

**A Study Investigating the Effect of Job Satisfaction on the
Millennial Generation in Irish Call Centres**

A dissertation submitted for M.A. in Human Resource Management

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Jovana Temaj

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Abstract

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon that determines the extent an employee is satisfied with their job which can also influence their turnover intentions in an organisation, such as call centres. Turnover is a complex issue that call centres continuously face and these turnover rates are mainly associated with employees from the millennial generation. This research aims to examine the fundamental factors that affect job satisfaction among millennials in call centres. The researcher uses variables derived from Herzberg's two-factor theory to examine existing factors that satisfy and dissatisfy millennials while also identifying the predictors of job satisfaction based on the perceptions of millennials. This study focused on employees of call centres in Ireland and used a qualitative approach to collect data by conducting in-depth interviews with 9 millennial participants who had experience in this industry. The findings revealed predictors of job satisfaction that would contribute to millennials' satisfaction in call centres. These include recognition, progression opportunities, supervision, benefits, salary, training, feedback, employee wellbeing and altering or eliminating targets. The main recommendations suggest that HR professionals should concentrate on improving these factors by being trained on the topic of job satisfaction to execute effective approaches that focus on millennial employees' needs to understand what actions can facilitate high satisfaction levels. This may provide the solution to minimising the turnover rates for the millennial generation in call centres.

The research was limited by a small sample size due to Covid-19. The imposed restrictions by the government, made accessibility to a larger sample size impossible. Nonetheless, it prepares a basis for understanding job satisfaction among millennials which shows potential in improving HR practices within call centre settings that recruit millennials and can be researched further using a quantitative approach.

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

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Name: Jovana Temaj

Student Number: x19115962

Degree for which thesis is submitted: MA in HRM

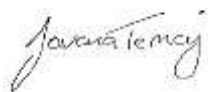
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background & Significance of the Study

Customer relations is one of the components of an organisation that changes with its growth and plays an essential role in maintaining a good relationship with its customers. Presently, if customers are facing ongoing issues with a company's product, they demand immediate attention through various communication means such as email, telephone and other social networks (Zapf et al. 2003). To maintain good customer relations, a vast number of organisations have turned to service-based call centres. Call centres were introduced in the 1990s and are becoming an essential part for most organisations today (Sato 2018). Their purpose is to reduce costs and improve quality of service for customers by serving as an interface between the customers and organisations (Zito et al. 2018). Due to the surge of call centres, attention has been cast upon their high turnover rates which was evident in several studies such as Flint et al. (2013) and Ro and Lee (2017). As such, the question arises as to whether job satisfaction could be affecting the high turnover rates observed. While there have been countless studies in the field of job satisfaction (Annakis et al. 2011), the impact of job satisfaction on employees in a call centre environment is currently capturing researchers' attention (Zhou et al. 2009; Ro and Lee 2017).

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon that has been commonly researched throughout the years with many theories and concepts linked to it (Uzonna 2013). As such, human resource (HR) professionals face significant challenges in managing their employees and keeping them satisfied (Aziri 2011). Thus, an organisation aspires to achieve high levels of job satisfaction in its workplace to promote high performance levels among their employees.

Studies show that job satisfaction plays a significant role in determining an employee's intention to leave an organisation or not (Celik and Oz 2011; Zhang and Li 2020). In call centres, employees are viewed as being more susceptible to having lower levels of job satisfaction and higher intentions to leave due to the presence of many negative workplace related impacts such as stress, frustration and pressure (Lewin and Sager 2007). So, where are call centres going wrong? Are there no prospects on creating effective strategies to eliminate these issues? Due to the continuous external changes

being made to improve services and customer relations, organisations tend to overlook the need for internal changes to optimise the work environment (Sato 2018). This places pressure among employees to meet the demands of an organisation and it is for this reason that negative aspects arise in the workplace (Molino et al. 2016).

Moreover, high turnover rates in call centres have been a continuous challenge and will continue due to the potential link with low levels of job satisfaction (Hong and Yang 2019), especially among younger generations such as the millennials as they comprise most of the workforce in call centres (Bobek and Wickham 2015). Traditionally, a call centre was perceived as a low paying occupation, mainly suitable for lower-skilled and middle-skilled people (Fleming and Sturdy 2011) due to a lack of advancement opportunities (Zito et al. 2018). Could this perhaps be the reason why millennials are possibly not satisfied and tend to leave call centres?

Millennials are described as the 'look at me' generation who are overly self-absorbed and expect to be involved in everything in the organisation (Pew Research Center 2007). As the role in a call centre tends to be controlled in nature with limited room for autonomy (Sato 2018), millennials are less likely to stay loyal to that organisation (Marston 2019). However, millennials are a crucial workforce for the organisation as they bring many unique skills and abilities that can benefit it (Myers and Sadaghiani 2010).

While there have been many studies conducted on millennials and job satisfaction (Campioni 2015; Garcia et al. 2019), however it has not been explored substantially within the Irish context. With the expansion of the call centre industry in Ireland (Breathnach 2000), this research aims to fill the gap in the literature by investigating job satisfaction among millennials in Irish call centres. This study will be constructive for the organisations which utilise call centres, as satisfied employees have been shown to be more motivated and deliver a better level of customer service than dissatisfied employees (Zhou et al. 2009).

There are many factors present in call centres that have an impact on job satisfaction such as turnover, stress, autonomy, performance and rewards: These factors will be considered to support the literature review and research as previous studies have discovered a connection between job satisfaction and these factors (Malik et al. 2010; Miao 2011; Park et al. 2014).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The objective of the study is to tackle the gap in knowledge regarding job satisfaction among millennials in Irish call centres as there are currently limited empirical studies conducted on this topic in Ireland. Therefore, it would be advantageous to analyse existing factors affecting job satisfaction among Irish millennials working in call centres to see what fundamental factors contribute to their satisfaction in this work environment.

There are two research questions developed to investigate this study and will be discussed further in chapter 3.

1. Do separate factors cause millennials to be satisfied or dissatisfied in call centres?
2. What are the key predictors of job satisfaction that causes satisfaction among millennials in call centres?

The results of these research questions aim to provide an understanding of factors that influence job satisfaction and assist call centres with suggestions to develop successful strategies to improve their satisfaction and potentially minimise turnover rates.

1.3 Approach to this Study

The primary task of the researcher was to gather all relevant literature to gain full understanding of the research topic. For data collection, the researcher will be using a qualitative approach, whereby the primary data will be collected by conducting in-depth interviews with millennials who have been employed in call centres. These interviews will comprise a set of standardised questions related to job satisfaction in a call centre work environment. The answers to these questions will then be analysed to facilitate the researcher to establish relationships between the factors influencing job satisfaction to form conclusions and recommendations.

1.4 Definitions of the Terms

Job satisfaction involves positive and negative attitudes and feelings that employees have towards their job. If the attitudes are negative, then it indicates that there is dissatisfaction, and if the attitudes are positive then it indicates satisfaction (Armstrong 2006, p. 264).

Call Centre is defined as a workplace where customer service representatives communicate with customers through phone and computer-based methods such as emails (Zapf et al. 2003).

Customer service representatives/agents are employees that work in a call centre and are generally the first point of contact between the customer and organisation as they deal with customers directly via email, telephone and other social network means (Sato 2018).

Millennials are defined as a generation of individuals who were born between the years 1981 and 1996 (Kadokia 2017).

Turnover refers to employees who leave the organisation (Zito et al. 2018).

Turnover intention is an employee's plan to leave an organisation (Celik and Oz 2011).

1.5 Overview of the Chapters

The dissertation is structured as follows.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter outlines the explanation and importance of job satisfaction and identifies problem areas of call centres and associated literature on what affect job satisfaction has on call centre representatives while also introducing millennials. It also includes the objectives and defines the terms used throughout this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Provides appropriate theories and concepts from available literature conducted by others on job satisfaction, millennials and call centres. It also presents factors affecting job satisfaction such as turnover, stress, autonomy, performance, and rewards.

Chapter 3: Research Question

Proposes the research questions for investigation derived from the literature review.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Presents the design and method of research used, the instrument used to gather the primary data (interviews) and finally the techniques used to analyse the data collected.

Chapter 5: Findings

Provides analysis of the findings from the data gathered.

Chapter 6: Discussion

Discusses the findings, implications and limitations of the study.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

Includes conclusions, offers recommendations and ideas for future study.

Chapter 8: References

Displays all relevant sources referenced in this dissertation.

Chapter 9: Self-Reflective Journal

Includes own learning and self-reflection required by Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

Chapter 10: Appendices

Displays all relevant appendices attached for this dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon that determines to what extent an employee is satisfied with their job (Aziri 2011). A 2017 study by Ro and Lee (2017) reported high turnover rates in call centres. The question arises whether the employees' intention to leave the organisation relates to their satisfaction at work. Thus, it would be worthy to study the existing theories and concepts to understand and study the factors that affect job satisfaction. Millennials comprise the largest percentage of workers employed at call centres (Bobek and Wicham, 2015). Therefore, it is advantageous to focus on the study of job satisfaction within the employees who belong to the millennial generation to understand their values, preferences and what satisfies them for possible future satisfaction and retention in call centres. Thus, this chapter explores existing research and literature on the job satisfaction phenomenon by explaining what it is and outlining the factors influencing this phenomenon while also exploring its existing theories. The chapter also concentrates on the extant literature of millennials and call centres while also exploring the emergence of call centres in Ireland.

2.2 What is Job Satisfaction?

Job satisfaction refers to how a person feels towards their job and the working environment. It relates to positive and negative attitudes that determines the degree of which a person likes or dislikes their job (Spector 1997). If the attitudes are negative, then it indicates that there is dissatisfaction and if the attitudes are positive, then it indicates that they are satisfied in the workplace (Armstrong 2006). George and Jones (2008, p.78) argue that it varies between extreme satisfaction and extreme dissatisfaction. The argument lies here as to whether job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are the same, or if they are a contrary and an excludable phenomenon? Aziri (2011) noted that there is currently no agreement among published authors regarding the relationship between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Therefore, both phenomena will be considered however, the prime focus of this research will primarily explore the factors affecting job satisfaction in a workplace. These factors are directly linked with call centres and millennials, which are discussed in Section 2.3.

2.3 Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction

2.3.1 *Employee Turnover & Absenteeism*

The extant literature shows that job satisfaction is a key determinant of influencing an employee's intention to leave an organisation (Zhang and Li 2020). Call centres are one of many organisations that continuously experience high absenteeism and turnover rates (Batt and Colvin 2011). As a result, they lose quality employees and face high costs to recruit and train new hires (Thite and Russell 2010). Zhou et al. (2009), Hong and Yang (2019) report that turnover and absenteeism is directly linked to low levels of job satisfaction present in the workplace. With the millennial generation comprising majority of the employees at call centres it is important to evaluate, whether dissatisfaction is the reason why they leave.

Marston (2019) reported that the millennial generation are most difficult to satisfy and retain in an organisation. However, Annakis et al. (2011) found that when millennial employees are satisfied, they tend to stay within the organisation and make positive contributions. Studies (Celik and Oz 2011; Garcia et al. 2019) show that high job satisfaction has a positive relationship with reducing absenteeism and turnover intentions.

