HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: A STATISTICAL RESEARCH AMONG EARLY CAREER TALENT.

University of Barcelona

Faculty of Psychology

Author: Carolina Rius Bosch

Supervisor: Carlos Royo

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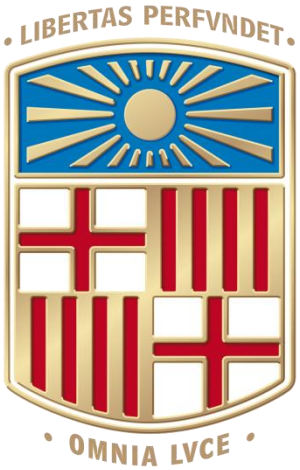

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Abstract

Purpose The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of generational, contextual and individual influences on Millennials' career expectations in order to evidence their needs and create a commitment strategy to enhance their Loyalty through job satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach A sample of Millennials employees (N=100) filled out a questionnaire regarding their psychological contract expectations according to their employment deal and loyalty to their companies. Data were analyzed with SPSS and was determined for the basis of the developed strategic plan.

Findings From the seven scales studied, career development is the only variable influencing early-careers' loyalty. However their expectations regarding job content and social atmosphere remain high, suggesting that the focus for commitment' strategy is career development and job content, with other situational side factors as social atmosphere, work life balance, job security, financial rewards and training.

Implications This study suggests that companies need to focus their resources on motivational factors rather than situational or hygiene side factors in order to meet Millennials' high expectations regarding their development and careers. Thus, investment in situational factors will not determine their intention to leave or to stay.

Originality/value This study put together Millennials' needs, VUCA characteristics and the impact of digital transformation to clarify the current contextual situation and the effects of it on today's organizations.

Keywords *Millennials' expectations · Psychological Contract · Commitment strategy · VUCA context · Strategic management.*

Resumen

Propósito El propósito de este estudio fue investigar el efecto de las influencias generacionales, contextuales e individuales en las expectativas de carrera de los Millennials, con el fin de evidenciar sus necesidades y crear una estrategia de compromiso para mejorar su lealtad a través de la satisfacción en el trabajo.

Diseño/metodología/enfoque Una muestra de trabajadores Millennials (N=100) cumplimentó un cuestionario sobre sus expectativas psicológicas contractuales en función de su relación laboral y su lealtad a la empresa. Los datos se analizaron con SPSS y constituyeron la base del plan estratégico desarrollado.

Hallazgos De las siete escalas estudiadas, el desarrollo profesional es la única variable que influye en la lealtad de los jóvenes profesionales. Sin embargo, sus expectativas con respecto al contenido del puesto de trabajo y al ambiente social siguen siendo altas, lo que sugiere que la estrategia de "compromiso" debe centrarse en su desarrollo profesional y el contenido del puesto de trabajo, con otros factores situacionales como el ambiente social, el equilibrio entre la vida laboral y personal, la seguridad en el empleo, las recompensas económicas y la formación.

Implicaciones Este estudio sugiere que las compañías necesitan enfocar sus recursos en factores motivacionales en lugar de factores situacionales o de higiene para cumplir con las altas expectativas de Millennials en cuanto a su desarrollo y carrera. De esta forma, la inversión en factores situacionales no determinará su intención de irse o de quedarse.

Originalidad/valor Este estudio reúne las necesidades de Millennials, las características del ambiente VUCA y el impacto de la transformación digital para aclarar la situación contextual actual y los efectos de la misma en las organizaciones actuales.

Palabras clave Expectativas millennial · Contrato psicológico · Estrategia de compromiso · contexto VUCA · Gestión estratégica.

Theoretical framework

Employees are considered to be the most valuable assets of an organization. In this era's market, characterised by tight labour competition and technological advancement, retention of talented workforce becomes altogether important. Furthermore, the literature associate talent retention with multiple variables and is consider a precedent of increased work performance and productivity (Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016). This study aims to determined how the predicted outcomes of psychological contract, help to identify which are the variables that Millennials value the most, in order to create a strategy to attain high retention among early-career talent.

Since nowadays Millennials are entering the labour market and by 2025 they will be a big part of our workforce, lately Millennials' expectations in their employment have been a huge topic. So it is important to understand how they choose a job and what they expect from their jobs. Therefore the organization needs to develop strategies to ensure that there is no shortage of qualified talent because of a retention issue based on a lack of corporate strategies to retain the young talent. Moreover, HR practices will enable the organization to avoid the large costs associated with employee turnover which not just include expenses allocated to replacement labour and separation, but also recruitment expenses, onboarding, and lost revenues (De Vos & Meganck, 2008).
To most effectively attract and manage this new cohort of employees, organizations need a clear understanding of the work values of the new generation and how they may differ from the values of previous generations. This research will be applicable to organizational leaders and talent retention specialists who are seeking to understand how VUCA context and technological immersion has shaped Millennials' thinking patterns, processes, values, motivational drivers and career expectations about their employment relationship and the influence of it on today's workplace.

Millennial is the first digital generation, also referred as Echo Boomers, Generation Y or Generation Next, which was born between 1980 and 2000, and is related with a big number of stereotypes (De Hauw & De Vos, 2010; Kornelsen, 2019).

They are told to be different from other generational cohorts[1]: 1- more determined about having work-life balance and having autonomy (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008); 2- with high punctuation on social affiliate opportunities and strongly motivated by a cooperative workplace (Wong, Gardiner, Lang, & Coulon, 2008); 3- more ambitious and seeking more likely career opportunities progression, training and development in organizations (Sturges, Guest, Conway, & Davey, 2002); 4- looking for a meaningful and challenging work which provides them personal fulfilment, learning opportunities and help them advance in their career (Dries, Pepermans, & De Kerpel, 2008); 5- with still high expectations regarding their financial rewards (Dries et al., 2008); 6- and low expectations on job security (Dries et al. 2008). In fact, experts believe that this group is better educated, especially in terms of the demands of a globalized world, more disciplined as well, and more achievement-oriented than the previous generations. Furthermore, surveys conducted by Cone Inc. in collaboration with AMP Agency (2006) found that Millennials see themselves as friendly, open-minded, intelligent, responsible, socially minded and informed; adjectives consistently related with the generally accepted persona of the Millennial Generation. Figure 1 highlights the Top 10 self-selected descriptors of this generational cohort. Moreover, optimism, civic duty, confidence and achievement are considered to be the core values of this generation (Kornelsen, 2019).

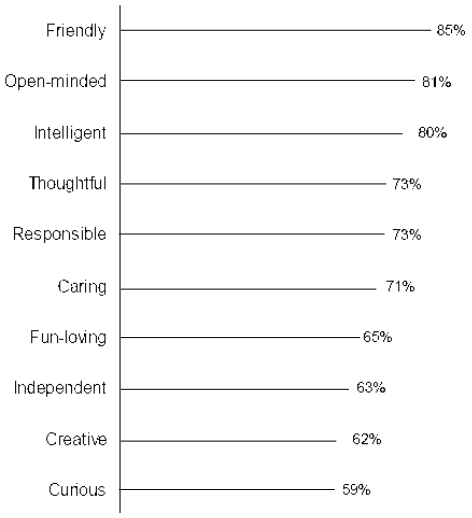


Figure 1: Top 10 adjectives that best describe Millennials. From AMP Agency (2006)

They are represented by some weaknesses as well like 1- seeking for instant gratification; 2- shallow commitment; 3- low frustration tolerance; 4- sceptical of long-term commitment; 5- lack of critical thinking as a result of multitasking and large amounts of information and 6- low ability to recover from failures (Kornelsen, 2019). All of them factors to bear in mind as possible inputs of their expectations from their employment commitment.

