

MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKFORCE: AN EXAMINATION  
OF MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

by

Josephine Bennett

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Business Administration

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Liberty University, School of Business

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# MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKPLACE

## Abstract

In recent years there has been much dialogue about retaining millennials. This dialogue has been fueled by a growing concern over millennial turnover trends. Because millennials have been said to have different work values than previous generations and have demonstrated behaviors outside of what employers describe as “norms” there has been much difficulty with understanding the turnover behavior of this generation. Sourced in motivation theory, this study sought to examine how the turnover intention behavior of millennials is related to rewards, specifically intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Data from the 2016 Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey was examined to meet the objectives of this study. 384 millennial employees, born between 1997 and 1977, were examined to present conclusions about millennial turnover. This study found that both intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards were related to turnover intentions. When millennials held a positive perception of rewards, they were less likely to express turnover intentions. These findings were useful in understanding what role rewards can play when acting as motivators to reduce turnover for the millennial generation.

*Key words:* millennials, motivation, turnover, rewards, behavior

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**Approvals**

_____	<u>1/26/2021</u>
Josephine Bennett, Doctoral Candidate	Date
_____	_____
Reshowrn Thomas, Ph.D, Dissertation Chair	Date
_____	_____
MeLisa Rogers, Ph.D, Committee Member	Date
_____	_____
Edward M. Moore Ph.D, Director of Doctoral Programs	Date

## MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKPLACE

### Dedication

This study is dedicated to my husband Aldric. You have been the force behind my motivation. You have covered me in prayer, believed in me, made endless sacrifices, and spoken words of encouragement when they were desperately needed. Thank you for being an awesome partner and loving husband. I would also like to dedicate this study to my daughter Alaina. For most of your life, I have been a student. I hope the work that you have seen me do is an inspiration to you throughout your life and a reminder that you can do all things through Christ.

# MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKPLACE

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### **Section 1: Foundation of the Study**

This study sought to explore millennial work motivations in the context of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine a sample of millennials working in the federal workforce to understand whether the perception of work motivations affect turnover. For this study, turnover was addressed through the measure of turnover intentions. Turnover intention refers to an individual's desire or willingness to leave their organization (Bouckenoghe et al., 2013). Turnover intention is heavily researched as an indicator of turnover behavior as its purpose is to detect employee attitudes and prevent employees from voluntary turnover (Fazio et al., 2017). According to Abid and Butt (2017), turnover intentions is strongly related to actual turnover and the voluntary withdrawal of employees and can be used as a valid predictor of turnover.

This research employed a quantitative correlational methodology to explain the phenomenon under examination. To establish the foundation of this study, this section addresses the background of the problem, the problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, research questions, hypotheses, theoretical framework, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, reduction of gaps, implications for biblical integration, relationship to the field of study, and a review of professional and academic literature. This foundation explained the rationale for conducting this study and established the quality necessary to develop sound conclusions.

#### **Background of the Problem**

Retaining millennials has become one of the most challenging tasks that organizations face (Wen et al., 2018). Gallup (2016) estimated that millennial turnover costs roughly 30.5 billion dollars per year. With limited research to address key work motivations of this

generation, organizations have been challenged with identifying the factors that motivate millennials to stay on their jobs. Recognizing that motivation is a driving force behind why this generation chooses to stay on their jobs, understanding millennial work motivations is crucial in the creation of dynamic work environments that are both enriching and fulfilling (Singh, 2016). Employers must be able to determine what factors meet the needs of millennials in the workplace to retain them (Bannon et al., 2011). Kultalahti and Viitala (2015) held that constant learning and development, interesting, challenging, and varied tasks, social relations, supervisor behavior, flexibility with timetables and working hours, and work-life balance acted as work motivators but their applicability to millennial's work should be developed further. While these findings were consistent with previous literature, Kultalahti and Viital were unable to establish a conclusive relationship between these motivators and millennials in their jobs.

Campione (2015) offered that while organizations have become creative in their offerings to recruit millennials, they have failed in their ability to retain millennials. George and Wallio (2017) described how firms have implemented initiatives designed to reduce millennial turnover, including increasing work-life balance and work flexibility, but the lack of results indicated there were other factors at play that may have affected employee turnover decisions. Saeed et al. (2018) identified job security plans, salary increases, accountability and working conditions as motivational factors that potentially affect employee retention, but their findings were not definitive. While unable to produce definitive findings relating to motivating millennials, Saeed et al. suspected these factors (i.e., salary increases, accountability, and working conditions) can potentially lead to a higher level of commitment and confidence towards an organization for the millennial generation.

Mohammad and Lenka (2017) described millennials as a high maintenance generation because they desire an inclusive style of management, participative decision making, innovation support, challenging work, quick promotion, and immediate performance feedback. Mohammad and Lenka were able to establish a relationship between mentoring and millennial's intention to stay but fail to identify the specific factors of mentoring that motivate millennials to stay. Mohammad and Lenka presented probable, but not definitive, factors that impacted millennial intentions that include continuous emotional support, guidance, counseling, visibility, protection, and personal and professional development. Valenti (2019) determined that millennials valued certain aspects of their leaders which ultimately affected their employment decisions. However, Valenti was unable to distinguish differences between millennial generations and other generations regarding exploring the role the leader preference served in increasing employee retention.

As millennials continue to grow in their composition of the workforce and become major organizational contributors, organizations remain confused in developing an understanding into how this generation thinks and acts (Baiyun et al., 2018; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). Many organizational leaders fail to understand what effectively managing millennials looks like because millennials have different motivations, interests and priorities and cannot be managed the same as preceding generations (Phillips, 2019). Having been identified as the largest demographic and represented with over 55 million members in the workforce, millennials must be managed effectively if organizations are going to be successful (Phillips, 2019).

**Problem Statement**

The general problem addressed in this study is the lack of understanding regarding millennial work motivations resulting in job turnover. According to Hassan et al. (2020) the turnover problem of millennials remains unresolved. One of the major challenges facing organizations today is the retention of millennials and while employers are offering many incentives, poor retention rates are prevalent amongst millennials (Sruk, 2020). According to Calk and Patrick (2017), it is difficult to discern the motivational needs of millennials. Managers have found it difficult to build relationships with millennial employees as well as understand what motivates them (Meola, 2017). Hornstein (2020) offered that while companies are offering more and more gimmicky perks to attract and retain millennial employees, their efforts are not working, and millennials remain the least engaged age group in the workforce. Campione (2016) pointed out that despite employer compensation packages and workplace policies offering to create satisfying work environments and jobs, millennials are not being retained. The specific problem addressed is the lack of understanding of millennial work motivations resulting in job turnover amongst millennial employees within the U.S. federal workforce.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the motivational factors of millennial employees and the relationship they have with employee behavior. The larger problem of not understanding what motivates millennials was explored through a study of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and the relationship these motivations have with the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal civilian workforce located within the United

States. The goal was to add to the body of knowledge pertaining to millennial work behavior motivations and assist in closing the gaps in existing research.

### **Nature of the Study**

This study utilized archival data to investigate the relationship between turnover intentions and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for millennials in the federal workforce. To fulfill the purpose of the study and address the research questions in a sound and unbiased manner, the research method and design were established prior to any data collection or analysis. The nature of this study was formed through the selection of the appropriate research method and research design. The nature of this study was hinged upon how the data were collected, the assumptions of the selected method and the limitations of the method.

### ***Discussion of Method***

Selecting the appropriate research method was crucial to effectively performing this research and was based on linking the objective of the research to the characteristics of the available research methodologies, the research question, and the literature review (Basias & Pollalis, 2018; Gelling, 2015). The list of approved research designs was outlined in the program requirements for this project. The approved qualitative designs for the DBA included narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, and ethnography. The approved quantitative designs were descriptive, correlation and causal comparative/quasi-experimental. The approved mixed methods design was convergent parallel. The design selected for this study was correlational. Rationale for utilizing this design is provided in the sections that follow.

The research design selected for this study was quantitative research design. This design was the best way to learn about a particular group and is the most appropriate under



the assumption that a phenomenon can be measured, and trends and relationships can be identified (Allen, 2017; Watson, 2015). Quantitative research seeks to answer questions asking “what” or “how many” and one of its goals is to draw inferences about the population which aligns with the research questions posed within this study (Apuke, 2017; Watson, 2015). Additionally, the influences and relationships that were examined in the data collected through questionnaires made quantitative methods the best option to investigate the links, influences, and relationships between the variables (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). When the research questions are specific, descriptive, comparative, or associative, they are indicative that a quantitative method is needed (Venkatesh et al., 2016).

Qualitative techniques are utilized to explore new topics and to shed light on human experience by clarifying or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meaning that people bring to them (Hoe & Hoare, 2013). Specifically, qualitative methods examine phenomena by analyzing, observing, interviewing, summarizing, describing, and interpreting experiences, behaviors, and interactions, using words as data rather than numbers (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Qualitative research typically involves a relatively small number of individuals who express their views in depth using spoken or written words (Cook & Cook, 2008). This method is necessary when the questions being asked are difficult to address using conventional approaches and does not lend itself to hypothesis testing (Frankel & Devers, 2000; Sinuff et al., 2007).

Mixed methods involve combining qualitative and quantitative research and data into one research study (Creswell, 2014). It holds philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry (Sadan, 2014). This method should be employed when the intent is to holistically explain a phenomenon where the existing research is fragmented, inconclusive or equivocal

(Venkatesh et al., 2016). It is most useful when studying new questions or complex interactions and when there is a need for gathering multiple forms of data (Sadan, 2014). Mixed methods are utilized when the intent is to merge the findings to create a new and richer understanding of the answers to the questions that guide the investigation (Stahl et al., 2019).

This study was implemented under the assumption the relationship between intrinsic rewards, extrinsic rewards and turnover could be measured. The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between two variables and develop conclusions about the population based on this examination. The goal was not to understand and interpret social interactions, which is the premise under which qualitative research would have applied (Apuke, 2017). Qualitative methods were not the appropriate approach because observations and in-depth interviews would not produce the information that was necessary to conduct the relational analysis of the identified variables. Mixed methods were not appropriate because the objective of the study could be met using one method of data collection. The data were collected through questionnaires with scaled responses which did not allow for additional exploration of responses. In the context of this study, statistical analysis was sufficient in exploring the relationship between turnover intentions and rewards amongst millennials.

### ***Discussion of Design***

This study adopted a quantitative research methodology utilizing the correlational research design. The correlation design was selected because it involved the exploration of correlation between two or more phenomena (Williams, 2007). The correlational design was employed because the millennial employees being examined through this study were not randomly assigned to treatment conditions. The data, which was not randomized and was

collected on a voluntary basis, eliminated the ability to reach definitive causal conclusions. This rendered the causal comparative/quasi-experimental design as an ineffective approach to reach the objectives of this study (Thompson et al., 2005). The strength of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions were assessed without experimental manipulation (Welford et al., 2012). Correlational research provided the best insight into understanding the relationship between turnover intentions and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

### **Research Questions**

The research for this study sought to explore whether rewards, either intrinsic or extrinsic, acted as motivation to millennial employees and impacted turnover intentions in the setting of the federal civilian workforce. It also examined if a difference existed between millennials who leave their jobs to take out of sector employment and millennials who leave their jobs to transfer to jobs at other government agencies. To explore and understand these motivations, the following questions were addressed in this study:

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce?

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce?

**RQ3:** What is the difference in the perception of rewards for millennials who intend to leave their job for in sector employment and those who intend to leave for out of sector employment?

The research questions guided this study terms of relevant inquiry, methodology, analysis, and findings.

## Hypotheses

Employee motivation is driven by both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Stumpf et al., 2013). This study examined these two types of rewards for millennial employees and the relationship they have with turnover intentions. The hypotheses provided tentative answers to the question of whether a relationship exists between rewards and turnover intentions and if differences existed between employees who intended to take employment outside of the federal government and employees who intended to take another job within the federal government. The hypotheses added perspective in the development of inferences and provided testing parameters in explaining the relationship between rewards and turnover intentions. The hypotheses were driven by extant literature that suggest that rewards are highly valued as motivating factors (Smith et al., 2015).

The hypothesized answers for this study were:

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no statistically significant relationship between extrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennial in the federal workforce.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a statistically significant relationship between extrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce.

**H<sub>0</sub>3:** There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of rewards for millennials who intend to leave their job for in sector employment and those who intend to leave for out of sector employment.

**H3:** There is a statistically significant difference in the perception of rewards for millennials who intend to leave their job for in sector employment and those who intend to leave for out of sector employment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

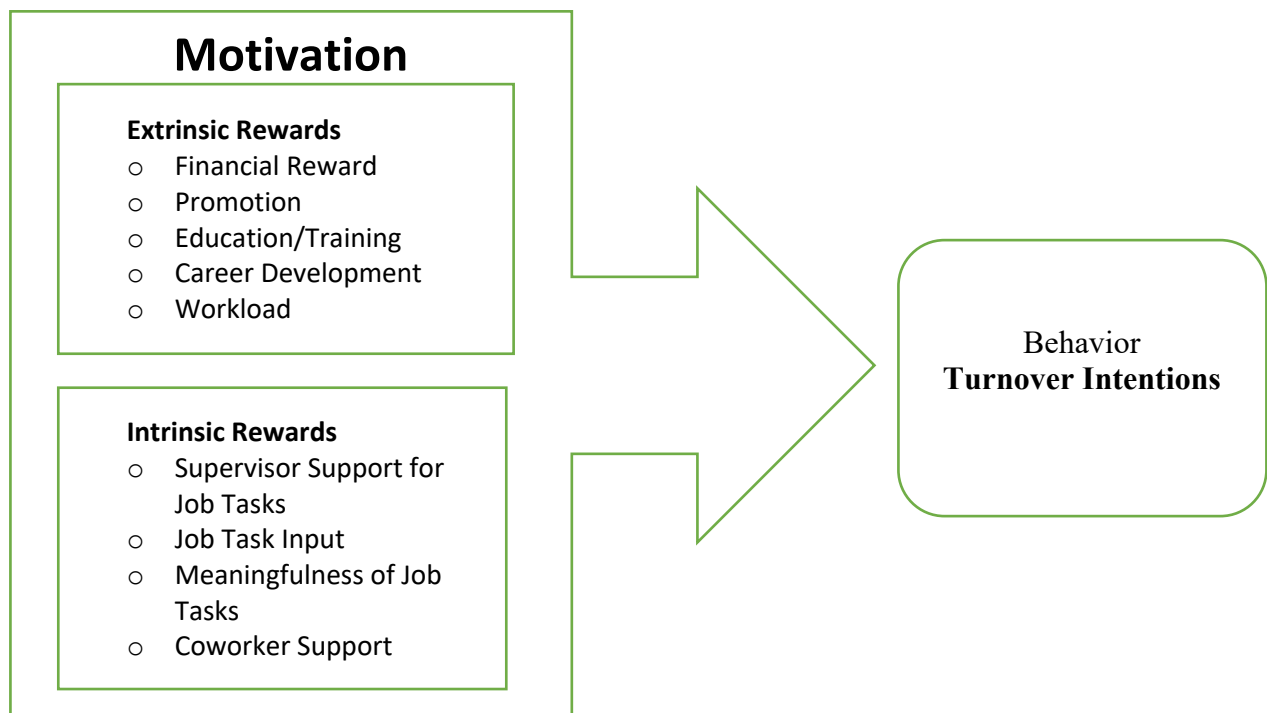
This study, aligned with the problem statement, focused on identifying what motivates millennials to stay on their jobs. Lee and Kulviwat (2008) indicated the propensity to leave an organization is in some part related to motivation, so this study was designed to provide a perspective of work motivation by examining forms of motivation and their relationship to intention to leave. The goal of this study was to offer suggested solutions to what many organizations and leaders have difficulty with understanding, millennial work motivations. The intent was to understand the role that rewards as work motivation affect turnover intentions. Stemming from the review of literature examining motivation, the concept of rewards as motivation emerged as a possible framework from which to view millennial behavior, specifically turnover intentions.

In this quantitative correlational study, the examination of motivation was conducted by exploring rewards with a delineation between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Both types of rewards are drivers of employee motivation (Stumpf et al., 2013). This study tested whether the assumption could be made that rewards affect millennial behavior, regarding their intention to leave their job. The theoretical framework was based on determining if turnover intentions decreased as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards increased for millennials working in the federal workforce. The independent variables in this study were intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards. The dependent variable was turnover intentions. Intrinsic rewards were considered internal rewards that provide feelings of satisfaction or recognition

for performing a particular task (Cote, 2019). As presented by Morgan et al. (2013b), intrinsic rewards included supervisor support for job tasks, the opportunity to have input in job tasks, meaningfulness of job tasks and coworker support. Extrinsic rewards included financial rewards, promotion, education/training, career development and having a reasonable workload (Morgan et al., 2013b). Extrinsic rewards are typically administered by the organization and are external to the job. Turnover intention refers to an individual's own estimated probability they are leaving the organization and is a stronger predictor of turnover behavior than other variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999).

**Figure 1**

*Theoretical Framework*



***Foundation for Theoretical Framework***

While there is no single answer of what best motivates people, there are many competing theories that attempt to explain the nature of motivation (Ovedele, 2010). The theoretical framework for this study was guided by Reinforcement Theory (Skinner, 1958) and Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). These theories served as the basis for understanding motivation on work behavior. Specifically rewards and turnover intention behavior.

**Theory 1: Self-Determination Theory.** While self-determination theory has been more appropriately described as a perspective rather than a testable theory, parts of this theory have been successfully used to explain work motivation and behavior (Kanfer et al., 2017). Self-determination theory seeks to explain motivated behavior and the emotional consequences of those behaviors (Sheldon & Prentice, 2019). This theory proposes that individuals experience distinct types of motivation at varying degrees or levels (Howard et al., 2016; Ma et al., 2020). Through the progression of time, self-determination theory has shifted from a one-dimensional concept of motivation to more of a multidimensional concept of motivation. In their latter works on motivation, Ryan and Deci (2000b) introduced a continuum of motivation that establishes the levels of motivation as intrinsic motivation, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation.

In summary intrinsic motivation is an individual's drive to fulfil their personal needs by performing specific activities that are not subject to the laws of logic because they are catalyzed by creativity, internal satisfaction, or a form of leisure (Pluszynska, 2019). External regulation is a result of individual behavior that is controlled by fear of punishment or external gratification. Introjected regulation is based on the desire for recognition and

encouragement and the unwillingness to experience feelings of guilt (Aliekperova, 2018). Identified regulation occurs when an individual engages in behavior based on their goals or values (Ma et al., 2020). With integrated regulation, behavior is self-determined because an individual's behavior emanates from his or her sense of self (Ma et al., 2020).