Consequently, it is worth noting that high job satisfaction will not necessarily lead to low absenteeism and turnover, but that having no job satisfaction is more likely to encourage high absenteeism and turnover rates. The main concept is that the higher the job satisfaction is, the lower the probability of absenteeism and turnover (Aziri 2011).

2.3.2 *Stress*

Moods and emotions directly affect an individual's satisfaction as it influences the cognitive and emotional state (Uzonna 2013). Studies show (Zito et al. 2018; Griffin et al. 2019) that if the moods and emotions are positive, the individual is more content and energetic, thereby increasing their satisfaction, and if they are negative, the individual experiences feelings of stress, sadness and emotional exhaustion; these are linked to dissatisfaction.

Call centres are described as stressful environments (Flint et al. 2013) due to the constant timing pressures, monitoring and mechanistic tasks (Molino et al. 2016). Additionally, the work consists of emotional labour where employees face complex calls received from customers who sometimes express their anger and frustration, while employees are required to be helpful and ‘smile down the phone’ to suppress their negative emotions (O’Connell 2010). Wang et al. (2011) and Kenworthy et al. (2014) found that suppressing negative emotions is energy consuming and impacts the employee’s wellbeing; it may lead to anxiety and emotional exhaustion due to constantly forcing expressions of positive emotions thereby, decreasing satisfaction.

Furthermore, Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) discovered that when millennial employees are faced with anxiety and pressure at work, they seek support from members of the organisation such as their co-workers and supervisors. According to Alsop’s study (2008), there is a positive correlation between the level of support received in the workplace and job satisfaction as it causes a reduction in emotional exhaustion and stress.

Moreover, Mullins (2016) uncovered a link between job satisfaction and lower levels of stress. The author argues that individuals have a healthier mental and physical state when they are satisfied. Thus, organisations such as call centres which focus on reducing the level of stress and emotional exhaustion are likely to increase job satisfaction among their employees (Annakis et al. 2011).

2.3.3 *Autonomy*

Autonomy refers to the extent of freedom an individual has in terms of deciding how their work should be done (Zito et al. 2018). Emanuel et al. (2017) concentrated on autonomy and established a link between autonomy and job satisfaction. It was found that when organisations allow room for autonomy, it stimulates motivation, development and positive emotions creating satisfaction within the workplace.

However, there is limited autonomy in call centres due to the constant monitoring of performance, pressuring set targets with mechanistic and monotonous tasks (Molino et al. 2016). This has a significant impact on the millennial generation as they desire to have a voice in the workplace and therefore, favour autonomy to achieve their work through empowerment and enjoy being involved in decision making. Studies,

including Van der Westhuizen et al. (2012), Pacheco and Webber (2016) show there is a positive relationship between active involvement in tasks and job satisfaction. The findings showed that employees are more satisfied once they can freely participate in the decision-making process at work.

2.3.4 Performance

There is preponderance of research evidence in relation to whether job satisfaction leads to increased performance (Mullins 2016) or performance leads to increased job satisfaction (Luthans 1998, p. 147; Miao et al. 2017). Springer (2011) argues that job satisfaction can lead to an increase in performance but an employee who is satisfied does not necessarily mean that their performance will increase or improve. Most certainly however, dissatisfaction leads to a disruption in performance whereby employees become unproductive (Hong and Yang 2019).

Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) found that millennials are more likely to disrupt their performance when they are dissatisfied. Alsop (2008) states that millennials need constant open communication and feedback on their performance to indicate how well they are carrying out a task. The study proved that millennials are more likely to be satisfied and productive when feedback is given on their performance as it influences attitudes and behaviours towards work.

Therefore, Zhang and Li (2020) state that in order to encourage performance and increase satisfaction, organisations should give positive and even negative feedback to employees on their performance to provide an understanding and willingness to improve; this creates a sense of meaningfulness. Some studies dealt with work meaningfulness, Brannan et al. (2015), Shantz and Booth (2014) which showed that a positive relationship exists between performance, feedback, job satisfaction and meaningfulness. They discovered that satisfied employees would work better when their job is meaningful because *'a happy worker is a productive worker'*.

2.3.5 Rewards

Job satisfaction is determined by a stimulus of rewards. Priya and Eshwar (2014) refer to a reward as something that an employee receives in return for the contributions and efforts made to the organisation such as compensation, promotions, benefits etc. When

there is a lack of these stimuli in the workplace, it can often lead to dissatisfaction. Annakis et al. (2011) and Zito et al. (2018) state that call centres offer limited rewards and benefits to their employees. The question arises as to whether call centres need to focus on rewards to increase satisfaction among their employees.

Additionally, Devonish (2018) undertook research in the public and private sector exploring the link between job satisfaction and rewards. He used a rewards questionnaire from Siegrist et al (2004) and a job satisfaction questionnaire developed by Camman, et al. (1979). The results have shown that rewarding an employee had a significantly positive effect on their job satisfaction.

Studies (Markova and Ford 2011; Wei and Yazdanifard 2014) show that it is important for an organisation to have an appropriate reward system in place as it has a powerful influence on job satisfaction. It stimulates positive feelings and emotions whereby employees feel valued and appreciated for their efforts (Chiang and Birtch 2011) that may motivate them to enhance their performance to receive greater rewards (Sajuyigbe et al. 2013).

2.4 How do these Factors Relate to the Theoretical Models?

Several theories have emerged from the field of job satisfaction to understand what influences an employees' satisfaction at a workplace. This section provides a brief summary for the five main theories on this subject.

2.4.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow developed the model between 1943-1954 by analysing and taking notes of individuals' behaviours to understand human motivation (Maslow 1943). Although this theory is usually associated with motivation, it is one of the first theories which identified and analysed the significant contributors of job satisfaction. The theory states that there are five levels of human needs on the hierarchy of importance (see Fig. 1) which begins with physiological needs and moves onto safety needs, belongingness, esteem needs and the need for self-actualisation.

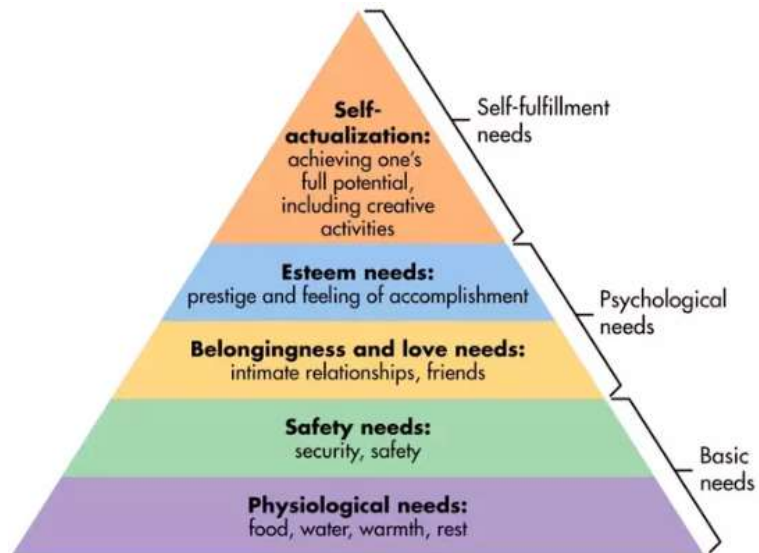


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1943)

Maslow (1943) believes that the first level (psychological needs) must be satisfied before moving onto the next level and that the degree of satisfaction depends on the individual as some contributors may be more satisfactory than others.

Nevertheless, there are several complexities with this theory as employees do not satisfy all their needs at a workplace; they have other needs that are personal to them which a manager cannot satisfy (Griffin et al. 2019). Despite criticisms the theory still creates an understanding of individual needs (Robbins and Judge 2007).

2.4.2 Alderfer's ERG Theory

Clayton Alderfer developed this theory in 1969 by conducting a questionnaire study with 110 employees in a bank (Alderfer 1972). It is a modified model that was refined from Maslow's five level hierarchy, refining job satisfaction into three levels of needs. These are existence, relatedness and growth (ERG theory) which are illustrated by Alderfer (1969) in Figure 2 and defined as follows

1. *Existence* is the need for basic human survival, and it matches the safety and psychological needs of Maslow's hierarchy.
2. *Relatedness* – concerns social relationships covering love, meaningfulness, belongingness, esteem etc. which matches belongingness and esteem needs of Maslow's hierarchy; and

3. *Growth* - concerns development covering self-esteem and self-actualisation in Maslow's hierarchy.

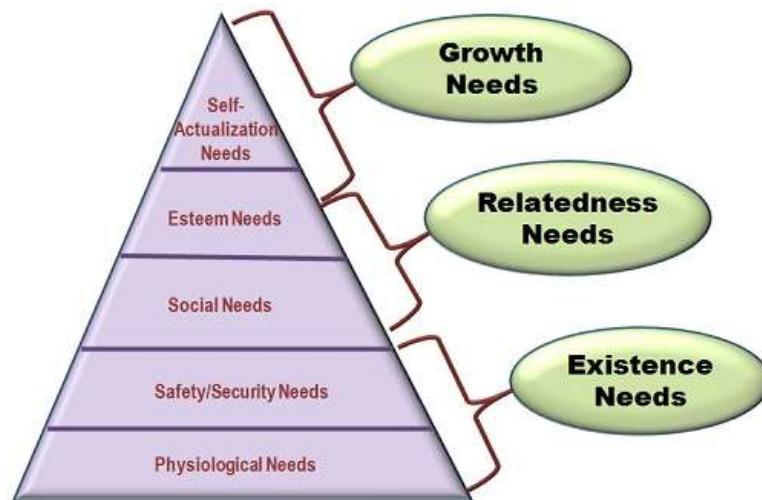


Figure 2. ERG Theory (Alderfer 1969)

Alderfer (1972) states that individuals proceed through the levels of existence, relatedness and growth, and argues that once the first level of need is achieved (existence) the employee becomes satisfied. It is more continuous than Maslow's theory as multiple needs can be activated simultaneously moving up and down the hierarchy (Redmond 2010). However, criticisms exist as the extent of satisfaction with these three levels vary from person to person depending on different individual characteristics and how their personality perceives a situation (Arnolds and Boshoff 2002).

2.4.3 Adam's Equity Theory

John Adams developed the equity theory in 1963 which examines the fairness present in the place of work and is based on the inputs and outcomes of the individual (Adams 1965). Inputs refers to the individual's skills, loyalty, commitment, enthusiasm, and contribution to the organisation while outcomes refer to what an individual receives in return for the contribution: for example, pay, bonuses, promotion, recognition etc. (Kehoe 2013).

The concept of the theory argues that individuals compare their own input-to-outcome ratio to the ratio of a comparison-other (Adams 1965): for example an employee will compare their efforts and the extent of rewards they receive for those efforts, with the

efforts and rewards of another employee. If the comparison is equal and the individual is being rewarded for their inputs, then it indicates that they are satisfied (Adams 1965). However, if the comparison is dissimilar in ratios, the individual perceives inequity and as a result, it leads to tension and unpleasantness at work whereby the individual feels dissatisfied (Adams 1963). The perceived inequity will, therefore, motivate an individual to eliminate or decrease tension and unfairness in order to restore equity by either making changes to their inputs or outcomes, or leaving the organisation (Huseman et al. 1987).

However, the equity theory is not free from criticisms as the theory fails to recognise individual differences i.e. individuals can have the same experience, qualification and perform the same job but can have different values and therefore, may perceive fairness and react to situations differently (Mowday 1991).

