Bridging the Generational Gap: Leadership Challenges and Management Strategies for Millennials in a Malaysian Manufacturing SME

Vishalini Sankaran[1], Mohd Fauzi Bin Kamarudin*[2], Muhammad Ridzuan Bin Noorzelan[3]

Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Malaysia

***Corresponding Author**

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100700290

Received: 13 July 2026; Accepted: 18 July 2026; Published: 30 July 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines how Millennials are understood and managed within a Malaysian manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), addressing persistent workplace tensions between Millennial expectations and traditional organisational practices. Guided by Constructivist Grounded Theory, the study employed purposive sampling and involved 23 participants comprising four Heads of Department, ten managers, and nine Millennial employees. Data were collected through focus group discussions and analysed iteratively using open, axial, and selective coding. Findings show that Millennials were characterised as value-oriented and meaning-seeking, wellbeing-oriented, recognition- and development-seeking, and highly sensitive to hierarchy, communication, and psychological treatment. Key workplace challenges included excessive workload and production pressure, communication breakdown, limited psychological safety, role ambiguity, and vulnerability to disengagement and turnover. Leadership practices were hybrid, combining developmental and training-centred approaches, relational and communication-focused practices, control and performance-oriented mechanisms, and adaptive balancing strategies. The study identifies organisational misalignment and the negotiation of work meaning as the central phenomenon explaining Millennial workplace experiences, emerging when manufacturing demands, hierarchical structures, and performance expectations conflict with employees' expectations for meaningful work, wellbeing, recognition, development, and respectful communication. In response, the study develops the Adaptive Alignment Framework, which explains how Millennial characteristics, organisational pressures, workplace challenges, and leadership responses interact dynamically to shape engagement, cooperation, retention, and turnover intention. The study concludes that effective Millennial management requires continuous alignment between organisational realities and evolving employee expectations rather than reliance on fixed generational stereotypes or a single leadership style, offering practical guidance for leadership development, communication, wellbeing, and retention in contemporary manufacturing workplaces.

Keywords: Millennials, leadership, manufacturing SME, organisational misalignment, psychological safety

INTRODUCTION

Millennials, generally defined as individuals born between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, now constitute a substantial share of the global workforce and are widely described as employees who value meaningful work, flexibility, recognition, and personal development (Nyamboga, 2025). Multiple empirical studies confirm that these expectations are relatively consistent across contexts, particularly regarding autonomy, development opportunities, and work-life integration (Hidayat et al., 2025). However, organisations especially those operating in manufacturing contexts continue to rely heavily on traditional leadership practices characterised by hierarchical authority, performance control, and operational efficiency (Farhan, 2021; Hanafi et al., 2020). This creates a persistent mismatch between employee expectations and organisational systems, often resulting in dissatisfaction, disengagement, and turnover (Basit et al., 2018). Contemporary literature increasingly argues

that this mismatch should not be simplistically attributed to generational traits, but instead understood as a broader organisational integration failure (Saraiva & Nogueiro, 2025).

Existing literature has largely focused on identifying which leadership styles are most effective for managing Millennials, particularly transformational, transactional, and servant leadership approaches. However, emerging evidence indicates that leadership effects are often mediated by psychological and contextual mechanisms rather than operating directly; transformational leadership, for example, may only produce positive engagement outcomes when psychological empowerment is present (Bustani & Juniar, 2023). This points to a critical limitation in existing scholarship: leadership is frequently treated as a discrete stylistic variable rather than as an embedded relational process operating within a wider organisational system.

In manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), this gap becomes more pronounced. Studies of Malaysian manufacturing SMEs demonstrate that leadership is deeply intertwined with organisational structure, operational constraints, and employee responses, yet research in this space remains heavily dominated by quantitative approaches that offer limited insight into lived experience and interactional dynamics (Arokiasamy et al., 2025; Khaddage-Soboh et al., 2024). Manufacturing SMEs also present distinctive structural constraints including production pressure, resource limitations, and rigid hierarchical coordination that shape how leadership can realistically be enacted, often restricting the extent to which relational and developmental leadership practices can be consistently applied. Within such environments, leadership becomes situational and adaptive, yet the mechanisms through which this adaptation occurs remain under-theorised.

