

Why Millennials Job Hop: Navigating Pay, Culture, and Growth

Ami Fitri Utami^{1*}; Ghita Ihwanul Shalihah²; Trihadi Pudiawan Erhan³

^{1,2}Management Department, BINUS Business School Undergraduate Program, Bina Nusantara University
Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

³Department of Management, Faculty of Business, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara
Banten, Indonesia 15810

³Department of Marketing, Business School, University of Western Australia
Perth, Australia 6009

¹autami@binus.edu; ²ghitaa.shalihah@gmail.com; ³trihadi.pudiawan@umn.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of job hopping, predominantly observed among millennials, has been a subject of interest. The research aimed to determine what factors influence job-hopping behavior, which was widespread among millennials, and how they influenced it. Three antecedents were analyzed, including organizational culture, perceived compensation conditions, and the availability of career development opportunities. The research used a quantitative method, where a questionnaire was used to gather data. There were 329 millennial respondents gathered, and Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the data. The results show that compensation has a positive influence, while work culture and career development negatively influence job-hopping behavior. It suggests that while higher compensation increases job-hopping, improving work culture and career development can decrease it. In this case, compensation is no longer the main factor for millennial employees to stay in their jobs or current organizations. The result also concludes that organizations should provide more consideration in developing an aligned culture with millennials' values and creating a more transparent, structured, and accessible career development plan. The research contributes to the body of knowledge on millennials' job-hacking behavior research by integrating the organizational practices factor towards individual behavior, particularly the millennial workforce. The research differs from previous research, which usually focuses on individual factors such as job satisfaction and exhaustion. The research has several limitations, including the number of respondents and geographical coverage. Hence, a larger sample and expanded geographical survey coverage are needed to enhance the potentiality of generalization of the research result.

Keywords: millennial, job hopping, culture, compensation, career development, pay, career growth

INTRODUCTION

Potential human resources are increasingly limited as times change and technology continues to experience rapid development. This issue is supported by data from the World Bank in 2018, which found that the quality of human resources, especially for Indonesia, was in 87th place out of 157 countries. Business World stated in 2018 that Indonesia had relatively low human resource competitiveness, occupying 45th out of 63 countries (Sugiarto, 2019).

Hence, it becomes more challenging for companies in Indonesia to attain qualified employees due to the need for more competitive human resources in the country. Maintaining good employees by decreasing turnover will be critical for the business's stability (Nasir et al., 2022).

According to Philip (2017), turnover is not a new issue. However, currently, job transfers carried out by employees tend to lead to a new concept called job hopping. Job hopping is when employees move their workplace from one company to another for

only a short period. Job hopping is done for rational reasons, such as looking for work with good career development (Kinasih & Amin, 2022). In this case, high job-hopping phenomena in the organization may jeopardize the business. It occurs as there will be a drastic decline in the company's work productivity due to employees continually changing to complete a job, which makes the burden on other employees even heavier (Liu & Batt, 2010). Likewise, profits and assets can decrease due to the company's continuous recruitment costs (Alisa et al., 2022).

The phenomenon of job hopping, predominantly observed among millennials, has been a subject of interest. Job hopping is a condition where an employee or individual can change their place of work in less than one year for certain reasons (Leovani, 2022). A survey conducted by IDN Times in 2022, comprising 211 respondents, revealed that 76.3% of participants were millennials younger than 30 years. The survey employed the duration of employment as a key metric, with periods shorter than three years serving as a benchmark and classified into five categories: 1-3 months (37.8%), 3-6 months (21%), 6-12 months (41.2%), three years (12.6%), and over three years (30.8%) (Hanina et al., 2022). These findings underscore the notable prevalence of job-hopping behavior among millennials.

Previously, several factors causing turnover intensity due to the job-hopping phenomenon include compensation and work culture (Priyangga & Fransiska, 2019). Compensation is a form of payment or reward given to employees for their performance through existing work relationships (Dessler, 2017). On the other hand, organizational culture is values or behaviors embedded in the employees' lives in a company that is carried out repeatedly (Stankevičienė et al., 2021). Previous research has been conducted on more than 2,000 executives who have changed jobs (the majority are female executives in specific contexts). It shows external moves in the form of job hopping to increase their compensation and enable efforts to narrow the overall gender pay gap (Groysberg et al., 2021).