2.4.4 The Job Characteristics Theory

Job characteristics are acknowledged as significant precursors of job satisfaction. The Hackman Oldham model (Hackman and Oldham, 1976) outlines five job characteristics:

1. *Variety* which refers to the degree to which a job requires different skills.
2. *Identity* refers to the degree to which a task is completed with a tangible outcome
3. *Significance* refers to the degree to which the job affects a person or others.
4. *Autonomy* refers to the extent the individual has freedom and independence to carry out his or her work and finally,
5. *Feedback* refers to the extent to which the individual's job provides clear direction and important information on the effectiveness of the individual's performance.

These characteristics affect three critical psychological states: (1) The degree to which an individual experiences meaningfulness in their job; (2) The degree to which an

individual experiences responsibility and accountability for their work outcomes or results; and (3) The degree to which an individual has knowledge on how successfully they are carrying out the job (Hackman and Oldham 1976). Hackman and Oldham (1975) developed two instruments to assess the constructs of this theory: The Job Diagnostic Survey and The Job Rating Form. It indicates that if employees score highly in all three psychological states, then the employee is content and will respond well to their work (Hackman and Oldham 1980).

Consequently, studies show (Fried and Ferris 1987; Towler 2020) that some of the crucial theoretical relationships between job characteristics and the psychological states are not supported within the model. This is presumed as the model was created in the 1980s when jobs had fixed roles whereas in the modern times many competent roles now exist. Nonetheless, this model can still be useful for managers in terms of understanding how to create jobs that satisfy and motivate individuals (Towler 2020).

2.4.5 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg aspired to discover what causes employees to be satisfied and dissatisfied in a workplace (1987). The theorist interviewed 203 accountants and engineers in 1959 and asked them to reflect on experiences in their present or previous job where they felt remarkably satisfied and dissatisfied (Herzberg 2003). The results indicated that there were two factors; motivator factors and hygiene factors that influenced job satisfaction and motivation.

Motivator factors (satisfiers) relate to an individual's need for self-growth and is concerned with a set of factors that motivate an individual to greater efforts and performance: For example, achievement, recognition, the work itself, performance, responsibility, growth and advancement (Herzberg 2003).

Contrastingly, hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) are concerned with the fair treatment at work and ensuring a pleasant working environment (Kehoe 2013). For example: good working conditions, salary, benefits, positive co-worker relationships and good quality of supervision.

The theory states that these two factors (hygiene and motivation factors) are equally important as it argues that if there was an absence of motivator factors it would mean

no satisfaction and if there was an absence of hygiene factors, it would mean dissatisfaction (Herzberg 2003) Thus, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two different dimensions where motivation is assumed to affect satisfaction and hygiene affects dissatisfaction (Herzberg 1965). Together (hygiene and motivator factors) they have been found to not cause dissatisfaction (Herzberg 1965).

However, the theory is not free from criticisms where Herzberg only interviewed engineers and accountants, its validity becomes questionable to other workers. It argues that one factor may satisfy an employee but dissatisfy another thus, it presumes that each group of workers will have a different outcome (Griffin et al. 2019).

As discussed, Herzberg's study assessed job satisfaction based on people's occupation. However, the study did not provide an insight into what contributes to job satisfaction of people from different generations such as millennials who have different socio economic and cultural backgrounds when compared to other generations.

2.5 Millennials

Kadokia (2017) states that the millennial generation applies to anybody born between the years 1981 to 1996. Studies by Lyons and Kuron (2014) and Garcia et al. (2019) show that millennials are quite different to previous generations as they have different outlooks, preferences and values. They are also the first generation to have been born into households that had computers and been surrounded by digital media while growing up. Thus, millennials are crucial to organisations as they are more comfortable at interacting with technology (Myers and Sadaghiani 2010).

In relation to interaction, millennials are a generation that must learn about work tasks through interacting and socialising with co-workers. They learn to adapt and understand by continuously learning through constant communication and therefore, see their co-workers as friends (Campione 2015).

Contrastingly, according to the Pew Research Center (2007) millennials are described as the 'look at me' generation who are overly self-absorbed and self-important. Hill's study (2008) uncovers that millennials focus on the lifestyle they desire rather than the

career itself and thus, they seek opportunities where they can aspire to their lifestyles and self-development. They spend time in internships, travelling, volunteering, pursuing further education and are focused on personal achievement and success (Myers and Sadaghiani 2010).

Hansen and Leuty's study (2012) state that millennials are less likely to stay loyal to an organisation, unless they feel that the job offers them opportunities to show their abilities, creativeness, expansion in responsibilities, involved in decision making, express their opinions freely and a job that will benefit their personal desires. As a result, millennials will feel that their job is meaningful and are thus, more likely to stay longer in an organisation and are more likely to be satisfied (Kong et al. 2016).

In addition to this, Garcia (2016) did a study on millennials and found that their career was more meaningful when organisations offered them a flexible job with plenty of interesting work tasks that challenges their abilities. The question arises whether call centre organisations offer these opportunities that contribute to millennials' preferences and values. Therefore, it is crucial to review existing literature on call centres to understand the nature of its work.

2.6 Call Centre Overview

A call centre is defined as a workplace where agents communicate directly with customers through phone and computer-based methods such as emails (Zapf et al. 2003). The activities of call centres can be summarised as inbound and outbound. Inbound means that customers contact the call centre directly about issues or complaints, and outbound means agents contact customers in terms of telemarketing or sales (Lewin and Sager 2007). The activities of call centres carry out an important role for the organisation in terms of collecting customer information which can be used to improve and develop new services and products (Sato 2018).

Fleming and Sturdy (2011) found that call centres were isolated from other departments of an organisation as call centres offer work to semi-skilled workers; while it cannot be viewed as knowledge work, it does demand more advanced expertise than those of low-skilled workers. Hence, call centres are crucial; they function as interfaces between the customers and an organisation and are the main

source for gaining insight and impressions from customers about the organisation far sooner than other departments in an organisation (Sato 2018).

Consequently, the extant literature states that there are minimal opportunities for career progression in call centres while also offering a relatively low salary with unfavourable hours (Zito et al. 2018). Additionally, the workplace environment in call centres is described by Deery et al. (2002) as stressful due to the constant pressures of reaching targets, controlling and monitoring length of call and completed time, which gives little room for autonomy. The work itself can be characterised as monotonous which has been shown by Annakis et al. (2011) and Ro and Lee (2017) to lead to low levels of job satisfaction and high turnover rates. According to Ro and Lee (2017), the impact of job satisfaction in call centres has captured the attention of researchers worldwide, and therefore it would also be valuable to study this in the Irish context.

2.7 Call Centres in Ireland

Breathnach (2000) states that the call centre expansion in Ireland commenced in the 1990s, servicing a wide range of industries such as financial services, telecoms, tourism, IT, media, entertainment, pharmaceutical etc.

Although there is minimal research conducted on call centres in Ireland, present literature of Customer Contact Management Association (CCMA 2014) states that there are currently over 40,000 employees working in the call centre sector in Ireland. According to Bobek and Wickham's (2015) study, most of the population of the workforce are made up of the millennial generation; aged between 25 to 40 years. Studies also show that call centres are dominated by females and are making up 70% of all jobs in the call centre (Breathnach 2002).

Moreover, Holman et al. (2007) proclaims that Ireland is a liberal market economy, whereby the economy is relaxed in terms of having higher levels of inequity wages and lower levels of workers with required training and skills. This economic trend is likely to have contributed to the rapid expansion of contact centres where employment of low skilled workers is adequate to fulfil the requirements of the job. Studies show that Irish call centres have a relatively low salary, where the average pay is €22,000

per annum and offers only 2 weeks training to become competent in the role (CPL 2019)

2.8 Conclusion

Job satisfaction is crucial in determining the extent to which an employee feels satisfied with their job. The literature review revealed that there are factors that affect employees' job satisfaction including absenteeism, turnover, stress, autonomy, performance and rewards. These factors influence the job satisfaction of any employees within all industries, such as the millennials working at call centres.

The literature review discussed existent theories on job satisfaction which show that an individual's feelings about their job, working environment and organisation has an influence on their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in terms of factors that affect job satisfaction. However, Herzberg's two-factor theory was most relevant for the purpose of this study as it examines factors that influence satisfaction (motivators) and dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) in the workplace. These factors contain all the necessary variables for identifying an employee's level of job satisfaction. Thus, the researcher will use these factors as a base for developing specific research questions and methodology to investigate job satisfaction of millennials working in call centres for the study.

From carrying out the literature review, it is evident that the call centre industry is growing rapidly. However, there is currently a lack of literature on job satisfaction in call centres in Ireland. Consequently, it is important to investigate job satisfaction in call centres as many people will be employed within this industry in Ireland.

The literature review provided an insight into the call centre work environment. Call centres appear to be stressful environments with complex issues such as high turnover rates, stress, monotonous nature of work and lack of opportunities for progression. Since majority of the employees in call centres are millennials, it is crucial to obtain a representative sample from this generation. Therefore, this research aims to understand through qualitative research, the fundamental factors that affect job satisfaction among the millennial generation which may increase satisfaction and

possibly reduce turnover rates in call centres. The researcher will collect and analyse data by conducting interviews with millennials who have experience or are currently employed at call centres to answer the proposed research questions which will enable the researcher to develop theory. The research questions derived from the literature review for this study are identified and discussed further in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Question

The research aims to examine the level of job satisfaction present among millennials in Irish call centres. It also aims to determine fundamental factors that contribute to the satisfaction of millennials within a call centre environment.

A conceptual framework was created to envision existing factors (See Fig. 3) that influence job satisfaction which were derived from Herzberg's (1965) two-factor theory from the literature review. These factors (satisfiers and dissatisfiers) are used as a base to examine and compare what aspects of the job cause millennials to be satisfied and dissatisfied in call centres.

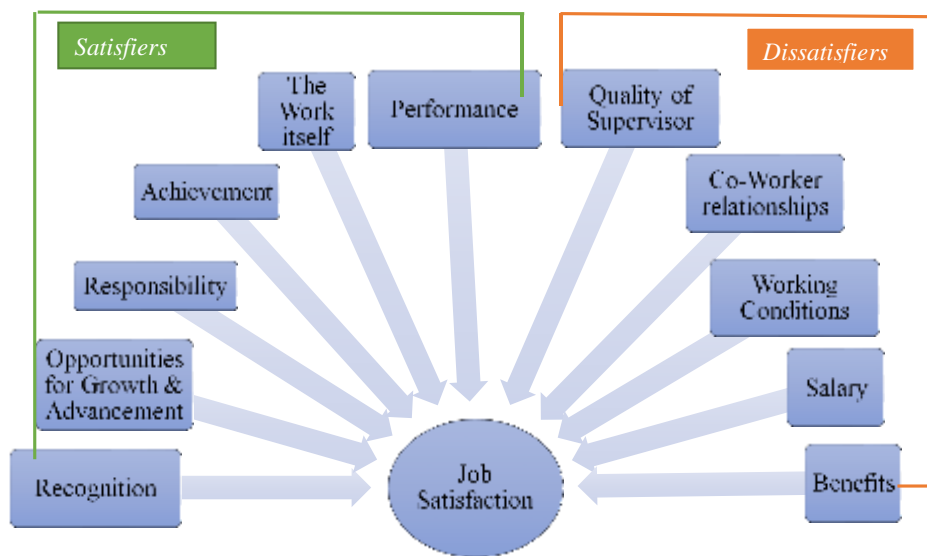


Figure 3. Job satisfaction factors adapted from Herzberg's (1965) two-factor theory

Consequently, two research questions were developed below to investigate this study:

1. Do separate factors cause millennials to be satisfied or dissatisfied in call centres?
2. What are key predictors of job satisfaction that causes satisfaction among millennials in call centres?