This study addresses this gap by examining how Millennials are characterised and understood, the workplace challenges associated with managing them, and the leadership practices used within a Malaysian manufacturing SME, Dominant Opto Technologies Sdn Bhd. Guided by four research objectives, the study aims to: (1) examine how Millennials are characterised and understood by leaders, managers, and employees; (2) identify the key workplace challenges associated with Millennials; (3) explore the leadership and management practices currently used to manage Millennial employees; and (4) develop a conceptual framework explaining the relationship between Millennials' characteristics, workplace challenges, and leadership strategies. In doing so, the study moves beyond style-based explanations toward a process-oriented understanding of workplace dynamics, focusing on how leadership mediation, organisational systems, and employee expectations interact to shape engagement, retention, and performance outcomes within a manufacturing SME setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generational theory and Millennials in the workplace

Generational theory posits that individuals born within the same historical period share formative experiences that shape relatively distinct workplace values and expectations. Millennials are widely characterised in the literature as valuing purpose, flexibility, feedback, and career development more strongly than prior generations (Bantha et al., 2024; Hidayat et al., 2025). However, critics caution that generational categories risk oversimplification, since considerable diversity exists within generational cohorts themselves, and workplace attitudes are shaped as much by organisational context as by birth cohort (Cho et al., 2025). This has prompted a shift in the literature toward more interactional understandings of Millennials, in which generational characteristics are treated as interpretive lenses shaped by organisational experience rather than as fixed, universal traits (Woo & Bertram, 2022).

Leadership approaches for Millennials

A substantial body of research has examined which leadership styles best engage Millennial employees, with relational, empathetic, and psychologically supportive leadership consistently associated with stronger trust, voice, and engagement (Ramlan et al., 2025; Olszyńska et al., 2026). Psychological safety, which is shaped directly by leadership communication and behaviour, has emerged as a particularly important mechanism linking leadership style to employee openness and participation (Konečná et al., 2026; Moon & Kang, 2025). At the same time, manufacturing-specific studies continue to identify task-oriented, procedural, and control-based

leadership as central to sustaining production continuity and operational discipline (Suhartono et al., 2023), suggesting that manufacturing leadership cannot rely on relational approaches alone.

Workplace challenges and the manufacturing SME context

Malaysian manufacturing SMEs operate under distinctive structural constraints, including limited resources, hierarchical coordination systems, and continuous production pressure, all of which shape how leadership can be enacted (Arokiasamy et al., 2025; Khaddage-Soboh et al., 2024). These conditions restrict the extent to which developmental and relational leadership practices can be consistently applied, often producing hybrid leadership approaches that combine control-oriented mechanisms with relational adaptation. Within such environments, workload pressure, communication breakdown, and role ambiguity are widely reported as recurring workplace challenges affecting Millennial engagement and retention (Gelencsér et al., 2023; Aksoy, 2025), while weak psychological safety has been linked to employee silence, reduced voice, and higher turnover risk (Cho et al., 2023; Clarke et al., 2026).

Theoretical foundations and research gap

The study draws on Psychological Contract Theory, which explains employee commitment through perceived reciprocal obligations between employer and employee (Frost, 2025; Respati et al., 2023), and Social Exchange Theory, which frames organisational engagement as an ongoing exchange of value, trust, and reciprocity rather than a fixed contractual obligation (Diehl & Cropanzano, 2025). Both perspectives suggest that Millennial commitment is conditional and continuously re-evaluated rather than automatically secured. Despite growing interest in Millennial-leadership dynamics, existing research provides limited integrated understanding of how Millennials' expectations, workplace challenges, and leadership practices interact within a single organisational setting, particularly within Malaysian manufacturing SMEs (Zarwi et al., 2023; Jenei et al., 2025). This study addresses this gap by examining these three dimensions concurrently, within a single bounded case, to develop a grounded, process-oriented conceptual framework.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study adopted a qualitative case study design situated within an interpretivist paradigm, guided by Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) (Charmaz, 2014). CGT was considered appropriate because it emphasises the co-construction of meaning between researcher and participants, allowing the development of a conceptual framework grounded in participants' lived experiences rather than predefined variables. A single-case design was employed, focusing on Dominant Opto Technologies Sdn Bhd, a Malaysian manufacturing SME, as the bounded case, enabling an in-depth, context-specific investigation of leadership and workplace dynamics (Halkias et al., 2022).