[1] Identifiable group that shares birth years, age location and significant life events (wars, new technologies, major economic transitions, or global political) at critical developmental stages which form the personality, values and expectations of a generation. (Kupperschmidt, 2006).

Millennial career expectations is totally related with anticipatory psychological contract, first framed by Rousseau (1989), and defined as "*those individual pre-employment beliefs about the future employment and inducements they expect to receive": career development opportunities, job content, social atmosphere, financial rewards and work life balance* (De Vos & Meganck, 2008). Millennials' expectations have a detrimental effect on a number of outcomes, such as job satisfaction, commitment, job performance and intention to stay (De Hauw & De Vos, 2010) which at the same time, as Figure 2 indicates, are tested antecedents of employee retention (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016). The psychological contract provides, that way, a relevant framework for studying employee retention while assessing the impact of different content dimensions on employee commitment (De Vos & Meganck, 2008).

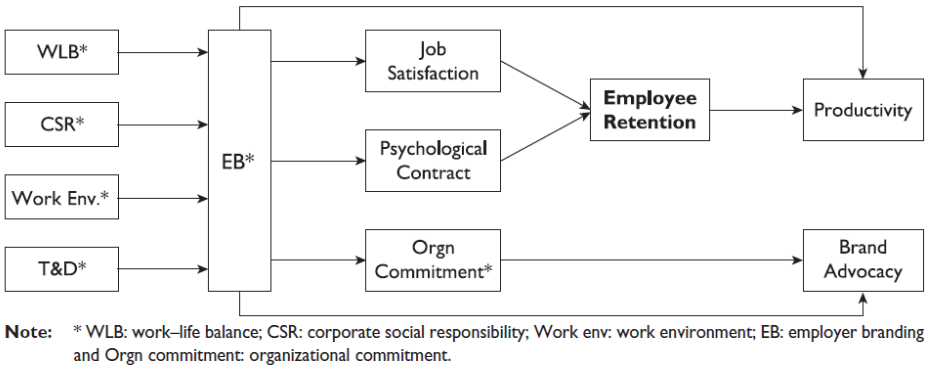


Figure 2: Employee Retention framework. From Tanwar and Prasad, (2016).

On the same path, Millennial generation's expectations are shaped by all the contextual events that this generational cohort has lived during their upbringing (Wey & Sutton, 2002; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010). In this case Millennials are contextualized in a stage of economic upheaval, new technologies, globalization, multiculturalism, terrorism, natural disasters, emerging social trends, and important international political changes, which had been decisive to shape their current values, expectations and short- and long-term, personal and professional interests. Considering all variables De Hauw and De Vos (2010) found that especially, job content, career development, training, financial rewards and job security are affected by generational influences while their expectations related to work-life balance and social atmosphere are actually more affected by contextual influences. Moreover, previous research has also shown that variables such as personality or individual career management desire,

are also affecting Millennials' psychological contract expectations (Raja, Johns & Ntallanis, 2004). Concerning that there is an influence between the environment where they have been grown up and their expectations, it is important to recognize and highlight how all the factors related with psychological contract, affect the individual's decision-making (De Vos & Meganck, 2008). Furthermore, literature frequently assumes that turnover rates are related with specific types of HR practices (Horwitz, Heng, & Quazi, 2003; Schmidt, Willness, Jones & Bourdage, 2018), it is thus important for organizations to identify the factors that truly operate as motivators for retention and consider the value attributed to those factors by employees, in order to work out effective and realistic retention strategies (De Vos & Meganck, 2008). Applying the perspective of the psychological contract may therefore be useful for understanding the importance of retention factors in employees' employment deal.

Contrary to turnover, loyalty, also known as employee commitment (Mahmood, Akhtar, Talat, Shuai & Hyatt, 2019) is presented as a variable with a significant negative impact on intention to leave (Boroff & Lewin, 1997). De Vos & Meganck (2008) found out that social atmosphere, career development and job content have a strong impact on loyalty, while financial rewards and work-life balance have less effect. On the other hand, Mahmood et al. (2019) present job satisfaction as a key driver of employee commitment and a strategic beneficial precedent of retention of valuable employees whose companies have invested in. By this way, leaders have an opportunity to reduce turnover by cultivating loyalty in millennials' early career (Koppel, Deline & Virkstis, 2017). These findings are aligned with Herzberg's theory, which determines a two-dimensional paradigm of factors affecting people's attitudes about work: hygiene factors such as company policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions and salary; and motivators, those factors enriching a person's job and enhancing job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement. According to the theory, the absence of hygiene factors can create job dissatisfaction, but their presence does not motivate or create satisfaction. In this sense just motivators are the elements that enriched a person's job. All in all, satisfiers or motivation factors are related to what a person does while dissatisfies or hygiene factors are related to the situation in which the person does what he or she does (House & Wigdor 1967).

