

Project topic

Topic proposal is grounded in a problem and aligned with program of study.

The topic for the proposed study focuses on the perceptions of HR professionals regarding HR strategies and methods used to motivate and retain millennial employees. Specifically, this research will examine how Human Resources (HR) perceive the current methods and strategies being used in the workplace. In the United States, 35% of the workforce are millennials, and it is the fastest-growing sector of the workforce. Anyone born between 1981 and 1996 is classified as a Millennial, while anyone born after 1997 belongs to Generation Z (Wilson, 2021). However, they often stereotyped because they have been known to "job hop".

The proposed topic is appropriate for this specialization in PhD Business Management with a concentration in Human Resources, as it seeks to shape positive workplace environments through HR strategies tailored to millennials. It can provide a framework to align HR strategies to motivate and retain millennials. While most employees have similar responsibilities, studies reiterate that different needs and demands influence their role in the workforce (Hudiono & Sari, 2022). Organizations may implement different leadership approaches, human resource development programs, motivational efforts, and reward systems to increase employee engagement and job satisfaction (Mayangdarastri & Khusna, 2020).

Alignment to the Program of Study

Presents an introduction to a clear topic proposal grounded in a problem within the program, project, and topic. Suggested length 1 paragraph.

This study investigates how HR professionals can implement targeted motivational strategies to engage and retain Millennials in the workplace. Millennials prioritize mentorship, recognition, and experiential learning over traditional training methods, yet many HR initiatives have yet to adapt to these evolving preferences (Chopra et al., 2020). Although there is research on Millennial workplace preferences, a gap persists in understanding how HR strategies can be optimized to align with their motivations while ensuring organizational stability (Waworuntu et al., 2022). By refining their HR policies, organizations can enhance Millennial engagement and reduce turnover, ultimately contributing to effectively managing a sustainable workforce.

Project Problem

Clearly stated problem aligns with program, reflects literature gap or practice issue, and identifies population of interest.

Problem to be Addressed

Describe a general and specific problem that is clearly defined and aligned with the program, including what the problem is, who is experiencing the problem, where the problem exists, and the professional/organizational context. Suggested length 1 paragraph.

The general problem is that businesses are experiencing a high turnover rate among millennials, which increases costs and reduces profits. Because millennials hold distinct expectations regarding the workplace, Human Resources departments fail to implement effective motivational strategies tailored to millennials (Paukert et al., 2021). In the United States, businesses are experiencing high turnover rates among millennials, leading to increased hiring, onboarding, training costs, negatively impacting organizational profitability and efficiency (Hommey et al., 2020; Moon et al., 2021). Research estimates that turnover costs can range from 90% to 200% of annual salary due to recruitment, selection, and training expenses (Ma, Shu &

Zhang, 2025).

The specific problem is that millennials leave jobs due to disengagement and the organization not meeting the needs of millennials (Minzlaff et al., 2024). Compared to previous generations, millennials change jobs frequently, causing financial strain, disruption to team dynamics, and decreased overall productivity. Important variables for this generation are career satisfaction, teamwork, flexibility, and workforce diversity. Estimates show that only 29% of millennials are engaged at work, meaning only about three in 10 are emotionally and behaviorally connected to their job and company (Adkins, 2024). Many organizations struggle to engage millennials effectively (Mayangdarastri & Khusna, 2020). Additionally, a key challenge for HR is enhancing retention strategies that effectively address the needs of millennial employees. Studies indicate that up to 74% of millennial employees in the U.S. are expected to leave their jobs within the next three years (Feng et al., 2021), further exacerbating workforce instability. Al-Suraihi et al. (2021) highlight that implementing targeted HR approaches can increase job satisfaction and employee motivation, ultimately reducing absenteeism and turnover. This study examines HR strategies that aim at addressing the retention and motivational challenges faced by millennials while also ensuring employee satisfaction.

Gap

Present an analysis of a gap in alignment with the problem and placed within the program. Addresses the broader questions of “who cares” and “why now”. Suggested length 1 paragraph.

While researchers have studied employee motivation and retention, the focus has primarily been on broad generational comparisons or traditional motivational frameworks. These approaches may not address the unique challenges related to retaining millennial employees. Although studies have examined factors that contribute to job satisfaction and workplace engagement strategies, there is limited empirical research targeting HR-driven retention strategies specifically tailored for millennials in today’s evolving work environment (Hussain & Chauhan, 2020). As a result, much of the existing research predates significant recent workplace transitions, including the rise of hybrid work models, the effects of the gig economy, and changing career expectations in the post-pandemic landscape.

Additionally, these developments have significantly shaped millennials' workplace behaviors and retention drivers (Hibrida & Sunarni, 2023). However, researchers need to explore further how businesses can effectively implement diverse strategies to address employee retention challenges (Zhenjing et al., 2022). An analysis of millennial-specific HR retention strategies in the context of these recent developments is insufficient. Addressing this gap is imperative for advancing research in human resource management and ensuring that retention strategies align with the realities of the modern workforce. The findings from this project will contribute to the existing body of literature by identifying HR strategies that are effective for millennial retention, bridging the gap between workforce trends, and expanding generational workforce management theories by evolving job expectations.

Supporting Evidence

Literature review addresses previous relevant projects and articulates theoretical (practice) orientation.

Primary Orientation

Provide an introduction to the review of scholarly literature, an argument for conducting the review, and a primary theoretical (and practice) orientation. Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

Employee engagement and retention have become critical priorities for organizations, particularly with the increasing presence of millennials in the workforce (Sanhi, 2021). This generation has distinct workplace expectations, making it essential for Human Resource (HR) professionals to understand the factors influencing their job satisfaction. While existing studies have explored general employee retention strategies, limited research has examined HR professionals' perceptions of effective strategies designed for millennials. The perceptions of HR professionals can be considered an important aspect as it can provide crucial insights from different experienced HR professionals on most effective strategies. Because work environments are evolving there is a need for a deeper understanding of how HR strategies align with these trends. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory is the theoretical framework for this project. This theory divides the workplace into hygiene factors and motivators.