Likewise, mindset differences also shape work culture and define success from the millennials' perspectives in achieving career paths or the availability of career development. In this case, career development is the achievement of the employees in experiencing career growth in an organization (Weng, 2018). For example, the previous generation (X & Y) defines success with job stability (Adi & Irawati, 2019). It may differ from millennials, who think career success can be achieved when they have a wide range of experiences and move from one company to another.

The research aims to unveil the antecedents of job hopping among millennials in Indonesia, namely the organization culture, compensation, and career development. In this case, individual and organizational values relevances will strengthen one's commitment to stay in the company (Anggara et al.,

2020). Hence, it is crucial to investigate whether this relevance is important for millennials. On the other hand, compensation is one of the main motivators and considerations for most workers to do and choose their jobs (Hee & Rhung, 2019). However, the millennials have varied preferences, which may prioritize other factors. This is why understanding how this factor affects their job decisions is highly needed, particularly knowing their domination within the population.

According to Prasetyo et al. (2021), compensation is a reward of fair and appropriate wages by recognizing employees' contributions toward achieving the company's objectives. In this context, compensation is not limited to monetary benefits but can also include indirect rewards, such as healthcare, insurance, or other non-financial perks. Those kinds of rewards are important for employees to enhance their satisfaction and productivity within the job. In this case, salary and benefits are often claimed as one of the pivotal factors in determining one's job selection within this competitive job market (Hee & Rhung, 2019).

The availability of appropriate compensation is essential to decrease employee turnover as it reflects appreciation and encouragement that can enhance organizational stability (Devi et al., 2023). Likewise, compensation packages that are designed comprehensively can be pivotal in influencing employee retention (Bibi et al., 2017). It occurs as employees will feel they are rewarded adequately, which leads to less possibility for them to find opportunities in another place. In this case, if organizations provide attractive rewards, they will have a better relationship with their workforce. Another research reinforces this notion, suggesting that job hopping often stems from dissatisfaction with compensation structures (Harlianto & Rudi, 2021).

On the other hand, not only compensation, transparency, and fairness in delivering and calculating the rewards are also important for millennials (Handayani & Herwany, 2019). Millennials prefer to stay in the organization if their accomplishment is recognized appropriately by the organization. Hence, clarity and fairness are highly important for them. Effective compensation strategies align with broader organizational objectives, ensuring that rewards meet employees' needs, drive performance, and achieve business goals. The first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Compensation significantly influences millennials' job-hopping decisions.

Organizational culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that are learned, believed, and implemented by a group to adapt to external factors and integrate internal practices within a company (Lagrimas & Buenaventura, 2023). These shared assumptions create a framework of values, norms, and behaviors that shape how employees interact, make decisions, and approach their work (Diputra & Suwandana, 2022). This concept gives employees an

understanding of identity and leads them to align their goals with the organization's objective. The more these two aspects are aligned, the more likely the employee's satisfaction and retention will be enhanced.

Employees who perceive that the work culture supports and values their efforts are likelier to feel satisfied and engaged in their roles. According to Anggara et al. (2020), a positive match between an individual's values and the organization's cultural environment fosters a sense of commitment and reduces the desire to seek employment elsewhere. This condition may lead to loyalty as they will be appreciated and empowered. On the contrary, when there are misalignments between their expectations and the actual culture, disengagement may occur, leading to a higher tendency to find a new job.

According to Rahman (2023), millennials tend to leave the organization, particularly when the work culture does not align with theirs. There are some expectations from this generation regarding their organization. For example, the expectation of more opportunities for personal growth, collaboration, and flexible workplace to enhance and trigger innovation. Hence, their job-hopping behavior may be triggered by a lack of cultural alignment. Work culture impacts employee retention and plays a critical role in determining an organization's overall success. According to Wijaya (2022), a well-designed organizational culture fosters collaboration, innovation, and adaptability, enabling the company to achieve its primary goals more effectively.