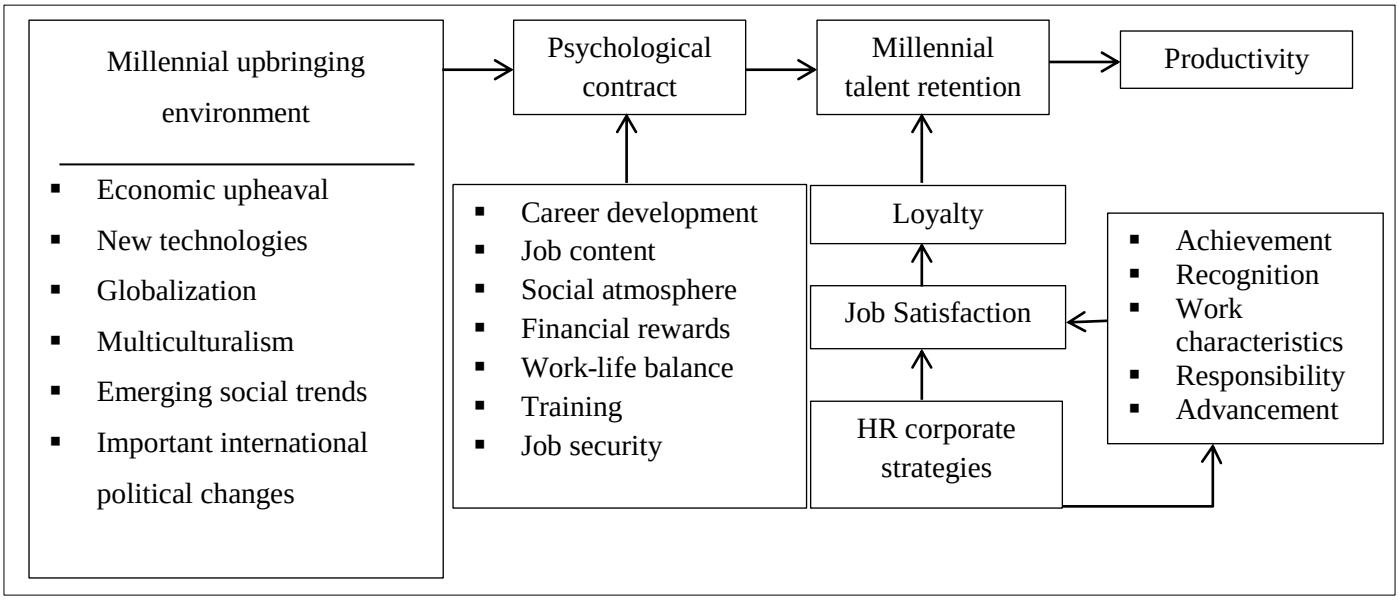


Figure3. Estimate framework research model. Author's own.

According to the literature, it seems therefore necessary to orientate HR strategies to those factors considered as motivators and with a positive impact to job satisfaction (Figure 3). As seen previously, retention practices for ensuring employee's loyalty might only turn out successful if they are in line with what employees value and what they take into account when deciding to stay or leave the organization (Horwitz et al., 2003; De Vos, Meganck & Buyens, 2005). According to the literature, these subject interpretations of retention factors will be moderate by all upbringing variables influencing values, principals and interests creation. Significant differences between generations should be then easily expected, and the so-called "new-age" inducements should be typical Millennial expected benefits more than expectations from other generational cohort. According to Stein (2013), this worldwide generation is more similar in characteristic features to one another than other previous generations within their nations. However, not all studies prove a clear and consistent generational cohort difference. Millennials or Generation Y is not always represented as the generation which is looking for more intrinsically rewarding insights from all ages. The results found by Twenge et al. (2010) present from small to moderate generational differences in work values among the three generations most prominently represented in the workforce. The authors found that 1- recent generations are progressively more likely to value leisure at work; 2- GenY is less likely to desire extrinsic rewards (income, material possessions, and prestige) at work than did the previous generation X, 3- GenY is significantly less likely to value an intrinsically rewarding job (interesting job, which

provides variety and responsibility and offers a challenge), 4- although GenY values altruism more than others, they didn't find empirical differences among GenY, GenX, and Boomers; 5- GenY members not value social rewards at work more than other generations do (Figure 4). Regardless, Kornelsen (2019) specify that the nature of the difference is more obvious between Baby Boomers and Millennials than with Gen X, who are seen to be a transitional generation and a link between the Boomers and Millennials itself.

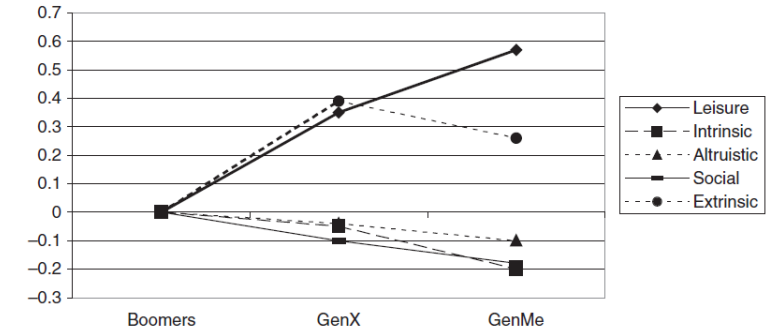


Figure 4. Work Values across generations. From Twenge et al. (2010)

It cannot be denied that some obvious differences between generations do exist. 1- Millennials prefer to sacrifice high incomes for leisure time; 2- are sceptical of hierarchies; 3- show strong self-confidence although being inexperienced; 4- call for direct and honest communication; 5- more result than effort orientated and 6-refuse micromanagement. So they are clearly operating differently and expecting specific attitudes in their employment (Kornelsen, 2019).

Company strategies need not only to focus on making employee more committed and productive, but also need to bear in mind the challenges of the environment. Lately, the most frequent organizational environment is VUCA, which refers to a volatile (speed, magnitude and dynamics of change), uncertain (unpredictability of issues and events), complex (chaos that surrounds all organizations) and ambiguous context (wide range of options currently affecting individuals' ethics, core values and the way each member and group perform in society). Since all are new characteristics of the current corporate world, traditional approaches and strategies are no longer valid (Kornelsen, 2019). Therefore, it is not only Y-generational cohort demanding new leadership and management approaches, but also the environment itself.

The world is changing so fast that many of the experiences and skills of the previous generations are therefore no longer an asset while Millennials' strengths based in tech-savviness are the strongest skills to face the challenges of a digitalized VUCA world. The same VUCA context characteristics and employment instability encourage

this generation to decide to change and constantly search for new opportunities, experiences and relocation. Koppel et al. (2017) say that Millennials do not remain in one workplace for more than a few years, and they attribute this fact to a series of causes independent from HR strategies: 1- propensity to move between jobs due to the many new opportunities available today; 2- unprecedented variety of work environments to explore; 3- easiness to apply to new positions within simple and streamlined processes; 4- the believed that someone who stayed too long would be considered a failure (Kornelsen, 2019) and 5- the fact that it is becoming more typical and accepted by employees to change jobs at the start of a career. As a result, Millennials do not need to worry about the stigma of leaving an organization to obtain new opportunities or experiences faster than they would at their current organization (Koppel et al. 2017). Thus these employees are difficult to retain due to their tendency to attach more importance to marking out their own career path than to organizational loyalty; a tendency which results in increased rated of voluntary turnover (De Vos et al. 2005). It is therefore necessary to examine the extent to which the initiatives taken by HR managers for enhancing employee retention are in line with what employees value and to better focus these practices as drivers of employee loyalty, bearing in mind that such practices could not be determined due to the present flow context.

After reviewing the literature, this study aims to demonstrate that predicted outcomes of psychological contract, help to determine early-career employees' retention. Thus they are useful variables to focus the organizational strategy to attain high commitment among millennial talent.

Method

Measures

Data were obtained using self-assessment questionnaires to measure Millennials' preemployment beliefs about employer inducements. The questionnaire used a 27 items referring to seven types of employer inducements. The items from the original scale by De Vos, Buyens and Schalk (2003) refer to five types of employer inducements typical for psychological contract analysis: career development (opportunities for promotion), job content (autonomy at one's job), social atmosphere (good relationships between colleagues), financial rewards (attractive rewards packages) and work-life balance

(respect for one's personal situation). Following the results of De Hauw and De Vos (2010), two other dimensions relevant for studying psychological contract expectations in a changing economic and social context were added: training (financial support for training courses) and job security (employment with long-term perspective). Items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'not expected at all' to 'very expected". The items used to measure each content dimension are presented in the *Annex*.

A higher score represents greater expectations regarding the inducement. The seven subscales from the original version of the anticipatory psychological contract have good reliability and internal consistency with Crohnbach Alpha ranging from (α=.71) to (α=.81).