The first question aims to examine satisfaction and dissatisfaction of millennials in call centres based on Figure 3. The second question aims to obtain solutions or recommendations from millennials that would contribute to their satisfaction in call centres.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on how the research will be investigated to provide observations in relation to the research questions mentioned in Chapter 3. Both primary and secondary research was undertaken to fulfil the objectives of the two research questions. There are many research methods available, but the most appropriate research method chosen is described in Section 4.5. This Chapter details the research methodology, research philosophy, research approach, secondary data collection, as well as primary qualitative data collection containing the method, participants, procedure, and pilot testing. The chapter also outlines the analysis of qualitative data, the ethical considerations, and its limitations in relation to the project.

4.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology forms an integral part of research and is defined by Buckley et al. (1976) as “*the strategy or architectural design by which the researcher maps out an approach to problem-finding or problem-solving*” and accordingly, this chapter describes the approach the researcher will take to carry out their research. There are two key types of research methodology: qualitative and quantitative (refer to Section 4.5). As part of this study, the researcher is using a qualitative research methodology to analyse job satisfaction among millennials in call centre settings which will be discussed further in this chapter.

Saunders et al. (2019) developed a research methodology model known as the “Research Onion” (see Fig. 4) which contains layers utilised for clarification and organisation of collected data, facilitating its analysis.

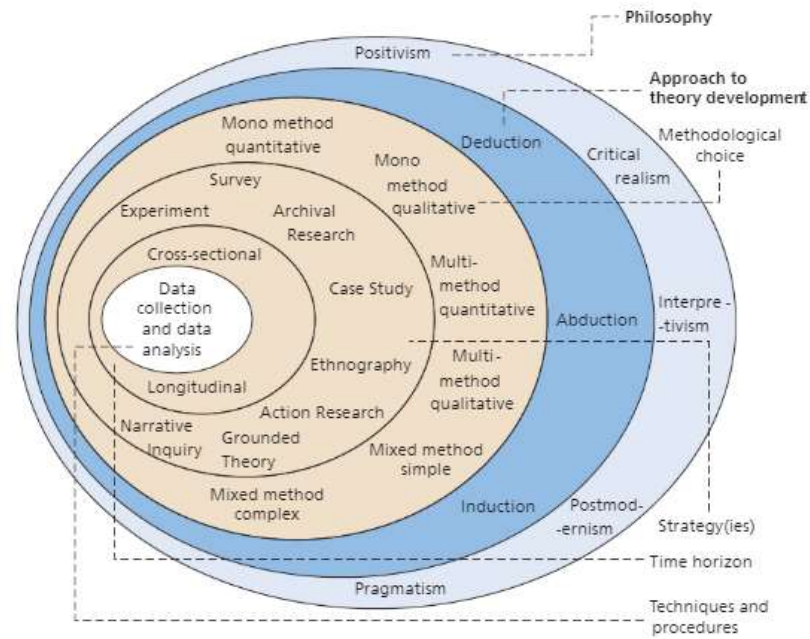


Figure 4. Research Onion (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019)

The model’s outer layer represents various research philosophies (see Section 4.3 for detail) while the layers in the middle represent the selected methods and approaches contained in the investigating process and finally, the inner layer comprises collection and analysis of data with both primary and secondary information. The “Research Onion” model will be used for guidance as part of this project.

4.3 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders et al. (2019) research philosophy can be defined as “*a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge*”. There are three key types of assumptions that exist simultaneously while carrying out research: ontological, epistemological and axiological (Creswell 2003). These assumptions are crucial to discuss as they guide the researcher in establishing their selected approach, strategy, method for collecting data and procedures for data analysis (Saunders et al. 2019).

Ontological refers to the assumptions about the nature of reality (Aliyu et al. 2015) in terms of how the researcher views the world and their choice of what to research based on what is reality (Saunders et al. 2019). *Axiological* refers to the degree to which the

researcher's values influence the research process (Burrell and Morgan 1979) and finally, *Epistemological* refers to the theory of knowledge (Aliyu et al. 2015). It concerns assumptions about human knowledge and what constitutes acceptable, valid and legitimate knowledge (Burrell and Morgan 1979).

The three assumptions of ontology, axiology and epistemology are related to research philosophies illustrated in the outer layer of the "Research Onion" (Fig. 4) and consist of positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism.

The researcher identified interpretivism as the most appropriate research philosophy as individuals' perspectives and experiences are utilised as part of this research. Interpretivists believe that knowledge must be expanded through the perspectives of others (Hudson and Ozanne 1998). Therefore, the researcher will attempt to enter individuals' perceived reality and is required to understand their point of view. This will enable the researcher to interpret meanings of human behaviour and apprehend what is recognised as reality to create understanding (Neuman 2000)

In general, the "Research Onion" (Saunders et al. 2019) is quite a complex model as it presents many approaches that have a different ontological, axiological, or epistemological approach within each research philosophy and thus, requires the use of induction or deduction analytical methods to develop theory which are discussed in the next section.

4.4 Research Approach

There are two main approaches to theory development: inductive research and deductive research. The two approaches are outlined below.

Inductive approach is part of qualitative research and begins with empirical observations about a phenomenon in question and develops theories and concepts based on these observations which determines whether the study contributes to knowledge or if it should be rejected (Sutton 1997).

Deductive research, however, begins with an existing theoretical base that forms hypotheses to test the existing theory (Suddaby 2006). It studies the relationships

between variables to interpret the phenomenon and produces findings (Trochim and Donnelly 2008) that are either valid or invalid in conjunction with the theory (Nola and Sankey 2007). Deductive research is part of quantitative research and only makes incremental contributions (Konrad 2008, p.13).

Upon evaluation of the two approaches, the inductive approach was considered by the researcher to be more compatible with the project as it is attributed to qualitative and interpretive research. It is a more flexible approach where the researcher is not required to begin with a theory and is not required to have previous theoretical knowledge thus, the researcher gains a better understanding of the phenomenon within its own context from observation (Eisenhardt et al. 2016).

4.5 Methodological Choice

The next layer (middle) of the “Research Onion” involves the researcher introducing the methods used to gather primary and secondary data in order to establish findings for the purpose of this study.

There are two primary types of methodologies: quantitative methodology and qualitative methodology. Before discussing the researcher’s method of choice, the two terms are explained and distinguished.

The quantitative method usually involves a large quantity of participants in the research process to measure hypotheses through experiments, surveys or questionnaires (Choy 2014). The information gathered from using a quantitative method are statistically analysed in a numerical form by a computer-readable format (Neuman 2006) which generates a large quantity of numerical data for the researcher to interpret and to give meaning to the data (Choy 2014). The quantitative method focuses on the relationships among a small number of features from a large quantity of participants (Tuli 2010).

A qualitative method, however, relies on participants’ reflection regarding a specific point in time, and allows the researcher to adopt a perspective (Neuman 2006). The method uses techniques like observations, focus group discussions or semi-structured and open-ended interviews (Dudwick et al. 2006). It is concerned with non-numerical analysis where the researcher is seeking an in-depth understanding and meaning of the

phenomena by focusing on relationships between many features based on responses received from a few participants (Tuli 2010).

4.5.1 Changes Made Due to Covid-19

Initially, the researcher's intention was to use a quantitative method using questionnaires and surveys like Alderfer (1969), Hackman and Oldham (1976) discussed in Chapter 2 of the literature review to investigate job satisfaction. The quantitative method would have been more appropriate for the study to analyse a high volume of responses. The acquisition of high volume of participants would have increased the accuracy of the findings and been a better representative of people's experience working at call centres. However, due to the restrictions imposed by the government in response to Covid-19 such as social distancing, access to a limited number of people was feasible. Consequently, the researcher was forced to amend their methodological choice by nominating a qualitative method for conducting their research project.

4.5.2 The Method Chosen

With fewer participants, the qualitative method gave the researcher an opportunity to carry out an in-depth analysis of their data, by investigating people's experiences and views thoroughly (Carol 2016). It provides rich and insightful information whereby comprehension of meanings and interpretations of the phenomena in terms of the behaviours, events, opinions and beliefs from the perspective of individuals is conceivable (Denzin and Lincoln 2008)

Thus, the researcher's choice of qualitative method was the execution of in-depth interviews where individuals expressed their feelings towards their working environment which permitted the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon thereby allowing deeper analysis into problems that may develop theories and concepts for potential quantitative research (Leedy and Ormrod 2001).

Finally, the researcher's choice is supported with the literature of Herzberg's (1965) two-factor theory. The theorist also conducted a qualitative study by interviewing participants and established factors that affect job satisfaction which were used to develop research questions and conduct this study.

4.6 Secondary Data Collection

The topic for this dissertation features within vast sources of existing secondary literature and research which was reviewed, carefully gathered and analysed. Kiecolt and Nathan (1985) defined secondary data analysis as research findings based on already existing data collected by others that can be collected through sources such as publications, books, records, journal articles, websites etc. Thus, the researcher obtained secondary data collected by other sources and discussed it in the literature review. This permitted the researcher to learn what information is available on the phenomenon and to identify the gaps in research.

Secondary data was gathered from online sources such as e-books, e-journals and websites for the purpose of this research. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions imposed at the time of writing the dissertation, hard copy material was unobtainable, and thus online sources of secondary data were relied upon. The acquired secondary data was used to develop and address research questions as part of the dissertation.

4.7 Qualitative Primary Data Collection

Primary data refers to original data that was obtained by a researcher through questionnaires, experiments, observations, interviews, surveys etc. usually for the purpose of discovering a solution to a problem (Ajayi 2017).

As discussed in Section 4.5, the researcher will obtain primary data qualitatively by conducting in-depth interviews with participants. Hennink et al. (2020) describes an in-depth interview as a one-to-one method of data gathering and comprises the interviewer (researcher) and the interviewee i.e. the participants selected for this study. The interviewer questions an interviewee about an area of interest, in this case regarding job satisfaction in Irish call centres and allows them to express their personal experiences, perceptions, emotions and feelings in order for the researcher to see the world from the individual's perspective and create meaning (Sutton and Austin 2015)

4.7.1 Method

The method for collection of qualitative primary data for this research involved conducting one-to-one interviews with participants. The researcher chose to carry out one-to-one interviews over the phone to ensure compliance with Covid-19 social

distancing measures. The interviews were semi-structured in nature whereby a set of questions were asked by the interviewer to the interviewee to ensure that the interview did not stray away from the topic concerning job satisfaction in call centres. This method allowed the researcher to develop open-ended and meaningful questions that facilitated better understanding of the topic at interest thereby allowing participants to provide in-depth answers. For this reason, it was necessary to record these interviews so that the in-depth answers could be thoroughly analysed.