Based on the argumentation, it is hypothesized that organizational culture will influence employees' decisions to do job hopping. In this case, when they perceive that the organization's culture aligns with their values, they will have less tendency to consider changing jobs. On the contrary, when an organization shows cultural misalignment with them, they will be more likely to consider finding another job.

In short, organizational culture is highly critical to shaping employees' decisions in their careers. When employees feel comfortable within the work environment, they will be more likely to stay longer with the organization (Azmy & Mauludi, 2024). Hence, fostering a culture that aligns with employees' personal and professional values may decrease employees' willingness to change their jobs. The second hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Organizational culture significantly influences millennials' job-hopping decisions.

According to Hee and Rhung (2019), career development is a form of extrinsic motivation provided by companies to support employees' professional growth. It encompasses opportunities for learning, skill enhancement, promotions, and other mechanisms that facilitate career advancement. A clear and accessible career development plan will provide a compelling reason for employees to be committed to a particular organization. The career pathway

serves as a motivational factor and indicator that an organization truly values its employees. Employees are more likely to feel valued and engaged when they perceive that their long-term career aspirations align with the company's goals.

For millennials, the opportunity for career growth will influence their commitment to their current job (Pandey, 2019). It is found that 16.8% of millennial respondents state that their reason for leaving their jobs is due to a lack of career growth. When employees, particularly younger ones, have a possibility of less growth in their career, they may have more consideration to seek a job elsewhere. It may occur as millennials value learning and career progression more, where the absence of career development will provide less motivation and higher urgency for them to find another job.

On the other hand, according to Schwartz et al. (2018), a well-designed career development plan must include structured steps where employees can upgrade their skills. However, if such frameworks exist without clear and accessible internal career advancement opportunities, they can lead to employee frustration. It is noted that employees may feel undervalued and unfulfilled when encouraged to develop their skills but see no pathway to apply them within the organization (Siddiqui & Rida, 2019). This discontent often translates into a search for roles in other companies, offering better career growth prospects. In this case, employees will remain loyal when they perceive that they will have positive prospects in their career advancement and opportunities (Handayani & Herwany, 2019). Hence, a lack of clarity in career development can erode their motivation, which leads to them trying to find another option for their job.

Based on the argumentation, the availability of robust and accessible career opportunities serves a critical role in influencing millennial employees' decision to stay or leave a company. It may provide motivation for employees, as well as strategic retention tools for the organization. Organizations that fail to provide clear, structured, and accessible career growth opportunities can lose valuable talent to competitors who prioritize employee development. The last hypothesis is as follows:

H3: Career development significantly influences millennials' job-hopping decisions.

The research provides several contributions. It contributes to research in the field of job hopping. Previously, Nguyen and Le (2022) investigated the motives behind job-hopping behavior. However, it focused more on the employee's job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, which reflected their internal individual factor. Likewise, Tran et al. (2025) also investigated millennials' turnover intention by considering individual factors, including job satisfaction, job involvement, and emotional exhaustion. They included one organizational factor, perceived organizational support. Other

research, such as Shakya et al. (2025), also focused on work-life balance and employee engagement as the antecedents of job-hopping behavior. They included organizational factors but focused more on the perceived organizational support and human resources' positive treatment toward employees. The current research investigates the organizational level factor, which includes compensation, culture, and career development. These aspects are different from previous research, which usually focuses more on individual factors. Then, the research provides managerial insights for organizations to manage their millennial employees to avoid the increasing job-hopping rate.

METHODS

The research uses the quantitative method to gather and analyze the data. In obtaining the data, the research applies an online questionnaire survey consisting of 27 questions to investigate the respondents' demography and answers to each variable. Non-probability with purposive sampling is used due to the specific characteristics of the respondents who will participate in the survey. In this case, the respondents are born between 1980–2000, already working, and have experience moving jobs during the last one year. The survey period is done within four months, from February to May 2023. The researchers successfully gather 329 data.

