

Rajani N¹, Prof. P. Raghunadha Reddy²¹Research Scholar, Department of Management studies,
Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, 517502, Andhra Pradesh, India.
Email : rajanidineshnadella@gmail.com²Head of the Department, Department of Management studies,
Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, 517502 Andhra Pradesh, India.
Email : sairaghubhanu@gmail.com.**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the role of career development opportunities and work–life balance in fostering employee engagement and the overall mediating role of both variables on retention intention among millennial workers in the Indian IT industry. Employing a positivistic research paradigm with a quantitative research approach, the paper conducts a primary research study using a structured questionnaire involving 400 millennial IT professionals in key IT centres of India. The research utilizes SPSS analysis and reliability analysis and conducts Structural Equation Modelling using the Amos software tool to establish the hypotheses. The study concludes that both career development opportunities and work–life balance have a significantly positive influence on employee engagement. In addition, the study asserts that work–life balance has an overall direct significant association with retention intention, while the partial mediation role of employee engagement is found between work–life balance and retention intention. This study concludes that millennial workers are more prone to staying with organizations that provide proper career development opportunities, skill development, and a proper working environment that ensures an effective blend of personal and professional life. Employee engagement has been established as an important psychological bridging mechanism by which organizations are nudged toward higher retention intentions by favourable working practices. This paper also attempts to produce original empirical information about millennial workers in the Indian IT scenario, thereby assisting HR managers in tailoring retention strategies that are multi-dimensional and ensure proper career development, work–life balance, and engagement development.

Keywords: Career Advancement opportunities, Work-life balance, Employee engagement, Retention intention, Millennial employees.

Introduction

Indian Information Technology (IT) and Business Process there is expertise that has been developed by the management (BPM) in the worldwide IT off shoring industry, because of the costs of labour arbitrage, the standards adhered to in the process of ensuring their ability in project management for distributed working environments. There are many of service providers/vendors with the highest process standard ratings, known for delivering cost-optimized yet high-quality IT-BPM projects for the global clients across industry verticals. In recent years, established IT The Indian service providers have only recently begun to build up expertise that can compare favourably in new technologies, for example, Artificial Intelligence (AI), mainly to meet the needs of the digital transformation process of their clients. Several major Indian IT companies have formed internal committees: research labs to fulfil these demands. For instance, Indian IT Companies - TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCL have all established AI research labs within the past five years and are pitching AI solutions to help cost-effectively augment the service capabilities of their mainstream IT-BPM projects(Reddy & Rajalaxmi, 2022).

Millennials show great reliance on technology, using it on a daily basis, meaning that they continuously expect organizations to have the latest technology at their disposal. This generation is comfortable with teleworking, hence demanding that organizations adopt flexible ways of conducting business that improve their work-life balance. They also seek challenging jobs that foster their growth, meaning that organizations must put in place efficient learning programs. On another note, despite being referred to as job hoppers, millennials continuously seek ways to improve their employability by enrolling in online programs offered by many platforms(Chopra & Bhilare, 2020).

Employee retention is one of the most important issues that has emerged recently due to the drivers for organizational success, besides cutting unnecessary expenditures and enhancing employees' motivation and skills(Publishers & Ampof, 2020). Employee retention, on the other hand, has emerged as one of the greatest challenges in the 21st century, especially for the hotel industry. The hotel industry is always beset with the problem of employee turnover; hence the struggle for employee retention is an ever-evolving process to retain competent employees. Practices of human resources that lead to employee development are responsible for employee retention(Alkitbi et al., 2021). Moreover, appropriate human resource management practices not only result in employees having the necessary skills, abilities, and knowledge, but employee motivation is also attained. It is also responsible for reducing employee turnover, enhancing productivity, and optimizing employees' performance, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. The global employee turnover is on the increase, and hence employee retention has become the global concern for various sectors(Ghani et al., 2022).

Career development opportunities, work-life balance, and employee engagement are very closely connected concepts that together form a kind of overall parameter that defines the employees' attitudes at the workplace(Wood et al., 2020). Career development opportunities including promotions and skill enhancement have the ability to boost employees' perceptions regarding their security and satisfaction at the workplace. This, in turn, leads to increased levels of psychological and emotional engagement at the workplace. At the same time, a balanced work-life balance has the ability to make employees balanced at the workplace and reduce stress and tiredness. When employees feel that their organization takes care of both their development and their well-being at the workplace and outside the workplace, they tend to build strong overall engagement that shows vigor, dedication, and absorption(Randel et al., 2021). This implies that employees' overall engagement at the workplace works as an important mediator that has the ability to make both their development and work-life balance complement each other at the workplace. This impacts the organization to a great extent and has the ability to make millennial employees at the workplace in the IT sector stick to the organization(Houssein, 2020).