The study utilizes this theory to explain how HR professionals perceive and implement motivation and retention strategies. It differentiates between hygiene factors, which help mitigate dissatisfaction (such as compensation, job security, and company policies), and motivators that drive satisfaction and engagement (including recognition, career development, and meaningful work) (Thant, 2022). Furthermore, the research will investigate how HR professionals tailor their motivation and retention strategies to meet the expectations and workplace behaviors of millennial employees. It is important for HR professionals to strike a balance between hygiene factors to prevent dissatisfaction and motivators to increase engagement and ensure long-term retention. By applying Herzberg's framework, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of

various HR strategies in addressing both dissatisfaction and engagement drivers. The findings will improve HR practices, ensuring organizations adopt evidence-based approaches to sustain motivation and retain millennials.

Efforts to Address the Problem

Provide a synthesized review of the scholarly literature to expose, explain, and analyze previous scholarly efforts to address the problem. Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

Retention and motivation of millennial employees have become pressing concerns for organizations, mainly as this generation now constitutes a significant portion of the global workforce (Mayangdarastri & Khusna, 2020). Previous research has examined various employee retention strategies (Babatunde & Onoja, 2023). Yet many studies predate key workplace transformations such as hybrid work models, gig economy influences, and evolving career expectations (Lauring & Jonnasson, 2024). This section synthesizes existing scholarly literature that highlights past and present efforts to address millennials in the workplace. It empathizes HR professionals' strategies used to motivation and retain employees.

Research has consistently emphasized the distinct work values of millennials, which differ from previous generations (Stiglbauer et al., 2022). Studies indicate that millennials prioritize career growth, meaningful work, work-life balance, and a supportive work environment over traditional incentives such as job security and monetary compensation (Bhatt et al., 2022; Sanhi, 2021). HR professionals would enhance millennial job satisfaction and long-term commitment by implementing evidence-based leadership, motivational and retention strategies. Research also suggests that a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators—such as professional development opportunities, recognition, and alignment with organizational values—can enhance millennial engagement and job satisfaction (Peramatzis & Galanakis, 2022). Therefore, to fully implement effective HR strategies, HR professionals must adapt and evolve to the current workplace environment (Uthman, 2024).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has been widely applied to employee motivation research,

distinguishing between hygiene factors (which prevent dissatisfaction) and motivators (which drive engagement) (Thant, 2022). The evolving landscape of the modern workplace, characterized by rapid digitalization, the rise of remote work, and shifting generational preferences (Bal & Bulgur, 2023), necessitates a critical examination of employee motivation strategies, particularly in the context of retaining millennial employees. Research has explored the impact of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory focusing on motivators such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and growth, a notable gap persists in understanding how HR professionals can effectively translate these principles into practical strategies tailored to millennial employees (Galanakis & Peramatzis, 2022). The challenge for HR professionals lies in the complex and multifaceted nature of millennial motivators and demands. Pandaya (2024) emphasizes the need for a balanced approach, integrating both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Also, millennial employees, often characterized by a desire for purpose, work-life balance, and continuous development (Yunita et al., 2023), may not be solely driven by traditional financial rewards or job security. Igbinoba et al. (2022) emphasize that employee retention strategies and organizational performance are inextricably linked and organizations that implement performance-based retention strategies can enhance employee motivation and commitment, ultimately driving organizational success.

Synthesis of the Evidence

Provide a logically organized and synthesized review and analysis of the literature in close alignment with the topic, problem, and gap. Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

The synthesis of evidence highlights HR professionals' challenges of retaining and motivating millennial employees. Research suggests that millennial employees prioritize career progression, technological integration, and workplace flexibility, which differentiate them from previous generations (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020; Thakur & Arora, 2022). However, traditional human resource practices that fail to educate workers about their responsibilities (Kamaruzzaman et al., 2022), along

with a lack of career development opportunities, inadequate training and development, and the absence of career ladders (Thwin et al., 2023), often do not meet employee expectations, leading to disengagement and increased turnover rates (Kemp & McLoughlin, 2022). High turnover has significant implications for organizational productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability, as it is influenced by factors such as satisfaction, job stress, security, work environment, compensation, and motivation (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021). These challenges highlight the necessity for HR professionals to develop retention strategies that address millennial expectations but also maintain organization stability in an evolving labor market (Minzlaff et al., 2024).

However, previous studies have focused mainly on broad generational comparisons or outdated motivational frameworks that do not consider recent developments, such as remote work, the gig economy, and shifting career expectations (Hibrida & Sunarni, 2023). Research highlights that HR strategies such as employee empowerment, flexible work arrangements, and continuous learning opportunities are key drivers of millennial engagement and retention (Setiyawami et al., 2024). Organizations that actively promote employee well-being, professional development, and engagement are more likely to experience higher productivity and lower turnover rates (Ayanponle et al., 2023). Organizations often benefit from lower turnover rates and increased engagement, as employees feel valued and supported. This study provides insights into workforce trends and refines organizational policies to enhance employee engagement and long-term retention.

Purpose of the Project and Project Questions

Purpose and questions align with topic, problem, and supporting evidence, including definition of terms.

Purpose of the Project

Provide one-to-two sentences aligned with the topic, problem, gap in practice, and project question to state the purpose of the project.

The purpose of this study is to understand HR professionals' perceptions regarding strategies and methods use to motivate and retain millennial employees. By addressing the gap in research regarding the perceptions of HR professionals' current retention strategies, this study aims to provide insights that can enhance employee engagement, reduce turnover, increase profitability and align HR practices with evolving workforce expectations.

Statement of Primary Question(s)

Provide 1-3 project questions that align with the topic, problem, and supporting evidence within the program. Suggested length 1 paragraph.

This study aims to answer the following question:

What are the perceptions of HR professionals regarding methods and strategies used to motivate and retain millennial employees?

