent management have any effect on the selected company's retention of

millennial employees? (2) Do talent management practices of Google Ireland foster any degree of employee loyalty of its millennial employees?

(3) Is talent management the major factor that engenders the retention of employees of Google Ireland?

To effectively answer the aforesaid questions, a quantitative research design was adopted to study the measure of effect that talent management has on the retention of employees in Google Ireland. This chapter is divided into three aspects. The first part encompasses the description of the participants of the study. The Second aspect encompasses the results of Pearson Product Correlation matrix, multiple regressions and mean comparison tests that are conducted to determine any causal effect that talent management has on the retention of millennial employees. In the final section, the results and findings of the analysis of the data will be discussed. Then, the chapter is concluded by a summary of the results and discussions of the findings.

5.2 Demographic Details of the Participants

To fully understand the results of the data and to provide some context and background to the participants that engaged in this study, it was necessary that some details of the participants' background were provided. However, these details serve a dual purpose. While they reveal aspects of the participants' background, they also help in the analysis of the regression analysis carried out between talent management and employee retention. Thus, the first six questions of the questionnaire inquired demographic details based on the age, gender, employment duration, position in the company strata and the salary of the respondents.

Among the 109 people that participated in the study, 64 (58.7%) identified as female, 43 (39.4%) identified as male while 2 (1.8%) did not state their gender. The average age, for the

range of ages of the participants (25-41), is 30 years. About 69.8% of the participants of this study earn between €60,000 and €90,000 per annum. In addition, about 24.7% of the participants work in the software engineering department. Table 1 below shows the full details of the descriptive statistics concerning the participants.

Table 1: *Demographics of the Participants*

Variable		n	% of sample
Gender	Female	64	58.7%
	Male	43	39.4%
	Did not say	2	1.8%
Age	25	2	1.8%
	26	5	4.6%
	27	11	10.1%
	28	9	8.3%
	29	21	19.3%
	30	11	10.1%
	31	13	11.9%
	32	14	12.8%
	33	7	6.4%
	34	8	7.3%
	35	5	4.6%
	38	2	1.8%
	41	1	0.9%
Salary	Between €35,000 and €40,000	2	1.8%
	Between €45,000 and €50,000	3	2.8%
	Between €50,000 and €60,000	11	10.1%
	Between €60,000 and €70,000	38	34.9%
	Between €80,000 and €90,000	38	34.9%
	Between €90,000 and €100,000	13	11.9%

	€100,000 and above	4	3.7%
<hr/>			
<hr/>			
Employment Duration	1 year	22	20.2%
	2 years	32	29.4
	2 years and above	48	44.0%
	6 months	3	2.8%
	8 months	4	3.7%
<hr/>			
Department	Accounting	1	0.9%
	Cloud computing	1	0.9%
	Customer solutions	17	15.5%
	Engineering and Design	3	2.7%
	Google Cloud	20	18.4%
	Inventory/ Quality control	18	16.5%
	Product Management	1	0.9%
	Sales	1	0.9%
	Software Engineering	27	24.7%
	Technical support	14	12.8%
	Did not say	6	5.5%
<hr/>			

5.3 Linear Regression Model

In order to be able to answer research questions 1 and 2: (1) Does talent management have any effect on the selected company's retention of millennial employees? (2) Do talent management practices of Google Ireland foster any degree of employee loyalty of its millennial employees? regression models were created to predict the dependent variable (employee retention). For the first question, the first hypotheses of this study are tested. The hypotheses are as follows:

H_{A1}: Adapting the talent management practices to suit employee proclivity aids in strengthening the retention ability of an organisation.

H₀₁: Adapting the talent management practices to suit employee proclivity does not aid in strengthening the retention ability of an organisation.

H_{A2}: Millennials in the workforce will have loyalty and affinity towards organisations that have a talent management structure caters to them as employees.

H₀₂: Millennials in the workforce do not have loyalty and affinity towards organisations that have a talent management structure caters to them as employees.

The independent variable for talent management was derived by combining 17 questions from five categories from the questionnaire about the employee satisfaction about the talent management practices listed and deriving the mean of the individual responses. On the other hand, the independent variable for employee loyalty was derived by combining four questions from one category in the questionnaire about engagement levels of the respondents and deriving the mean of individual responses. Out of the 109 participants of the survey, only 5 did not respond to all the questions required for determining the talent management. Thus, these responses for these five participants were removed from analysis.

Results for Hypotheses 1:

Table 2: *Linear Regression Model for Hypothesis 1*

Variable	Standard Coefficients	R Square	F	T	Sig
Talent management	-.013	0.016	0.898	-.128	.000

Dependent variable: Retention $p < .05$

This regression model shows that talent management does not have a strong impact on the employee retention of the employees. Thus, adapting the talent management practices to employees' proclivities does have help in strengthening the rate of employee retention, even though it is not significant.