In identifying the various types and levels of motivation, Ryan and Deci (2000b) categorized motivation into either controlled or extrinsic motivation, autonomous or intrinsic motivation or amotivation, signifying no motivation. Controlled motivation consists of external regulation and introjected regulation (Aliekperova, 2018). The more autonomous forms of motivation include, intrinsic, integrated and identified regulations. The autonomous forms of motivation reflect a sense of volition and personal causation with regard to behavior (Lindwall et al., 2017).

Across the continuum of motivation, Ryan and Deci (2008) have broadly presented self-determination as behavior regulated by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Through various works, studies, developments, and progressions, what has been presented consistently through Ryan and Deci's (2000a, 2008) presentation of self-determination theory is the intrinsic and extrinsic nature of motivation. This is the perspective that was used in establishing the theoretical framework for this study.

**Theory 2: Reinforcement Theory.** The second aspect of the theoretical framework drew from B.F. Skinner's (1958) reinforcement theory. Skinner proposed reinforcement theory arguing the result of any specific event or circumstance drives the behavior of humans. Reinforcement theory suggests that people display certain behaviors because they have been rewarded for that behavior in the past (Nenty et al., 2017). Reinforcement theory posits that good performance will likely be repeated in the future if it is recognized and rewarded and



poor behavior will not be repeated if it is punished (Abun et al., 2020; Law, 2016). This theory serves to investigate the connection between target behavior and motivational tools (Ponta et al., 2020).

**Rewards, Motivation and Behavior.** Drawing from Ryan and Deci's (2000b) broad perspective of motivation, with intrinsic and extrinsic components and Skinner's (1958) approach to motivation which infers that rewards affect behavior, the framework for this study was formed. This framework holds that positive behavior can be elicited from rewards, even when the rewards are implemented as an antecedent to desired behavior rather than a result. Numerous other studies have shown that rewards in some way affect behavior, from lying behavior to habit formation and even behavioral flexibility and learning (Grover & Chun, 2005; Judah et al., 2018; Murayama & Kitagami, 2014; Shen & Chun, 2011). These components shape the framework upon which the exploration and analysis of the research problem were derived.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Extrinsic rewards:* Extrinsic rewards are the rewards that are external to work tasks and established on the organizational level. These rewards are generally out of the control of managers and employees (Kayode & Yarie, 2016).

*Federal civilian workforce:* The federal civilian workforce is comprised of employees that work for the various federal government agencies (Guy, 1993).

*Intrinsic rewards:* Intrinsic rewards are psychologically or emotionally rewarding work-related experiences that individuals gain from their work or work environment (Jacobs et al., 2014).

*Millennials*: Millennials are the generation of individuals born between 1977 and 1997 (Bowen & McCain, 2015).

*Turnover Intentions*: Turnover intention refers to an individual's own estimated probability they are leaving the organization (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations**

#### ***Assumptions***

This study was guided by several assumptions. It was assumed that each survey response was an accurate reflection of the respondents' feelings. To address response accuracy issues respondents must be motivated to provide accurate responses (Lyberg & Weisberg, 2016). Prior to and during the survey administration period, employees were encouraged to voice their opinions safely and confidentially about their job and work environments (Appendix A). The importance of the respondents' input and the ability to inspire change were included with survey administration to promote accurate completion of the survey.

It was also assumed that that a valid number of millennials completed the survey to allow for a valid study. While surveys are generally an efficient way to gather large amounts of data for a variety of purposes (Ruel et al., 2016, p. 13), to ensure a sufficient sample size could be garnished, the researcher identified the total number of survey responses from the applicable age group. The researcher made a reasonable assumption that an appropriate sample size could be selected from the 91,070 millennial employees who completed the survey.

***Limitations***

The data examined in this study were limited to millennials working in the federal government. Thus, the findings are limited in terms of generalizability and may not be applicable to millennials working in other sectors or the entire US population of millennials. While the findings are limited in respect to being generalized to the entire US population, they can be generalized to the target population, millennials within the US federal workforce. All factors that may affect turnover were not addressed in the data nor are they examined as a part of this study. Additionally, the data were collected as a snapshot of one point in time so it does not address how millennial intentions may change over time. To address other factors that may affect turnover and how intentions may change over time, recommendations are made for future research to gain an expanded perspective of millennial turnover.

The data used in the study were previously collected as a part of the Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey, thus the researcher lacked the ability to control how the data were collected as well as the ability to manipulate and control the study variables. Considering the archival nature of the data, this limitation cannot be reduced. Additionally, the data collection method did not allow for the recontacting of survey participants, which limits the analyses to the information already contained within the data.

***Delimitations***

This study only addressed the work motivations of millennials that are a part of the federal civilian workforce and did not address the work motivations of millennials employed in other sectors. It also did not explore other generational groups the federal workforce is comprised of. Additionally, this study did not seek to produce an exhaustive exploration of

factors that affect millennial turnover intentions, but rather focused on the extent to which rewards as motivation affect millennial behavior.

### **Significance of the Study**

#### ***Reduction of Gaps***

The findings of this study contributed to the understanding of millennial work decisions and will benefit the federal and state government organizations as well as private organizations, considering millennials are poised to be such a large fraction of the US workforce. The increasing composition of millennials in the workforce justified the need for understanding what motivates millennials to stay on their jobs (Baiyun et al., 2018). The federal government and organizations that understand the role that rewards play in reducing turnover intentions are better equipped with developing appealing pay and reward plans that aid in the retention of millennials. For the researcher, this study will help to uncover an aspect of millennial work motivations that is not often addressed, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Evidence establishes rewards as motivation, but much remains unknown regarding the extent that this applies to millennials. This study will help to close this gap within the existing research.

#### ***Implications for Biblical Integration***

In the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Numbers, the Bible details events between God, Moses, and Israel. These scriptures outline God speaking to Moses regarding the land of Canaan that was promised to the children of Israel. Moses, as commanded by God, sent men to search the land and report what was in the land of Canaan and whether the people who possessed it were strong, weak, few or many. Upon returning from Canaan, the representatives had two different reports. One group reported the people who dwelt in the

land were strong and giants. They also reported the cities were walled and great and were hesitant to pursue further. The second group of representatives, specifically Caleb and Joshua, desired to possess the land quickly and described the land as an exceeding good land. The subsequent sequence of events that took place include the children of Israel murmuring and complaining based on the report from the ten representatives, Moses being angered and God declaring 40 more years of wandering in the wilderness for the children of Israel. This meant the younger generation, along with Joshua and Caleb, would be the generation that entered the land that God promised, and the older generation would die in the wilderness. While there are many lessons and principles that can be garnished from the events that took place in these scriptures, one notable thought is the perception of rewards or benefits motivates behavior. This can be seen in Joshua and Caleb's response.

In the case of Joshua and Caleb, what is seen is a group of people who, based on perceived rewards, were willing to fight giants to possess a land that was foreign to them. This group of people saw the benefits or rewards that would be obtained by taking possession of the land, and they were willing to align their behavior with receiving those benefits. These benefits would include fulfilling a promise that was made to their forefathers, improved living conditions, feelings of fulfillment and acknowledgment, plenteous food, and stability. Benefits that are both intrinsic and extrinsic.

What can also be seen in a second group of people who, based on their perception of rewards or lack thereof, were unwilling to take possession of Canaan. This group of people did not see the benefits of taking the land, so they did not desire to pursue further. This group of people perceived danger, or harm would result from their actions and they based their response accordingly.

This set of events between God, Moses and the Israelites vividly illustrates the theme and theories set forth in this paper. People are motivated by rewards or the perception of rewards and they will align their behavior in the affirmative if they perceive rewards or benefits and negatively if they do not. This theme can also be seen beyond the book of Numbers in the daily life of the believer. There is a promised reward of eternal life with Jesus that is a direct result of behavior that is shown in this life. This is a core tenet in the life of the believer.

### ***Relationship to Field of Study***

Employees are an essential aspect of any business. Regardless of activities that an organization undertakes, the success of an organization is determined by its employees, the decisions they make and the behaviors in which they engage (Mello, 2015). These behaviors and decisions are impacted by employee motivations and they are understood and governed by human resources. Motivation is the power that strengthens employee behavior, gives route to behavior, and triggers the tendency to continue the behavior (Shukla, 2012). The study of human resources gives perspective to these motivations and places an importance on what motivates employees for the successful operation of the organization (Pilukiene, 2017).

### **A Review of Professional and Academic Literature**

A review of professional and academic literature was conducted to determine the available research and identify any gaps in existing research that were central to the theoretical framework of this study. This review illuminated gaps in existing literature the study could address. This literature review is organized into six areas: 1) motivation, 2) rewards, 3) rewards as motivation, 4) rewards and behavior, 5) turnover intentions, and 6) the

millennial employee. These six focus areas are centered around the theory being tested within this study, which is the effect of rewards on millennial behavior.

The first section of this literature review explores historical and current research on motivation. This section outlines motivation theories and identifies where each theory sources motivation. This section also establishes how motivation has been defined among researchers and identifies what has been identified as factors that affect motivation. The second section defines rewards and details findings related to intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The third section focuses how rewards serve as motivation. The fourth section explores how rewards and behavior have generally been examined. The fifth section discusses turnover intentions and identifies previously researched antecedent to turnover intentions. The sixth final section discusses a range of perspective and outcomes related to millennials including turnover and motivational profiles.

To complete this section of the research project, a search for relevant literature was conducted. In searching for relevant literature, specific search terms were used. These terms included “motivation theories,” “motivation,” “millennials and rewards,” “millennial work behavior,” “millennial turnover,” “generation Y and rewards,” “work motivations,” “millennial work preferences,” “rewards and motivation,” “rewards and behavior,” “intrinsic rewards,” “extrinsic rewards,” and “generational work behaviors.”

In the process of selecting articles for review, several parameters were observed to ensure that relevant and important articles were considered in the literature review. First, peer-reviewed journals published from 2015 to 2020 were included in the review. Second, the writer carefully scanned the abstract of articles to determine if they were relevant to the study. In instances where the abstract did not provide a clear picture of relevancy, the entire

article was inspected to determine if there was information related to the applied problem, research questions, hypotheses, or theoretical framework. Third, articles with motivation related constructs, such as intrinsic motivations, extrinsic motivations, intrinsic rewards, and extrinsic rewards were included. Fourth, articles with turnover intention related constructs, such as retention and turnover were included. The databases utilized in the review of literature include ProQuest, Gale OneFile, Emerald Insights, Google Scholar, Sage Journal, Jstor, EBSCO, APA PsycNet, and Wiley. Based on the parameters and preferences mentioned above, an exhaustive review of literature is conducted.

### ***Motivation***

**Motivation Defined.** Motivation is a complex phenomenon of the contemporary society that is influenced by the system of values, commitments, and perceptions of various people (Aliekperova, 2018). Motivation has been a robust and fertile area of theory and research throughout the history of psychology (Bernard et al., 2005). According to Kayode and Yari (2016), motivation is a psychological feature that prompts an organism to work towards a desired goal and elicits, dominates, and sustains certain goal-directed behavior. Kayode and Yari posed that motivation is psychological because it is the driving force that is born from the inner mind in the form of action or reactions to achieve a certain purpose.

Panait and Panait (2018) also described motivation as a psychological structure but poses it as the totality of internal and external motives of the personality which condition the transformation of the personality's development potential into real and functional structures. Rahardjo (2017) posed that motivation is a factor that encourages a person to perform a specific action and hence is a factor that drives individual behavior. Shkoler and Kimura (2020) defined motivation as the psychological force that generates complex processes of



goal-directed thoughts and behaviors. According to Kanfer and Chen (2016), modern views of motivation portray motivation as a time-linked set of reciprocal affective, recursive, behavioral, and cognitive processes and actions that are formed around an individual's goals.

Motivation is a predecessor to individual action and the basis for the choices that individuals make (Alexandru, 2019). It is the sentiment generated by viewing the purpose of an individual's action (Alexandru, 2019). Motivation is what really causes people to work and helps to stimulate an individual to perform actions to achieve desired results (Ahluwalia & Preet, 2017; Panait & Panait, 2018). Kayode and Yari (2016) opined that human performance of any sort is improved by an increase in motivation. Bruni et al. (2019) described motivation as complex and implied that human behavior is motivated by more than just material factors but is also driven by honor, esteem, recognition, shame, and glory.

According to Bernard et al. (2005) motivation refers to the reason why organisms initiate and persist in certain behaviors as opposed to others. Bernard et al. described motivation as including the process that guide activity over time. Bernard et al. placed emphasis on the sense of duration and time and posits that while motivated behavior takes place in the present, its orientation is toward the future.

Hunjet et al. (2016) delivered the concept of motivation as the inner force that affects individual behavior. Hunjet et al. described motivation as the theoretical concept that explains why people choose to behave in a certain manner under certain circumstance. Hunjet et al. also described motivation as a process that occurs over time, but offers that individual motivators change over time depending on character traits, workplace characteristics and organizational characteristics.

Leszek and Michal (2020) posed motivation as a driving force in which an entity engages in effort to achieve its objectives. Leszek and Michal added the motives for taking action depends largely on human needs, the workplace and cultural environment, and the potential for achieving its goals. Simply put, motivation represented the willingness, intention, or desire to achieve something (Leszek & Michal, 2020).

Panait (2020) submitted that motivation is mainly concerned with an employee's will to make an effort to achieve the objectives of the organization while satisfying individual needs. According to Panait, to motivate employees, one must take into account the individuality of each organizational member, their potential needs, interests, behavior, ambitions and desires. Panait's perspective of motivation highlighted three major coordinates, needs, effort and organizational objectives.

**Work Motivation.** Motivation serves as not just a personal attribute, but more of a result of the interaction between an individual and their work environment (Kjellström et al., 2017). Within research, motivation has been established as an important determinant of job performance and a strategic factor within organizations to achieve better results (Ahluwalia & Preet, 2017; Bronkhorst et al., 2015; de Castro et al., 2016; Syaifuddin, 2016).

Jovanovic and Bozilovic (2017) found motivation to be one of the most important prerequisites to work efficiency and achieving targets of both individuals and organizations. Jovanovic and Bozilovic expressed that to motivate individuals, one must understand their needs and goals. In detailing the motivational process, Jovanovic and Bozilovic indicated the first phase is formation of motives or activities of the employee towards the achievement of a specific goal. In the second phase the activities produce a certain effect and in the third phase is the employee satisfaction effect as a consequence of the award.

Gupta and Gupta (2014) posed three thoughts that should be noted about work motivation. First, organizations must understand the needs of their employees, employee perceptions of the goal setting process and employee reward expectancies. Second, employee motivation represents the employee's devotion to their organization. Finally, organization setting, the nature of the job, the interpersonal relationships, employee needs, organizational climate, rewards, and personal policies affect work motivation.

**Theories of Motivation.** While motivation theories contribute to understanding human behavior within organizations, none of the approaches alone is considered the most correct theory (Alexandru, 2019). Theories are developed to explain past observations and predict future observations (Hunjet et al., 2016). Most prominent theories of motivation address the proximal, intra-individual psychological forces, mechanisms, and processes that determine goal choices and actions (Kanfer & Chen, 2016).

To understand which questions certain theories answer, the general psychological principles applicable to specific theories must be identified (Hunjet et al., 2016). Most theories of motivation recognize that behavior is influenced by its context (Kanfer et al., 2017). Most of the theories of motivation are also named after the persons who developed them and differ mainly in their assumptions about human needs (Hunjet et al., 2016). The theories of motivation are generally grouped into two categories, content theories and process theories (Cote, 2019; Jovanovic & Bozilovic, 2017; Oyedele, 2010).

**Content Theory.** Content theories identify factors that tend to cause a person to behave as they do (Song et al., 2007). These theories focus on the needs that motivate people to action which includes the needs that energize, direct, sustain and stop an individual's behavior (Barton et al., 2018). Content theories address the "what are the sources of human

motivation” question (Barbuto, 2006; Hunjet et al., 2016). Content theories are based on needs that can be psychological or physiological and assume that individuals are affected by factors that exist within the structure of the organization that can direct, sustain and arouse individual behavior (Cote, 2019). Content oriented theories specify the psychological traits, motives, tendencies, and orientations that instigate motivational processes (Kanfer et al., 2017). The content theories of motivation include theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, McClelland's theory of achievement motivation, Herzberg's Two-factor Theory, Role Motivation Theory, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, and ERG theory (Hunjet et al., 2016; Oyedele, 2010; Song et al., 2007). Table 1 outlines the content theories of motivation, along with their theorists and proposed source of motivation.

**Table 1***Content Theories of Motivation*

Theory	Theorist	Source/Influence of Motivation	Theory Details
Hierarchy of Needs	Maslow (1943)	The desire to achieve certain needs	Needs: Physiological, safety, belongingness/love, esteem, and self-actualization  A need is no longer a strong motivator once it has been satisfied and the need at the highest level becomes the motivator.
Theory X Theory Y	McGregor (1957)	The direction of managers	Managers are responsible for directing the behavior of individuals.  Individuals must be persuaded, rewarded, punished and controlled to direct their behavior.
		Internally present in people	Motivation is already present in people and there is no need for management to put it there.
Achievement Theory	McClelland (1953, 1985, 1987)	Need for achievement, Need for affiliation Need for power	When employee's needs are strong, they demonstrate behaviors that lead to need fulfilment.
Two Factor Theory	Herzberg (1968)	Motivation factors Hygiene factors	Factors influence motivation  Motivators cause satisfaction  Hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction
ERG Theory	Aldefer (1969)	The desire to meet core needs	Three core needs: existence needs, relatedness, and growth needs.  Human behavior can focus on more than one need at a time and in any order.

Role Motivation Theory	Miner (1993)	Based on the requirements of the role	Roles: Hierarchic, Professional, Task and group (See Tables 2-5 for role requirements-motive patterns)
			Certain motivations must exist for individuals to display certain behaviors in certain roles.

**Table 2***Hierarchic Role Motivation*

Role Requirement	Motive Pattern
Positive relations with authority	Favorable attitudes to superiors
Competing with peers	Desire to compete
Imposing wishes on subordinates	Desire to exercise power
Behaving assertively role requirement	Desire to assert oneself
Standing out from the group role requirement	Desire to be distinct and different
Performing routine administrative functions role requirement	Desire to perform routine duties responsibly

**Table 3***Professional Role Motivation*

Role Requirement	Motive Pattern
Acquiring knowledge role requirement	Desire to learn and acquire knowledge
Acting independently role requirement	Desire to exhibit independence
Accepting status role requirement	Desire to acquire status
Providing help role requirements	Desire to help others
Exhibiting professional role requirement	Value-based identification with the profession

**Table 4***Task Role Motivation*

Role Requirement	Motive Pattern
Achieving as an individual	Desire to achieve through one's own efforts
Avoiding risks	Desire to avoid risks
Seeking results of behavior	Desire for feedback
Personally innovating	Desire to introduce innovative solutions
Planning and setting goals	Desire to plan and establish goals

**Table 5***Group Role Motivation*

Role Requirement	Motive Pattern
Interacting with peers effectively	Desire to interact socially and affiliate with others
Gaining group acceptance	Desire for continuing belongingness in a group
Positive relations with peers	Favorable attitude towards peers
Cooperative with peers	Favorable attitude towards peers
Acting democratically	Desire to participate in democratic processes

***Process Theories.*** In contrast to content theories, process theories of motivation describe “how” individual behavior occurs (Barton et al., 2018). Process theories are concerned with the analysis of how personal factors such as cognitive processes determine individual motivation (Oyedele, 2010). Most process theories describe the motivation inducement process and the motivational process in an attempt to prescribe general interventions to induce human motivation (Barbuto, 2006). Process theories place emphasis on the actual process of motivation and include Equity Theory, Expectancy Theory,

Reinforcement Theory, Self-efficacy Theory and Goal-setting Theory (Oyedele, 2010; Song et al., 2007). Table 6 outlines the content theories of motivation, along with their theorists and proposed source of motivation.