Participants and sampling

A purposive, theoretically guided sampling strategy was employed. The study involved 23 participants drawn from three organisational levels: four Heads of Department (HODs), ten managers, and nine Millennial employees (Table 1). This multi-level design enabled triangulation across strategic, managerial, and operational perspectives. Sampling continued iteratively until theoretical saturation was reached, consistent with CGT principles.

Table 1: Profile of Participants

Participant ID	Pseudonym	Organisational Level	Year
P1	Daniel	HODs	2025

Participant ID	Pseudonym	Organisational Level	Year
P2	Rahman	HODs	2025
P3	Michael	HODs	2025
P4	Haris	HODs	2025
P5	Aina	Managers	2025
P6	Nadia	Managers	2025
P7	Farid	Managers	2025
P8	Kelvin	Managers	2025
P9	Jason	Managers	2025
P10	Arjun	Managers	2025
P11	Melissa	Managers	2025
P12	Hafiz	Managers	2025
P13	Zulkifli	Managers	2025
P14	Firdaus	Managers	2025
P15	Siti	Millennials	2025
P16	Faiz	Millennials	2025
P17	Kumar	Millennials	2025
P18	Priya	Millennials	2025
P19	Chloe	Millennials	2025
P20	Mei	Millennials	2025
P21	Iqbal	Millennials	2025
P22	Wen	Millennials	2025
P23	Hannah	Millennials	2025

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), organised by participant category to encourage open discussion without hierarchical pressure. Sessions were semi-structured, audio-recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim, with field notes capturing non-verbal cues and group dynamics. Data analysis followed the three-stage CGT coding process — open, axial, and selective coding supported by constant comparison and memo-writing, continuing until theoretical saturation was achieved. Trustworthiness was addressed through credibility (triangulation across participant groups), dependability (a documented audit trail), confirmability (reflexivity and verbatim evidence), and transferability (thick contextual description). Ethical approval was

obtained prior to data collection; informed consent, confidentiality, pseudonymisation, and participant protection were maintained throughout.

FINDINGS

Findings are presented according to the study's four research objectives, beginning with how Millennials were characterised, followed by the workplace challenges identified, the leadership practices observed, and the resulting Adaptive Alignment Framework. Direct participant quotations are used throughout to preserve analytical transparency; pseudonyms and role categories are indicated in parentheses.

Millennial characteristics

Millennials within the organisation were characterised across four interconnected dimensions. First, participants described Millennials as value-oriented and meaning-seeking, continuously evaluating whether tasks and organisational expectations were purposeful and justified rather than simply complying with instructions. As one Head of Department explained, employees need to be placed into a suitable position, environment, and training background before commitment can develop:

"We need to put them into a suitable kind of position, suitable kind of environment, and background of training." (Daniel, P1, HODs)

Millennial participants reinforced this, linking continued organisational participation to visible career growth: "It makes us think whether it is worth continuing to work here if there is no career growth" (Wen, P22, Millennials).

Second, Millennials were characterised as wellbeing-oriented, placing considerable importance on emotional sustainability and manageable workload within a physically demanding production environment. One participant noted that employees "need time for themselves because they are already standing for 12 hours in production" (Siti, P15, Millennials), while another linked increased machine-handling ratios directly to exhaustion (Kumar, P17, Millennials). Several participants explicitly connected unsustainable wellbeing conditions to resignation intentions: "For me personally, I would resign" (Mei, P20, Millennials).

Third, Millennials were characterised as recognition-seeking and development-oriented, expecting visible acknowledgment and clear developmental pathways. While one manager described this expectation somewhat critically, "They are too calculative. They do a little work, and they want recognition" (Nadia, P6, Managers) another highlighted the same expectations as manageable through structured follow-up: "When the pathway is clear, they understand" (Hafiz, P12, Managers).

Fourth, Millennials were characterised as hierarchy-sensitive and psychologically reactive, interpreting authority emotionally rather than purely structurally. Leaders acknowledged the need for greater diplomacy, "You need to be very diplomatic whenever you want to talk to them" (Haris, P4, HODs) while Millennial participants described communication fear within hierarchical interactions: "It is the fear of approaching the boss... 'Is the boss in a good mood?'" (Chloe, P19, Millennials). Importantly, participants did not reject hierarchy altogether; supportive, approachable leadership was consistently described positively: "My boss will try to settle things together with us" (Faiz, P16, Millennials). Collectively, these findings indicate that Millennial engagement within the organisation was conditional, interpretive, and relationally negotiated rather than fixed or automatically compliant, consistent with broader observations that younger employees increasingly evaluate organisational participation through perceptions of meaning, fairness, and psychological safety (Bakhtiar & Molang, 2025).