Definition of Terms

Present a list of terms and definitions that relate to the program, topic, problem, gap, program, and project framework. This is a working section which you will continue to update in future courses. Suggested length 1 paragraph.

Employee Retention. The term employee retention can be defined as the ability of an organization to retain its employees over time, often influenced by job satisfaction, workplace policies, compensation, and career development opportunities (Hussain & Chauhan, 2024).

Human Resource Strategies. Human Resource Strategies can be defined as the policies and practices implemented by HR professionals to attract, develop, and retain employees while aligning with organizational goals and workforce expectations (Minzlaff et al., 2024).

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been characterized as "a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's job experiences." Job satisfaction reflects on total life quality, involving social ties, family connections, and perceived health status, affecting job performance, work absenteeism, and job turnover, leading, in certain situations, to serious psychological conditions such as burnout (Montuori et al., 2022).

Leadership Styles. Leadership styles can be defined as the technique or method that a leader uses to motivate, guide, and manage a team. It describes how leaders communicate, make choices, and interact with their teams in order to achieve organizational goals. Autocratic, democratic, transformational, transactional, and other leadership styles may be more effective in various circumstances or teams (Knight, 2024).

Millennial Employees. Millennial employees can be defined as the individuals that are born between the year 1981 and 1996. The millennial employees exhibit distinct workplace preferences, including career advancement opportunities, technological integration, and job flexibility (Lee & Circella, 2019).

Motivation. Motivation can be defined as an essential component of individual's interactions with the outside environment and with one another is the energizing of conduct in pursuit of a goal (Simpson et al., 2016).

Workplace Engagement. Workplace engagement can be defined as the emotional and cognitive commitment employees have toward their work, directly impacting productivity, motivation, and retention (Kemp & McLoughlin, 2022).

If you are seeking Topic Endorsement in XX-V8926 – Doctoral Project Development - Topic Approval, you only need to complete the sections above for the approval.

Proposed Project Framework

Methodological approach is clearly defined and includes constructs, phenomena, variables, and population.

Methodological Approach

Provide a description and explanation of the methodological approach. The methodological approach must align to the topic, problem, supporting evidence, and data sources. Suggested length 2-3 paragraphs.

This study employs a qualitative research methodology using Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI).

It is a descriptive qualitative research method that aims to understand how people make meaning of a

situation or phenomenon, often used when little is known about a topic or when a rich, in-depth description is desired (Wingate & Bourdage, 2024). The methodology selected for this study or research is a qualitative research methodology as it involves conducting semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research methodologies can be considered as most suitable for this kind of research, in which there is a need to understand the perceptions of HR professionals and their strategies to retain millennials. Qualitative research methodology can provide detailed insights and information on such topics, making it most suitable. Wingate & Bourdage (2024) describe this research best as qualitative interviews targeting meaning-making provides an understanding of the construct's individuals hold, which is ideal for the targeted perception of HR professionals. Qualitative research is best suited for understanding the nuanced subjective experience because HR professionals will articulate their perceptions in their own language. This also helps in ascertaining the rationale and mechanics of strategies that are effective and ineffective in retaining millennials. Interviews allow participants to speak freely and provide the flexibility to question about various perspectives and situations, which is important for qualitative research on this topic (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021).

Philosophical Assumptions of the Methodology

An Interpretivist philosophical approach will be undertaken for this research, as this philosophy is effective for understanding individual experiences based on certain situations and contexts (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). This philosophy is suitable for this research as this details subjective contexts in which understanding the experiences and contexts of individuals is important. This philosophical approach is essential for this study as it stresses understanding of human behavior and social reality through subjective experiences and meanings of individuals within their specific cultural contexts (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). The interpretivist philosophical approach goes well with the nature of this study and its aims and objectives to understand the perspectives of human resource professionals related to different millennial retention strategies. The study assumes that HR professionals' perceptions of retention

strategies will be influenced by their past experiences, the culture of the organization they belong to, and their personal convictions, thus recognizing the need to appreciate the manner in which HR strategies are actually constructed and executed in the real world.

Alignment of Methodology with Research Questions

This qualitative strategy fits the needs of the study perfectly when it comes to the understanding of the attitude of HR professionals toward the motivational and retention strategies for millennials. The semi-structured interviews will give most of the respondents the opportunity to speak about the motivational and retention strategies that they have found to be effective, as well as the ones that they consider to be ineffective (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). The qualitative aspect of the method also permits the instructor to ascertain the reasoning that lies behind the answers of the respondents. Open-ended questions can be considered highly effective in this research as they provide scope for collecting and gathering a wide range of personal experiences of HR professionals (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). This will significantly help in understanding the challenges and the effective strategies associated with the successful retention of millennials.

Identification of Data Sources

The primary data source for this study will be semi-structured interviews. The main data sources of participants for this study will be HR professionals who have worked with retaining millennials. The purpose of these interviews will be to gather different perspectives, concentrating on the HR practitioners' point of view. This will help in gaining a clear understanding related to the effectiveness of the strategies, the challenges, and the recommendations.

Population and Sample (including site if necessary)

Describe the general target population (e.g., size, characteristics). Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

Description of the Problem

The target population for this study consists of 12 to 15 HR professionals employed in various

industries across the United States, specifically those involved in the staff retention, recruitment, organizational development and implementation of employee retention and motivation strategies for millennial employees. The sample will be selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure participants have relevant experience in handling millennial workforce dynamics, including those responsible for designing or evaluating HR strategies aimed at retention and engagement (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024). A total of 12 to 15 HR professionals and managers from diverse industries in the US will be employed. The specific inclusion criteria for selecting these professionals will be to select the persons who have at least 3 years of experience in staff retention, recruitment, organizational development implementation of employee retention and motivation strategies for millennial employees. This will help in gathering practical and multidimensional insights related to millennial retention strategies and challenges. The candidates or the participants selected will be from U.S.-based organizations and will range from 12 to 15 employees in number, ensuring a wide and diverse scope for this research on human resource practices for millennial retention strategies.