Results for Hypothesis 2

Table 3: *Linear Regression Model for Hypothesis 2*

Variable	Standard Coefficients	R Square	F	T	Sig
Employee Loyalty	.296	.087	9.864	3.141	.000

Dependent variable: Employee loyalty $p < .05$

This regression model shows that talent management is quite effective in fostering employee loyalty, although the significance of the effect of talent management on employee retention is not substantial.

5.4 Mean Comparisons

This particular test is to be used to test the final hypothesis of this research and discover if talent management is the major determinant of the retention of millennial employees. This hypothesis will be tested by calculating the responses of the participants to questions that ask for what their choice would be if presented with jobs with ideal talent management, jobs with above average salary or jobs with a company image that they approve.

Table 4: *Comparisons of Means*

Preferences	Mean
Talent management	5.27
Jobs with Average Salary	1.8
Approved Company Image	5

As shown in the table above, talent management almost tallies with company image as the major determinant of the retention of millennial employees. This indicates that talent management is still an important strategy that can be used to retain millennial employees.

5.5 Summary of Analysis

This quantitative study was crafted to assess the impact that talent management has on the retention of millennial employees. Following the hypotheses created, the study created regression models to predict the employee retention rate as it relates to talent management and to also predict employee loyalty based on the employees' satisfaction with the talent management practices put in place. To answer the last research question (which was to determine if talent management is the major determinant of retention of millennial employees), the means of the values representing the choice of above average salary, talent management and company image were compared manually.

From the results of the analysis, it can be seen that talent management does have an effect on employee retention of millennials. However, the model generated does not have a significant explanatory power to describe the actual impact of talent management. The same issue applies to the second research question (which is to assess the impact of talent management on

employee loyalty). The model shows that there is some effect of talent management on employee retention but the model is not quite useful in describing the extent of the causal relationship between talent management and employee loyalty. As for the final research question, the means of the choices for above average salary, talent management and employee retention were calculated and compared manually. The results show that talent management is the major determinant but only by a little margin, compared to company image.

5.6 Discussion of Findings

A sample group of 109 participants was used to determine the effect of talent management on the retention of millennial employees. The research questions guiding this research were:

Research Question 1: Does talent management have any effect on the selected company's retention of millennial employees?

Research Question 2: Do talent management practices of Google Ireland foster any degree of employee loyalty of its millennial employees?

Research Question 3: Is talent management the major factor that engenders the retention of employees of Google Ireland?

The first research question helped the researcher discover if there was any sort of cause and effect relationship between employee retention and talent management of millennial employees in Google Ireland. Since this question encapsulates the majority of what the research is about, the findings that answer this question are pertinent. It was found that a cause and effect relationship does exist between talent management and employee retention of millennials. This attests to the findings of Gilbert (2011), Ishafani and Boustani (2014), KPMG (2017) and Thiriku and Were (2016) on how talent management must invariably have an impact on

employees, regardless of the demographic group that the employees belong to. However, the model used in this study was not sufficient to provide the full predictive and explanatory value. Nonetheless, the findings indicate that employee retention of millennials can be influenced by talent management. These findings, however small they may be, help to lend credence to previous researches that have established the viability of talent management to influence the retention rate of millennial employees (Weyaldn, 2011 and Bruce, 2017).

In answering the second question, the findings show that the relationship between talent management and employee loyalty is weak. This finding may be due to the insufficient face value of the factors used to determine employee loyalty. Nonetheless, the regression model generated for this study shows that talent management fosters employee loyalty, no matter how small (Kurter, 2018).

In answering the final question, the means of the variables that can influence employee retention are calculated and compared to assess the variable with the highest mean score. Talent management takes the top position but company image follows closely, with only a difference of 0.27. While, salary (even if it is 20% above average salary in the industry) does not play any significant role in retaining millennial employees. This result is not unexpected, considering the literature on millennials and their attitudes to employment shows that majority of millennials place a high value on the ethical considerations and community impact of the companies where they work; both ethical considerations and community impact culminating in company image or employer brand. This is supported by the works of Foster (2019) and Morel (2019) that conclude that millennials are very concerned by the social contributions and ethical image of the companies where they work.

From the findings of this analysis, it can be asserted that talent management does have effect on the retention of millennial employees and the loyalty of these employees to their

organisation. In addition, talent management is also a huge determinant of the retention of employee retention alongside company image as supported by Ishfani and Boustani (2014) who assert that the impact of talent management on employee retention is a proven constant in any situation assessed.