Workplace challenges

Four interconnected workplace challenges emerged. Workplace pressure and unsustainable workload were widely reported within the high-pressure manufacturing environment, with participants describing cascading

production pressure across organisational levels. Communication breakdown and limited psychological safety emerged as a second major challenge; employees frequently withheld concerns due to fear of dismissive or emotionally aggressive leadership responses, reflecting broader evidence that psychologically unsafe environments suppress employee voice (Cho et al., 2023; Clarke et al., 2026). Retention vulnerability and conditional organisational commitment constituted a third challenge, with managers noting: "Their span of loyalty is short, where even a small trigger can make them start looking outside for other opportunities" (Nadia, P6, Managers). Finally, role ambiguity and expectation misalignment emerged when employees questioned responsibilities extending beyond formally defined job scopes: "Sometimes they would say, 'This is not production work'" (Kelvin, P8, Managers).

These challenges were not isolated. Workplace pressure intensified emotional exhaustion, which in turn weakened communication openness and increased resignation vulnerability, consistent with findings that organisational retention challenges typically operate through interconnected emotional, relational, and structural mechanisms rather than isolated variables (Gelencsér et al., 2023; Aksoy, 2025).

Leadership and management practices

Leadership within the organisation was hybrid, combining four overlapping approaches. Developmental and training-centred practices relied on hands-on coaching and structured monitoring to support employee adaptation within a technically demanding environment: "Hands-on training is important because they learn better when they do it themselves" (Arjun, P10, Managers). Communication-centred and relational practices emphasised diplomacy and collaborative problem-solving: "The best way is to sit down together and brainstorm" (Jason, P9, Managers). Control-oriented and performance-driven practices remained embedded due to production realities: "KPI is the direction that must be followed" (Haris, P4, HODs). Finally, adaptive and balancing practices reflected leaders' ongoing efforts to reconcile these competing demands, particularly within a multi-generational workforce: "The current practice is actually harmonising between the various departments and different groups of people" (Daniel, P1, HODs).

Rather than reflecting a single managerial style, leadership emerged as a continuous process of negotiation between operational discipline and relational sensitivity, an adaptation that remained incomplete, with leaders frequently oscillating between supportive and control-oriented practices depending on operational pressure (Suhartono et al., 2023; Konečná et al., 2026).

Emerging theme: organisational misalignment and the negotiation of work meaning

Integrating findings across the three objectives revealed a central phenomenon: organisational misalignment and the continuous negotiation of work meaning. Millennials did not reject work, discipline, or organisational authority; rather, they continuously interpreted whether organisational practices, leadership behaviour, and workload demands remained meaningful, fair, and psychologically sustainable. Leaders, in turn, operated within organisational systems strongly shaped by production continuity, KPI accountability, and manpower constraints, creating structural pressures that did not always align with employee expectations. Tensions did not arise because either party was inherently problematic, but because both operated from differing assumptions regarding work, authority, loyalty, and organisational obligation. This finding aligns with broader observations that disengagement among younger employees frequently emerges through misalignment between organisational systems and employee expectations surrounding wellbeing, communication, and developmental opportunity, rather than through individual employee deficiency (Saraiva & Nogueiro, 2025).

DISCUSSION: THE ADAPTIVE ALIGNMENT FRAMEWORK

Integration of the findings across all three objectives culminated in the development of the Adaptive Alignment Framework (Figure 1), which explains how Millennial workplace orientations, organisational tensions, and leadership responses interact dynamically within the manufacturing SME context. The framework positions organisational misalignment and the negotiation of work meaning as its central, unifying process, rather than treating Millennial characteristics, workplace challenges, and leadership practices as independent variables.

Figure 1: The Adaptive Alignment Framework



At the foundational level, the framework identifies four Millennial workplace orientations, meaning-seeking expectations, wellbeing orientation, recognition and developmental expectations, and sensitivity to interpersonal treatment and hierarchy that shape how employees evaluate organisational legitimacy and leadership quality (Bakhtiar & Molang, 2025; Hidayat et al., 2025). These orientations interact with manufacturing-specific structural pressures, including KPI accountability, operational urgency, and staffing constraints, generating recurring tensions around workload, communication, retention, and role clarity. Importantly, these tensions operate recursively rather than independently: workload pressure intensifies emotional exhaustion, weakened communication increases interpersonal withdrawal, and unclear expectations deepen disengagement (Aksoy, 2025; Gelencsér et al., 2023).