Literature review

This study examined the impact of work-life balance, employee engagement, and career development on these intentions among millennials. Adopting a quantitative explanatory approach based on data from 100 respondents aged 25–40 years, the research applied multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS. The results revealed that all three dimensions are significant in influencing turnover intention or $R^2 = 0.820$, with only employee engagement and career development having a significant positive influence. Surprisingly, work-life balance was not found to be significant, which means that probably it alone is not adequate for retaining employees if it is not mediated by job satisfaction(Journal & Economics, 2025a).

Using Signalling Theory, the research postulated that employer image is a kind of reputation signal that can reduce information asymmetry for job candidates. A survey of 500 final-year engineering students from 20 colleges in Bengaluru shows that there is a positive relationship between employer image and JPI, which WLB benefits partially mediate ($\beta = 0.47$). It also embedded the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in order to examine how electronic interaction and information usefulness affect the job-seeking behaviors. The research extended theories of signal processing and digital reputation management and offers empirical insights into applicant attraction, along with practical suggestions for IT firms on their employer branding strategies(Kamboj & A, 2025).

In this research, the impact of job-specific resources such as job autonomy (JA) and perceived organizational support (POS) on employees' intention to stay (IS) is examined. Additionally, this research used serial mediation to determine how job resources are indirectly linked to IS via two variables, namely psychological capital (PsyCap) and work-life balance (WLB). The results showed a positive impact of both JA and POS on IS, with PsyCap and WLB as serial mediators. The results were significant to HR managers and bring forth the importance of job resources and PsyCap to minimize employee turnover and improve work-life balance. The research made a significant contribution to existing literature and is the first to accurately define the PsyCap mediator within job-specific resource and IS relations(Samroodh et al., 2023).

The research investigated the role of employee engagement and work happiness in the success of IT organizations. Using a quantitative survey-based approach, it identifies a significant positive relationship between employees' involvement with and satisfaction with their job. Indeed, engaged employees are productive and loyal to their organization. This research identified clarity in leadership and communication as antecedents to engagement and innovation. Human resource and organizational leaders will find recommendations to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational successfulness in the long run(Gaur, 2024). This paper aimed to examine employee engagement in the millennial employee population in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, thereby filling an important research gap. From the perspective of social exchange theory (SET), this paper seeks to uncover the role of employee engagement in mediating the relationships that

exist between employees in relation to job characteristics, job satisfaction, commitment to an organization, and employee turnover. This research used a self-administered questionnaire to gather data from 408 employees of private companies in Riyadh, employing the statistical package entitled SPSS Amos 25.0. Findings showed that there was a substantial level of employee engagement among young members, revealing the positive relationship that exists between job characteristics, job satisfaction, and commitment to an organization. Employee engagement acts as a mediator in this relationship, but not in terms of employee turnover (Sahni, 2021).

This research adopted a positivism paradigm and a quantitative research approach. Data collection involved the administration of a survey via Google Forms, WhatsApp, and Telegram, which yielded a 94% response rate with a sample size of 284 out of a total of 302 questionnaires. Software suites consisting of Descriptive Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling were adopted for data analysis with the assistance of the SPSS and the AMOS computer applications. The results showed job autonomy has a positive effect on work-life balance and employee engagement, mediated by the latter. Direct moderation by supervisory support has been supported by the results (Due, 2024).

(Bhattacharya, 2020) was conducted to discover and assess the strategies adopted by the Information Technology companies in India to engage the millennial generation, using a concurrent approach with mixed methodology. The quantitative method, conducted as a survey among 306 millennial workers in the IT sector, listed corporate social responsibility, outdoor and culture events, and informal communication as influential engagement components, while balance in work-life and physical activity opportunities was considered attractive but not critical. Qualitative research using interviews with 18 millennial managers in positions of administration was conducted, and it was found that, although gamification of learning was not considered a pro-active approach, the results suggested it was highly effective.