The interview consisted of 15 questions (see Appendix A) that facilitated in answering the two research questions identified in Chapter 3. The interview questions were divided into 3 distinct sections; the first section concentrated on general questions whereby participants can express themselves openly for the researcher to gain a better insight into the subject. The second section was based on the illustrated conceptual framework (refer to Chapter 3, Fig. 3) which was adapted from Herzberg's two-factor theory to examine existing factors that cause millennials to be satisfied and dissatisfied. Some questions asked participants to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1-10 where a rate of 5 or under indicated low satisfaction and a rate over 5 indicated high satisfaction. The purpose of the scale was to gain a better understanding of their satisfaction based on specific factors. The third section aimed to obtain recommendations and any other additional information from millennials on job satisfaction. This information will be utilised by the researcher to identify any factors that can improve satisfaction of millennials in call centres.

4.7.2 Participants

The primary data was collected from 9 no. participants who were born within the millennial generation. It was not possible to obtain a larger sample size due to the unforeseen circumstances associated with the Covid-19 emergency which forced the researcher to outsource a small number of random millennial participants through 'LinkedIn', an online social media platform for businesses.

The researcher sought random millennial candidates through LinkedIn. Only individuals who indicated on their LinkedIn profile that they had work experience in an Irish call centre were selected for the study. The researcher then sent a request and messaged each candidate directly through LinkedIn describing the purpose of study

whilst also asking them whether they would like to participate in an in-depth interview (see Appendix B). The message was sent to 15 millennials (candidates) at the time.

Approval from the call centre organisations was not required to conduct the interviews as specific organisation names were not of importance for this study. As such, the researcher's aim was to obtain an overall insight into job satisfaction in call centres around Ireland.

4.7.3 Procedure

As mentioned previously, the researcher directed the message to 15 people on LinkedIn but only 9 responded and accepted to partake. This may not be considered as a representative sample for the millennial generation however, it can still provide an understanding of job satisfaction in call centres.

Furthermore, the candidates were given a general guide (see Appendix C) regarding the procedure and instruments in the study, the duration of the interview as well as outlining the rules and relevant ethical information regarding anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation and recording (see Section 4.9 for further discussion). Prior to conducting interviews, all participants gave consent and scheduled a suitable date and time.

Moreover, the selected participants felt more comfortable to interview over the phone for health reasons due to the government's Covid-19 recommendations regarding social distancing. Bernard (1988) states that telephone interviews are just as accurate as face-to-face interviews and will thus be sufficient to collate data for this research. The researcher carried out interviews with each participant individually over the phone. The interviews were conducted within the period of 15th July to 23rd July and the duration of the interview ranged from 10 to 45 minutes depending on the responses of the interviewees.

In addition, participants were alphabetically categorised to maintain their anonymity and the interview sessions were audio recorded through the researcher's mobile phone. These sessions were later listened to thoroughly and transcribed for the purposes of data collection and analysis. The recordings and transcriptions were then stored in a safe file with a key encrypted password that only the researcher could access.

4.7.4 Pilot Testing

Before the semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted, the researcher carried out a small pilot test. Kvale (2007) states that a pilot test strengthens the interview process as it identifies issues and flaws that allows the researcher to modify and improve the pilot interview before executing the real interview. The pilot test was conducted with an individual who possessed in-depth knowledge on job satisfaction. The individual answered all interview questions and provided in-depth knowledge and experience in the area of call centres.

The purpose of the pilot test was to examine the challenges and validity of the questions as well as the reliability of the answers (Van Teijlingen and Hundley 2002). In order to ensure its validity and reliability the individual was required to thoroughly examine the interview questions to confirm that the questions are understandable and clear.

Furthermore, at the end of the pilot study, the individual was given the opportunity to provide feedback over the phone. The individual provided adequate and useful information that allowed the researcher to identify the direction of the interview. This ensured that the participants provided sufficient information to the interview questions. The pilot test interviewee also provided generally positive feedback and did not feel that any questions were offensive or inappropriate.

4.8 Qualitative Data Analysis

The transcription process was the first step in data analysis. According to Halcomb and Davidson (2006, p.38) transcription is the process of “*reproducing spoken words, such as those from an audiotaped interview, into written text*”. Thus, the researcher carefully listened to the information in the audio recordings and then reproduced the information in writing for in-depth analysis.

During the analysis stage, the researcher examined the transcriptions of the original data and placed the letter X on any personal information or names disclosed to protect the identity of the individual. The researcher then used a thematic data analysis approach to examine the data collected. This approach involves the researcher to colour-code and create themes or identify patterns from the participants’ responses to the interview questions (Takupiwa 2018). The participant’s responses offered plenty

of detail, where direct quotes guided the researcher through the process of findings and helped gain a sense of understanding. The researcher ensured that no information was excluded and/or altered in the transcription and findings process.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

Bell and Waters (2014) state that participants must be given thorough information on the present research study so that they are not influenced or feel forced to participate in the research. To ensure each participant voluntarily consents to the study, the researcher presented a statement which non-technically described the study and its purpose and questioned whether they would like to participate or not (see Appendix B).

In addition to this, Saunders et al. (2012) states that the researcher must also provide an informed consent form (see Appendix C). The form gives the participants the option to decide, based on information given, on whether to agree to participate in the study by signing the form. The researcher's contact number was provided in case the participants had any queries or questions at any stage of the process and the document provided sufficient information about the implications of participating and ensuring the interview is completely voluntary where they can withdraw at any time without feeling pressure or coercion (Saunders et al. 2012).

Moreover, Bryman and Bell (2007) states that the dignity of participants must be respected during the interview process. Therefore, the researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity throughout the course of the research so that the provided information could not be traced back to the participant. This ensured the protection of their privacy under the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 and will prevent harming and/or damaging the reputation of the participant and organisation.

Furthermore, the researcher ensured that all candidates gave their full consent before proceeding to the interview process. The researcher ensured that each participant was honest and did not provide misleading information and/or exaggerated their responses. The researcher also actively avoided the use of discriminatory, offensive, and inappropriate language by the participants.

All data acquired from the interviews was recorded on a mobile phone. These recordings were then safely transferred to a laptop. Both the recordings and transcripts were electronically stored with an encrypted password that could not be accessed by anyone except the researcher. All information on the researcher's phone was then deleted once the information was safely stored on the laptop. The participants were aware of this and agreed by signing the consent form. The researcher also informed them that all information gathered will only be used for the submission of the dissertation and once the study is approved, the information gathered will be deleted and will not be distributed to any other external sources for any reason.

Finally, authors of various online works were acknowledged throughout this dissertation with the use of the Harvard referencing system.

4.10 Limitations

This study was limited to the fact that the initial quantitative research approach could not be adopted due to the current Covid-19 restrictions and thus, an alternative approach had to be developed i.e. the qualitative approach.

Additionally, the researcher had difficulty in reaching individuals through LinkedIn as many profiles were private as such, contact information was not readily available.

Chapter 5: Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the qualitative data gathered from the millennial participants, and answers the two research questions which are divided into the following two sections:

Section 5.2 concentrates on factors of satisfaction where millennials express how satisfied or dissatisfied, they are with each factor.

Section 5.3 provides the recommendations in order to establish the key predictors of job satisfaction for millennials in call centres.

For research question one, the participants were asked to self-assess their satisfaction based on specific factors on a scale of 1 to 10. (Refer to chapter 4, Section 4.7.1 for explanation of 1-10 scale).

5.2 Research Question 1: Do Separate Factors Cause Millennials to be Satisfied or Dissatisfied in Call Centres?

This section of the chapter used Herzberg's satisfiers (motivator) and dissatisfiers (hygiene) to examine factors that cause satisfaction and dissatisfaction among millennials. These factors are illustrated in Figure 4 and discussed further below.

<u>Satisfiers</u>	<u>Dissatisfiers</u>
1. Personal Achievement	1. Quality of supervision
2. Recognition	2. Physical Working Conditions
3. The Work Itself	3. Relationships with Co-workers
4. Opportunities for Responsibility	4. Salary
5. Growth & Advancement	5. Benefits
6. Performance	

Figure 5. Factors of job satisfaction adapted from Herzberg (1965)

5.2.1 Satisfiers

Figure 6 captures the extent participants feel satisfied with each factor which are placed in circles. The idea is that the bigger the circle, the more satisfied participants are with a factor. As shown, personal achievement has the greatest satisfaction among the participants, followed by the work itself, responsibility, performance, recognition and finally, there was least satisfaction with growth. The findings related to these factors will be discussed below.

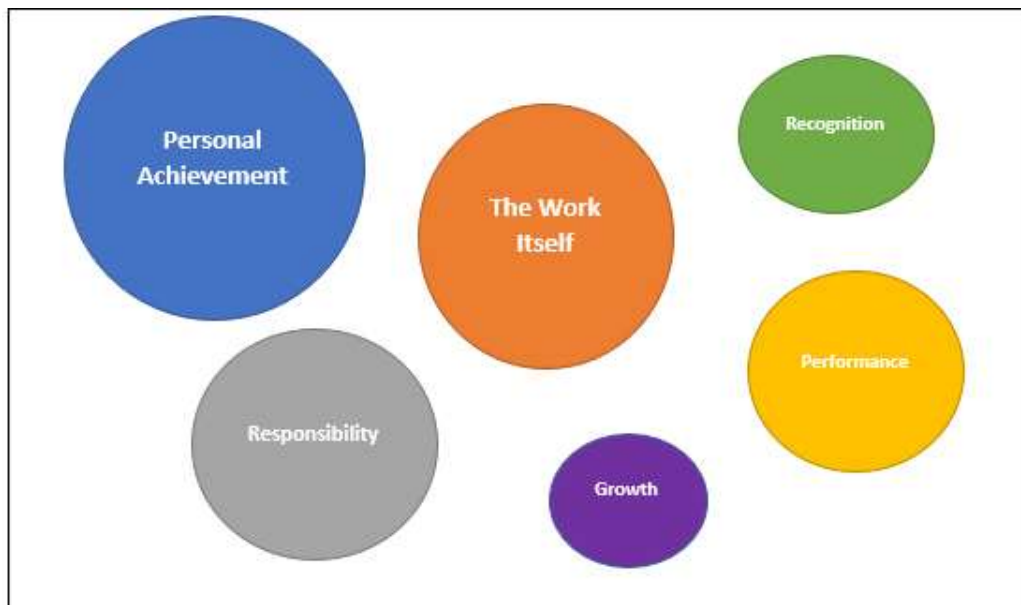


Figure 6. Satisfier factors in order of satisfaction

5.2.1.1 Personal Achievement

No dissatisfactory comments were given regarding personal achievements as majority of the participants liked achieving personal goals and were satisfied. Six participants stated that their personal achievement was to achieve the organisation's goals and once they succeeded, they felt empowered. For instance, one participant stated that *“doing my own targets is what made me feel empowered”*. Some participants stated that they received an increase in *“earnings”* and *“praise”* from reaching their targets which made them feel *“empowered”* and *“motivated”*.

Moreover, two participants expressed their personal achievement in assisting customers. and “*making them happy*”. One participant stated, “*I feel like I’ve achieved something when I help them and make the customer satisfied*”.

Finally two other participants stated that their personal achievement goes beyond the work itself and has more to do with their personal goals like learning “*customer satisfaction*” and “*building confidence*” while one participants added that “*it has built my confidence to speak to customers at work...and to be able to provide solutions or answers to them when needed*”.