Regarding loyalty dimension, three-item scale was used to measure employee commitment or intention to stay. The scale is adapted from Boroff and Lewin (1997), also used in the mention studies. Answers were tracked on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "completely disagree" to (5) "completely agree". Alpha-reliability for Loyalty scale was 0.81.

Sample and procedure

Millennial employees and other participants as well, were asked to indicate the importance they attached to the seven types of inducements (career development, job content, social atmosphere, financial rewards, work-life balance, training and job security) considered as major retention factors to evaluate the extent to which employees consider fulfilled those promises expected in the employment deal. The outcome satisfaction was related with the Loyalty scale. All questionnaires were sent by email and Social networking sides to potential respondents, together with a letter providing clarifications about the research.

A total of 100 early-career employees filled out the questionnaire, representing a 96.15% per cent of the final sample, which consisted of 104 participants, from which 65% per cent were female (N= 68) and 35% male (N=36). 4% of the participants were between 19 and 23 years old, 46% were between 22 and 24 years old, 24% were between 25 and 27 years old, 16% were between 28 and 30 years old, 4% were between

31 and 33 years old, 2% were between 34 and 36 years old and 4% were 40 or more years old. The most common age of respondents was 22 to 24 years. This means that the most represented range of Millennials was born between 1995 and 1997, part of the Millennial generation cohort. For 8% of the respondents, this was their first temporal job, for 25% this was their first fix job, while 29% of the respondents were still doing an Internship and 38% had already some years of experience in the labour market.

In terms of academic background, 13% of respondents were studying their Bachelor's degree, 30% already had a Bachelor, 23% were studying a master's degree, 27% had a Master and 7% had an occupational education. 59% of the Millennial respondents were hired in a SME, 31% was hired in a multinational company and a 10% were working in another types of organizations such as public administration, NGO, University, private foundation or as freelancers. As represented in the *Figure 5*, a big majority of the respondents were working on the Human Resources field, followed by Social Services and Consultancy.

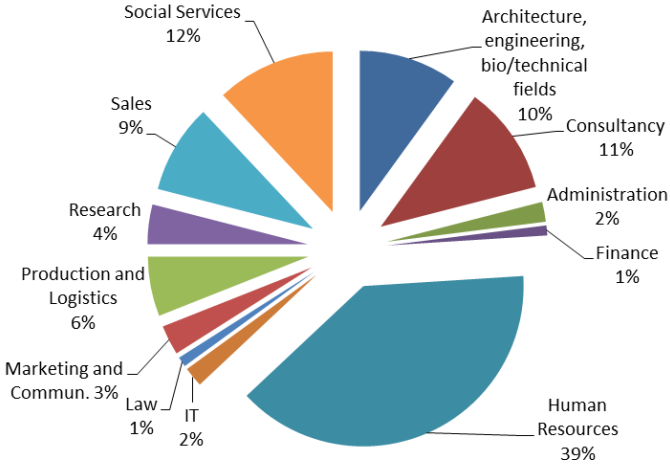


Figure 5. Fields where Millennials work

After the reception of all completed questionnaires, data has been analysed through the statistical program SPSS using correlations and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis in order to firstly determine the relation between variables and secondly explain the contribution of each variable that, directly and indirectly, have an impact in the explanation of the dependent factor's variance. Talent retention was considered the dependent variable and the seven subscales defined as outcomes of the psychological contract of Millennials' expectations (career development, job content, social atmosphere, financial rewards, work-life balance, training and job security), were considered the independent variables.

Results

Data was treated through SPSS to release the following results.

Table 1, indicates the descriptive data of the study. Millennial sample of this study mostly tent to punctuate each item of the different variables as "medium expected, pretty expected or very expected", that is why generally means above 3 have been obtained. As indicated in the table throughout the normality test Kolmogorov Smirnov, the variables of this study do not follow a normal distribution, which can be a limitation. Although, through the coefficient of variation (CV) it is seen that the dimensions with more heterogeneity are: Financial rewards, Training and Job security. Contrary those dimensions more homogeneous are Social atmosphere, Job content and Career development meaning that the average is more representative of the data set.