(Obeng et al., 2024) employed social exchange theory to determine the effect of the knowledge management cycle on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and a positive culture in the Ghana Highway Authority (GHA). The research applied structural equation modelling (SEM) software - AMOS version 23 - to administer questionnaires to 300 employees of the GHA utilizing the snowball technique and cross-section research conducted manually and electronically. Results showed that there was a positive effect between the knowledge management cycle and employee engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Employee engagement was also found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction and commitment to an organization, partially mediating between the knowledge management cycle and outcomes.

In this research, employee retention measures are studied that impact Indian companies, and it showcases the need for qualified employees, who are essential assets for any organization. Even after advancements in technology, there is a need to implement effective personnel planning in order to retain efficient workers. A self-administered survey was conducted among various employees, and data analysis was carried out using SPSS and Structural Equation Modelling (Khan & Bhagat, 2022).

(Gazi et al., 2024) examined the quality of work life (QWL) among industrial workers in Bangladesh. A structured questionnaire survey was conducted among 420 workers, and a response rate of 93.33% was achieved. The important variables which impact QWL are work environment, organizational culture, association, remuneration, resource availability, autonomy, job satisfaction, and security. The variables which do not impact QWL are training and development and facilities. The results are expected to improve QWL among industrial workers and provide strategy insights to policymakers for increased productivity to ensure sustainable growth.

Hypothesis Development

- **Career advancement opportunities have an effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.**

This study examined employee engagement of millennial employees within DKI Jakarta by looking at how career development might improve the levels of employee engagement and help to counteract the trend of millennial job-hopping. A total of 407 participants answered the questionnaires, after which the data was analyzed using path analysis to examine a variety of variable relationships. Due to the cross-sectional nature, long-term effects may not be established. The results of the study show that effective career development empowers the employees and boosts their engagement, hence a need for the firm to tailor professional development according to aspirations and work styles of millennial employees. This study contributes toward the rather thin number of studies published within Southeast Asia regarding millennials in the workplace. It also proposes that longitudinal research could provide an insight into how trends are changing. The paper concludes by recommending other qualitative methods of data collection, ways to improve overall quality, and reducing self-reporting bias while suggesting the best direction for future studies. Generally, the research gives great insight into the relationship between career development and employee engagement as a retention strategy (Triana & Prihandoko, 2024).

The research explored factors that cause millennial workers in Denpasar City to job hop, particularly related to career development and the role of compensation, with employee engagement considered a mediating variable. The selection of the research location, Denpasar City, was due to its status as a dynamic regional economy within the province of Bali, which holds particular meaning related to millennials between the ages of 28 and 43, who have had more than two workplaces. The research, conducted through a combination of qualitative tools, such as questionnaires, has shown that while there is satisfaction with career development, compensation, and employee engagement, there is room for improvement, especially within these areas related to employee engagement and aspects of career development and compensation (Journal & Economics, 2025b).

This research aimed to explore how employee engagement (EE) can act as a driving force for innovative work behaviors (IWBs) among the millennial generation of Chinese employees working in the service sectors, specifically in the IT, trade, real estate, finance, and telecommunication sectors. Questionnaires were distributed among senior employees, with a total sample size of 372. The result reveals that high levels of EE promote the possibility of IWBs as well as work-life balance (WLB). This research emphasizes that EE can be an important component for encouraging IWBs among the millennial generation in the midst of an uncertain business environment (Ali et al., 2022).

Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed, **H1: Career advancement opportunities have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.**

- **Work-life balance has an effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.**

This study looks at the rewards, work-life balance, and employee retention nexus in a conceptual framework where job satisfaction serves as a mediator. In using an explanatory quantitative research approach and SEM, implemented in AMOS 24, the study examines 219 employees of Generation Z in private trade organizations across West Kalimantan Province in Indonesia. All subjects were from 18 to 26 years old and had working experiences of more than six months. The findings support the hypothesis that both rewards and work-life balance exert positive effects significantly on employee retention and job satisfaction. Moreover, job satisfaction is an important mediator for the impacts of rewards or work-life balance on employee retention (Syal et al., 2024).