Leadership practices function within the framework as adaptive mediating mechanisms attempting to negotiate alignment between operational requirements and employee expectations. Developmental practices strengthen competency and adaptation; relational practices enhance communication and interpersonal trust; control-oriented practices preserve organisational discipline; and adaptive balancing practices mediate these competing demands simultaneously. This is consistent with broader discussions of adaptive leadership, which frame organisational effectiveness as dependent on leaders' capacity to balance structure, control, and relational responsiveness concurrently (Adejumo, 2024; Katsaros, 2024).

At the centre of the framework lies the negotiation of work meaning under conditions of organisational misalignment, the process through which employees and leaders continuously interpret, evaluate, and renegotiate organisational participation. Organisational outcomes vary according to the extent to which this alignment is successfully negotiated: positive alignment strengthens engagement, cooperation, and retention, while persistent misalignment increases stress, disengagement, silence, and turnover vulnerability. These outcomes subsequently feed back into future employee expectations and leadership adaptation, producing a continuous, cyclical process of alignment and realignment rather than a static organisational condition (Amarilli et al., 2023).

The Adaptive Alignment Framework extends existing literature in three ways. First, it repositions Millennial workplace behaviour away from deficit-based generational stereotypes and toward a relational, interpretive process shaped by organisational interaction (Woo & Bertram, 2022; Cho et al., 2025). Second, it demonstrates that leadership effectiveness in manufacturing SMEs depends less on adopting a single leadership style and more on the capacity to balance competing organisational demands adaptively (Suhartono et al., 2023; Konečná et al.,

2026). Third, it offers manufacturing SME practitioners a diagnostic lens: where disengagement or turnover risk emerges, organisations can examine whether misalignment originates in workload, communication, recognition, or role clarity, rather than attributing the issue to generational traits alone.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how Millennials are characterised and managed within a Malaysian manufacturing SME, revealing that workplace tensions associated with Millennials are best understood not as fixed generational traits but as manifestations of organisational misalignment between evolving employee expectations and manufacturing-oriented organisational systems. Millennials were characterised as meaning-seeking, wellbeing-oriented, recognition-driven, and hierarchy-sensitive employees whose engagement was conditional upon perceived organisational reciprocity. Workplace challenges such as workload pressure, communication breakdown, retention vulnerability, and role ambiguity were interconnected rather than isolated, while leadership practices were found to be hybrid, combining developmental, relational, control-oriented, and adaptive balancing approaches. The resulting Adaptive Alignment Framework offers a process-oriented explanation of how these dimensions interact, positioning organisational misalignment and the negotiation of work meaning as the central phenomenon shaping engagement, retention, and turnover intention.

The findings carry practical implications for manufacturing SMEs managing multi-generational workforces. Leadership development should prioritise communication training, emotional awareness, and consistency across departments; career development structures should be made visible and linked explicitly to training; and organisations should establish safer feedback mechanisms such as regular pulse surveys or structured listening sessions to identify misalignment before it manifests as resignation. Theoretically, the study contributes to generational workforce literature by shifting analytical focus from fixed generational categories toward organisational interaction, and extends Psychological Contract and Social Exchange perspectives by demonstrating that Millennial commitment is conditional, reciprocal, and continuously renegotiated (Frost, 2025; Diehl & Cropanzano, 2025).

This study is limited by its single-case, single-industry design, its comparatively small sample of 23 participants drawn from one organisation, its reliance on focus group discussions (which may constrain disclosure of sensitive experiences), and its cross-sectional timeframe. As a qualitative study, its findings necessarily reflect participants' subjective accounts and the researcher's interpretation of the data; while credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were addressed through the trustworthiness measures outlined earlier, the findings should be read as a context-rich account of this organisation rather than as statistically generalisable claims about Millennials as a population across other industries, organisations, or cultural settings. The study also did not directly compare Millennial employees with employees from other generational cohorts, meaning it cannot determine with certainty which of the identified challenges are unique to Millennials and which reflect broader workplace dynamics experienced across generations.