**Table 6**

*Process Theories of Motivation*

Theory	Theorist	Source of Motivation	Additional Theory Details
Equity Theory	Adams (1963)	Striving for Equity	The desire to reduce or eliminate inequity, serves as motivation for behavior.  Perception of inequality must exist before efforts towards equity are generated (Miner, 2005).
Expectancy Theory	Vroom (1964)	Expectancy, instrumentality, valence	Behavior derives from conscious choices among alternatives that aim to increase pleasure and minimize suffering.
Expectancy Theory	Porter & Lawler (1968)	Expected rewards (intrinsic and extrinsic)	Fairness and attractiveness of rewards will affect motivation.  The nature of the task and perceived equity of reward also influence individual motivation (Humphreys & Einstein, 2004).
Goal Setting Theory	Locke (1996)	Goals	Behavior is a function of consequences and people take action because they know what they can expect as a result.  High (hard) goals lead to a higher level of performance than easy or abstract goals (Locke & Latham, 2006).
Reinforcement Theory	Skinner (1958)	Rewards	Any specific event or circumstance drives behavior.  When people are rewarded for behavior, they are likely to repeat that behavior.



Self-efficacy Theory	(Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997).	An individual's belief they can carry out a specific task or complete a specific goal	Self-efficacy is sourced from performance experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and psychological arousal.
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***Other Behavior and Behavior-Related Theories.*** Along with content and process theories of motivation are other theories that offer perspectives on what motivates individual behavior. While these theories may possess characteristics of process or content theories, they have not been specifically categorized to either. These theories include Self-Concept Theory and Self-Determination Theory. Table 7 outlines other behavior and behavior related theories of motivation, along with their theorists and proposed source of motivation.

**Table 7**

*Other Behavior Theories*

Theory	Theorist	Source of Motivation	Additional Theory Details
Self-Concept	Leonard, Beauvais, and Scholl (1995)	Self-concept	<p>Self-concept-based motivation is the basis for deliberate and reactive explanations of behavior.</p> <p>As a deliberate process, individuals consciously act to receive task and social feedback that will confirm or enhance their social identities that make up their self-concept.</p> <p>As a reactive process, individual behavior is motivated to preserve self-perceptions that make up their self-concept.</p>
Self-Determination	Ryan & Deci (2008)	Universal needs	<p>Universal needs are competence, relatedness, and autonomy.</p> <p>People are motivated to grown and change when their universal needs are met.</p>

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Self-Determination	Pink (2009)	Intrinsic motivators	Intrinsic motivators are autonomy, mastery and purpose.  By allowing employees to direct their own lives (autonomy), continuously improve (mastery), and do something that matters (purpose) individuals are more motivated.
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**What Affects Motivation?** Today, organizations endeavor to improve employee motivation along with their employee's related knowledge and skills (Cetin & Askun, 2018). However due to the complexity of motivation, it has been hard to determine a single cause or solution to what motivates people (Alexandru, 2019; Tan & Sivan, 2019). According to Tan and Sivan (2019), the contemporary ideology of motivation is that individuals act when they have a reason to act and an employee will only respond when they find the right reason to act upon. Understanding why people act in a certain manner creates the ability to predict favorable behaviors that are critical to organizational success (Tan & Sivan, 2019).

Kalhor et al. (2017) found that employees who are well-motivated tend to be more committed, more efficient, and more effective for organizations. Kalhor et al.'s study revealed that as employee motivation increases so does their organizational commitment and performance. Lencho (2020) found the factors the most motivated employees were empowerment, recognition, working conditions, and benefits. Haryono et al. (2020) determined that training and job promotion influenced work motivation. Ngwa et al. (2019) maintained that individuals are motivated to work by the needs they have that require satisfaction. Several other factors have been found to affect work motivation including work ability, work related boredom, newcomers unmet expectations, the enjoyment of work,

working relationships, fair treatment, and autonomy (Feißel et al., 2018; Gkorezis & Kastritsi, 2017; Rahardjo, 2017).

Macovei and Argintaru (2016) generated a hierarchy of factors that influences work motivation. The six factors that increase work motivations are: 1) work characteristics, 2) possibility of professional achievement, 3) workplace climate, 4) merit recognition, 5) possibility of personnel development, and 6) promotion opportunities. Macovei and Argintaru also identified a hierarchy of factors that decrease work motivation which include

- 1) working conditions,
- 2) commander behavior,
- 3) failure to recognize merit,
- 4) inadequate remuneration, and
- 5) coworker behavior/lack of cohesion.

***Leadership and Motivation.*** Ouakouak et al. (2020) suggested that leadership has the ability to shape employee behavior. Ouakouak et al. offered that effective leadership practices improves employee performance by increasing organizational commitment, employee engagement and employee motivation. Additionally, Ouakouah et al.'s study found ethical and emotional leadership to function as an enhancement to employee motivation.

Higher work motivation has also been associated with transformational leadership (Bronkhorst et al., 2015; Syaifuddin, 2016). Transformational leadership has a role that promotes positive encouragement to develop subordinates to do more than expected by inspiring them to look at the future with optimism, projecting the vision of the idea and by communicating how the vision can be achieved (Bronkhorst et al., 2015; Syaifuddin, 2016).

These types of leaders possess the ability to influence behaviors based on their leadership style (Syaifuddin, 2016).

Shkoler and Tziner (2020) identified several outcomes while examining the role of leadership style on individual behavioral outcomes for individuals working in the public, private and government sectors. Specifically, in all sectors transformational and transactional leadership together led to increased work drive and work drive led to enhanced work enjoyment. Also, in all sectors, transformational leadership led to increased work enjoyment. Under transformational leadership in private and public sectors (not government) work drive led to job engagement (Shkoler & Tziner, 2020). Transactional leadership did not directly lead to work enjoyment at all. In the private sector, both leadership styles led to increased job enjoyment. In the public sector, transformational leadership (but not transactional leadership) led to job enjoyment (Shkoler & Tziner, 2020).

Belrhiti et al. (2020) found that a laissez-faire or hands-off approach leadership decreased employee motivation. Belrhiti et al. also found that an overreliance on transactional leadership had negative effects on staff motivation as well as levels of trust in the organization. Additionally, Belrhiti et al., consistent with other studies, showed that transformational leaders who showed individual consideration and clearly communicated their vision increased employee motivation.

***Compensation.*** A frequently identified means of motivation is compensation. Compensation is often identified as a reward as it is given as a reward to employees for their contribution to the organization (Sudiardhita et al., 2018). Sudiardhita et al. presented compensation as a reward received in return for some form of effort that makes an individual feel satisfied with the work they have done. Compensation had intrinsic and extrinsic aspects

which included salary and wages, benefits, incentive, additional income, responsibility, challenging work, and growth ability (Sudiardhita et al., 2018). Sudiardhita et al. revealed that as compensation increases, motivation increases as well. Sudiardhita et al. also found that with increases in compensation there are also increases in job satisfaction and employee performance.

Compensation is seen as important to individuals because it reflects the value of employees and the size of their work to the employees themselves, their families and their community (Rahardjo, 2017; Sudiardhita et al., 2018). Rahardjo (2017) pointed out that compensation even affects how and why people choose to work in an organization. Tan and Sivan (2019) opined that while compensation may motivate the performance of an employee, it may not effectively stimulate other employee behaviors such as knowledge sharing.

### ***Rewards***

Rewards are the most important techniques to keep employees motivated in accomplishing their tasks (Qaiser Danish et al., 2015). Rewards are the most common practice within organization used to acknowledge and compensate for good performance (Özutku, 2012). Organizations have begun rewarding their employees in a manner that extends beyond rewarding them with a salary (Stalmašeková et al., 2017). Ayman and Husman (2019) offered that to assure the retention and performance of employees, organizations must offer a diverse means of rewarding its staff.

According to Kaut and Sharma (2019) rewards refer to the reimbursement or repayment that an employee receives from an organization in exchange for services rendered, completing a task, or fulfilling a duty. Gov (2015) presented rewards as one of the most important factors that encourages employees to invest extra effort and work more efficiently.

Stalmašeková et al. (2017) suggested that rewards, both monetary and non-monetary, create an opportunity for organizations to lure and retain employees.

In examining the effect of rewards on employee outcomes, Farrington and Beck (2017) found that offering more rewards led to an increase in organizational culture reflected in excellent service, innovation, modeling, professionalism, integrity, and cooperation. Farrington and Beck also found that as rewards increased, so did employee performance. Kaut and Sharma (2019) suggested that to be effective in positively impacting employee behavior, rewards alone are not sufficient. There must be alignment between rewards and organizational culture. These authors define culture as the values, beliefs, and attitudes that are shared between individuals or groups. Kaut and Sharma argued that culture and rewards both direct the behavior of employees. Kaut and Sharma opined that as employees seek to be rewarded for what they contribute to the organization rather than their work alone, the synchronization between culture and rewards is important to influence the narrative about organizations, and ultimately reward expectation and acceptance within the organization.

While research generally points to the positive aspects of offering rewards, such as Delmas and Pekovic (2018) who proposed that by offering rewards, organizations can promote sustainable innovation among other favorable organizational outcome, Singhal and Singhal (2017) noted there are instances where offering rewards does not lead to expected outcomes. Singhal and Singhal proposed when a gap exists between received rewards and expected rewards, there is a possibility that rewards will not produce positive outcomes. Singhal and Singhal indicated when received rewards do not meet expected rewards and the valence of the perceived rewards is lower, higher rewards would produce lower levels of motivation.

### ***Rewards as Motivation***

Generally, the concept of rewards is associated with motivation (Coccia & Igor, 2018). A critical task for organizations is to motivate its employees and one part of this is through rewards (Stalmašeková et al., 2017). Rewards are a motivational tool that maximizes psychological well-being (Langove & Isha, 2017). Ayman and Husam (2019) maintained the motivation to remain with an organization is greatly determined by the rewards the employee receives. In a multi-country study, de Castro et al. (2016) found the greater the rewards offered to employees the greater the motivation exhibited by the employee.

Organizations have been known to use rewards to motivate and increase the task performance of their personnel (Qaiser et al., 2015). In understanding the role of rewards when acting as motivation, the means or methods in which reward are extended must be understood. Within the literature, two principal forms of rewards emerged, extrinsic and intrinsic. Victor and Hoole (2017) suggested that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are important factors for retaining employees and organization must draw strategies from both types to improve retention levels and serve other purposes within the organization.

**Extrinsic Rewards.** Extrinsic rewards are rewards that are external to the task such as salary, work environment, job security, promotion, gifts, and advancement opportunities (Coccia, 2019; Kayode & Yarie, 2016). Victor and Hoole (2017) proposed that extrinsic rewards are external to an individual rather than a task. Farrington and Beck (2017) also categorized extrinsic rewards as external rewards and offer examples of extrinsic rewards such as pay for achieving a company goal, bonuses, commissions, a comfortable workspace, promotion, stock options or a company car. Panait and Panait (2018) posed that extrinsic rewards are financial rewards obtained by the employee that include salary, commission,

bonuses, dividends, and cash. Kokubun (2018), in examining extrinsic rewards and organizational commitment, offered four findings about extrinsic rewards:

- 1) Higher rewards increase commitment.
- 2) Better pay packages, incentives, promotions, and bonuses aid in the retention of employees.
- 3) Symmetrical reward distribution reduces the likelihood of role conflict.
- 4) Extrinsic rewards reduce employee intention to leave.

Kayode and Yarie (2016) offered that extrinsic rewards or financial rewards are the most important staff motivator. Kayode and Yarie suggested these rewards are the most attractive type of awards. These thoughts are echoed by Mustafa and Ali (2019) who found that financial compensation enhanced motivation and as a result, reduced turnover intentions. Mustafa and Ali's research revealed that extrinsic rewards in the form of pay and salary, may serve as a strong indicator of how an organization values its employees which as a result enhances employee motivation.

Hoole and Hotz (2016) found that certain types of extrinsic rewards contribute significantly to employee motivation such as gratuity and allowance. Interestingly, in this study pension and salary did not positively influence employee motivation but salary, pension and gratuity did attract employees to the job. Hoole and Hotz also found that gratuity and pension encouraged employees to remain on their job. The findings from Hoole and Hotz's study indicated that extrinsic rewards aided in the motivation, attraction, and retention of employees.

Ngwa et al. (2019) found that extrinsic rewards such as profit sharing, had a positive effect on employee commitment. Ngwa et al. concluded the link between rewards and



employee performance create the opportunity for organizations to fine-tune employee behavior. Morgan et al. (2013a) found that extrinsic rewards, such as higher financial rewards, were related to employee's intention to stay with their organization. Morgan et al. also found that greater promotion opportunities were related to employee intent to stay.

Konrad and Piore (2020) offered that extrinsic rewards in the form of financial rewards are a significant part of any job. But in examining the relationship between employee engagement and financial rewards, Konrad and Piore found that salary, benefits, and bonuses did not build work engagement. Thibault Landry et al. (2020) found extrinsic rewards to have a positive effect on individual motivation and performance when the financial rewards were less conspicuous. Thibault Landry et al.'s findings revealed that when financial rewards were presented in a manner that was autonomy supportive and in a non-controlling, non-pressuring way, employees responded better.

Panait and Panait (2018) maintained that while extrinsic rewards are the most frequent form of rewards, these rewards are not everything. Panait and Panait highlighted that extrinsic rewards reveals shortcomings in terms of motivation because they are based on the employee perceiving the value of the rewards, making their motivating role very small. While extrinsic rewards may be easily identified and heighten trust and engagement, Victor and Hoole (2017) submitted the modern workplace is becoming increasingly intrinsically driven, thus intrinsic rewards should not be overlooked.

**Intrinsic Rewards.** Renard and Snelgar (2016) classified intrinsic rewards as rewards that are personal psychological responses to the work that employees perform. They provide employees with a feeling of satisfaction or sense of recognition for performing tasks (Farrington & Beck, 2017). According to Kayode and Yarie (2016), intrinsic rewards arise

from rewards that are inherent in the job that an employee does and enjoys because of successfully attaining set goals. Coccia (2019) proposed that intrinsic rewards exist in the form of autonomy, reputation, trust, empowerment, and expense preference. Farrington and Beck (2017) added that intrinsic rewards include meaningfulness, recognition for a job well done, credit for a job well done and autonomy in making decisions.

Renard and Snelgar (2016) proposed that extrinsic rewards alone are not the only way to motivate behavior. Renard and Snelgar held that employees can be effectively rewarded intrinsically by stimulation, delight and joy that is generated from the way in which the job is designed. Ayman and Husman (2019) suggested that through intrinsic rewards, employees are motivated to achieve their job tasks rather than being driven by the idea of tangible incentives as seen with extrinsic rewards placing a prevailing effect within intrinsic rewards.

Qaiser et al. (2015) found that when intrinsic rewards are offered as rewards, employees performed well and are positively motivated for the welfare of the organization. Riasat et al. (2016) found that as intrinsic rewards increase, employee performance and satisfaction increase as well. Munir et al. (2016) also found that intrinsic rewards motivate employees to increase their job performance. According to Özutku (2012) intrinsic rewards are instrumental in making employees more productive. Morgan et al. (2013a) found that employees are more satisfied with their jobs when intrinsic rewards are present. Interestingly Morgan et al.'s study revealed that intrinsic rewards was not related to employee's intention to stay with their organization.

Tausif (2012) suggested that by offering intrinsic rewards such as task autonomy, task significance, task involvement and recognition to private employees, they become more satisfied with their jobs. Tausif also found that in some circumstances, specifically when

given the opportunity to learn new things, intrinsic rewards led to unsatisfied employees. Tausif's findings also revealed that public employees are satisfied when they have freedom at work and involvement. Tausif found that public sector employees were not satisfied when they were given the opportunity to learn new things or with task involvement.

Jacobs et al. (2014) identified three behavioral outcomes related to intrinsic rewards. First, individuals who are given significant amounts of intrinsic rewards at work typically experience high levels of work engagement. Second, older employees are more engaged than younger employees when intrinsic rewards are present on the job. Third, women were more engaged when the competence factor of intrinsic rewards were present. Competence involves feelings of capability to handle work and meet or exceed standards of achievement (Jacobs et al., 2014). While intrinsic rewards have generated useful implications, Renard and Snelgar (2016) acknowledged that intrinsic rewards are not the sole method for motivating employees.

### ***Rewards and Behavior***

White and Gottfried (2011) offered that rewards are used to describe an event that increases the probability of a behavior when the event is contingent on the behavior. This line of thinking lends itself to the idea there are reward factors that can influence behaviors. From the perspective of rewards, Agarwal (1998) proposed that rewards generally influence two types of behavior, membership, and performance. With membership including behaviors such as joining and remaining with an organization and coming to work regularly and punctually and performance comprising of the range of behaviors that are required to perform a given job or role.

Agarwal (1998) also opined that rewards systems should satisfy three design requirements to be effective.

- 1) Rewards should be contingent upon behaviors that are of importance to the organization.
- 2) Employees should perceive the rewards as equitable.
- 3) The rewards should be of value to the employee.

Lardner (2015) proposed that a key element to design effective rewards strategies is to reward high quality performance that is directly linked to the business success while not rewarding poor performance.

Much of the research examining rewards within organizations consider the impact that rewards have on employee behavior. Numerous researchers have supported the fact that organizational rewards have an impact on employee behavior which can ultimately impact the effectiveness of the organization (Kaut & Sharma, 2019). Victor and Hoole (2017) found that a positive relationship exists between rewards and employee trust, work engagement and performance. This finding indicated that organizations could utilize rewards to improve employee trust and work engagement and ultimately productivity, performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Victor and Hoole also suggested that employees exert more effort, dedication, and involvement in their work as more rewards are offered.

Kayode and Yari (2016) found that certain rewards have a significant effect on employee performance. Kayode and Yari found that employees placed value on different rewards and when preferential rewards were not given, employees expressed their displeasure through poor performance and non-commitment to their job. Jaleta et al. (2019) also found

there was a significant relationship between rewards and performance. Jaleta et al. findings suggest that as rewards offered to employees increase, there is an equivalent enhancement in the work motivation and employee job performance. Jaleta et al. conclude that offering rewards can influence employees to perform assigned tasks in an efficient and effective manner. Ngwa et al. (2019) expressed that employees place great value on rewards given to them by their organization and this has a major impact in their performance behavior.

