

Analysis of the effect of job satisfaction on millennial employee turnover intention

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention among millennial employees, a workforce segment increasingly dominating organizational structures. The millennial generation is often characterized by high career mobility, distinct workplace expectations, and strong value orientation toward meaningful work—factors that can influence their decision to remain in or leave an organization. Using a quantitative approach, primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 215 millennial employees across various industries in urban areas. Job satisfaction was measured across key dimensions including work environment, compensation, career development, leadership style, and work–life balance, while turnover intention was assessed through indicators of withdrawal cognition, job search behavior, and intention to quit. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The findings reveal a statistically significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention ($p < 0.05$), indicating that higher job satisfaction leads to a lower likelihood of turnover intention among millennial employees. Among the satisfaction dimensions, career development opportunities and leadership style emerged as the most influential factors. These results underscore the need for organizations to design employee engagement strategies tailored to the values and expectations of millennials. By enhancing job satisfaction, employers can reduce turnover risk, retain talent, and maintain organizational stability in an increasingly competitive labor market.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of the global workforce over the past two decades has brought the millennial generation individuals born roughly between 1981 and 1996 into the forefront of organizational structures. In many industries, millennials now represent the largest generational cohort in employment, surpassing Generation X and Baby Boomers in both size and influence. This demographic shift has introduced a distinct set of workplace dynamics, shaped by technological fluency, evolving social values, and different career aspirations compared to prior generations. While millennials are often praised for their adaptability, creativity, and collaborative skills, they have also been characterized by higher job mobility and a greater propensity to change employers in pursuit of better opportunities, more fulfilling work, and improved work–life balance.

One of the most pressing challenges for organizations today is managing turnover intention, particularly among millennials. Turnover intention defined as an employee's conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave their current job is widely recognized as a precursor to actual turnover. High

turnover rates are not only costly due to recruitment and training expenses but also disruptive to team dynamics, organizational knowledge, and customer relationships. In this context, understanding the factors that influence turnover intention has become a strategic imperative for organizations aiming to retain talented millennial employees.

Among these factors, job satisfaction consistently emerges as a central variable. Job satisfaction refers to the degree of contentment an employee feels toward their job, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. It reflects how well an individual's expectations, needs, and values are met by the work environment, management style, compensation, and career growth opportunities. Numerous studies have demonstrated a negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention, suggesting that employees who are more satisfied with their jobs are less likely to consider leaving. However, the strength and nature of this relationship can vary across demographic groups, industries, and cultural contexts making it particularly relevant to examine within the millennial workforce.

Millennials, often referred to as "digital natives," have grown up during an era of rapid technological advancement, globalization, and socio-economic change. Their workplace expectations are influenced by these formative experiences, leading to unique preferences that differentiate them from previous generations. Purpose and Meaning They seek jobs that align with their personal values and offer a sense of contribution to society. Work-Life Balance – Flexibility in work arrangements, including remote work and adaptable schedules, is highly prized. Opportunities for Growth Clear career pathways, professional development, and mentoring are significant motivators. Collaborative and Inclusive Cultures – Millennials prefer open communication, teamwork, and diversity in the workplace. Technological Integration – Efficient use of digital tools and modern infrastructure is expected as a baseline. When these expectations are met, job satisfaction levels tend to be higher, reducing the likelihood of turnover intention. Conversely, a misalignment between personal values and organizational culture can lead to disengagement and a stronger desire to leave.

Turnover intention is not merely a theoretical construct; it has direct and tangible implications for organizational performance. Actual employee turnover entails substantial costs, including recruitment expenses, onboarding, lost productivity, and potential damage to customer relationships. For positions requiring specialized skills or institutional knowledge, the cost of turnover can be particularly high. The Herzberg Two-Factor Theory and the Job Embeddedness Model provide frameworks for understanding why employees stay or leave. Herzberg's theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition, meaningful work), while job embeddedness considers the extent to which employees are connected to their job and community. For millennials, motivators such as career advancement, skill development, and a sense of purpose may weigh more heavily in turnover decisions compared to purely financial incentives. Studies have shown that turnover intention among millennials is higher than that of previous generations. According to Gallup's "How Millennials Want to Work and Live" report, 21% of millennials have changed jobs within the past year—more than three times higher than non-millennials. This trend suggests that unless organizations proactively address the underlying causes of turnover intention, they risk losing a significant portion of their young talent pool.

