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A Qualitative Study of Millennials in the Workplace:
Gaining their Long-term Employment in News Media Firms in North Alabama

by

Harry L. Hobbs

A dissertation
submitted to the Bisk College of Business at
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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We the undersigned committee hereby recommend
that the attached document be accepted as fulfilling in
part the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Business Administration

A Qualitative Study of Millennials in the Workplace:
Gaining their Long-term Employment in News Media Firms in North Alabama,
a dissertation by Harry L. Hobbs

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Abstract

A Qualitative Study of Millennials in the Workplace:
Gaining their Long-term Employment in News Media Firms in North Alabama

by

Harry L. Hobbs

Dissertation Chair: Jeff Cerny, DBA

This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to understand why millennials are not remaining long-term in news media firms located in North Alabama. Long-term is defined as three or more years of employment in the news media firm where they are currently employed (Deal et al., 2010; Deloitte, 2014; Gedeon, 2013 & Saiidi, 2014). There is a lack of understanding as to why millennial generation employees in North Alabama news media firms, on average, fail to remain employed long-term. As of March 2015, millennials are the largest working generational cohort in the U.S. workforce (Feeney, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015). The baby boomer generation is retiring in large numbers, and there are not enough generation X members in the workforce to fill their vacant positions. Businesses will have to rely on recruiting, developing, and retaining millennial generation employees long-term to fill these vacancies and remain viable. Key factors to attracting, recruiting, onboarding, motivating, managing, developing, and retaining millennial employees in the news media firms of North Alabama will be explored.

Keywords: millennial generation, news media firm, attracting, recruiting, onboarding, retaining, leadership development, long-term, work/life balance, phenomenological research, millennial-ready

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my wife, Erica Hobbs, for her unwavering support and encouragement for over thirty-six years. She has literally been the wind beneath my educational wings since I began my non-traditional education journey in 1984. I joined the U.S. Army in 1978 with only a high school education. I married my wife in 1981 and started going to college at night in 1984. My wife has provided me with unbelievable emotional and spiritual support during my educational marathon; I would not have completed this journey without her by my side. I love you Erica Hobbs, and I thank you for being my wife and my best friend.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter one provides the background of the problem, the purpose, and the significance of this qualitative phenomenological study. This chapter introduces the research questions that this study aims to answer and defines the terms used within this study. This chapter details the assumptions made within the study and explains the limitations of the study. The worldview and theoretical foundation of this study are included and discussed as well.

Overview

Representing the largest population of the workforce, millennials affect the hiring outcomes and workforce planning of current and future employers aspiring to survive and exist as major business entities. Consequently, employers must ensure work management processes are geared as much towards the millennial as the other generational cohorts in their respective organizations. Business leaders must address issues leading to the minimization and prevention of costs associated with millennial employee high turnover rate, recruiting efforts, and onboarding.

This qualitative phenomenological study was designed and developed to understand the workplace expectations and practices that North Alabama news media millennial employees desire. Phenomenological research is a descriptive and inductive research method with an aim to describe the lived experience of a person or a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology is a form of study based on the structure of experience and consciousness displayed and

communicated by individuals. The researcher attempts to identify the human experiences concerning a phenomenon and to describe the understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several people (Creswell, 2014).

To remain competitive or gain a competitive edge, market conditions for labor require the recruitment and retention of not only millennials but also other talent in the midst of continuous and rising costs associated with recruiting talented news media millennial employees in North Alabama. Additionally, many myths exist in the workplace concerning millennials, such as millennials tend to act disrespectfully towards authority and that they feel their intellect is superior to that of their other generational peers. Managers in the 21st century must understand how to communicate best with the millennial generation in a way members of this group can relate to and accept. Because millennials comprise the largest generational cohort in the global workforce, it is vital that any organization be able to relate to and communicate with them effectively (Feeney, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015). The millennial generation is a very unique cohort. Members of this cohort have vastly different needs, skills, and workplace expectations from previous workplace generations (Caraher, 2015; Deloitte, 2014; Schawbel, 2013). Howe and Strauss (2000) were the first researchers credited with identifying this generation with the moniker of millennials.

Millennials were raised during the self-esteem movement with plenty of praise from their parents; therefore, they emerged as young adults believing they can accomplish anything they put their minds to (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). The

upbringing of millennials was very different, in this respect, from their older generational peers. In many cases, the baby boomer parents of the millennial generation were raised at a distance from their parents. This parental distance occurred for a variety of reasons, one of the most common being because both parents worked, leaving the baby boomers to cope with adversities and deal with issues on their own, with very little parental assistance (Winograd & Hais, 2011). According to Winograd and Hais (2011), “By contrast, millennial children were almost invariably highly valued by their parents and perceived as the most important requirement for a full and happy life” (p. 29). As a result, millennials see themselves as a special commodity for any workplace that hires them. This sense of self can lead to expectations to be treated as special (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Green (2013) stated, “Many managers today believe the millennial generation is the “Generation Me, Generation Spoiled, Generation Screwed—these are just some of the commonly found labels for millennials” (p. 1).

Millennials were reared with the ability to acquire very quickly almost anything they desire (Gross, 2013). Parents of millennials were also often away at work in corporate America; however, unlike baby boomer parents who left their children to be responsible for themselves, parents of millennials spoiled their children with many gifts to distract them from noticing their parents were often gone. As a result, a majority of millennials spent many hours playing with electronic devices purchased by their parents, for the sole purpose of occupying their free or unsupervised time (Green, 2013). Twenge (2006) found that some

critics argued that the way millennial children were raised produced a generation of self-important and entitled young people. Conversely, others believe the millennial generation to be an accomplished, self-confident, group-oriented, and optimistic generation (Winograd & Hais, 2011).

Members of the millennial generation in America, regardless of ethnicity or gender, have been described as possessing certain distinguishable traits because of the way they were raised. Millennials feel special, vital, and full of promise and hope concerning themselves and the world in which they live (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). They lived a sheltered life during their formative years and were covered with safety rules and devices (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). They are very confident because their parents created an environment in which they could succeed (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015).

Millennials are team-oriented because they were constantly raised among their peers; for instance, most millennials played multiple sports, participated on several teams, and learned collaboratively in group learning systems (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). They are also high achievers, owing to the higher education standards they experienced during their primary and secondary education programs (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). For instance, they are comfortable with the use of technology, emerging technologies, and social media (Howe & Strauss, 2003; Kowske, Rasch & Wiley, 2010; Taylor, 2014). They have been pressured to do well by their parents and do not want to let their

parents down. They were raised to be conventional, not rebellious (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015).

Questions for this research study emerged from the obvious gaps found during the literature review and as research progressed. During the literature review, the context for the workplace expectations and practices that millennials prefer in order to remain long-term with their current employers were explored. There is existing literature on millennials in the workplace, but more scholarly research was required to determine the specific expectations and practices millennials in the workplace desire and demand to be retained long-term (Howe & Strauss, 2003; Kowske et al., 2010; Taylor, 2014).

Many economists are concerned about large numbers of the most experienced workers exiting the labor force because of retirement and/or mortality over the next few years, and intensification of global competition for workplace talent (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010). Millennials will have to fill the gaps in the workplace left by the large and ever-growing number of retiring baby boomers. Millennials currently make up approximately 35% of the workforce, and by 2020, it is estimated they will comprise over 40% (Loudenback, 2016; Pew Research Center, 2015). Howe and Strauss (2003) stressed how previous generations do not understand the needs of the millennial generation in the current workplace.

Gedeon (2013) reported 60% of working millennials plan to leave their current job within the first three years of employment. As the millennial generation continues to grow in the U.S. workplace, it is important for business leaders to

know how to cultivate a workplace environment to which millennials are attracted and will remain in long-term employment, at least three years or longer, because of the recruitment investment spent and the contributions they are able to make to the business (Loudenback, 2016). Business leaders will need to learn how to relate best to millennial workers in order to understand their needs, ensure long-term retention, and prevent high turnover. The current U.S. general population of this generation is 75.3 million (Fry, 2015; Loudenback, 2016). According to research by Gutfriend (2014) by 2020, 86 million millennials will be in the workforce, and they will represent approximately 40% of the total working population (Brack, 2012). In Figure 1, below, the projected growth rate of millennials in the workplace is depicted.

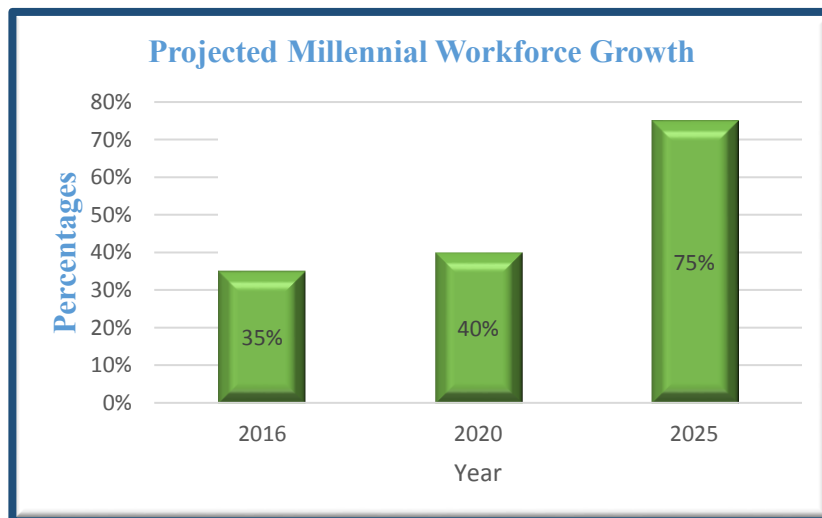


Figure 1. Projected Workforce Percentages by Year

Adapted from *Managing Millennials* by E. Galantine, 2013, ProQuest, 1-5. Copyright 2015 by ProQuest, LLC

Organizations are finding that members of the millennial generation, the newest generational cohort to enter the workforce, hold very different beliefs and values about the workplace compared to those of their baby boomer and generation X cohorts (Espinoza et al., 2010, Raines, 2002). They are the most educated generation to enter the workforce, and they sometimes display a superior attitude to co-workers and supervisors without even being aware of it (Caraher, 2015; Winograd & Hais, 2011). Also, millennials are the most racially and ethnically diverse generation in American history (Espinoza et al., 2010; Pew Research Center, 2015; Zemke et al., 2013). Minority population numbers increased as individuals of Hispanic origin and other minorities immigrated during their early childhoods, in high numbers, to the United States, be it legally or illegally (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Many millennial stereotypes in the workplace are propagated without people first reaching out to fellow millennial co-workers to try to understand them and how they view the world (Zemke et al., 2013). For instance, millennials have been viewed as “self-centered, unmotivated, disrespectful, and disloyal, contributing to widespread concern about how communication with millennials will affect organizations and how they will develop relationships with other organizational members” (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 1).

This millennial generation is very comfortable with technology and social media (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Winograd & Hais, 2011). They are more adaptive to change and upgrades of technology, unlike previous generations (Caraher, 2015).

According to Espinoza et al. (2010), an organization's future vitality is dependent on its ability to attract and retain millennials. Bannon, Ford, and Meltzer (2011) appear to agree: "The challenge for businesses will be to motivate millennials by playing to their technological relationships, celebrating their diversity, and helping them balance work and family" (p. 65).

The millennial generation is destined to change the workplace landscape with its members' uniqueness, varied talents, and skill-sets (Bannon et al., 2011). This study of millennials in the workplace was conducted with three news media firms in North Alabama. The news media industry was selected because of the current high turnover rate of millennial generation employees working in these firms in North Alabama. This researcher has worked very closely with North Alabama news media firms for the last ten years. The news media industries in North Alabama have a history of working well with researchers who are investigating their industries. This researcher was granted permission to access and collect data from three news media firms located in North Alabama.

Background and Rationale of the Study

Previous workplace generations did not move from job to job as often as the millennial population. Millennials have shown a propensity to move from job to job approximately every two to three years (Espinoza et al., 2010; Lynch, 2008). Lynch (2008) and Taylor (2014) credit previous generations with being more concerned about workplace loyalty, long-term retirement benefits, teamwork, and respect for authority and sacrifice, minimizing the frequency with which they switched and

changed jobs and careers, unlike millennials. Millennials come with more expectations of their employers as well as themselves. They expect their employers to provide a multitude of rational and profitable reasons to encourage them to stay long-term (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Lynch, 2008). An organization workplace must have factors attractive to millennials: “(1) the opportunity to contribute to and share in the firm’s success, (2) outstanding training and education, (3) a good worker-supervisor relationship, (4) a challenging work experience, and (5) open and honest communication” (Lynch, 2008, p. 10).

All onboarding strategies for millennials should be geared to include technology usage, a work-to-live mentality, consistent regular feedback, daily collaboration, and community involvement opportunities (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Vincent, 2012). Previous generations did not require specific onboarding strategies that target their generational cohort preferences such as those that current businesses find necessary to attract and engage millennials in order to succeed (Brack, 2012; Raines, 2002; Taylor, 2014). Most employers consider the first six months’ salary of a new employee as an investment (Lynch, 2008). Employers consider this time period critical toward convincing the employee that this is an organization with which they will want to remain long-term. Knowing that millennials are searching for a workplace that provides solid leadership, challenges, collaboration opportunities, non-traditional work schedules, latest technologies, and friendly organizational culture should drive businesses to modify their onboarding programs to meet these millennial preferences (Raines, 2002).

According to Lynch (2008), “Bringing a millennial employee on board into a business involves the costs of developing an effective value proposition, recruitment, processing, interviewing, testing and orientation” (p. 9). This determination of associated costs is referred to as “onboarding” a new employee (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Lynch, 2008). During the onboarding period, an organization must be able to inform all new employees of benefits and openly answer any questions. The intent of the employer during this period is to display the type of leadership that millennials seek with the goal of ensuring long-term employment and low job turnover rates. Leadership that is less hierarchal and casual is attractive to millennials when considering remaining long-term with a business (Johnson, 2016).

The cost of turnover rates varies from company to company and can adversely affect a company’s bottom line (Lynch, 2008, Saiidi, 2014). According to Jurnak (2010), “The average cost of replacing an employee is approximately 150 percent of salary, in other words, it takes about \$75,000 to refill a position that pays \$50,000 a year” (p. 21). These costs adversely affect a company’s bottom line revenue, viability, and success. This rate of millennial employee turnover can lead to a company failing to remain fiscally viable. The Deloitte survey (2014) reaffirmed these concerns, concluding that costs can run over \$60,000 to replace an employee. The survey also noted that two out of three millennial employees already plan to leave their current jobs to seek other, more advantageous employment within the next six years, and one out of four plan to quit their jobs in the next year

(Deloitte Survey, 2014). Subsequently, high millennial employee turnover can cause a company's failure to succeed and decreased viability.

Managers must find a way to recruit and retain millennial employees if they want successful businesses because competition for workers will increase (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Millennials prefer to be mentored often, collaborate with others, have open communication throughout the company, and work with the latest office technologies (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Therefore, it benefits businesses to provide organizational cultures that are millennial-friendly or, as this researcher denotes, 'millennial-ready,' leading to millennials remaining long-term employees. Businesses providing millennial-friendly workplaces will increase millennial retention rates and reduce high turnover rates, thus aiding the reduction of costs for businesses (Waldrop & Grawich, 2011).

Heckman (2015) purported businesses that were more willing to take on innovative projects and ideas were more likely to recruit and retain millennials looking for jobs. Millennials prefer a collaborative workplace culture over a competitive one (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Gutfriend, 2014). Their objectives are to work on innovative projects that can affect the world in which they live in a positive way (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Gutfriend, 2014). Millennials also want a workplace with a flexible work schedule, constant feedback, and a social mission (Walsh, 2015). Individuals who are part of the millennial generation cannot reach their full potential unless their older generation supervisors begin to mentor them in a manner they can understand and appreciate. The intent of this study is to provide

the courses of action for business leaders to take to create a workplace organizational culture conducive to attracting, retaining, and developing the millennial generation. This study will reveal strategies and tactics business leaders can implement to provide a millennial-ready workplace organizational culture which will lead to their long-term employment. According to Boss (2016), 71% of organizations report that losing a millennial employee increases the workload and stress of the remaining employees.

Statement of the Problem

The baby boomer generation is retiring in large numbers, and there are not enough members of generation X available in the workforce to fill their pending vacancies. This will drive a need to attract, recruit, and retain more millennials in the workforce (Fry, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015). Millennials will be the primary population to fill these workplace vacancies left open by the increasing baby boomer retirements. Millennials must be considered in all future workplace designs and decision making for a business to be successful (Caraher, 2015; Saiidi, 2014).

The current workforce is concerned about the millennial generation employees' work ethics and their loyalty to stay long-term with their current organizations (Bannon et al., 2011). Businesses must consider millennials' preferences if they are seeking sustainability into the future. This qualitative study will focus on answering the questions of what workplace expectations and practices millennials prefer in the news media industry of North Alabama to remain in their

current positions long-term. The results of this study will allow business leaders and supervisors to recruit, develop, and retain millennials long-term in North Alabama news media firms.

Purpose of the Study

The millennial employee population in North Alabama has been characterized as well-educated, collaborative, sociable and flexible (Payton, 2015). This region of the United States draws millennials who possess a high degree of technological skills that meet the requirements of businesses in this research and development industry community. The purpose of this qualitative study is to determine the workplace expectations and practices essential to millennials' career longevity in news media firms in North Alabama. Understanding the workplace expectations and preferences of the millennial generation can aid in preventing high turnover rate costs, recruiting costs, and onboarding costs for businesses. Onboarding costs are the costs associated with recruiting and integrating an employee into a business. Due to the limitations of the study, the data collection will include three news media firms in North Alabama. The results of this study will not be generalizable to other regions or industries.

Nature of the Study

This qualitative study will explore the consciousness within the news media workplaces of North Alabama concerning the expectations and practices millennials desire to remain long-term in their current jobs. The final recommendations made will seek to prevent high millennial turnover rates in news

media firms not only in North Alabama but also in other global workplaces. The data for this study was collected from five employees at each of three different news media firms in North Alabama, for a total of fifteen participants. Participants answered open-ended questions conducted by the researcher during scheduled, on-site interview sessions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The sample group provided by each business in the study was comprised of the company CEO (non-millennial generation), one supervisor (non-millennial generation), one co-worker of millennials (non-millennial generation), and two millennial employees. Data samplings consisted of interview sessions held at the respective news media firms. Each interview was recorded using two digital recording devices to ensure recording continuity. Although the study was limited to North Alabama, results are indicative of the millennial workforce population throughout the news media industry. Results from the interviews have been transcribed and interpreted by NVivo Pro 11 QDA software program (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014). The transcript from each interview is stored on a separate external drive and secured in a locked file cabinet (Creswell, 2014).

Definition of Terms

This section clarifies terms used in this study. The terms clarified include acronyms, terms with special meanings, and other common terms which have a particular meaning in the context of this study.

Baby Boomers. Generation of people born on or between 1946-1964 (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010; Taylor, 2014).

Cohort. “A cohort may be defined as the aggregate of individuals (within some population definition) who have experienced the same event within the same time interval” (Ryder, 1965, p. 845).

Corporate America. A term often used to describe corporations and businesses in the United States (Burgoyne & James, 2006). This also refers to the U.S. unified system of commerce as it relates to the current economic system of the United States. Many people also relate the term “corporate America” to working, white-collar personnel and professions that require more intellectual and mental strength than physical power (Burgoyne & James, 2006). This phrase also includes personnel working together as teams, or in groups, in an office setting that usually involves working with computers and managing paperwork (Burgoyne & James, 2006).

Generation. A generation is roughly 20 years in length (Howe & Strauss, 2003).

Generational Theory. A term coined by Karl Mannheim (1952) that explains how attitudes and values are shaped in both individuals and groups (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016).

Generation X. Generation of people born between 1965-1979 (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010; Taylor, 2014).

Leadership. In corporate America, successful leadership is the art of influencing and guiding others to complete a specific task or job with little or no supervision (Burgoyne & James, 2006).

Leadership Development. A term used to denote the ability to improve and enhance the capabilities of a member or employee of an organization through formal training and mentorship programs (Burgoyne & James, 2006).

Long-term employee. A term used by the researcher to define an employee that remains with their current employer three years or longer.

Management. The act or skill-set needed to exert control and make decisions about a business, department, or people under one's supervision (Raines, 2002). A competent manager will communicate workplace expectations and provide the training and resources needed for the employee to succeed (Vajda, 2009).

Millennials. Generation of people born between 1980-2000 (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010; Raines, 2002; Taylor, 2014).

Millennial-ready. A term used by the researcher to describe a business leader's consideration of the workplace practices and preferences millennials expect in order to remain long-term (Carney, 2016).

News Media Firm. A term used to describe the news media or mass media news industry that focuses on broadcasting information and awareness to the general public or a targeted public market. Mass media includes print media, radio, television, internet online news, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms (Socha & Eber-Schmid, 2014).

Onboarding. A term used to describe the process and costs of orienting and integrating a new employee into the hiring organization as quickly as possible (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009).

Organizational Culture. A term used to represent the overall values, beliefs, and principles of members of an organization. The culture of an organization is driven by its vision, norms, language, and symbols. Organizational culture is also represented by the collective behavior and actions of its membership, as well as by the actions of its members on a day-to-day operational basis (Needle, 2004).

Phenomenological Research. To describe the understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several people (Creswell, 2014). The researcher attempts to identify the human experiences concerning a phenomenon.

Recruiting. A term used to describe efforts to attract qualified individuals to apply and become part of a business or organization (Brack, 2012; Jerome, Scales, Whithem & Quain, 2014).

Social Constructivism. A term used to describe social phenomena from a context-specific perspective (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Social Networking. A set of human contacts an individual or a group has which grows over time and with which the individual or group interacts periodically and agrees to support each other in mutually beneficial activities. The social networks of which people are a part can be families, civic organizations, church groups, and other civic organizations (Granovetter, 1973).