Sulistiyani et al. (2018) found that rewards did not affect knowledge sharing behavior. However, when employees are under transformational leaders and are offered higher extrinsic rewards, they are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing. Liu and Li (2017), after finding that only certain types of rewards affected knowledge sharing and contribution behavior, recommended that organizations should cautiously use rewards to motivate contribution behavior. Liu and Li conclude that rewards do not simply work in a more is better manner, but rather, different reward types serve different purposes. Nguyen and Malik (2020) found that extrinsic rewards motivated private company employees to engage in knowledge sharing behavior while intrinsic rewards worked effectively to encourage public company employees to engage in knowledge sharing behavior. Lombardi et al. (2020) found that when extrinsic rewards were in place for knowledge sharing, the positive effects of intrinsic motivation were reduced.

According to Hoole and Hotz (2016), organizational rewards should affect behaviors such as performance, productivity, engagement, and commitment. Langove and Isha (2017) submitted that rewards should minimize turnover behavior. Okinyi (2015) found a strong relationship between rewards and employee commitment to their organization. Okinyi findings indicate the more satisfied employees are with rewards, the more committed and

motivated they are. Nazir et al. (2016) also found a significant relationship between rewards and commitment. Nazir et al. findings revealed that as rewards increased, commitment increased and as a result turnover intention decreased.

### ***Turnover Intentions***

The prerequisite to an individual leaving their job is their intention to leave, which is referred to as turnover intention (Belete, 2018). Turnover intention is considered a crucial organizational topic by both scholars and practitioners (Jung et al., 2017). Research on turnover intention often focuses on the influences of organizational or individual/employee characteristics and may depend on the ways in which organizational and individual factors influence employees' physical and psychological status (Kim, 2015). A large amount of literature emerging during the last three decades has identified a range of antecedents of turnover intention and actual turnover, including individual characteristics, employee attitudes, organizational conditions, and managerial practices (Kim & Fernandez, 2017). Understanding drivers of employee turnover intent is an important step toward designing the appropriate strategies in terms of recruitment, benefits, and compensation in the workforce (Ali et al., 2018).

Fazio et al. (2017) revealed that an increase in perceived social support leads to an increase in affective commitment and subsequently a decline in turnover intentions. Fazio et al.'s findings suggested the higher the perceived social support, the more obliged employees feel to stay employed with an organization and do their jobs well despite difficulties and stressors. Ayman (2018) found that transformational leadership negatively correlated with turnover intentions, noting that employees are more likely to remain with an organization if

they believe their managers show interest and concern for them. Ayman also found there was no meaningful relationship between transactional leadership turnover intentions.

According to Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) the higher the work life balance experienced by an employee the less likely that individual will be to leave their job. Jaharuddin and Zainol also found that as job engagement increased the intention to quit is decreased. Rashid et al. (2019) found that employees who are more engaged in their work are less likely to leave their organization. Yukongdi and Shresta (2020) found that affective organizational commitment, and job satisfaction had a negative effect on turnover intentions. Yukongdi and Shresta also found that as job stress increased so did turnover intentions of employees.

### ***The Millennial Employee***

Many studies examining millennial behavior, do so with the intent of either identifying factors that affect millennials behavior or by providing a profile to describe millennial work preferences or thought patterns. Rather (2018) explored the motivational psychology of millennials and concluded with eight factors that describe millennials.

- 1) They are not static individuals who wait for seniority to help them move a step ahead.
- 2) They want a leader not a boss.
- 3) They demand feedback.
- 4) They want flexibility and freedom in their work.
- 5) They seek mobility.
- 6) They hate administrative hiccups.
- 7) They want to work in teams.
- 8) They are driven by recognition and desire to be known by their contributions.

The motivational profile presented by Kovačević and Labrović (2018) offered three thoughts about millennials. First that millennials strived towards intrinsic goals. Second, millennials are least satisfied with existential needs. Finally, this generation is not satisfied with affiliative needs and the needs for competency.

As millennials transition through their organizations, Graham and Musse (2020) urged organizations to adjust their approach to not only understand millennials but also to understand their mindset. Graham and Musse suggested that organizations must take a number of actions to build confidence in millennials and aid in the development of loyalty to the organization, mission and culture. Graham and Musse offered that organizations must challenge millennials early in their careers. Organizational leaders must empower millennials to seek and implement solutions. Graham and Musse also suggested aligning millennials roles and responsibilities with their technical strengths and values. Finally, Graham and Musse suggested diversifying the work experience of millennials.

Assumptions about millennial work behaviors emphasize that millennials have a propensity to be easily dissatisfied with a job, to leave their jobs quickly and to look for better pay (AbouAssi et al., 2019). Norris et al. (2017) opined the millennial generation is often described as unmotivated, incoherent, and lazy. Baker Rosa and Hastings (2018), in presenting manager's perceptions of millennials in the workplace, found that most managers in their study maintained that millennials preferred to work with peers to have a social aspect to their work. Managers also described millennials as wanting more feedback than other generations within the workplace but also demonstrated an aversion to criticism.

Bolelli and Durmus (2017) provided that millennial employees have less loyalty to their employers; they have to like what they do at work and they have a preference for



working for causes they can embrace. Millennial employees were also identified as centering their lives around their job (Bolelli & Durmus, 2017). An alternate opinion of millennials is provided by Liesem (2017) who suggests that millennials are unwilling to sacrifice their family lives to their careers. Liesem indicated that millennials often tend to question strict hierarchies and structures. Liesem also opined that due to growing up in a multi-option society, millennials expressed a need for individualism and flexibility in their private lives as well as their work environments.

In studying millennials work preferences, Waltz et al. (2020) concluded that millennials valued positive professional relationships and a sense of teamwork. Millennials were also noted to value supportive leadership and verbal and written praise. Patil (2017) found that millennials are more likely to respond to intrinsic factors rather than extrinsic factors. White (2018) also found that millennials placed more value on intrinsic rewards factors rather than extrinsic. As seen in a range of other literature, White's findings highlight the importance of constant learning and development, interesting, challenging, and varied tasks, social relations, supervisor behavior, reciprocal flexibility with work timetable and working hours and work life balance among millennial employees. Garcia et al. (2019) found that when millennials could participate in specific decisions and had greater involvement, they were more satisfied. These findings also imply that millennial workers hold higher importance to the intrinsic aspects of their jobs.

According to Kultalahti and Viitala (2014), millennials are motivated by pleasing work climates and environments. Millennials also appreciated flexibility in work hours and work methods. Millennials were found to appreciate work projects that were challenging and developmental but not too time consuming. Kultalahti and Viitala identified demotivating

factors for millennials as difficulties with personal relationships outside of work, insufficient sleep, incompetent supervisors, feelings of stagnation and nonfulfillment on the job. Poor communication was also found as a demotivator in the workplace for millennials. According to Omilion-Hodges and Sugg (2019) millennials are motivated by managers who lead by example. They want leaders who are active, leaders they can learn from and leaders who act as a guide or coach (Omilion-Hodges & Sugg, 2019). Millennials are inspired by leaders who are hardworking, motivated, passionate and engaged.

**Rewards and Millennial Behavior.** According to Kuron et al. (2015), millennials have been found to have the same work values pre-career as they do during their career, however, they place greater importance on extrinsic work values. As noted by Kuron et al., millennials work values are different from previous generations because millennials maintain stability in their work values as the transition from school to work. Kuron et al. also point out that millennials place greater importance on salary increases when they enter the workforce but as they become more experienced, the practical aspects of the job such as salary, supervision, job security and work hours, become more important. What also becomes more important are the intrinsic aspects of work such as continuous learning and advancement (Kuron et al., 2015).

Shufutinsky and Cox (2019) identified eight factors that turnover behavior of millennial employees is dependent upon. These factors include innovative behavior, a clear path for career growth and opportunities, targeted learning and development to provide guidance, advice and mentorship, integration of emerging technology, social and community impact, a positive and engaging organizational culture and collaborative and diverse perspectives. Frye et al. (2020) showed that empowerment, work environment, relationships

with managers and pay are positively associated with millennials job satisfaction and as a result their commitment and intention to remain in their jobs.

Madan and Madan (2019) identified extrinsic rewards, compensation, and financial rewards, as a major criterion in job preferences for millennials. Frien and Mulyani (2018) found that salary, compensation, employee involvement did not have significant influence on employee turnover behavior while perceived alternative job employment did. Bannon et al. (2017) submitted that it is necessary for organizations to determine the type of compensation, rewards, recognition, or other incentives that will meet the needs of millennials.

**Millennial Turnover.** In a study examining the job mobility of millennials, AbouAssi et al. (2019) found that 64% of millennials switched jobs in sector at least once within a 5-year span. AbouAssi et al.'s study revealed findings that suggest millennials favor sectors and are more likely to change employers within a sector than to pursue employment outside of a sector. AbouAssi et al. also found that millennials in the public sector are not motivated by financial reasons to pursue employment outside of the public sector. Millennials who performed volunteer work were also less likely to leave jobs in the public and non-profit sector.

Shufutinsky and Cox (2019) opined that millennial experience with onboarding may have negative effects on their retention. This connection is made when millennials feel that onboarding is a representation of the work experiences that can be expected during their tenure. Holtschlag et al. (2020) studied millennials and protean career orientation, which is the degree to which individuals self-direct their careers and are guided by their own values. Holtschlag et al. highlighted that millennials with high levels of protean career orientation experienced lower levels of turnover intentions when millennials were progressing towards

their goals. Vui-Yee and Paggy (2020) found that job characteristics, in terms of knowledge and task characteristics, alone did not affect retention of millennial employees. Vui-Yee and Paggy did however find that when task and knowledge characteristics led to work fulfilment, millennial employee retention was positively impacted. Vui-Yee and Paggy also found that job enrichment indirectly led to reduced turnover intentions of millennials when work fulfilment.

**Millennials and Other Generations.** While there appears to be some variation in the birth year ranges of the generations that exist within the workforce, there is some agreement on the generational composition of the workforce. Many researchers identify traditionalists (matures), baby boomers, generation x, generation y (millennials), and generation z as the generations that compose today's workforce (Lyons et al., 2015; Mahmoud et al., 2020a; Mappamiring et al., 2020; Wiedmer, 2015). Of the generations that exist within today's workforce, extant research has shown that millennial employees differ from other generations in terms of their values, motivation to work and workplace behavior when compared to other generations (Muskat & Reitsamer, 2019). Wiedmer (2015) created a profile that compares and contrasts the generations that are found in the workforce. Wiedmer describes traditionalists as respecting authority and possessing family values that keep their work and family lives separate. While this generation is motivated by money, they take pride in being self-sacrificing and thrifty. Traditionalists acknowledge that change comes slowly (Wiedmer, 2015). Baby boomers are described by Wiedmer as work centric, independent, goal oriented and competitive. Baby boomers typically equate their work and their positions with their self-worth. According to Wiedmer, baby boomers believe in hierarchal structures and this has resulted in many of them earning significant positions of responsibility and authority.

Wiedmer (2015) described generation x employees as less loyal to employers and are comfortable demanding flexible work arrangements. Generation x employees are pragmatic, direct, expect change and require flexibility in workplace rules and regulations (Wiedmer, 2015). Generation y (millennials) are characterized as multitaskers. They are easily bored, and thus enjoy experimenting and discovering new approaches and solutions. Millennials are motivated by their need for sense of purpose and belongingness to meaningful communities. Millennials seek independent learning and when recognized as students or employees, they prefer certificates or monetary rewards to indicate they are supported and valued (Wiedmer, 2015). Millennials seek happiness in the work and life, so the one career mindset is not valid for millennials. According to Wiedmer, the traits that define generation z employees are still emerging, but these employees are considered to be highly connected due to the use of social media, the internet and mobile devices. Wiedmer opined that generation z employees will mobilize around causes and will be more socially and environmentally aware than previous generations.

Mahmoud et al. (2020b) presented the generational approach as an approach for grouping age cohorts as well an approach for analyzing people on a range of issues, behavior, and characteristics. According to Mahmoud et al. there are fundamental differences across generations in the way that age groups connect events, people, and experiences. Additionally, Mahmoud et al. opines that each generation has a different value and characteristics that has a direct impact on the behaviors they exhibit. Detecting and understanding these differences may predict motivations to perform on the job (Mahmoud et al., 2020). In exploring generational differences in the workplace, Mahmoud et al. found that millennials behaviors seemed to be more internally regulated than generation xers but less than generation zers.

Mahmoud et al also found that generation z employees were more motivated to work on activities that were out of inherited satisfaction than generation x and millennial employees.

Various other stereotypes exist that attempt to explain the generational work differences between millennials and other generations. Kelly et al. (2017) offer that millennials are called entitled, selfish and unmotivated, baby boomers are described as not technologically savvy and generation x is described as selfish. From Waltz et al.'s (2020) perspective, baby boomers have been characterized as loyal, strong willed, driven to succeed, committed to their employer, team oriented and willing to work overtime. On the other side of the spectrum, baby boomers can be judgmental of those with opposing views, uncomfortable with conflict and believe that new employees should pay their dues before being promoted. Waltz et al. describes generation Xers as self-directed, skeptical, and independent. Their negative attributes include their dislike for micromanagement, they are less loyal to employees and they are not impressed with authority. Waltz et al. describe millennials as flexible, adaptable, and as possessing the ability to multitask. On the opposite end of the spectrum, they are used to constant stimulation, expect immediate results, and seek frequent feedback.

Studies have consistently shown that millennials hold different attitudes towards work when compared to other generations (Morrell & Abston, 2018). An example of this can be found with Roman-Calderon et al. (2019) who found that millennials manifested less turnover behavior when compared to generation xers. Similarly, Glazer et al. (2019) identified differences in the commitment levels of millennials and generation xers. For millennials, factors such as employee development were not found to affect organizational commitment, while positively affecting the organizational commitment of generation xers.

Having benefits or alternative employment opportunities also did not affect the commitment of millennials, while generation xers were noted to be more invested in their organization with regard to compensation, benefits and status and were also noted to be less likely to leave when compared to millennials (Glazer et al., 2019).

According to Williams (2020), millennials skills, values and priorities differ significantly from earlier generations and they bring a unique attribute to the workplace that can fit uneasily with current organizational management practices. Williams suggest the millennial problem in the workplace is not related to recruitment, retention, and training but rather in the expectations that have been established for millennials. This thought is echoed by Mappamiring et al. (2020) who suggested the gap between other generations and millennials exists between the expectations and reality of millennials. This gap between expectation and reality, according to Mappamiring et al., is based in the way that millennials define discipline, work motivation, loyalty, and engagement.

Rather (2018) posed that millennial's needs are dynamic and what motivated the boomers in 1950s does not necessarily motivate the millennials today. Mahmoud et al. (2020b) found that older generations were motivated through social rewards such as supervisor respect and recognition while millennials valued pay raises, non-monetary benefits. Mahmoud et al. also indicated that millennials valued employee development, authenticity, transparency and having a work-life balance.

By measuring relative levels of entitlement through the Equity Sensitivity Instrument, Allen et al. (2015) found that millennials were more entitled than generation Xers and Baby boomers. Entitlement, rooted in Equity Theory, is defined as expecting to receive more than others for doing essentially the same work (Allen et al., 2015). In measuring job mobility, or

the rate of job and organizational changes per year of employment, Lyons et al. (2015) found that millennials had almost twice as many jobs and organizational moves per year as generation Xers, 4.5 times as many moves as baby boomers and 2.5 times more moves than matures. In contrast Lyons et al. findings revealed that Boomers were more likely to change employers when they changed jobs in comparison to millennials and other generations. Lyons et al. also found that younger generations were more likely make more career moves in all directions (downward, lateral, career-track, upward) while matures are more likely to make upward career moves.

Cattermole (2018) reported the biggest difference between millennials and other generations is that millennials grew up with technology and are more comfortable with its use. Because of this, millennials are more apt to constant change in technological advances and rapid evolution. To accommodate millennials in the workplace, Cattermole suggests the development of strong nurturing relationships between millennials and management. Cattermole also recommends constant communication, workplace flexibility, and decision involvement.

While a significant amount of research exists that suggests that millennial work behavior differs significantly from other generations, there have been mixed findings as to whether these generational differences actually exists. Jones et al. (2018) stated that much of the research identifying differences between generations lack theoretical support. In an attempt to produce theoretical evidence Jones et al. concluded that stereotypes pertaining to generational differences cannot be empirically substantiated and thus findings cannot be generalized.



***Summary of Literature Review***

This discussion of literature produced two main points. The first is that research pertaining to motivation, rewards, behavior, and millennials was broad. As can be seen within the literature review, there are many perspectives that have been offered to view the core tenets of this study. The second point that was produced through this review of literature is that while the research is expansive, there was only a small amount of research in the current body of literature that addressed the effect of rewards on millennial turnover behavior.

**Transition and Summary of Section 1**

This section presented the foundational basis for this study by outlining the background of the problem, the problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, research questions, hypotheses, theoretical framework, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, reduction of gaps, implications for biblical integration, relationship to the field of study and a review of professional and academic literature. This section established the infrastructure necessary to proceed with the methods that will analyze the relationship between rewards and turnover intentions for millennials working in the federal workforce. The next section, Section 2, will present specifics related to the application of the research methods and design. This section includes information about the population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, and reliability and validity.

## **Section 2: The Project**

This project was designed to provide insight into the relationship between rewards and turnover intentions of millennials. Utilizing the quantitative research method and correlational design, an analysis was performed to determine if a significant relationship existed between turnover intentions and rewards. The goal was to determine if millennials are motivated to stay on their jobs when they perceive the presence of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

The following section, Section 2, will describe the role of the researcher and study participants. This section will also discuss the research method and design along with information about the study sample and population. Section 2 will also detail the data collection and data analysis procedures. This section will conclude with a discussion of the process for determining the study reliability and validity.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the motivational factors of millennial employees and the relationship they have with employee behavior. The larger problem of not understanding what motivates millennials was explored through a study of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and the relationship these motivations have with the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal civilian workforce located within the United States. The goal was to add to the body of knowledge pertaining to millennial work behavior motivations and assist in closing the gaps in existing research.

### **Role of the Researcher**

This study used archival data to explore the research problem and research questions and to test the hypotheses. Data were previously collected through the Federal Employment

Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The survey consisted of an original instrument developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). No personal contact was made with the research participants in the completion nor submission of the online survey. After administrative review and approval, the data file was obtained from the Office of Personnel Management.