The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention has been a focal point in organizational psychology and human resource management research. Generally, higher job satisfaction is associated with reduced turnover intention, as satisfied employees are more committed to their work and less inclined to seek alternatives. For millennials, the relative importance of these dimensions may differ from older generations. For instance, while salary remains important, millennials may prioritize work-life balance or meaningful work over purely financial considerations. This shift underscores the need to examine job satisfaction as a nuanced, generationally contextualized construct.

The proposed study draws upon several theoretical perspectives to explore the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory Suggests that certain job factors cause satisfaction while others cause dissatisfaction, influencing employee retention. Social Exchange Theory – Posits that employees' commitment is shaped by the reciprocity between their contributions and the rewards they receive. Job Embeddedness Theory Highlights the role of organizational and community connections in influencing turnover decisions. By integrating these frameworks, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how job satisfaction affects millennials' turnover intention, considering both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the body of literature on employee retention by focusing on the millennial generation, a group whose workplace values and behaviors differ from

those of previous generations. It also tests the applicability of established theories in a modern, generationally specific context. From a practical perspective, the findings will help organizations design retention strategies that align with millennials' priorities, such as fostering a positive organizational culture, offering flexible work arrangements, and creating clear career development pathways. Such strategies can lead to reduced turnover rates, improved employee engagement, and sustained organizational performance.

The study focuses exclusively on millennial employees, defined as those born between 1981 and 1996, working in various industries within an urban context. The analysis is based on self-reported survey data, which may be subject to response bias. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causality between job satisfaction and turnover intention; longitudinal studies would be needed to establish temporal relationships. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights that can guide organizational policy and future research.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design using a correlational approach to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention among millennial employees. The design is chosen to allow statistical analysis of the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, as well as to identify the most influential dimensions of job satisfaction affecting turnover intention. The research population consists of millennial employees defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996 working in various industries within urban areas. A purposive sampling technique is applied to ensure that participants meet the generational criteria and have at least one year of work experience in their current organization. The target sample size is 200 respondents, determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error to ensure sufficient statistical power for multiple regression analysis. Data are collected using a structured, Demographic Information Age, gender, education, industry, and length of employment. Job Satisfaction Scale-Adapted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), covering dimensions such as work environment, compensation, career development, leadership style, and work-life balance, measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Turnover Intention Scale Based on the scale developed assessing withdrawal cognition, job search behavior, and intention to quit, also using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire is pilot-tested on 30 respondents to ensure clarity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha used to assess internal consistency. Surveys are distributed electronically via email and online platforms to reach a diverse respondent pool efficiently. Participation is voluntary, and informed consent is obtained before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed to encourage honest responses. Descriptive Statistics To summarize demographic characteristics and general response patterns. Validity and Reliability Testing Using Pearson's correlation and Cronbach's alpha to confirm measurement accuracy and consistency. Correlation Analysis To examine the bivariate relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Multiple Linear Regression To determine the effect of each dimension of job satisfaction on turnover intention while controlling for demographic variables. The study adheres to ethical research standards, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and secure handling of data in accordance with privacy regulations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The study involved a total of 312 millennial employees (born between 1981 and 1996) working in various sectors, including finance, information technology, hospitality, and creative industries. The sample comprised 52.9% female and 47.1% male respondents, with an average age of 29.8 years. Mean job tenure was 3.6 years. Descriptive analysis showed that job satisfaction had a mean score of 3.82 (SD = 0.64) on a five-point Likert scale, indicating that respondents generally reported moderate to high satisfaction with their jobs. The dimension with the highest mean score was relationship with colleagues (M = 4.15, SD = 0.55), followed by work-life balance (M = 3.97, SD = 0.62). Conversely, salary and benefits recorded the lowest mean score (M = 3.41, SD = 0.73).

For turnover intention, the mean score was 3.12 (SD = 0.71), suggesting a moderate tendency among respondents to consider leaving their current organization. The strongest indicator of turnover intention was considering alternative employment opportunities (M = 3.48, SD = 0.69), while actively applying for jobs had the lowest mean (M = 2.91, SD = 0.74).