Justification for Targeting This Population

The main targeted population for this research is considered to be 15 HR professionals with practical experience in the field of human resources. Selecting 15 candidates for this study or research will help in developing effective retention strategies and will also help in the identification of potential challenges associated with strategies (Ahmed, 2024). Since these candidates are experienced in the particular field in which the study is being conducted, they can significantly contribute towards the development of effective retention strategies. Moreover, these personnel can also understand which strategies might work or not, thereby contributing to the development of the most effective strategies. The practical and organizational experiences of these candidates make them the most suitable choice for this study. This particular sample population meets the query that deals with the perception of retention strategies. The methodology selected, specifically the semi-structured interviews, fits perfectly to obtain

the information they need concerning their retention strategies, challenges, and wins. This technique provides the needed qualitative material to understand the perceptions that will help in responding to the queries outlined in the research.

Potential Vulnerabilities

One possible vulnerability is the tendency of HR professionals to be reluctant and avoid discussing poorly implemented retention strategies and the problems they encounter in their organizations because of the fears of confidentiality constraints and company image problems in the public sphere. In addition, bias concerns might arise, especially concerning strategies to which they have previously dedicated considerable time and resources (VandeVusse et al., 2021). To address these issues, confidentiality will be guaranteed, and participants will be told that their answers will be de-identified in the analysis. To appear neutral and non-judgmental, the recruitment of interviewees will be designed in such a way as to promote the possibility of candor and openness.

Potential Barriers

One potential barrier presented in recruiting participants could be the busy schedules or workloads of the Human Resource staff. Also, there could be difficulties in reaching out to the HR staff in different organizations, as there may be restrictions or even gatekeepers in big organizations. To overcome this issue, HR professionals will be recruited through networks, LinkedIn, and relevant industry associations. Time constraints will be accommodated through flexible scheduling options (e.g., interviews via video calls or during off-peak times). As an additional motivation, prospective participants may appreciate having access to an incentive, like a summary of the key findings.

Constructs, Phenomena, Variables

Present evidence and explanation for the final choice of framework. Constructs, phenomena, and/or variables must align to the topic, problem, gap, and project questions. Suggested length 2-3 paragraphs.

The main constructs of this study are motivation, retention, and HR strategies. These constructs are required to analyze the perspectives of HR practitioners on the engagement and retention of millennials in the workforce. This study's aim is to investigate how HR professionals perceive the tactics and methods employed to inspire and retain millennial workers. Herzberg's two-factor theory (1966) will then be used to investigate the key concepts of motivation and retention.

Motivation

These are the internal and external reasons for millennials to perform the tasks required of them and for them to stay in their positions. Motivation could be intrinsic (personal growth or appreciation) and extrinsic (reward, job security). Motivation could also be (im)personal as described in Herzberg's two-factor theory (Ibrahim et al, 2023). For the purposes of this study, the construct of motivation as described will be analyzed in relation to the perceptions of HR professionals regarding what factors affect the job satisfaction and commitment of millennials.

Retention

In this context, employee retention refers to how organizations are able to keep their employees, specifically millennials, over a certain period of time. Flexible work arrangements, opportunities for advancement, and employee appreciation initiatives are other examples of retention strategies. It has been observed in various studies that developing retention strategies focusing on millennials can be highly effective in reducing turnover rates. In current times, millennials value a proper work-life balance, along with growth opportunities to advance in their careers (Pasko et al., 2020). The aim of this research is to understand the perceptions and perspectives of HR professionals and how they assess the effectiveness of a particular strategy.

HR Strategies

The fundamental role of HR in any organization is to manage the processes and policies for improving work culture, motivating employees, and retaining employees in the long term. Additionally, HR departments of organizations also has role in maintaining employee documents, developing compensation policies, managing employee payroll, and many more. These activities are performed through developing talents, providing rewards and recognition, and competitive pay scales to employees. As per Singh (2025), for millennials, the need for personalization of work life, alignment of organizational objectives with their objectives, and self-development is very important as this is considered as meaningful work by millennials.

Phenomena

The central phenomenon of this study can be considered as the retention and motivational strategies aimed towards retention of millennial employees, and the perceptions of HR professionals on such strategies. The analysis will boil down to using Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. This theory will provide a fuller understanding of how to intrinsic and extrinsic factors will lead to a judgment about satisfaction and retention at work. This phenomenon would be best studied through semi-structured interviews where HR professionals articulate their perspectives regarding the effectiveness of the various strategies. Understanding the phenomenon helps the study focus on how HR professionals derive meaning from their experiences and the factors, both external and internal, that shape the design and execution of various HR strategies.

Alignment with Research Questions

The constructs, and phenomena mentioned relate closely to the research questions regarding the perception of HR professionals on motivating and retaining millennials. Understanding the construct of motivation will help address the questions on what propels millennials to remain devoted and involved with their work. The construct of retention shall be evaluated through turnover rates and the strategies

HR professionals believe assist in turnover mitigation. HR strategies will be analyzed to determine which are regarded as the most effective in retaining millennial employees. This study focuses on understanding the perceptions of HR practitioners on motivational strategies and retention policies concerning Millennials. A qualitative method with semi-structured interviews will provide an in-depth comprehension of the retention issues HR faces with Millennials. Grasping the motivational and retention issues alongside retention strategies helps in understanding how HR perceives Millennial engagement and commitment to the organization. The outcomes of this research will help in improving and developing effective millennial employee retention strategies. This research also aims to provide practical insights and strategies aimed at improving engagement and retention of millennial employees.

Proposed Data Sources

Instrumentation and data collection tools address project concepts; ethical threats and their mitigation are detailed.

Measures or Artifacts to be Reviewed

Present a description of instrumentation or data collection tools. Measures or artifacts must closely align with the methodological approach. Suggested length 3-4 paragraphs.