The questionnaire is adapted from the previous research's scale and adjusted to the Indonesian context. In this case, compensation is adapted from Permadi et al. (2019) with six items of questions. Organization culture questions are adapted from Stankevičienė et al. (2021) with six questions items. Career development comprises four questions, and job-hopping decisions include three questions adapted from Philip (2017).

The research uses Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the data. This analysis includes both the measurement model analysis (outer model analysis) and structural model analysis (inner model analysis) (Hair et al., 2019). The outer model analysis or measurement model analysis aims to check the validity and reliability of the measurements which represents each variables in the research. On the other hands, the inner model analysis or structural model analysis is conducted to test the hypothesis which develop the research model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To conduct the measurement model analysis or the outer model analysis, the researchers utilize Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) scores to measure reliability. According to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), a construct is considered reliable if it meets or exceeds a threshold of 0.60. According to Hair et al. (2019), for an indicator to be declared valid, the value of the outer loading must be > 0.70 . On the other hand, the Average Variance

Extracted (AVE) score also exceeds 0.5, which shows that variables have convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021). Based on the result in Table 1, It can be seen that all measurements pass the reliability and validity standards.

According to Hair et al. (2021), the results obtained in the discriminant validity test by looking at the cross-loading value can be a reference in assessing the indicators that exist in the validity of discrimination. Referring to the results of the discriminant validity test in Table 2, each constructed indicator that is formed (in bold) has a discriminatory value of an adequate amount or greater than the intended construct compared to other indicator constructs.

After the outer model analysis results are evident, the inner model analysis is done to check the hypothesis testing results. Table 3 shows that the p-values of the entire constructs are smaller than 0.05, and the t-values are greater than 1.967. Therefore, while compensation significantly affects job-hopping positively, organizational culture and career development significantly and negatively influence the notion. The result also shows that the R-Square (R^2) value is 0.722, which shows that this research model explains 72.2% of the job-hopping variance among millennials. Hence, from the result, all hypotheses are accepted. In this case, compensation is found to positively and significantly influence job-hopping decisions. On the other hand, organizational culture and career development negatively and significantly influence job-hopping behavior in millennial generations.

The research provides several theoretical implications. First, based on H1, compensation is confirmed to influence job-hopping decisions significantly and positively. These findings align with Zahari and Puteh (2023), that indicate a positive and significant relationship between compensation and job-hopping. Then, according to Ruanggoon and Leephajaroen (2023), the younger generation tends to switch jobs more than the older generation. It may occur due to various factors, including the cultural and priority shift, where younger generations prioritize their personal growth over other factors. This statement aligns with the findings. Other contributing factors motivate individuals to switch jobs frequently, even when compensation is considered satisfactory. Because of this, although adequate and competitive compensation is provided, job-hopping behavior continues to rise. Compensation is not the primary factor driving job hopping. Other factors, such as negative work culture and lack of career development opportunities, significantly encourage job hopping. In this case, according to Hall et al. (2022), this job-hopping phenomenon shows similar motives to hobo syndrome, where logical reasons do not act as the primary causes of the decision. Although compensation is pivotal as the main monetary acknowledgment of one's job, in the research context (millennials), compensation is not the only factor that determines their consideration to move their job.