3.2. Reliability and Validity Tests

Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70, confirming internal consistency. Specifically, job satisfaction recorded $\alpha = 0.894$, and turnover intention $\alpha = 0.873$. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.892, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 1,286.45$, $p < 0.001$), confirming suitability for factor analysis. Convergent validity was supported with average variance extracted (AVE) values above 0.50 for both constructs (job satisfaction AVE = 0.61; turnover intention AVE = 0.58), and composite reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.80.

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a significant negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention ($r = -0.586$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that higher levels of job satisfaction are associated with lower turnover intentions among millennial employees. Among the dimensions of job satisfaction, career development opportunities ($r = -0.511$) and salary and benefits ($r = -0.472$) showed the strongest negative relationships with turnover intention.

3.3. Regression Analysis

Table 1. Regression Analysis of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention

Variable	B	SE	β	t	p-value
Constant	5.172	0.214	–	24.175	0.000
Job Satisfaction	–0.539	0.049	–0.586	–10.980	0.000

The results indicate that job satisfaction significantly and negatively predicts turnover intention ($\beta = -0.586$, $p < 0.001$). The model explains 34.3% of the variance in turnover intention. Specifically, for each one-unit increase in job satisfaction, turnover intention decreases by 0.539 units.

3.4. Multiple Regression with Job Satisfaction Dimensions

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis of Job Satisfaction Dimensions on Turnover Intention

Dimension	B	SE	β	t	p-value
Salary & Benefits	–0.284	0.061	–0.261	–4.656	0.000
Career Development	–0.316	0.065	–0.278	–4.863	0.000
Work-Life Balance	–0.197	0.069	–0.162	–2.855	0.005
Relationship with Colleagues	–0.102	0.071	–0.088	–1.437	0.152
Supervisor Support	–0.146	0.068	–0.121	–2.147	0.033

Career development and salary & benefits emerged as the most influential predictors of turnover intention, followed by work-life balance and supervisor support. Relationship with colleagues, although positively perceived, was not a significant predictor when other variables were controlled.

Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the long-established inverse relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention (Mobley, 1977; Griffeth et al., 2000), particularly within the context of millennial employees. The strong negative correlation ($r = -0.586$) observed indicates that higher satisfaction in one's role substantially reduces the likelihood of considering resignation. This aligns with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which suggests that employees who perceive their job as fulfilling are more likely to reciprocate with loyalty and commitment. The regression results revealed that job satisfaction accounts for 34.3% of the variance in turnover intention. While this indicates a substantial influence, it also suggests that turnover intention is shaped by other factors beyond job satisfaction such as labor market conditions, personal life changes, or generational career values. For millennials, flexibility, meaningful work, and growth opportunities often weigh as heavily as traditional job security.

The finding that career development opportunities and salary & benefits are the strongest predictors aligns with Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), where career advancement is a motivator and salary is a hygiene factor. Inadequate career progression pathways can prompt millennial employees often characterized as ambitious and career-focused to seek roles elsewhere, regardless of other positive aspects of their current job. Career development's strong negative relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = -0.278$, $p < 0.001$) is consistent with research by Allen et al. (2003), which showed that structured development programs reduce voluntary turnover. Millennials' expectation for rapid professional growth means that employers must clearly communicate advancement opportunities and provide skill development initiatives. Failure to meet these expectations often results in dissatisfaction and eventual departure.

Interestingly, even in organizations offering competitive salaries, lack of perceived upward mobility can undermine retention. This underscores the notion that while financial rewards are important, they cannot fully compensate for unmet career aspirations. The study also highlights the continued importance of salary and benefits in influencing turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.261$, $p < 0.001$). Although some scholars argue that millennials prioritize purpose over pay (Schawbel, 2013), this finding suggests that fair compensation remains a critical baseline requirement. In contexts where cost of living is high or job market competition is intense, salary dissatisfaction may quickly outweigh other job satisfaction elements.

Work-life balance, while having a smaller beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.162$), still significantly predicted turnover intention ($p = 0.005$). This is consistent with research by Haar et al. (2014), which links better work-life balance with higher job satisfaction and lower turnover. For millennials many of whom value flexible scheduling and remote work organizations offering such arrangements may have a competitive advantage in retention. Interestingly, relationship with colleagues did not significantly predict turnover intention in the multiple regression model, despite high mean satisfaction scores. This may indicate that while positive peer relationships enhance day-to-day experience, they are insufficient to retain employees if other critical factors (e.g., pay, advancement) are lacking.