In order to achieve alignment with the aims of the research, the preparation of the interview schedule will be completed in a two-phase process. Concerning the first phase, a group consisting of Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the fields of human resources and behavioral organizational research will be given the interview questions for a validity review. They will provide feedback to verify the questions are relevant, as well as determine if they are content complete (Cooper & Renshaw, 2023). They will also be responsible for issues of clarity and neutrality, as well as the alignment of the questions with the theoretical framework and the research question. This process will be helpful to making the interview guide better. After that, a small sample of HR practitioners will be involved to serve as a focus group for a series of mock interviews that will be used to test the guide. In this case, the aim of the mock interviews will be to determine the general sequence and arrangement of the questions,

which will, in turn, lead to the modification of the guide so that the questions will be less complicated for the interviewers as well as more straightforward in terms of the aims of the research (Harerimana et al., 2024). In other words, this will enable the researchers to pinpoint and resolve some questions that are vague and complicated so that they will be left with an interview guide that will ensure that they will have the relevant detail that they need to complete their study.

In this research, the primary data collection method utilized will be semi-structured in-person interviews or through Zoom video calls with experienced HR professionals and personnel. Video calls have been kept as a potential option to address issues such as time constraints and geographical barriers. Interviews have been selected as the primary means, as it will help in capturing key insights and in-depth data related to how attention is paid towards motivating and retaining the millennial employees in the workplace. This method is highly suitable since it is qualitative research and will allow participants the opportunity to freely express and discuss their real-life experiences in interviews (Roberts et al., 2025). The questions of the interview for this study will mainly focus and revolve around three main constructs that have been identified earlier, namely, motivation, retention, and HR strategies. Focusing on these constructs will help the research collect data and insights on what HR personnel perceive to be effective motivating factors for millennials, challenges and issues faced to retain them, and strategies used by them to retain and engage employees for a long time. Interviews are highly suitable for this study, as the main aim of this study is to understand and document the experiences, perceptions, and strategies used by HR professionals to motivate and retain employees in current times.

In this study, first, there will be questions based on the key construct of motivation. These questions will aim to analyze and assess the key factors associated with the motivation and engagement of millennial employees. Moreover, these questions will also aim to understand the impact of the motivating factors on the long-term engagement and loyalty of millennial employees towards their organization. These questions will be highly beneficial for this study as it will not only provide insights

into the influence of the key motivating factors but will also help in collecting data and insights related to potential reasons for millennial employee turnover. Secondly, this study will also include questions focusing on another key construct, HR Strategies. The primary aim of these questions will be to collect data related to the diverse views and opinions of HR professionals on effective practices, policies, and factors for retaining and motivating millennial employees. These questions will seek to understand what essential factors are necessary for supporting the growth and engagement of millennial employees in current times to ensure long term retention.

The field notes, data, and insights collected through the process of interviews will be assessed to understand the key factors. A digital recorder and a screen recording software will also be used to record the interview sessions to conduct a further detailed evaluation of the interviews afterward. The interview process can be considered highly effective and suitable for this kind of qualitative study, as it not only helps in gaining practical insights and experiences of participants, but also helps in identifying potential non-verbal cues such as body language and tone. These cues also help in improving the reliability and findings of the study (Roberts et al., 2025). Thus, it can be stated that the process of semi-structured interviews is highly suitable for this research study as it will help in collecting data based on all key constructs in a single session.

Interview Question Alignment Matrix

Research Question (RQ)	Interview Questions	Alignment to RQ	Alignment to Theoretical
RQ: What are the perceptions of HR professionals regarding methods and strategies used to	1. What strategies and methods you use to motivate millennial employees in	The aim of this question is to explore and understand the perceptions of	Aligns with motivators in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (e.g.,

motivate and retain millennial employees?	organization? 2. How do you understand and determine what motivational strategies are effective for millennials in your organization?	HR professionals on types of motivational strategies implemented. • The focus of this question is to analyze and understand how HR professionals determine the effectiveness of different motivational strategies.	career advancement, recognition, responsibility). • Aligns with motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition, meaningful work) in Herzberg's framework, focusing on how these factors influence engagement.
	3. What are the most effective HR policies and	• The aim of this question is to identify and	• Aligns with hygiene factors (e.g., job

	practices according to you are most effective in retaining millennial employees?	understand which HR strategies are perceived to be most effective by HR professionals for retaining millennial employees.	security, compensation) and motivators (e.g., growth opportunities, work-life balance) in Herzberg's framework.
	4. Provide and explain an example of why a retention strategy that did not prove to be effective or failed in retaining millennial employee?	The focus or objective of this question is to identify and understand the potential challenges that HR professionals face with retention	Aligns with hygiene factors (e.g., company policies, work environment) and motivators (e.g., professional growth) in Herzberg's theory.

		strategies and reasons for the strategies to be less effective.	
	5. How important is workplace flexibility as an essential factor for retaining millennial employees?	• The aim of this question is to understand the opinions and perceptions of HR professionals related to workplace flexibility as a key element for retaining millennial employees.	• Aligns with motivators (e.g., work-life balance, career development opportunities) and hygiene factors (e.g., flexible work arrangements, job satisfaction) in Herzberg's theory.
	6. What are the potential suggestions or recommendations	• The objective of this question is to understand and identify the	• Aligns with motivators (e.g., personal growth,

	that you would make for enhancing workplace flexibility for better retention of millennial employees?	potential improvements or changes that can be done in workplace flexibility to improve millennial retention employees.	work-life balance) and hygiene factors (e.g., job security, flexible schedules) in Herzberg's framework, addressing factors that influence both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
	7. What are the types of rewards and recognition that are highly effective in retaining millennial employees?	• The aim of this question is to understand effective reward-based motivational strategies from the perspective of HR professionals.	• This question is directly aligned with the motivational factor of recognition and achievement of Herzberg's

	8. What is the influence of career development opportunities and training on retaining millennial employees?	● The objective of this question is to analyze how important is training and development for retention of millennial employees in organizations.	theory. ● This question aligns with motivator factors of recognition and achievement of Herzberg's theory.
	9. How does factors like leadership styles and organizational culture have an influence on motivating and retaining millennial employees in organizations?	● This question aims to explore the impact of various leadership styles and organizational environment or culture on millennial employee motivation and	● This question is directly aligned with hygiene factors such as supervision and work environment of Herzberg's theory.

		retention.	
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Detailed Procedures

Present a description of the processes needed to complete the instruments by the participants or observers. Suggested length 3-4 paragraphs.

