

Millennial's Perspective of Job-Hopping Phenomenon and The Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. The job-hopping phenomenon is often associated with the millennial generation and creates stereotypes such as being disloyal, lazy, and many more. This phenomenon potentially creates negative perspectives towards millennials workers. The researchers conducted this study with the aim of understanding more deeply about the views of the millennial generation on the job-hopping phenomenon and the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. This research method uses a qualitative approach with thematic analysis methods. The research data were collected from 14 respondents by collecting techniques using in-depth interviews and secondary data. From the processed data that has been obtained, it can be seen that most millennials doing job-hopping have been stereotyped as a generation that is disloyal and has no commitment to the organizations, this treatment is carried out in the workplace and in the family environment. If this stereotype continues, it will have a negative impact on their mental state and the employer's view of their capabilities as employees. The influence of COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to decreased the job-hopping intentions among millennial workers.

Keywords: Millennial, Job-Hopping, Stereotype, COVID-19, Disloyal

1 Introduction

This study discusses the job-hopping phenomenon carried out by the millennial generation, which in recent years has always been a hot topic to be researched and discussed because of its different characteristics from previous generations, for example Generation X. Millennials are the generation born in the ratio 1980 to 1990 with 2000 [1]. The most prominent characteristic of the Millennial Generation is how they behave in the world of work. Many phenomena are related to the millennial generation in the work environment. One phenomenon that has been known since the beginning of the industrial era is the job-hopping phenomenon, and someone who does job-hopping is called a job-hopper [2].

In recent years, there have been quite a number of studies revealing that this job-hopping phenomenon is most commonly carried out by Generation Y or known as the Millennial Generation who only survives in their workplace for 1-3 years and then moves to other workplaces. Khantri et al. [3] define job-hopping as an attitude or behavior in which employees migrate from one job to another, regardless of better alternatives or other seemingly rational motives. Khantri et al. [3] also stated that job-hoppers move from one job to another without definite growth prospects or other rational explanations. These job-changing employees seek alternative jobs due to social influences or impulsiveness. The main

reason employees often change jobs is to gain financial benefits and faster career advancement.

There are many factors that influence employees to leave the organizations as well as motivational factors to stay in the organizations they currently occupied. The factor that forces someone to leave the organizations is to seek new opportunities. The variables considered by millennial employees to leave work are low salary structure, low potential for self-development, and unfair treatment by management and conflicts with direct superiors or co-workers. Meanwhile, the factors that millennial employees consider when choosing a new job are career growth opportunities, higher compensation, job security, freedom in the workplace, organizational reputation and a higher position [4].

The job-hopping phenomenon that millennial employees often do creates bad perceptions such as causing distrust to appoint these millennial employees as permanent employees in the organizations or causing reluctance from their leaders and management to recruiting millennials because of these negative stereotypes (disloyal) and investment (training, mentoring, coaching) self-development for millennial employees because of the reputation that millennials have as "jumping flea".

There have been many studies that have looked at the characteristics, stereotypes, and activities carried out by the millennial generation in the world of work. However, after the researchers traced previous relevant studies on the topic of job-hopping, most of them examined this phenomenon outside Indonesia, for example in the context of the United States such as Deborah [5] who studied job-hopping syndrome in millennials or in Singapore by Khantri et al. [3]. In addition, the majority of previous studies looked at this phenomenon from the point of view of an organization or employer such as Khantri [3] with the majority of respondents being employees who have held managerial positions. Likewise with research conducted by Pizam and Thornburg [6] in which 69 percent of the respondents are managers.

