Predicting Lower Millennial Turnover Intentions: Examining Work Benefits Factors and Organizational Environment Factors as Sets

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PREDICTING LOWER MILLENNIAL TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXAMINING WORK BENEFITS FACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FACTORS AS SETS

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Lyric W. Fortson
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PREDICTING LOWER MILLENNIAL TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXAMINING WORK BENEFITS FACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FACTORS AS SETS

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ABSTRACT

PREDICTING LOWER MILLENNIAL TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXAMINING WORK BENEFITS FACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FACTORS AS SETS

by Lyric W. Fortson

Millennials make up the majority of the working population now, however organizations are struggling to retain them, as they tend to turnover in their job roles after an average of just a few years. The purpose of this study was to examine what workplace variables could predict lower turnover intentions in Millennials. This study examined a set of two work benefits factors, satisfaction with salary and satisfaction with career advancement, and a set of three organizational environment factors, satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with supervisor, and satisfaction with work-life balance, as predictors of lower turnover intentions in Millennials. A survey was administered to 102 Millennials across industries. Standard multiple multiple regression analysis showed that satisfaction with supervisor was the only organizational environment variable that had a significant unique contribution, but that both factors in the work benefits set had a significant unique contribution. Two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were also conducted. The first revealed that the work benefits set accounted for significant variance above and beyond the organizational environments set, with both factors having significant unique contributions. The second revealed that the organizational environment set accounted for significant variance above and beyond the work benefits set, however, only satisfaction with supervisor had a significant unique contribution.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables ....................................................................................................... vii

Introduction .......................................................................................................... 1
  Millennials ..................................................................................................... 2
  Millennials in the Workforce ......................................................................... 5
  Turnover Intentions ........................................................................................ 8
  Feedback ........................................................................................................ 9
  Supervisor ...................................................................................................... 11
  Work-life Balance ........................................................................................ 13
  Career Advancement ...................................................................................... 16
  Salary ............................................................................................................. 18
  Purpose of the Current Study ......................................................................... 19

Method ............................................................................................................... 22
  Participants ..................................................................................................... 22
  Measures ........................................................................................................ 24
    Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Feedback .... 24
    Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Work-Life Balance ........................................................................................................ 25
    Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Supervisor .. 26
    Work Benefits Factor Set: Satisfaction With Career Advancement...... 26
    Work Benefits Factor Set: Satisfaction With Salary............................ 27
  Turnover Intentions .................................................................................. 28
  Procedure ....................................................................................................... 29

Results .................................................................................................................. 30
  Descriptive Statistics ...................................................................................... 30
  Pearson Correlations ...................................................................................... 31
  Test of the Research Question ....................................................................... 33

Discussion ............................................................................................................ 39
  Summary of Findings ...................................................................................... 39
  Theoretical Implications ................................................................................. 41
  Practical Implications ...................................................................................... 42
  Strengths of the Study .................................................................................... 45
  Limitations of the Study ................................................................................ 45
  Future Research ............................................................................................... 46
  Conclusion ..................................................................................................... 47

References ............................................................................................................ 48

Appendix .............................................................................................................. 58
# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents ($N = 102$) .......... 23

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables .............................................. 30

Table 3. Pearson Correlations Among the Measured Variables ......................... 32

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis for Organizational Environment Factors and Work Benefit Factors ................................................................. 34

Table 5. Hierarchical MRC 1: Organizational Environment Factors First, Work Benefits Factors Second ................................................................. 36

Table 6. Hierarchical MRC 2: Work Benefits Factors First, Organizational Environment Factors Second ................................................................. 37
Introduction

The literature on generational differences in the workplace spans decades. Every new generation and their respective habits and patterns seem to baffle the previous one. The workplace is an especially salient example of where generational differences come to light, and researchers continue to determine what causes and mitigates challenges born of these differences. One challenge employers have increasingly been facing is the tendency of Millennials to leave a role and company after just a few years or even less. A recent study showed that Millennials are only staying in a role, on average, approximately two years (CareerBuilder, 2021; Grace & Graen, 2014; Graen & Schiemann, 2013; PwC, 2013; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). This is in stark contrast to Generation X, the Baby Boomer Generation, and the Veteran Generation, who stayed an average of over eight years (CareerBuilder, 2021).

Organizations by and large have failed to get to the heart of what it is that Millennials seek in a company or role that reduces their intentions to turnover. To find this solution, organizations must look at different factors and discover which ones lead to reduced intentions of a Millennial to leave their role. To date, there is no research that has examined sets of environmental factors and work benefits as predictors of reduced Millennial turnover intentions. The purpose of this study was to examine a set of organizational environment variables and a set of work benefits variables as predictors of lower Millennial turnover intentions.
Millennials

The definition of “generation” tends to be subjective, defined differently by different people. There is general consensus that a “generation” is a cohort of people of certain ages, or sets of ages, whose early to adolescent development is impacted by living through the same historical events (Costanza et al., 2012). These events shape the values, attitudes, and characteristics of the cohorts of people who live through them.

Though the length of generational cohorts is also subjective, many anthropologists and genetic genealogists agree that a generation is somewhere between 22 to 27 years (Devine, 2016). The Millennial generation length, however, seems to fall within a shorter timeframe. This may be due in part by how technology advanced exponentially within a short period of time, and perhaps because of the magnitude of events that occurred so close together, such as the September 11th attacks in 2001 and the economic crash of 2008.

The birth range of Millennials has been stated differently throughout literature, but always falls roughly within the same timeframe. Earlier definitions, like that of Foot and Stoffman (1998) and Smola and Sutton (2002), assert that Millennials are those born between 1979 and 1994. However, as time progressed, the range moved further down the line in years. Researchers may have thought the Millennial era was over, but actually they were still in the midst of it. This did not become clear until later, resulting in a shift of the range. Carver et al. (2008) stated the Millennial birth-year range is from 1982-2003.

Some characterize Millennials not by a range of birth years, but by the range of years that this cohort entered the workforce. Hershatter and Epstein (2010) characterize Millennials as those who entered the workforce between 2004 and 2022, which implies they were born
between 1986 and 2004 if it is assumed that they entered the workforce at 18 years old; or 1982 and 1998 if it is assumed they entered the workforce after getting a four-year university degree.

There clearly exists a range of estimates, but the consensus that has been reached is based primarily on coinciding the birth years of this generation with the birth and advancements of technology. Many now agree that the first Millennials were born in 1982, the same year the TCP/IP, the set of communication protocols that laid the groundwork for the modern internet, was created (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Another cornerstone of this generation was email. Though the very first version of what could be considered email was invented at MIT in 1965, it was the 1989 creation of the World Wide Web that led to the debut of the first major email provider, Hotmail, seven years later in 1996. Other staples of this generation were mobile phones and social media. MySpace, which would be considered the first major social media platform, was created in 2003, and the first iPhone was released in 2007. Being born at the same time as these technological inventions, and growing up alongside the incredible advancements that followed, are what made this generation who they are. Therefore, Millennials are defined in this paper as being born between 1982 and 2000.

Every generation begets their own patterns of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. These patterns touch every aspect of life, from personal to professional, and Millennials are no exception. Millennials are set apart from preceding generations by a distinct set of characteristics and values. Millennials are characteristically technologically savvy, as they grew up with cell phones, internet, and video games (Carpenter et al., 2014). They were born
into an onslaught of technological advances and immersed themselves in them. When they were old enough, they took over and propelled the advancements even further.

Millennials, who grew up watching news stations reporting on mass shootings, environmental crises, and a war on terror, have developed high social consciousness in tandem with understandable cynicism and narcissistic tendencies (Twenge et al., 2008). This means they may have a more negative outlook on life and think they know better than others, having witnessed so many social and political decisions that led to dire consequences. They are also more likely to detect unethicalness in situations. Culiberg and Mihelic (2016) found Millennials have an increased likelihood of understanding when a circumstance is unethical and are more likely to avoid engaging in it if they perceive the unethicalness negatively.