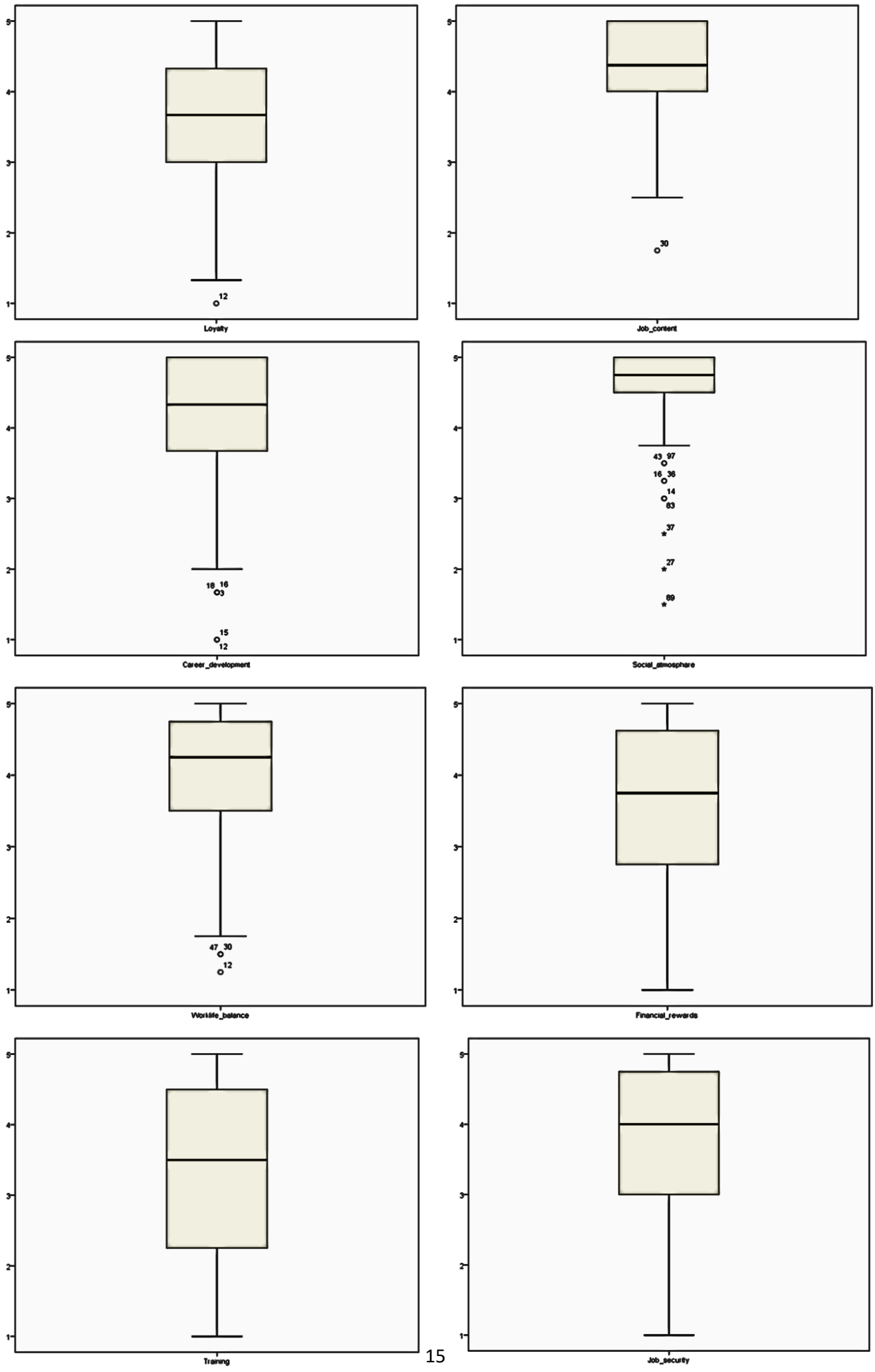
Table 1

Descriptive data and normality test

	Millennials (N=100)			
	Mean	SD	CV (%)	K-S
Loyalty	3.55	.82	23.10	.12**
Career_development	4.08	.98	24.20	.18***
Job_content	4.30	.69	16.05	.15***
Social_atmosphare	4.56	.67	14.69	.26***
Financial_rewards	3.56	1.20	33.71	.12***
Worklife_balance	4.07	.94	23.10	.18***
Training	3.40	1.8	52,94	.14***
Job_security	3.72	1.13	30,38	.14***

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

The different boxplot bellow complement the descriptive data giving some extra information in regards of the central trends, distribution and symmetry of the studied data. Social atmosphere turns out to be the less width, while Training represents the dimension with more dispersion. In addition, some outliers are found in dimensions such as Loyalty, Career development, Social atmosphere, WLB and Job content, the latter being also the most asymmetric.


Loyalty
Job_content
Career_development
Social_atmosphere
Worklife_balance
Financial_rewards
Training
Job_security

In terms of correlation among the variables of the study (Table 2), it is seen that the dependent variable Loyalty, is high significantly correlated with Career development, Job content and Job security. It has also strong correlations with Financial rewards and Work life balance. Loyalty has little correlation with Training, and no significant correlation is found with Social atmosphere. Furthermore, some high correlations around .70 are found among the group of independent variables which may indicate overlapping. This is the case of Financial rewards, which is highly correlated with Training, Work life balance and Job security, having high significant correlation of .72, .69 and .67, respectively.

Table 2

Correlations among dimensions

	Loyalty	CD	JC	SA	FR	WLB	T	JS
Loyalty	1	.38***	.34***	.14	.25**	.28**	.22*	.30***
CD	.38***	1	.57***	.32***	.61***	.62***	.52***	.57***
JC	.34***	.57***	1	.24**	.45***	.57***	.41***	.38***
SA	.14	.32***	.24**	1	.24**	.31***	.25**	.28**
FR	.25**	.61***	.45***	.24**	1	.69***	.72***	.67***
WLB	.28**	.62***	.57***	.31***	.69***	1	.62***	.61***
T	.22*	.52***	.41***	.25**	.72***	.62***	1	.66***
JS	.30***	.57***	.38***	.28**	.67***	.61***	.66***	1

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

CD- Career_development, JC- Job Content, SA- Social Atmosphare, FR- Financial Rewards, WLB- Work Life Balance, T- Training, JS- Job Security.

A regression model was calculated in order to see how much variability in the dependent variable can be explain by several predictable variables. What it is important in the regression model, is to determine which independent variables are helping to predict the dependent variable and thus have a strong impact to Loyalty in Millennial generation in order to establish them as a focus for the practices of Human Resources. Multiple Regression models were examined though SPSS. The first model seen in the Table 4 was calculated using the default Enter Method. That means that all variables: Career development, Job content, Social Atmosphere, Financial rewards, Work life balance, Training and Job security; were introduce to the model considering them all valuable contributors to the dependent variable. However, none of them resulted significant for Loyalty. 11,2% of the variance of Loyalty is explained through this regression model (Table 3).

In the second regression model, 3 variables were removed: Social atmosphere since had no correlation with the dependent variable; both Training and Job security since they had correlation around .70 with other independent variables so they were probably overlapping and not adding extra value. In this case, significance was neither found (Table 3), although the variance of Loyalty explained increased from 11,2% to 12,8% (Table 4). The last regression model, Model 3, was calculated with the Stepwise Method in SPSS. This method considers whether the variables have a significant contribution to the model or not. As indicated in Table 3, a significant variable, Career development, was found with a high significant impact of .336 to Loyalty. Model 3 explains 13,4% of the Loyalty's variance (Table 4).

Table 3

Regression models

	Loyalty								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Predictors	Coefficent	Standard error	p-value	Coefficent	Standard error	p-value	Coefficent	Standard error	p-value
Constant	1.454	.701	.041	1.558	.532	.004	2.174	.350	.000
Career development	.210	.124	.095	.237	.120	.051	.336	.083	.000
Job Content	.231	.157	.145	.219	.155	.162	-	-	-
Social Atmosphere	.006	.133	.966	-	-	-	-	-	-
Financial Rewards	-.023	.119	.850	.001	.100	.994	-	-	-
Work Life Balance	-.005	.142	.971	.020	.136	.885	-	-	-
Training	-.040	.102	.700	-	-	-	-	-	-
Job Security	.122	.112	.277	-	-	-	-	-	-

Predicted variables of each model: *Model 1*: (Constant), Career development, Job content, Social atmosphere, Financial rewards, Work life balance, Training and Job security.
Model 2: (Constant), Career development, Job content, Financial rewards and Work life balance.
Model 3: (Constant), Career development.

Table 4

Significance of each model and explained Loyalty's variance

	Loyalty		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
F	2.780**	4.648**	16.261***
R-Sq.	.175	.164	.142
Adj. R-Sq.	.112	.128	.134

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

The dispersion chart (Figure 6) indicates a slightly growth trend. Even the fact that it is evident that there is a lot of dispersion; the variables of the study have a tendency to explain the dependent variable. In this sense, the higher the regression standardized predicted values (Loyalty), the higher the regression standardized residual. This way, as independent variables increase in value, so does Loyalty.