5.2.1.2 The Work Itself

Three participants stated that the work was not interesting and described it as “*repetitive*” and “*draining*”. For example, one participant stated that “*the words keep repeating and echoing itself in your ear because you’re doing the same thing every day, saying the same thing every day*”. However, the remaining six participants felt that the work was “*somewhat interesting*” where two participants stated that “*targets*” made the work interesting. Other participants said that work became interesting when they came across “*new queries that you’ve never dealt with before*” or “*when you get a long query or... have to contact different departments and go looking for an answer to a query*”. Some referred to the job as a “*constant learning environment*” and “*don’t mind the repetitiveness*” as it “*can be very boring... but if it’s boring it means I know how to do it... and I can be confident with carrying that task out*”. Thus, overall, most participants were satisfied with the interest of the work they were tasked in completing at call centres.

Furthermore, only one participant stated that there was “*no challenge*” in the job. However, the remaining eight participants stated that the work is challenging to some extent. Many participants described that the work is challenging when they’re “*faced with new queries*” and “*complex calls that require many tasks*”. One participant also stated that “*you’ll get some odd calls during the day that is challenging and requires you to go look for the answer which can be kind of fun*”. As a result, no complaints were presented by majority of the participants and as such, it is likely that participants were quite satisfied in terms of how challenging the job is.

5.2.1.3 Opportunities for Responsibility

Five participants expressed that *“there’s a lot of responsibility”* in a call centre because *“whatever transpires between you and that customer is solely on you”*. Another participant added *“and if any mistakes happen it’s no one’s fault but yours”*.

Additionally, a participant expressed that the responsibilities expanded after working for three years in the organisation *“sometimes, I’m assigned to listen to other agents’ calls and assess them and sometimes my team leader lets me listen and train newcomers on the floor.”*

However, there were four participants that felt that the call centre did not offer them opportunities for responsibility due to its controlled nature *“you’re not allowed much flexibility to take responsibility while working since everything is controlled”*.

Nonetheless, most of the participants agreed that the responsibility falls solely on the customer representative and were thus, satisfied with the level of responsibility expected of them as part of their job.

5.2.1.4 Performance

According to the findings, two participants rated their performance “9” and “10”. These participants said that it *“did not relate to satisfaction or dissatisfaction”* but rather *“I was following the rules laid out for me... and doing what I was asked to do”* and the other participant related it to *“my own personal ethic... because I feel like any job that you do, you should give it your all because you don’t know... when you will need a reference”*. However, the rest of the participants (7 no. in total) stated that their satisfaction had influence on their performance in the workplace.

Five participants gave a lower rate for their performance due to the nature of the job. These participants described their performance as *“repetitive”, “boring”* and *“emotionally draining”*. Thus, they perceived their performance as *“dissatisfactory”*. One participant commented that *“the fact that the job was repetitive started to weigh down on me and every time I got a call, I started to get irritated... the job satisfaction started to drop”*. In addition to this, two other participants stated that their level of satisfaction had been affected due to the *“pressure”* of reaching the organisation’s expectations and targets.

Contrastingly, two other participants had positive perceptions on their performance where they felt *“it relates to my satisfaction”*. Another participant added *“I would say I have a very good performance and that would match how satisfied I was”*.

Consequently, most participants were not satisfied with their performance. The findings show that participants’ performance is influenced by their level of satisfaction.

5.2.1.5 Recognition

Overall, seven participants felt that their work was not recognised enough for their efforts. One participant expressed their feelings regarding recognition as follows:

“I feel that in an environment like this where we feel a lot is expected from us, it would be nice if we could get recognised that bit more for the hard work that we carry out”.

However, two participants felt that the recognition was enough *“because I never expected anything so when you’re not expecting anything it comes as an added bonus”*

Another individual said *“it doesn’t go unnoticed and there’s always a reward for it...I think the recognition is enough”*.

The findings show that majority of the participants were likely to not be satisfied with the recognition offered at call centres.

5.2.1.6 Opportunities for Growth & Advancement

It was found that only one participant perceived that opportunities existed for growth and advancement *“You always see people moving on to a higher position or to a different department... so I do think that there is room to progress”*. In contrast, the remaining participants (8) stated that *“there are few opportunities for growth within the department like you can progress to become a team leader but that’s about it”*.

Many complained that call centres demand working for *“a long period of time”* before progression is possible and it was *“never guaranteed”*. In addition to this, three participants revealed that *“favouritism”* existed while one participant offered the following insight into the subject:

“I think they’re quite selective which makes me feel like it’s predetermined so it’s not in as much as they may want to make it seem open to everyone, I don’t think that’s the reality of it”. Thus, most participants were likely to be dissatisfied with the opportunities for growth and advancement offered at call centres. It was also found that five participants left the organisation due to lack of opportunities for progression.

5.2.2 Dissatisfiers

Figure 7 represents the extent participants are satisfied with dissatisfier factors. The concept is that the bigger the word in the illustration is, the more satisfied participants are with a specific factor. As shown in the figure, salary has the greatest satisfaction among the participants, followed by co-worker relationships, physical working conditions, benefits and finally, there was least satisfaction with the quality of supervision. The findings related to these factors will be discussed below.



Figure 7. Dissatisfier factors in order of satisfaction

5.2.2.1 Salary

All participants felt fairly satisfied with their salary. Many described it as “good” and “okay”. One participant mentioned that the “target earnings” was what was satisfying them “because I was earning more than the average”. Six participants mentioned that the salary tends to increase the longer they are employed in the call centre, with one participant stating, “it’s the best I’ve had so far like it moves up, you’re not stuck at the one salary, it gets increased after some time”.

5.2.2.2 Relationship with Co-workers

Most participants stated that they had great relations with their co-workers and “*got along with everybody*”. However, only one participant had negative views where they mentioned “*I wouldn’t say I have a friendship in the place... you’re just civil with people... groups kind of stick together and sometimes you feel a bit excluded*”. Additionally, when the organisation introduced interactive activities to encourage teamwork, the participant felt “*forced... and embarrassed because you’ve never seen these people or spoke to them before*”.

Contrastingly, when participants were asked about what they liked most about their work, they stated that they valued friendships because “*your friends take the stress off your shoulders*”, “*it makes the job easier... so whenever I’m dealing with an issue or stress, we just help each other and have a laugh... It’s what makes me look forward to going to work every morning*”.

Furthermore, when participants were speaking about their friendships, five participants complained about the organisation moving individuals into different teams. One participant stated, “*I hate when they keep moving me from team to team because I lose my friends in the process*”. As a result of this, participants felt “*lonely*” while the job itself became “*boring*”. A participant also mentioned that the lack of friendship induced by constant team rotation affected their performance “*I was just working without even having fun at work, nobody I could really properly have a laugh with*”. Thus, it was found that once the participants had close friends in the workplace it was “*enough*” to make their job satisfactory.

5.2.2.3 Physical Working Conditions

Most of the participants were satisfied with their physical working conditions by giving a score of 6 or higher. One participant said, “*There was a little bit of comfort in terms of the chair, desk, the screen, the working conditions*” and “*you have your own desk*”. Although there were many positive comments, four participants however, rated physical working conditions with a score below 5 with one participant stating that they “*never... had a comfortable chair where my back isn’t killing me and there’s always something wrong in the kitchen... sometimes your headsets are missing*”. Some participants complained about requests for better working conditions had been

ignored by the organisation where one participant provided the following insight into the subject:

“they give you a form to fill in of what you need to pretend they’re looking after you but when you request for a footrest or comfier chairs, they just completely ignore it”.

5.2.2.4 Benefits

It was found that three participants were satisfied with the benefits that their call centre offered. One of these participants said *“we get to go home earlier...they bring us lots of snacks, fruits and beverages...and on special days... you get chocolate boxes, wine, Easter eggs. I really like it”*. Another participant said *“they do vouchers...and other things like personal services like counselling... I’d say I’m satisfied with it”* However, the remaining (6) participants were not satisfied with the benefits they were receiving as they felt that *“snacks”, “beverages”* and *“getting off an hour early”* was *“not enough for the work”* that they carried out. Some participants felt that *“they weren’t even awarded to you for your efforts but for winning competitions”*.

Additionally, the organisation was described as *“a selfish kind of job... where it was the job that mattered more than the staff”*. Another participant stated that *“they don’t really put us into consideration, and they don’t take time to get to know you and see what would benefit you”*. For instance, when a participant complained about having problems with their eyesight *“nobody responded to anything and I had to take matters into my hands... I was expecting some sort of compensation or something... but till today I got nothing and that’s the same job that makes me wear glasses now”*.

5.2.2.5 Quality of Supervision

According to findings, only one participant was satisfied with the quality of supervision where the participant felt that there was *“good supervision”* and that *“they’re quite helpful”*. However, the majority of participants (8) were not fully satisfied with the quality of supervision and stated that only some supervisors were *“helpful”* and some were *“arrogant and impatient”* where they felt *“uncomfortable”* approaching supervisors because *“it sounds like I’m disturbing them”*.

Additionally, many participants mentioned that there were “*not enough supervisors*” present on the floor while another participant commented that consequently when you “*do something wrong, you still have to be blamed for it while it wouldn’t have been your fault if there had been a supervisor on the floor at all times*”. One participant also mentioned that supervisors did not have adequate training where “*you try to ask them a question and they just rumble around it so you don’t know what they’re saying and you know quite well that this person is not answering your question*”.

As a result, most participants were likely to be dissatisfied with the quality of supervision and stated that due to the lack of availability of supervisors and inadequate assistance had a consequence on the customers because “*they’d be more angry*” as well as impacting negatively on the participant’s performance; one participant stated that the actions of the supervisor “*just ruined my call length as well as wasted my time and the customers time*”.

5.3 Research Question 2: What are the Key Predictors of Job Satisfaction that Cause Satisfaction Among Millennials in Call Centres?

Job dissatisfaction was cited by 5 out of 9 participants interviewed as a reason which prompted them to leave a call centre organisation. In turn, these participants, along with the remaining participants made recommendations in relation to factors that could satisfy and enable them to remain within the organisation: the predictors of job satisfaction. Figure 8 identifies these predictors with the discussion provided below.



Figure 8. Predictors of job satisfaction

5.3.1 Predictors of Job Satisfaction

5.3.1.1 Recognition

It was recommended by most participants that there “*should be more*” recognition for their effort and “*hard work*” where a participant stated “*I’d like to be spotted for the effort I carry out... so it would be no harm to give credit where it’s due*” Accordingly, based on the participants' feedback, more employee recognition is required in call centres.

5.3.1.2 Opportunities for Progression

Some participants suggested that call centres should have “*constant opportunities for developing and advancing in a company*” where “*all departments should be connected to each other, so progression to a different department or position is easier*”. Some participants suggested that organisations should be more “*inclusive*” and “*open*” to positions so that everybody is given an equal chance to progress and that the organisation should not show “*favouritism*”.

Additionally, the respondents noted that there are plenty of ways to involve employees and make them feel that there are opportunities for them to expand their responsibilities and to feel like they're progressing such as *"involving them into things and allowing them to show their creativity, listening to their methods of solutions, or allowing them to create games for the team. Anything that would make them feel like they have a bigger responsibility and make you feel valued"*. Many participants added that *"it shouldn't take years just to progress a little further"*.