Millennials have blurred the lines between gender roles as well. It has become widely accepted for men to stay home and assume parental roles while women return to work, more often now in leadership roles than before (Chalofsky & Cavallaro, 2013).

Millennials' needs can be partially attributed to how they were raised. These individuals were at the forefront of their parents' lives, which has resulted in an inherent need for them to be acknowledged, included, and respected (Carpenter et al., 2014). This has led to attitudes about life distinct to their generational cohort. They seek fulfillment in their life and work, longing for the two to be meaningful to them, their families, their community, and society at large (Chalofsky & Cavallaro, 2013). They feel most accomplished when they are helping others, regardless of what form that takes. Feeling fulfilled on a personal level and making worthy social contributions are integral themes in their lives.
Millennials in the Workforce

Millennials have been flooding the workforce since around 2004 (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010) and have taken the American professional world by storm. By 2025, Millennials are purported to make up 75% of the workforce (Deloitte, 2014). Therefore, if organizations expect to grow, prosper, and thrive, there is a clear need to research, understand, and accommodate Millennial employees. This begins with understanding their mindset and approach to working life.

Older generations have noted Millennials’ high levels of confidence and self-absorbed nature in the workplace, but also their impressive affinity for multitasking and orientation toward teamwork (Baum, 2020). They are optimistic, enthusiastic, trusting, and collectivist in their occupations (Baum, 2020). Some people have the mindset that Millennials are competent and capable: the heroes who will turn the economic, political, and environmental crises around. However, other critics think they are entitled, self-serving, and unable to see tasks through to completion without the handholding and participation trophies reminiscent of their childhoods (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). “Trophy kids” is one popular nickname of this generational cohort, alluding to the idea that, in childhood, Millennials were rewarded on participation, regardless of performance or results (Beinhoff, 2011).

Millennials value fulfilling careers characterized by the same social contributions towards family and society that they desire in their personal lives (Tapia, 2008). They want respectful, inclusive work environments where they feel psychologically safe to express their opinions, thoughts, or disagreements. They want a culture of equity and voice in the workplace they choose to dedicate their time (Tapia, 2008).
Millennials value doing things the way they want to do them, with flexibility and autonomy (Carpenter et al., 2014). Shift work, defined as roles that require or allow the incumbent to work evenings, nights, or early-morning shifts (Wright et al., 2013), has become increasingly popular and sought after with the new age of hybrid and remote work. Millennials are less likely to agree to a workday that has an inflexible start and end time if there is no justifiable reason why they cannot start or end later or earlier. They want the freedom to work at their own pace as long as deadlines are being met and deliverables are of quality. They feel more accomplished when they are tasked with something and then given free rein on how to complete it.

Millennials require consistent and honest performance feedback (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016) in the form of open and clear communication (Baum, 2020). Millennials are not satisfied with once-a-year performance reviews. They want consistent feedback on how they are doing, be it positive or constructively critical. They want to know if they are on the right track and expect to be corrected if they are not. When this feedback comes, they want it to be honest, open and clear, with no euphemisms, sugar-coated phrases, or convoluted explanations (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016). They want direct, concise feedback from which they can draw clear next steps.

Millennials also desire strong interpersonal relationships with their coworkers and supervisors, supportive and uplifting management (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016), and respectful work environments (Baum, 2020). They expect someone to be there to uplift them when they are struggling, cheer them on during a marathon project, or inspire them with a strong vision when they lose sight of the “why” to the work.
Perhaps the factor that sets Millennials apart most saliently from earlier generations is their refusal to accept the “live to work” mentality, instead replacing it with the philosophy of “work to live.” The generations before Millennials lived to work, in that they identified themselves heavily with their jobs, saw their career as their legacy, and were very proud of the marks they left on their organization. In contrast, Millennials work to live, in that they want fuller lives outside of the workplace, placing less value on tenure, title, and the prestige of their organizations.

Trends and research on Millennials show they commit to people over companies, and leave managers, not jobs (Cates, 2010). This means that good relationships with supervisors and coworkers are more meaningful to Millennials than their overarching company or specific job title, and that they will leave their organization if not satisfied with these relationships. If the job is stressful but the employee feels supported, they may be more inclined to stay in the role. However, if they enjoy their work, but do not like their boss, they may leave despite their favorable attitudes towards their role. When Millennials develop loyalty to their companies, it is only to the extent that it benefits and aligns with the greater vision of their career and path. Company loyalty is much less on their radar than advancing their careers and finding better opportunities elsewhere (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016).

Regardless of the beliefs previous generations hold regarding Millennials, one thing is certain: Millennials are only growing in numbers in the workplace and will continue to do so. Their trends are becoming clear, and one of their most prominent characteristics is their tendency to leave their role in a matter of low, single digit years. If organizations wish to retain top Millennial talent in any capacity, they must begin to understand why this may be.
The next section of this paper will illustrate each variable in the study, its relevance to Millennials, and its connection to turnover intentions.

**Turnover Intentions**

Turnover intentions are defined as an employee’s plan to voluntarily leave their job or company (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday et al., 1982). Turnover and its substantial cost to organizations are issues that managers and leaders in the modern workforce have struggled with for generations. Not only are companies losing top talent, but they are also paying a hefty financial fee. The price tag of replacing and hiring new employees can be as high as 60% of an employee’s yearly salary, and 90-200% when training and loss of productivity are taken into account (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2011).

Organizations have tried different means of retaining Millennials. Such attempts include open bars in the office, ping pong tables, and nap pods. While these may be enjoyable in the short term, they have not been found to be effective in terms of long-term retention. Several studies have documented that even in top-paid positions, Millennials tend to leave their positions in under two years (Grace & Graen, 2014; Graen & Schiemann, 2013; PwC, 2013; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). The current study seeks to examine what work-related constructs can lead to Millennial retention. This paper examines three different organizational environment factors (feedback, supervisor, and work-life balance) and two different work benefits factors (career advancement and salary) that may reduce Millennial’s intentions to turnover.
Feedback

Feedback is the process of relaying observations of one’s behavior and performance back to them (Prayson & Rowe, 2017). It allows individuals to understand how their actions are being perceived and is necessary for learning, improving, and mastering tasks. Feedback allows an employee to gain awareness of the difference between how they think they are behaving versus how a supervisor believes they are behaving. From there, the disconnect between the two can begin to be bridged. Prayson and Rowe (2017) assert that there are seven characteristics that feedback must have to be effective: the feedback must be detailed and specific, based on observation, balanced, actionable, timely, professionally delivered, and constructive and purposed.

Across the literature, feedback has been shown to be an extremely important aspect of the workplace for Millennials. Most trace this back to their childhoods, where trophies were handed out for participation rather than results (Alsop 2008; Hill 2002). Many millennials were coddled as children, which fostered feelings of entitlement to recognition. It created a stimulus response to expect approval and recognition for tasks, no matter how menial (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). When Millennials grew up and entered the workforce, these expectations also entered with them.

Millennials continuously seek guidance, direction, and recognition for their work. More than the previous generations, they need to feel confident that they are on the right path (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). They want close relationships and constant feedback from their supervisors (SHRM, 2009). They want consistent feedback, but to be satisfied with it, it needs to be abundant, positive, and personal (Baker Rosa & Hastings, 2018). They want
communication to be accepting and uplifting (Redding & Tompkins, 1988). Job satisfaction among Millennials is higher when supervisors evaluate their performance on a regular basis and in a more positive and affirming manner (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). When an employee receives feedback about their performance on various tasks, it allows them to understand what they are doing right and what they need to improve on.