The research carried out at PT Bali Busana Kreasi possessed substantial importance in focusing on turnover intention issues and developing a productive working environment for employees. It adopts a quantitative research design that involves the whole population of employees at 162 members, using simple random sampling through the Slovin formula that generates 116 samples. Meanwhile, analysis was performed through Structural Equation Modelling. It showed the following findings: 1) Compensation has a significant negative relationship with turnover; 2) Work-life balance affects turnover intention in a negative way; 3) Compensation affects employee engagement in a positive manner; 4) Employee engagement was enhanced through work-life balance; 5) Employee engagement was found to decrease turnover intention; 6) Through employee engagement, compensation significantly affects turnover intention in a negative way; 7) There was a significant negative relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement on the intention to leave (Triningsih & Darma, 2024).

This paper explored the relationship and effect that work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction (JS) have on employee loyalty (EL) for centennial employees who are aged 17 to 29 years old in the cities of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. Through the snowball sampling method and the usage of questionnaires that were distributed from the 4th to the 14th of May 2024 to a total of 220 participants, the study used the structural equation model and covariance for the statistical method. The results showed that both WLB and JS have a positive relationship and effect on EL (Balance, 2024).

Based on the above the following hypothesis is developed, **H2: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.**

- **Employee engagement significantly mediates between work-life balance and retention intention.**

This paper examined the impact of employee engagement, work-life balance, and perceived supervisor support on turnover intentions among teachers in private schools within the Indian state of Punjab. A parallel multiple mediated regression approach analyzed the data from 375 respondents that was collected using a structured questionnaire. It was also observed that perceived supervisory support itself has an indirect effect on turnover intentions, which gets transmitted through employee engagement along with two dimensions of work-life balance: work interference with personal life and enhancement of work-personal life. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the principals of such schools develop policies for improving work-life balance and enhancement of employee engagement, which will lead to employees' better job satisfaction and lower intentions towards turnover. This research is entirely new as far as examining these constructs within an Indian context, and the implications are huge for school management and HR policy planners who want to bring down the rate of employee turnover (Kaur & Randhawa, 2019).

Employee retention has become an ever more pressing issue for psychologists in organizations, and there has been a lot of emphasis in trying to address the issues concerning employee retention, particularly in the healthcare field, where there is a dearth of research being conducted. This paper aimed to apply the principles of the social exchange theory to establish a theoretical framework that focuses on the two-party aspect of employee-organization relationship dynamics, which are founded purely on principles of dependence between the two factors. This paper seeks to explore how aspects of HRM, such as staffing, compensatory, training and development, and career pathing programs, in addition to employee work-life balance, influence doctors' engagement and retention. An empirical test was carried out that drew data from a questionnaire that covered 385 doctors in the public healthcare field in Punjab, Pakistan, employing the use of data analysis software tools such as SPSS 23.0 and Smart-PLS Version 3.0. From this research, there exist direct relationships between compensation, work-life balance, and doctor retention, in addition to relationships between HRM practices, employee work-life balance, and doctor engagement. In addition, this research established that employee engagement directly and positively affected doctors' retention. There was significance in employee engagement mediating relationships between different practices relating to HRM and doctors' retention, in addition to employee engagement, considering that the issue was moderated in an environment that was employee supporting, pertaining to doctors' retention (Kaur & Randhawa, 2019).

Based on the above the following hypothesis is developed, **H3: Employee engagement significantly mediates the positive relationship between work-life balance and retention intention.**

Research gap

Although numerous studies have been conducted on employee engagement, work-life balance, autonomy, and retention-related outcomes, several research gaps can clearly be observed within the existing body of literature. First, the result oscillates regarding the measure's potential role for work-life balance: some studies reveal it to act as a mediator or an indirect predictor for retention and intentions related to retention, whereas others reveal it as a non-significant measure on its own, especially for the millennial generation. This reveals a mere ambiguity or absence of clarity regarding the conditional or mediating processes involved in work-life balance. Second, whereas it has been revealed repeatedly that employee engagement and the process of career development act as predictors for turnover intentions, little research has employed all such variables under a collective model qua millennial employees across emerging economies. Third, the existing research analysis has been conducted either on retention intentions related to employees or the job pursuit intentions of applicants, which has little scope for the link between the two, specifically based on employer branding signals. Finally, the scope for contextual research evidence based on the combined theoretical frameworks related to the Indian IT and service industries has become an underexplored domain.