Who Will Use the Measure

In this research study, the involvement or measure of both the researcher and participants will be required. This is because the researcher who is conducting the study will be responsible for a lot of factors, such as structuring questions sequentially, asking follow-up questions to gather further details, and recording the interviews. Additionally, other responsibilities include noting down key notes and actively observing for potential non-verbal cues such as tone and body language of participants. Apart from this, the researcher is also responsible for attentively observing and noticing non-verbal cues such as changes in tone and body language of participants. It is the responsibility of the interviewer to structure the interview and data collection process efficiently to uphold the aim of the study and the methodology (Levitt et al., 2021). Additionally, the involvement of the candidate is also important, who is an HR professional, and their qualifications align well with the laid-down criteria of this study. The participant is responsible for honestly discussing their practical experiences, opinions, and strategies they use for motivating and retaining millennial employees. Lastly, to ensure privacy and confidentiality of participants, and also to minimize chances of biased responses, the interviews will be conducted in a safe private space or over Zoom video calls where a participant will be able to talk freely alone and discuss during the interview process.

How the Measure Will Be Collected

The measures for this study will be mainly collected through in-person, semi-structured interviews in a secure and private space to ensure the privacy, comfort, and security of both

participants and the insights collected from the interviews. The interview process will be a semi-structured interview with questions mainly based on key constructs identified for the study, along with some follow-up questions to understand certain areas in more detail. The primary aim will be to understand the main objectives of the study. Each interview will take around 45-60 minutes. The interviews will be audio-recorded upon securing the participants' consent, after which the researcher compiles short field notes, which will be alongside the audio recording to observe and record any non-verbal or contextual dynamics. After the audio transcripts are formed, a process of member checking will be conducted to ensure accuracy of their responses, and to make any rectifications if needed. The member checking process can be considered important as it will help in ensuring the credibility and the validity of the data by confirming that the transcripts formed are actual intentions and meanings of the responses provided by participants (Motulsky, 2021). No observational or organizational records will be utilized in the interviews, as they are the only means of data collection.

Materials and Tools Needed

For the in-person interviews, I will need a printed copy of the semi-structured interview protocol, printed copies of the consent forms, and a notepad for field notes. I will use a digital audio recorder to capture participant responses, and I will have a second recorder or a mobile device in airplane mode as a backup in case of any issues (Arntson & Yoon, 2023). For the online video call interviews, I will need Zoom software and web cam. I will use a timer or clock to keep track of the time. audio files, field notes, and any additional notes generated will be stored on a secure digital storage solution, such as an encrypted drive or a password-protected folder, to ensure confidentiality and protection of the data.

Potential Barriers and Strategies

There are a few possible obstacles to obtaining data in the in-person interviews. Participants may drop out or have scheduling conflicts, which can be reduced by sending reminders, providing flexible interview times, and permitting one reschedule. Some participants may be less candid if they know they are being recorded; therefore, the researcher will communicate the confidentiality safeguards, and participants will have the option to skip or pause a question (Feroz et al., 2024). Another risk is technical failure, so the researcher will get everything ready in advance, and the airline will have a spare phone and extra batteries. Interviews will be in a quiet and private space to ensure that there are no distractions.

Validity/Reliability/Credibility/Dependability

Identify and present the potential threats to reliability and validity (quantitative techniques) or trustworthiness (qualitative techniques). Include a proposed plan to mitigate the noted threats. Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

As a qualitative study that incorporated only semi-structured interviews and no other data collection instruments, the trustworthiness of the study hinges on the potential for bias, the researcher's misinterpretation of participants, and a small sample size, which may limit transferability. To increase the trustworthiness of the account, the researcher will stick to the same procedures for each interview (as outlined in the documentation), use neutral probes aimed at clarifying the meanings of responses, and round off the interview by summarizing the main ideas and verifying them with participants (Freire et al., 2025). Additionally, the credibility of the research will be further improved through utilizing SME reviews, conducting mock interview sessions, and member checking as well to ensure accuracy and validity of the data interpretation. To improve data understanding and transferability to readers, the researcher will structure the participants and their contexts in such a way that readers are able to understand the settings and contextual relevance of the study and its findings. In addition, bracketing will be used to suspend

any assumptions the researcher may hold so that the findings reflect the participants' point of view as opposed to the biases of the researcher.

Lastly, to minimize chances of bias and reflexivity, the researcher will maintain a neutral position and avoid allowing candidates to ask leading questions. To enhance the dependability and confirmability of this study, the researcher will keep a record of a systematically developed audit trail that will point out all key steps of interviews, data collection, data processing, and analysis processes to ensure replicability and transparency. All the insights gathered from interviews, including field notes, audio recordings, and personal details, will be kept highly secure by following safety processes and ID codes of participants to allow retrieval of data if needed. Keeping field notes secure is highly important as it records contextual elements and key non-verbal cues that will significantly contribute to the refinement of data, improving the reliability and credibility of the study, and facilitating accurate interpretation. After articulating thoughts, participants may be left with a short time to approve and endorse their words, again guaranteeing confirmability. These actions guarantee focus remains on the participants, demonstrating their perspective and not the researcher's.

Proposed Data Collection

Describe sampling, recruitment, data collection procedures, and potential ethical considerations.

Sampling Strategy, Number participants

Describe, explain, and justify the sampling strategy to be used. Suggested length 2-3 paragraphs.