The connection between feedback and turnover intentions is ample in organizational literature. When looking at feedback and turnover intentions, the correlation is consistently significant and negative (Joo et al., 2015; Joo & Park, 2010). When feedback is obstructed, or prevented from being given, employees experience increased intentions to turnover (Walsh et al., 1985). In a study by Walsh et al. (1985), 89 sales representatives in the pharmaceutical industry participated in a questionnaire measuring the value of feedback and feedback obstruction across different outcome variables, including turnover intentions. The study illustrated that when different feedback sources were obstructed, turnover intentions increased.

Feedback of all different kinds has been linked to lower turnover intentions. A study by Lee et al. (2019) found that the performance feedback characteristic of transformational leadership was a resource for employees that led to reduced turnover intentions among 500 employees in 65 workgroups from private organizations in Malaysia. The quality of feedback has also been examined. Van Waeyenberg et al. (2015) found that feedback that was frequent and favorable was directly related to lower turnover intentions in a sample of 312 home nurses from a division of a large home health care organization in Belgium.
Supervisor

Leadership has been one of the most popular topics in organizational literature for decades (Mumford et al., 2009). It is almost impossible to ignore the concept when considering constructs that impact job attitudes and turnover intentions. Leadership styles of all kinds have been found to increase positive job outcomes and reduce negative ones. Individual differences play a substantial role in someone’s partiality or disapproval of a leadership style. For this reason, this study examines the construct of satisfaction with one’s supervisor, rather than choosing one leadership style and examining its relation to turnover intentions.

Supervisors, like every other aspect of the working environment, have had to change and adapt to Millennials’ picky nature. Millennials are very particular about how they want to receive, communicate, and engage with leaders like their supervisors. Millennials want leaders and supervisors who employ centralized decision making, where decisions that are made at the top are communicated down to lower levels of management for implementation, as well as leaders who define responsibilities clearly by providing an accurate job description and realistic job preview, and who formalize and standardize procedures to mitigate red tape and bureaucracy (Graduate Management Admission Council, 2007).

Millennials need communication from the top to be open (Baum, 2020). This means sharing information, communicating negative information, providing performance feedback, fostering a supportive organizational climate, asking for input, and disclosing information (Jablin, 1987). They expect to hear about all organizational issues, even those most typically shared only with senior employees and managers (Gursoy et al., 2008). They want and
expect to be kept privy to company matters, and would be more prone to pushing back on a culture where information was only relayed on a need-to-know basis (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Millennials want their supervisors and leaders to take a personal interest in them, which some believe stems from their constant coddling from their parents and teachers in their youth (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). They were encouraged to form close and personal relationships with parents, teachers, coaches, and other authority figures growing up, which may contribute to their view that strong relationships with supervisors is paramount for long-term job satisfaction, as well as in processes like negotiating role aspects (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009).

While the literature on satisfaction with supervisor is not as vast as the literature for each leadership style, there is sufficient evidence that simply being satisfied with the leadership style that one’s supervisor has, regardless of style, can lead to lower turnover intentions. Research studies have consistently yielded a negative relationship between supervisor satisfaction and turnover intentions. A study by DeConinck and Stilwell (2004) used two data sets in order to examine a model of turnover intentions that included role states. One of the role states was satisfaction with supervisor. The study found a significant, negative relationship between supervisor satisfaction and withdrawal cognitions, also known as turnover intentions. Fang (2001) conducted a study on 180 nurses in a hospital in Singapore focusing on antecedents of turnover intentions. The author found that supervisor satisfaction was one of the top predictors of turnover intentions when compared amongst stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and professional commitment.
Wells and Peachey (2011) examined the relationship between satisfaction with a leader and voluntary turnover intentions. They administered a multifactor leadership questionnaire to 208 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I softball and volleyball assistant coaches in the United States. Participants were prompted to evaluate individual satisfaction with the leader, and their organizational turnover intentions. In the study, satisfaction with leader and voluntary turnover intentions yielded a significant, moderate and negative relationship.

**Work-life Balance**

Work-life balance describes the extent to which an individual is able to successfully fulfill work and personal or familial responsibilities and activities with minimal role conflict (Clark, 2000; Delecta, 2011). Sirgy and Lee (2018) divided work-life balance into two key dimensions: role engagement in multiple roles in work and nonwork life, and minimal conflict between work and nonwork roles. Within each dimension, the authors identified fundamental characteristics from research regarding the construct. Within role engagement in multiple roles in work, they first identified the characteristics of attentive engagement in multiple roles (Marks, 1977; Marks & MacDermid, 1996; Sieber, 1974). This implies being energized and focused while engaging in multiple job roles. The second they identified was equal time and involvement across multiple roles (Kirchmeyer, 2000), meaning an even distribution of time dedicated to each role. The third they identified was balanced satisfaction across life domains (Clark, 2000; Kirchmeyer 2000), meaning that the incumbent feels content regarding the present state of the different aspects of their life. The last was balance in time, involvement, and satisfaction across life domains (Greenhaus et al., 2003), meaning
that an equal amount of time, contentment, and engagement was present across different aspects of their life.

Within the minimal conflict between work and non-work roles, they identified three characteristics. The first characteristic was minimizing role conflict between work and family roles (Allen et al., 2000; Clark, 2000; Galinsky & Johnson, 1998; Kahn et al., 1964), meaning decreasing conflict between one’s occupation and one’s family. The second was role enrichment with no role conflict (Frone 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), meaning adding responsibility to one’s role without causing conflict with their current job tasks. The third was management of resources to minimize role conflicts (Fisher et al., 2009; Hobfoll, 1989), meaning leveraging the resources one has to decrease conflict with their role.

Every generation has expressed desire and appreciation for work-life balance, but not all generations have had the luxury to experience it. Millennials grew up watching their Gen X and Baby Boomer parents making personal and familial sacrifices for success in careers that lacked flexibility. This sometimes resulted in Millennials spending childhood afternoons in after-school programs or daycare rather than at home with their parents (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). This led to their strengthened desire for and rise in priority of work-life balance as they entered the workforce (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

In Hershatter and Epstein’s (2010) analysis of Millennials at work, they highlighted a survey measuring priority placed on work versus family in Millennials and older generations. The results of the survey demonstrated that Millennials were 40% less likely than Boomers to describe themselves as “work-centric,” and 9% more likely to describe themselves as “family-centric.”
During the rise of Millennials in the workforce, work-life balance became a hotter and hotter topic, eventually becoming something this generational cohort had the boldness and determination to demand (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Millennials are the generation most likely to prioritize roles that provide healthy work-life balance and make career choices based not only on security and stability, but also on high levels of work-life balance (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

There are many organizational-related outcomes associated with work-life balance. Ample research has provided evidence that work-life balance leads to higher levels of favorable job outcomes like job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Allen et al., 2000). Work-life balance has also been seen to play a vital role in increasing aspects of well-being, such as health satisfaction, family satisfaction, and overall life satisfaction (Keyes 2002; Marks & MacDermid 1996). Work-life balance has been shown to play a role in outcomes like absenteeism, presenteeism, and job performance (Sirgy & Lee, 2018).

In the vast research regarding work-life balance, its relationship with turnover intentions has been studied time and time again. Giauque et al. (2019) surveyed 1769 staff members across four intergovernmental international organizations regarding work opportunities and turnover intentions. Results revealed that work-life balance significantly reduced turnover intention. In a study by Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019), 213 executive employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia were administered a questionnaire regarding work-life balance, job engagement, and turnover intentions. Results showed that there was a direct, positive relationship between work-life conflict and turnover intentions, in that the more work-life
conflict an individual experienced, the more likely they intended to turnover. In another study by Lindfelt et al. (2018), a national web-based survey was administered to American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy members in academia. Across 700 participants, faculty with higher work-life balance were more likely to report lower levels of intent to turnover.