Social Capital. Social capital is defined as the features of a social organization, such as trust, norms, and special abilities that can improve the efficiency of society by actions requested between members of a social network (Baker, Onyx, & Edwards, 2011).

Veterans/Traditional Generation. Generation of people born between 1925-1945 (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010; Taylor, 2014).

Significance of the Study

Millennials' attributes, abilities, and skill-sets will most likely affect the development of the workplace and the relationships between co-workers (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). The first significant hurdle that the millennial generation must overcome will be to become socialized and integrated into their places of work. "Organizational socialization is interactive, involving newcomers' and old timers' evaluations and commitments to each other and the organization, as well as newcomers' potential transition to important roles in the organization" (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 226). Moreland and Levine (2001) stated, "There is a process of integration into an organization that everyone must learn, which involves the formal and informal rules, regulations and standards" (p. 235). The millennial generation must be welcomed, oriented, and integrated into the workplace so that it can also play its part in the overall success stories of America. In this study, the four generations currently in the workplace will be defined, and the generational differences of each will be examined. Current literature on the topic of millennials

and the expectations and practices they prefer in the workplace was reviewed in this study.

Assumptions and Limitations

The central issue being researched in this study is the millennial cohort in the workplace. The intent of the study was to determine the most effective workplace environment conducive to millennials remaining in their current news media firms long-term. In order for this study to be successful, it was important to carefully consider any assumptions and limitations that could have potentially affected its outcome. The first assumption involved the data and its value. It was assumed that the data collected from the participants and their interviews would be relevant to the problem. Participants would answer all questions and ask for any needed clarification throughout the entire process. The second assumption of this study concerned the number of participants and the participants themselves. The assumptions were that fifteen participants would be available to participate in the interview sessions and that they would provide truthful and candid answers about their experiences with millennials in the workplace.

The limitations of this study concern the reach of participation. This study was restricted to news media firms in North Alabama that hire millennial workers in large numbers. The settings in which the data were collected were the three actual businesses where the millennials work. The time period during which that the data were collected comprised 90 days.

Scope of the Study

A qualitative, phenomenological research design was chosen for this study. This approach was selected because it was best suited to promote a deeper understanding of the corporate workplace as viewed by the research participants. This approach is also guided by an emphasis of exploration, discovery, and descriptions of a specific phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012). This qualitative study allowed for open-ended questions and personal interpretation of the findings in an effort to make new discoveries (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative study allows the researcher to observe and interview subjects of the study in their current settings, thereby understanding their perspectives and goals more clearly (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014; Wolcott, 2009). Qualitative research is designed to provide in-depth and detailed data which allows for understanding of a specific phenomenon or a shared lived experience. Interviews were transcribed, coded, categorized, analyzed, and themes were examined and determined (Creswell, 2014; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

The news media industry workplaces of North Alabama were the locations of this study. The researcher's goal was to determine the needs of millennials in North Alabama news media workplaces. The central phenomenon that was studied was the millennial cohort in North Alabama news media firms. The principal investigator conducted an investigation to determine which news media firm workplace culture millennials prefer to be retained long-term in North Alabama. Business leaders will need to understand the workplace expectations and

preferences of this unique group in order to better utilize their skill-sets and retain them in their workforces. News media firm business leaders will need to know how to best manage and motivate millennials to retain them long-term (Payton, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015). Businesses will need to know how to relate to their millennial employees in order to provide them with the workplace environment, opportunities, and office tools they prefer to utilize daily in the workplace.

The objective of this qualitative study was to provide insight to business leaders concerning how millennials process today's workplace and determine what organizational culture they expect in order to be retained in their current positions. The results of this study will add valuable knowledge toward bridging the generational differences in today's workplace and decrease millennial turnover rates. This study was limited to North Alabama news media firms that hire millennial workers in large numbers.

The data were collected by utilizing open-ended questions conducted during scheduled on-site interview sessions. The interview sessions for data collection were conducted at news media firms in individual offices to ensure each interviewee was in a protected, non-threatening environment. The study is designed to add to the body of knowledge concerning the workplace preferences of millennials; thus allowing leadership a greater understanding of how to retain this generation within their firm. Opportunities for future studies on the impact of millennials in the workplace may exist based on providing them with the preferences this study recommends to retain them long-term.

Millennials are joining the work force in increasing numbers with very little experience in balancing their personal and work lives, also referred to as work/life balance (Waldrop & Grawich, 2011). According to Jenkins (2007), younger workers complain that there is a lack of respect toward them in the workplace; older workers share similar complaints. Older workers believe younger workers display negative attitudes toward them, especially when the older workers are part of the managerial team (Tolbize, 2008). Although the definition of respect among older workers differs from that of younger, millennial age workers, like their older counterparts, they too want to be respected (Tolbize, 2008). As more millennials enter the workplace, the older generation managers will need to understand how to better communicate with them and fully understand their needs (Queiri, Yusoff & Dwaikat, 2014; Taylor, 2014).

Managers have to be able to clearly communicate workplace expectations to the millennial generation and get them integrated and engaged (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). The findings of this study are not intended to be generalizable, although some themes may resonate in similar contexts (Maxwell, 2013). They are intended to provide a pathway and recommendations for news media firms and other businesses to follow in order to transform their workplaces into millennial-ready environments with the goal of maximizing millennial workers' skill-sets and retaining them long-term in their workplaces.

Theoretical Foundation and Worldview

The generational theory established by German sociologist Karl Mannheim (1952) will be the central theory in this study. The generational theory states that a social generation or cohort is defined as a group of people who are similar in age and have experienced the same historical events in the same time period (Mannheim, 1952; Ryder, 1965). Although the term “generation” is normally used to describe genealogical kinship, it has been adopted to describe broader social trends such as cohort generations (Ryder, 1965).

Creswell (2014) suggested that there are three components to a research approach: philosophical worldviews, research designs, and research methods. Creswell believes it is imperative to understand these three components prior to choosing a research approach and conducting a study. The social constructivist worldview was chosen for this study. This worldview supports the philosophy that humans seek understanding of the world in which they live, interact, and work (Creswell, 2014). Social constructivists believe “that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things” (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). The participants’ views of the situation being studied are heavily relied upon in relationship to the study’s findings. This worldview tends to align with the qualitative research method. This worldview allows for the understanding of social environments by utilizing questionnaire instruments. The questionnaire instruments will allow the researcher to better understand the phenomena of the importance of the millennial generation’s workplace

expectations and how those expectations can be implemented in the organizational culture of the business. Because of their sheer numbers in the U.S. workforce, millennials should be considered valuable assets in all workplaces in America.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter one provided an overview of the study. The remainder of the study will be covered in Chapters two through five. Chapter two consists of the review of the literature, and Chapter three describes the qualitative methodology chosen to conduct this study. The data analysis will be presented in Chapter four; the results and discussion will be presented in Chapter five.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Overview

Businesses will need to be millennial-ready if they want to succeed in today's competitive market. In addition to providing the foundation and understanding for the necessity of this study, this literature review will provide recommendations for creating the most effective millennial-friendly workplace. This exploratory phenomenological study will also discuss the type of workplace organizational culture to which millennials are attracted. This study will determine what expectations and practices millennials prefer to remain long-term with their current news media firms. This chapter will review existing literature to provide a foundation and understanding for the necessity of this study.

First, this chapter will provide an overview of the study, discuss the generational theory, and define the characteristics of each generation currently in the workplace. This chapter will then discuss the specific themes that emerged from the literature review concerning the millennial generation in the workplace. Millennials are currently the largest segment of the workforce, and it would benefit businesses that want to be successful to know how to create a work culture that attracts and retains them (Feeney, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015). According to Zemke et al. (2013), "Millennials now comprise over a third of the population in the United States and nearly a quarter of the world population" (p. 122). Business

leaders will need to know how to best relate to millennials and to provide the best environments and tools necessary for them to decide to remain long-term.

Reviewing current literature on millennials in the workplace provides the framework and basis for this study. This group expects to be successful in the workplace because they believe they will put forth the effort to do so (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Millennials can handle multiple tasks well and are very adept at new and emerging technologies (Espinoza et al., 2010). Their success with technology stems largely from the fact that they grew up using digital technology during their formative years (Caraher, 2015). This skill-set makes them invaluable in today's modern workplaces, which utilize multiple technological devices and systems regularly (Levenson, 2010; Vincent, 2012).

The characteristics and traits of other generations that millennials will encounter within the workforce will be discussed as part of the literature review. Millennials process information and communicate differently than other generations in the workplace. According to Howe and Strauss (2003), millennials communicate so differently from previous generations because they are the first generation born in the digital age and grew up with the Internet and social media platforms at their fingertips. The millennial generation has helped expand the use of social media due to constant and continuous interconnectedness to the Internet (Cafasso, 2007; Fleming, 2015). Taylor and Keeter (2010) state, "They embrace multiple modes of self-expression, and nearly 75% of them have a profile on a social media site" (p. 1). Many baby boomer managers do not understand social

media or how it can be leveraged to communicate ideas and win new customers (Cook, 2014).

The millennial generation grew up with less formality and social restraints than the generations before them (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). The millennial generation has characteristics and traits so different from previous generations that it is imperative they be studied and understood by corporate America, so as to best understand how to guide them to their full potential in the workplace. They are also the most educated generation in American history; this trend accelerated in recent years because of the demands of a modern, technology-driven workplace (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). There are many millennials who have a higher education level than their current baby boomer supervisors, and this has become a point of contention between the two generations (Moore, Grunberg & Krause, 2015).

Today's society has progressed in terms of race relations and has become more tolerant of people who think differently and choose different lifestyle choices (Caraher, 2015). The millennial generation "represents a generational cohort, very distinct from their parents and of the baby boomer generation, and their immediate predecessors," according to Howe and Strauss (2003, p. 2). There is no doubt that the millennial generation is more open-minded and less formal than previous generations in the workplace (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). As of 2002, "the Latino and non-white population have accounted for almost 40 percent of the twenty and under population" (Howe & Strauss, 2003, p.1).

The literature review supports the fact that the millennial generation views the world very differently than previous generations. As the millennial generation enters the workplace in vast numbers, today's business managers must understand how best to communicate with this unique and diverse generation (Caraher, 2015; Fleming, 2015). The traits and characteristics of the millennial generation make them more unique than any generation before them (Caraher, 2015). There is general literature in the body of knowledge on millennials in the workplace, but there is not a substantial amount of literature which specifically addresses the workplace expectations and practices that millennials prefer to remain long-term at their current firms in the news media industry. The researchers' data collection process is described below (See Figure 2 below).

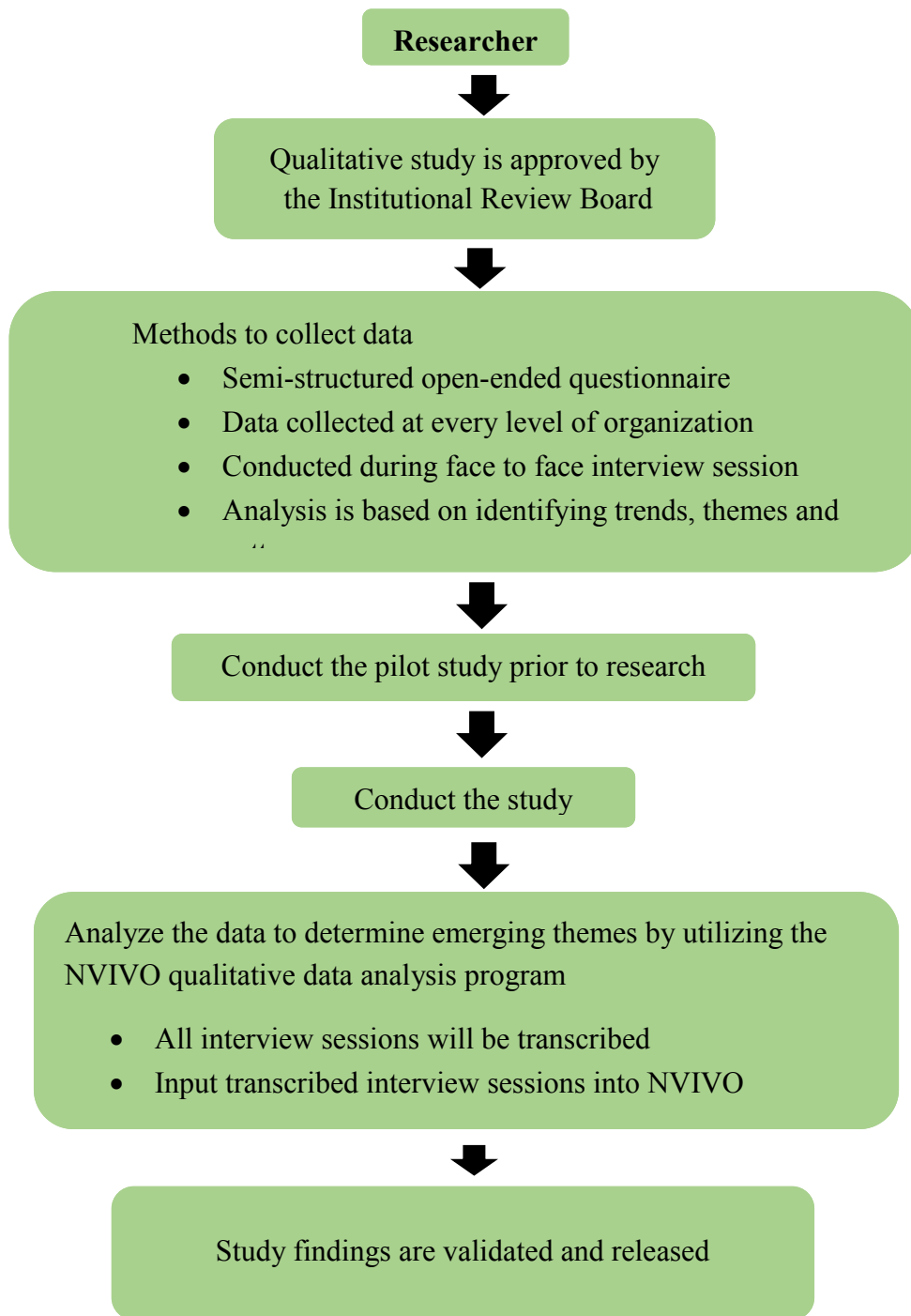


Figure 2. Data Collection Process

Research Questions Guiding the Study

RQ1- What expectations and practices do millennials prefer in the workplace of their current news media firms to remain long-term?

RQ2- How can the expectations and practices millennials prefer in their current news media firms be initiated and implemented into the present workplace organizational culture?

Method for Reviewing the Literature

The literature review for this research study will include (a) a summary of previous scholarly research documents related to different generations in the U.S. workforce, (b) an overview of the generational theory, and (c) previous research conducted concerning the millennial generation in the workplace, in relation to the uniqueness of this generation. The research for the literature review was conducted using over 125 scholarly, peer-reviewed articles, seminal books, academic journals, doctoral dissertations, and research studies. Both traditional and online approaches to research were incorporated into the literature search.

Generational Theory

The generational theory was established by German sociologist Karl Mannheim in his 1923 essays, which were published in 1952. The theory states that a social generation or cohort consists of a group of people who are similar in age and have experienced the same historical events in the same time period. The generational theory is also defined as a social generation, cohort or group of people

who are similar in age and have experienced the same historical events in the same time period (Mannheim, 1952; Ryder, 1965; Strauss & Howe, 1991).

The generational theory was further developed by William Strauss and Neil Howe in their 1991 book *Generations*. This theory was developed to retell the history of America and was later modified to describe and identify different generations of people (Strauss & Howe, 1991). The authors identified a recurring generational cycle in American history to explain eras in U.S. history.

Kupperschmidt (2000) defined a generation as a group or cohort who are born in the same year and share experiences because they grow together during the same time period. People born in the same generation can relate and connect more easily to world events that affect them (Ryder, 1965; Strauss & Howe, 1991).

The generational theory states that people within a generational cohort will experience events during their growing years that shape their beliefs and values (Vue, 2015). Corporate America is beginning to realize that millennials, the newest generational cohort to enter the workforce, may hold different beliefs and values about the workplace compared to generations before them (Vue, 2015). These differences may lead to less organizational commitment and higher turnover among millennial employees (Taylor, 2014). The term “generation,” as a concept, is important because it identifies and groups together individuals who have had similar life, historical, and social experiences (Howe & Strauss, 2003; Ryder, 1965).

According to Kowske et al., (2010), “Shared experiences at key developmental points contribute to unique characteristics (e.g., values, attitudes, personality) which define and differentiate one generation from another” (p. 266). Each generation has unique characteristics that lead them to process information in a way similar to their generational peers. “Generation members are born, start school, enter the workforce, have children, and retire at about the same age and time” (Kowske, et al., 2010, p. 266). The way members of a generational cohort process the events around them has historically led them to drive social change. Macky, Gardner and Forsyth (2008) support that experiences and the environment affect the socialization process in a way that influences a generations’ values, beliefs and expectations. Ryder (1965) coined the term “demographic metabolism,” which basically means that generational cohorts, for the most part, will agree on how they perceive the world in which they live and how they process their shared historical experiences. Generations hold different values and beliefs based on their generational cohort experiences (Mannheim, 1952).

The generational theory also states that a social generation can be defined as “the aggregate of all people born over a span of roughly twenty years or about the length of one phase of life: childhood, young adulthood, midlife, and old age” (Howe & Strauss, 2003, p.3) (see Table 1 below). There are three groups of criteria which serve as indicators of every generation. These criteria are age, location and history, and common beliefs and behaviors (Ryder, 1965).

In the first criteria, age, people experience key historical events and social trends during the same phases of their life because they were born and are growing and developing in the same time period (Ryder, 1965). Members of a generation are shaped in lasting ways by the experiences they encounter as children and as young adults (Ryder, 1965). The second criteria, location and history, explains how people who are raised in the same regions and communities are often raised with the same principles and beliefs. Because they live in the same geographic region, they also witness the same events and experience the same hardships and triumphs. This allows them to share some basic common beliefs and behaviors, which is the third criteria (Ryder, 1965). People who have common beliefs and behaviors seem to bond more easily. People are aware of the experiences and traits they share, which allows them to feel a perceived membership in that generation (Ryder, 1965).

Table 1. Generations in the Workplace

Cohort Title	Birth Year	Age (in 2017)
Veterans/ Traditionalists	1925-1945	72-92
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	53-71
Generation X	1965-1979	38-52
Millennials	1980-2000	17-37

Organization of Studies According to Themes

Veterans/Traditional Generation

The people of the veterans generation (also known as traditionalists) were born between 1925 and 1945 (Caraher, 2015). This is the oldest generation which may still exist in the workplace, albeit in very small numbers (Fry, 2015). This generation is known by multiple terms: veterans, the silent generation, traditionalists, depression generation, traditional generation, and the greatest generation (Zemke et al., 2013). Members of this generation were influenced by the Great Depression and World War II, among other events, and have been described as being conservative and disciplined as well as having a sense of obligation, and observing fiscal restraint (Espinoza et al., 2010; Tolbize, 2008; Zemke et al., 2013). The people of the traditional generation have experienced several traumatic world events which forced them to be tough, self-disciplined, and able to overcome (Espinoza et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2013). They have been described as embracing formality and a top-down chain of command, needing respect, and preferring to make decisions based on what worked in the past (Espinoza et al., 2010; Tolbize, 2008; Zemke et al., 2013). They believe in paying their dues in life and respecting authority and government rule (Espinoza et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2013).

People of this generation are very patriotic, and they live close to other family members (Espinoza et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2013). This generation has a strong Christian faith in God and country and are also very conservative in their political views (Espinoza et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2013). Most are not

comfortable with today's technology (Espinoza et al., 2010; Espinoza et al., 2010). The current U.S. population of the veteran generation is 29 million, and they make up two percent of the current workplace (Fry, 2015).

The veteran generation is also described as having a high regard for developing communication skills and are the most affluent elderly population in the U.S. due to their tendency to save and conserve, as cited by Jenkins (2007) and Tolbize (2008). This generation was raised during a time of extreme segregation in America (Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). There were few observed civil rights for African Americans and other minorities, including women, during most of this generation's life span (Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). There are those of the millennial generation who find it hard to believe that America was so divided on issues of race, gender, and other equality issues during the life of the veteran/traditional generation (Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). Members of the veteran generation were forced, during their life spans, to overcome a vast amount of prejudice and stereotyping due to America's societal growth and reconciliation between the races and genders (Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013).

Baby Boomers

The people of the baby boomer generation (also known as Boomers) were born between 1946 and 1964 (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010; Taylor, 2014). World War II had recently ended, and Americans were settling down and starting families again. This generation is referred to as the baby boomer generation because of the extra 17 million babies born during this period relative to previous census figures

(O'Bannon, 2001). The baby boomer generation has had the largest impact on American society to date, due to its size – roughly 75 million – and the period during which it came of age (O'Bannon, 2001). The baby boomer generation had the largest working population of all generations until March 2015 when the millennial generation overtook them (Fry, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015).

Boomers believe hard work and sacrifice are the price one has to pay to be successful in the workplace (Zemke et al., 2013). Baby boomers' work ethic caused them to be known as workaholics. They value the chain of command and may be technologically challenged when working with computers and digital technologies (Taylor, 2014). Baby boomers like to fight for what they consider a just cause even if it is against all odds; they protested that equality should be for everyone (Espinoza et al., 2010). They were raised to respect authority figures, but as they witnessed their mistakes and mishaps, this led them to not trust older people as much (Espinoza et al., 2010). Baby boomers believe in teamwork and collaboration in order to get a job done. Baby boomers grew up with the idea to work for one company or organization for their entire careers (Zemke et al., 2013). They were raised to be loyal to their employer and to stick to one job/business until their time of retirement (Espinoza et al., 2010). The current U.S. general population of this generation is 74.9 million and they make up 29% of the current workforce (Fry, 2015).