The sample data of millennials were qualified basing eligibility on Bowen and McCain (2015) definition of millennials, the generation of individuals born between 1997 and 1977. After qualification, a new dataset was created with only millennial survey responses. The survey instrument was reviewed to identify and categorize the responses that relate to the research questions and study variables. After survey responses were categorized, statistical analyses was performed to analyze and present the findings. Proper steps were taken to ensure the analyses were performed objectively and with no bias that would distort the findings of the research. The steps of the statistical analyses were chronicled, documented, and presented as a part the research findings. Within this study, the role of the researcher was broadly described as an organizer, explorer, analyst, and reporter.

### **Participants**

Based on Bowen and McCain (2015) defining parameters of millennials and the structure of the question regarding age group within the FEVS, millennials responses were those individuals who selected their age group as “under 25,” “26-29,” and “30-39.” The survey’s responses that fell within these age group were identified as millennials, and for the purposes of this study were classified as participants.

**Table 8***Millennial Responses*

Millennials Based on 2016 FEVS	Age	Applicable Age Group on FEVS “What is your age group?”
Born between 1997 and 1977	19-36	Under 25, 26-29, 30-39

In this quantitative study, the sample consisted of millennials working in the federal civilian workforce. Archival data were used so there was no interaction with participants. The data were provided from responses to an annual employee survey that was administered by the Office of Personnel Management. The surveys were completed on a voluntary basis by federal employees. The archival data collected included no personally identifiable information such as address, telephone number, or social security number. There were no identifying questions within the survey outside of general demographic questions (e.g., education, race, gender, age range, etc.). This research project was proposed as having minimal to no risks to participants.

**Research Method and Design**

The purpose of this quantitative correlation study was to examine the relationship of motivational factors and millennial behavior. This was done through an examination of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and their relationship with turnover intentions of millennials in the federal civilian workforce. The independent variables were intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and the dependent variable was turnover intentions. This section will present the rationale for use of the quantitative research method and correlational research design in the analysis of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

### *Discussion of Method*

A research methodology describes the manner in which the study will be conducted, how the data will be collected and analyzed, and how answers will be provided to the questions that are being investigated (Allen, 2017). The method should be selected based on the ability to best address the research purpose, hypotheses, and research questions (Leavy, 2014). For this study, the quantitative methodology was selected as the best method to fulfil the purpose of the research and address the hypotheses and research questions.

The quantitative approach is centered on achieving objectivity, control and precise measurements and is aimed at refuting or supporting specific theories or hypotheses (Leavy, 2017). According to Creswell (2014), the quantitative approach is used to test objective theories and examine the relationship among variables. It is aimed at proving, disproving, or lending credence to existing theories (Leavy, 2017).

Quantitative research involves measuring variables and testing relationships between variables to reveal patterns, correlations, and causal relationships (Leavy, 2017). Quantitative research uses data to objectively describe and predict behaviors, look at the cause, and effect relationships (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016). Ang (2014) provided three parameters under which the quantitative approach is desirable.

- 1) When large amounts of data are available and accessible.
- 2) Then the theories are well established in an area and the existing theories can be used to explain the phenomenon being investigated.
- 3) When generalizability is an important outcome.

A review of literature, prior research findings and theoretical underpinnings provided an idea of what the relationship will be between the variables under study (rewards and

behavior). However, these findings were further tested among millennials to address the problem regarding lack of understanding for what motivates millennials. The best method to test the theoretical assumptions was quantitative methodology.

In quantitative research, the evidence that is collected provides the basis for answering the research questions. The data for the variables under study within this research were collected through self-administered surveys. The surveys are cross-sectional as they seek information from a sample at one point in time (Leavy, 2017). Surveys are generally used to collect subjective data about individual's attitudes, beliefs, opinions and their reports of their experiences or behaviors and they are most widely used in quantitative research (Leavy, 2017).

O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2016) outlined the philosophical assumptions of quantitative research which further validates that this is the most appropriate method under which to conduct this study. Odwyer and Bernauer presented that quantitative research is derived from positivism, which indicates the scientific method is the best approach for understanding phenomena (Quantitative research is predicated on the scientific method). The ontological assumption in the quantitative tradition, according to O'Dwyer and Bernauer, assumes that phenomena can be measured and understood. The axiological assumption of quantitative research offered in the context that while quantitative research is objective, the tests carry a great deal of human intentionality and value (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016). The epistemological assumption of quantitative research is that knowledge claims are based on objective empirical evidence and there is a scientific detachment between the researcher and the phenomena being investigated (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016).

In the design of this study, existing research established the nature of the relationship among the variables under investigation. The best method to test the hypothesis was determined to be quantitative methodology. This study, in alignment with the philosophical assumptions of quantitative research, assumed the relationship between rewards and turnover could be measured; values or ideals affected millennial behavior; and the problem under examination, when further explored will be a source of knowledge pertaining to millennial behavior.

### ***Discussion of Design***

The correlational design assumes that reality is best described as a system of interacting relationships (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). The correlation research design attempts to explore relationships between at least two variables within a given environment. This design is used when the intention is not to infer causes but rather to examine relationships and interrelationships between phenomena (Brewerton & Millward, 2001).

The correlational design is used when the variables cannot be manipulated (Whitley & Kite, 2013). This approach to research is concerned with 1) finding out whether a relationship exists between two variables and 2) determining the magnitude and direction of the relationship (Ho, 2017). The correlational approach is concerned with determining whether a naturally occurring set of scores is related to another naturally occurring set of scores (Ho, 2017). In most correlation studies, the variables are allowed to vary freely, and the extent of their covariation is examined (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). This free variation of variables allows the degree of the relationship between the variables to be determined without the loss of information (Crano & Brewer, 2005).

The correlational research design is the best approach to explore the relationship between the variables under study (intrinsic rewards, extrinsic rewards, and turnover intentions). This design is also the most appropriate in the determination of the magnitude and direction of the relationship between rewards and turnover intentions of millennials in the federal civilian workforce. With no manipulation of the variables, and no causal inferences, the correlational design best allows the purpose of the research to be fulfilled.

## **Population and Sampling**

### ***Discussion of Population***

In this non-experimental correlational study, archival data of millennials employed with the federal government as federal civilian employees was used to examine whether intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are related to the turnover intentions of millennials. The data were collected as a part of the Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The FEVS was utilized as the archival data source because the survey items applied to the variables of this study. The data for the 2016 survey year was retrieved. Table 10 outlines the population and survey responses for the 2016 FEVS.

**Table 9**

### *2016 FEVS Response Rate*

# of Federal Employees Surveyed	889,590
# of Federal Employees that completed Survey	407,789
# of Millennial Employees that completed survey	91,110

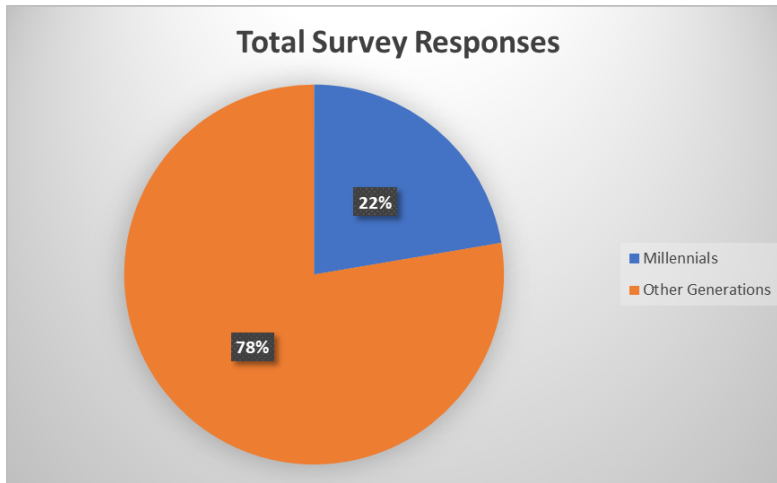
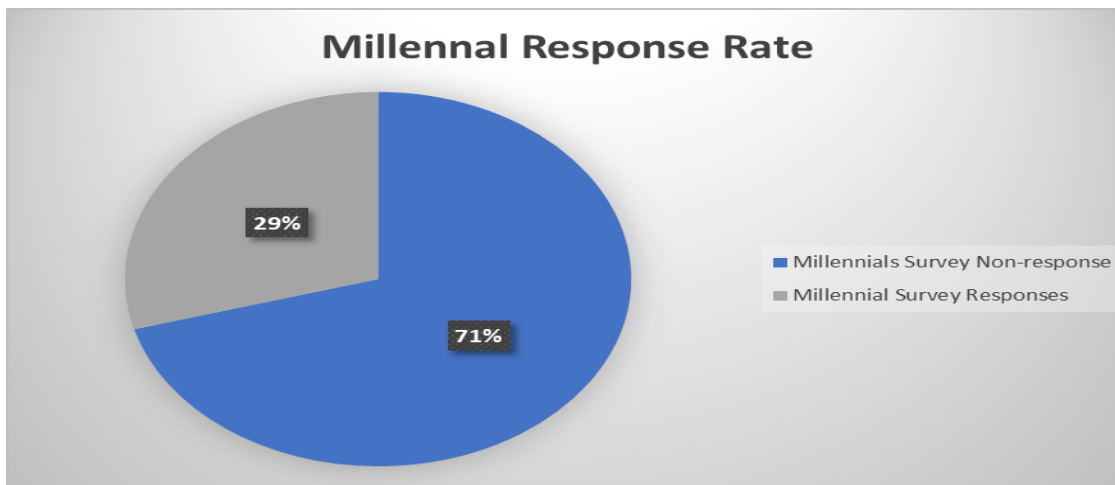
Source: 2016 Office of Personnel Management Governmentwide Management Report (<https://www.opm.gov/fevs/>)

The population for this study was millennials who are a part of the federal civilian workforce. This includes millennials employed with the federal government in non-political,



non-seasonal, full, and part-time jobs. A population included all individuals or groups that possess the characteristic the researcher aims to investigate (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016). For this study, the defining characteristic for the population is age or millennial generation membership. Millennials were defined as individuals born between the years 1977 and 1997 (Bowen & McCain, 2015). According to data from the June 2016 Fedscope Employment Cube, the federal millennial population 579,661 (Office of Personnel Management, 2020).

The dataset population was 889,590, which represents the total number of federal civilian employees. The population for the dataset includes federal civilian employees who were permanently employed in non-political, non-seasonal, full- and part-time jobs. Of this population the total number of employees that completed the survey was 407,789. Of the 407,789 employees who completed the survey, 91,070 were millennials. This revealed that around 22% of the employees who completed the FEVS were millennials.

**Figure 2***Total Survey Responses***Figure 3***Millennial Response Rate*

The final population subset size was determined once exclusion criteria was applied. The exclusion criteria excluded survey responses with missing data in the observed survey questions. The abundance of data in the 2016 FEVS presented an opportunity for archival data to be used to investigate the variables under study.

### *Discussion of Sampling*

The 2016 FEVS survey was sent to all eligible employees, including all eligible millennials (Office of Personnel Management Report, 2016). 91,070 millennials completed the survey. The sample frame for this study was 91,070 minus the cases that were excluded due to exclusion criteria. This sample frame included all the individuals within the dataset that were eligible for selection in the study.

In determining the sampling method, the researcher considered the sampling element that allowed the research questions to be addressed (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016). This applied to sampling with archival data. According to Vogt et al. (2017) sampling is central to the process of conducting research using archival data. While sampling is different in most archival work as the data has already been generated and assembled by others, the types of sampling utilized in other approaches (i.e., probability, non-probability, stratified, systematic or purposive) can still be applied to archival data (Vogt et al., 2017). Probability sampling is preferable whenever possible (Vogt et al., 2017).

Simple random sample, a form of probability sampling, was the sampling method that was utilized in selecting the study sample from the sampling frame. Simple random sampling uses a random process to select respondents. This method gave each individual in the sampling frame an equal probability of being selected for inclusion in the study sample.

**Sample Size.** The sample size, or the number of participants in the sample, was determined prior to conducting the study to avoid bias in the interpretation of the results. According to Patten and Newhart (2018), the sample size should be large enough to adequately represent the population and its variability in the area of inquiry. Additionally, Hair (2015) suggested the sample size should be sufficient enough in size and quality to the

extent the results yielded are credible in terms of their accuracy and consistency. To ensure that an appropriate sample size was selected a sample size calculator was utilized. This sample size calculator can be found at [www.qualtrics.com/blog/calculating-sample-size/](http://www.qualtrics.com/blog/calculating-sample-size/). The sample size calculator recommended a sample size of 384. This sample size was recommended based on a 95% confidence level, a population size of 219,571 and a 5% margin of error.

**Eligibility of Sample.** This study examined millennial turnover behavior and millennial perceptions of the presence of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. To be eligible for inclusion in the sample, an individual first had to meet the criteria outlined by OPM regarding participation in the FEVS which included being a full-time or part-time, permanent, non-seasonal employee (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2016). Finally, the individual had to select an age group of “25 and under,” “26-29,” or “30-39” on the FEVS as their age on question 91. The parameters outlined within the selection criteria ensures the sample was reflective of the group that was examined in this study.

### **Data Collection**

The data used to analyze the relationship between the variables in this study were archival data previously collected as a part of the 2016 Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey. Whitley and Kite (2013) outlined a few benefits of using archival data that were considered prior to conducting this study. First, since the data were not initially collected for the purpose of examining millennial behavior, there are no reactivity problems associated with people knowing they are participating in the research. Second, use of archival data allowed the researcher to expand the research population to include participants not usually available such as individuals working in certain roles, positions, or industries. Third, most

research conducted using archival data raises few ethical issues, except for deception to access records or invasion of privacy which reveals participants personal information.

The archival data used was a published dataset created from the results of the 2016 FEVS. The FEVS is a survey that collects information on employee perceptions of work experience, leadership, and satisfaction within a variety of work-related components of the federal government (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2016). The data were initially collected to provide agency leadership with information on employee perceptions of their work experiences, agency, and leadership. The survey was performed with the intent of providing agency leaders with insight into areas where improvements have been made and areas where improvements are needed.

The data for the 2016 FEVS survey was collected between April 26<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup> of 2016. According to the 2016 OPM FEVS technical report, OPM sent emails to employees with an invitation to participate in the survey (Appendix A). The invitation email included instructions for accessing the survey. OPM also sent reminder emails to non-respondents weekly including a final reminder on the last day of data collection.

### ***Instrument***

The 2016 FEVS survey was composed of 98 items that cover 8 topics, personal work experience, work unit, agency, supervisor, leadership, satisfaction, work/life programs and demographics. 84 survey items measure employee perceptions of the areas listed and 14 survey items were demographic in nature. The 84 survey items that measures employee perceptions have six response categories based on the five-point Likert style scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and No Basis to Judge/Do Not Know (See Appendix B for survey).

For this study, the survey questions that were of interest to the researcher were the questions related to the variables, turnover intentions, intrinsic rewards, and extrinsic rewards. The dependent variable in the study, turnover intentions, was defined as the employees estimated probability they are leaving the organization (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Extrinsic rewards in this study were identified as financial rewards, promotion, education/training, career development and having a reasonable workload (Morgan et al., 2013b). Intrinsic rewards were identified as supervisor support for job tasks, the opportunity to have input in job tasks, meaningfulness of job tasks and coworker support (Morgan et al., 2013b).

The turnover intention variable was generated from question 91. The extrinsic rewards variable was created from questions 33, 70, 22, 67, 1, 18, 68, 43, 47 and 10. The intrinsic rewards variable was shaped by responses to question 9, 46, 63, 4, 12, 13, 20 and 26. Table 10 outlines each of the study variables, and the related constructs and survey questions.

**Table 10***Variable, Constructs, Survey Question*

Variables	Constructs	Survey Question
Turnover Intentions	Turnover Intentions	Q91: "Are you considering leaving your organization within the next year?"
	Financial Rewards	Q33: "Pay Raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs." Q70: "How satisfied are you with your pay?"
	Promotion	Q22: "Promotions in my work unit are based on merit." Q67: "How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?"
Extrinsic Rewards	Education/Training	Q1: "I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization." Q18: "My training needs are assessed." Q68: "How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?"
	Career Development	Q43: "My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills." Q47: "Supervisors in my work unit support employee development."
	Workload	Q10: "My workload is reasonable."
	Supervisor Support	Q46: "My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance."
Intrinsic Rewards	Job Task Input	Q63: "How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?"
	Meaningfulness of Job Tasks	Q4: "My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment." Q12: "I know how my work relates to the agency's goals" Q13: "The work I do is important."
	Coworker Support	Q20: "The people I work with cooperate to get the job done."
		Q26: "Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other."

***Data Organization***

The electronic file containing the raw data used in this study was stored on a password protected personal laptop. A backup of the electronic data file was saved to a second password protected laptop. No personal information about the study participants other than general demographic information was available in the data file. As a result, no personally identifiable information about the study participants were saved to the researcher's computer. No data were sent or exchanged over unsecured networks. Once the study data were processed and analyzed, data that were no longer needed were safely destroyed or discarded.

**Data Analysis**

This study was designed to explore millennial work motivations and turnover. Work motivations were explored through intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. According to Stumpf et al. (2013) employee motivation is driven by intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. By examining intrinsic and extrinsic rewards the work motivations of millennials were addressed. Turnover was examined through turnover intentions based on turnover intention's strong relationship to turnover and its role as an indicator of actual turnover behavior (Abid & Butt, 2017; Fazio et al., 2017).

An examination of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions allowed the research questions that seek to identify if a relationship exists between rewards and turnover intentions to be addressed. Examination of this relationship also allowed the hypotheses that have been formed based on existing research to be tested. By answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses of this study, contribution was



made to the understanding of what motivates millennials. This contribution addressed the research problem regarding difficulty in identifying exactly what motivates millennials.

**Table 11**

*Variables Types*

Variables	Initial Variable Type	Processes	Resulting Variable Type
Independent Variables			
Intrinsic Rewards	Ordinal	Summation	Interval/Scale
Extrinsic Rewards	Ordinal	Summation	Interval/Scale
Dependent Variable			
Turnover Intentions	Nominal	Recode	Dichotomous/Nominal

**Dependent Variable: Turnover Intentions.** The answer to the question “Are you considering leaving your organization within the next year?” was used to create the turnover intentions variable. The possible responses on the survey were “No,” “Yes, to retire,” “Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government,” “Yes, to take another job outside the Federal Government” or “Yes, other.” OPM merged the responses to “Yes, to retire” and “Yes, other” to protect the identity of the respondents. Since this study only considered voluntary turnover, evaluating retirement was not useful in meeting the objectives of this study. Additionally, the response, “Yes, other” would have been difficult to define and could have meanings not defined within the survey instrument. For this study, the merged category was excluded from the analyses.

In the first level of analysis, a dichotomized variable was created from the responses to this question. Dichotomous variables are variables that have only two levels or categories (Morgan et al., 2013b). The respondents who answered “No” were coded as 1. The

respondents that selected “Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government,” and “Yes, to take another job outside of the Federal Government,” were coded as 2. Selection of “Yes, to take employment within the Federal Government” and “Yes, to take employment outside of the Federal Government” were both considered turnover intentions for this study similar to structure found in studies by Pitts et al. (2011), Callier (2013), and Chordiya (2020).