**Career Advancement**

Career advancement is the extent to which an employee has the opportunity to be promoted to a higher position, move up in a company, or be given more responsibility in their role (Nouri & Parker, 2013). Organizations can provide career advancement by having clear career progression ladders, providing visibility for junior talent, engaging in succession planning, and tracking the progress of new hires and junior level talent.

It could be said that opportunities for growth and advancement is something sought after across all generations, but Millennials are especially keen to seek it out (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016). Millennials are characteristically ambitious to advance in their careers and pursue advancement opportunities elsewhere if they think they are better than their current opportunities (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016). Millennials have expressed that they want companies in which learning will be continuous and training will be thorough, because they see this as fostering and investing in advancement in their careers (Baker et al., 2018). Cahill and Sedrak (2012) describe Millennials as “anxious to advance their careers and eager to learn new things” (p. 12).

Advancement of one’s career can be a very motivating factor for employees to excel in their work, gain new skills, and network with peers. It can also be very demotivating if there is a “ceiling” in the role, or the lack of opportunity to move up. Career advancement has been
linked to many favorable job attitudes and outcomes. Opportunity for career growth has been shown to be a key predictor of job satisfaction (Yang et al., 2015) in that the more career growth an individual has access to, the more satisfied they are with their job. It is also a key predictor of organizational commitment (Nouri & Parker, 2013) as those who have more opportunities for advancement display more commitment to the organization. A study by Huang et al., (2017) found that among 253 surveyed employees in a car manufacturing company in Taiwan, those who reported higher career growth opportunity were more likely to have lower levels of emotional exhaustion, and higher levels of job satisfaction.

Career advancement has been shown to decrease intentions to turnover. The literature on career advancement and turnover spans back to 1958, when March and Simon (1958) first proposed that career rewards (pay or status) led to reduced turnover. Today, research on career growth opportunities has remained consistent. In the same study by Huang et al. (2017), it was found that across the 253 employees in the car manufacturing company in Taiwan, career growth opportunities decreased turnover intentions through increasing levels of job satisfaction and decreasing levels of emotional exhaustion.

In another study by Yang et al. (2015), a moderate negative relationship was found between promotional opportunities and turnover intention in a sample of 526 nurses across eight teaching hospitals in Tianjin, China. Chen et al. (2012) conducted a study that investigated the motivators of turnover intention in caseworkers. They found that career development opportunities predicted turnover intentions more strongly than pay or benefits.
Salary

Salary is the amount of pay an employee gets on an hourly or annual basis. Salary ranges depend on job, title, tenure, experience, geographic location, and unfortunately, even gender. When a candidate is given a job offer, salary is often negotiated between the candidate and the hiring manager.

A study by Kuron et al. (2015) found that salary was more important to working Millennials than pre-career Millennials, meaning that the importance of salary increases when Millennials enter the job market. In another study examining the importance of salary, respondents were asked to rate the importance of 16 items pertaining to a variety of work-related attributes that they considered to be important when making job choice decisions (Ng et al., 2010). They rated importance on a 5-point scale, from “not at all important” to “essential.” Among 11,398 Millennial respondents, “Good initial salary level” ranked at an average importance of 4.17 out of 5, surpassing “Challenging work” and “Opportunities to have a personal impact.” In a 2001 study called Generation 2001: A Second Study of the First College Graduation Class of the New Millennium, 15% of 2,001 Millennials in their senior year of college said a high salary was very important (Harris Interactive, 2001).

Satisfaction with salary has been identified as a key factor in the retention of workers across a wide range of fields and industries. Xiong et al. (2018) studied 117 part-time students in a management program at a large university in Guangzhou, China to examine the relationships of multiple anchor points of pay perception on turnover intentions. The three anchor points were minimum requirement, status quo, and goal. The results showed that turnover intentions were higher when the employee’s pay fell below the minimum
requirement anchor, and when it was between status quo and goal. This indicates that when the employee was not satisfied with their pay, they developed higher intentions to turnover. Liu (2021) surveyed 510 teachers from 20 middle schools from the Jilin Province of northeastern of China regarding satisfaction with job through the facet of satisfaction with salary. It was found that satisfaction with salary accounted for 21.2% additional variance in teacher’s turnover intentions. A sample of 819 social workers in China were surveyed regarding pay satisfaction versus professional identity and turnover intentions by Wang et al. (2021). Results showed a significant negative relationship between pay satisfaction and turnover intentions and revealed that pay satisfaction was a stronger predictor of turnover intentions than professional identity.

**Purpose of the Current Study**

What is evident from the existing literature is that certain organizational environment factors, namely feedback, satisfaction with supervisor, and work-life balance are especially important to Millennials, as well as have an impact on their turnover intentions. High levels of feedback is consistently found to be negatively related to turnover intentions (Joo et al., 2015; Joo & Park, 2010) such that when feedback is obstructed, levels of turnover intentions increase (Walsh et al., 1985). Satisfaction with supervisor has also been found to reduce turnover intentions across multitudes of studies (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004; Fang, 2001; Wells & Peachey, 2011). Studies examining work-life balance and turnover yield results indicating that when work-life balance levels are high, turnover intentions are lower (Giauque et al., 2019; Lindfelt et al., 2018), and when it is obstructed, or when work-life conflict is ample, turnover intentions increase (Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019).
There are also certain benefits in the organizational context that mean more to Millennials than others, and in tandem are very impactful on turnover intentions. High opportunities for career advancement, a construct whose relationship to turnover intention has been studied since 1958 (March & Simon, 1958), remains a consistent predictor of lower turnover intentions today (Chen et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2015). Lastly, salary as a workplace benefit has been shown to be a consistent predictor of turnover intentions (Liu, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). When employees do not receive a salary that is considered a minimum requirement to them, turnover intentions increase. Turnover intentions also increase when an employee’s salary falls between the anchors of status quo and goal (Xiong et al., 2018).

While the nomological net of these constructs is vast, there is a gap in the literature that this study aims to bridge. To date, these variables have not been examined as sets that are used to predict Millennial’s intentions to turnover in their role. Each variable touches on different aspects of the set, making the set a more well-rounded approach to examining outcomes. Employee satisfaction with feedback, supervisor, and work-life balance make up the organizational environment set, with each contributing its own importance. Feedback contributes to the unique way that employees are being communicated with. Supervisor contributes to the individual way that employees are being managed. Work-life balance contributes the time the work takes up in an employee’s life, and whether they are satisfied with those levels.

Employee satisfaction with salary and career advancement make up the work benefits set, with each contributing its own importance. Career advancement contributes to the ability of
an employee to move up in their role or company, in other words, a future need, whereas salary fulfills an employee’s current need through the lens of financial security and stability. It is both important and beneficial to the literature to examine these factors as sets of variables that can provide more wholistic insight into what can predict a Millennial’s intentions to stay. The sets represent the combined factors that influence retention and reduced turnover intentions.

The purpose of this study was to test the research question: between a set of three organizational environment factors and a set of two work benefits factors, which set is strongest at predicting lower Millennial turnover intentions? To do this, I tested a set of three organizational factors, consisting of satisfaction with feedback, supervisor, and work-life balance, and a set of two work benefits factors, consisting of satisfaction with career advancement and salary, to predict Millennial turnover intentions. I then compared the sets to each other, and determined which factors are a stronger predictor of Millennial retention. It was hoped that this study's findings would provide practical implications for leaders and organizations, namely, which organizational environment and work benefit factors they can focus on and develop in order to retain their high-valued Millennial talent.
Method

Participants

There was a total of 189 participants who partook in this study. Participants consisted of my personal and professional network and were recruited through social media platforms including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram, and through text messaging. The criteria to be included in the study were being currently employed, having a leader or supervisor, and being born between the years of 1982 and 2000. Those who did not meet these criteria were automatically taken to the end of the survey and excluded from data collection. Those who had substantial missing data were also excluded from the sample. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 102 participants.