Table 1 The Results of Reliability and Validity Measurement

Construct and Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
1. Organizational Culture		0.849	0.849	0.569
(Oc1) I can arrive and leave for work whenever I want.	0.750			
(Oc2) I am free to work at the hours that fit my schedule.	0.792			
(Oc3) I can easily take leave or work if I want to.	0.779			
(Oc4) My boss understands the demands of my family.	0.735			
(Oc5) I can choose what I do at work.	0.730			
(Oc6) I have the right to determine my agenda and priority in the workplace.	0.740			
2. Compensation		0.844	0.845	0.562
(Comp1) My organization offers me high incentives that make me enthusiastic about my work.	0.741			
(Comp2) My company provides health insurance for me.	0.752			
(Comp3) In my organization, performance achievements are rewarded with regular bonuses.	0.750			
(Comp4) Employees receive security guarantees as long as they are working in the company.	0.754			
(Comp5) The company has guaranteed employees' safety.	0.745			
(Comp6) Employees can use leave benefits (paid leave) to take leave or not to come to work.	0.756			
3. Career Development		0.761	0.762	0.582
(Cd1) The job I have done previously is suitable to provide opportunities for me to realize or achieve the career goals I desire in the future.	0.764			
(Cd2) I feel that there have been opportunities provided by my previous job to develop and enhance my skills as well as gain new knowledge and experience.	0.753			
(Cd3) There is an opportunity or possibility for promotion, especially in a short period at the company I have worked for previously.	0.770			
(Cd4) The opportunities provided by the company I have previously worked for can improve the speed of time and the amount of compensation increases (salary, wages, bonuses, incentives).	0.764			
4. Job-Hopping		0.713	0.715	0.636
(Jh1) I do a job hopping by considering that the move can help me to achieve my personal goals, including career advancement and improving my quality of life.	0.810			
(Jh2) I voluntarily make the job hopping without any coercion or unilateral pressure from the company through the act of dismissal, including the transfer due to the end of a contract or work agreement.	0.804			
(Jh3) I have changed jobs repeatedly, moving from one company to another within no more than 2.5 years after starting at that company.	0.778			

Table 2 Results of Discriminant Validity (Cross Loading)

No	Organizational Culture	Job Hopping	Compensation	Career Development
Comp1	-0.644	0.557	0.741	-0.619
Comp2	-0.687	0.634	0.752	-0.594
Comp3	-0.578	0.609	0.750	-0.636
Comp4	-0.618	0.558	0.754	-0.626
Comp5	-0.598	0.579	0.745	-0.591
Comp6	-0.636	0.579	0.756	-0.621
Oc1	0.750	-0.600	-0.632	0.625
Oc2	0.792	-0.628	-0.655	0.605
Oc3	0.779	-0.638	-0.609	0.591
Oc4	0.735	-0.615	-0.624	0.599
Oc5	0.730	-0.601	-0.605	0.639
Oc6	0.740	-0.610	-0.662	0.626
Cd1	0.614	-0.569	-0.594	0.764
Cd2	0.607	-0.612	-0.651	0.753
Cd3	0.599	-0.589	-0.613	0.770
Cd4	0.659	-0.647	-0.640	0.764
Jh1	-0.663	0.810	0.623	-0.641
Jh2	-0.665	0.804	0.658	-0.642
Jh3	-0.622	0.778	0.592	-0.616

Table 3 Hypothesis Testing Results

	Relationship	PC	T-Value
H1	Compensation → Job Hopping	0.196	2.607**
H2	Organizational Culture → Job-hopping	-0.404	7.034***
H3	Career Development → Job Hopping	-0.305	5.151***
	Variance Explained (R ²)	0.722	

Note: PC: Path coefficient; ***: $p < 0.001$; **: $p < 0.01$; *: $p < 0.05$; and NS: not significant.

Second, the result of H2 shows that organizational culture significantly influences job-hopping decisions in a negative direction. The result is consistent with previous research by Yu et al. (2022) and Lee and Jang (2020), finding a negative and significant relationship between organizational culture and employees' decisions to engage in job-hopping behavior. Because the influence is negative, it shows that when millennials think that the organizational culture improves or better matches their aspirations, the intensity of job hopping will also decrease. It may be relevant to millennials' needs to find an organization that has relevant value to them. In this case, the younger generation values more culture with more transparency, innovation, respect, and collaboration within the organization (Dwidienawati et al., 2024). Creating a relevant culture to their preference will enhance their consideration of staying within their current organization.

Third, the result of H3 shows that career development negatively influences job-hopping

behavior. In this case, the results align with the findings of Purba and Ruslan (2020) and Dewi and Nurhayati (2021), indicating a negative and significant relationship between career development and employees' decisions to do job hopping. Previous research by Dwidienawati et al. (2024) argues that this young generation prefers transparency. Hence, providing a structured, clear, and transparent career path can help them to stay in the organization.