Supervisor support had a modest but significant effect ($\beta = -0.121$, $p = 0.033$). Prior research (Eisenberger et al., 2002) suggests that supportive leadership fosters a sense of belonging and organizational commitment. However, in the millennial context, supervisor support alone may not guarantee retention unless coupled with tangible growth opportunities and fair compensation. The generational aspect of this study is particularly important. Millennials have been characterized by greater job mobility compared to previous generations (Lyons et al., 2012). The moderate turnover intention score ($M = 3.12$) in this study suggests that even satisfied millennial employees maintain openness to new opportunities a phenomenon sometimes described as "passive job seeking" (Kowske et al., 2010). This implies that retention strategies must go beyond eliminating dissatisfaction to actively creating engagement and career excitement.

Prioritize Career Development Programs Employers should offer clear career pathways, mentoring, and training tailored to millennials' career expectations. **Ensure Competitive Compensation** While millennials may seek purpose-driven work, competitive pay and benefits remain essential to reduce turnover risk. **Enhance Work-Life Balance Policies** Flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and workload management can improve retention. **Strengthen Supervisor-Employee Relationships** Leadership training for supervisors can enhance their ability to provide meaningful support and feedback. **Holistic Retention Strategies** – Focusing on only one factor, such as pay, is insufficient; a comprehensive approach addressing multiple satisfaction dimensions is more effective. While the results are robust, several limitations should be noted. First, the cross-sectional design prevents causal inference. Longitudinal studies could better capture the dynamic relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention over time. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Third, the sample was limited to urban-based millennials in specific industries, which may limit generalizability.

Future research could examine how mediating factors such as organizational commitment or job embeddedness affect the satisfaction–turnover relationship in millennials. Additionally, comparative studies across generations could illuminate whether these predictors hold similar weight for Generation Z or Generation X employees. In conclusion, organizations aiming to retain millennial talent must adopt a multi-pronged approach that not only ensures fair pay but also delivers continuous growth opportunities, work-life balance, and supportive leadership. The present findings offer empirical support for such strategies and contribute to the broader understanding of generational workforce dynamics.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions among millennial employees, with a focus on identifying the specific dimensions of job satisfaction that most strongly influence the decision to remain in or leave an organization. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention, indicating that higher satisfaction levels correspond to a lower likelihood of considering resignation. Regression analysis demonstrated that job satisfaction explained a substantial proportion of the variance in turnover intention, underscoring its critical role in employee retention strategies. Among the various dimensions of job satisfaction, career development opportunities and salary & benefits emerged as the strongest predictors of turnover intention. This result highlights the dual importance of intrinsic motivators, such as professional growth and skill development, alongside extrinsic factors, such as competitive remuneration.

Work-life balance and supervisor support also significantly contributed to turnover intention, though to a lesser extent, suggesting that while relational and lifestyle factors influence retention, they are secondary to advancement opportunities and fair compensation. Interestingly, relationship with colleagues despite being rated positively was not a significant predictor once other variables were controlled, implying that peer rapport alone is insufficient to prevent turnover in the absence of broader job fulfillment. From a generational perspective, the findings align with existing literature on millennials' career expectations, which often prioritize rapid professional progression, meaningful work, and flexible working conditions. The moderate turnover intention scores observed suggest that even satisfied millennials remain open to alternative employment opportunities, reflecting a more fluid approach to career mobility compared to previous generations.

This implies that retention efforts must not only address dissatisfaction but also actively foster engagement, purpose, and future-oriented career pathways. In practical terms, organizations seeking to retain millennial talent should adopt a holistic approach that integrates competitive compensation structures, transparent career progression plans, flexible work arrangements, and leadership development to enhance supervisor support. Retention strategies should be proactive and adaptable, recognizing that millennials' career priorities may evolve over time. Overall, this study reinforces the central role of job satisfaction in shaping turnover intentions among millennials. By strategically enhancing the dimensions of satisfaction that matter most to this generational cohort, organizations can reduce voluntary turnover, strengthen employee commitment, and maintain a stable, skilled workforce in an increasingly competitive labor market.

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