Future research should therefore extend the Adaptive Alignment Framework in four directions. First, the framework should be tested across manufacturing companies and organisations from other industries to determine whether its components and relationships hold across different workplace settings and cultural contexts. Second, future studies should directly compare Millennials with other generational cohorts, such as Generation X and Generation Z, to identify similarities and differences in work expectations and organisational experiences, and to clarify which findings are genuinely generational rather than broadly shared across the workforce. Third, quantitative studies should test the Adaptive Alignment Framework empirically, measuring its influence on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention using validated survey instruments and larger, more representative samples. Fourth, further research should examine how additional factors including organisational culture, leadership style, compensation, and career development affect workplace alignment, in order to refine the framework's practical and theoretical applicability beyond the present case.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank the Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), for providing the facilities and support necessary to conduct this study.

REFERENCES

1. Adejumo, O.A., 2024. The relevance of leadership alignment to attaining organizational resilience. International Journal of Professional Business Review, 9(5), p.6.
2. Aitken, J., Deakins, E., Skipworth, H. and Cole, R., 2025. Temporal perceptions and tensions in production management. European Management Journal, 43(3), pp.502-513.
3. Aksoy, E., 2025. Balancing act: Exploring the interplay of production pressure and innovation/flexibility climates on employee well-being. Creativity and Innovation Management, 34(1), pp.222-236.
4. Allen, J.A. and Magill, M.S., 2026. Psychological safety and engagement: the importance of collaboration and experience. Journal of Management Development, 45(2), pp.151-165.
5. Amarilli, F., van den Hooff, B. and van Vliet, M., 2023. Business-IT alignment as a coevolution process: An empirical study. The Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 32(2), p.101776.
6. Arokiasamy, A.R.A., Wider, W., Tanucan, J.C.M. and Hossain, S.F.A., 2025. Optimizing employee productivity: The mediating role of employee engagement in training programs for Malaysian SMEs. Asian Development Policy Review, 13(3), pp.310-324.
7. Aswani, D. and Otiende, J.O., 2024. Effective workplace communication: organizational subcultures and communication preferences for Gen Z's. Journal of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 5(1).
8. Bakhtiar, B. and Molang, A., 2025. The meaning of employee loyalty among Millennials in the age of gig economy and side hustles. Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management, 5(2), pp.464-475.
9. Bantha, T., Nayak, U. and Mishra, S.K., 2024. Engaging the disengaged: the role of workplace spirituality on millennials' work engagement. International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 32(9), pp.1713-1738.
10. Basit, A., Sebastian, V. and Hassan, Z., 2018. Impact of leadership style on employee performance (a case study on a private organization in Malaysia). International Journal of Accounting & Business Management, 5(2), pp.112-130.
11. Bustani and Juniar, A., 2023. Exploring transformational leadership and employee performance: The mediation role of psychological empowerment Millennial generation. Ilomata International Journal of Management, 4(4), pp.697-717.
12. Charmaz, K., 2014. Constructing grounded theory. Sage.
13. Cho, H., Rodriguez, A.C. and Ardichvili, A., 2025. Generational differences under scrutiny: issues and implications for HRD. Advances in Developing Human Resources, 27(2-3), pp.62-90.
14. Cho, H., Steege, L.M. and Arsenault Knudsen, É.N., 2023. Psychological safety, communication openness, nurse job outcomes, and patient safety in hospital nurses. Research in Nursing & Health, 46(4), pp.445-453.
15. Clarke, E., Malinen, S., Näswall, K. and Masselot, A., 2026. Safe to stay: The role of leader behaviors and psychological safety in employee retention in high-demand workplaces. German Journal of Human Resource Management, 40(1), pp.56-86.
16. Diehl, M.R. and Cropanzano, R., 2025. Social exchange theory: Novel directions and new opportunities. Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings, (1).
17. Farhan, B.Y., 2021. Customizing leadership practices for the millennial workforce: A conceptual framework. Cogent Social Sciences, 7(1), p.1930865. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1930865
18. Frost, L., 2025. Exploring contributing factors in psychological contract formation. New Zealand Journal of Health and Safety Practice, 2(3).
19. Gelencsér, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, G., Kőmüves, Z.S. and Hollósy-Vadász, G., 2023. The holistic model of labour retention: The impact of workplace wellbeing factors on employee retention. Administrative Sciences, 13(5), p.121.