The research findings offer several managerial implications that can inform strategies to improve employee retention, particularly among millennial workers. These implications revolve around understanding the factors influencing job-hopping decisions and tailoring management practices accordingly. First, the research finds a positive relationship between compensation and job-hopping behavior among the millennial workforce. It shows that although the compensation package is high, millennials may still have a higher tendency to find other job opportunities. By this, organizations should

also explore non-monetary benefits beyond monetary rewards that align with millennials' preferences. For example, different generations prefer work values differently, whereas younger generations (millennials) prioritize intrinsic rewards more than extrinsic rewards such as salary and perks (Utami et al., 2018). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that managers should be able to adopt a more holistic approach to managing employee retention, which goes beyond compensation and monetary package. It can be done by including other factors, such as job satisfaction, the awareness of work-life balance practice, and career development opportunities. In this case, managers should understand that fostering employees' intrinsic motivation is equally critical for the organization. Hence, managers can also put an effort into creating a meaningful work experience, including providing an alignment between employees' roles and compensation with their interests and values.

Second, the research confirms that organizational culture negatively affects employee's job-hopping decisions. In this case, the culture's role as a critical part in shaping the work environment leads to how employees interact and determine the sense of belonging toward the company. The finding shows the importance of cultivating an aligned workplace environment with the millennial's preferences in the professional world. For example, there are several ways that organizations should know when they are managing this generation, including constant communication to show transparency, availability of frequent and timely feedback, and fair learning and development opportunities (Chillakuri & Mogili, 2018). Managers can use this as a basis to cultivate a culture that matches their preferences.

Third, the research also finds that career development opportunities negatively influence one's job-hopping decisions. The clear, structured, and accessible career opportunities will decrease the employees' willingness to leave their current roles. Managers should design and implement not only clear but also comprehensive, fair, and accessible career development programs that can cater to millennials' diverse needs and aspirations. A transparent system outlining potential career trajectories and the steps required to achieve them can give employees a sense of direction and purpose. The research also shows that managers can combine a more holistic benefit package that considers monetary benefit, career advancement, and cultural alignment options for the younger generations.

CONCLUSIONS

The research investigates the factors influencing job-hopping tendencies among millennial employees. Millennials are often described as a generation with unique preferences and expectations, and their domination in the workplace challenges traditional strategies of workforce retention. It is revealed that compensation cannot suppress the millennials'

decisions to leave an organization. Instead, organizational culture and career development opportunities are pivotal in reducing job-hopping behavior.

Moreover, the results reflect a paradigm shift in employee retention strategies. While competitive compensation packages have always been prioritized as the cornerstone of employee satisfaction and retention, the research highlights that millennials prioritize non-monetary factors, such as culture and career development opportunities. The millennial workforce is more likely to remain in the organization when the culture is aligned with their values. Hence, it will enhance their sense of belonging to the organization.

The finding also suggests that it is important for workplaces to create an emotional connection with their workers. On the other hand, career development is also identified as one of the influential factors which can decrease the decision to do job hopping. An organization must create a clear and structured career development framework or plan that employees apply and understand. When they fail to provide this factor, it is less likely that the millennial generation workforce will stay in the organization.

The research also has several limitations that need to be explored. First, the number of data and geographical coverage may provide less ability to generalize the research result. Further research should consider using more data and expanding its survey's geographical coverage to mimic the country's demographical condition. Second, the concept explored in the research focuses more on organizational factors, including culture and career development. Further research should explore the millennials' traits and preferences, including flexibility in organization, leisure of work, or even inclusivity issues, to provide more insights for organizations in developing their culture.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceived and designed the analysis, A. F. U. and T. P. E.; Collected the data, G. I. S.; Contributed data or analysis tools, A. F. U. and G. I. S.; Performed the analysis, A. F. U.; and Wrote the paper, A. F. U. and T. P. E.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The participants of the research did not give written consent for their data to be shared publicly. So, due to the sensitive nature of the research, supporting data were not available.

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