SECTION SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of Research

The purpose of this research was to check if any cause and effect relationship existed between talent management and retention of millennial employees. This research was carried out due to the dissenting opinions as to whether companies' retention rate of millennial employees is low because the talent management practices are not suited to them or millennials simply love to hop from one job to the other.

This study began by introducing the concepts, the objectives, the research, the methodology and the outline of the chapters. After presenting the background of the study and stating the objectives and research questions that would guide this study, the literature on talent management, employee retention and millennials in the workforce was reviewed. From the literature, three sets of hypotheses were derived, which would be used during the analysis and for answering the research questions. Each set contained a null and alternative hypothesis, all the null hypotheses were rejected via the findings of the analysis. Speaking of the analysis, the linear regression analysis was used to generate models to help in predicting the influence of talent management on employee retention and employee loyalty, respectively. The findings of the study indicated that talent management does indeed influence employee retention of millennial workers but the model does not effectively [predict the actual extent of causal relationship between the variables. Also, employer brand also levels with talent management on the scale of influence on retention of millennial employees.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

It is pertinent for the research on the relationship between talent management and employee retention to be continued, seeing that there is still much to be done. With regards to the findings of this study, the following are recommended for further research:

- (1) The specific strategies of talent management that can be used to retain millennial employees should be investigated. Seeing how company image is becoming more important to millennial employees, studies should be done to ascertain if the focus of companies should be adequately placed on strategies that work instead of all of the practices of talent management.
- (2) Studies should be done to examine how companies can utilise their brand and employer image to increase the retention of their millennial employees. The results show that talent management is no longer the sole influence behind retention. Therefore, more research needs to be done in this area.
- (3) Studies should also be done to examine other employee retention strategies that might have a significant effect on employees, in general.

6.3 Recommendations and Implementation Plan

The following recommendations are made base on the researcher's findings

- (1) Employers seeking to retain their millennial employees should pay more attention to talent management. In these times things like just a good payment package are not enough to retain this generation of employees
- (2) Company image is another very important factor that employers should pay close attention to, millennials want to work in reputable organizations that are in good standing with their surrounding communities

- (3) Google Ireland and other employers in the IT sector in Ireland would need to create more opportunities for personal growth and career development of their employee

The implementation of these recommendations would require formulation and implementation of new talent management policies by employers and these policies would be peculiar to each organization. Also they may impact the current mode of operations of the organization and also be very expensive and time consuming but would be worth it eventually.

6.4 Implication of Findings

The implications of the findings of this study will be discussed in this section of the chapter. The findings are particularly pertinent to researchers interested in furthering the studies on talent management. To delve deeper into the study of these two concepts, I would recommend that a mixed research design should be used in undertaking this study as it would provide more depth to the study. Also, the sample size should be significantly larger than what was used in this study. Although, this might have financial implications, taking on a large sample size, it would yield better results than what was discovered in this study.

6.5 PERSONAL LEARNING STATEMENT

Taking on this research study has been one of the most tasking aspect of my academic career. However, all of the nuances of streamlining my research interests to find a suitable methodology and population to focus the research on as well as conducting the research itself have helped me gain more knowledge that would help me achieve my goals in my career. The concluding part of any task or project is the best time for reflections and assessment of the routes taken as well as the considering the alternatives that would have been more advantageous.

The research area of talent management and employees chosen for this research were an ideal fit for assessing the work attitudes of millennials. However, it would have been prudent if some strategies of talent management had been selected and used for assessing their impact on the retention of millennial employees, instead of the umbrella concept of talent management. Aiming for more specifics would have given the results of the analysis more specificity and created a stronger foundation for further research. Nonetheless, the results of this research do prove that talent management is effective in retaining millennial employees, contrary to popular opinion.

In the aspects of the methodology, a mixed research design would have been more efficient in determining both the impact of talent management on retention and also in highlighting the specific talent management practices. However, this research design would have been extremely time consuming (regarding the time frame for the submission of this dissertation) and would have had incurred immense financial cost for me, especially in conducting the interviews. Nonetheless, the quantitative research design used for this study sufficed in deriving the results of the analysis. Also, I would have used a more diverse and larger sample size to determine the relationship and to have well-rounded generalized results.

If I were to conduct another research study, I would certainly incorporate all aforementioned observations in the research. Yet, all the research strategies, methods and design used in this study certainly helped in creating a dissertation that adds to the budding research on the study of talent management and retention of millennial employees.

6.6 Conclusions

Now, more than ever, the tenets of talent management and work cultures and expectations are changing. As millennials become the largest demographic group in the global workforce, more studies need to be carried out to reassess the established strategies in the field on Human Resources.

This study only shows that talent management can affect employee retention, but it does not show how much the influence. The researcher concedes that models created for evaluating the causal relationship were not sufficient for the analysis and levels of importance could have been measured through ANOVA. However, due to the data size, there was no concrete avenue to conduct an uber extensive analysis. Nonetheless, the fact remains that talent management is not an alien concept to use in retaining millennial employees, as long as it is suited to their needs.