5.3.1.3 Supervision

Most participants felt that call centres had an insufficient number of supervisors. One participant recommended that *"more supervisors should be put on the floor especially on busy days...because you can get all your queries answered straight away"* and another participant added *I shouldn't have to go looking for a supervisor all over the floor there should be one available at every team or table"*. Furthermore, it was suggested *"more training for the supervisors and managers"* to be made available by the organisation.

5.3.1.4 Relationships

Although most participants were satisfied with their relationships at work, many recommended that organisations should *"stop moving employees to different teams"* as they *"lose friends"*. One participant mentioned that *"friendships are important in work because you can have a laugh with them which makes the job easier and reduces stress"*. Thus, participants suggest *"letting every person pick who they want to sit with or what team they want to join"*. Additionally, it was also recommended that organisations should not force employees to interact through games but rather provide a *"more of a grown up way to get to know people, like having a coffee morning once a week where...you'd get to chat and get to know them a bit better"*.

5.3.1.5 Salary

Although all participants were reasonably satisfied, many felt that the salary should be more for *"what the expectation is and what they want from you"*. Other participants felt that the salary should be larger to compensate for *"the emotional and stress part"* of the job. Another participant recommended that call centres should offer extra hours to increase the salary *"I wish they could offer overtime so I can do longer hours and get paid more"*.

5.3.1.6 Benefits/Incentives

Many participants were not fully satisfied with the benefits that their organisation offered and felt that these are important for “*motivation*” and to be “*given something to know that you’ve done a great job*” which makes employees feel “*valued and appreciated*”. Many benefits and incentives have been suggested by participants for incorporation by the call centre organisation such as pension, healthcare, compensation, flexible hours, game night, competitions, paid lunch, vouchers, discounts, promotions, bonuses, paid gym membership, night out with team, pizza or doughnut day, working from home and longer holidays.

5.3.1.7 Alteration of targets

Although many participants stated that targets were one of their personal achievements, many of them felt that that the organisation expects too much from them invoking “*pressure*” and “*stress*”, noting that “*that’s when mistakes are going to happen*”. Some felt forced by the organisation to achieve their targets “*even though you’re doing your best*”. As a result, they recommended that targets should be altered or eliminated “*it’s a call centre for a reason so if you’re taking calls you should be focusing on that customer... I just think that there should be a longer time, increase the call length or they should just scrap that completely...It would take a lot of pressure off people*”.

5.3.1.8 Focusing on wellbeing of staff

Some participants felt that the organisations’ focus was “*strictly based on your job they’re not checking on the welfare of the staff. If I am going through something personally it would affect my job... of me giving you a hundred percent*”. The participants recommended for the organisations’ focus to incline towards employee’s welfare as they would feel a sense of “*value*”, “*compassion*” and “*that the organisation cares about you*”.

5.3.1.9 Feedback on Performance

Participants suggested that feedback on performance should be given on a “*weekly basis*” and not to “*wait until you do something wrong till you’re given your feedback*”. Another participant stated that “*using such metrics and analytics would have made them know... how to handle people individually on their strengths and weaknesses*”.

5.3.1.10 In-depth Training

A participant stated that 2 weeks training was not adequate as “ *they don’t prepare you for what you’re going to meet or prepare you enough... for example, you never get training on when a question comes, how you handle difficult situations or how you handle a difficult customer*”. Thus, more training is required to be provided by a call centre organisation.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

Two research questions were developed to study job satisfaction among millennials in Irish call centres. The first research question concentrated on existing factors that influences job satisfaction while the second research question examines the predictors of job satisfaction based on the perceptions of millennial participants which contributes to their satisfaction in call centres. This chapter discusses findings and implications of the study, while also considering its limitations.

6.2 Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction Among Millennials

The findings also aimed to investigate what factors influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction of millennials working in call centres. Thus, the findings concentrated on existing factors of job satisfaction that is directly related to Herzberg's two-factor theory as it determines satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the workplace by focusing on satisfiers (motivator factors) and dissatisfiers (hygiene factors) to understand what factors cause millennials to be satisfied and what factors causes them to be dissatisfied. The satisfier and dissatisfier factors will be discussed separately.

6.2.1 Satisfiers

Satisfiers are factors that positively influence an employee's need for self-growth at a workplace by motivating them to perform better. These factors include, but are not limited to personal achievements, recognition, the work itself, opportunities for growth and advancement, opportunities for responsibility, and performance.

The participants set their own *personal achievements* at the workplace that made them feel empowered and motivated. Most of the participants were also satisfied with the extent of *responsibility* that the job offered as they felt that most tasks were autonomous. These findings support the study of Emanuel et al. (2017) that demonstrate a positive relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction; autonomy stimulates motivation and positive emotions creating satisfaction. The findings were contradictory to what was found in the literature review by Molino et al. (2016) which

stated that there was limited autonomy at call centres. This study, however, can indicate that for the millennial generation, the range of autonomous work available at call centres is deemed to be sufficient.

Most millennials however were not satisfied with *recognition* as they felt that they were not adequately recognised for their efforts. The implications of these findings in relation to recognition is that greater recognition by supervisors/managers is required in call centres to ensure their employees feel that their work is being valued.

Moreover, many millennials had positive perceptions with how *interesting and challenging* their job was. Participants felt that work was interesting and challenging when they hit targets or when they received long queries from customers, especially if they were new and complex as it contained a learning curve. Thus, millennials who perceived their work as interesting and challenging were more satisfied and vice versa.

Furthermore, most millennial participants were not satisfied in terms of *opportunities for growth and advancement* as they felt it was short in supply and as a result, many left the organisation. The findings agree with Zito et al. (2018) observation which demonstrated that there are minimal opportunities for career progression at call centres. The findings of this study also concur with Kong et al. (2016) who state that millennials are more likely to be satisfied and stay when organisations offer opportunities for progression. Consequently, it is likely that the lack of career progression at call centres is one of the factors influencing the millennials decision to leave the organisation.

Based on the findings, the study suggests that there should be continuous opportunities to facilitate development and progression of employees at call centres. Organisations are also encouraged to listen and involve millennials in decision-making. Pacheco and Webber (2016) show that a positive relationship exists between involvement and job satisfaction and that employees who were actively involved in decision-making were more satisfied. Additionally, the study showed that giving millennials more responsibilities when performing tasks and allowing them to be creative would have made the participants more satisfied. These findings concur with Hansen and Leuty's study (2012) where they state that it is important for millennials to feel that the organisation offers opportunities where they can utilise their abilities, creativeness, skills and knowledge.

The findings revealed that job satisfaction had an influence on the *performance* of millennials. It conveys that a relationship exists between satisfaction and performance, where the extent of satisfaction determines how well a person performs in their role. The findings are supported by Mullins' (2016) argument that job satisfaction leads to increased performance while Hong and Yang (2019) note that when employees are dissatisfied, a disruption happens to their performance where they become unproductive. As a result, findings show that millennials who were dissatisfied became more unproductive and vice versa. The study suggests that it is crucial for call centres to concentrate on increasing levels of job satisfaction to prevent the likelihood of disruptions in performance.

6.2.2 Dissatisfiers

Dissatisfiers are factors concerned with the fair treatment at work and ensuring a pleasant working environment. These factors include, but are not limited to the quality of supervision, physical working conditions, relationship with co-workers, salary and benefits which are discussed further below.

Dissatisfaction arose among most of the millennial participants regarding the *quality of supervision* as it was perceived that there was an insufficient number of supervisors on the floor to effectively manage the employees which caused pressure and stress. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) found that when millennials are faced with stress and pressure at work, they need support from supervisors. Thus, the findings agree with the authors and concur with Alsop's study (2008) that there is a positive correlation between the level of support received in the workplace and job satisfaction as it causes a reduction in pressure and stress. Thus, the implications to these findings in relation to the quality of supervision is that call centres need to revise their rotation-supervisor strategy to ensure that there are always enough supervisors on the floor to provide appropriate assistance to employees which in turn will prevent the build-up of pressure and stress.

The *physical working conditions* provided in call centres was a dissatisfier factor that millennials were generally satisfied with. This showed that there was a positive relationship between good working conditions and job satisfaction as millennials who had positive perceptions of the working conditions were more satisfied with the job.

Additionally, nearly all millennial participants were satisfied with *co-worker relationships* where it was found that individuals who had close friendships in the workplace were more satisfied than those who did not. This aligns with Campione (2015) who emphasises that friendships in the workplace is a necessity for millennials. Although they were satisfied, many millennials had negative perceptions on call centres moving employees to different teams as they felt secluded from their friends which they felt impacted their work performance. Alsop (2008) also states that lack of positive relationships with colleagues can affect an individual's mental health and is directly linked to low levels of job satisfaction. Based on the findings, the study advises call centres to stop team rotation in the workplace whereby employees can remain within a team of their choosing. This will ensure that employees maintain meaningful relationships and not feel isolated within the workplace thereby reducing stress and pressure in the workplace.

In addition, many millennials were satisfied with the *salary*. Although based on the findings, the study suggests that the salary should be increased to compensate for the expectations, pressure and stress received in call centres.

This research also found that a relationship exists between rewards and job satisfaction where millennials tended to be dissatisfied with the *rewards and benefits* that call centres provided for their effort. Priya and Eshwar's (2014) study supports this relationship by affirming that satisfaction is determined by stimuli of rewards, where if these stimuli are not adequately applied, it leads to dissatisfaction among employees. The findings of this research also concur with Devonish's (2018) study by deriving that rewarding an employee has a positive influence on job satisfaction. Many suggestions were provided by millennials and discussed what benefits and rewards would satisfy them (see Chapter 5, 5.3.1.6) Thus, the implications of these findings in relation to rewards is that call centre organisations must understand the needs and desires of millennials to provide the appropriate reward system. Several studies (Markova and Ford 2011; Wei and Yazdanifard 2014) concur with the findings as providing the appropriate reward system has a powerful influence on job satisfaction by stimulating employees' feelings and emotions where they feel valued and appreciated for their efforts.

6.3 How the Study Adds to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg (1965) claims that if any of the factors are missing it leads to dissatisfaction. The researcher's study showed that participants were dissatisfied with recognition, performance, growth and advancement opportunities, quality of supervision and benefits which proved that to some degree, dissatisfaction existed. Therefore, call centres must focus on implementing measures for these factors to prevent dissatisfaction for millennials to feel satisfied and motivated.

This study aimed to expand on Herzberg's two-factor theory by investigating job satisfaction of millennials working within the call centre industry. The study discovered additional factors that millennials suggested would influence their job satisfaction in call centres. These include managing targets, feedback on performance, training and looking after the wellbeing of employees. These factors are discussed further below.

Many millennials felt that targets caused pressure and stress. They recommended that the process of reaching the targets should be altered, such as increasing the times customer representatives can take short breaks between calls. Some millennials also suggested that targets should be eliminated to completely remove the manifestation of pressure and stress. The findings relate to Uzonna's study (2013) who concluded that stress and pressure directly affects an individual's satisfaction and states that these emotions are linked to dissatisfaction. Deery et al. (2002) also states that due to the constant pressure of reaching targets which are constantly controlled and monitored, a stressful workplace environment is created. Thus, based on the findings, the study advises that call centres must seek to alter or eliminate the use of targets as motivators to reduce the feelings of dissatisfaction among their employees.