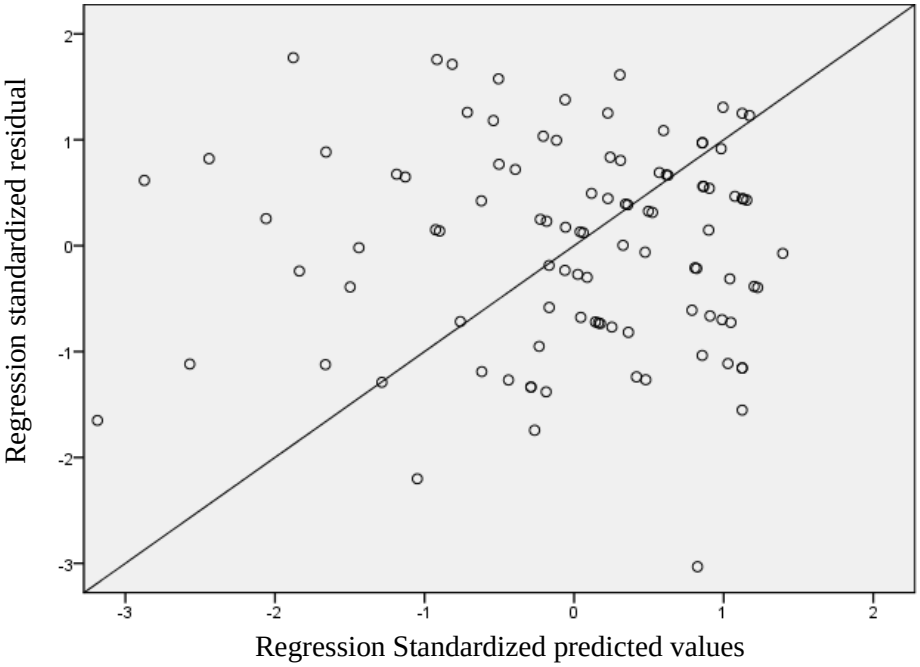


Figure 6. Scatter plot, dependent variable Loyalty.

Strategic commitment management

Bearing in mind the impact of each variable on talent retention, a proposal strategic plan for organization was released, with the aim to approach Millennials' psychological contract expectations to a solid and practical retention practices for modern companies willing to enhance their early-career commitment.

After all the revision of literature and the results of this study, it is highlight that the creation of an optimal portfolio of HR practices is not sufficient. It is important to manage employees' expectations related to these practices, because only this way we will create a deal which is understood by all implicated stakeholders, in this case, the business organization and employees. The theoretical proposal in this study is related and focused in the data found and also reviewed literature, highly inspired by 8 factors highlighted in Rodriguez and Rodriguez (2015) with a strong focus on Millennials' values while trying to determine the leader's characteristics in the current VUCA context and the concern of Millennial as a big part of the workforce.

The authors confirm that any strategic theory or strategic practise should be passing from the "horizontal" way of doing and thinking (competencies, skills, abilities), to the "vertical" way of understanding and developing a strategy: self-knowledge, self-awareness, personal motivations, core values. This way, we are moving from an external impulse of development to the own responsible development; from an individual conceptualization to a collective process throughout networks and from singular theories to complex convergences of diverse methodology, ideas and experiences (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2015). Thus, the following insights aim to become an acceptable way to understand, and to lead this new generation which as seen in this study is highly focus on their career development.

Table 5.

Millennials' valuable factors

1) Technology enforceability
- Technological resources which allow them to connect to a vast network of computing resources, data and servers. - Secure environment where every individual is able to transfer information and communicate comfortably, fast, through open channels for communication.
2) Information flows
- The Millennial require information in a lighting speed using the latest gadgets and apps with flexibility and diversity. - Have access to updated, pertinent and condensed information to seek their goals and have a clear idea of the shared vision of the organization.
3) Cooperation and enhance of diversity
- Able to collaborate, contribute, access to vicarious facilitation/coaching, using personal assets and social networks to attract supporters, and entrusting others to enhance a shared vision, intrinsic cooperative behaviour, and fluency in multiple perspectives. - Learning about other groups occurs, support innovation, and encourage cultural communication competence. - "Accompaniment net": using technology in a bi-directional way for community, team, society and individuals bringing a sense of belonging, nurturing an environment that values individuality and diversity

4) Autonomy
- Clarified roles. - Challenges, uniqueness and creativity at work. - A place based on trust, engagement, resiliency and positive psychological capital. - A job that enables the employee to see the results of what he or she does, and has a significant impact on others.
5) Lighting speed
- A job which produce growth - Freedom to oppose external conditioning and formalism by a gradual insistence with revision and encouragement - Solid formation - Promotions opportunities and goal achievement.
6) Development
- Receive mentoring - Influence their mentees - Career facilitation programs
7) Leader contact and Leadership
- Availability “to be accessed” with an open schedule for personal encounters - Accompaniment by a constant and cordial presence. - Align the process of information and personal communication. - Establishment of a clear path about where they are going in expectations, goals, challenges and requirements but very flexible how they get there. - Someone who ensures learning agility, flexibility, and the participation of others.
8) Emotional management
- Support and accompaniment for self-regulation, self-awareness and metacognition. - Support positive directed emotions (e.g. gratitude, appreciation) motivate leaders to behave in ways that reflect self-transcendent values (e.g. honesty, loyalty, equality) developing certain psychological processes (e.g. self-knowledge, interpersonal skills, communication competence, and cultural competence)

In response to these umbrella of concepts and the issues facing the nowadays organizations in terms of leading with turnover and little commitment of young workforce, this theoretical proposal should be considered as an orientation to focus not only strategies to retain talent (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2015) but also strategies of recruitment and training. Recruitment, selection, and training are now also structured to highlight employees' career potential and growth and they no longer provide training just to meet the minimum job requirements of the current job (Mahmood et al. 2019) but to ensure development.

Bearing in mind all the variables influencing Millennials' commitment, according to Herzberg's theory and to give response to Millennials' psychological contract, the organization should work on those motivation factors with a positive impact on job satisfaction in order to determine an attractive career deal strong enough to strengthen ties between the organization and the employee (House & Wigdor 1967). This deal should consist of 1- meaningful work (e.g. by restructuring the work organization or adding new responsibilities to the job, clarifying roles, using different technologies), 2- opportunities for advancement (e.g. lateral moves, internal mobility, walk in my shoes projects, cross-departmental projects), 3- responsibility (e.g. letting employees be heard, having the right to make decisions, freedom from supervision and influence people around) 4- recognition (e.g. feedback either from managers or peers, customers or subordinates) and 5- achievement (e.g. good performance rates, feeling important and respected by others).

Action Plan

The specific practices determined to make the employment deal more attractive for Millennial employees and to ensure their satisfaction were focused on the significant statistical results founded in the variables of this studied: Career Development and Job Content; and aligned with the Millennial most valuable assets emphasized by Rodriguez and Rodriguez (2010): transparency, cooperation, flexibility and accompaniment. This way, the final structured Action Plan has been framed in the following five dimensions (House & Wigdor 1967) with its following specific practices:

1. *Restructuration,* enrich roles and enhance meaningful work so that the job appeals to employee interests and also bestows a sense of responsibility. The experience of doing enriched jobs motivates employees to perform with a sense of enjoyment, autonomy and ownership of the job. Consequently, enriched jobs

offer desirable levels of employee satisfaction (Mahmood et al. 2019). It is then, important to provide clear work expectations, allowing their own imprint to their jobs and showing them the big picture as to how their jobs relate to the mission, strategic objectives, and core values of the organization. Actions:

a. Get to know your corporate strategy: mission, strategic goals and core values conference.
b. Meet our team goals: Team goals and business expectations meeting.
c. Job enrichment Design Thinking session.
d. Meet your goals within the team: Meeting of expectations of each team member.
e. Quarterly follow up for improvements and changes.