Demographic characteristics of survey respondents are presented in Table 1. The majority of the participants were female (59.8%), with the remaining genders being male (38.2%), and non-binary or a third gender (1%). As a critical criterion of inclusion was being born between the years of 1982 and 2000, 100% of participants were born between those years, with 32 (31.4%) being born between 1982 to 1992, and 70 (68.6%) being born between 1993 to 2000. Most survey respondents were with their company 1.1 to 3 years (47.1%). The second longest tenure group was 6 months to 1 year (27.5%), with 3.1 to 6 years following (20.6%). The vast majority of participants worked 40 or more hours a week (69.6%).

To summarize the sample, the majority of the respondents were female, born between 1993 and 2000, had been working at their company 1.1 to 3 years, and worked 40 or more
Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents (N = 102)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-binary/third gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Born Between</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982 to 1992</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993 to 2000</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure at Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to 1 year</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 to 3 years</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 to 6 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 to 9 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1 to 12 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per Week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 19 hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 29 hours</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 39 hours</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or more hours</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

hours a week. Overall, aside from the gender distribution, which is more even in reality, these distributions accurately represent those of the Millennial workforce as it exists today.
Measures

Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Feedback

Feedback is the first in the set of the three organizational environment factors. Feedback is the process of relaying observations of one’s behavior and performance back to them (Prayson & Rowe, 2017). Satisfaction with feedback was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were written by the author as well as adapted from The Feedback Environment Scale (Steelman et al., 2004). The items were: “The feedback I receive about my job performance is useful,” “I am satisfied with the frequency that I am provided with feedback,” “I feel satisfied with way performance feedback is delivered to me,” and “I wish I received more feedback about my job performance” (reverse coded).

Once data were collected, I coded the responses options numerically, with 5 mapping to “Strongly Agree,” 4 mapping to “Agree,” 3 mapping to “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” 2 mapping “Disagree”, and 1 mapping to “Strongly Disagree.” Once the response options were coded, an average of all items across this variable was computed. The average response to the four items yielded an overall score for satisfaction with feedback, which included a range of scores between 1.00 to 5.00, per the response option codes. A higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction with feedback, while a lower score indicated a lower level of satisfaction with feedback. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability (α = .82).

Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Work-life Balance
Work-life balance is the second in the set of the three organizational environment factors. Work-life balance describes the extent to which an individual is able to successfully fulfill work and personal or familial responsibilities and activities with minimal role conflict (Clark, 2000; Delecta, 2011). Satisfaction with work-life balance was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were written by the author as well as adapted from a scale validated by Brough et al. (2014). The items were: “I feel satisfied with the time I spend at both work and non-work activities,” “I have difficulty balancing work and non-work activities” (reverse coded), “I find that after work, I do not have time for the things I want to do” (reverse coded), and “I feel there is balance between my work life and my personal life.”

Once data were collected, authors coded the responses options numerically, with 5 mapping to “Strongly Agree,” 4 mapping to “Agree,” 3 mapping to “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” 2 mapping “Disagree”, and 1 mapping to “Strongly Disagree.” Once the response options were coded, an average of all items across this variable was computed. The average response to the four items yielded an overall score for satisfaction with work-life balance, which included a range of scores between 1.00 to 5.00, per the response option codes. A higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction with work-life balance, while a lower score indicated a lower level of satisfaction with work-life balance. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha = .85$).
Organizational Environment Factor Set: Satisfaction With Supervisor

Satisfaction with supervisor is the third in the set of the three organizational environment factors. Satisfaction with supervisor was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were written by the author as well as adapted from the Satisfaction with My Supervisor Scale (Scarpello & Vandenberg, 1987). The items were: “I am satisfied with my supervisor,” “My supervisor demonstrates positive leadership behaviors,” “I dislike with the way my supervisor leads” (reverse coded), and “I am content with the leadership style of my supervisor.” Once data were collected, I coded the responses options numerically, with 5 mapping to “Strongly Agree,” 4 mapping to “Agree,” 3 mapping to “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” 2 mapping “Disagree”, and 1 mapping to “Strongly Disagree.”

Once the response options were coded, an average of all items across this variable was computed. The average response to the four items yielded an overall score for satisfaction with supervisor, which included a range of scores between 1.00 to 5.00, per the response option codes. A higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction with supervisor, while a lower score indicated a lower level of satisfaction with supervisor. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha = .94$).

Work Benefits Factor Set: Satisfaction With Career Advancement

Career advancement is the first in the set of the two work benefits factors. Career advancement is the extent to which an employee has the opportunity to be promoted to a higher position, move up in a company, or be given more responsibility in their role (Nouri &
Satisfaction with career advancement was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were written by the author as well as adapted from items developed by Amatea et al. (1986). The items were: “My current job provides me opportunities to realize my career goals,” “There is a clear career advancement ladder I can climb at my company to keep moving up,” “I am happy with the opportunities I have at my current company to advance my career,” and “I feel satisfied with the efforts of my company to grow me in my career.”

Once data were collected, I coded the responses options numerically, with 5 mapping to “Strongly Agree,” 4 mapping to “Agree,” 3 mapping to “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” 2 mapping “Disagree”, and 1 mapping to “Strongly Disagree.” Once the response options were coded, an average of all items across this variable was computed. The average response to the four items yielded an overall score for satisfaction with career advancement, which included a range of scores between 1.00 to 5.00, per the response option codes. A higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction with career advancement, while a lower score indicated a lower level of satisfaction with career advancement. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha = .86$).

**Work Benefits Factor Set: Satisfaction with Salary**

Salary is the second in the set of the two work benefits factors. Salary is the amount of pay an employee gets on an hourly or annual basis. Satisfaction with salary was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were
written by the author as well as adapted from the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) (Heneman & Schwab, 1985). The items were “I am satisfied with the amount of pay I take home,” “I am content with my current salary,” “I feel I am compensated fairly for the work I do,” and “My salary for my job is comparable to salaries for similar jobs at other companies.”

Once the response options were coded, an average of the four items was computed, yielding an overall score for satisfaction with salary that could range from 1.00 to 5.00, higher scores indicating a higher level of satisfaction with salary. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability (\( \alpha = .86 \)).

**Turnover Intentions**

Turnover intention was defined as an employee’s plan to voluntarily leave their job or company (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday et al., 1982). Turnover intention was measured using four Likert scale items with five response options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree,” with “Neither agree nor disagree” as the middle option. Items were written by the author as well as adapted from the Turnover Intentions Scale validated by (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). The items were: “I am seriously considering leaving my current job,” “The chances of me leaving my current job in the next year are low” (reverse coded), “I am likely to accept a job at another company should it be offered to me,” and “I have no intention of leaving my current job” (reverse coded).

Once data were collected, I coded the responses options numerically, with 5 mapping to “Strongly Agree,” 4 mapping to “Agree,” 3 mapping to “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” 2 mapping “Disagree”, and 1 mapping to “Strongly Disagree.” Once the response options were
coded, an average of all items across this variable was computed. The average response to the four items yielded an overall score for turnover intention, which included a range of scores between 1.00 to 5.00, per the response option codes. A higher score indicated a higher level of turnover intentions, while a lower score indicated a lower level of turnover intentions. The internal consistency reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha = .92$).