In conclusions, it can be seen that most of the research that examines the context of job-hopping comes from the perspective of the employer. In addition, the majority of previous research findings related to job-hopping motivation often focused on the desire to obtain greater financial incentives. Research conducted by Reshma [7] for example states that millennials do job-hopping only to gain a bigger salary and benefits. Likewise with research conducted by Ramkumar et al. [8] which yielded similar results that economic factors have the highest scale in their influence on job-hopping in the IT sector. Therefore, this study aims to directly explore the millennial generation's perspective on the job-hopping phenomenon and the impact caused by the pandemic on this phenomenon. With this research, companies can change their perception of the millennial generation and no longer hesitate to hire millennials and invest in self-development for millennial employees. In addition, along with the growth of the millennial workforce, the organizations can also find out why the millennial generation is doing job hopping so that the organizations can modify and upgrade its retention program and then be able to adjust it to the needs of the human resources employed by the organizations.

2 Method

The method used in this study is a qualitative research method where this research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on how respondents interpret and understand their experiences in the world [9]. Researchers used a qualitative approach to explore the behavior, perspectives, feelings, and experiences of respondents. Qualitative research is also explicitly

related to the study of social relations related to facts that occur in the life of the world community, where this method is applied to see and understand the subject and object of research which includes society and organizations.

The reason the researchers chose to use qualitative research methods was based on the topic of the problem to be studied in this study, namely how the perspective of the millennial generation sees the job-hopping phenomenon around their world of work that requires insight and personal experience that cannot be measured in number and statistically. Where there are advantages, there are disadvantages, as well as this research method. The challenges faced by researchers in using qualitative methods are the need for more time to execute the research, the data and information obtained cannot be calculated with the help of special programs, and the researcher must be careful in analyzing the data to avoid bias opinion [10].

The data collection method for this study used two sources of data collection, namely primary data through in-depth interviews and secondary data. In determining the sample, the researcher used purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The results of sample collection resulted in fourteen participants who were included in the criteria for this research participant, where the fourteen participants belonged to the millennial generation who were born in 1980 to 2000 and have changed companies at least twice and are domiciled in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. The analytical method used in this study is a thematic analysis which aims to identify and analyze patterns in qualitative data [11]. There are six steps identified by Braun and Clarke [12] in the thematic analysis, namely: (1) Becoming familiar with the data, (2) Generating initial codes from the data and starting to organize it into meaningful groups, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, (6) Producing the report.

3 Result and Discussion

Based on the results of data processing carried out through six steps identified by Braun dan Clarke [12], four themes emerged, namely: (1) The meaning of job-hopping, (2) Millennial generation stereotypes, (3) Job-hopping intentions. The first theme is the meaning of job-hopping, explaining the participants' understanding of Job-Hopping, especially the meaning of Job-Hopping for them. The second theme is millennial stereotypes. This theme describes the existence of stereotypes against millennials in the work environment, family environment, friendship circles, and the daily lives of the participants. The third theme is job-hopping intentions. This theme illustrates the level of desire or intention of millennial employees to do Job-Hopping when the COVID-19 pandemic enters Indonesia and in the following years or the future. The responses were given by participants who belong to the millennial generation and have worked and changed companies at least two or three times are summarized and illustrated with word-for-word quotations (interviewer questions are put in brackets if needed as context for respondents' answers).

3.1 The meaning of job-hopping for millennials

The term "job-hopping" is no stranger to the broader community. They consider that individuals who do job-hopping have a goal to gain a higher wage than before. With this stigma, many people view job-hopping as a negative thing because it only relates it to aspects of wages or salaries. However, in fact, it is still rare for individuals to understand the meaning of job-hopping itself, not only to gain a higher wage but there are still various meanings that

the participants think as millennials who do job-hopping. The results of in-depth interviews stated that most millennials interpret job-hopping as a tool or opportunity to develop themselves, as a method to find an ideal job for them (dream job), a chance to pursue stability in a career, and as a way to acquire a work-life balance.