2. Design of training program to ensure *advancement*. Through mentorning, Millennials will be helped to identify themselves with their mentees and even adopt some of their values and attitudes. At the same time it gives an opportunity to the so-called reverse mentoring important to increase Millennials' involvement within their organizations while engaging and educating the current leaders. The mentor will be seen as a person to motivate, advance, help to learn and work to their potential and find new perspectives and meaning in their jobs. Thus mentoring, as a practical strategy provides both a psychosocial (acceptance, encouragement, coaching, counseling) and a career facilitation function (sponsorship, protection, challenging assignments, exposure, and visibility) (Kornelsen, 2019) while showing them how they can make a positive, meaningful impact at work. Apart from mentorning, a specific Individual Development Plan will be design based on those agreement actions between managers and employees. Actions:

    a. Mind Mapping social session to match people through 3 matching criteria: productivity, benefits and creativity.
    b. Training for mentors: role, expectations and duration of the programs
    c. Satisfaction survey after 1 month, 3 months and at the end of the program.
    d. Individual Development Plan (IDP) meeting: manager and team member will meet in order to work on the IDP template and establish training needs.
    e. Annual IDP tracking

3. Implement leadership management courses in order to improve leading practices and boost perceived *responsibility in the teams*. Concerning what this generation expects and demands from a leader, two leadership approaches are suggested:
    i. Positive leadership which call for the involvement of the new leader, to influence others and to generate well-being.
    ii. Transformational leadership focused in encourage teamwork, setting high performance targets and encourage out-of-the-box thinking among followers (Kornelsen, 2019). Actions:
    a. Brainstorming- detection of needs
    b. Leadership capabilities course
    c. Tracking survey
4. Feedback-Guideline to enhance public *recognition*, reinforcement and corrective mechanism providing direct and honest feedback in variety of forms. (Suleman & Nelson, 2011).

    Feedback has to be understood in terms of help to channel their big dreams and plans in achievement goals. It will be useful to maintain them on track and to motivate them to continue to do daily good work for the employer. Different feedbacks which need to be consider. Providing frequent feedback based on the performance. This systematic framing of feedback takes it from being unearned hype to a practical information stream that can help to shape desired behaviours and enhance results. Actions:
    a. Kanban: weekly work + feedback.
    b. Developmental quarterly discussion. Having quarterly "developmental discussions" with a focus on ways the employee can improve.
5. Establishing a (OKR) Objectives and Key Results program for both teams and employees with the intention to guide, accompany and especially visualize the clearly defined *achievements* and one or more measurable results. Actions:
    a. Sharing strategic division goals
    b. Key-results Focus Group to establish 5 KR to achieve during a quarter and clearly define the actions of each team member.
    c. Quarter Review

Gantt chart

		Activities	People involved	Quarter 1								Quarter 2								Quarter 3							
				M1		M2		M3		M4		M5		M6		M7		M8		M9		M10		M11		M12	
ACTION PLAN	**Restructuration** *Enriched roles*	Company strategy insights session	DG																								
		Meet our team goals	Managers & team members																								
		Job enrichment Design Thinking session	HR & Division team																								
		Meet your goals within the team	Manager & employee																								
		Quarterly follow-up	Division team																								
	Advancement *Enhance potential*	Mind mapping social session	DG & all employees																								
		Training for mentors	HR & mentors																								
		Satisfaction survey	HR & participants																								
		Individual Development plan (IDP)	Manager & employee																								
		Annual IDP tracking	Manager & employee																								
	Respon-sibility *Commitment*	Brainstorming- detection of needs	HRBP & managers																								
		Leadership capabilities course	HR & managers																								
		Tracking survey	HR & employees																								
	Recognition *Systematic feedback*	Kanban	Division team																								
		Development discussions	Division team																								
	Achieve-ment *Guide goals*	Sharing strategic division goals	Managers & team members																								
		Key-results Focus Group	Managers & team members																								
		Quarter Review	Managers & team																								

Discussion

The present field research wanted to demonstrate that predicted outcomes of psychological contract, determine early-career employees' retention. Thus they are useful variables to focus the organizational strategy to attain high commitment among millennial talent. This research has been designed for organizational leaders and talent retention specialists who may be in charge of commitment strategies and enhancing productivity of young talent putting together the current situation with an influence on today's workplace.

A literature review has been conducted in order to discover which variables may have been affecting Millennials' decisions, interests and expectations in regards of their employment deal. Furthermore, some extra information about this generational cohort has been found, suggesting that not only they are the first digital generation but a generation which has been raised in a totally different environment from any previous generation before. That has as a result a large group of young talent with high expectations from their jobs and a special mind-set without stigma about turnover and job-changing at the start of their careers. According to De Hauw and De Vos (2010) research, the present study treated as well the outcomes of the psychological contract as predictors of what Millennials expect from their employment deal, and thus, as indicators of job satisfaction, commitment, job performance and intention to stay.

After the revision of literature, it has been seen that there is a lot of information about Millennial generation's characteristics, interests, expectation, stigmas, etc., but just a few of them truly focused on their needs, instead. As Stein (2013) says this worldwide generation is more similar in characteristic features to one another than other previous generations within their nations. So although some authors emphasize that there is either no difference at all or just a slightly difference between Millennials and previous generations (Twenge et al. 2010), it is clear that either for contextual reasons or current job opportunities, Millennials are more strict about having work-life balance and autonomy (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008), a good social atmosphere with opportunities for a cooperative workplace (Wong et al. 2008), career opportunities progression (Sturges et al., 2002), a challenging work and options to advance in their career (Dries et al. 2008).

Initially De Vos et. al (2003) determined five employer inducements for psychological contract analysis: career development, job content, social atmosphere, financial rewards and work-life balance. To those, eventually De Hauw and De Vos (2010) added two extra scales to refer to psychological contract expectations in our VUCA context: training and job security. These independent factors, where related with Loyalty or employee commitment, the dependent variable of the research, since as Boroff and Lewin (1997) found that it has a significant negative impact on intention to leave. The empirical results of the present study could not replicate these findings. Moreover, although the 7-scale studied Model 1, has been significant (F=2.580**), none of the variables considered resulted significantly important for Loyalty meaning that rather than predicting the effect of the dependent variable they were correlating with it. After eliminating 3 variables due to the lack of correlation with the dependent variable (as was the case of Social Atmosphere) or collinearity risk (as was the case of Training and Job security), the 4-scale Model 2, has been significant (F=4.648**) but still any variable was significant to explain Loyalty in early-careers. In the final regression Model 3, calculated through Stepwise method, a significant variable, Career development, was found with a high significant impact ($p<0.001$) of 0.336 to Loyalty. The Loyalty's variance explained through each model increased from 11.2% to 12.8% and finally to 13.4% in Model 1, Model 2 and Model 3, respectively. Career development has been this way, the only variable that can predict commitment of Millennials. These results oppose to what De Vos and Meganck (2008) found. Since the authors research conclude that both social atmosphere and career development, as well as job content have a strong impact on loyalty, while financial rewards and work-life balance have less effect. However in terms of punctuations, the averages of Millennial rates in the present research reflect a tendency to punctuate higher Social atmosphere ($\bar{x}$=4.56), Job content ($\bar{x}$=4.30) and Career development ($\bar{x}$=4.08), exactly the same variables as the previous mentioned authors. Furthermore, De Hauw and De Vos (2010) emphasize that there are some variables especially affected by generational influences so their punctuations should be constant from one individual to another within this generational cohort. This is the case of, job content and career development but also training, financial rewards and job security.