Baby boomers are predominately the leaders, supervisors, and managers in today's work places, and are, therefore, the generation that must be able to

communicate with and lead generation X and millennial employees (Caraher, 2015; Durkin, 2010 & Taylor, 2014). This generation lived through the 1950's and 1960's Civil Rights Movement and the 1960's Free Love Hippie Movement (Zemke et al., 2013). Baby boomers became more open minded than their parents because of the desegregation laws and integration within the school systems (Zemke et al., 2013). This generation also experimented with gateway drugs such as marijuana and acid, and the space and exploration race began during this generation (Zemke et al., 2013).

Generation X

The people of generation X were born on or between 1965 and 1980 (Caraher, 2015). This generation was born in the early years of the technology age. They were born during the women's feminist rights and the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s (Zemke et al., 2013). Their baby boomer parents raised them with fewer restraints than their traditional generation parents imposed upon them (Zemke et al., 2013). Generation X witnessed many world-changing events, such as the 9/11 tragedy and the Iraq/Afghanistan wars (Zemke et al., 2013). This generation was often home alone because both parents worked. As such, they also became known as "latch-key kids," leaving home and returning home alone from school (Winograd & Hais, 2011). They received less disciplinary actions from their dual income parents. Their parents would try to, at times, buy their love, respect, and discipline with gifts (Zemke et al., 2013). As this generation aged into adults, the U.S. economy was weakened by recession, and many of them had to return

home to live with their parents until the economy recovered. As a result, they were labeled the “boomerang generation” (Zemke et al., 2013). The current U.S. population of this generation is 66 million, and they make up 34% of the current workplace (Fry, 2015).

The people of generation X operate at a high level of technical competence and are computer savvy (Zemke et al., 2013). Generation X has been influenced by the media and television programs like no other generation before them due to being home alone and using television as babysitter (Zemke et al., 2013). “They were influenced by MTV, AIDS, and worldwide competition and are accustomed to receiving instant feedback from playing computer and video games,” according to O’Bannon (2001, p. 2). This generation is not intimidated by titles or authoritative figures. People of this generation display the following characteristics: desiring to be more successful than their parents, valuing family time over work, expecting the workplace to be fun at times, focusing on getting results, and operating with little supervision (O’Bannon, 2001).

Millennials

The people of the millennial generation were born between 1980 and 2000 (Caraher, 2015; Dukin, 2010 & Taylor, 2014). The millennial generation is so distinctive because they are the first generation to truly grow up entirely immersed in the digital age (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). They grew up in a very diverse community, which led them to perpetuate fewer stereotypes of others than previous generations (Winograd & Hais, 2011). The Civil Rights Movement had, for the

most part, occurred already, so they may not understand how racism, in some ways, still exists today between blacks and whites in America (Winograd & Hais, 2011).

A vast majority of the millennial generation were raised by mid-life baby boomers who were accustomed to living well and were highly educated (Vanmeter, Grisaffe, Chonko & Roberts, 2013). Millennials observed their parents being adversely affected by the dot-com bubble bursting and high rates of divorce and layoffs. These experiences have made millennials more skeptical of long-term commitments and given them a desire for more flexibility in their careers (Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar & Kaifi, 2012). This millennial generation is very comfortable with technology and social media (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Winograd & Hais, 2011).

The experience and beliefs that millennials hold to be true have led them to possess less commitment toward an organization and a much higher job turnover rate than other workplace cohorts (Espinoza et al., 2010). Millennials were raised to believe their opinions mattered and are very confident in their ability to succeed (Vanmeter et al., 2013). Millennials have many specific characteristics that are displayed in the workplace (See Table 2 below). They are more adaptive to change and upgrades in technology than other generations before them (Caraher, 2015). This generation, on the average, marries later in life and is more educated than previous generations (Caraher, 2015). Millennials seek flexibility at work; they are very independent, and they are not impressed with titles or positions in the workplace (Caraher, 2015; Winograd & Hais, 2011).

Table 2. Characteristics of Millennial Employees in the Workplace

CHARACTERISTICS OF MILLENNIAL EMPLOYEES Millennials 1980-2000	
Most Diverse Generation	Needing Constant Feedback
Academic Achievers	Casual Workplace Environment
Community Minded	Require Workplace Challenges
Social Media Driven	Requests Work with Meaning
Technology Driven	Entrepreneur Mindset
Flexible	Sheltered Youth
Require Work/Life Balance	Craves Collaboration
Seeking Directions and Mentorship	Socially and Financially Responsible

Adapted from *Millennials & Management*, by L. Caraher, 2015. Copyright 2015 by Lee Caraher; "Generational differences in the workplace," by A. Tolbize, 2008, Research and Training Center on Community Living, p. 1-22.

Millennials started entering the workplace around the year 2000. They feel a strong moral responsibility to make a difference in the communities in which they live and work (Taylor, 2014). They are very socially conscience and want to volunteer when able and have a strong desire to keep their communities safe and clean (Taylor, 2014). The millennial generation is also very environmentally aware and cares about conservation and recycling (Taylor, 2014).

According to the Pew Research Center (2015), this generation currently has surpassed generation X to become the largest generation in the U.S. workforce. As of May 2015, there is an estimated 53.5 million millennials in the U.S. workforce (Pew Research Center, 2015). The millennial generation values technology and the ability to use it at all times (Zemke, 2013). People of this generation have been referred to as millennials, generation Y, and echo boomers (Zemke et al., 2013).

Even the very young in the millennial cohort are accustomed to using electronic gadgets and related ringtones (Langford, 2011). They tend to occupy their free time with video devices and personal computer usage, enjoy global access to the internet, benefit from emerging wireless communications, and many engage heavily in online social networking (Zemke et al., 2013). Being technologically connected almost from birth can have far-reaching effects in school and at work for the futures of millennials (Langford, 2011; Taylor, 2014). This unique millennial characteristic makes them very valuable in the workplace. The four generations in the workplace display different characteristics (See Table 3 below).

Table 3. A Comparison of Workforce Characteristics between
Current Generations

The Generational Workforce Characteristics			
Traditionalist	Baby Boomer	Gen X	Millennial
Respectful of authority	Values individuality	Self-reliant	Image conscious
Values duty and sacrifice	Driven by goals for success	Highly educated	Need for feedback and reinforcement
Values accountability	Work ethic = hours worked and monetary rewards	Questioning	Values instant gratification
Values practical experience	Believes in teamwork	Most loyal employees	Idealist
Work ethic = timeliness and productivity	Emphasizes relationship building	Wants open communication	Team-oriented
Strong interpersonal skills	Expects loyalty from coworkers	Respects production over tenure	Wants open communication
Promotions and recognition come with job tenure	Career = identity	Values control of his or her time	Searches for others who will help him or her achieve his or her goals
Values academic credentials	Wants work-life balance	Invests loyalty in a person, not in an organization	Wants job that is personal fulfillment
Accepts limited resources		Risk averse	Searches for ways to shed stress in his or her life
Loyal to employer; expects loyalty in return			Racial and ethnic identification less important

Adapted from “Leading a Multigenerational Workforce: Strategies for Attracting and Retaining Millennials,” by T. F. Cahill, E. D. Fache, and M. Sedrak, 2012. *Frontiers of Health Services Management*, 29(1), p. 9. Copyright by Workforce 2015: Strategy Trumps Shortage Accessible at <http://www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/workforce/workforce2015.shtml>. © 2015 by the American Hospital Association.

Workplace Expectations

Millennials want to play an important role in the success of the organizations where they work. Millennials want to have a friendly relationship with their supervisors which, to older generations, may seem a little abrupt and disrespectful (Bannon et al., 2011; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Businesses will need to be millennial-ready in their recruiting and retention programs to be able to appeal to this unique population. Millennials desire to have a balance between their work lives and family lives (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). In previous generations, the amount of hours a person spent at work may have been a barometer of how valuable they were to their organization or directly related to promotions and assignments to supervisory positions. The millennial generation wants to perform quality work in the least amount of work hours versus spending copious hours at work and not accomplishing quality work (Espinoza et al., 2010; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Millennials want to work smarter, not harder and shorter, not longer.

Millennials have been identified as demanding in the workplace and hard to supervise (Zemke et al., 2013). Managers are often intimidated when supervising a millennial employee. Millennials can process and understand digital information more quickly in most cases than other generational co-workers because they have grown up in the digital age and were immersed in digital technology from birth (Espinoza et al., 2010; Taylor, 2014). They can multi-task more easily than other generations (Espinoza et al., 2010; Zemke et al., 2013). It is important to any business that hires millennials to know what they expect in the workplace.

Workplace managers of millennials need to understand how important social media networking is to their psyche and mental well-being (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Taylor, 2014). It is paramount to allow millennials to utilize technology and social media networks during their workday. Millennials want to have access to the latest technology and computer systems at work (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2014). Mentorship is also critical to the success of a new millennial employee in the workplace (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2014). However, millennials must understand why face-to-face mentoring is essential to their success and cannot be substituted by digital means (Caraher, 2015; Graen & Grace, 2015).

Millennials want to have a very clear direction of what is expected of them at work, what deadlines they have to meet, and what standards of work are expected of them (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). They want to earn the respect of those they work with, and they want to be paid appropriately for the skill-sets they bring to the workplace (Caraher, 2015; Taylor,

2014). Millennials seek responsibilities at work and want to accomplish tasks which will not only make a difference at their workplaces but also make a positive difference in their communities and the world (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). The millennial generation wants constant feedback at work to ensure they are on track to accomplish the work their supervisors expect (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). Millennials want to perform high-quality work and want to be recognized for their contributions by receiving pay raises, promotions or time off (Caraher, 2015). Millennials want to work in a very casual working environment and want to be on a first name basis with their supervisors and co-workers (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013).

Because they are so technologically savvy, millennials expect to utilize computers, the Internet, and other technological assets in the workplace as much as possible (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor & Keeter, 2010; Zemke et al., 2013). Flexible work hours and the ability to collaborate are of utmost importance to the millennial generation as well, since having balanced lives of work and personal time is one of their goals (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014). Millennials want leadership that will invest in them and allow them to make a difference in the workplace almost immediately after they are hired (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2014). They do not want to be judged by their ages but by the skill-sets and abilities they bring to the workplace (Caraher, 2015; Taylor 2014). Also, millennials do not like

to be constrained by workplace bureaucracy (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Martin, 2005).

According to research by Walsh (2015), millennials want more responsibility, training, and opportunities to make positive differences in their workplace organizations. Millennials also desire very flexible workplace schedules, which will allow them time for social life and community service. Millennials want to be valued employees with the ability to make decisions which will help their organizations become successful (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Taylor, 2014). Millennials want to be part of a productive workforce that is making the world a better place to live (Caraher, 2015).

Millennials want to expand their skill-sets by working a variety of jobs (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Taylor, 2014; Walsh, 2015). They have gotten a reputation for job hopping, but they are really experience seekers; they move to jobs where they can get more experience and opportunities (O'Keefe, 2016). According to Walsh (2015), millennials are looking for greater challenges and opportunities for upward mobility. The millennial generation has energized managers to rethink how they lead due to the uniqueness of this new cohort (O'Keefe, 2016; Waldrop & Grawich, 2011). Millennials view the workplace differently than their baby boomer managers and supervisors (O'Keefe, 2016). They believe their skill-sets should be highly valued in the workplace (Jurnak, 2010). The millennial generation wants its skill-sets to be valued and rewarded according to the enhancements they bring to productivity in their workplaces (Watkins & Neal, 2015).

Millennials expect a great deal from today's workplace employers. They want flexibility, innovative technology, growth opportunities, leverage, and latitude where they work (O'Keefe, 2016; Watkins & Neal, 2015). They are a very confident and talented generation. Surprisingly though, millennials also expect to receive mentorship from supervisors and feedback from co-workers (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). However, because of the manner in which they carry themselves, co-workers and supervisors may not approach them with mentorship opportunities or constructive feedback because they do not want to be rejected by the millennial who acts, at times, as if he knows everything and cannot be guided or taught (Taylor, 2014; Brack, 2012). Perception means a great deal in life as well as the workplace. Millennials must work on their body language and the tone in which they communicate in the workplace so they will not be perceived as rude or superior to others.

Millennials want workplace flexibility because they grew up in an entrepreneurial culture. They like to complete tasks at home or by teleworking, which allows them to be more innovative (Ferri-Reed, 2014). Millennials want the flexibility to be able to accomplish their tasks not only in the office space but also outside the workplace. This flexibility affords them the ability to collaborate with their social network of contacts (Caraher, 2015). Millennials want to be allowed to leverage new technologies at all times, and they want the latitude to accomplish their tasks outside of the normal way of doing business, as long as it is sensible and more efficient (Taylor, 2014; Waldrop & Grawich, 2011).

The key to success for millennials will be their ability to communicate with their co-workers and supervisors. They want their supervisors and co-workers to make an attempt to connect with them on both personal and professional levels. Millennials are looking for guidance, but they may not realize their guarded behavior and social skills are building walls, preventing their predominately baby boomer generation supervisors from approaching them with opportunities for mentorship (Lykins & Pace, 2013). This situation makes it very difficult for millennials to engage in a mentee to mentor relationship with their supervisors and co-workers. Millennials want to attend training sessions to grow and develop their skill-sets for their organizations to use as needed for financial gains and success (O'Keefe, 2016). They want a mission they understand, so they can use all of their technical talents to accomplish it, and they expect to receive rewards for working hard (O'Keefe, 2016). Millennials believe they are one of their company's greatest assets, and they want to be treated like they are valuable human capital for their organization (O'Keefe, 2016). It is necessary for both millennials and those they work for and with to be able to grow and develop harmoniously, so they all contribute to their organization's value and success.

There is a dilemma which exists with millennials in the workplace; they want mentorship, but only if it is positive in nature (Tolbize, 2008). The baby boomer generation supervisor is confused about how to approach them with any negative feedback or mentorship. The baby boomer generation is afraid that if they give millennials honest feedback, this younger generation may shut down and not

use their skill-sets to the fullest for the organization (Tolbize, 2008). Millennials believe they should be included in all organizational information flows within an organization even as newly hired employees (Taylor, 2014). Baby boomers have trouble understanding why millennials cannot comprehend why that privilege should be earned and not immediately expected (Caraher, 2015). Millennials want the freedom to accomplish their tasks without someone leaning over their shoulders, and they want to be trusted to get the job done and performed well.

Millennials are a valuable part of the American workforce. It is important that corporate America understands what millennials expect at the workplace and strives to provide it to them to ensure they are retained long-term by their current employers. All generations in the workplace must be able to communicate with millennials in a way in which they are receptive and accepting (Kaifi et al., 2012). Millennials will comprise 40% of the workforce in 2020, and many will hold key positions in the workplace, government, and society (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). Today's workplace needs to embrace the millennial generation and discover ways to communicate, mentor, and learn from them as well. The millennial generation will soon be the senior leaders and managers in corporate America, so it is important that businesses not overlook opportunities to invest in them (Taylor, 2014).

Workplace Characteristics

The current millennial generation now entering the workforce in large numbers is collaborative, social, and surprisingly idealistic (Caraher, 2015; Payton, 2015). The workplaces of today must be conducive to communication, collaboration and connectedness. This will allow the millennial generation to succeed (Murphy & Raines, 2007). Millennials want to work on meaningful projects in corporate America's workplaces (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010).

The workplace design in corporate America will evolve into more of a social workplace due to the influence of millennials (Murphy & Raines, 2007). Millennials entering the workplace want balance between work and life, which allows them to utilize the latest technologies at all times (Ferri-Reed, 2014; Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Millennials prefer workplaces with collegiate atmospheres that are less formal than traditional workplace environments (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). Millennials must be considered in all aspects of the organizations in which they are employed due to their large numbers in the workplace (Murphy & Raines, 2007; Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010).

The millennial generation is concerned with several factors in the workplace in which they choose to work. The factors may be external factors, such as economic factors and technology, or internal factors, such as job satisfaction and career development opportunities (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). These factors will shape the beliefs and trust issues of millennials in the workplace. The

millennial generation is attracted to jobs that have benefits that align with their workplace views (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010).

Each generation in American history has its own unique characteristics (Ng, Scheweitzer & Lyons, 2010; Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). Millennials are making an impact in the workplace, and businesses should be aware of this generation's particular skills and desires in order to successfully integrate them into their organizations. Research by Bannon et al. (2011) concluded that "millennials are often characterized as tech-savvy, a quality observed in many aspects of their lives" (p. 61). Millennials are the first generation completely raised in an advanced digital age.

According to Bannon et al. (2011), employees of the millennial generation tend to be less formal in the workplace and desire to spend their free time on the Internet and interacting within social media networks. Millennials tend to prefer a flexible work environment which supports a work and life balance (Ertas, 2015; Singer & Goodrich, 2006). Millennials expect to have access to different technologies and the most current computer and communications systems in the workplace (Bannon et al., 2011). Millennials want to make a positive difference not only in the workplace but also in the communities in which they live (Campione, 2015; Taylor, 2014).

Because of millennials' educational level and digital knowledge, the average millennial expects to be held in full regard as early as day one of his employment (Taylor, 2014). Millennials learn through digital means, such as webinars, laptops,

smart phones, and social media forums. Millennials believe their skill-sets should allow them to earn respect in the workplace immediately, even if they have not been on the job very long (Tolbize, 2008). They may join an organization in an entry level position and speak in the same casual tone to the CEO as they would to a member of the building cleaning team. They want their ideas to be heard, and they expect to be treated like a productive employee immediately upon going to work for an organization (Tolbize, 2008).

Many supervisors in the workplace today believe millennials have poor work ethics based on their lack of respect for the current hierarchal structures of their organizations. They receive their daily news through the Internet, and they do not subscribe to local newspapers like generations before them (Aswell, 2015; Barnes, 2014; Friedman, 2016). According to Tolbize (2008), “Other sources of evidence do not support the claim that there is a decline in work ethics among younger generations” (p. 5). Millennials believe if they are motivated enough to take the correct actions at work and get the desired results, they will be rewarded appropriately. Research supports the idea that millennials will do their part to continue to make American businesses and other organizations of which they are a part very successful (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013).

There are many misconceptions and stereotypes concerning millennials: Individuals born between 1980 and 2000 are self-centered, unmotivated, disrespectful, and disloyal are just a few of these misconceptions (Bannon et al., 2011). These purported characteristics contrast with millennials’ more positive

qualities; they work well in teams, are motivated to have an impact on their organizations, favor open and frequent communication with their supervisors, and are at ease with communication technologies (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Many organizations are concerned about how communication with millennials will affect their organizations, and how they will develop relationships with other organizational members (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Millennials must be integrated and socialized into today's workplaces to be utilized to the utmost of their potential. Millennials will have to be allowed input into the workplace organizational culture so they will have buy in and want to remain long-term with a single business. Millennials have a unique skill-set that must be leveraged to allow their organizations to succeed. When millennials stay with a business long-term, their valued contributions will increase the bottom line for that business.

Millennial Generation Diversity and Uniqueness

According to Bannon et al., (2011), the millennial generation's ethnic makeup is 38% non-white, making them the most racially tolerant and diverse generation in America's workplace today. Due to its diversity, the millennial generation is very inclusive and open to all cultures (Zemke et al., 2013). The stereotypes and prejudices previous generations may have fueled have not plagued this generational cohort. Instead this cohort is very inclusive of others who are different from themselves (Bannon et al., 2011; Watkins & Neal, 2015). As a whole, millennials have a more global perspective than generations before them because of their access to technology throughout their entire lives and their ability

to use it (Watkins & Neal, 2015). Millennials have developed world views without cultural boundaries that previous generations were unable to accomplish (Watkins & Neal, 2015). In short, this generation values diversity much more than previous generations (Bannon et al., 2011; Watkins & Neal, 2015).

The millennial generation is much more forgiving of other generations even though the two may have vastly different views (Bannon et al., 2011). Millennials are more racially tolerant and the most diverse generation in the workplace today according to Taylor and Keeter (2010). Millennials were raised by high achieving parents and are the most educated generation in the workforce today (Shih & Allen, 2007; Taylor & Keeter, 2010; Zemke, 2013).

One of the many attributes that make the millennial generation unique is that they are the first generation raised with technology such as email, laptops, and the Internet from the day they were born (Zemke et al., 2013). They were born in the middle of the technology boom, and this has afforded them an advantage, in that they have the skill to master current technologies (Espinoza et al., 2010). Specifically because they are very technologically savvy, they have a huge advantage over previous generations when it comes to competing for jobs and positions that require the use of current communication technologies (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Zemke et al., 2013). According to Shaw and Fairhurst (2008), “Millennials are technology literate and are very comfortable with the internet world, as they have grown up in an environment of technology and thus, are

familiar with mobile phones, lap-top computers, real-time media, and communications” (p. 367).

Millennials enjoy spending time in their social network groups, in person, and on-line digitally. Most social networks are a set of social contracts that people make with one another; they agree to occasionally socially interact and discuss ways to help each other become successful in their professional and personal endeavors (Granovetter, 1973). A social network can be a family, civic organization, business organization or any organization where people interact (Granovetter, 1973). Within the social networks, people discover they may each possess resources that can be accessed through these relationships.

Millennials are very adept at social networking and sharing information through social media platforms (Zemke et al., 2013). They enjoy being a part of groups that share technology and information (Zemke et al., 2013). There are many social media platforms they use to interact with their network of friends: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Instant Messaging to name a few. The average person maintains close ties known as “strong ties” with a small number of family and friends; the average person also maintains loose relationships, known as “weak ties” with dozens or even hundreds of people (Granovetter, 1973). Using social media platforms, millennials can leverage resources through both strong-tie and weak-tie relationships (Davidsson & Honig, 2002). Millennials are able to build relationships at work and in their communities very easily due to their open-mindedness, objections to stereotyping, and ability to live without allowing cultural

and ethnic barriers to get in the way of interacting with others who may be very different from them. Millennials enjoy building their social networks because they know it also increases their social capital capabilities as well.