Methodology

Research design

The research design employed a quantitative analysis, using statistical and empirical analysis to examine the career advancement opportunities and work-life balance influence employee engagement and retention intention among millennial employees in India's IT industry. A structured approach is used to systematically collect and analyze data from a representative sample of 400 respondents to ensure statistical reliability and validity. Data collection is conducted using a standardized questionnaire that includes Likert-scale questions to assess respondents' impressions of Career Advancement Opportunities, Employee Engagement, Work Life Balance, and Retention Intention. The research used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for data analysis, utilizing factor loadings, reliability analysis, and descriptive statistics to evaluate the dataset. AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) is employed for structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyze the interrelationships among the principal variables and to evaluate the provided hypotheses.

Conceptual frame work

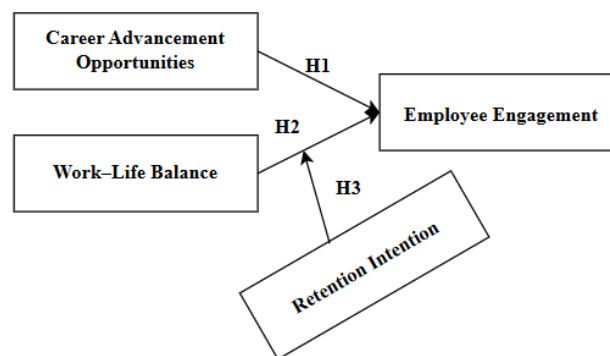


Figure 1 Conceptual frame work

Objectives

- To assess the impact of career advancement opportunities on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.
- To determine the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.
- To evaluate the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between work-life balance and retention intention among millennial IT employees.

Hypothesis

- H1: Career advancement opportunities have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.
- H2: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement among millennial IT employees.
- H3: Employee engagement significantly mediates the positive relationship between work-life balance and retention intention.

Sample selection

The study employed a sample size of 400 respondents, ensuring a reliable and representative data set for analysis. A random sampling method was used to select millennial employees working in the IT Sector in India, encompassing individuals with varying levels of work experience and exposure to organizational practices. Millennials were defined as employees born between 1981 and 1996, with a minimum of one year of work experience to ensure meaningful assessment of career advancement opportunities and work experience to ensure meaningful assessment of career advancement opportunities and work-life balance initiatives. Respondents were drawn from IT and IT-enabled service organizations across major and emerging IT hubs in India, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the influence of career advancement and work-life balance on employee engagement and retention intention.

Data collection

The study employed a quantitative approach with a systematic data collection process to guarantee the precision and dependability of the results. Primary data were gathered using a meticulously crafted questionnaire intended for investigating the impact of career development possibilities and work-life balance on employee engagement and retention intentions among millennial IT professionals. The questionnaire included essential study variables: career progression, work-life balance, employee engagement, and retention intention, each assessed by many statements on a five-point Likert scale to thoroughly capture respondents' perspectives. Participants were requested to express their degree of agreement with statements concerning prospects for advancement, equilibrium between professional and personal life, workplace involvement, and intent to continue with the organization. To improve accessibility and response rates, the questionnaire was distributed using online channels, including email and Google Forms, as well as through traditional means where possible.

Measures

Data has been gathered with the help of a structured questionnaire. Questionnaire has been prepared using 5 Likert-scale (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree) where respondents will be asked to share their opinions regarding various research questions under study. Questionnaire has a set of both open ended and closed ended questions. Questions have been carefully crafted so as to gather meaningful information with respect to identified research variables. There are five categories

of respondents in the survey and a separate questionnaire has been designed for each category of respondents. The bellow mention table show variables and no. items considered for the study.

Table: 1 Variables and number of items

Constructs	Number of items
Career Advancement Opportunities	5
Employee Engagement	5
Work Life Balance	5
Retention Intention	5

(Source: Compiled from collected data)