**Procedure**

The survey was administered online to participants through the online survey tool Qualtrics. The invitation to participate in the study included a brief description, the estimated time it would take to complete the survey, and the survey link. When participants clicked the link, it took them into the Qualtrics platform. From there, they saw a more detailed description, and at the bottom an agreement to participate; in other words informed consent. Each individual had the option to voluntarily opt in or out of the study. Once respondents gave their consent, they were taken to a screen with brief instructions and the first item of the survey. From there, they completed the remaining 30 questions. The end of the survey consisted of a page thanking participants for their time.

The data collection period for the survey was three weeks. In this time, participants could take the survey on their own time and at their convenience. Once all the surveys were collected, the data were statistically analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.
Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to assess the central tendency and variability of the variables measured within the study. The means and standard deviations of the variables are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Environment Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with feedback</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with supervisor</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with work-life balance</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Benefits Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with career advancement</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with salary</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover Intentions</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 102

The measured variables were all relatively normally distributed, with means from 2.26 to 2.93, which is nearly in the middle of the 1 to 5 rating scale but slightly on the lower end. This indicates that participants had slightly lower levels of satisfaction with the respective variables. The variable with the lowest mean was satisfaction with supervisor (M = 2.26, SD
= 1.19), indicating that out of all variables, participants felt the lowest satisfaction with their supervisor. The variable with the highest mean was turnover intentions ($M = 2.93, SD = 1.32$), indicating participants had moderate intentions to turnover. Satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with work-life balance, and satisfaction with career advancement had very similar means, ranging from 2.52 for satisfaction with work-life balance to 2.58 for satisfaction with career advancement. These indicate moderate to low satisfaction with the respective variables. Variability in the way questions were answered by participants was lowest for satisfaction with feedback ($SD = .88$) and highest for turnover intentions ($SD = 1.32$). Overall, the central tendency indicated a moderate to low level of satisfaction with the three organizational environment and two work benefits factors.

**Pearson Correlations**

As depicted in Table 3, Pearson correlations were computed to assess the strength of the relationships amongst the measured variables. Regarding the set of organizational environment factors, every variable had a moderate to strong negative relationship with turnover intentions except satisfaction with work-life balance. This suggests that being satisfied with work-life balance was not something Millennials needed in order to intend to stay in their role.

The organizational environment set contained the second strongest variable related to turnover intentions out of all variables across sets, which was satisfaction with supervisor $r(100) = -.50, p < .01$. This strong negative relationship showed that when levels of satisfaction with supervisor were high, Millennial turnover intentions were lower. The last factor in the set of three organizational environment factors was satisfaction with feedback.
Table 3

*Pearson Correlations Among the Measured Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Satisfaction with feedback</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Satisfaction with supervisor</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Satisfaction with work-life balance</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Satisfaction with career advancement</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Satisfaction with salary</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Turnover intentions</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.59**</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 102, ** p < .01*

Satisfaction with feedback was tied with the second work benefits factor, satisfaction with salary, for the weakest significant relationship with turnover intentions, but the relationship was still strong and negative in nature $r(100) = -.37, p < .01$. These results demonstrated that when there were high levels of satisfaction with feedback and salary, turnover intentions were lower for Millennials.

The other factor in the set of work benefits was satisfaction with career advancement. Satisfaction with career advancement was the variable most strongly related to turnover intentions across sets $r(100) = -.59, p < .01$. This negative relationship indicates that out of all the measured variables, when satisfaction with career advancement was highest, turnover intentions were lowest for Millennials.
Test of the Research Question

The research question that is being examined in this study is: Which set of factors is strongest at predicting lower Millennial turnover intentions? To answer this question, and to evaluate the contribution of each set on the variance in turnover intentions, one standard multiple regression (MRC) analysis was conducted on each set, respectively. Results are presented in Table 4.

For the set of organizational environment factors, results indicated that the combination of satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with supervisor, and satisfaction with work-life balance was significantly related to Millennial turnover intentions, \( R^2 = .22 \). \( R^2_{adj} = .20 \), \( F(3, 98) = 9.44 \), \( p < .001 \). Satisfaction with supervisor was the only organizational environment factor that had a significant unique contribution to the relationship, \( \beta = -.41 \), \( t = -3.22 \), \( p < .01 \), suggesting that the more satisfied a Millennial was with the person who managed them, the less likely they were to intend to leave their job. Satisfaction with feedback had a significant Pearson correlation with millennial turnover intentions, \( r(100) = -.37 \), \( p < .01 \), but not a significant beta, \( \beta = -.09 \), \( t = -.70 \), \( p > .05 \). One explanation for this is multicollinearity, or the overlap of predictors. Satisfaction with feedback was strongly and positively correlated with satisfaction with supervisor, \( r(100) = .69 \), \( p < .01 \), therefore undermining its statistical significance as a unique predictor variable. Satisfaction with work-life balance did not have a significant Pearson correlation, \( r(100) = .05 \), \( p > .05 \) and therefore, it is no surprise that its beta was also not statistically significant, \( \beta = .03 \), \( t = .36 \), \( p > .05 \).

The second set, work benefits, was then run to evaluate its contribution to turnover intentions. The combination of satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with
Table 4

*Multiple Regression Analysis for Organizational Environment Factors and Work Benefits Factors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R^2_{adj}$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Environment Factors</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with feedback</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with supervisor</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with work-life balance</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Benefits Factors</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with career advancement</td>
<td>-.52***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with salary</td>
<td>-.21***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 102, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001*

salary was significantly related to Millennial turnover intentions, $R^2 = .39$. $R = .37$, $F(2, 99) = 30.95$, $p < .001$. Both satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with salary had significant unique contributions to the prediction of turnover intentions. The variable that made the largest unique contribution to the variance in Millennial turnover intentions was satisfaction with career advancement, which had a significant strong negative unique relationship, $\beta = -.52$, $t = -6.28$, $p < .001$, suggesting that the more satisfied a Millennial was with their career advancement opportunities, the less likely they were to intend to leave their job. Satisfaction with salary had a significant moderate negative unique relationship with Millennial turnover intention, $\beta = -.21$, $t = -2.52$, $p < .001$, suggesting that the more satisfied
a Millennial was with their annual compensation, the less likely they were to intend to leave their job.

In summary, the two standard MRC analyses conducted using the two sets of variables revealed that both sets were related to turnover intentions. However, the set of two work benefits predictors accounted for almost twice as much of variance in turnover intentions as the set of three environment factors. This suggests that although the organizational environment factors influenced turnover intentions, the work benefits factors influenced these intentions almost twice as much.

Next, two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the incremental value of each set after the other set had been taken into account. The first hierarchical MRC analysis entered the set of organizational environment factors first, and the set of work benefits factors second. The first step, consisting of the three organizational environment factors, revealed that the set accounted for 22% of the variance in turnover intentions, \( R^2 = .22, R^2_{adj} = .20, F(3, 98) = 9.44, p < .001 \).

In the second step, the set of two work benefits factors was entered. The combination of the two sets accounted for 46% of variance in the outcome variable, turnover intentions, \( R^2 = .46, R^2_{adj} = .43, F(5, 96) = 16.31 \). By adding the second set, it was also found that the work benefits factors accounted for a significant amount of variance above and beyond the organizational environment factors, \( \Delta R^2 = .24, F(2, 96) = 20.88, p < .001 \). Both second set predictors had significant unique contributions. Satisfaction with career advancement had a significant beta at \( \beta = -.44, t = -4.83, p < .001 \); and satisfaction with salary had a significant beta at \( \beta = -.20, t = -2.54, p < .05 \). This means that even after the organizational environment
factors were taken into account, satisfaction with career advancement and with salary both had an individual, unique contribution to the prediction of turnover intention. Results are depicted in Table 5.