Because of the quantity of a person's weak tie relationships, those relationships may lead to knowledge about more business opportunities than do their close tie relationships. Weak tie relationships can act as a bridge to other relationships outside a person's normal social group. This allows for the sharing of knowledge among people who would normally never have a conversation. By moving in different circles of people than just normal friends, a person can connect to a much wider network of people that may have fresher ideas and different levels of influence.

Alvarez, Agarwal and Sorenson (2005) stated: "That concerning social networks through a variety of mechanisms, the more extensive the social networks of its employees, the more success the firm likely enjoys in recruiting highly qualified individuals" (p. 240). Social networks also influence resource mobilization through their connections to tacit information. Granovetter (1973) supported the idea that there is a social structure within social networks that can affect economic outcomes. Social networks affect the flow and quality of information. They are an important source of feedback, and there is a level of trust that is developed with a social network (Granovetter, 1973). According to Alvarez et al. (2005), "Social networks not only provide pathways for information and resource flows but also act as conduits through which social influence operates" (p.

245). According to Gamarnikow (2003), “The distinction made between bonding and bridging social capital resembles the distinction made between strong ties (between members of tightly knit kinship groups and communities) and weak ties (between, for example, members of professional or political associations)” (p. 128). Millennials realize how important social networks and exercising social capital are to accomplishing workplace goals or achieving community visions (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009).

Motivating, Managing, and Mentoring Millennials

Motivating millennials in today’s workplace can be a challenge as a result of working constraints for some organizations (Zemke et al., 2013). Millennials value a work/life balance and also favor a flexible work schedule that is both positive and motivating (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Ng et al., 2010). They are inspired by leaders who build teams and want to be invested in by receiving the training and development they need to perform meaningful work for their organizations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). They want to receive immediate and continuous feedback from their supervisors, even if they act like they do not (Aswell, 2015; Barnes, 2014; Friedman, 2016). They also expect clear expectations from their superiors (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials expect a leader who can keep an open mind, allowing them the opportunity to contribute to their organizations almost immediately upon hire.

Millennials want to be challenged with tough assignments and work with organizations where there are fun and light moments to enjoy. They want to be paid

a fair wage and have some benefits for the skill-sets they bring to their positions. Millennials want to have meaningful work experiences and to be trusted by their supervisors to get the job done (Caraher, 2015). Millennials desire the ability for upward mobility and to not be held back based solely on their young ages. They want to be mentored by more senior employees so they can have opportunities to excel in the workplace (Sunjansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). They want the opportunity to receive training and development investments from their organizations (Ng et al., 2010). Millennials want to make a difference in the world in which they live, as well as in their workplaces (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010).

The millennial generation expects to do well in the workplace because they are willing to put in the work needed to succeed (Walsh, 2015; Ng et al., 2010). Millennials want mentorship from their managers, but they sometimes have problems communicating this to their superiors (Walsh, 2015; Winograd & Hais, 2011). Likewise, their managers are also challenged as they do not know how to motivate millennials in the workplace (Wojcik, 2013). One of the keys to working with and mentoring millennials will be to determine what factors will add to their job satisfaction identity and what factors may add to their job dissatisfaction (Caraher, 2015).

Training and development can increase a company's competitive advantage. Millennials want their skill-sets to be valued and want to play an important part in making their organizations successful. Millennials want to be valued and invested in by their organizations (Taylor, 2014). A company must allow for a budget which

will be used to invest in the physical, emotional, and tacit knowledge of its employees. The human resources department of any organization must always consider investing in its employees by providing them the training they need to be successful (Bernardin & Russell, 2013). Employees who are invested in by their companies or organizations become more motivated to perform at higher levels of efficiency (Walsh, 2015).

Millennials may be a challenge to integrate into workplace teams; however, over time they are poised to become among the most active and successful employees. Managers will have to adjust their management strategies to take advantage of millennial skill-sets and strengths (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2014; Zemke et al., 2013). Managing millennials in the workplace is a challenge. Millennials are redefining expectations regarding the cultivation of junior professionals (Riccardi et al., 2014, p.1). Millennials want to receive mentorship from their supervisors, peers, and senior management in non-traditional ways, such as electronic mentoring and offsite mentoring sessions. At times millennial supervisors may become overwhelmed due to the constant daily mentoring that millennials crave. Previous generations need not be afraid of the millennials in the workplace. Instead they should approach millennials and ask for assistance as needed with digital automation or other areas that millennials are more easily able to master and continue to do so.

When mentoring millennials, leaders must try to incorporate technology into the approach. In the workplace, millennials expect technology to be leveraged

as much as possible and at all times. One way to start communicating with millennials is through reverse mentoring (Murphy, 2012). Reverse mentoring might include asking them how to best solve problems and implement some of their suggestions, if feasible. Reverse mentoring is also a good method to use to break down any communication or generational walls which might exist (Murphy, 2012). This method also enfranchises millennials, making them feel as if they are a part of the team and have buy-in to the overall strategy of the company or organization (Zemke et al., 2013). Millennials want to feel valued, recognized, appreciated, supported, and considered valued members of the team. They like to learn through group work, team projects, and collaboration.

A motivated millennial employee will be an attractive asset for any business. Mentoring millennials requires setting tasks for them and allowing them to finish the way they believe is best; as long as their solution does not involve breaking any laws or safety standards. Mentoring also makes it possible for millennials to collaborate with other employees outside the departments in which they work and, with constant feedback being provided, to know previous generations are supporting their efforts. Asking millennials what motivates them in the workplace to see if there are opportunities where their ideas can be implemented into the workplace will also let them see just how important their input is to the success of the organization.

Murphy (2012) explained millennials have shaken things up again by turning mentoring into a collaborative effort. Collaborative learning includes many

people in the mentoring process. Millennials see it also as a process by which they are able to use technology to connect with people across an organization for purposes of sharing knowledge and skills and soliciting advice and opinions. Millennials consider mentoring as a way to provide practical context to their daily work.

Millennial Beliefs and Traits

According to Howe and Strauss (2003), millennials believe it is important to balance one's work and personal life. Their personal time is paramount to them, and they value their millennial co-worker friendships highly. They are very cooperative, civic minded, and well educated. This generation also grew up as the center of attention for their parents and grandparents and want meaningful work.

Millennials have needs in the workplace like every generation before them. They want to achieve, build relationships, and have a certain amount of power very early in their work careers. The millennial generation values information and technology (Esser, 2007). They are very good at multi-tasking and doing very technical computer work. They are always connected digitally, and the majority of them sleep with their phones at night (Taylor, 2014).

Many millennials possess strong parental connections. This drives them to need constant recognition, praise, and the freedom to express themselves in non-traditional ways (Zemke et al., 2013). Many theorists label millennials as having a sense of entitlement and displaying narcissistic tendencies (Taylor, 2014). The new phenomena of millennials always taking pictures of themselves (selfies) and

posting them on their Facebook social media sites has not helped dismiss this stereotype (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials appreciate diversity and can operate in ambiguity better than previous generations. They also like tattoos, and almost half of them have at least one (Smith & Nichols, 2015). They don't feel any negative stereotypes projected at them because they enjoy displaying tattoos. Instead they consider this to be one of the many ways of expressing themselves (Smith & Nichols, 2015).

Leadership Styles Millennials Prefer

Millennials, for the most part, want a multifunctional leader who displays many different leadership styles based on the current situation or issue in the workplace. They want a leader who will know when it is appropriate to display the leadership style that best addresses a situation or an issue. Millennials want a leader who allows for work flexibility, as well as a balanced work and personal life (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials want a leader who allows them the option to work in the office or at their homes and the ability to leverage all available technology (Ozcelik, 2015). Millennials want to be invested in by receiving leadership development training, which can position them to be able to perform meaningful work for their organizations (Durkin, 2010). Millennials want to be able to collaborate and receive mentorship from several accomplished and capable supervisors (Zemke et al., 2013). Millennials desire a friendly employee to leader/manager relationship with a collegiate approach (Caraher, 2015). Millennials

see themselves as self-starters and want the ability to accomplish tasks through the use of collaboration and the latest office technologies.

In any organization there must be different leadership styles and approaches available to address any contingencies or situations that may arise. Millennials are less work-centric than previous generations, and today's leaders will need to know what leadership style best suits their workplace needs (Waldrop & Grawich, 2011). Millennials desire a leader/manager who provides them resources, training, and time to get the job done. They also want to be praised for their daily workplace efforts.

This generation remains a hot topic in terms of management, marketing, and their recruitment. Millennials are receiving particular attention because they represent the future of the workplace, and they also tend to live life and do business in ways very different from previous generations (Stevenson, 2008). Generation X is a much smaller generation than the baby boomer generation. There are too few employees in this generation to fill supervisor vacancies left by the retiring baby boomer generation; this has caused managers to consider their younger millennial counterparts.

Successfully managing the millennial generation in the workplace should be a top priority of every business in America (Stevenson, 2008). Millennials will comprise almost 75% of the American workforce in the next ten years (Gedeon, 2013). The question for every organization or business to consider is this: What does management need to adjust in their organizations to recruit and retain

millennials in their businesses? According to Stevenson (2008), there is a strong need for millennials to have a flexible work-life balance and a benefits package to which they can relate and adjust as they age.

Leader Development for Millennials

Corporate America is comprised of people who must be properly trained and developed for each business to be more efficient and effective. It is the responsibility of each individual organization to train and develop its people. It is important that each organization develops its members so that there will be readily available, qualified, and prepared employees willing to accept the leadership roles which will become open due to retirements, promotions, or other factors such as terminations, reassignments, or resignations. Succession planning is critical to the leadership team of an organization that wishes its tenure to be competitive, viable, and successful.

All organizations must be competitive, essentially requiring high performing leaders who can provide the leadership and direction to make them successful. A competitive advantage occurs when an organization can provide a unique capability, process, product, resource, or service that is more advantageous than any other organization can provide and sustain to the market. It is important to have checks and balances within an organization, such as an effective leadership development program that can help determine its needs, including identifying those in the organization who have the skill-set to be senior leaders in the company.

Leadership development is a critical element that an organization can exploit and utilize to improve its competitive advantage and expertise (Ross, 2008).

Bernthal and Wellins (2006) stressed that “in a complex and changing world, highly skilled and experienced leaders at all levels – not just senior leaders – are becoming harder to find” (p. 32). In corporate America, successful leadership is the art of influencing and guiding employees to complete a specific task or job with little or no supervision. There are many attributes of leadership that are expected when recognizing leadership and leaders. Most successful leaders display self-confidence and the ability to accept risks (Ross, 2008). A leader is proactive, able to get the job done, able to overcome obstacles, and able to utilize resources effectively. According to Ross (2008), “A leader’s primary task, after creating the vision for the organization, is to mobilize the workforce to achieve the vision” (p. 1).

Leadership development is a term used to note the ability to improve and enhance the capabilities of a member or employee of an organization (Burgoyne & James, 2006). Organizations that wish to become successful or maintain success can greatly benefit from having leadership development training opportunities available for its employees (Burgoyne & James, 2006). When employees receive formal leadership development training, it is an important investment into the organization’s overall human capital depository. Individuals who experience leadership development training will be able to function more independently and efficiently (Bernthal & Wellins, 2006). Leadership development in corporate

America allows an organization the opportunity to invest in its human capital by building leadership talent from its own pool of employees currently employed. This eliminates the costs incurred in searching for new employees and recruiting outside talent. Using existing talent also allows the organization greater control over its supply of leaders within the organization and access to the skill-sets they have honed as employees (Pernick, 2001). Subsequently, the organization will have more tools to utilize towards implementing its strategic plans. A highly trained employee in corporate America may allow an organization to gain a competitive advantage over a similar organization with less trained personnel.

Many employees feel they have incompetent leaders in the workplace today (Schettler, 2002). It is important to have checks and balances, such as effective leadership development programs, that can help determine if someone in the organization has the skill-set to be groomed for a more senior position in the company. Many jobs that were once performed by American companies have been outsourced and offshored because the product or service was provided or manufactured more cheaply or efficiently by an international business. It is essential that American businesses continue to produce intelligent and ethical business leaders so those same businesses can continue to provide world class products and services. Our economy relies heavily on American businesses succeeding and maintaining a healthy market share of the global market (Friedman, 2005). Millennial employee leader development will be the key in this effort.

In recent years, corporate America has had a myriad of stories concerning business leaders who have led with a lack of integrity (Schettler, 2002). Corporate leaders must set the example for their shareholders, board members, and employees at all times, especially when the economy is struggling and jobs are as scarce as they are now (Schettler, 2002). A corporate leader's display of poor ethics could cost the company a lawsuit, loss of revenue, or its customers. A corporate leader with integrity issues will adversely affect the human resource functions of recruiting, retaining, and hiring quality employees. Key leaders in an organization who have integrity problems will affect the reputation of the organization in the communities they serve. When millennials leave jobs, they often mention they 'did not quit the job,' but instead 'quit the boss,' due to poor leadership displayed toward them by their supervisors (Wieck, 2008). Millennials want leaders who have moral fiber and the utmost integrity.

The lack of emotional intelligence in corporate America leadership can affect the financial bottom line of a company (Schettler, 2002). Schettler stated, "Emotional intelligence suggests thinking, combined with emotional awareness, promote both personal and professional success" (p. 2). America's workplace is very diverse; consequently, supervisors must be aware of the needs of others and be sensitive to their individual differences. It is important that everyone in the workplace believe they are wanted, important, and valued, regardless of any differences.

The dynamics of the workplace are constantly changing. The millennial generation will continue to join America's workplaces in growing numbers over the next few years, and they need to know that their desire to work with the latest technology will be met (Bannon et al., 2011). Corporate America must embrace this generation and allow them the freedom to utilize the latest technologies and social media platforms as they complete their daily tasks in the workplace. The millennial generation has a vast computer-based technology skill-set, due to their place in history as the first generation to be plugged into the internet and to experience extensive use of computers from their childhood into adulthood.

Recruiting and Retaining Millennials

It is imperative for companies and organizations to recruit younger workers (Wojcik, 2013). As children, millennials were teaching their parents how to operate emerging technology based devices (Taylor, 2014). These children are now entering the workforce in large numbers and must be considered in all recruiting and retention planning stages of an organization. The philosophies that millennials adopted from their parents must be considered in the marketing plans to attract them to a business or organization. It is becoming increasingly difficult to retain talented employees (Singer & Goodrich, 2006). Businesses must start thinking of different and revolutionary ways to attract and hire this new, emerging, millennial generation workforce (Wojcik, 2013).

Millennial news media representatives in North Alabama brand themselves by the way they present the news and the stories they are assigned to cover.

Millennial business leaders are now marketing their services, goods and brands to other millennials by utilizing digital techniques and platforms to which most millennials can connect and relate. Millennials value personal relationships and are likely to switch brands if they have a negative experience or find negative customer feedback from an online blog forum (Aswell, 2015).

Wubbe (2014) stated, “Traditionalists and boomers are known to stay with an organization for a long time” (p. 18). The millennial generation has been characterized as moving from job to job and not displaying loyalty to an organization. Although not all members of a generation fit into the stereotypes with which they have been tagged, most companies place value on trying to understand each generation in their workplaces. This understanding will allow for organizations to run more smoothly. The millennial generation has displayed unique characteristics and must be understood to ensure they are accepted into corporate America and can contribute to their company’s success. When millennials feel a part of the organization, they are more inclined to stay employed long term. This can be evidenced by companies which have high millennial retention rates; these companies allow newly hired millennials to take part in feedback programs almost immediately (Payton, 2015).

With over one million millennials entering the workforce each year and with estimates of nearly 40 percent of the U.S. workforce expected to be comprised of millennials by 2020 (Lykins & Pace, 2013), employers must be prepared to support them as they move into leadership roles. There are many questions a

business must be able to answer concerning millennials entering the workforce in such high numbers. Three of the questions an organization must be able to answer pertaining to the growing millennial generation in today's workforce are: Is the leader development of millennials a priority? Are millennials worth the effort to recruit and retain? Is my business millennial-ready?

In the recent study "Leadership Development for Millennials," conducted by Lykins and Pace (2013), it is stated that organizations are preparing the millennial generation to manage and lead effectively now and into the future. Of the many businesses and learning professionals who participated in the survey for this report, the largest group self-identified as being members of the baby boomer generation (45%), followed by generation X (36%), millennials (17%), and the veteran generation (2%) (Lykins & Pace, 2013). One of the main themes that emerged from the study was that learning and development is nothing short of critical to attracting and retaining millennial employees (Lykins & Pace, 2013).

The millennial generation's use of technology is a prime example of allowing technology to make the world seem smaller or flatter (Friedman, 2005). Millennials have access to virtually any information they want, when they want it (Caraher, 2015). According to Caraher (2015), "With nearly unfettered access to billions of pages of information from around the world through the Internet, millennials are used to getting their hands on any data point they seek" (p. 15). Millennials' access to technology is essential to attracting and retaining them in a workplace position.

Generational Conflicts

In workplaces across corporate America, there are several generations working side by side that process and understand events in life differently due to their own generational viewpoints. Understanding that there can exist a gap in comprehension between generations due to this phenomenon, it is important to be aware of the generational theory (Codrington, 2008). According to Codrington, the generational theory can help explain why the era in which a person was raised can affect the development of their world view. This is important to business leaders because there can be a clash of generations in the workplace if different generations do not learn how to tolerate the values, expectations, and preferences of others.

According to Wubbe (2014), as older generations slowly begin to retire, there are now more generations working together than ever. With several generations working side by side, there will be an even greater need to understand generational differences to allow companies to operate efficiently. While some of the millennial generation have “earned the reputation of being entitled, lazy, and over-praised, others are driven and using technology to help them advance every chance they can” (Wubbe, 2014, p. 17). With millennials now entering the workforce in large numbers, a supervisor may now have a team of employees comprised of four generations, which may cause generational conflicts if not properly prepared (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). Millennial employees possess a unique set of skills and a somewhat different work ethic than previous generations. The millennial generation is already one of the best-educated generations in

American history (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2010). They are technologically savvy, embrace diversity, and have a strong preference to collaborate to solve problems (Caraher, 2015).

One of the common issues with older generations in the workforce is the need for millennials to have access to communication technology at all times. Older generations in the workforce are concerned with the seemingly constant need for millennials to communicate on social media sites and to communicate with their circle of friends. It is apparent that millennials in the workforce of corporate America is a hot-button topic across all industries today (Gavatora, 2012). The relationship between millennials and their colleagues could become more strained in the future if companies do not properly manage these relationships.

Not only have millennials entered the workplace in large numbers, but many of them have also moved into roles managing and leading veteran employees, who are more seasoned than they are. This change in workplace dynamics must be addressed throughout the U.S. workforce. This dynamic has caused a different type of workplace conflict based on generational differences. As millennial workers continue to rise in management positions, many are surpassing experienced personnel from previous generations. Now many veteran employees are being supervised by millennial-aged people with less work and life experience. This phenomenon has proved to be difficult to navigate for all generations in the workforce.

There are two types of distinct conflicts in organizations (Ivancevich et al., 2014). The first is a functional conflict, which in the long run may enhance the organization's performance (Ivancevich et al., 2014). The second type is a dysfunctional conflict, which leads to the organization's performance being hindered (Ivancevich et al., 2014). Due to generational differences with four working generations in the workplace, there is no single best answer or approach to managing multigenerational workforces (Cahill, Fache & Sedrak, 2012). Business leaders must bridge the gap between generations for an organization to be successful. (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). The literature review themes are in ranked order in the table below (See Table 4 below).

Table 4. Ranked Themes from the Literature Review

Number	Theme
1.	Generational characteristics of the four generations in the workforce currently
2.	Millennial workplace expectations
3.	Millennial workplace characteristics
4.	Millennial generation diversity and Uniqueness
5.	Motivating, managing, and mentoring millennials
6.	Millennial beliefs and traits
7.	Leadership styles millennials prefer
8.	Leadership development for millennials
9.	Recruiting and retaining millennials
10.	Generational Conflicts

Summary and Synthesis of the Data

According to Galentine (2013), millennials will increasingly dominate the makeup of the future workforce. Any business that wants to remain viable for the foreseeable future must embrace this generation, and learn how they function and what they desire to be retained long-term where they are currently employed (Galentine, 2013). Millennials have been raised with unprecedented levels of positive reinforcement and positive amounts of attention (Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Research by Jurnak (2010) shows that the average cost of replacing an employee is about 150 percent of the salary of the employee that is being replaced. Managers must find a way to recruit and retain millennial employees if they want a successful business because competition for workers will increase (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009).

Chapter two provided an overview of recent literature relevant to this study. Chapter three will discuss the research methodology chosen for this study. Chapter three will also discuss the population sample, selection of participants, instrumentation used, and the data collection process. The reliability and validity of the study will be addressed in Chapter three as well.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Overview

The intent of Chapter three is to explain the method that was used to collect data and answer the research questions for this study. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the workplace expectations and practices millennial employees prefer in news media firms located in North Alabama. It is important for managers and business leaders to know how to relate best to members of different generations because all generations process information differently (Caraher, 2015). An exploratory phenomenological approach is the best methodology for this study because it allows the researcher to analyze the lived experiences of not only the millennial news media employee cohort but also all generational cohorts that interact with them in the work environment. This chapter also discusses the research design for this study.

A description of the populations discussed, sample, data collection procedures, data collection instrument(s), and a rationale for these procedures will follow the outline of the methods and research design. Understanding the preferences of millennials in the workplace can lead to their long-term tenure and reduction in turnover rates. The approach for this study was a qualitative research methodology using semi-structured, open-ended questions asked during face-to-face interview sessions. The findings from this study have allowed the researcher to determine specific expectations and practices millennials prefer that will lead them

to stay employed longer than three years, or long-term, in their current workplaces. The results from this study also provide an implementation plan for business leaders to follow in order to institute the researcher's recommendations and allow businesses to become more millennial-ready workplaces. This knowledge will facilitate business leaders being able to more effectively manage this cohort and decrease turnover rates. The researcher has collected data not only from millennial employees but also their co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs. The data is presented in the following two groupings: group one consists of millennial employees and group two consists of the baby boomer/generation X co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs.