The second level of analysis included only the respondents that planned to leave their organization. The respondents who selected “Yes, to take another job outside of the Federal Government,” were coded as 1, and the respondents who selected, “Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government,” were coded as 2. Table 12 summarizes the manner in which the turnover intentions variable will be recoded.

**Table 12**

*Turnover Intentions Conversion Table*

Variable/Construct/Question	Current Scale	Recoded Values
Level 1 Turnover Intentions: Q91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No</li> <li>○ Yes, to retire</li> <li>○ Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government</li> <li>○ Yes, to take another job outside of the Federal Government</li> <li>○ Yes, other</li> </ul>	No= 1 Yes, to take another job inside or outside of the Federal Government = 2
Level 2 Turnover Intentions: Q91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government</li> <li>○ Yes, to take another job outside of the Federal Government</li> </ul>	Yes, to take another job outside of the Federal government = 1 Yes, to take another job inside of the Federal Government= 2

**Independent Variables: Intrinsic Rewards and Extrinsic Rewards.** Based on the literature, there were six constructs that represented extrinsic rewards, the employee's perception of financial rewards, promotion opportunities, education/training, career development, and workload. There were four constructs that represent intrinsic rewards, the employee's perception of supervisor support for job tasks, input on job tasks, the meaningfulness of job tasks and coworker support. The survey used a 5-point and 6-point Likert scales to measure employees' perceptions. The respondents' selections were converted to numerical values for statistical analysis. Table 13 outlines the conversion values for the Likert Scales for the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards variables.

**Table 13***Intrinsic & Extrinsic Rewards Construct Conversion Table*

Intrinsic Rewards Constructs: Q4, Q12, Q20, Q26, Q46, Q63	
Extrinsic Rewards Constructs: Q1, Q10, Q18, Q22, Q33, Q43, Q47, Q67, Q68, Q70	
Current Scales	Recoded Numerical Value
Very satisfied (VS), Strongly Agree (SA),	5
Satisfied (S), Agree (A),	4
Neither satisfied nor Dissatisfied (NSD), Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD),	3
Dissatisfied(D), Disagree (D),	2
Very dissatisfied (VD), Strongly Disagree (SD),	1
Do Not Know (NA)	0

**Descriptive Statistics.** Descriptive analyses are used to summarize and describe data, and to reveal patterns in the data that are not immediately apparent through inspection of raw data alone (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2016). Descriptive statistics were examined to check for errors and to identify the distribution of the variables. In this phase of analysis, the number of missing responses and N for the variables were identified. The skewness of the distribution was also calculated. Variables with a skewness between -1.00 and 1.00 were considered as approximately normally distributed (Morgan et al., 2013b). The skewness statistic was used to determine if parametric or non-parametric statistical analysis would apply.

**Inferential Statistics.** Once the data were described, inferential statistics were performed to make inferences about the population based on the sample data that was analyzed. The statistical analyses selected was determined by the treatment of Likert scale data. Generally, responses to a single Likert item are treated as ordinal data as with the level of responses, no assumption is made that the respondents perceived the difference between the adjacent level as equidistant (Gavin, 2008). When Likert data are treated as ordinal, the responses can be analyzed using non-parametric tests. However, if the responses to several Likert items are summed or averaged, they may be treated as interval data measuring a latent variable. If the summed responses are normally distributed, then parametric tests are applicable (Gavin, 2008).

The two independent variables for this study, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, were summed from the applicable survey responses and thus treated as interval data. Turnover intention was a dichotomous variable in the first and second level of analysis. In the first level of analysis, a Point-Biserial Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables under study. Point-Biserial

correlation is recommended when a correlation is examined between an interval variable and a dichotomous variable (Gavin, 2008). The Point-Biserial correlation ( $r_{pb}$ ) analysis produces an estimate of what the Pearson  $r$  would be if the variables were continuous and normally distributed instead of dichotomous variables (Myers et al., 2010). The range of a Point-Biserial correlation is less than 1 to -1.00 (McGrath & Myer, 2006). The correlation was examined using Cohen's (1988) guidance in examining the strength of a relationship/effect size between variables in which  $r = .10$  is small,  $r = .30$  is medium,  $r = .50$  is large, and  $r \geq .70$  is much larger than typical.

If the independent variables were not normally distributed a non-parametric equivalent was utilized. With respect to the variable type and research questions, the Eta Coefficient test was considered appropriate. This test allowed the researcher to test the relationship between a variable that was categorical and a variable that was scale or interval level (Scott Jones, 2019). The results were analyzed using Cohen's (1988) guidance in examining the effect size between variables in which  $\eta$  (eta) =  $.45$  is much larger than typical,  $\eta = .37$  is large or larger than typical,  $\eta = .24$  is medium or typical, and  $\eta = .10$  is small or smaller than typical.

If the significance (p-value) of the correlation was less than the alpha value (.05), the null hypotheses, indicating no statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions and extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions was rejected. If the p-value was greater than the alpha value, the decision was made to fail to reject the null hypothesis. A positive correlation noted in the relationship between the intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions and extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions denoted a relationship that

traveled at the same trajectory. A negative correlation noted in the relationship between the variables denoted a relationship that travels in different directions.

In the second level of analysis the turnover intentions variable was again coded dichotomously, however the goal of this analysis was to examine differences in the perception of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards between millennials who are planning to leave their organizations for jobs within the federal government and millennials who are planning to leave their organization for jobs outside of the federal government. This analysis addressed research question 3. To perform this analysis, an independent sample t test was performed. Utilization of this analysis was contingent upon the assumptions of the independent sample t test not being markedly violated. If the assumptions were markedly violated, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was utilized. The independent sample t test and the Mann-Whitney U test are useful when investigating the difference between two unrelated or independent groups (Morgan et al., 2013b).

### **Reliability and Validity**

#### ***Reliability***

Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement and the extent to which the measure is free from errors (Frey, 2018). It is viewed as a property of the instrument the researcher uses to measure the phenomena being studied (Given, 2008). The internal consistency reliability of the independent study variables was provided through performance of a factor analysis. The Cronbach's alpha of this analysis established the reliability of the measures for the independent variables and constructs. According to Morgan et al. (2013b) this reliability measure is useful with a study that has one administration of a survey.

**Internal Consistency Reliability.** According to Morgan et al. (2013b), when a researcher wants to combine a number of Likert-type questions into a smaller group of items based on literature or theory the researcher must establish there are several specific items for each of a limited number of constructs. Morgan et al. recommended checking the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the items that are assumed to make up each scale or variable. It was also recommended to conduct an exploratory factor analysis to determine if the participant's organized the data the same way as the theory. Morgan et al. suggested the Cronbach's alpha be recomputed if any items are deleted, modified, or moved from one scale to another. Finally, Morgan et al. recommended computing the aggregated or summated scale scores base on the final items in each factor.

A reliability analysis to establish the internal consistency reliability of the questions that would make up the independent variables was performed. This was done by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. If the reliability coefficient was above .70, it was concluded there is strong evidence for internal consistency reliability. An exploratory factor analysis for the intrinsic rewards variable and the extrinsic rewards variable was also performed. Based on the literature, it was believed there were latent constructs underlying the variables under study. The exploratory factor analysis aided in determining empirically whether the participants' responses to the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards items were similar (Morgan et al., 2013b). The survey items were grouped based on the structure identified in Table 11. The correlations of Q4, Q12, Q13, Q20, Q26, Q46, and Q63 for intrinsic rewards and Q1, Q10, Q18, Q22, Q33, Q43, Q47, Q67, Q68, and Q70 for extrinsic rewards were examined to determine if the questions had high or low correlations. The pairs of items with correlations of  $>+/- .30$  were determined to likely have high loadings from the same factor. The results of

the exploratory factor analysis provided firm guidance in the determination of whether the grouped items were suitable for summation.

If the data fit reasonably well into the two identified scales, then the internal structure was established to support validity of the intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards measures in the sample. If the data did not fit reasonably well, the exploratory factor analysis was allowed to find the factors that best fit the data even if this deviated from the researcher's original prediction (Morgan et al., 2013b).

Regarding the reliability of the data, the expertise of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) was relied upon. Within the FEVS technical report, the OPM provided a summary of their quality control process. The OPM implemented two levels of quality control for the data. This quality control was intended to promote accuracy and validity of the data. In the first level two programmers created data numbers independently based on pre-defined specifications and compared the numbers to ensure they matched. In the second level, staff performing the quality control measures were placed into two separate teams to compare the data inputs to the data outputs to ensure congruency. This process was aligned with interrater reliability, a widely accepted means of determining reliability, which is determined by comparing the degree of agreement between two or more coders (Elder et al., 1993).

### ***Validity***

Validity refers to the extent to which the survey instrument adequately reflects what it was designed to measure (Frey, 2018). When the relationship between two or more variables is likely not due to another variable, a high internal validity is indicated (Fallon, 2016). The data for the independent variables were validated by examining the results of the factor analysis. For intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, through the use of the factor analysis, multiple



items were used to construct the variables and as a result validity was deemed as inherent within the variable construction process. The factor analysis provided the internal structure evidence to support the validity of the measures in the sample (Morgan et al., 2013b).

This however was not the case for the dependent variable. Due to the use of a single survey item to measure the dependent variable, turnover intentions, the threat to validity was considered. Langbein and Felbinger (2006) indicated that when using single items, constant nonrandom measurement error poses a threat to both internal validity and reliability of a measure if the item does not reflect the construct. Internal validity refers to whether an instrument actually measures what it is supposed to measure (Given, 2008). To address this validity concern, similar studies that used a single measure from the FEVS to assess turnover intentions were identified.

Caillier (2016) utilized a single survey response from the FEVS to develop turnover as an independent variable. Similarly, in studies examining inclusive work practices and turnover intentions (Sabharwal et al., 2019), employee empowerment and turnover intentions (Kim & Fernandez, 2015), public service motivations and turnover intentions (Ertas, 2015) and reform and turnover intentions (Park et al., 2018), a single survey item from the FEVS was used to examine turnover or turnover intentions as a variable utilizing a single measure. The single survey items used within these studies correspond with the same survey item that is being proposed within this study. Based on prior acceptance and use of this single item within the FEVS to create a single turnover or turnover intention variable, and the ability to consistently produce conclusions from this measure, it was found there is no threat to the internal validity of the turnover intention measure.

**Transition and Summary of Section 2**

Section 2 provided details on how the research for this study was conducted. It also provided justification as to the methods and approaches that was used to meet the research objectives. Specifically, Section 2 described the role of the researcher and the study participants. This section also presented evidence on the appropriateness of the selected research method and research design along with information about the study sample and population. Section 2 detailed the manner in which the data were collected and analyzed. Finally, this section concluded with a discussion of the process for determining the study reliability and validity.

### **Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change**

Section 3 is comprised of an overview of the study, presentation of the findings, applications to professional practice, recommendations, reflections and summary and study conclusions. To open, this section discusses the steps taken to analyze the data and present the findings of the study. The section further discusses the findings that individually address each research question. Next this section presents the findings and results of the analyses. The section then discusses how the findings can be applied to professional practice.

Recommendations for action and further study are then presented to expound on steps to apply the results to action and opportunities for further research to expand the knowledge obtained in the study. This section closes with reflections on the researcher's experience and a summarization of the study and key findings.

#### **Overview of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to understand the motivational factors of millennials in the federal workforce and the relationship these factors have with millennial behavior. To gain this understanding, an examination of the relationship between rewards and millennial turnover intentions was performed. According to Campione (2015) the starting point for understanding millennial work behavior is rooted in first understanding their work-related values, attitudes and personality traits. Through the implementation of a quantitative correlational research design, the data from the 2016 FEVS was examined. The archival data used within this study, collected between April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, provided sufficient detail to evaluate the variables under study. With millennial survey responses totaling 91,110 from a population of 579,661, the researcher was able to achieve the recommended sample size of 384.

### **Presentation of the Findings**

This subsection includes the findings that were garnered from the statistical analyses and summaries using IBM's SPSS Version 27 and the 2016 FEVS public release data file. The public release data file was downloaded from <https://www.opm.gov/fevs/public-data-file/>. The file was uploaded to SPSS to conduct the analyses. The researcher performed preliminary functions within SPSS to extract responses from the desired age group, variables under study and demographic information. Prior to conducting any analyses, the data went through a cleaning procedure to manage missing responses or erroneous data. Any surveys with missing responses were excluded from the sampling frame. After data were cleaned and respondents with missing responses for the relevant survey questions were removed, a total of 60,643 respondents were left from which to draw a random sample from. From this number a simple random sample of 384 respondents was selected. This sample was used to perform all analyses for this study.

### ***Reliability and Validity***

Prior to performing statistical analyses to test research hypotheses, reliability testing was performed with Cronbach's alpha on the intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards variables. This precedes other analyses to ensure that variable scales that have been constructed are fit for the research purposes.

The intrinsic rewards variable, which is a measure of the employee's perceptions of intrinsic rewards, was constructed using the following items: "My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance," "How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work," "My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment," "I know how my work relates to the agency's goals," "The work I

do is important,” “The people I work with cooperate to get the job done,” and “Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other.” Based on concept structure found within the literature, intrinsic rewards are composed of 4 constructs (7 items) that were rated on Likert scales from very dissatisfied/strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree/very satisfied (5). To determine if the items that are used to form the intrinsic rewards variables are interrelated sufficiently enough to be use as a composite or summated variable, the Cronbach’s alpha was computed (Table 14). The alpha from the 7-item intrinsic rewards scale was .851 which indicates the items would form a scaled that has good internal consistency reliability.

The extrinsic rewards variable, which is a measure of the employee’s perceptions of extrinsic rewards, was constructed using the following items: “Pay Raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs,” “How satisfied are you with your pay,” “Promotions in my work unit are based on merit,” “How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization,” “I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization,” “My training needs are assessed,” “How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job,” “My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills,” “Supervisors in my work unit support employee development,” and “My workload is reasonable.” Literature provides 7 underlying constructs (10 items) which were rated on Likert scales from very dissatisfied/strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree/very satisfied (5). The alpha for the 10-item extrinsic rewards scale was .905 (Table 14). This indicated the items would form a scale that has good internal consistency reliability.

**Table 14***Reliability for Independent Variables*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Intrinsic Rewards	.851	7
Extrinsic Rewards	.905	10

*Exploratory Factor Analysis*

**Intrinsic Rewards.** Principal axis factoring analysis was conducted to assess the underlying structure for the 7 items of the intrinsic rewards scale. One factor was requested based on the Morgan et al.'s (2013b) presentation of intrinsic rewards. In Morgan et al.'s design, intrinsic rewards included supervisor support for job tasks, the opportunity to have input in job tasks, meaningfulness of job tasks and coworker support. For the intrinsic rewards variable a correlation matrix determinant of .060 revealed appropriate collinearity (Table 15). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of .848 was adequate (should be more than .70 (Morgan et al., 2013b)). The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant,  $p = .000$  (Table 16). This provided a reasonable basis of correlation for utilizing the factor analysis. An additional measure to assess factorability, communalities, was observed as well. Communalities, which provided evidence of shared variance or overlap of variance should be above .30 (Pavelko et al., 2015). There were no communalities below .30.

According to Kaiser (1960), factors with eigenvalues of 1.00 or above should be retained. Table 19 revealed that one factor has an eigenvalue of 3.732. The scree plot was also evaluated to confirm the number factors to retain (Figure 4). According to Costello and Osborne (2005) in observing the scree plot, the number of data points above the "break" not

including the point in which the break occurs is the appropriate number of factors to retain. The exploratory factor analysis indicated a reasonable assumption can be made the seven items measure one underlying factor. The final factor, termed intrinsic rewards, was appropriately supported.

**Extrinsic Rewards.** Based on the literature there was also a belief there were multiple constructs underlying the extrinsic rewards variables. According to Morgan et al.’s (2013b), extrinsic rewards include financial rewards, promotion, education/training, career development and having a reasonable workload. The results of the assumption testing were satisfactory with a correlation determinant of .004, KMO=.901 and Bartlett’s sphericity testing with a significance of .000 (Table 20). All factor loadings for the extrinsic rewards variables had communalities above .30 (Table 21). Additionally, one factor had an eigenvalue of 5.499 (Table 22) with scree plotting noting support for 1 factor as well (Figure 5). The final extrinsic rewards factor, composed of ten items (5 constructs), was supported.

**Table 15**

*Intrinsic Rewards Correlation Matrix<sup>a</sup>*

		Correlation Matrix <sup>a</sup>						
		4. Meaningfulne ss of Job task 1	12. Meaningfulne ss of Job task 2	13. Meaningfulne ss of Job task 3	20. Coworker Support 1	26. Coworker Support 2	46. Supervisor Support	63. Job Task Input
Correlation	4. Meaningfulness of Job task 1	1.000	.612	.621	.379	.385	.458	.589
	12. Meaningfulness of Job task 2	.612	1.000	.609	.366	.366	.396	.484
	13. Meaningfulness of Job task 3	.621	.609	1.000	.308	.349	.346	.443
	20. Coworker Support 1	.379	.366	.308	1.000	.608	.400	.475
	26. Coworker Support 2	.385	.366	.349	.608	1.000	.392	.396
	46. Supervisor Support	.458	.396	.346	.400	.392	1.000	.533
	63. Job Task Input	.589	.484	.443	.475	.396	.533	1.000

a. Determinant = .060

**Table 16***Intrinsic Rewards KMO and Bartlett's Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.848
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1071.667
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

**Table 17***Intrinsic Rewards Communalities*

	Initial	Extraction
4. Meaningfulness of Job task 1	.557	.609
12. Meaningfulness of Job task 2	.484	.509
13. Meaningfulness of Job task 3	.476	.452
20. Coworker Support 1	.442	.367
26. Coworker Support 2	.418	.354
46. Supervisor Support	.352	.379
63. Job Task Input	.481	.535

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.