For this research, the aim is to purposefully choose individuals who have first-hand knowledge about the different strategies used to motivate and maintain millennial employees. According to Ahmad & Wilkins (2024), this approach is fitting for qualitative research since it

enables the investigator to systematically invite individuals who can offer valuable, pertinent, and knowledgeable insights that correspond with the primary goal of the study. A proposed sample of between 12 to 15 HR practitioners who have a minimum of three years of background in HR, specifically in employee engagement, retention, and talent development, will be considered. I have proposed this range on the basis of the qualitative research field in which it is considered appropriate to have a sample of 12 to 15 individuals for saturation, where no further themes or insights can be offered with additional interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Considering a wide range of participants from different organizational aspects for this study will help in improving the quality of data, information, and reliability of the study.

Considering and selecting 12 to 15 participants for the study has its own advantages and disadvantages. Focusing on advantages, it can be said that having such participants will help in collecting high-quality, practical, and crucial insights from each HR professional. This will provide a clear overview and understanding of the experiences they face for retaining and motivating millennial employees. This number is also attainable for the targeted analyses of in-person interviews, while being diverse enough to gather a range of perspectives. On the downside, there is a chance that the findings might not be transferable to a wider context because of the small number of participants, a situation that most qualitative researchers encounter. Another potential problem is the loss of data if a participant retires from the study or if an interview recording fails. To reduce these risks, the researcher will be systematically recruiting HR professionals from a range of sectors, identifying and including 'reserve' participants and managing data as proposed in the methodology. I believe the proposed number is justified in qualitative research and will lead to the collection of defensible data.

Recruitment Procedures

Provide a recruitment process to identify, screen, and recruit participants as it aligns with the methodological approach. Present the inclusion and exclusion criteria for participating in the project. Suggested length 2-3 paragraphs.

The purposive recruitment procedure will target HR practitioners who have firsthand knowledge of the motivation and retention of millennials within the workplace. To facilitate recruitment and ensure proper vetting of participants, we will use a third-party recruitment service, such as User Interviews (userinterviews.com, 2025). They are a service that assists in identifying eligible HR professionals and helps minimize bias and other participant recruitment-related issues, such as permissions. A recruitment email or flyer will be distributed with information about the study's purpose and eligibility, the voluntary nature of participation, time commitments required, and the researcher's contact information (Tsindos, 2023). If recruitment occurs through organizations, permission will be needed to be obtained from the appropriate organizational authority. However, using User Interviews eliminates the need to obtain organizational permissions, and they will recruit participants as a third party to maintain compliance and help ensure less administrative burden. There will not be any conflicts of interest or bias, as the researcher does not currently supervise or have any working relations with any of the possible participants. Power imbalance has been addressed as the researcher will not recruit direct peers, former subordinates, or people with any dependent relations to the researcher.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants will help ensure that the candidates selected for this study will provide rich and high-quality data. The inclusion criteria are that the professionals are currently engaged in an HR role for more than 12 months, the candidates have at least three years of experience in the field of HR, and the candidates perform a direct role related to employee engagement, motivation, and retention of millennial employees. The User Interview service will be responsible for only contacting individuals who are fit for inclusion

criteria imposed on the participant sample of individuals. They will also match participants based on specific job titles related to millennial employee motivation and retention. The exclusion criteria can be considered as participants not having direct involvement with millennial employee engagement or retention, candidates are not able to be present for a full in-depth interview, and candidates who might not feel free to share sensitive information due to policies. This will ensure exclusion of participants that may hamper the quality of the study and the data.

This study will strictly follow all the principles and guidelines as set by the International Research Board for ethically recruiting and conducting interviews. This will uphold the ethical principles of this study and will also ensure that participation is voluntary, and candidates are not feeling forced to attend (Throne, 2024). Initial screening is conducted through a brief email or phone call. Furthermore, after assessing the suitability criteria of participants, the participants selected will be sent an informed consent form before the interview and will be allowed to freely ask any questions related to the study and the process. The research needs to address all issues and clarify all the concerns of the participants before conducting the interview. I inform participants that they may withdraw at any time, and their data will be de-identified and kept confidential. This guarantees transparency, participants' respect, and protection.

Data Collection Process

Provide a logical step-by-step data collection process as it aligns with the methodological approach. Suggested length 3-4 paragraphs.

Recruiting participants is the first step in collecting data, and this will be executed through User Interviews, which is a site that allows researchers to recruit qualified participants. Targeted participants will be HR professionals with a minimum of three years of retention management experience and a focus on retention of millennials. User Interviews allow for

purposeful sampling, as contacts will be filtered based on experience in the field, which is in line with the focus of this study on strategies for millennial retention. User Interviews will initiate the process of obtaining informed consent, whereby an outline of the study, participants' rights in terms of voluntary participation, and anonymity will be explained to the participants in order for them to be aware of the ethical components (O' Sullivan et al. 2021) of this step. This bias is in concordance with Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI) and the Interpretivist philosophy, which emphasizes the rights of the individuals who will be participants in the study. Informed consent will be evidence that participants will be aware of their participation in the study, which will promote a positive ethical atmosphere for the collection of data.

Once the research participants provide informed consent, semi-structured interviews will be carried out in User Interviews. The semi-structured interview style provides for a certain degree of flexibility in that there will be some questions prepared in advance that will act as a guide for the interview. However, the interviewers will be invited as speakers and are encouraged to delve more into their unique experiences and thoughts. Also, the style of interviewing aligns best with the Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI) approach, whose goal is to capture in as much finer detail as the participants can provide (Tariq, 2025). This would help to explain the sample's motivation, attitudes, and the hurdles that the participants would face in answering questions that would help Human Resource (HR) professionals to provide ways to retain millennials. The interviews will revolve around the participants' experiences (or their perceptions) and the various ways in which they are (or can) engage their employees, the various ways in which they can (or do) retain employees, and the degree to which their (or the) HR strategies align with the demands of millennials. The participants will provide their consent to be recorded for the purpose of data accuracy. The semi-structured design also meets the requirements of the Interpretivist paradigm

as it permits the participants to explain their thoughts in their own manner, which preserves the richness of their data.