Organization of the Remainder of this Chapter

The design of the study is described in eleven main sections comprising this chapter. The first section is the ethical considerations section. The second section of this chapter presents the research questions. The third section of this chapter presents the research design which includes an overview of action research, phenomenological research, and the rationale for selecting the qualitative research methodology. The fourth section provides the research approach that will be used in the study. The fifth section discusses the population and sample. The sixth section discusses the rationale for selecting the participants for this study. The seventh section discusses the instrumentation that will be used during the study and includes the interview questions. The eighth section covers the procedure used during the study. The ninth section details the methods that will be used for data

collection. The tenth section consists of an analysis of the data. The final and eleventh section discusses the reliability and validity of the study.

Ethical Considerations

There are several guidelines that must be adhered to by the participants in this study. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was completed before the actual study was conducted. The study was conducted with IRB approval. Each participant in the study was informed of any possible risks and the benefits of this study. Each participant did receive a consent form (see Appendix A), that was signed prior to their participation in this study (Linden, 2015). Participants were not put in any bodily danger. As stated in the IRB application, an executive summary of the results of this study will be provided to all participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014). The data collected from the sample group will be divided into two categories and will be used to make general statements about millennial employees in news media firms in North Alabama (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Yin, 2009).

All participants were informed that participation was voluntary and, as such, they could have stopped the interview at any time during the process (Linden, 2015). The names and titles of all participants and all organizations involved in the study will remain anonymous at all times. Every participant in the study had the right to privacy and was informed concerning all aspects of the study. All information and data collected were locked in a secure location at all times. Each individual was expected to answer all of the questions honestly and thoroughly.

The researcher did adhere to all of the IRB requirements. The researcher conducted all data collection based on the schedules of the participants. It was imperative to complete this study in an unbiased state to allow the results to speak and stand for themselves.

Research Questions that Guided this Study

RQ1- What expectations and practices do millennials prefer in the workplace of their current news media firms to remain long-term?

RQ2- How can the expectations and practices millennials prefer in their current news media firms be initiated and implemented into the present workplace organizational culture?

Research Design

The research design for this study was a qualitative phenomenological approach involving a sample of fifteen news media firm employees, co-workers and supervisors. Data were collected from every level of the organization. Qualitative research is appropriate when the research questions are exploratory (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research provides an understanding of different individuals' beliefs and the realities as perceived by each individual (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Qualitative research is used to study, explore, or understand a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative researchers normally focus on three types of questions to help process the theories they believe pertain to the research. They ask questions about the meaning of events and activities to the people who are a part of their sampling study group(s), questions about the influence of the

physical and social context on their activities, and questions about the processes and the events and activities they experience. These questions allow the researcher to better understand and analyze the experience the participants are living. The study data were collected via face-to-face, in-depth interviews by receiving verbal responses to a questionnaire.

A qualitative approach was the most appropriate method to explore the workplace preferences of millennial workers in news media firms in North Alabama. It was important to not only collect data from a millennial employee's viewpoint but also from those of their co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs. Millennials are not staying long-term with the businesses that hire them (Saiidi, 2014). Business leaders will need to know how to relate to millennial workers in order to understand their needs in the workplace for long-term retention and the prevention of employee high turnover rates. Millennials are needed in the workplace to fill the positions soon to be vacated by aging baby boomers as they begin to retire in large numbers.

According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative researcher must rely on participants' opinions, use broad statements, and gather primarily textual information. The job of the researcher is to analyze the text to identify themes, noting at the same time that qualitative analysis is subjective and contains bias. Using a phenomenological design will allow each participant's experience to be more clearly defined and understood by the researcher. A qualitative phenomenological study is the most appropriate design for this study. "Qualitative

research is suited to promoting a deep understanding of a social setting or activity as viewed from the perspective of the research participants” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 27). The data collection could not be approached adequately through quantitative means because of the in-depth nature of the human experiences of millennials in the workplace.

Overview of the Research Approach Used in this Study

The study collected data from fifteen employees working at three news media firms in North Alabama. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the expectations and practices that millennials prefer to remain long-term with their current employers. The qualitative research method approach was the best suited for this study because it allowed the researcher to observe and interview the participants in their settings, thereby understanding their perspectives and goals more clearly (Creswell, 2014).

Businesses will need to know how to relate to their millennial workforce in order to provide them with the environment and the tools they need to encourage them to remain long-term. Businesses will need to understand the workplace needs of this unique cohort to better utilize them effectively for their business to become more successful. The central phenomenon being studied in this project is the millennial cohort in the workplace.

The objective of this qualitative study, now completed, is to provide insight into news media firms in North Alabama concerning how millennials process today’s workplace and what work organizational culture encourages their continued

employment within the same firm. The results of this study will add valuable knowledge toward bridging the generational differences in today's workplace, and in effect prevent high millennial employee turn-over rates. The limitations of the study are that this study was restricted to just North Alabama news media firms that hire millennial workers in high numbers. The data were collected at three media firms where millennials are employed. The data for this study were collected from news media industry millennial workers, co-workers, supervisors, and their CEOs. The businesses participating in the data collection for the study were comprised of millennial workers in the news media industry. That the researcher was granted pre-approved access to all of the news media firms in this study is attributable to his job as a public relations official at a local utility company.

This study was designed to add to the body of knowledge concerning the preferences of millennials in news media firms. The findings of this study have been packaged in an actionable format that can be implemented in today's evolving workplace. News media workplaces in North Alabama require employees to possess technical skills inherent in the industry. The businesses in this study are located in North Alabama. The population of the area is approximately 180,000 citizens. There will be opportunities for future studies on the impact of millennials in the workplace in the years to come based on millennials receiving the preferences they desire in the workplace.

Population and Sample

The participants in this study consisted of fifteen employees of three different news media firms located in North Alabama. Data were collected from every level of the organization using in-depth interviews. The sample group provided by each business in the study were comprised of two millennial workers, one co-worker (non-millennial generation), one supervisor (non-millennial generation), and the company CEO (non-millennial generation). All the participants had three or more years of employment with their news media organizations. The sampling was not representative of all news media firms in the news media industry. All organizations and participants were given pseudonym identifications.

Selection of Participants

The researcher purposely selected participants based on their experience and expertise in the news media industry. The sample group included only those who are members of news media firms located in North Alabama. Each participant had worked at their current news media firm for at least three years. The CEOs of three news media firms agreed to allow their organizations to be a part of this study. All participants and organizations in the study will remain anonymous. Pseudonyms were given to all participants and organizations.

Instrumentation

The researcher gained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to conducting this study. The instrumentation for this study included the researcher conducting in-depth, face-to-face interviews with all of the participants.

A pilot study using semi-structured, open-ended questions was conducted prior to collecting the study data to ensure the questions were understandable and rational based on the needs of the industry being studied (Maxwell, 2013). The data for this study were collected during scheduled, on-site interview sessions (Creswell, 2014). The interview questionnaire consisted of questions from an instrument used in a similar study conducted by Smith and Galbraith (2012). Smith and Galbraith granted permission to this researcher to utilize their questionnaire as a starting point for this researcher's study. The researcher obtained a signed consent form from each participant prior to conducting interview sessions. Each participant agreed to the use of a digital recorder and a backup recorder as the main source for controlling bias and producing reliable data for qualitative analysis. All interview sessions were transcribed and imported into NVivo Pro 11, a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software tool for coding and analysis. All participants in the study answered the interview questions located in Appendix D.

Procedures

IRB approval was granted to the researcher prior to conducting this study. The researcher provided a copy of the interview questions to each participant prior to their interview session. The researcher took notes during the interview sessions to ensure all information exchanged was taken into account. All interview sessions for data collection were held at the news media businesses that were a part of this study.

The interview sessions were scheduled for 45 minutes; however, many participants completed their interview sessions in less time. Prior to the study, pilot interview sessions were conducted with two millennials, one millennial co-worker (non-millennial generation), one millennial supervisor (non-millennial generation), and a millennial CEO (non-millennial generation) who works in a North Alabama news media firm. The pilot study was conducted in order to validate the questions and the procedures that were utilized during the actual study. At the end of each interview session conducted during the research study, the researcher thanked the participants and closed out the interview sessions. The audio recordings from the research study were transcribed and entered into a digital, qualitative software program NVivo Pro 11 QDA to determine the themes from the interview sessions.

Data Collection

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the workplace organizational culture millennials desire to remain long-term with their current news media firm. The data for this study was collected from employees in three different North Alabama news media firms by utilizing open-ended questions. Interview sessions for the data samplings were held at the news media firms during scheduled on-site interview sessions. Pre-approved access to all three of the businesses were granted to the researcher. During the fifteen interviews, a semi-structured set of open-ended questions were utilized to aid in ensuring that a consistent interview session is conducted each time (Carpenter & de Charon, 2014; Creswell, 2014). The digital audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and

prepared for input into the NVivo Pro 11, a software tool for coding and analysis (Carpenter & de Charon, 2012; Creswell, 2014). The NVivo Pro 11 software is a computer-assisted, qualitative data analysis software program that assisted in determining the emerging themes and trends in news media firms located in North Alabama. The primary limitation of the NVivo software tool is that it is dependent on the internal software to determine the emerging themes based on the interview transcripts that are entered into the digital software program. The transcripts from each interview are stored on a separate external drive and secured in a locked file cabinet.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed, coded, categorized, and analyzed (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014). Themes were examined and determined by the NVivo Pro 11 qualitative data analysis (QDA) software program. The NVivo Pro 11 software facilitated the process of grouping common thoughts from the interview transcripts into emerging themes and eventually significant themes. To verify findings and themes, the researcher manually verified the results of the NVivo Pro 11 QDA software by conducting manual checks of each finding against the transcripts of the interviewees. According to Moustakas (1994), the purpose of analysis and organizing data is to form structural meaning. The researcher collected data by utilizing a semi-structured interview format and open-ended questions.

Reliability and Validity

To address bias, this researcher exercised extensive reflection and reflexivity throughout the interview, observation, and data collection processes (Maxwell, 2013). The validity component addresses the results and conclusions the researcher reaches to ensure that they are rational and supported by the research. Any plausible alternative interpretations and validity threats were explored, and the researcher challenged and explored these ideas and research results. The researcher ensured that the same interview techniques and procedures used during the pilot study were utilized during the research study, which ensured validity was adhered to throughout this study.

Phenomenological research is a way of determining the human experience through descriptive accounts, which allows the participant's essence to emerge and to be understood by the researcher (Moustakas, 1994). Qualitative research is open, subjective, and flexible; the standardized methods of quantitative research do not apply in a qualitative study. Qualitative research can only be valid if the participants involved in the study answer the researcher's questions truthfully and completely throughout the interview session. The researcher encouraged all study participants to reply to all questions truthfully and accurately.

The researcher ensured triangulation was conducted by collecting data from a diverse range of individuals through interviews, interview transcripts, questionnaires, observations, and by recording field notes during site visits

(Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013). All organizations and participants were given pseudonym identifications and kept anonymous.

Summary and Synthesis of the Data

Chapter three is an introduction to the research methods and design chosen for this study. This chapter provides the rationale for the phenomenological research approach chosen. Included in the chapter is a discussion of the research design and its appropriateness. The experiences of millennial employees and their co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs in North Alabama news media firms were the focus of this study. Twelve interview questions were answered by fifteen participants in order to address two research questions. Chapter four includes detailed results from the analysis of the interview sessions' collected data. The discussion in Chapter four includes the steps taken and the processes used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 4. Findings

Chapter four relates the findings of this study to the current body of knowledge. Chapter four discusses the ten significant themes revealed in this study. This chapter includes the study's contribution to applied practice and business leader take-away points. This chapter also introduces the researcher's new findings. The chapter concludes with the summary and synthesis of data.

Business leaders must explore and determine what millennial employees prefer in the workplace in order to recruit new talent among the millennial generation and to ensure that those employees remain long-term and that the businesses in which they are employed are successful. This chapter will discuss the data the researcher collected from the two groupings that emerged out of the sample group. Chapter four includes the researcher's findings and a summary of the data collection methods, the demographics of the sample group of study participants.

Overview

Chapter four also contains details of the data analysis techniques and the major themes which emerged from the interview transcripts. The results of the study were designed to provide actionable recommendations for business leaders to consider in order to recruit and retain millennial employees long-term. For purposes of this study, long-term employment is being defined as three or more

years of employment with the same news media firm. Chapter four concludes with a summary of the findings of this study.

Data Collection Method

This study included fifteen North Alabama news media firm employees, both males and females, from three different generations. Participant selection for this study was primarily based on location, years of work experience, and availability. Five employees from three different types of news media firms were interviewed: radio news media, television news media, and print news media. Their job positions ranged in titles and job duty responsibilities from CEOs to supervisors to employees.

Participants were intentionally selected based on their adherence to the following participant criteria: (a) news media employee in North Alabama, (b) set number of five employees from radio, television, and print news media firms, (c) data must be collected from every level of the organization, (d) the sample group provided by each business in the study must be comprised of two millennial workers, one co-worker (non-millennial generation), one supervisor (non-millennial generation), and the company CEO (non-millennial generation), and (e) all participants must have a minimum of three years of employment with their current news media firm. All interviews were recorded by a digital recording device and a backup digital recording device. The interview responses were transcribed by Vanan Online Transcription Services.

The researcher initially collected data from the sample group as one sample group. The researcher then divided the sample population into two groups. The researcher was endeavoring to ascertain a full and rich picture of the perspectives of millennial employees and the other players in the workplace that interact with them. Data were collected from millennials (six participants) referred to as group one in this study and their co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs (nine participants) referred to as group two in this study. All interview sessions were transcribed and imported into NVivo Pro 11, a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software tool for coding and analysis.

The researcher utilized the NVivo query system to run a word frequency cloud to determine the initial emerging themes. A major factor that drove the emerging themes to the forefront was the frequency and similarity of specific words and phrases used by participants to address their concerns about recruiting and retaining millennial employees in news media workplaces. The themes that emerged from the two groups individually or collectively also had to address one or both of the research questions. The following research questions were the focus of this study:

RQ1- What expectations and practices do millennials prefer in the workplace of their current news media firms to remain long-term?

RQ2- How can the expectations and practices millennials prefer in their current news media firms be initiated and implemented into the present workplace organizational culture?

Pilot Study Conducted

The researcher conducted a pilot study consisting of a cross section of five news media employees, all meeting the required participant criteria. All pilot study participants agreed to take part in this study and signed the study consent form before being interviewed. The pilot study interviews were conducted using twelve semi-structured, open-ended questions. The interview sessions were conducted at the pilot participants' locations of choice, which, in all cases, was at their place of employment. The interviews were conducted one-on-one with each participant in a separate office area. At the conclusion of each interview session, the researcher asked the participant to provide any additional information they would like to add pertaining to millennials in the news media industry. Three males and two females were interviewed for the pilot study. Males consisted of 60% of the pool and females accounted for 40%. The study consisted of 60% African-American and 40% Caucasian participants.

The pilot study was conducted to ensure that the phrasing and sequencing of the questions were understandable and rational. The researcher wanted to ensure the appropriate responses were provided to address the study's research questions. It is important to note that comments from participants were taken into account to ensure the study had the best opportunity for success. As such, the pilot test participants did note two questions were out of sequence, concerning the flow of questions, and suggested they should be swapped in the order in which they were asked on the questionnaire. The researcher originally planned for each interview to

last approximately 45 minutes for each participant, based on the pilot participant interviews; however, it became clear that each interview would not last longer than approximately 25 to 35 minutes. Prior to each interview, the researcher explained the consent form and ensured all consent forms were signed. The researcher provided each participant a copy of the questionnaire before recording the interview session. During the interview session, the researcher ensured all questions pertaining to the study were answered.

The researcher had considered utilizing an assistant to facilitate discussion; however, after conducting the pilot study and adjusting the interview questionnaire, there was no need for an assistant. At the completion of each interview session each participant was offered a \$25.00 Visa gift card from the researcher for volunteering to provide valuable information pertaining to this study. At the end of each interview session, the researcher asked the interviewees if they had anything else to share with the researcher that was not covered in the questionnaire and interview session. The researcher revised the questionnaire after the pilot study was conducted based on input from the pilot study participants (See Table 5 below).

Table 5. Coding Definitions and Demographic Data for the Pilot Study

Pilot Participant Codes	Generation Millennial=M Baby Boomer=BB Generation X=GX	Gender Male=M Female=F	Industry Print=P Radio=R Television=T	Interview order Number Note: “P” will follow the pilot participant’s numbers	Ethnicity
MFT-1P	M	F	T	1P	African American
BBMP-2P	BB	M	P	2P	Caucasian
GXMR-3P	GX	M	R	3P	Caucasian
MFP-4P	M	F	P	4P	Caucasian
GXMP-5P	GX	M	P	5P	African American
Total N= 5	Millennials= 2 (40%) Baby Boomers= 1 (20%) Generation X= 2 (40%)	Females =2 (40%) Males= 3 (60%)	P= 60% R= 20% T= 20%		African American = 3 (60%) Caucasian = 2 (40%)

The information and experience the researcher gained from the pilot study process was instrumental in being able to properly conduct an interview session with each research study participant. The researcher was able to hone the skills required to conduct an interview session and was able to allow each participant the time they needed to fully respond to each interview question. Prior to conducting each interview, the researcher allowed each participant a few minutes to discuss their news media career thus far and to answer any questions that were important to the participant. Below is a short profile of each research participant.

Research Participant Profiles

Research participant 1

Research participant MFT-1 is a millennial African-American female. She participated in the interview with great excitement and enthusiasm. She is a television reporter that has enjoyed living and working in the North Alabama area. She was very humbled to be a part of this study. She plans on making her career in the television news media industry.

Research participant 2

Research participant BBMP-2 is a baby boomer Caucasian male. He arrived for the interview with great enthusiasm and excitement. He has worked in the print media industry as a print journalist for almost thirty years. He provided excellent insight as it relates to his experiences in the print news media industry. He plans to work about five to ten more years. He is a co-worker of millennial employees.

Research participant 3

Research participant GXMP-3 is a generation X Caucasian male. He was very interested in this study and was happy to be a part of it. He has been in the print media industry for twenty years. He is a supervisor of millennial employees. He has had to make the tough decisions of hiring and firing millennial employees over the last few years. He plans on working in this industry another ten to fifteen years.

Research participant 4

Research participant MFP-4 is a millennial Caucasian female. She is a print media industry employee. She indicated that she was extremely pleased with her company and her work assignments as a print journalist. She was very positive about the future of print media and the digital content it now provides. She plans on working in this industry for about 20 more years.

Research participant 5

Research participant BBMP-5 is a baby boomer Caucasian male. He is the CEO of a print media firm. He has been a part of the print media industry 30+ years. He feels grateful for his long career and is excited about the future of print media as it migrates to a more digital platform, in addition to the normal print media. He wants to mentor young millennial employees to be successful in the print media industry.

Research participant 6

Research participant BBMR-6 is a baby boomer Caucasian male. He is the CEO of a radio broadcasting news media firm, which has several millennial employees. He has been in the radio news media industry about 35 years. He is very interested in the study results because the station is having trouble understanding millennial workplace needs. He plans on working in the radio news media industry another five years.

Research participant 7

Research participant BBMR-7 is a baby boomer Caucasian male. He is a radio broadcasting millennial employee supervisor. He enjoys the flexibility of his job and stated he does not want or need continual praise like the millennial employees he works with daily. He has been in the radio news media industry for almost 25 years. He is very satisfied with his current position and his relationship with his employers. He believes millennial employees have unrealistic workplace expectations and want to be patted on the back for just showing up for work.

Research participant 8

Research participant GXMR-8 is a generation X Caucasian male. He is a radio news media broadcasting co-worker of millennial employees. He has been in the radio news media industry for about 20 years. He was excited to share details related to working with millennials in his industry. He plans on working in this industry about ten more years.

Research participant 9

Research participant MFR-9 is a millennial Caucasian female. She is a radio news media broadcaster. She is grateful for her position and is very satisfied with her current employer. She plans on making radio broadcasting a career. She is very hopeful for the future of radio as the digital content platform begins to expand.

Research participant 10

Research participant MFR-10 is a millennial African American female. She is excited to be in the radio broadcasting industry. This is her second career, and it suits her lifestyle. She is a millennial employee and enjoys working with other, older generations in the workplace.

Research participant 11

Research participant MMT-11 is a millennial Caucasian male. He is a television reporter employee. He is very excited about his career in television. He is very satisfied with his employer and desires to remain in his current position long-term. He enjoys being mentored by older generations in his workplace.

Research participant 12

Research participant GXFT-12 is a generation X African-American female. She arrived for the interview with great excitement and enthusiasm. She is a television reporter supervisor that has enjoyed living in the North Alabama area for over ten years. She supervises millennial employees in the television news media industry.

Research participant 13

Research participant MFP-13 is a millennial Caucasian female. She works as a print news media journalist. She is excited to be a part of the local media. She plans on making the print news media industry a career.

Research participant 14

Research participant BBMT-14 is a baby boomer Caucasian male. He is the CEO of a television news media firm. He has been in the television news media industry for over 30 years. He is excited about millennial employees and the skill-set they bring to his firm.

Research participant 15

Research participant GXFT-15 is a generation X Caucasian female. She is a co-worker of millennial employees in the television news media industry. She has been in the industry for over ten years. She believes millennial employees must be mentored for them to be successful over the course of their careers.