20. Halkias, D., Neubert, M., Thurman, P.W. and Harkiolakis, N., 2022. The multiple case study design: Methodology and application for management education. Routledge.
21. Hanafi, W.N.W., Daud, S., Baharin, N.L., Noordiana Wan Hanafi, W. and Lyana Baharin, N., 2020. Leadership attributes among Generation X and millennials leaders. European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences, 100.
22. Hidayat, A., Amelia, A., Budiwidodo, S., Suherli, E. and Chandrasari, F., 2025. Makna employee engagement bagi generasi milenial: Pendekatan fenomenologi. Cakrawala Repositori IMWI, 8(2), pp.1538-1546.
23. Jenei, S., Horváth, F., Molnár, J., Gyurián, N., Poyda-Nosyk, N., Dávid, L.D. and Kálmán, B.G., 2025. Generational differences and organizational resilience: Addressing workplace conflicts. Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change, pp.2560-2569.
24. Katsaros, K.K., 2024. Gen Z employee adaptive performance: The role of inclusive leadership and workplace happiness. Administrative Sciences, 14(8), p.163.
25. Khaddage-Soboh, N., Yunis, M., Imran, M. and Zeb, F., 2024. Sustainable practices in Malaysian manufacturing: The influence of CSR, transformational leadership, and green organizational culture on environmental performance. Economic Analysis and Policy, 82, pp.753-768.
26. Konečná, L., Lisá, E. and Čiriková, V., 2026. The role of leadership in shaping psychological safety: a qualitative study from Slovakia. Scientific Reports.
27. Moon, B. and Kang, M., 2025. Breaking employee silence through dialogic employee communication: mediating roles of psychological safety and psychological empowerment. Management Communication Quarterly, 39(2), pp.230-262.
28. Nyamboga, T.O., 2025. Strategic leadership in multigenerational workforces: Bridging generational divides for enhanced engagement. Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports, 19(1), pp.270-285.
29. Olszyńska, K., Górka, E., Ćwiąkała, M., Baran, D., Saługa, K., Zawadzki, D., Wyrzykowska-Antkiewicz, M., Piwnik, J. and Ślusarczyk, M., 2026. Empathetic leadership in managing Generation Z. European Research Studies Journal, 29(1), pp.629-639.
30. Ramlan, M., Akob, M. and Jumady, E., 2025. The role of leadership in fostering employee engagement: A literature analysis. Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management, 5(2), pp.360-373.
31. Respati, Y.A., Rusdiyanto, W., Yovianingtyas, C. and Tajudin, A., 2023. Understanding millennial generation organizational social exchange through psychological contract. J. Econ, 19(1), pp.95-111.
32. Saraiva, M. and Nogueiro, T., 2025. Perspectives and realities of disengagement among younger generation Y and Z workers in contemporary work dynamics. Administrative Sciences, 15(4), p.133.
33. Silva, I., Dias, Á. and Pereira, L.F., 2024. Determinants of employee intention to stay: a generational multigroup analysis. International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 32(8), pp.1389-1418.
34. Suhartono, S., Sulastiningsih, S., Chasanah, U., Widiastuti, N. and Purwanto, W., 2023. The relationship of leadership, discipline, satisfaction, and performance: A case study of steel manufacture in Indonesia. International Journal of Professional Business Review, 8(2), p.4.
35. Woo, D. and Bertram, V., 2022. "I value collaboration but won't get pushed around": Uncovering tensions in Millennials' vocational anticipatory socialization. Western Journal of Communication, 86(3), pp.400-421.
36. Yunita, T., Hadita, H., Wijayanti, M. and Ismayani, V., 2023. Work-life balance, job satisfaction, and career development of Millennials: The mediating role of affective commitment. Journal of Economics, Business, and Accountancy Ventura, 26(1), pp.89-101.
37. Zahirah, N.G. and Satrya, A., 2024. The influence of career growth and perceived organizational support on turnover intention: The role of organizational commitment among Indonesian millennial employees. EKOMBIS REVIEW: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi dan Bisnis, 12(3), pp.3129-3146.
38. Zarwi, M., Marchand, S., Kennard, B. and Michael, J., 2023. Millennials and organisational commitment: current and future perspectives. Human Resource Development International, 26(5), pp.642-654.