When the interviews are complete, the audio recordings will be transcribed word for word in a verbatim transcript to include all details of the participants' responses. Then, the data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is appropriate to apply with different coded themes from the transcripts being analyzed, which will focus on themes such as career development, work-life balance, and recognition of HR strategies regarding the retention of millennials. Thematic analysis aligns with the Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI) methodology, as it focuses on understanding how participants make meaning of their experiences of the phenomena (Qaissi, 2024). The transcriptions with coded data will be analyzed for indications that the research questions were adequately approached through semi-structured interviews, as well as to see if themes emerged during the analysis of the transcripts. This will allow the researcher to help understand how HR practitioners view designing and implementing strategies, then reflect upon their own experiences, and consider them within a context of culture(s) in their organization, and the challenges experienced with the millennial workforce. All data will remain confidential as an anonymized report will be made of the findings, and research ethics will be upheld throughout the analysis process.

Ethical Considerations

Identify potential ethical issues and provide a proposed plan to adhere to strict ethical standards. Include details regarding privacy, confidentiality, and data security procedures and concerns. Suggested length 1-2 paragraphs.

This study will ensure privacy, confidentiality, and data protection when handling participant data. All participant data, including interview responses, will be devoid of any identifying details, and such data will be kept in a secure space. Identification of participants will

be kept confidential as there will be no mention of the names or details of the organizations of the participants in any of the research outputs (Pascale et al., 2022). The study will also comply with data protection regulations, including the storage of audio files and their corresponding transcripts in secure, encrypted digital files that will only be available to the research team. The above protocols are also aligned with federal requirements, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and the regulations of Capella University, especially the IRB guidelines, which are centered on the protection of sensitive and personal data. The data will also be kept in encrypted files, which will be stored in a safe and approved server of the university, which will restrict unauthorized individuals from accessing the data. These measures have also been put in place to meet Capella University's guidelines on participants' data protection, and as a result, participants' data will be kept confidential throughout the study.

Besides the risks associated with maintaining privacy, confidentiality, and the security of data, potential ethical issues could relate to the discomfort of the participants that may arise around the discussions of sensitive issues, such as perceived ineffective retention strategies or failures with regard to HR practices. This study will also comply with the Belmont Principles which has three core ethical guidelines that are Respect for Persons, Beneficence, and Justice (Nagai et al., 2022). Respect for Persons will be upheld in this study by ensuring informed consent of participants, voluntary participation, and rights of candidates to withdraw from the study. Beneficence will be upheld in this study by minimizing and potential risks such as emotional discomfort while discussing in effective and failed HR strategies to retain millennial employees, ensuring benefits of the study outweighs risks. Lastly, Justice will be upheld in this study by ensuring fair and equitable candidate selection without any bias. HR professionals

may be reluctant to share their thoughts as they may see this as a risk to their careers or the reputation of the company. To avoid this, participants will be given categorical assurances that data, as they have given it and as they will be grouped, will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and anonymity. They will also be told that they have the right to withdraw from the study at their own discretion, and at any point, without any due sanctions. Another issue is that of bias, particularly the desire of participants to provide feedback that is perceived to be supportive of their organization and that is provided as a practice in the organization. To mitigate this, the study will stress unbiased feedback. This unbiased feedback will also be obtained through member checking, which will be justified in participants having the right of access to their data in the study for their review (Motulsky, 2021). These supportive statements, together with those derived from Capella University's ethical guidelines, have to be supported by the APA Ethical Principles to ensure that the research will be conducted with due ethical care and that the risks will be as minimal as possible.

Proposed Data Analysis Plan

Articulate data analysis techniques appropriate to project framework.

Present a plan to analyze and present data with techniques that are appropriate to the project, framework, data sources, and sample size. Suggested length 3-4 paragraphs.

The study's data will be processed or analyzed using thematic analysis aligned best with the qualitative methodology. According to Jowsey et al. (2021), thematic analysis entails the process of transcription and coding of interviews to uncover and analyze patterns and themes aligned to the research questions. The first step of the process will be to generate codes using data from the interviews. These codes of data will be categorized and aligned according to response themes of motivation, retention strategies, and HR practices for millennials. These

codes will be assigned to and organized under main themes that capture the essence of the fundamental questions posed to HR professionals. Thematic analysis fits with the Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI) methodology, which focuses primarily on how people construct meaning with respect to their experiences, and in this instance, HR strategies. This allows for the data to be processed in a structured way from which a great understanding will be drawn on how HR practitioners conceptualized and triangulated on the issue of retention of millennial employees. This will further allow the study to respond to the main questions in the research.

After coding, the themes will be improved and verified through an examination of their frequencies and meanings. This allows the researchers to focus their analysis on the most relevant themes. When all themes have been considered and improved, the findings will be compiled into a narrative that describes a complete picture of the HR approaches to employee retention perceived to be the most effective for millennial employees. To assist visualization of some important findings, tables and graphs will be displayed. For example, a table may display the retention strategies in order of frequency, and a graph may display a correlation between HR practices and their retention rates. Visual displays will enhance clarity and increase the ability to draw from the findings (Divecha, Tullu & Karande, 2022). In addition, establishing this method of presentation with thematic analysis and the qualitative approach to this study aligns with the study of employee retention and provides a clear and organized view of the research findings.

This study's sample size will consist of 12-15 HR professionals. This range is acceptable for qualitative research focused on achieving data saturation. The sample size will ensure various perspectives are attained while remaining manageable for comprehensive analysis. Once interviews are completed, the interview responses will be analyzed for patterns and themes. Data saturation will be established for this study when no new themes emerge from interviews. This

assures that subjects' data represent the perspectives of HR professionals on retaining millennial employees fully. The study's data collection process and data analysis process are iterative and follow the assumptions of the Generic Qualitative Inquiry (GQI) methodology. This establishes assurance that data collected and analyzed is in accordance with the experiences of HR professionals feasibly and responsively. The process of data processing, along with methodology and sample size, all provide the appropriate steps to ensure the research questions will be sufficiently answered in a complete manner, to the extent that relevant HR strategies for retaining millennial employees will be gathered.

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APA formatted reference section that includes a reference for each citation used in text.

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