Study Demographics

Each study participant (see Table 6 below) provided basic, demographic data such as their generation, gender, ethnicity, and industry occupation. It was the objective of the researcher and this study that there exist as closely as possible equality of demographics. Accordingly, eight males, or 53 percent of the interview pool, and seven females, or 47 percent of the interview pool, participated in the study. The ages of the participants ranged between 26 and 58 years old. There was

an ethnicity makeup of 80 percent Caucasian and 20 percent African American participation in the study.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), the newspaper print industry has a demographic makeup of 48 percent males and 52 percent females and an ethnicity makeup of 17 percent African American, 81 percent Caucasian and 2 percent other ethnicities. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), the radio and television broadcasting industries have a demographic makeup of 58 males and 42 females and an ethnicity makeup of 19 African American, 79 percent Caucasian and 2 percent other ethnicities. The data analysis were conducted in two phases. In phase one of the data analysis, data were analyzed from the overall sample group. In phase two of the data analysis, the sample group collected data was separated into two groups. Group one consisted of the six millennial employees, and group two consisted of their nine co-workers, supervisors, and CEO.

Table 6. Coding Definitions and Demographic Data for the Research Study

Research Study Participant Codes	Generation Millennial=M Baby Boomer=BB Generation X=GX	Gender Male=M Female=F	Industry Print=P Radio=R Television=T	Interview order number	Ethnicity/Group #
MFT-1	M	F	T	1	African American/ 1
BBMP-2	BB	M	P	2	Caucasian/2
GXMP-3	GX	M	P	3	Caucasian/2
MFP-4	M	F	P	4	Caucasian/1
BBMP-5	BB	M	P	5	African American/2
BBMR-6	BB	M	R	6	Caucasian/2
BBMR-7	BB	M	R	7	Caucasian/2
GXMR-8	GX	M	R	8	Caucasian/2
MFR-9	M	F	R	9	Caucasian/1
MFR-10	M	F	R	10	African American/1
MMT-11	M	M	T	11	Caucasian/1
GXFT-12	GX	F	T	12	Caucasian/2
MFP-13	M	F	P	13	Caucasian/1
BBMT-14	BB	M	T	14	Caucasian/2
GXFT-15	GX	F	T	15	Caucasian/2
Total N=15	Millennials= 6 (40%) Baby Boomers= 5 (33%) Generation X= 9 (27%)	Females = 7 (47%) Males= 8 (53%)	P= 33% R= 33% T= 33%		Caucasian = 12 (80%) African American= 3 (20%)

Research Study Conducted

In-depth, one-on-one interviews were conducted with the fifteen study participants at a date, time, and location agreed upon by each individual participant. Each interview lasted approximately 25 to 35 minutes in length. Prior to each interview, each participant read and signed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved consent to interview form. The interview sessions were conducted with the same protocols (See Appendix B) as the pilot study.

Five pilot study participants' responses are not included in the study research findings. The responses of the 15 participants in this study were analyzed, and their input directly influenced the emergent and significant themes that the researcher discovered. According to Moustakas (1994), "Typically in the phenomenological investigation, the long interview is the method through which data is collected on the topic and question" (p. 114). The significant themes were supported by the vast majority of the participants' responses and were determined in large part by the responses to the interview questions.

The following are participant responses to interview question number one:

Interview question 1: Define the millennial generation.

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question one.

Participants MMT-11 and GXFT-12 believe millennials often do not recognize how other generations in the workforce perceive them, which is as a

group of people who seek out preferences and promotions that have not yet been earned. Participants MFR-10 and MFP-13 believe not all millennials act the same or display the same characteristics; they noted some millennials display hard work ethics, while some display the opposite – lazy work practices and customs.

Participant BBMR-6: “Millennials seek instant gratification and crave constant feedback from supervisors to help boost their self-esteem.” Participant BBMR-7: “A millennial’s biggest concerns are their sense of entitlement and their need for constant positive reinforcement and feedback.” Participant MFT-1: “Some millennials do not fully understand the notion of actually working before receiving the next promotion or any compliments at work.”

Participant GXMP-3: “Millennials are risk-takers that can help a business approach problems in a different, fresh way.” Participant BBMT-14: “Millennials will definitely shape the future of this country and redefine the business world within the next decade or so.” Participants GXFT-15 and BBMR-7 agree that millennials constantly seek mentorship and guidance from older generations. Participant GXFT-15 noted that the level of constant positive feedback millennials thrive off of can, at times, test the patience of supervisors. According to participant BBMR-6: “It is important that older generations share information and lessons learned with millennial employees so the business can guard the valuable historical information it needs to be successful.” Participant GXMR-8: “Millennials will make their own success in the workplace as the older generations did before them.”

According to participant GXMP-3, millennials are a group of people who are very concerned with the future of business and their communities. Participant GXFT-15 believes this new generation will definitely shape the future of this country and redefine the business world within the next decade, especially in the areas of technology. Participant BBMP-2: “They are known to be very knowledgeable of digital technology and communications devices like smart phones.” Participant GXMR-8 commented that they are also characterized as being globally minded because they can operate different technologies very easily and stay on line for hours at a time. Participant GXMR-8: “This skill-set makes them a unique and valuable asset to any business.”

BBMP-2 commented that millennials do very well with technology; however, they are still being labeled as lazy and, at times, disrespectful to other, more senior, employees. Participant GXMR-8: “Millennials are able to keep their fingers on the pulse of society by paying close attention to the latest business and technology trends.” Participants BBMT-14 and GXMP-3 both commented that millennials should be more respectful in their opinions of older generations in the workplace and the workplace culture in which they were raised.

Participants MFR-9, BBMT-14 and BBMP-5 believe that, for the most part, millennials are hardworking and excited about their futures. MFT-1: “I believe they do not just care about their own successes but also they are concerned about the communities where they live.” Participant BBMR-6: “Many millennials want to make their communities safe places to live and raise a family.” Participant MMT-

11: “We are not afraid to join community groups or join civic groups that help better our communities.” Participant MMT-11: “Because of the increase of technology, we can rally support for community events through using our social media networks.” Participant BBMP-5: “Millennials are smart, creative, and continue to seek out new technologies and techniques that allow our organizations to be more successful.” Participant BBMP-5: “When previous generations tell millennials this is how they have always performed this work task, it is a turnoff to them because they want to do better.” Participant BBMR-6: “They want to find new ways to perform daily activities at work by using the latest technologies.”

The following are participant responses to interview question number two:

Interview question 2: How does your organization attract and retain millennial employees?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question one.

Participants BBMP-5, BBMR-7, and BBMT-14, CEOs of the firms represented in this study, believe that attracting and retaining millennial employees is critical to the success of any news media firm. MFP-13: “Millennials seek job opportunities that allow them to be creative and part of the decision-making process.” Participant BBMR-6: “News media firms in North Alabama attract millennials by offering internships, in which they hope will lead to them wanting to choose a career in news media.” Participant GXMR-8 expressed how important

opportunities like internships are towards motivating millennials to choose the news media industry as a long-term career.

Participant MFT-1: “We are attracted to companies which represent our interests and who are socially and environmentally responsible.” Participant BBMP-5: “Companies who want to attract and retain millennials must consider what millennials consider important and attempt to address it in the workplace.” BBMP-5: “The concerns of all employees in any business must be considered in recruiting programs, especially those of millennials.” Determining a millennial’s passion in the news media industry will allow businesses to develop pathways for them to live out their passions and accomplish their goals, according to BBMT-14. Participant GXFT-15: “Millennials want to be able to access social media at all times during the day so they can share information with their friends.”

Participant BBMR-7: “News media positions draw millennials because jobs in news media allow them to express themselves and use the latest communication technologies.” Participant BBMR-7: “After millennials settle into news media positions, they soon realize this business is not as glamorous as they thought it was.” According to participant GXMR-8, millennials eventually find out that the expectations required of them due to the nature of the industry itself, such as long hours, meeting daily deadlines, and constantly staying abreast and ahead of the news cycle, are not easy and are not as one-dimensional as simply being able to understand and use technology. Participant BBMR-7 expands upon participant GXMR-8’s observation by explaining that this realization leads many millennial

employees to move from the news media industry to other types of businesses that they believe to be less stressful.

Participant BBMR-6: “The news media industry is not quick or easy to get into today.” Most news media employees begin their career by working as interns while attending local colleges in the community according to BBMR-7. Sponsors and college instructors of millennials encourage their students to participate in news media internship programs because of the hands-on experience they will receive, according to participant MFR-10. Participant MFR-10: “They also see this route as the best way to go to get a full-time position and gain real work experience while receiving college credit.” Participant BBMR-7: “Internships are really the way to start in the news media business.” Participant BBMR-7: “The trouble news media firms have recruiting millennials is finding college-age and even twenty-something age interns willing to come in early in their youth or while in college and get started in the news media business.”

Participant BBMR-6: “The concern is many news media interns who apply for internships quickly walk out the door when they discover there is very little or no pay associated with the internship.” Participant BBMR-6 used the analogy of a used car to paint a picture of this scenario by asking the researcher to visualize someone kicking the tires on a used car, believing it might still have years of safe use in it, but then realizing the car will take too much work and dedication to be serviceable. This results in the person walking away after deciding that was their best, or only, option. In this example, the young college intern, the millennial

worker, comes to the realization that internships provide too little pay or no pay at all and subsequently walks away.

Participant MFP-4: “Many millennials interested in a news media career are trying to gain experience in a workplace that is dynamic and challenging.”

Participant MFP-13: “They are attracted to businesses that allow them the ability to change and grow.” According to participant MFP-4: “Millennials want to be a part of an organization that allows them to learn news processes and procedures and not lock them into one specific job or task.” Participant GXMP-3: “They desire a workplace that is active and ever-changing, which keeps them engaged in their company’s mission.” Participants GXMP-3 and BBMP-5 believe millennials who display high levels of drive and motivation can move up the corporate ladder very quickly. Participant GXFT-15: “News media firms seek employees by partnering with local colleges during their career day activities.” Participant GXFT-15: “Millennials desire to have a career path they can follow and know they are on track to succeed.” Participant GXFT-15: “This allows them to want to stay long-term.”

Participant BBMR-6: “Many millennials do not have their career paths locked-in. This may be one reason they move from job to job more quickly than other generations used to.” Participant GXMR-8: “Millennials require and want constant mentorship and a clear cut career path to follow for success.” Participant BBMT-14 commented on the shared responsibility of the millennial worker and his or her supervisor to work together to allow the millennial employee to receive

training and job assignments that will allow him or her to be fulfilled at work and want to remain long-term. Participant BBMT-14 stated: “A leader must have some leverage to help keep good millennial workers from leaving so soon, such as money, prestige, a better assignment, or whatever the company can offer.”

Participant GXFT-15: “If leaders do not have the ability to make these types of decisions, a millennial’s chance of leaving the company will increase.”

Many news media firms successfully attract smart, young millennials by offering “perks,” such as job rotations, flexible work hours, and constant mentorship, according to participant BBMT-14. Participant MMT-11: “Millennials at the same time, want to work with other knowledgeable, more senior leaders.”

Participant MFR-10: “The use of technology is a strong draw to attracting and keeping millennials as today’s news media moves to a more digital platform.” A company’s ability to purchase high-tech, new digital media equipment has helped attract and retain many millennial news media personnel longer, according to participant MFR-9. Participant GFXT-12: “Millennials want a workplace environment that is flexible, fluid, and allows them to work outside the office.”

The following are participant responses to interview question

number four:

Interview question 4: Is leader development training important to you and your career?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question two.

Participant BBMP-5: “An organization must have a leadership development plan in place to allow future leaders the opportunity to be trained by other successful leaders.” Based on participants’ BBMP-2 and GXMP-3’s comments, the major note of concern in this area was the lack of formal leadership development training provided by businesses for all of their employees, especially millennials. BBMT-14: “Millennials need to be trained and coached by other senior employees to understand the history of the company and to know its vision and goals.” BBMP-5: “It is important businesses be prepared to replace leaders in their organizations by having plans in place.”

According to participant BBMR-7: “Leadership development is critical when teaching younger employees how to conduct company business the way a company wants it done.” Participants GXMR-8 and BBMP-5 believe that when businesses invest in their employees by providing them leadership development training, the employees will put more effort into their workplace duties. Participant MFP-4: “Leadership training and leader development training are important tools to use to prepare future leaders for any organization.”

The following are participant responses to interview question number five:

Interview question 5: Is the use of the latest office technology important to you?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question one.

Participant MFR-10: “Millennials are arriving in the workplace already very computer literate and confident in their digital knowledge.” BBMP-5: “Millennials are valuable assets to print news media firms as they move from print to digital means of presenting information on multiple stages and different types of platforms.” According to participant BBMR-7, news media firms utilize digital cutting edge technologies which millennials can immediately manage and operate. Participant BBMT-14: “News media firms use many digital social network platforms to communicate the news to the public and millennials can manage these platforms very quickly with very little formal training.” According to CEO participants BBMP-5 and BBMT-14, news media firms are seeking to hire millennials because they are very knowledgeable about a multitude of social media platforms and technology databases.

News media firms are attractive to millennials because they spend large periods of time online using their smart phones to communicate, according to participant GXMP-3. According to participant GXMR-8, when news media firms can hire an individual like a millennial with pre-existing skills using social media platforms, they are strongly encouraged to do so, as having this type of skill-set allows companies to receive an instant return on their hiring investment. According to participants MFT-1 and MFP-4, when news media firms recruit through digital social media platforms, they are likely to appeal to millennials.

Participant BBMR-6, CEO position, commented on how important it is that businesses stay at the forefront of the public consumption of news and information.

Participant BBMT-14, CEO, remarked how imperative it is to have personnel who can consistently and properly manipulate and handle current communication technologies efficiently and effectively every day. Most business leaders today expect millennial new hires to already be computer savvy and able to multitask with several communication devices, according to participants BBMT-14 and BBMR-6. According to participant BBMR-7, the more technology is implemented in the daily tasks of a news media firm, the more efficient the organization will become. Participant BBMR-7: “It is very important for older generations in the media workforce to learn how to work with millennials in order to learn new computer skills.”

The following are participant responses to interview question number six:

Interview question 6: What workplace flexibility do you desire to have the option to utilize?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question one.

Participants GXMP-3 and BBMP-5 commented that millennials enjoy working in non-traditional office spaces and in virtual office spaces or teleworking. Participant BBMP-2 stated that millennials understand that news today is delivered in more diverse and frequent platforms around the clock from outside the traditional office space environments. Participant BBMP-2: “They want the flexibility to prepare and deliver the news in a way very different from in the past.”

According to participant BBMT-14, news media business leaders must be able to embrace current communications technologies and allow employees the flexibility to use them outside the traditional office space. News media millennial employees are more willing to work from home with these new technologies because of their knowledge and use of current technologies, according to participant BBMT-14.

Participant MFP-4: “Millennials are more willing to check their email throughout the night and will sleep within arms-reach of their smart phones.” Participant BBMP-5: “Millennials are more willing to come in early, stay late, and work overtime versus the older generations.”

Millennials are attracted to news media firms because they will allow them to telework and work flexible hours, according to participant BBMT-14. Participant MFP- 13: “Millennials are more willing to work flexible schedules because they want the opportunity to travel or take off to go on weekend trips.” Participant GXMR-8: “Older generations are less flexible with their traditional work hours because they have more responsibilities at work and at home.” Participant GXFT- 15: “Single parent millennials are attracted to jobs that allow them to telework from their homes.” Participant MFP-13: “Millennials can manipulate communications technology devices much easier than older generations because they grew up in the digital growth era.” Participant BBMT-14: “Millennials see the entire world because they are connected to the Internet and stay on networking websites constantly.”

The following are participant responses to interview question

number seven:

Interview question 7: What employer workplace benefits are important to you?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question two.

Participant BBMR-7: “Employer loyalty towards millennial employees is a major factor for business leaders to consider to help prevent high turnover rates.” Participants BBMP-5 and BBMR-6 both commented that management does not display enough loyalty to younger employees, which could lead to higher turnover rates. Participant MFP-4: “Millennials want what most Americans want in the workplace: decent salary, vacation and sick days, basic health benefits, and a retirement fund.” Participants MFP-13 and MMT-11 believe a fair pay wage is the most important benefit millennials seek prior to employment. Participants BBMR-6 and MFR-9 both stated that millennials born in the 90s are more concerned about higher wages than improved health care benefits such as medical, vision, and dental care. Millennials also desire a respectful relationship with other generations in the workplace, according to participant MFP-4. Participant MFP-4: “Being a journalist can be quite stressful; sometimes things get heated.”

According to participant GXFT-15, millennials born in the 80s are more concerned with health care benefits versus millennials born in the 90s. Participant BBMP-2 stated that many news media agencies now offer free gym memberships

to their employees. Participant MFP-4 commented that, as millennials get older, medical benefits are becoming more critical in recruiting them. Participants MFR-9 and MFR-10 both agreed that having a retirement program is essential to recruiting and retaining quality millennial employees. Participant MFP-13: “Millennials are just as concerned about their retirement as generations before them and would also like to have a 401(k) or Roth IRA to rely on when they retire as well.” According to participant MFP-4: “Vacation time is a major benefit that encourages younger employees to remain long-term at a business.” However, according to participant BBMT-14, many news media firms do not provide vacation time to newer employees until they have worked several months, which can be a deterrent to recruiting millennial employees.

The following are participant responses to interview question number eight:

Interview question 8: What leadership style(s) do millennials respond best to?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question two.

Participants GXMR-8 and GXFT-12 believe most millennials want a leader who is less formal and more-friendly than a hard line, authoritative boss.

Participant BBMT-14: “Millennials respond better to less of micromanaging leadership styles.” Participant GXFT-15, however, stated, “Some millennials actually need to be micromanaged because they do not perform well with time

management guidelines and restrictions; they also have trouble staying on schedule.”

Participant MFT-1: “Millennials are not able to handle pressure as well as older generations did.” Participant GXFT-15 believes millennials born in the 90s do not properly respect their elders at work as well as the millennials born in the 80s. Participant BBMP-2 does not believe millennials accept criticism very well or handle pressure as well as other generations do. Participants MFR-9 and MFR-10 believe millennials do not accept direct leadership styles very well. Participant GXMR-8: “Millennials do not take orders very well in the workplace and have to be asked very gently before they can accept any directions.” Participant BBMR-7 added, “Millennials work best when they believe they are involved in the decision making process and feel like they are making a positive difference for their organization.” Participant BBMT-14: “They must be told how important it is what they do for the success of their company.”

Participant GXMP-3 has supervised many millennials and has found that a more relaxed leadership style works best. According to GXMP-3, keeping the environment more relaxed and less rigid allows millennials to thrive and begin to build relationships, sharing their computer and technical knowledge with other, less computer savvy, generations in the workplace. According to participant GXFT-12, millennials like to work in a lighter work atmosphere, not just fun and games, but more collaborative and less competitive. They do not like to be micromanaged; they want to know what is expected of them daily and then allowed the resources

and time needed to get it accomplished, according to GXFT-12 and BBMP-5.

Participant GXMP-3 believes that when millennials are included in the company creative process, the product outcome is always top notch.

The following are participant responses to interview question number nine:

Interview question 9: Do millennials work well with other generations within the organization?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question two.

Simply having an office with a door and a designated parking spot are not at the top of a millennial employee's wish list, according to the CEO participants BBMR-6 and BBMT-14. Participants MFR-9 and MFR-10 agreed; millennials prefer open office floor plans. Participant GXMP-3: "They do not enjoy working in cubicles or behind walls." Participant GXMP-3: "They desire to have work spaces that are open without walls." GXFT-15: "Open floor plans make it easier for millennials to work together to get their work done."

Participant BBMR-6: "Millennials also want to be able to communicate freely up and down their leadership chain." They do not want to wait on office protocols or permission from supervisors to talk to other employees in other departments, according to participant MFR-9. BBMT-14: "Older generation supervisors depend on the work millennials do and appreciate the way they like to work as a team." Participant GXMP-3: "Millennials have a fresh outlook on present

work tasks, objectives, and means of accomplishing them and are not caught up with the old way of doing business.” However, other generational cohorts working side-by-side with newly hired millennials report they may not work well with older generations currently in the workplace, according to participants GXMP-3 and BBMP-2. Participant BBMR-6: “They could learn a lot from older generations in the workforce if they would just observe and listen to older employees more often.” Participant MFR- 9, however, stated, “This is not always the case: a minority of millennials do not like to work in groups or with older generations in the workforce.” Participant GXFT-15 validated this statement by participant MFR-9, stating, “There are millennials who are very headstrong in the way they do things.”

The following are participant responses to interview question number ten:

Interview question 10: What attributes and characteristics define millennials as unique in the workplace?

The responses to this question assisted in answering research question two.

The participants GXMR-8 and GXFT-12 believe millennials, as a group of individuals, possess some unique characteristics that define them in the workplace. Participant MFR-9: “Millennials want to use the latest technology daily in the workplace.” According to participant BBMR-6, millennials are the most tech-savvy generation in the workforce today, and any organization that wants to succeed must hire them in large numbers. According to GXFT-12, these unique characteristics

have been earned by millennials based on their thorough knowledge of communications technology devices and other emerging digital technologies.

Participant BBMT-14: “Millennials bring newer and fresher ideas to the workplace because of their computer knowledge and their ability to think outside the box.” Participant GXFT-15: “They solve many problems by seeking help from their friends and their social networks.” Participant BBMR-6 noted that their creativity is very impressive and that they can see a set of solutions that older generations might not even consider. Participant GXFT-12 commented on the wealth of knowledge millennials possess. Not only do many business leaders take this aspect of millennials for granted, they actually expect it, according to CEO participants BBMP-5 and BBMT-14.

Participant GXFT-12: “Millennials are not locked into the old ways of conducting business at work; they see workplace challenges in a much different and fresher way.” Participant BBMT-14: “millennials bring a ton of knowledge and experience from a digital standpoint and a lot of energy into the organization as well.” Participant GXFT-15: “Millennials, obviously younger than most people in the office, bring a different and contagious energy to the workplace.” Participant BBMP-2: “Even if millennials do not necessarily have the background or existing knowledge in a technical function, they are still able to catch on to it very quickly.”