- Career Advancement Opportunities:** Career Advancement Opportunities are the opportunities and processes offered to employees in the organization for their professional and overall career development. Career Opportunities offered to the employees of the organization encompass promotions, training and development programs for improving their skills and abilities, and training and certification programs that help to build the abilities and employability of the employees in the future. Availability of proper and equal career opportunities to the employees enables them to form long-term plans for their careers and make them feel committed to the organization. Career opportunities have become an essential factor for the engagement and retention of the millennials in the organization (Iheduru-Anderson, 2020).
- Employee Engagement:** Employee engagement is one such important topic that has gained interest among academics and practitioners because of its marked linkage with different outcomes related to employees, such as their attitudes, behaviors, performance, and overall well-being. Employee engagement refers to the process by which an individual invests their physio/cognitive and emotional resources simultaneously into completely doing the job. Employee engagement is important because it is directly linked with maximizing worker efficiency and satisfaction (Info et al., 2021).
- Work Life Balance:** Work-Life Balance (WLB) refers to finding personal and professional happiness through active role-performance with equal time investment. Thus, achieving a balance helps to increase an individual's strength, self-esteem, and positivity, which can internally motivate employees to perform better at their workplace, leading to increased employee engagement (Wood et al., 2020).
- Retention Intention:** Employee retention has been recognized as a critical component for the viability and efficacy of modern organizations. This aspect has been linked to several disadvantages associated with a high employee turnover rate. These include increased recruitment and training costs (Wibaselppa et al., 2025).

Results

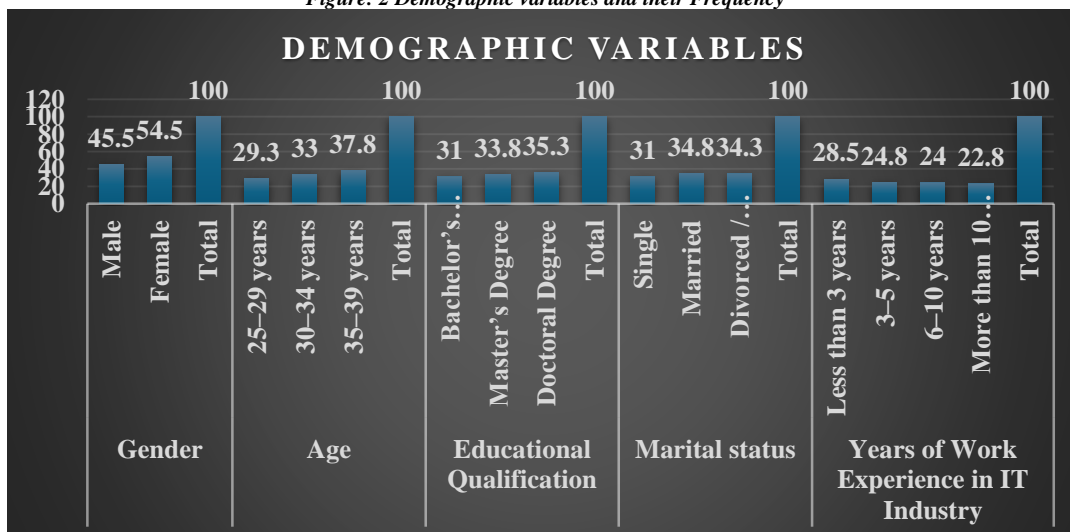
Demographic variables

Table: 2 Demographic variables

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	182	45.5
	Female	218	54.5
	Total	400	100
Age	25-29 years	117	29.3
	30-34 years	132	33
	35-39 years	151	37.8
	Total	400	100
Educational Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	124	31
	Master's Degree	135	33.8
	Doctoral Degree	141	35.3
	Total	400	100
Marital status	Single	124	31
	Married	139	34.8
	Divorced / Separated	137	34.3
	Total	400	100
Years of Work Experience in IT Industry	Less than 3 years	114	28.5
	3-5 years	99	24.8
	6-10 years	96	24
	More than 10 years	91	22.8
	Total	400	100

(Source: Compiled from collected data)

Figure: 2 Demographic variables and their Frequency



(Source: Compiled from collected data)

The demographic composition of the respondents reveals a balanced and diversified representation of millennial IT professionals. Females represent a little greater percentage of the sample (54.5%) than males (45.5%), indicating a rise in female involvement in the IT industry. The age distribution indicates that the majority of respondents is in the 35–39 years category (37.8%), succeeded by those aged 30–34 years (33.0%) and 25–29 years (29.3%), so confirming that the sample accurately reflects the millennial demographic. A significant percentage of respondents possess higher academic qualifications: 35.3% hold doctoral degrees, 33.8% have master’s degrees, and 31.0% possess bachelor’s degrees, reflecting a highly educated workforce. The distribution of marital status is somewhat balanced, with 34.8% of respondents married, 34.3% divorced or separated, and 31.0% single, indicating a variety of personal life situations among the participants. Regarding work experience in the IT sector, the majority of respondents possess fewer than three years of experience (28.5%), followed by those with three to five years (24.8%), six to ten years (24.0%), and above ten years of experience (22.8%). The demographic parameters indicate a diverse sample, hence strengthening the validity and generality of the study’s conclusions.