There is no clear behaviour found in the present study in regards of Financial rewards (CV= 33.71%) and Training (CV= 52.94%), both variables had the highest

dispersion level. This fact could be explained with the possibility that two or more different subgroups are coexisting in the sample, thus the results may be biased depending on the company size: 31% working in a multinational and 59% in a SME; or the experience in the labour market: 62% of the respondents where approximately in their first labour experience while 38% had already some years of experience. The same reason can be explaining the behaviour of the variables Work life balance and Job security, especially the last one, with a significant correlation (.30***) with Loyalty, but with any predictor effect. These remarkable biases can serve as evidence for the length of generational cohorts. A 20-year-gap generational cohort is rather too wide to categorise individuals among this interval with the same characteristics.

In regards of Social atmosphere, it has been the higher mean value ($\bar{x}$=4.56) and since Financial rewards has been the lowest ($\bar{x}$=3.56), this study supports one of Millennials's expectations highlighted by Kornelsen (2019) and Wong et al. (2008) which is the fact that this generation prefers to sacrifice high incomes for leisure time. However as the empirical results demonstrate, the variable social atmosphere is not directly connected with Loyalty, thus should not be a big focus for commitment's strategy. This connects with Herzberg's theory and his approach to hygiene factors, among which we find interpersonal relations and working conditions. These factors are related to the situation where the person works, so they are important but not influencing a person to leave or to stay (House & Wigdor 1967).

All in all, it is demonstrate that HR practises related with retention or better said commitment strategies of early-careers should be clearly focus on Career Development and Job content, bearing in mind other influencing situational factors as Social Atmosphere, Work life balance, Job security, Financial Rewards and Training.

With the data as a basis, the proposed strategy in this study establishes a focus on motivator's factors to enhance job satisfaction and thus increase Loyalty throughout early-careers with the aim to give respond to the generational demands and the approach of the characteristic current environment. It has been inspired by Herzberg's theory and Mahmood et al. (2019) who presented job satisfaction as a key driver of employee commitment and a strategic beneficial precedent of retention. However, due to the environment current characteristics and Millennials approaches, as Koppel et al. (2017) says, Millennials will not remain in one workplace for more than a few years which is a

fact related with a series of causes independent from HR strategies. So our strategy, as a Human Resources department should be focused on get the best of them while they are holding the position in the organization and as Tanwar and Prasad, (2016) advocate, to understand the practices as drivers of employee loyalty and increment of productivity rates.

In the light of the research results, the hypothesis conceived cannot be accepted. Even though results show a trend towards talent retention, the lack of significant evidence cannot demonstrate the 7-scales studied model. Nonetheless, the given strategic plan is justified within two strong variables: Career development and job content and the frame of the revised research.

Limitations and future studies

This study is a good contribution to Millennial talent retention literature, focused on the research of generational changes in work values. However, additional work is needed in order to have sustainable practices that demonstrate that Millennial generation cohort is as different as it is told to be.

With the data of the present study, it would have been interesting to see how Millennials' behaviour change after applying the suggested HR retention strategy by doing a comparison of means and results at the end of the implementation of the action plan suggested. Furthermore, in order to have valid results and to be able to generalize and compare them within the population, variables should be transformed to be normal distributed. The same should be done with the sample. A randomly sample would be necessary to avoid risks of collinearity and subgroups with different behaviours that may be skewing the sample. To avoid subgroups within the sample, it would have been interesting to see which is the tendency if the sample is split in regards of age, company size and experience in the labour market. Even though to do so, a larger sample would be needed. Moreover, the studied sample could be also skewed due to the big quantity of participants from the Human Resources field, representing almost the half of it.

In terms of future research, it would be interesting to investigate whether a generational fact instead of an age effect, contribute more to differences in Millennial's work values comparing with both previous generations and future Generation Z. Also, a study of generational differences within a sequential cohort design would be ideal to

better demonstrate how Generation Y differs from other previous generational cohorts so as to highlight the need of specific HR practices focused on early-career employees and better impact on retention of such generation. Moreover, since nowadays new generations are really focus on values and new trends it will be useful further empirical literature about cross-temporal analyses to determine whether variables such as work values have changed over time. As the widespread attention for the topic of employee retention contrasts with the lack of research that comprehensively incorporates employees' motivations for staying or leaving their organization, an exhaustive study would be necessary to better understand their motivations and continue the transformation of the workforce.

As a final reflexion, since Millennials are supposed to not remain in one workplace for more than few years and Generation Z, is already slightly represented in the workforce and has even stronger characteristics, how far should we go investing on retention practices rather than starting to explore which are the effects of the informal so-called "Nomad employee" and which effects is has in the organization?

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Annex: Talent retention questionnaire

Age: **Year born:** **Citizenship:** **Sex:** M F

Actual Job: internship, first proper temporal job, first proper permanent job

Academic background: high school, currently studying my Bachelor's degree; I have a University bachelor degree; currently studying my Master's degree; I already have a University Master degree.

Field where you are working: consultancy, research, sales, Marketing and communication, HR, production and logistics, Informatics, documentation and administration, law, finance, architecture, engineering, bio/technical fields, others (which).

Company Size: multinational, SME or others

LOYALTY	Completely disagree	Quite disagree	Medium	Quite agree	Completely agree
	1	2	3	4	5
I generally say good things about this company even when other people criticize it					
The HR practices form my company make me stay					
The people in charge of this firm generally know what they're doing					

EMPLOYER INDUCEMENTS	Not expected at all	Slightly expected	Medium expected	Pretty expected	Very expected
	1	2	3	4	5
Career development					
1. Opportunities for promotion					
2. Opportunities for individual career development within the organization					
3. Opportunities to grow					
Job content					
4. A job in which you can make decisions by yourself					
5. Opportunities to show what you can do					
6. A job with responsibilities					
7. Opportunities to use your skills and capacities					
Social atmosphere					
8. A good atmosphere at work					
9. Positive relationships between colleagues					
10. A good mutual cooperation					
11. A good communication among colleagues					
Financial rewards					
12. Financial rewards for exceptional performance					
13. Wage increases based on your performance					
14. An attractive pay and benefits package					
15. Regular benefits and extras (bonus, social benefits such as Tickets Restaurants, transport, shop discounts…)					

Work-life balance
16. Respect for your personal situation
17. Opportunities for flexible working hours depending on your personal needs
18. The opportunity to decide for yourself when you take your vacation
19. A flexible attitude concerning the correspondence between your work and your private life
Training
20. Financial support for training courses
21. Free access to corporate courses
22. Mentoring and coaching opportunities
23. Provision of health & wellness programmes
Job security
24. Employment with long-term perspective
25. Job succession plans to cover internal position with internal talent
26. Permanent contract
27. Perceived stability