Furthermore, many millennials mentioned the need for feedback on their performance to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Zhang and Li (2020) support this by confirming that millennials need constant positive and negative feedback on their performance. Thus, the study proved that millennials push for greater efforts and are more likely to be satisfied when they receive feedback as it influences positive attitudes and behaviours towards work. Based on the findings, the study suggests that feedback should be given on a weekly basis.

Moreover, it was also suggested that 2-week training for new starters is not enough. The findings disagree with CPL's study (2019) where it is reported that a 2-week training period is adequate to become competent in the role. The implications of the researcher's findings in relation to training is that constant training is required to assist millennials in carrying out their tasks correctly. The training provided must ensure that millennials are aware of what the job entails and how to handle the volume and the complexity of the customer calls.

Finally, it was also found that participants felt that the organisation only cared about the job and did not put the employee's wellbeing into consideration. Based on the findings, the study suggests that call centres should check up on staff regularly and provide support when necessary to make them feel appreciated and that the organisation cares about them.

In general, it is evident that the participants have recommended organisations to focus on improving the factors that they, themselves found to be dissatisfying when working in call centres. Based on this research, it is evident that job satisfaction is crucial for call centres and for HR managers to consider as it has an impact on their performance and their intentions to stay or leave the organisation based on how satisfied they are with their job. There are implications identified that provide possible solutions to increase satisfaction of employees and their intentions to remain within the organisation.

The HR managers at call centres are recommended to take all the above into account to ensure that millennials are more satisfied. This action is likely to aid the call centre organisations in reducing the high turnover rate among millennials. It is recommended that managers should be trained on this subject which will be discussed further in Chapter 7, Section 7.1.

6.4 Limitations

The research had several limitations. Firstly, the research was limited in terms of sample size. The researcher's intention was to conduct a quantitative method for a high volume of responses however, due to the current situation of Covid-19, it was not possible to proceed with this method. Thus, the researcher was only able to get access

to a small number of people. As a result, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to elucidate job satisfaction in the Irish call centre industry to its entirety due to the small sample.

The limited time available to complete the research project also posed a constraint on the study. Given more time, the researcher would have been able to seek more participants for the study to increase its sample size.

Additionally, the study was limited with seeking more participants for the study as it was difficult to access call centre organisations due to the lockdown of Covid-19 which forced many organisations to close. Consequently, the researcher had no choice but to source individual participants through LinkedIn. However, the researcher had trouble as many accounts of participants were private and therefore, could not be contacted.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter discusses the recommendations including costs associated with implementing a recommended intervention for the call centre organisation. The chapter also includes suggestions for further research which considers the limitations section from Chapter 6. The chapter closes with concluding remarks for the conducted dissertation.

7.1 Recommendations

Referring to Chapter 6, it was suggested based on findings that there is a need for call centre organisations to improve the satisfaction factors in relation to recognition, progression opportunities, supervision quality, co-worker relationships, salary, benefits/rewards, wellbeing of employees, training, targets and feedback on performance. By improving these factors, the organisation is likely to meet the necessary satisfaction levels of millennial employees and encourage them to remain working within the organisation.

Additionally, the researcher recommends for HR managers to be provided with appropriate training on job satisfaction. The researcher believes that this is a necessary action that will enable HR managers to understand the predictors of job satisfaction. With this knowledge, the HR managers will be able to effectively implement strategies to ensure that the quality of work environment remains high in order to successfully manage millennial employees and keep them satisfied. Several online courses have been identified (see Table 1) which offer training to managers on job satisfaction by different institutes.

Table 1. Information on training courses

Institution	Hours	Duration	Price
Henley Business School – University of Reading	4 hours per week	3 weeks	€59-€239.99
Udemy	Few hours per course	Unlimited once paid	€10-€170
CIPD	Unlimited	12-month membership	€113-€299
The Course Mix	70 hours	12-month membership	€26-€279
Ecornell	4-6 hours per week	2 weeks	€655-€1176
Courses for Success	6-8 hours per course	12-month membership	€127

As shown in Table 1, the institutions offer short training courses with the price ranging between €10 and €1176. These training courses are a worthwhile investment and will upskill HR managers while benefiting all employees of an organisation. Although there are costs associated with ensuring satisfaction of employees is constantly maintained, there are greater costs associated with dissatisfied employees in a form of poor quality of work, poor attitudes and high turnover. According to Mahoney (2019) it costs call centres approximately \$5000-7500 to replace and hire new employees. Thus, call centres save a multitude of costs if training on job satisfaction is provided as the training is cheaper than replacing new employees regularly. It is recommended for training to be offered to HR managers every 6 months or yearly to ensure that they are regularly refreshed and updated on new topics or insights of the subject at hand.

7.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The qualitative research method applied to address the research questions posed, was adequate to provide understanding of the phenomenon of job satisfaction and its relating factors identified. However, a quantitative study is recommended to be used for future research as the large sample size will allow for more accurate representation of what factors influence job satisfaction among millennials in Irish call centres.

Additionally, a quantitative approach will be able to show what key factors are more valued by employees at call centres, rather than simply identifying all the job satisfaction related factors which the qualitative method provided for this study.

Additionally, the study can be expanded beyond Herzberg's two-factor theory as the researcher felt that the interview questions were very specific and focused on a finite number of satisfier and dissatisfier factors. To achieve this, more generalised interview questions can be created to allow the participants to be more open and flexible with their answers. This will offer the researcher an opportunity to investigate if there are more significant themes that have not been included as part of Herzberg's theory.

It is also worth noting that further research should be done on job satisfaction among different generations for organisations to understand how to manage and satisfy employees of different generations.

7.3 Conclusion

The study explored job satisfaction and its factors that influence the job satisfaction among the millennial generation in Irish call centres using a qualitative approach. The researcher established two research questions. The first research question was based on satisfier and dissatisfier factors extracted from Herzberg's two-factor theory to investigate different variables that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in millennials. The research concludes that millennials were satisfied with some aspects of these factors (personal achievement, the work itself, responsibility, physical working conditions, co-worker relationships, salary) and dissatisfied with others (recognition, growth and advancement opportunities, performance, quality of supervision, benefits). The second research question was focused on establishing predictors of job satisfaction based on millennials' recommendations that would contribute to their satisfaction in call centres. The findings suggest that organisations can increase job satisfaction of millennials by focusing on improving recognition, co-worker relationships, salary, opportunities for progression, training, wellbeing of employees, benefits/rewards, feedback on performance, quality of supervision and altering or eliminating targets.

Overall, the research revealed that job satisfaction is a crucial component in determining millennials' decision to stay or terminate their employment at call centres, Thus, satisfaction of employees should not be ignored by organisations. The findings of this study offer solutions in tackling dissatisfaction among millennial employees and aim to minimise the turnover rates in Irish call centres. As a result, this dissertation has contributed to the literature in the field of job satisfaction as it focused on millennials in call centre environments and was specific to the growing call centre industry in Ireland.

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Chapter 9: Self-Reflective Journal

Upon commencement of the master's course, it was quite frightening and overwhelming with many expectations and fears of the unknown especially having recently graduated with a bachelor's degree. However, as the course progressed with tremendous assistance and teaching received in NCI, the path became clearer and proved that a master's can be accomplished with persistence and constant focus.

Moreover, the course facilitates a continuous learning environment where questions were infinite and the answers to these questions made the learning process easier. Additionally, I acquired knowledge and many skills during my journey of writing many assignments, exams, and writing this dissertation which was very difficult but the constant learning in lectures, guidance and support from NCI and my supervisor has helped me to accomplish this.

My dissertation explored the topic of job satisfaction which is a popular area of study that captures the attention of many researchers nowadays. Job satisfaction is concerned with an employee's feelings towards their job and is one of the most important factors in determining an employee's intention to stay or leave an organisation depending on how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with their job. Undertaking this study was very challenging to me as it was my first time writing a thesis and it required me to critically think and write throughout the whole research process.

Furthermore, managing my time wisely was also a challenge. However, through the constant practice of self-set deadlines for completing dissertation chapters, I have learned to appositely plan and complete my work in a timely manner. Additionally, conducting interviews is something I have recently learned and will benefit me in my HR career. The study has also taught me to effectively analyse my data using excel and word to colour-code and illustrate data in a creative manner. The process involved plenty of mistakes and independent studying until the knowledge and skills had been acquired.

Having completed this study, it revealed that job satisfaction is crucial and should not be disregarded as it is the determining factor of influencing an individual to excel at work particularly in the call centre industry. Therefore, investing in human capital would be worthwhile as it would save costs for call centre organisations.

Furthermore, if I were to do this dissertation again, I would have used a quantitative method as it would have made the study more accurate and reliable due to a larger sample.

Upon completing this chapter, it allowed me to realise how far I have progressed thereby motivating me to work harder to reach my full potential and accomplish all my ambitions. Thus, this reflective journal has provided me with an opportunity to reflect on my acquired knowledge and skills that will assist me in my future career in the HR field.

Chapter 10: Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions

General Satisfaction Questions

1. Are you currently working in a call centre?
2. What are the key things you like that satisfies you while working in a call centre?
3. What do you not like that made you dissatisfied at work?

Herzberg's two factors

Satisfiers

1. Do you have any personal achievements in work? Do you feel empowered at work?
2. Are you ever recognised for your efforts? Is the recognition enough?
3. How interesting is your work itself? How challenging is your work?
4. Do you have opportunities to take responsibility? Are there opportunities for growth and advancement?
5. How would you rate your overall performance?

Dissatisfiers

1. How is the quality of supervision?
2. How would you rate your physical working conditions?
3. What is your relationship like with other co-workers?
4. What is your opinion on your salary?
5. What is your opinion on benefits in your workplace?

Final Questions

1. What recommendations do you have to the business that would make you more motivated and happier or satisfied?
2. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Appendix B: Letter of Participation

Hi x

My name is Jovana. I am currently doing a master's in human resource management in National college of Ireland. As part of my completion for this course, I am required to do a thesis. Therefore, my research is based on job satisfaction in call centres among the millennial generation as they comprise majority of the workforce in call centres.

I have come across your profile and saw that you have experience working in a call centre so I was wondering if you are a millennial that would like to take part in my research. It aims to examine the level of job satisfaction present in call centres and hopes to find solutions to increase job satisfaction among millennials in this working environment.

I hope to undertake this research by conducting an interview over the phone. The interview will be approximately 10-20 minutes depending on your responses and your information will remain anonymous throughout the research (I will provide you with further information regarding this).

Would you be interested in taking part in this research?

I look forward to hearing from you soon

Kind regards,
Jovana Temaj

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

I would like to provide you with additional information regarding the research and interview process prior to commencing the interview.

The interview is based on millennials and their level of satisfaction in Irish call centres and aims to see whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with certain aspects of the job. It also aims to see whether there is something that would make them more satisfied working in a call centre.

The interview will be over the phone and is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw at any point you wish. The candidate should not feel forced to participate. The duration of the interview is approximately 15-20 minutes however, this may vary person to person. All information given throughout the interview process will be confidential and your name and the organisation will remain anonymous and will not be used.

The researcher will be recording the interview phone call. However, the recording will be transcribed and only be used for the purposes of analysing and interpreting data. The information will be stored safely and securely with an encrypted password that only the researcher can access.

Once the thesis is accepted by NCI, the recording will be deleted and this data will not be distributed to any other external sources.

By signing below, you are agreeing to everything mentioned above.