Validity and Reliability

Table: 3 Validity and Reliability

Constructs	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Career Advancement Opportunities	0.892	0.838	0.705
Employee Engagement	0.861	0.816	0.651
Work Life Balance	0.85	0.823	0.666
Retention Intention	0.893	0.838	0.703

(Source: Compiled from collected data)

The study constructs’ reliability and convergent validity were evaluated by Cronbach’s alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The findings reveal that all constructs exhibit robust internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha values between 0.85 and 0.893, surpassing the suggested minimum of 0.70. Career Advancement Opportunities ($\alpha = 0.892$), Employee Engagement ($\alpha = 0.861$), Work–Life Balance ($\alpha = 0.85$), and Retention Intention ($\alpha = 0.893$) show substantial reliability. Composite Reliability scores for all constructs above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, so affirming the stability and consistency of the measurement methodology. The AVE values vary from 0.651 to 0.705, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50, thereby confirming sufficient convergent validity. These findings confirm that the measuring scales employed in the study are both reliable and valid, hence endorsing their suitability for further structural model analysis.

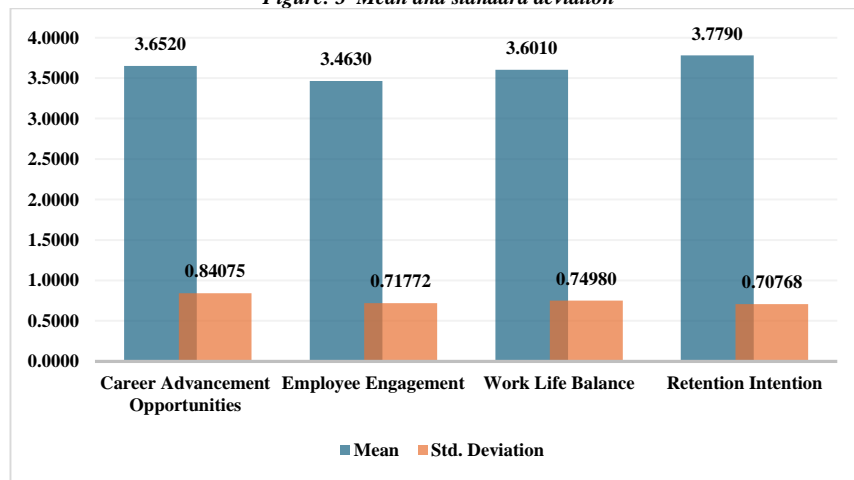
Table: 4 Mean and standard deviation

Constructs	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career Advancement Opportunities	3.6520	0.84075
Employee Engagement	3.4630	0.71772
Work Life Balance	3.6010	0.74980
Retention Intention	3.7790	0.70768

(Source: Compiled from collected data)

The descriptive statistics reveal a generally favourable assessment of the principal constructs among millennial IT professionals. The mean score for retention intention was the highest ($M = 3.7790$, $SD = 0.70768$), indicating that respondents have a considerable propensity to remain with their current organizations, accompanied by moderate response variability. The mean value for career advancement opportunities was favourable ($M = 3.6520$, $SD = 0.84075$), suggesting that employees moderately concur that their organizations offer sufficient prospects for career development; however, the elevated standard deviation indicates variability in personal experiences. Work–life balance yielded a mean score of 3.6010 ($SD = 0.74980$), indicating a generally favourable evaluation of the equilibrium between professional and personal life, with satisfactory consistency among respondents. The mean score for employee engagement was 3.4630 ($SD = 0.71772$), indicating a modest level of engagement among millennial IT personnel. The findings indicate that although perceptions of career progression, work–life balance, and retention intentions are strong, employee engagement is significantly lower, underscoring the necessity for organizations to enhance engagement initiatives to ensure long-term retention.