A second hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to enter the variables in the opposite order of the previous hierarchical regression analysis. The second hierarchical MRC had a set order of work benefits factors first, and organizational environment factors second. The first step was to enter the work benefits factors set. The result of the first step revealed that the set accounted for 39% of the variance in turnover intentions, \( R^2 = .39, R^2_{adj} = .37, F(2, 99) = 30.95, p < .001 \). In the second step, the organizational environment factors set was entered. The combined variance (i.e., \( R^2 \)) was consistent with the first hierarchical MRC.

**Table 5**

_Hierarchical MRC 1: Organizational Environment Factors First, Work Benefits Factors Second_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( r )</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( R^2 )</th>
<th>( \Delta R^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Organizational Environment Set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with work-life balance</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td>.22***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with supervisor</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with feedback</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Work Benefits Set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with salary</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with career advancement</td>
<td>-.59**</td>
<td>-.44***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \( N = 102, *p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001 \)
analysis. By adding the second set, it was found that the organizational environment factors accounted for a significant amount of variance above and beyond the work benefits factors, \( \Delta R^2 = .08, F(3, 96) = 4.42, p < .01 \). Only one of the betas for the organizational environment factors was significant. Satisfaction with supervisor had a significant beta at \( \beta = -.31, t = -2.92, p < .01 \). This means that even after each variable was taken in account, satisfaction with supervisor had an individual, unique contribution for the prediction of turnover intentions. However, satisfaction with feedback and satisfaction with work-life balance did not have unique contributions. Results are depicted in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Hierarchical MRC 2: Work Benefits Factors First, Organizational Environment Factors Second*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( r )</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( R^2 )</th>
<th>( \Delta R^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1: Work Benefits Set</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with salary</td>
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<td>-.21*</td>
<td>.08**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with career</td>
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<td>-.52***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.08*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advancement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2: Organizational Environment Set</strong></td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with work-life</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with supervisor</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with feedback</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 102, * \( p < .05 \), ** \( p < .01 \), *** \( p < .001 \)*

In summary, in the first hierarchical MRC, the combination of the two sets accounted for 46% of variance in turnover intentions of the Millennial sample. Work benefits accounted for
a significant amount of variance above and beyond the organizational environment factors set. Both of the work benefits factors (satisfaction with career advancement and with salary) had significant unique contributions.

For the second hierarchical MRC, the work benefits set accounted for 39% of the variance in turnover intentions of the Millennial sample. The organizational environment set accounted for a significant amount of variance above and beyond the work benefits factors. Satisfaction with supervisor had an individual, unique contribution. However, satisfaction with feedback and satisfaction with work-life balance did not have unique contributions. Results of the two hierarchical MRC analyses revealed that though both sets contributed above and beyond the other, the work benefits set contributed much more to the variance in turnover intentions than the organizational environment factors set did in both analyses.
Discussion

The purpose of this study was to test the research question: between a set of three organizational environment factors and a set of two work benefits factors, which set is strongest at predicting lower Millennial turnover intentions? This study was exploratory, and therefore, there were no hypotheses.

Summary of Findings

Descriptive statistics showed that all measured variables were normally distributed, falling in the middle of the 1 to 5 rating scale. Pearson correlations revealed that in the set of organizational environment factors, every variable had a moderate to strong negative relationship with turnover intentions except satisfaction with work-life balance, which was not statistically significant. In the work benefits set, satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with salary both had moderate to strong negative relationships to turnover intentions. Satisfaction with career advancement was the variable most strongly related to turnover intentions across sets.

A standard multiple regression was run to measure the contribution of each set on the variance in turnover intentions. In the set of organizational environment factors, the combination of the three factors, satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with supervisor, and satisfaction with work-life balance, was significantly related to Millennial turnover intentions. Of these three factors, however, only satisfaction with supervisor had a significant unique contribution to the prediction of turnover intentions. Satisfaction with feedback did not have a significant unique contribution, despite having a significant Pearson correlation with Millennial turnover intentions. This may have been due to multicollinearity, as
satisfaction with feedback was strongly and positively correlated with satisfaction with supervisor. This overlap of predictors may have prevented it from yielding statistical significance as a unique predictor variable.

The standard multiple regression showed that in the work benefits set, the combination of satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with salary was significantly related to Millennial turnover intentions. Both factors had significant unique contribution to the prediction of turnover intentions. The variable that made the largest unique contribution to the variance in Millennial turnover intentions across sets was satisfaction with career advancement.

Following the standard multiple regression, two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the incremental value of the sets after one had already been taken into account. In the first analysis, the set of organizational environment factors was entered first, and the set of work benefits factors second. The first step revealed that the organizational environment set accounted for 22% of the variance in turnover intentions. In the second step, the work benefits set was added. By adding the second set, it was found that the work benefits factors accounted for a significant amount of variance above and beyond the organizational environment factors. Both second set predictors, satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with salary, had significant unique contributions.

The second hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted with the sets entered in reverse. In the first step, the work benefits set was entered, and in the second step, the organizational environment factors were entered. The first step revealed that the work benefits set accounted for 39% of the variance in turnover intentions. By adding the
organizational environment set in the second step, it was found that the set accounted for a significant amount of variance above and beyond the work benefits factors. Despite this, only the beta for the satisfaction with supervisor factor of the organizational environment factors was significant.

Theoretical Implications

There was consistency as well as discrepancy between the results of this study and what has been reported in the literature at large. In the current study, the measured variable of feedback had a moderately strong negative relationship with turnover intentions, which is consistent with the findings of Joo et al. (2015), and Joo and Park (2010). In the literature, feedback has been shown to be very important to Millennials (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016; Baum, 2020; SHRM, 2009). Though feedback did not have a significant unique contribution, it had a strong Pearson correlation, and the set that it resided in was significantly related to turnover intentions, suggesting alignment with the existing literature.

This study’s findings on satisfaction with supervisor was also consistent with existing literature. Satisfaction with supervisor had a strong negative correlation with turnover intentions, which aligned with findings by DeConinck and Stilwell (2004), Fang (2001), and Wells and Peachey (2011). In the standard multiple regression, satisfaction with supervisor was the only factor in the organizational environment set that had a significant unique contribution to the prediction of turnover intentions. This implies that being satisfied with a supervisor is important for Millennials, which was stated in literature by Jokisaari and Nurmi (2009).
Work-life balance was the only measured variable with no statistical significance. This was a discrepancy between this study and the existing literature. The existing literature on work-life balance supports that it is negatively related to turnover intentions (Giauque et al., 2019; Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019; Lindfelt et al., 2018).

In the work benefits set, career advancement was the most strongly negatively correlated variable to turnover intentions. Negative correlations between career advancement and turnover have been found in the literature as well (Chen et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2015). The career advancement variable resided in the work benefits set, which by and large provided stronger prediction of Millennial turnover intentions than did the organizational environment factor set. Satisfaction with salary had a moderately strong negative correlation to turnover intentions, which mirrored results found by Xiong et al. (2018), Liu (2021), and Wang et al. (2021). Both variables had unique significant contributions, implying that these are paramount to Millennials. This is supported by research by Ng et al. (2010) and Barbuto and Gottfredson (2016).

**Practical Implications**

The results of this study indicate that as a set, satisfaction with career advancement and satisfaction with salary are the strongest in predicting lower Millennial turnover intentions. Satisfaction with career advancement also had the strongest correlation to lower turnover intentions than any variable across sets. These findings suggest that a company should prioritize career growth and advancement opportunities first and foremost, and ensure Millennial employees are compensated in a way they are satisfied with.
Organizations can create career advancements opportunities by putting in place traditional career paths and ladders (SHRM, 2023). One tool that falls under this umbrella is career mapping. Career mapping allows employees to think strategically about their career goals, and how they can achieve them inside the company rather than outside (SHRM, 2023). It involves three steps: (1) taking a self-assessment that provides information on the employees’ knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs), (2) creating an individualized career map that identifies roles in the company that align with the person’s KSAs and interests, and (3) exploring other role opportunities as they become available. Another strategy to have in place would be a career ladder. A career ladder is a clear promotion progression that a person in a role can follow to move up within a company (SHRM, 2023). An example may be: Junior Analyst, Analyst, Senior Analyst, Junior Consultant, Consultant, Senior Consultant, and Director.