Millennials have a high expectation for how work tasks are performed at a news media workplace, according to participant BBMR-7. Participant GXMP-3: “Business leaders see millennials as a positive disruptive force in the workforce

because they force leadership to relook workplace challenges very differently than in the past.” Participant GXFT-15: “They are an important part of news media firms because they know how to handle reporting news in a disruptive world situation and are not afraid to be the face of a news media firm during breaking news situations.” They also enjoy competing with other news firms to bring current news updates via audio and visual platforms, according to participant MMT-11.

According to participant GXMP-3: “Millennials can utilize technology as if they are fish swimming in the sea; they know how to use media technologies, and they know when to use them.” Participant MFP-13: “Millennials are not afraid to operate and use new technologies.” No matter the ambitious, hardworking, and contributing ways of many millennials, there are some within this generation who do not quite live up to these characteristics or expectations, according to GXFT-15. Participants BBMR-7 and GXMR-8 did acknowledge and agree with the notion that there are some millennials who are the opposite of the current, more accepted, millennial stereotype of being very computer and technology literate.

Data Coding and Analysis

The participants were interviewed individually using a questionnaire that consisted of 12 semi-structured, open-ended questions. Clarification of questions was given as needed. The two groups that emerged out of the sample population were able to communicate their own personal views of their experiences as millennial employees (group one) and as co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs of millennials (group two) in North Alabama news media firms. In an effort to

determine the true experience of millennials in North Alabama news media workplaces, the study included not only millennial viewpoints, but also those of their co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs to ensure a full and rich picture is presented. All digital audio interviews were transcribed by a reputable transcription service to ensure the validity of the data collected.

The researcher emailed all digital audio recordings of interviews to Vanan Online Services. The interviews were then transcribed into Microsoft Word documents and emailed back to the researcher. The content of all of the interviews were then analyzed using the NVivo Pro 11 software (NVivo QSR International, 2015). The NVivo Pro 11 is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software program designed to facilitate the analysis of non-numerical or unstructured data. The NVivo system can determine data from interview transcripts, notes or memos input into the system by the researcher. NVivo is able to group common thoughts from the transcribed interviews, notes or memos input into the system by the researcher. NVivo Pro 11 QDA software can facilitate the analysis of unstructured and descriptive text from interview transcripts for the purposes of collecting pertinent data for a qualitative research study. The NVivo data analysis system allows the researcher to sort, arrange and code qualitative data.

The phenomenological data process consists of collecting, coding, analyzing, and reporting the data from the participants (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative data analysis is the pursuit of the relationship between categories and themes of data striving to increase the understanding of a specific phenomenon

(Hilal & Alabri, 2013). By utilizing the NVivo Pro 11 QDA software analysis program word frequency query command, the researcher was able to construct a word cloud which assisted in identifying emerging themes due to their frequency of use during participant interview sessions.

The NVivo Pro 11 software analysis program was able to group common thoughts from the interview transcripts and identify emerging and eventually significant themes by first generating a word cloud (See Figure 3 below). The word cloud allows the researcher to analyze the frequent use of key words that are important to the sample population in the study. The NVivo Pro 11 software analysis program is an excellent tool to utilize for qualitative research studies. It provides a path and starting point for a researcher during the early stages of a study.

focusing on areas of millennial workplace concerns from the initial sample group, the researcher was able to narrow the emerging themes to the nine most significant themes that answered the research questions. The researcher accomplished this by dividing the sample group into two groups and analyzing their data. The nine significant themes were determined after the researcher conducted further manual analysis and synthesis of the data to ensure the research questions in this study were answered.

The final analysis of the significant themes required the researcher to reflect and seek common information in the participants' quotes and interview observations to determine the relevant data that could be utilized towards answering the research questions presented in this study. The researcher discovered one revelatory theme and two literature review theme subtopics were further expanded upon by comparing the significant themes from the research study to the themes discussed during the literature review. The researcher also provided key take-away points with each new theme that North Alabama news media firm business leaders can utilize in order to implement them into their business organizational cultures (see Figure 4 below).

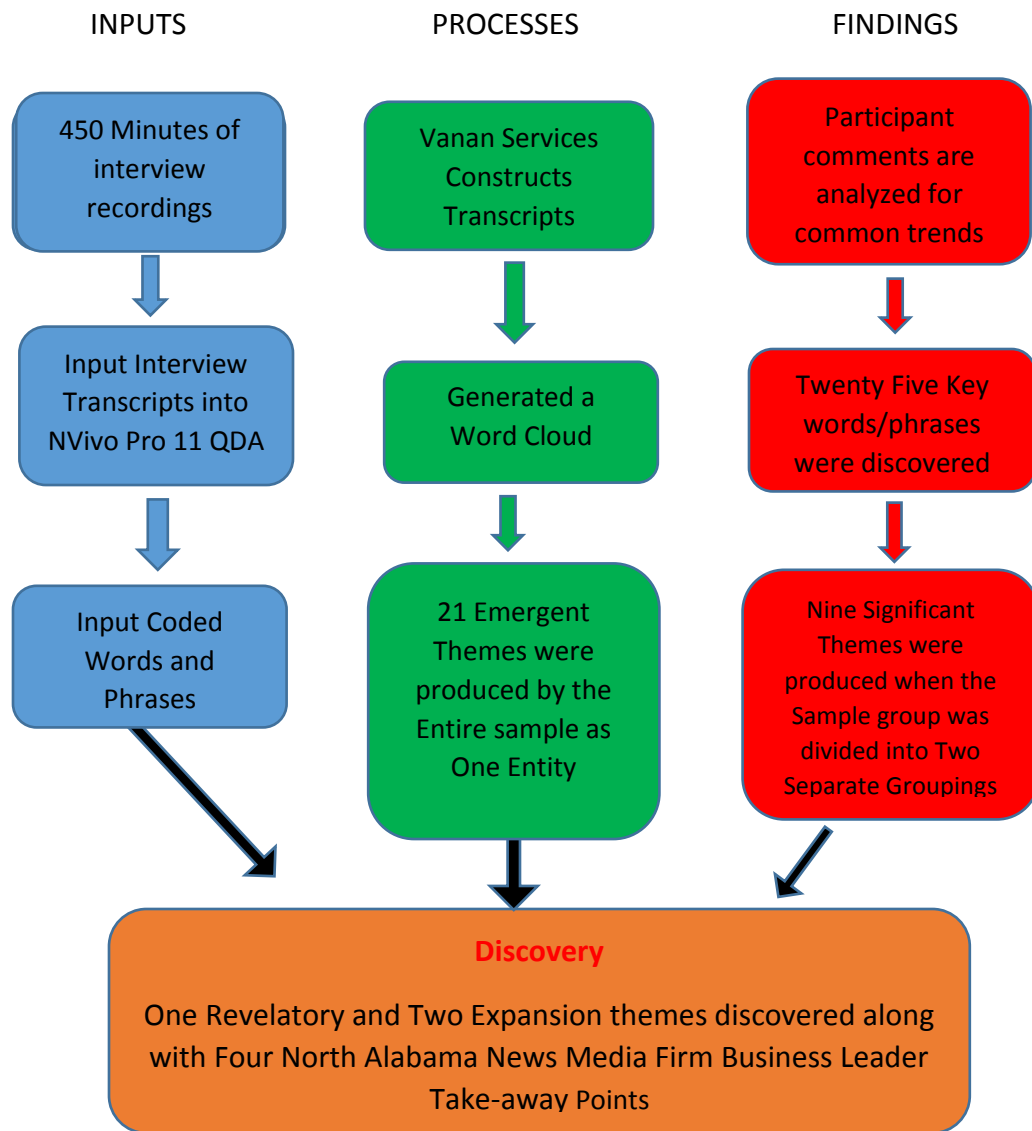


Figure 5. Data Analysis Methodology, NVivo Pro 11 Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Software

Research Findings

All interview participants' names and firms were kept anonymous throughout this study to comply with the study's confidential nature. Creswell (2014) stated that coding is the process of organizing the data by grouping it into different descriptive categories. These descriptive categories were developed by the researcher into a list of themes. The researcher then determined a list of the most significant themes based on their ability to address one or both of the research questions. The following research questions guided this study:

RQ1 -- What expectations and practices do millennials prefer in the workplace of their current news media firms to remain long-term?

RQ2 -- How can the expectations and practices millennials prefer in their current news media firms be initiated and implemented into the present workplace organizational culture?

The collection of 15 in-depth interview sessions initially produced twenty-one emergent themes to be analyzed (See Table 7 below). However, after the researcher's synthesis of the collected data was completed, only nine significant themes were relevant to answering the research questions in this study. The data analysis was conducted in two phases. In phase one of the data analysis, twenty-one themes emerged from the overall sample group data collected. In phase two of the data analysis, the sample group collected data was separated into two groups. Group one consisted of the six millennial employees, and group two consisted of their nine co-workers, supervisors, and CEOs. In phase two of the data analysis,

nine themes emerged from both groups. Both groups agreed on all nine of the themes.

Table 7. NVivo Twenty-One Emerging Themes from the Study

Number	Theme	Number	Theme
1.	Attracting and retaining millennials	12.	Management styles millennials desire
2.	Career goals of millennials	13.	Millennials' need to collaborate
3.	Career opportunities for millennials	14.	Millennials' need for the availability of technology
4.	Common millennial characteristics	15.	Motivation for millennials
5.	Communication conflicts with millennials	16.	The importance of social media for millennials
6.	Defining the millennial generation	17.	Unique millennial attributes (millennials as change agents)
7.	Desired leadership styles for millennials	18.	Work/life balance for millennials
8.	Desired organizational structure for millennials	19.	Workplace benefits for millennials
9.	Desired employer characteristics for millennials	20.	Workplace contributions for millennials
10.	Generational conflicts in the workplace	21.	Workplace flexibility needs for millennials
11.	Leadership development training for millennials		

The significant themes were determined when interview question responses by group one or by group two addressed the study research questions. The researcher ensured any and all possible new findings that could be derived from the data were allowed by first analyzing the data as one overall sample group and then as two separate groups. By dividing into two separate groups, the data collected would also represent the generational divide in the workspace.

The nine significant themes were finalized after further manual data analysis by the researcher to ensure both research questions were addressed by at least one group or by both groups. In group one, nine themes emerged from the twelve interview questions. In group two, nine themes also emerged from the twelve interview questions. There were three interview questions (Questions 3, 11 & 12) from which no themes emerged from either group. The two groups agreed on all nine of the significant themes. The nine significant themes are in the order of importance and priority for the workplace to be millennial-ready (see Table 8 below).

Table 8. Significant Ranked Revelatory Themes from the Study

Number	Theme
1.	Common millennial characteristics
2.	Attracting and retaining millennials
3.	Millennials' need for the availability of technology
4.	Millennials' need to collaborate
5.	Unique millennial attributes (millennials as change agents)
6.	Desired leadership styles for millennials
7.	Leadership development training for millennials
8.	Workplace benefits for millennials
9.	Workplace flexibility for millennials

Theme 1. Common millennial characteristics

Participants in the study varied on what they considered to be common millennial characteristics displayed in the workplace. Millennials in news media workplaces do not recognize, at times, how other workplace generations view them. The baby boomers and generation X cohorts view millennials, for the most part, as hard workers and conscientious employees. Other generations in the workplace must build relationships with millennials one relationship at a time to understand what is important to them in the workplace and in the community in which they live. There is a primary myth that millennials seek instant gratification in all of their endeavors; this study determined that not to be true. Millennials in

news media workplaces are just as able as prior workplace generations to work long-term for advancement and to work less desirable positions in order to earn the positions they desire.

Millennials are concerned with not only the success of their firms but their communities as well. Millennials will work long hours and sacrifice their personal time for their businesses to succeed, just as prior workplace generations are willing to do. Some millennials, but not all millennials in this study, do seek constant feedback and positive reinforcement on a daily basis. They want to succeed in the workplace and earn the respect of their peers and seniors leaders. Millennials seek the same opportunities as previous workplace cohorts and want to become industry leaders and managers of the future. Millennials want to learn from older generations in the workplace and are willing to share their knowledge of computers and social media platforms. They want to build social networks at work and in the community and will use them to solve problems in the workplace.

Theme 2. Attracting and retaining millennials

News media firms in North Alabama attract millennial employees by advertising internship jobs that are steeped in technology and require the ability to be creative. Internships are the primary entry point to many positions in the news media industry. Businesses must create positions that allow millennials to use their computer skills and social media platforms to accomplish their tasks. Millennials desire to work in news media firms because they have opportunities to express their

personal feelings on current topics to large audiences. In the news media industry, they can operate current communications technology.

Businesses must be careful not to let millennials linger too long with menial tasks during internships, or they have the tendency to lose interest and abandon a career in the news media industry. Many millennials will begin a college internship program but will depart it when they realize there is no regular salary attached to the position. Many millennials are seeking a challenge and are attracted to the glamor they may think is a part of the news media industry. Businesses must show millennials a path for success early in their careers to motivate them to remain long-term.

Theme 3. Millennials' need for the availability of technology

Millennials seek to utilize communications technology devices daily at work and at their homes. Participants in the study all agree that millennials are always tuned in, or in other words, tied into the internet or social media platforms. Businesses that can provide daily opportunities for millennials to interface with multiple social media platforms and internet searches will gain their approval. Millennials will respond to digital communications almost around the clock; older workplace generations are not as adept at operating new, emerging computer technologies as millennials. Businesses must hire millennials due to this generation in large part possessing excellent computer operations skills.

As news media businesses become more and more digital and less paper driven, it will be millennials who will lead that charge. The news media industry,

by its very nature, allows millennials to access communications technology and opportunities to interface with social media platforms daily. This motivates millennials to desire to be a part of the news media industry in large numbers. Millennials are drawn to the latest technological devices and are able to manage and operate them very efficiently, which allows businesses to become more successful.

Theme 4. Millennials' need to collaborate

Millennials, for the most part, are very gregarious people and enjoy working together on projects. The majority of millennials were raised being a part of a sports team or a community civic organization. This has left them with the belief that working in groups to solve issues is a positive experience and should be a part of everyday life in the workplace and in their communities. This trait is very common among millennials in the news media industry.

Business leaders must understand the need millennials have to work in groups to accomplish daily tasks and large projects. Millennials have a knack for being able to synergize their strong tie and weak tie relationships in order to gain human capital towards accomplishing professional and personal goals. It is important to millennials to be a part of community and civic groups that have similar concerns on social justice and humanity issues. Millennials are not opposed to reaching out to people they may have relationships with in other departments in the workplace to get the job accomplished, unlike some of the previous generations

in the workplace. They want to have a friendly, collegiate relationship with their coworkers versus a more hierarchal interface.

Theme 5. Unique millennial attributes (millennials as change agents)

Millennials in the study displayed and communicated a unique set of attributes that most participants in the study agreed upon. The participants believe most millennials are very computer and technology literate and will help teach others in the workplace that may not be as adept with technology. There is a myth that millennials are lazy due to being observed manipulating the latest communications devices and not performing a more laborious task in the workplace. Millennials will perform the menial tasks as entry level employees, but in most cases, they will also arrive in the workplace with an in-depth knowledge of computer operations and applications.

Millennials are change agents who must be able to influence change to believe they are valued employees; when they believe they are valued members of their organizations, it encourages them to remain long-term. Millennials process information and their environments much differently than previous generations before them and will make long-term career decisions very quickly. The first workplace impression is very important to millennial employees. If they sense the organization is not millennial-friendly or millennial-ready, they will quickly decide to walk away from that employment opportunity. Millennials are attracted to businesses that allow them the ability to change and grow. They want to be a part of an organization that allows them to learn new processes and procedures and not

lock them into one specific job or task. Millennials want to be a part of an active and ever-changing workplace, which keeps them engaged in their company's mission. Millennials want to be a part of positive change in their workplaces and in the communities in which they live. They do not have a problem with leading change efforts if they believe they will improve the organizational environment.

One participant in the study used the analogy of a used car to describe a picture of someone kicking the tires on a used car, hoping it might still have years of safe use in it, but then realizing the car will take too much work and money to be serviceable. This results in the person walking away after deciding it would take too much effort to get the car in the condition they would prefer. In this example, a millennial worker comes to the realization that they may realize early in their employment with an organization that the organizational environment is not a good fit for them so they decide to depart from it quickly versus waiting and hoping the environment will become more millennial-friendly.

Businesses in the news media industry understand what the average millennial employee will bring to their business on day one with no training provided. It is a valuable asset to businesses that the millennial generation is well versed in current computer and communications technologies and can utilize their skills almost immediately upon being hired. The news media industry is a millennial-friendly environment that allows it to leverage millennials unique attributes on a daily basis. Due to seemingly always being linked into the Internet, social media platforms, or communications devices, millennials have a unique

perspective of our world; news media industries can be the beneficiaries of this knowledge.

Theme 6. Desired leadership styles for millennials

Leadership styles that leaders employ are very critical towards mission accomplishment in the workplace. The majority of millennials desire a collegiate and friendly leadership style, due to their history of playing on several teams as youths. Millennials do not like to be micromanaged; they want to be trusted to get the job done if given the resources and time needed. They want to know exactly what is expected of them and when it is due so that they can plan accordingly to get the job done. Formality for millennials is off-putting; they want to be on a first name basis with all co-workers and supervisors. They do not want the workplace to be too rigid and want to have fun at work while they accomplish their missions.

Millennials expect to be treated as equals early in their careers even though they may have been recently hired. They believe their technology skills are important to the organization and want to be respected for their knowledge level immediately upon being hired. The millennial generation enjoys working with older generations and sharing their digital technology skills and knowledge. Authoritative leadership styles do not mesh well with millennials. They are turned off by direct and stern leadership tactics and techniques. They want to be included in the decision making process when it comes to the way they are managed and supervised.

Theme 7. Leadership development for millennials

Millennials desire to receive leadership development for future leadership positions at their workplaces. Businesses that have formal leadership development programs in place are very attractive for millennial employees. Millennials in news media firms want to know what their pathways are to promotions and educational opportunities. Formal leadership development programs would allow for millennials to receive the institutional and historical company knowledge they would need to be able to represent their organizations in an intelligent manner.

Businesses that do not invest in formal leadership development programs will miss the opportunity to assess the talent they may already have in their organizations and waste assets trying to recruit new talent. Most millennials arrive at the workplace with advanced computer application skills but need to receive leadership development training to improve on any weak areas or discover any hidden talents on which the organizations may be able to capitalize. Millennial employees seek mentorship from more seasoned and older employees in order to increase their job knowledge and to find out what problems may exist of which they are not yet aware. Businesses can reduce their high millennial turnover rates by providing leadership development training and assigning new millennial employees mentors who can guide them through the different stages of the onboarding process.

Theme 8. Workplace benefits for millennials

Workplace benefits are very important to millennials in news media firms in North Alabama. They want to know they have opportunities for retirement accounts when they retire, as did previous generations. Older millennials are more concerned about medical benefits than younger millennials. Younger millennials prize take home salary pay without benefit deductions more highly than salary pay deductions for medical benefits and retirement accounts.

Millennial employees with children would like to have free daycare provided by their companies. Younger millennials place more value on vacation time versus older millennials, who place more value on medical benefits. Millennials, in general, enjoy being physically fit and believe businesses should provide free fitness facilities and opportunities for their employees to be fit. Workplace benefits will continue to be strong recruitment incentives for millennials seeking employment in news media firms in North Alabama.

Theme 9. Workplace flexibility for millennials

Workplace flexibility is a critical element for millennials. They want the ability to work from home or outside their normal workspaces. They believe that the current communication technologies allow them to be just as productive at home or elsewhere as they would be if they were at their office desks. Most news media firms in North Alabama allow their employees to telework from their homes or other locations as long as they get their work completed on time. Millennials, as

a generation, are known to always stay connected digitally, and working off-site using digital connections is normal to most millennials.

Being able to work off-site is a strong recruiting and retention tool for millennials. They want to have a work/life balance and being able to work off-site often is very attractive to them. News media millennial employees expect to be able to work off-site often and to turn in assignments at all times of the day and night, as needed, to distribute the current news. Millennials think very globally due to their need to stay connected to the world through daily Internet searches and interacting with several social media platforms. News media millennial employees must have the flexibility they need to communicate the news and maintain a work/life balance, which is paramount to them as a generation.

North Alabama News Media CEO Take-Away Points

The literature review performed by the researcher in Chapter two revealed ten themes. The research study conducted by the researcher revealed nine themes (see Table 9 below). Six themes in the literature review, as well as in the research study, were very similar. The researcher's findings became apparent after comparing the literature review themes to the revelatory themes, which resulted in the discovery of one new theme and further exploration of two themes that were presented as subtopics of two literature review themes. This is new information for the body of knowledge. The nine revelatory themes the researcher discovered must be acknowledged, addressed, and implemented into the daily operations and

organizational culture of news media firms in North Alabama in order to increase millennial employee recruiting and retention rates.