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APPENDICES

This survey is part of an investigation into talent management and retention of millennial employees in IT organisations.

Talent management is a set of activities designed to utilise the capabilities, capacities and skills of employees towards the achievement of the goals of an organisation; however, this research aims to discover if this HR approach works in retaining millennial employees.

Rest assured that this questionnaire will not be time consuming. More importantly, all your responses and details will be kept confidential.

Thank you for taking time to be part of this survey.

SECTION 1

1. Which department do you work in? :.....
2. Which position do you hold? :.....
3. How long have you worked at Google Ireland?
 - Less than 6 months
 - 6 months
 - 8 months
 - 1 year
 - 2 years
 - 2 years and above
4. To which gender identity do you most identify?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Transgender Female
 - Transgender Male
 - Non-Binary
 - Prefer not to answer
5. How much do you make per annum?
 - €34,000 and below
 - Between €35,000 and €40,000
 - Between €45,000 and €50,000
 - Between €50,000 and €60,000
 - Between €60,000 and €70,000
 - Between €80,000 and €90,000
 - Between €90,000 and €100,000
 - €100,000 and above
6. How old are you?

SECTION 2

For the following sections, please indicate the extent to which you are satisfied or dissatisfied; and agree or disagree with the following statements

(HS: Highly Satisfied, S: Satisfied, N: Neutral, D: Dissatisfied, HD: Highly Dissatisfied)

(SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree)

Please, indicate your opinion towards the following statements by marking ✓ in the appropriate column

S/N	Statements	HS	S	N	D	HD
	SATISFACTION WITH THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND POLICIES					
1	Accuracy of job description					
2	Salary Review					
3	Promotion					
	SATISFACTION WITH THE SALARY AND BENEFITS					
4	Medical insurance package					
5	Paid vacation					
6	Paid maternal/paternal leave					
7	Share option plan					
8	Holiday entertainment					
9	Overall, how much are you satisfied with your company's employee benefit's package					
	MANAGING PERFORMANCE					
10	The immediate supervisor sets ambitious objectives for the department					
11	The immediate supervisor clearly explains how performance is evaluated					

12	The immediate supervisor gives regular feedback on the performance					
13	The immediate supervisor is a good coach for the unit					
	DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN FOR STAFF	SA	A	N	D	SD
14	The immediate supervisor delegates responsibility to their subordinates					
15	The immediate supervisor discusses future career development with the subordinates					
16	There is a lot of scope for career development in the existing job					
17	The organisation offers support and resources for development					
	ENGAGEMENT	HS	S	N	D	HD
18	I get the feeling of personal accomplishment from the work					
19	I'm satisfied with Google Ireland as a place to work					
20	I recommend Google Ireland to others as a good place to work					
21	I will not leave the company or plan to move to another company in the future					

SECTION 3

CAREER PROGRESSION

Current job: Offers a clear path for development with numerous opportunities; however, the salary is a market average for the industry.

Another job: Offers a salary 10% above the average market salary for the industry but your career progression appears hazy.

How likely are you to stay in your job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Slightly Unlikely
- Slightly Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

FEEDBACK

Your current job: Offers senior level mentorship to employees with regular feedback and evaluations to help with your development with the average salary in the industry.

Another job: Offers no mentorship or feedback until after six months but employees are allowed to take on personal projects on company time; with the average salary in the industry.

How likely are you to stay in your job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Slightly Unlikely
- Slightly Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

TRAINING

Your current job: Offers free training courses and career seminars during work hours as well as during employees' free time with the average salary in the industry.

Another job: Does not facilitate platforms for training to acquire new skills. Nonetheless, employees who do not acquire new skills not pressured to do so by the threat of retrenchment. The salary is the average pay in the industry.

How likely are you to stay in your job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely

- Slightly Unlikely
- Slightly Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

ENGAGEMENT

Your current job: Allows employees to offer innovative ideas which have an 80% chance of being implemented and fosters teamwork and a sense of community. The salary is the average pay in the industry.

Another job: Does not create an avenue for employees to share ideas but the employee benefits are robust. The salary is the average pay in the industry.

How likely are you to stay in your job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Slightly Unlikely
- Slightly Likely
- Likely
- Very Likely

COMPANY IMAGE

Your current job: Has a reputable company image and has values that resonate with you as a person but the pay is the average salary in the industry.

Another job: Stands for values that you do not necessarily agree with but the pay is 20% higher than the average salary in the industry.

How likely are you to stay in your job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Slightly Unlikely
- Slightly Likely

- Likely
- Very Likely