According to Great Workplace (2010), some strategies for increasing levels of salary satisfaction are implementing a standardized process for evaluating pay rates, cost of living, market, and merit adjustments through compensation surveys; analyzing differences in pay rates for employees to keep from having differentials that cannot be accounted for; using market cautiously and consider one’s organizational context when making market adjustments; and developing a strategy for communicating how pay rates are determined.

Results of the current study support satisfaction with supervisor as being a strong predictor of lower Millennial turnover intentions, suggesting that organizations should invest in manager development and champion best practices. Barbuto and Gottfredson (2016) found that Millennials wanted supportive and uplifting management. SHRM (2020) highlighted
five key practices for effective people management: knowing personalities and working styles of those on one’s team, showing respect to subordinates, ensuring facts are collected accurately, fostering interpersonal dynamics through humor, and empowering employees to tackle challenges in their work. If supervisors are not managing teams up to par, management development programs can be put into place. This can be done through knowledge training on matters such as managing change and succession planning, or skills training on management practices such as goal setting and motivation (SHRM, 2023).

Feedback was also a statistically significant predictor of lower Millennial turnover intentions in this study, suggesting that that is a particular management practice that should be fostered and employed. According to Barbuto and Gottfredson (2016), Millennials need consistent and honest performance feedback. A once-a-year performance review does not suffice with this population. They want consistent feedback on their performance, whether it is positive or critical in nature. Millennials want to know if they are on the right track, and if they are not, they expect to be corrected. They want feedback to be honest, open, and clear. If feedback is falling short, an organization can implement strategies for more effective feedback.

SHRM (2021) highlights two distinct parts to more effective feedback: feedback preparation and engaging in the feedback conversation. During the feedback preparation phase, managers should “strive for five.” This means that giving a ratio of five pieces of positive feedback to one piece of negative feedback. During this phase, managers should ask themselves if biases are present, and strive to understand how their subordinates would want to be treated. Part 2 in this process is engaging in the feedback conversation. During this
session, managers should focus on the problem, not the employee, or in other words, the behavior or action, rather than the personality of the person or person themselves. Identifying the type of feedback one is giving can be helpful at this time as well, be it appreciation, coaching, or evaluation. Finally, during the conversation, the manager should seek to understand the point of view of the subordinate through empathy and compassion.

**Strengths of the Study**

One of the primary strengths of this study was the unique approach it had to comparing variables. This study grouped variables into categories, and compared those categories as sets. Each variable’s relationship to turnover intentions has been examined in the past, but not as sets, where combined contributions can create stronger predictions. This allows organizations to know what aspects of the workplace can be combined to create environments that foster higher levels of retention, and lower levels of turnover intentions. It allows them to prioritize certain factors, and perhaps sheds light on where they can cut investment costs on others.

Another strength of this study was that it looked at a certain population, Millennials, across all industries and ages in the range of the generation, rather than young Millennials in a university psychology class, or in one institution or organization. This makes the results more generalizable to the entire population of Millennials.

**Limitations of the Study**

One of the limiting factors of this study was that it only measured general satisfaction with the variables, rather than what specifically led to Millennials to being satisfied with the variable. The impact of this lies within the theoretical implications. Leaders and
organizations may glean the knowledge that their Millennial employees need to be satisfied with certain aspects of the workplace, but not know how to ensure that satisfaction. For example, they may take away that Millennials need to be happy with career advancement opportunities presented to them, but may not know how which opportunities they should invest in implementing.

Another limitation was potential overlap of predictors, which led to multicollinearity, and tainted the results for the satisfaction with feedback variable. The variable overlapped strongly with the satisfaction with supervisor variable, causing its statistical significance to be undermined, and the results to be affected. In future research, this could be avoided by choosing constructs more distinct from one another.

**Future Research**

Future studies could examine what components of each variable lead to satisfaction, as this study only examined general satisfaction. For example, a study could analyze what kind of feedback leads to the highest levels of satisfaction with feedback, what kinds of supervisor practices lead to the highest levels of satisfaction with supervisor, and so on. This would allow for a more robust practical implications section, as it would be able to point directly to how organizations and leaders can increase satisfaction with workplace variables that have been shown to retain Millennial employees.

Another subsequent study could more deeply examine the work benefits set, as that set was the stronger predictor of lower turnover intentions in this sample. This research could compare sets of work benefits to see which are stronger predictors in retention or job satisfaction. Potential sets could be personal benefits, like health insurance and 401k
matching; organizational perks like free on-site meals, entertainment, and on-site gyms; pay components like salary, bonuses, commissions, equity, and stock; and promotional opportunities, fairness, and frequency. This would allow companies to know what kinds of benefits they should offer, focus on, and invest in as antecedents of satisfaction and retention.

Conclusion

Millennials make up the majority of today’s workforce. They have their own generational traits, characteristics, expectations, idiosyncrasies and approach to work. Of the most glaring differences between Millennials and their previous generations are their increased employee mobility and tendency to change jobs in just a handful of years. This comes as a massive cost to organizations, that know that it is easier, cheaper, and better to build talent from within, rather than recruit from outside. Millennial retention is something that organizations have been trying to master since this cohort of employees entered the workforce. What the current study sought to examine was what workplace variables led to lower Millennial turnover intentions. Results revealed that satisfaction with career advancement was the strongest predictor of lower Millennial turnover intentions. It was also found that the combination of satisfaction with career advancement and with salary as a set of work benefits was stronger at predicting lower turnover intentions than the set of organizational environment factors. Leaders and companies can take forth this insight when considering what to prioritize, invest in, and focus on when approaching the issue of Millennial retention.
References


Twenge, J. M., Konrath, S., Foster, J. D., Campbell, W. K., & Bushman, B. J. (2008). Egos inflating over time: A crosstemporal meta-analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. *Journal of Personality, 76*(4), 875–902. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6494.2008.00507.x.


Appendix

Demographic Items

Are you currently employed?
How many hours do you work per week?
How long have you been with your current employer?
Do you have a manager or a supervisor?
Between what years were you born?
Which of the following best describes the industry in which you work?
What is your gender?

Scale Items

Turnover Intentions Items
I am seriously considering leaving my current job.
The chances of me leaving my current job in the next year are low.
I am likely to accept a job at another company should it be offered to me.
I have no intention of leaving my current job.

Organizational Environment Factors Set
Satisfaction with feedback items
The feedback I receive about my job performance is useful.
I am satisfied with the frequency that I am provided with feedback.
I feel satisfied with way performance feedback is delivered to me.
I wish I received more feedback about my job performance.

Satisfaction with supervisor items
I am satisfied with my supervisor.
My supervisor demonstrates positive leadership behaviors.
I dislike with the way my supervisor leads.
I am content with the leadership style of my supervisor.

Satisfaction with work-life balance items
I feel satisfied with the time I spend at both work and non-work activities.
I have difficulty balancing work and non-work activities.
I find that after work, I do not have time for the things I want to do.
I feel there is balance between my work life and my personal life.

Work Benefits Factors Set
Satisfaction with career advancement opportunities items
My current job provides me opportunities to realize my career goals. There is a clear career advancement ladder I can climb at my company to keep moving up. I am happy with the opportunities I have at my current company to advance my career. I feel satisfied with the efforts of my company to grow me in my career.

Satisfaction with salary items
I am satisfied with the amount of pay I take home.
I am content with my current salary.
I feel I am compensated fairly for the work I do.
My salary for my job is comparable to salaries for similar jobs at other companies