Table 9. Literature Review Themes Ranked Comparison with Revelatory Study Themes

Number	Literature Review Theme	Number	Revelatory Study Themes
1.	Generational characteristics of the four generations in the workforce currently	1.	Common millennial characteristics (Similar theme to research study theme)
2.	Millennial workplace expectations	2.	Attracting and retaining millennials (Similar theme to research study theme)
3.	Millennial workplace characteristics	3.	Millennials' need for the availability of technology (Similar theme to research study theme)
4.	Millennial generation diversity and Uniqueness	4.	Millennials' need to collaborate (Literature review theme subtopic)
5.	Motivating, managing, and mentoring millennials	5.	Unique millennial attributes, millennials' need to be change agents (New theme)
6.	Millennial beliefs and traits	6.	Desired leadership styles for millennials (Similar theme to research study theme)
7.	Leadership styles millennials prefer	7.	Leadership development training for millennials (Similar theme to research study theme)
8.	Leadership development for millennials	8.	Workplace benefits for millennials (Similar theme to research study theme)
9.	Recruiting and retaining millennials	9.	Workplace flexibility for millennials (Literature review theme subtopic)
10.	Generational conflicts		

The one new revelatory theme and the two further explored literature review theme subtopics the researcher discovered must be considered for implementation by all North Alabama news media leadership to ensure all employees acknowledge that millennials must be allowed to collaborate, be change agents, and have workplace flexibility daily in order to reach their potential for their businesses. The millennial generation must have their value to their organizations recognized and understood by all employees. These three new ideas must be acknowledged by all employees and implemented immediately to ensure millennial employees are seen as valuable assets that businesses must recruit and retain to succeed (see Table 10 below).

Table 10. Research Study Revelatory Themes/Further Expansion Literature Review Theme Subtopics/CEO Take-away Points

Theme	Research Study Revelatory Themes/ Further Expansion Literature Review Theme Subtopics	News Media CEO Take-away Points
1.	Millennials' need to collaborate (literature review theme subtopic that needed further exploration)	They must collaborate often and believe they are making important contributions to the organization's success. They believe in working smarter, not harder, by collaborating often, if not daily, on routine and non-routine workplace tasks.
2.	Millennials have unique attributes that allow them to become change agents and impactful in the workplace (new research study theme)	Millennials process information and their environments' differently than previous generations. When millennials are able to influence change they believe they are valued and this motivates them to remain long-term.
3.	Workplace flexibility needs for millennials (literature review theme subtopic that needed further exploration)	They must have workplace flexibility to be able to balance their work/life needs. They believe there is no reason to be at work if the job can be accomplished remotely through technology outside the normal workspace.

Contribution to North Alabama News Media Firms

The research findings are intended to help business leaders better understand how to recruit and retain millennial employees long-term in their current news media firms in North Alabama. Millennials will comprise 75% of the workforce in 2025 and currently comprise over 35% of the workforce (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016; Galentine, 2013; Deloitte, 2014). This study was designed to fill a knowledge gap by understanding why growing numbers of news media firm employees in North Alabama fail to remain long-term at their current firms. The researcher contributed nine revelatory themes and four news media firm CEO take-away points to be acknowledged and implemented into the organizational culture of North Alabama news media firms in order to promote the preferences and practices millennials desire in order to remain long-term. Millennial workplace expectations and preferences must be considered if a business wants to recruit and retain them long-term.

According to Meister (2012), 91% of millennial employees expect to stay in their jobs less than three years. Businesses must be able to answer the questions of what millennials expect and prefer in the workplace and how to implement those things in order to recruit and retain them long-term. A 2012 survey by Net Impact found that 88% of workers that left a job in less than three years considered a “positive culture” essential to remaining at that job long-term. News media firm business leaders in North Alabama must ensure their organizational cultures are

sensitive to the needs and preferences of millennial employees if they want to reduce high turnover rates and protect the company's bottom line.

Summary and Synthesis of Data

News media firm millennial employees located in North Alabama are not remaining long-term with the firms where they are currently employed. As employers continue to seek out employees to replace the fast growing number of retiring veteran/traditionalist and baby boomer generation employees, there are not enough generation X employees to fill the gaps, and business leaders will have to recruit and retain millennial generation employees for their businesses to succeed. The millennial generation is a unique generation that businesses must be able to relate to and provide a millennial-ready workplace for to retain them long-term. There are 92 million millennials in the United States (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016).

The primary goal of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to gain more understanding of why North Alabama news media millennial employees, as a generation, are not remaining long-term at their current firms. The researcher investigated three North Alabama news media firm workplaces to discover what organizational culture is millennial-ready that millennials can relate to and remain long-term. Millennials are currently the largest working generation in corporate America and must be retained for any business to succeed (Feeney, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2015).

Chapter four provided an overview of the study and data analysis procedures and discussed the significant themes that emerged from the collected

data. This chapter provided nine themes for business leaders to acknowledge and implement into their news media firms to decrease the high millennial turnover rate and to increase retention rates. The researcher also provided important take away points for CEOs in news media firms in North Alabama to infuse into their organizational cultures in order to recruit and retain millennial employees long-term. Chapter five includes a discussion of the significant themes that emerged during data analysis, conclusions of this study, and current and future recommendations for business leaders to consider for implementation. Chapter five concludes with a review of the limitations of this research study and considerations for further research.

Chapter 5. Discussion and Recommendations

Chapter five details the contribution of this study to the current body of knowledge. This chapter includes the implications of this research study and recommendations for news media firm business leaders to implement in order to retain and recruit millennial employees. Chapter five also discusses suggestions for future research and ends with the summary.

Overview

As discussed earlier, the current workforce in corporate America is aging, and there are not enough generation X population employees to fill the gaps created by retiring baby boomer and veteran generation employee retirements. The growth of technology in the workplace has made it imperative that incoming employees be well-versed in computer skills and social media platforms. Millennials, due to being raised immersed in the digital age and possessing the ability to quite easily manipulate all types and forms of communication technology devices, are in high demand by businesses. As millennials have begun to join the workforce in large numbers over the last few years, they have also developed a history of moving from job to job in a very short amount of time versus previous workplace generations.

Businesses must be able to recruit and retain millennials long-term for their organizations to be successful. The high millennial turnover rate is costing businesses upwards to 150% of salary of the departing employee (Jurnak, 2010). Businesses must discover practices and methods to implement in order to recruit

and retain millennial employees to fill the gaps left by the retiring older generations. According to the United States Census Bureau (2015), millennials outnumber generation X 83.1 million to 75.4 million. Millennials also represent more than one quarter of the nation's population (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

The things that are important to millennials in the workplace are drastically different from things that were essential to older generations. Older generations in the workplace must learn to connect with the millennial generation so they will be able to exchange needed information such as company history and important tacit information to have a more efficient workplace. Millennials' ability to collaborate daily is key to an organization being successful. One of the primary findings from this study is the need for millennials to exchange information and collaborate daily. All generations in the workplace must learn to complement, not compete, with one another for a business to succeed.

Each generation could learn much from the other if the communication between them is respectful and each generation is open to new and different ways of accomplishing tasks. Older generations must understand that millennials want to work smarter, not harder, at work, and they have no problem with working less than eight hours per day if they are able to get the job done. Millennials work to live; they do not live to work as previous generations have been known to do. This researcher determined this from the comments shared by the participants in the study.

Contribution of the Study

This qualitative research study contributed to the existing body of knowledge by providing nine themes for news media business leaders to consider for implementation into their workplace organizational culture. The researcher discovered one new significant theme and expounded on two existing literature review theme subtopics discussed during the literature review pertaining to millennials in the workplace. The individual interview sessions in the current study consisted of twelve open-ended, semi-structured questions to determine an in-depth understanding of millennials' workplace expectations and the practices they prefer in North Alabama news media firms in order to remain long-term.

The literature review performed by the researcher in chapter two revealed ten themes, as compared to the research study conducted by the researcher revealing nine themes. Six themes in the literature review and in the research study were very similar. The researcher's discovery of one new theme and the further exploration of two literature review theme subtopics during this research study is new knowledge that can be considered for workplace implementation in order to increase millennial employee recruiting and retention rates in North Alabama news media firms. The new themes the researcher discovered during this study will fill a gap of knowledge concerning millennial employees that work in North Alabama news media firms. Two of the three themes were barely covered as literature review theme subtopics. The further examination of these subtopics has brought forth new

information to the body of knowledge that business leaders can consider when managing North Alabama news media millennial employees.

Discussion and Implications

The millennial generation must be accepted and integrated into corporate America businesses as previous generations were for businesses to succeed. Millennials possess identifiable characteristics, unique attributes, and specific workplace expectations that must be addressed by business leaders in order to recruit and retain them long-term. North Alabama news media firm millennial employees are the primary representatives of their organizations, and they relish the opportunity to be the faces and voices of their organizations to their audiences. These millennials deliver the news and drive public opinion not only in North Alabama but also in the United States.

News media firm millennial employees in North Alabama are positioned in a very unique geographic area due to the scientific and technological developments that this region produces for America. This allows them to report the latest technological developments in the Research Park Government Defense Agency Business district to not only their local audiences but to the world as well. This unique opportunity they are able to experience allows them to have more national exposure than the average millennial news reporter or journalist who may be assigned in other regions of America. Their jobs in the local media firms here in North Alabama are very important and noticeable locally and abroad. They are easily recognized in the community, and they build relationships with their

audiences, which affects the financial bottom line for their organizations. News media business leaders in North Alabama must consider implementing measures to ensure the following three themes are acknowledged, addressed, and implemented in the workplace organizational culture to increase millennial employee recruiting and retention rates:

1. Millennials' need to collaborate
2. Millennials' need to be change agents
3. Workplace flexibility needs for millennials

Millennials' Need to Collaborate

The responses from the study participants indicated that millennials enjoy collaboration in order to complete tasks. Millennials' desire workplaces that are collaborative in nature, revolve around teamwork with constant mentorship, and are structured so that they have the ability to give and receive immediate feedback. As such, supervisors must consider millennials' desires to collaborate when assigning them tasks and work spaces. Businesses must always continue to discern how their employees work together in groups, as well as individually.

Millennials were raised to be the center of attention by their baby boomer parents (Caraher, 2015). Baby boomer parents who could afford it ensured that their millennial children had access to emerging technologies. Their parents also gave them opportunities to play on multiple sports teams, which led them to want to work in teams and often collaborate when given workplace tasks. At times, millennials may act as if they are superior to others who do not have their level of

digital or technological expertise. Some also require constant positive reinforcement and feedback, as they did from their parents and coaches while growing up.

Millennials are very involved in the communities in which they live and want to improve them with their knowledge and volunteer work (Pew Research Center, 2015). Subsequently, workplace and community friendships are very important to them as well. They want to build their personal and professional social networks so they can leverage them to solve problems at work and in the communities in which they live (Taylor, 2014). Millennials will ask other, more senior, business leaders for feedback without going through formal organizational structure channels.

Millennials want a leader who allows work flexibility, a balanced work/life, and the ability to access all available technology (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials like leaders who build teams. They like to be able to collaborate and receive mentorship from several capable supervisors. Millennials prefer a polite and collegiate relationship with authority (Zemke et al., 2013). They like to work in teams with a collective effort (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials like the idea of networking with others to share skill-sets toward project accomplishment. Millennials want to know that the work they are assigned will result in the improvement of the community (Caraher, 2015; Taylor, 2010). Millennials see themselves as self-starters and want the ability to accomplish tasks through

collaboration and with the use of technology. When it comes to millennials in the workplace, collaboration is the key to success!

Millennials' Need to be Change Agents

Many of the study participants described millennials as change agents. A change agent for millennial news media employees in North Alabama may include delivering the news about the latest technological advancement that will not only affect their local communities but the world as well (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). These millennial employees must have access to the most current communications technologies in order to capture and present the news in a timely manner. In many cases, the millennial news media employee will be the person who is demonstrating the latest communications technology device to his or her audiences during a nightly news show which, in turn, may motivate members of the public audience to go out and purchase that communications device the next day. They have a knack for demonstrating the use of highly technical equipment in a user-friendly way that allows individuals who may not feel they are able to operate the new equipment properly the confidence to use the item until they can master it as millennials often do (Taylor, 2014).

Millennials in this study report they are motivated to stay long-term in their North Alabama news media firms when they have the ability to make suggestions that can lead to changes that enable their organizations to become more efficient and millennial-friendly environments. Millennials want to be able to make a positive impact in the workplace almost immediately upon being hired (Espinoza &

Ukleja, 2016). Millennials frame problems much differently than generations before them. Business leaders should allow millennials to be a part of problem-solving teams within their organizations, because they bring fresh outlooks to solving not only technology driven problems but social interaction problems as well, due to their life experiences and diversity of friends (Lynch, 2008). They are able to see solutions that may be difficult for other generations to see due to how they were raised and socialized as young people (Pew Research Center, 2015). Millennials are a valuable asset for any business to leverage in efforts to become a profitable organization.

Workplace Flexibility Needs for Millennials

A barometer for relating with millennials is for businesses to determine what is important to them and where they are spending most of their time and money when not at work. The ability to recruit and retain millennial employees will be critical to any organization being successful in corporate America today (Taylor, 2014). Millennials find it interesting and exciting to play vital roles in the transformation of the means by which news is packaged and presented to the public. These attributes lead millennials to do well in news media firm positions. Millennials are able to multitask in the digital world rather easily due to growing up using these capabilities for long hours at a time.

Millennials enjoy working on digital media devices such as smart phones and communicating frequently on social media platforms (Pew Research Center, 2015). Businesses must have the latest communications tools to continue to deliver

news to the public in the most platforms available today and in the future. Working outside a traditional office space in areas such as an individual's home or at a computer café is commonly known as teleworking, and millennials are attracted to businesses that will allow them to telework. Business leaders must consider the workplace flexibility needs of millennials to recruit and retain them. Workplace flexibility is essential to retaining millennials!

Recommendations

The millennial cohort includes 92 million people, which constitutes over 25% of the current United States population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015; Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). According to Espinoza and Ukleja (2016), "By 2020, one in three adults will be a millennial, and when the clock clicks 2025, three of four workers will be from the millennial generation" (p. 4). The unique experience of multiple generations can create discrepancies in values, gender issues, cultural biases, and team building. With four different generations in the workforce, leaders need to meet the expectations of each generation to ensure organizational success. However, millennials are the largest working cohort in the world today and must be considered in every aspect for recruiting and retention purposes for any company that wants to be successful. Millennials want to work in an environment that is vastly different from the workspaces previous generations utilized.

The researcher recommends that the one new theme, the further explored literature review theme subtopics, and the teachable points resulting from this study be addressed and implemented in the organizational cultures of news media firms

in North Alabama. When news media business leaders implement these recommendations, it will reduce the high turnover rates of millennial employees in North Alabama news media firms. By making these workplace adjustments and changes, businesses can position themselves to attract, and also retain, millennials.

Millennials, by virtue of their young age alone, are known for their energy in the workplace and for their computer intellect. The researcher recommends North Alabama news media firm leaders implement policies and practices that are specifically aimed at decreasing millennial employee turnover rates. In today's society, there are many different avenues for consuming and disseminating news and information, and millennials are abreast of them as they have had more access to information technologies than any other generation before them. Consequently, they strive to utilize cutting edge technologies such as advanced smart phone technologies that have the capabilities to allow them to collect the news and deliver it on-site, in real time to their audiences.

Millennials in North Alabama news media firms believe the flow of information must be delivered through many different digital platforms so public consumers have every opportunity for daily access. They are accustomed to using the latest information technologies to communicate with their own social networks, and they want to leverage those same technologies when they deliver the news to their audiences. Businesses that want to continue to attract and retain millennial workers here in North Alabama news media firms must have the latest technology available for daily use in the workplace. Millennials are technologically driven, and

business leaders must feed that drive daily in their workplaces, or they will migrate to a workplace that allows their daily technology appetites to be satisfied.

Suggestions for Future Research

The current qualitative study contributed to understanding the preferences and expectations of the millennial cohort in news media workplaces in North Alabama. The participants worked in various news media firms. The following suggestions are offered for future research in exploring the preferences and expectations of the millennial cohort.

The focus of the current study was on millennial cohorts who had at least three years or more of news media firm work experience. It might be interesting to undertake a longitudinal study to explore the preferences and expectations of millennial generation news media employees as these cohort members move further in their careers and hold a variety of jobs. This would allow for a more seasoned millennial employee to report on the state of the work environment of the future pertaining to the acceptance of the skills and attributes millennials bring to the workplace.

The current study was limited to the North Alabama region of the United States, and the ability to generalize the findings are very specific and limited to North Alabama news media firms. Other researchers might wish to refine and expand this initial investigation to other regions and industries. This would allow for more data that could be applied in a more generalizable application.

Summary

Chapter five provided a discussion of the study results and recommendations for news media business leaders to consider based on the one newly discovered emergent theme and two existing literature review theme subtopics identified through the information gathered during the analysis of the fifteen individual interview sessions. The chapter ends with recommendations for further research and a summary. The results of this study were designed to provide actionable and implementable recommendations for news media business leaders to consider in order to recruit and retain millennial employees long-term in news media firms in North Alabama.

Business leaders are trying to find the best method to use to communicate with millennials in the workplace. It is imperative that business leaders relate to and understand the needs and concerns of millennials to address their preferences in the workplace. Leaders must be able to manage millennial workplace expectations, which are very different than those of older generations. According to Espinoza et al., (2010), “Mannheim thought that the generation a person belongs to determines, to a certain extent, his or her thoughts, feelings, and even behaviors” (p. 15). Millennials want to receive leadership development and mentorship so they can succeed in corporate America. News media businesses will have to tailor their approaches to reach the millennial population with a message that they can accept and to which they can relate. A business that can keep the interest levels of millennials peaked will increase their millennial employee retention rates.

Understanding the mindsets, personalities, and characteristics of millennials in order to gauge not only their work ethic but how well they can handle pressure, criticism, and direction in the workplace is very important to every business that wishes to be successful. As such, this was a major focus of this study. When millennials believe they are part of a close work group that communicates easily and works together in harmony, they are encouraged to stay long-term with the organization and, in fact, often want to stay. A millennial will even use his or her own personal and professional network of friends, associates, and resources to solve office problems and accomplish daily tasks if given the opportunity to manage his or her social media networks during normal work hours.

North Alabama news media firms should have a balance of different generational cohorts with their different views, perspectives, experiences, knowledge bases, expertise, and means of accomplishing tasks all working together and sharing ideas to make the business better. The technological knowledge and passion for excellence the millennials bring to the workplace is invigorating for those around them because they see how excited millennial workers get, and it encourages them to do the same. Most millennials exude the essence of technology and are technologically ready, in most cases, as soon as they are hired. They are very computer literate and are able to assist in technology-related workplace tasks immediately, enabling them to contribute in a positive way on day one. Millennials are an important commodity for any news media firm to be successful because of their ability to manage and manipulate technology at a higher level never before

observed in the workplace. It is paramount that business leaders make it a priority to provide a millennial-ready workplace in order to recruit and retain millennial employees long-term.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent

FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Informed Consent: Participants 18 years of age and older

Dear Participant,

My name is Harry Hobbs and I am a student at the Florida Institute of Technology working on a Doctoral degree. I am conducting a research study entitled *A Qualitative Study of Millennials in the Workplace: Gaining their Long-Term Employment in News Media Firms in North Alabama*. The purpose of the research study is to explore millennial employees' expectations and practices they prefer in the workplace that may lead to them being retained long-term. A qualitative phenomenological study was selected as the best means for exploring the workplace preferences that millennials seek.

Your participation will involve a 25-35 minute questionnaire with specific questions on the millennial generation. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study will be published but your identity and your organization will remain confidential and your name will not be disclosed to any outside party.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, a possible benefit of your participation is to fill the gap in research on the millennial generation's workplace preferences.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact me at [REDACTED]

As a participant in this study, you should understand the following:

You may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without consequences. If you wish to withdraw from the study, please contact me at [REDACTED]

1. Your identity will be kept confidential at all times.
2. Harry Hobbs, the researcher, will thoroughly explain the parameters of the research study and all of your questions and concerns will be addressed.
3. The interviews will be digitally recorded; you must grant permission for the researcher, Harry Hobbs, to digitally record the interview. You understand that the information from the recorded interviews will be transcribed. The researcher will structure a coding process to assure that anonymity of your name is protected.
4. Data will be stored in a secure and locked area. The data will be held for a period of three years, and then destroyed.
5. The research results will be used for publication.

“By signing this form, you acknowledge that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to you as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your signature on this form also indicates that you are 18 years old or older and that you give permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.”

Signature of the interviewee _____ Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Interview Session Protocol

1. All participants must sign the informed consent form.
2. Each participant will be provided the interview session cover letter.
3. Each participant will be advised of the following:
 - Provide demographic information—age, gender, industry, and occupation description
 - Each person will be assigned a code so as not to keep names out
 - The study will be published
 - Each person should answer each of the questions honestly
 - Use your participant code when answering the question
 - Each participant will be given a paper with his or her code on it, to use when responding to questions
 - An assistant will be helping to facilitate the discussion
4. A list of 12 questions will be used to ask questions to specific participants based on their generation.
5. Participants can change their minds about participating in the study at any time.

6. All materials and participant information will be safeguarded to protect participant identity.

Interview session cover letter – Give one to each participant with time and date for interview.

Informed Consent – HH sign and get a signed copy from each participant.

Appendix C: Interview Session Cover Letter

Dear Participant,

I am a student at the Florida Institute of Technology working on a Doctor of Business Administration degree. I am conducting a research study entitled *A Qualitative Study of Millennials in the Workplace: Gaining their Long-Term Employment in News Media Firms in North Alabama*. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore the expectations and practices millennials prefer in the news media workplace that lead to them remaining long-term.

Your participation will involve your participation in a 45 minute long interview session on _____ located at _____ with other members of your generation. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study will be published, but your name will not be used and your results will be maintained in confidence.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in this research. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation is your help in furthering research related to the millennial generation in the news media industry. If you are willing to participate, please sign the attached informed consent form.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact me
at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Harry L. Hobbs

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. Define the millennial generation.
2. How does your organization attract and retain millennial employees?
3. What motivates you to want to remain long-term (3 plus years) with your current organization?
4. Is leader development training important to you and your career?
5. Is the use of the latest office technology important to you?
6. What workplace benefits are important to you?
7. What workplace flexibility do you desire to have the option to utilize?
8. What leadership style(s) do millennials respond best to?
9. Do millennials work well with other generations within the organization?
10. What attributes and characteristics define millennials as unique in the workplace?
11. What contributions do millennials make to your organization?
12. Is there anything else concerning millennials you would like to share?