Figure: 3 Mean and standard deviation



(Source: Compiled from collected data)

Hypothesis implementation

Table: 5 Hypothesis implementation

Hypothesis	Relationship	Estimate	C.R.	Sig. P- Value	Results
H1	Career Advancement Opportunities ----> Employee Engagement	0.433	7.618	***	Accepted
H2	Work Life Balance ----> Employee Engagement	0.423	6.482	***	Accepted
Mediation					
H4	Work Life Balance ----> Employee Engagement	0.388	8.417	***	Accepted
	Work Life Balance ----> Retention Intention	0.584	13.98	***	
	Employee Engagement ----> Retention Intention	0.12	2.886	0.004	

(Source: Compiled from collected data)

Table 5 presents a detailed overview of the hypothesis test results, analysing the intricate relationships among Career Advancement Opportunities, Employee Engagement, and Work Life Balance and the Retention Intention mediating influence of Work Life Balance and Retention Intention. Hypothesis H1 proposes that career advancement possibilities exert a favourable and significant influence on employee engagement among millennial IT professionals. The structural path analysis indicates a strong positive relationship between career development prospects and employee engagement, with a standardized estimate of 0.433. The critical ratio (C.R. = 7.618) above the suggested threshold, and the corresponding p-value (***) denotes statistical significance at the 0.001 level. The results clearly support H1, indicating that prospects for advancement, skill enhancement, and career progression are important in augmenting the engagement levels of millennial

employees within the IT sector. The findings suggest that millennials are more likely to show elevated levels of passion, dedication, and engagement in their position when they recognize clear and realistic career advancement opportunities inside their companies.

Hypothesis H2 investigated the impact of work-life balance on employee engagement among millennial IT Professionals. The analysis reveals a positive and statistically significant correlation between work-life balance and employee engagement, with a standardized estimate of 0.423 and a critical ratio of 6.482. The significance level (***), indicates that the association is highly significant. Consequently, H2 is approved. The finding underscores the significance of flexible work arrangements, feasible workloads, and supporting organizational policies in enhancing employee engagement. For millennial IT professionals, achieving a good equilibrium between job responsibilities and personal life appears to be a crucial factor influencing their psychological and emotional engagement in their roles. Hypothesis H3 proposed that employee engagement mediates the association between work-life balance and retention intention among millennial IT professionals. The mediation study indicates that work-life balance significantly enhances employee engagement ($\beta = 0.388$, C.R. = 8.417, $p < 0.001$) And exhibits a substantial direct influence on retention intention ($\beta = 0.584$, C.R. = 13.98, $p < 0.001$) Moreover, employee engagement shows on retention intention ($\beta = 0.12$, C.R. = 2.886, $p = 0.004$). The statistical paths in the mediation model validates the mediation model validates the mediating role of employee engagement. The enduring direct correlation between work-life balance and retention suggests partial mediation. This indicates that work-life balance directly affects employee's intention to remain with the company and indirectly increases retention intention by elevation employee engagement levels.

Discussion

The present study provides significant insights into the determinants of retention intention among millennial IT employees in India by analysing the impact of career progression possibilities, work-life balance, and employee engagement. The results indicate that career advancement possibilities and work-life balance are essential organizational factors that substantially improve employee engagement. Millennials, characterized by their career oriented and growth focus, show increased engagement when firms provide explicit avenues for professional development, skill upgrading, and long-term career advancement. Work-life balance is a crucial factor influencing participation, highlighting the evolving priorities of the millennial workforce, which emphasizes flexibility, moderate workloads, and organizational support for personal well-being. The study identifies employee engagement as a crucial mediating factor between work-life balance and retention intention. This indicates that work-life balance not only directly promotes employee retention but also indirectly enhances it by cultivating emotional and psychological engagement. Engaged employees show more commitment, motivation, and alignment with business objectives, thereby reducing turnover intentions. The partial mediation effect demonstrates that work-life balance independently affects retention, in addition to its influence through engagement. The discussion highlights modern human resource theories that highlight the significance of nurturing work environments and development-focused policies in retaining millennial talent within the competitive IT industry.

Conclusion

The study indicates that possibilities for professional growth and work-life balance are essential in improving employee engagement, which in turn affects retention intentions among millennial IT employees in India. Organizations that emphasize systematic career advancement and foster a healthy work-life balance are more inclined to nurture an engaged and loyal workforce. Employee engagement serves as a crucial psychological connection that converts positive workplace conditions into enhanced retention intentions. Consequently, IT firms must to implement integrated human resource strategies that concurrently emphasize career advancement, work-life balance efforts, and measures that enhance employee engagement. This approach will enhance employee well-being and performance while fostering long-term workforce stability and organizational success in the dynamic IT sector.

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