**Table 18**

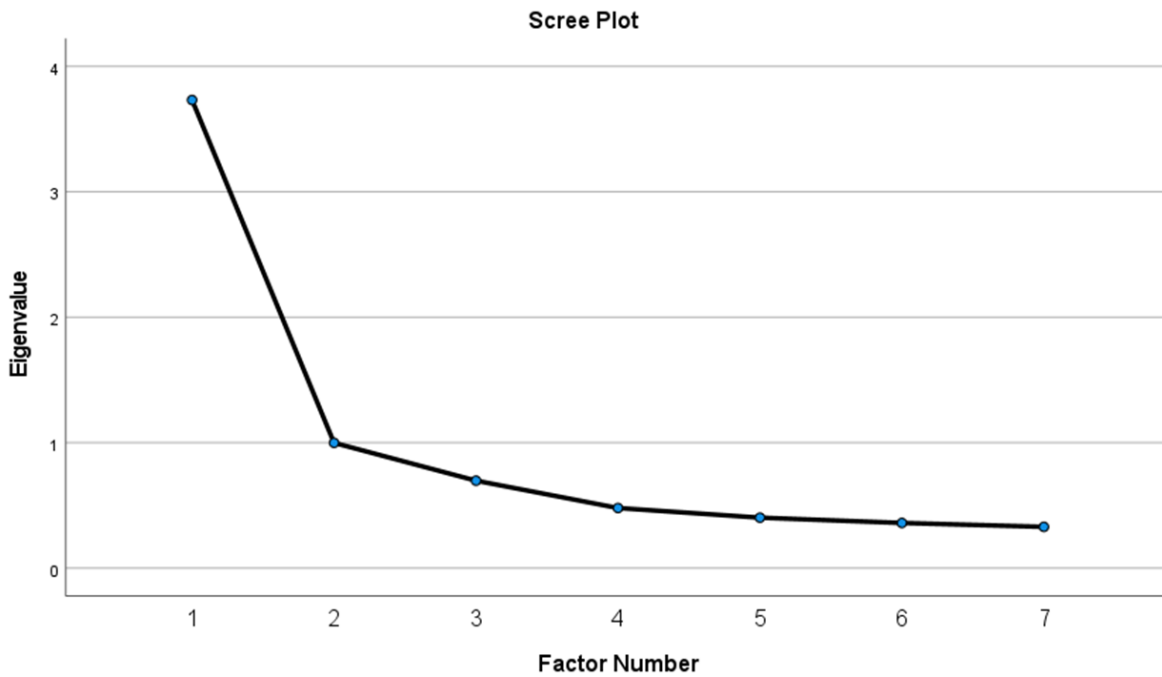
*Intrinsic Rewards Total Variance Explained*

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.732	53.317	53.317	3.205	45.784	45.784
2	.999	14.271	67.588			
3	.697	9.963	77.551			
4	.479	6.847	84.398			
5	.403	5.750	90.148			
6	.360	5.148	95.296			
7	.329	4.704	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

**Figure 4**

*Intrinsic Rewards Screeplot*



**Table 19**

*Extrinsic Rewards Correlation Matrix<sup>a</sup>*

		Correlation Matrix <sup>a</sup>									
		1. Education/Training 1	10. Workload	18. Education/Training 2	22. Promotion 1	33. Financial Rewards 1	43. Career Development 1	47. Career Development 2	67. Promotion 2	68. Education/Training 3	70. Financial Rewards 2
Correlation	1. Education/Training 1	1.000	.439	.618	.524	.447	.576	.644	.609	.632	.426
	10. Workload	.439	1.000	.496	.403	.334	.385	.456	.438	.451	.398
	18. Education/Training 2	.618	.496	1.000	.470	.383	.511	.561	.538	.720	.327
	22. Promotion 1	.524	.403	.470	1.000	.676	.483	.544	.589	.423	.387
	33. Financial Rewards 1	.447	.334	.383	.676	1.000	.367	.427	.499	.401	.381
	43. Career Development 1	.576	.385	.511	.483	.367	1.000	.756	.509	.496	.409
	47. Career Development 2	.644	.456	.561	.544	.427	.756	1.000	.543	.581	.415
	67. Promotion 2	.609	.438	.538	.589	.499	.509	.543	1.000	.536	.478
	68. Education/Training 3	.632	.451	.720	.423	.401	.496	.581	.536	1.000	.340
	70. Financial Rewards 2	.426	.398	.327	.387	.381	.409	.415	.478	.340	1.000

a. Determinant= .004

**Table 20**

*Extrinsic Rewards KMO and Bartlett's Test*

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.901
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2067.225
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

**Table 21**

*Extrinsic Rewards Communalities*

<b>Communalities</b>		
	Initial	Extraction
1. Education/Training 1	.588	.632
10. Workload	.343	.348
18. Education/Training 2	.601	.552
22. Promotion 1	.584	.502
33. Financial Rewards 1	.490	.371
43. Career Development 1	.599	.519
47. Career Development 2	.670	.634
67. Promotion 2	.535	.569
68. Education/Training 3	.600	.542
70. Financial Rewards 2	.317	.300

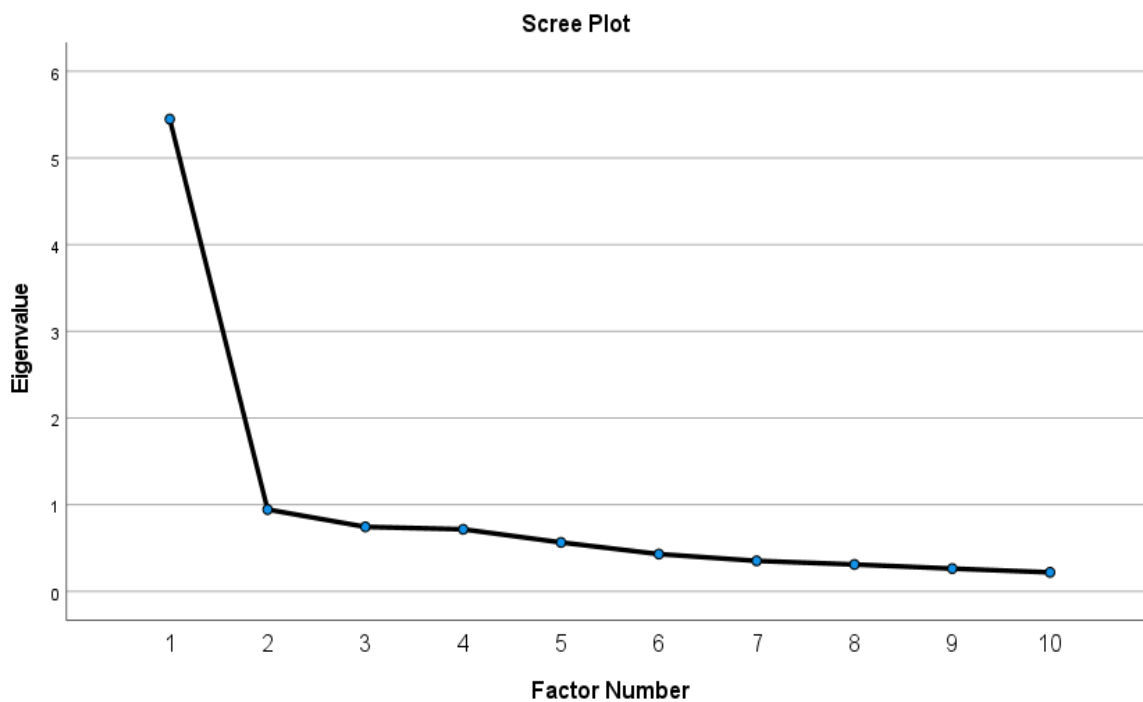
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

**Table 22**

*Extrinsic Rewards Scree Plot*

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>						
Factor	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.449	54.490	54.490	4.969	49.687	49.687
2	.945	9.452	63.942			
3	.745	7.450	71.393			
4	.717	7.168	78.561			
5	.565	5.654	84.215			
6	.431	4.309	88.525			
7	.353	3.528	92.053			
8	.311	3.111	95.163			
9	.264	2.635	97.799			
10	.220	2.201	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

**Figure 4***Extrinsic Rewards Screeplot****Descriptive Statistics***

The results of the factor analysis revealed the appropriateness of aggregating the interrelated survey items. The scores of the four intrinsic rewards constructs and seven extrinsic rewards constructs were summed to form new composite intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards variables for each survey respondent. Data from the 364 millennial employees that were randomly selected were examined. The majority of the survey respondents (65.1%) were non minorities (Table 23). Also noted was majority of the respondents (70.6%) reported no intention to leave their jobs with less than 30% reporting an intention to leave. Additionally, around 55% of the respondents were male, and 45% were female.

The descriptive statistics observed for the independent (intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards) are mean, standard deviation, and skewness. The mean score for intrinsic rewards was 27.323. The mean score for extrinsic rewards was 34.339. The minimum statistic for intrinsic rewards was 8 and the maximum was 35. The minimum statistic for extrinsic rewards was 10 and the maximum was 50. The lower statistical values represent a negative perception of rewards while the higher values represent a positive perception of rewards. Descriptive analysis revealed a skewness statistic of -1.130 for intrinsic rewards which was indicative of a markedly skewed distribution. The skewness statistic for extrinsic rewards was -.538. This indicated a normal curve that was not markedly skewed.

**Table 23**

*Demographics*

Characteristic	N	%
Minority Status		
Minority	122	31.8
Non-Minority	250	65.1
Gender		
Male	212	55.2
Female	171	44.5
Turnover Intentions		
Leaving	113	29.4
Not Leaving	271	70.6

*Note.* N=264

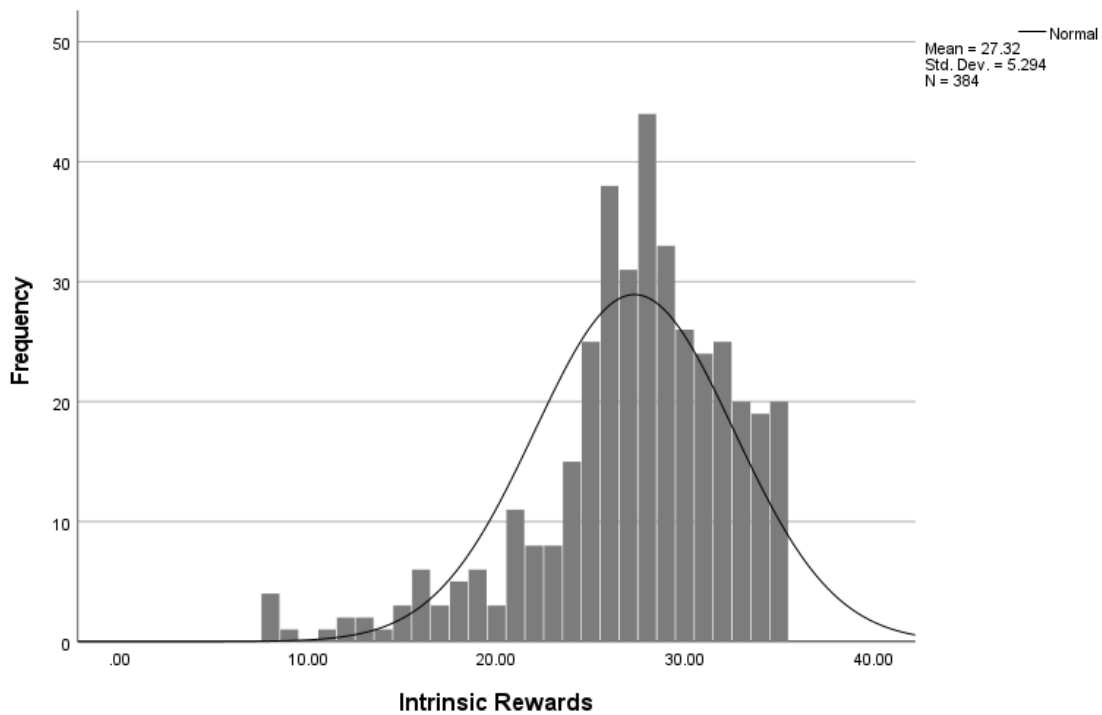
**Table 24**

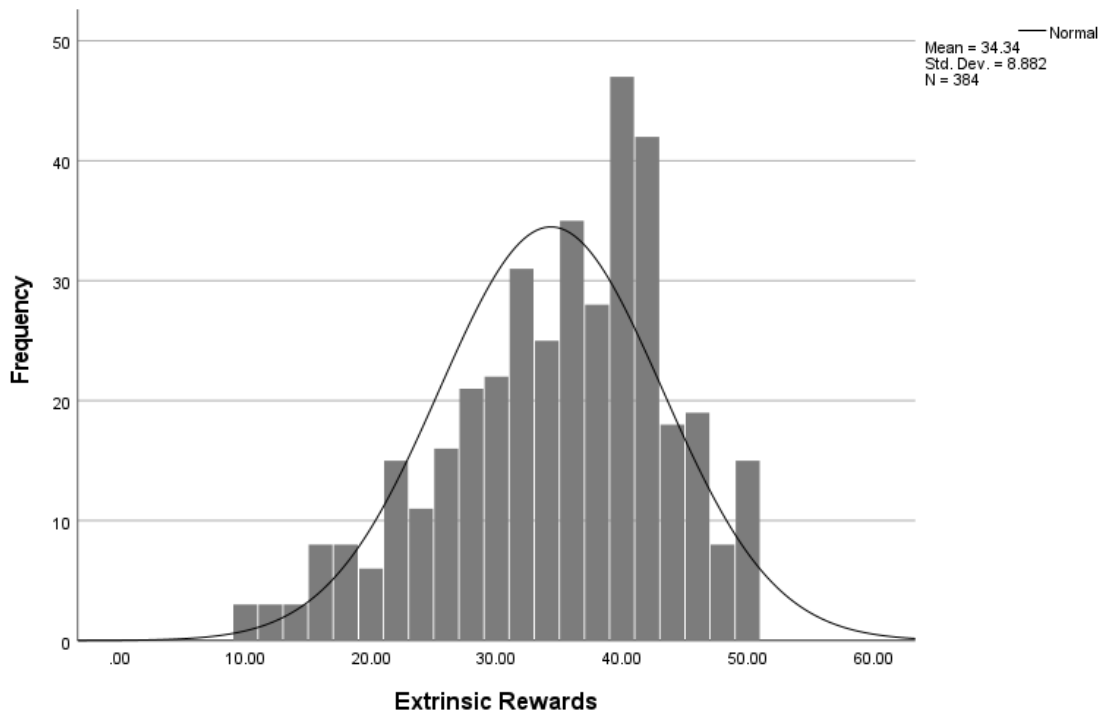
*Descriptive Statistics Independent Variables*

Variable	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Standard Deviation	Skewness
Intrinsic Rewards	27.3	8	35	5.29	-1.130
Extrinsic Rewards	34.3	10	50	8.88	-.538

**Figure 5**

*Intrinsic Rewards Histogram*



**Figure 6***Extrinsic Rewards Histogram****Hypothesis 1***

$H_01$ : There is no statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials in the federal workforce.

The intrinsic rewards skewness of -1.130 suggests that nonparametric statistics should be utilized to examine the relationship between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions. Based on the variable type and distribution of the data, the most meaningful statistic to examine the relationship between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions was determined to be eta. Eta is an associational statistic utilized when one variable is nominal and the other is approximately normal or scale (Morgan et al., 2013b). Analysis revealed the strength of the association between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions to be much larger than typical

(eta=.48; Table 25) according to Cohen’s (1988) guide. The eta-squared of .23 indicates that intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions share 23% common variance. The scatter plot for the turnover intention and intrinsic rewards variables reveal a negative relationship (Figure 8). The null hypothesis was rejected.

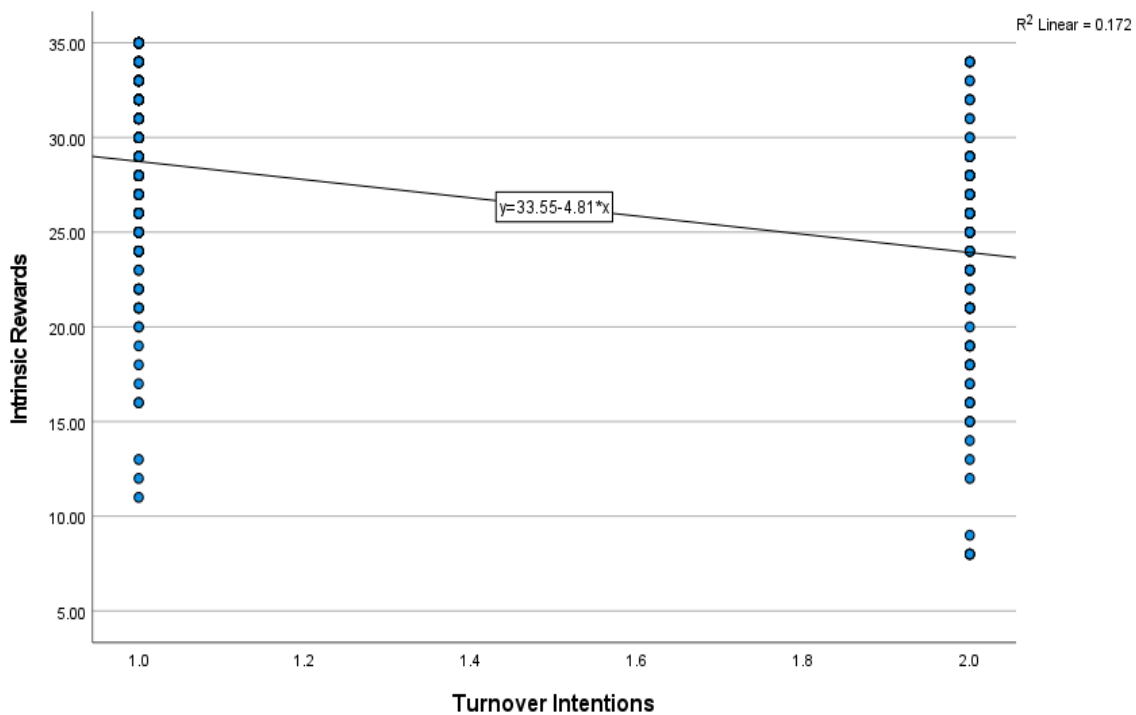
**Table 25**

*Eta Correlation Coefficient*

Nominal by Interval	Eta	Common Variance
	.483	23%

**Figure 7**

*Intrinsic Rewards Scatterplot*





***Hypothesis 2***

$H_02$ : There is no statistically significant relationship between extrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennial in the federal workforce.

To investigate if there was a statistically significant relationship between extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions a correlation coefficient was computed. The extrinsic rewards variable was not skewed (-.538), so the assumption of normality was met. The following basic assumptions of the Point-Biserial correlation were determined to be met:

1. There is one naturally occurring dichotomous variable and one interval or ratio variable.
2. The interval variable must be normally distributed for each level of the independent variable. Therefore, there should be more than 25 study participants.
3. The relationship between the two variables must be linear (Allen, 2017).

The Point-Biserial correlation was calculated,  $r_{pb} (384) = -.48, p = .000$  (Table 26). The direction of the correlation was negative, which reveals that millennials who have positive perceptions of extrinsic rewards are less likely to express turnover intentions and millennials who have negative perceptions of extrinsic rewards are more likely to express turnover intentions. Using Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the effect size is large or larger than typical. The correlation is statistically significant thus the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 26***Point Biserial Correlation*

Turnover Intentions Extrinsic Rewards	Point-Biserial Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
	-.480	.000

***Hypothesis 3***

$H_03$ : There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of rewards for millennials who intend to leave their job for in sector employment and those who intend to leave for out of sector employment.

**Table 27**

*Descriptive Statistics for Expressed Turnover*

Variable	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness
Intrinsic Rewards	23.93	8	34	-.763
N=113				
Extrinsic Rewards	27.74	10	45	-.189

In this level of analysis, the total number of responses from the sample that indicated an intention to leave was 113. A total of 91 of respondents indicated they planned to leave their job for in sector employment. Twenty-two responded indicated they planned to leave for out of sector employment.

To determine if millennials who plan to leave their jobs for in sector employment and those who plan to leave for out of sector employment differ in regard to their perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, an independent sample t-test was employed. Prior to performing this analysis, the researcher ensured the assumptions of the independent samples t-test were not markedly violated. According to Morgan et al. (2013b) the following are the assumptions of the independent sample t-test:

1. The variances of the dependent variable in the two populations is equal.

2. The dependent variable is normally distributed within each population.
3. The data are independent.

Assumption 1 was tested through observation of findings in Table 29. The findings reveal the F test is not significant, indicating the assumption of equal variances is not violated. Assumptions 2 is met and can be seen in Table 27. Skewness statistics for intrinsic rewards is  $-.763$  and is  $-.189$  for extrinsic rewards. The assumption of normality was not markedly violated. For assumption 3, there is no reason to believe that intention to leave for in-sector employment and intention to leave for out of sector employment are matched or related pairs or that one person's score might have influenced another person's score. Individuals who are a part of one group cannot be a part of the other group.

For intrinsic rewards  $t=-1.4$  and  $\text{Sig}=.165$ . The t-value for extrinsic rewards was  $-1.3$ ,  $\text{Sig}=.180$  (Table 29). Perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are not statistically significant. Inspection of the two group means indicate there is not enough evidence to say that employees who intended to leave for in sector employment differed in their perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards from employees who intended to leave for out of sector employment. Considering the p-value is greater than alpha ( $.05$ ), the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis.

**Table 28**

*Group Statistics*

		<b>Group Statistics</b>			
	Turnover Intentions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Intrinsic Rewards	Out of Sector Employment	22	22.318	7.4730	1.5933
	In Sector Employment	91	24.319	5.6330	.5905
Extrinsic Rewards	Out of Sector Employment	22	25.545	10.0557	2.1439
	In Sector Employment	91	28.275	8.1241	.8516

**Table 29**

*Independent Samples Test*

		<b>Independent Samples Test</b>								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Intrinsic Rewards	Equal variances assumed	5.611	.020	-1.398	111	.165	-2.0005	1.4313	-4.8366	.8356
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.177	27.046	.249	-2.0005	1.6992	-5.4866	1.4856
Extrinsic Rewards	Equal variances assumed	4.336	.040	-1.348	111	.180	-2.7293	2.0249	-6.7418	1.2833
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.183	27.988	.247	-2.7293	2.3068	-7.4547	1.9962

**Summary of the Findings**

**Research Question 1.** This correlational study aimed to address the gaps in existing research and the business problem related to understanding millennial work motivations and behavior. The researcher identified intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards as the independent variables and turnover intentions as the dependent variable. The first research question examined whether a relationship existed between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions for millennials in the federal workforce. The corresponding null hypotheses suggested there was no statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials. The researcher analyzed the null hypothesis utilizing information from the

sample data to determine the correlation. The eta coefficient was found to be .483 with a shared common variance of 23%. The analysis supports the conclusion there is an association between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions. The eta coefficient is always a positive number, but according to the scatter diagram (Figure 7) the relationship between the two variables is negative. This indicated that as perceptions for rewards increase turnover intentions decrease. Based on the results of the statistical analysis the researcher rejected the null hypothesis for the first research question. The results of the hypothesis testing were consistent with the findings of Milikić and Došenović (2020) which identified a strong relationship between intrinsic rewards and job satisfaction. It is also supported by Ozutku (2012) who suggested that intrinsic rewards have a direct effect on the motivation of employee outcomes.

**Research Question 2.** The second research question examined whether a relationship existed between extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions for millennials in the federal workforce. The corresponding null hypotheses suggested there was no statistically significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and the turnover intentions of millennials. The researcher analyzed the null hypothesis utilizing information from the sample data to determine the correlation coefficient. The Point-Biserial correlation coefficient was calculated,  $r_{pb}(384) = -.48, p = .000$ . The correlation was negative which indicated that as perceptions of extrinsic rewards increase, turnover intentions decrease. The  $p = .000$  suggested the relationship was statistically significant. Based on the results of the statistical analysis the researcher rejected the null hypothesis for the second research question. This was consistent with Alferai et al.'s (2018) findings that extrinsic rewards are significant in reducing an employee's intention to leave. As outlined by Alferai et al., better pay packages,

incentives bonuses, and other benefits help organizations to retain employees longer. Smith et al. (2015) also reported similar findings in reporting that an additional monthly salary and pay are the most motivating rewards factors.

**Research Question 3.** The third research question examined if a difference existed in the perception of rewards for millennials who were leaving their jobs for in sector employment and those leaving their jobs for out of sector employment. The corresponding null hypothesis suggested that no significant difference existed in the perception of rewards for millennials who are leaving their jobs for in sector employment and those leaving for out of sector employment. Utilizing information from the sample data, the researcher analyzed the differences between the two groups. The sample test values  $t=-1.4$ , Sig.= .165 and  $t=-1.3$ , Sig. = .180 revealed that among millennials who intend to leave their job, there was no statistically significant difference between those who intended to leave for in sector employment and those who intended to leave for out of sector employment. These findings are not consistent with AbouAssi et al (2019), who found evidence that millennials were not motivated by financial reasons to pursue employment outside of the public sector. AbouAssi et al. was able to establish significance in the relationship between sector choice in turnover and rewards.

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

The purpose of this study was to explore millennial work motivations by determining if a relationship exists between rewards and millennial turnover behavior. Review of previous studies illuminated a gap with respect to understanding millennial work motivations. While there have been studies on rewards and millennial behavior (Bannon et al., 2017; Frye et al., 2020; Kuron et al., 2015; Madan & Madan, 2019; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019), few of them

have examined them from the specific lens of intrinsic rewards and extrinsic reward. In observing this gap, this study sought to contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

Organizational leaders need to understand the reasons that millennial employees leave their jobs as well as analyze the reasons why they choose to resign from their role.

Understanding the factors that influence a millennial's decision to leave can guide business and human resource leaders to formulate strategies that help to alleviate the burdensome consequences of employee turnover. There is a common misconception that millennials are not loyal and easily switch employers. While this notion has the possibility to deter organizations from investing in their millennial employees, millennials generally do not choose to look for other employment unless they have a compelling reason (LaCore, 2015). It has been often acknowledged that employees rarely leave their jobs when they feel their needs are being satisfied (Linhartova, 2011).

The primary finding of this study was the confirmation of the relationship between rewards and turnover intentions among millennials. This corroborates the notion that rewards can affect behavior. In this case, the perceptions of meaningfulness of job tasks, coworker support, supervisor support, and job task input (intrinsic rewards) were related to turnover intentions for millennials across the federal workforce. This is consistent with LaCore (2015) who found that drivers for turnover amongst millennials often stems from intrinsic factors. Additionally, the reward-behavior paradigm is supported by the negative correlation between turnover intentions and education/training, workload, promotion, financial rewards, and career development (extrinsic rewards). The significance of extrinsic rewards factors for millennial employees provide an area of focus for organizational leaders to concentrate their improvement efforts in order to retain millennials.

The secondary finding of the research shows there was inadequate evidence to conclude that millennials who intended to leave their jobs for in-sector employment perceive rewards differently from employees who intended to leave their jobs for out of sector employment. This is an indication that while perceived lack of rewards may affect behavior, it does not necessarily impact the sector choice in turnover decisions. These findings have significant implications to the public sector, local governments, policymakers and practitioners pertaining to rewards packages, retention, and turnover.

The study results support the inference that government organizations can utilize policies that promote or reinforce rewards to affect millennial behavior. Human resource practitioners and organizational leaders can enrich their list of workforce management practices by matching job offerings to the motivational needs of employees who are strongly motivated by rewards. The study findings support the belief that by implementing strategies that align with millennial's perceptions of rewards, jobs and employers can be viewed more favorably, leading to lower levels of turnover. This alignment might also include developing governmental HR policies that enable more financial rewards, promotion opportunities, training opportunities, career development plans and workload support. It would also include integrating structures that bolster the utilization of processes that increase supervisor support, employee input, employee support and task value.

The findings of this study are relevant to improved business practice because they provide an approach to help government organizations 1) motivate millennial employees and 2) design effective rewards packages. Learning how to optimally reward employees does matter for the bottom line. To motivate and reward employees optimally, managers must gain a better understanding of the types of rewards that employees are looking for at work.



Generally, compensation and reward programs have failed to positively motivate employees, in part because companies struggle to understand what employees want and why (Thibault Landry et al., 2018). Designing reward packages that are targeted to the needs of millennials may promote more credible and robust discussion between millennials and organizational leaders regarding the reciprocal obligations in the employer-employee relationship.

Considering the challenges that organizations face when it comes to hiring and retaining talent in a tight labor market, it has become critical to understand how to effectively reward employees (Thibault Landry et al., 2018).

The Bible addresses every aspect of human life. From how to treat one another, how to forgive, pray, worship and how to commit ourselves to each other and God. When a believer is troubled, confused, sad, angry, happy, or thankful, a directive or scripture can often be found to connect those feelings back to some desired action or behavior. While the Bible is all encompassing to the life of the believer, there is one scripture that comes to mind that can be applied to all behaviors no matter the underlying emotion. This scripture, found in Colossians 3:17, directs the believer that, "...whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." While living in a world with constant deterrents and motivators for certain behaviors, this scripture directs Christians that at the center of every choice that is made, every behavior that is exhibited, every single thing that is done should be done to the glory of God. This is the objective of the life of the believer, to allow the attributes of God to be manifested in all behavior.

### **Recommendations for Action**

Managers and human resource practitioners should tailor motivational strategy when feasible to ensure they are aligned with their employee's motivation needs rather than basing

this decision on motivation theory alone. Considering laws and the possible arduous process of changing the pay, financial incentives, workload and other extrinsic factors within federal agencies, the more readily available approach can be implemented with intrinsic rewards factors in mind. These are the factors the managers and agency leaderships are more likely to have more discretion over.

Several actionable recommendations can be formed from this research. Six action steps are presented to execute these actions. Prior to action steps, organizations should first assess the effectiveness of the rewards programs that are currently being used. This includes specifically defining rewards offerings and assessing the tangible and intangible outcomes.

Step one: Thoroughly analyze the results of existing employee surveys to find agency or organization specific problems. Use additional surveys and interviews with current, past and potential employees to explore and understand their interests, desires and preferences.

Step two: Utilize the data to structure an inclusive conversation across generational lines to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Step three: Utilize the gathered information to create a plan. Identify common themes or problem areas.

Step four: Solicit millennial employee input into developing viable solutions.

Step five: Create and implement a turnover reduction plan. Ensure that all employees are aware of their role in the success of the plan.

Step six: Continuously monitor and report progress within this population across all levels to create accountability.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

There are several recommendations for future research in the field of human resources regarding millennial turnover and turnover behavior. This study was conducted within the federal government sector. It is recommended to replicate this study in other industries or sectors will enable future researchers to expand the generalizability of this study's findings. The second recommendation for further study is the suggestion of a qualitative study to further examine millennial attitudes. Interviews or a more open-ended inquiry with millennial employees could provide useful insights beyond the results presented in this study. Further research may help to develop a broader understanding of millennials motivations through their personal experiences. The third recommendation for future research is to examine millennial turnover over time. Longitudinal studies are minimal within millennial work behavior research. To observe their behavior over time would be crucial in determining if millennials hold the same work values as their tenure changes.

**Reflections**

Through personal interaction with management and leaders within the government, the researcher believed that millennials were a unique group of employees within the workforce that was easily misunderstood. After reading and hearing of millennial employees being described as unmotivated, disloyal, job hoppers and lazy, the researcher was motivated to explore millennial work behavior further. While initially the researcher shared some of the mentioned perceptions, through the course of this study, this perception changed. The expansive research on motivation revealed to this researcher that most individuals are motivated by something. Millennials are not excluded from this assertion and it is just a

matter of finding exactly what motivates this generation. This was the interest behind this study.

In reflecting on the doctoral degree journey, the course work adequately prepared the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher did find the dissertation process to be rather challenging initially. Those challenges were overcome, by the researcher's faith in God. Knowing this process was undertaken after the leading of God, the researcher had confidence the degree would be completed because there was no other option. The researcher kept a daily reminder of Jeremiah 29:11. This scripture states, "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." This scripture was more than a reminder for the researcher but motivation the end and the final product is given by God. Overall, the DBA process has been a source of intellectual, spiritual, vocational and personal growth for the researcher.

### **Summary and Study Conclusions**

This study strengthens the literature by supporting the long-held notion that rewards affect behavior, specifically by connecting this notion to the millennial generation. By shedding light on the relationship between rewards and millennial turnover intentions, additional insight is gained into the behavior decisions of millennials. The study findings indicate that where millennial employees receive certain rewards from their organization, they may be motivated to remain employed with their organization. Rooted in motivation theory, Ryan and Deci's (2000a) self-determination theory model and B.F. Skinner's (1958) reinforcement theory model resonated with this study. Ryan and Deci's motivation theory presented the dyadic perspective of motivation while B.F. Skinner's motivation theory established the reward/behavior connection. From these two theories the theoretical

framework indicating that rewards are related to turnover intention behavior, was formed.

This is the lens through which the research was analyzed, and study conclusion were made.

The findings of this study sought to accomplish the following: (1) add to the empirical research on millennial work behavior, (2) examine the relationship between millennial turnover intention behavior and perceptions of rewards, and (3) fill a gap in research within the millennial population. This study identified significant relationships between rewards, both intrinsic and extrinsic, and millennial employee turnover intentions. The study provided valuable insight into the complex relationship between millennial motivation and behavior. The study findings support the inference that government organizations can reduce millennials turnover by pursuing proactive activities that focus on intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The relationship found between intrinsic rewards and turnover intentions indicate that as organizations change their presentation of intrinsic rewards, they can expect to see a change in the turnover behavior of their millennial employees. The study findings established a negative relationship between extrinsic rewards and turnover intentions as well as between extrinsic rewards and millennial turnover intentions, revealing that positive perceptions of extrinsic rewards correlated with low turnover intentions. Additionally, the results of this study implies that while there is a relationship between rewards and turnover intentions, there is a need to further explore the impact that rewards have on sector choice for millennials who plan to leave their jobs.

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### Appendix A: Sample Invitation Email



**Sample Invitation Email**

Subject: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey: Employees Influencing Change

The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is a safe and confidential way for you to voice your opinions about critical aspects of your job and working environment. Please take this important opportunity to help guide your agency's focus in the coming years.

Click here to access your survey:

XX

If the link does not take you directly to the survey, copy and paste the following into a browser window:

XX

Please DO NOT forward this e-mail, as it contains your personalized link to the survey. Answering the questions will take about 25 minutes, and you may use official time. While participation is voluntary, your feedback is important. Your individual responses are confidential.

Reply to this message if you have any questions or difficulties accessing the survey, or call our Survey Support Center toll free at: 1-855-OPM-FEVS (1-855-676-3387).

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

**Sample Reminder Email**

Inspire Change through your participation in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey!

What matters most to you as a Federal employee? If you had the opportunity to speak directly with your agency's senior leaders, what would you say?

If you have not yet completed the 2016 FEVS, take this opportunity to fill out the survey. This is your chance to voice your opinions and let your leadership know which issues are most critical to you.

Click here to access your survey

XXXX

If the link does not take you directly to the survey, copy and paste the following into a browser window:

XXXX

Please DO NOT forward this e-mail, as it contains your personalized link to the survey.

Please reply to this message if you have any questions or difficulties accessing the survey, or call our Survey Support Center toll free at: 1-855-OPM-FEVS (1-855-676-3387).









Appendix B: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Instrument (continued)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
40. I recommend my organization as a good place to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
41. I believe the results of this survey will be used to make my agency a better place to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>My Supervisor</b>						
42. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Discussions with my supervisor about my performance are worthwhile.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
48. My supervisor listens to what I have to say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
49. My supervisor treats me with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
50. In the last six months, my supervisor has talked with me about my performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
51. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Appendix B: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Instrument (continued)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
<b>My Satisfaction</b>					
63. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66. How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
67. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
69. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
71. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Work/Life</b>					
72. Have you been notified whether or not you are eligible to telework?					
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I was notified that I was eligible to telework.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I was notified that I was not eligible to telework.					
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I was not notified of my telework eligibility.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure if I was notified of my telework eligibility.					



Appendix B: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Instrument (continued)

Demographics

85. Where do you work?

Headquarters

Field

86. What is your supervisory status?

Non-Supervisor: You do not supervise other employees.

Team Leader: You are not an official supervisor; you provide employees with day-to-day guidance in work projects, but do not have supervisory responsibilities or conduct performance appraisals.

Supervisor: You are a first-line supervisor who is responsible for employees' performance appraisals and leave approval.

Manager: You are in a management position and supervise one or more supervisors.

Senior Leader: You are the head of a department/agency or a member of the immediate leadership team responsible for directing the policies and priorities of the department/agency. May hold either a political or career appointment, and typically is a member of the Senior Executive Service or equivalent.

87. Are you:

Male

Female

88. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

Yes

No

89. Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify (mark as many as apply).

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

**Appendix B: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Instrument (continued)**

90. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

Less than High School

- High School Diploma/GED or equivalent
- Trade or Technical Certificate
- Some College (no degree)
- Associate's Degree (e.g., AA, AS)
- Bachelor's Degree (e.g., BA, BS)
- Master's Degree (e.g., MA, MS, MBA)
- Doctoral/Professional Degree (e.g., Ph.D., MD, JD)

91. What is your pay category/grade?

- Federal Wage System (for example, WB, WD, WG, WL, WM, WS, WY)
- GS 1-6
- GS 7-12
- GS 13-15
- Senior Executive Service
- Senior Level (SL) or Scientific or Professional (ST)
- Other

92. How long have you been with the Federal Government (excluding military service)?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 14 years
- 15 to 20 years
- More than 20 years

93. How long have you been with your current agency (for example, Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency)?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 20 years
- More than 20 years



**Appendix B: 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Instrument** (continued)

94. Are you considering leaving your organization within the next year, and if so, why?

- No
- Yes, to retire
- Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government
- Yes, to take another job outside the Federal Government
- Yes, other

95. I am planning to retire:

- Within one year
- Between one and three years
- Between three and five years
- Five or more years

96. Do you consider yourself to be one or more of the following? (mark as many as apply).

- Heterosexual or Straight
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- I prefer not to say

97. What is your US military service status?

- No Prior Military Service
- Currently in National Guard or Reserves
- Retired
- Separated or Discharged

98. Are you an individual with a disability?

- Yes
- No