3.1.1 Job-hopping as a way to develop themselves

Most organizations are already facing increasing pressure to reduce the time and financial costs associated with necessary organizational training programs [13]. In the absence of a training program, the participants feel dissatisfied while doing their jobs because there is a thought that there is no reciprocity between the employers and employees, meaning that participants as employees belonging to the millennial generation feel that they are the only ones who contribute with maximum effort while the employers does not provide "rewards"; regardless of the benefits obtained, and not even allowed to submit proposals regarding the provision of self-development programs for employees.

"The company itself doesn't give an opportunity to be included in training, right, what kind of training, seminar, etc.." (R14: Bitu, 27 years old).

Millennials understand that if the organizations does not provide them with facilities such as participating in training programs, job rotation in one organizations, there is no room for expressing opinions. They feel they are not getting knowledge from the organizations, which results in the thought that they were only used as machines for the organization's benefits and they chose to do job-hopping rather than stay in the same job.

".okay I get a pretty big salary but I don't get the knowledge to make myself grow, so it's important if for example I can't project or see myself not being able to grow in the next three to six months in that company, it's a red alert for me.." (R2: Grace, 27 years old).

3.1.2 Job-hopping as a process of reaching the ideal job

Many popular literature reviews are showing that millennials "want it all" and "want it now", in terms of good salaries and benefits, rapid self-development, work-life balance, exciting and challenging jobs, and having jobs that can contribute to society [14]. In addition, assumptions about career goals and expectations among millennials are also very "supersized", unrealistic, and not connected between rewards and performance. This could be because most millennials see their parents (boomers) working long hours only to become victims of corporate downsizing, frequent layoffs and high divorce rates. Thus, when millennials start to enter the workforce, they become more aware of being placed in the same position and prefer "making a life" over "making a living" [15]. Millennials who already have mature goals, for example, they already have aspirations of working in the government or other places also, tend to continue to do job-hopping until they secure a job in the place of their dreams.

"If I'm this type, it's like my main goal is to be a civil servant, right, to become a civil servant, now when I get to that point, that means okay, I won't be looking for the best anymore, because I already knew from the start, my main goal is indeed a civil servant, so if for example I haven't been able to work as a civil servant (Why are you really interested in becoming a civil servant? Is it because of encouragement from your parents or is it from your own desire?). Both of them, my father is a civil servant, so I also know what it's like, listening

to the story continues to be more familiar, yes, so it's like okay and also if it's for girls, personally it's more comfortable if I someday have a family, if I look at it hahaha..” (R14, Bitu, 27 years old).

3.1.3 Job-hopping as an opportunity to pursue stability in a career

The phenomenon of early retirement with sufficient savings at the age of 50 has proven to be an ancient ideology for millennials [16]. As opposed to relying on one job for life, millennials think about their careers a little differently, preferring a more varied career path with consistent pace and lag time. Career paths can provide individuals and organizations with the structure needed for career development. With the characteristics of millennials who are idealistic, have high optimism, and are confident, they have high expectations and feel proud of themselves [17]. Millennials believe that if they contribute to the organization, they expect to receive a quick promotion and career development.

“What kind of career path can I get at that place like now.. (What do you think is a clear career path?) Yes, of course, those who already have good talent management guarantee their talents so that their career paths are smooth. in the future and also providing information transparently about what the conditions are or the steps that must be taken to get promoted to become a manager, for example, in my case, yes..” (R8: Shelly, 32 years old).

Employers need to understand the characteristics of millennials and provide them with opportunities and space to grow. When the career path and career development in an organization are apparent, millennials will be more interested in contributing to realizing the organization's vision. Suppose millennials feel respected and valued and have clear communication relationships with supervisors and coworkers about how to achieve work-life balance in their work life. In that case, millennials will show loyalty and commitment to the organizations.

3.2 The millennial “disloyal” stereotype

Of all the stereotypes labeled on millennials, the one most recognized by everyone is the stereotype that millennials do not have loyalty to companies like previous generations. For millennials, the stereotypes that are thrown at them have often happened, even they feel it is a commonplace. This “disloyal” stereotype has long been happening in their daily lives and the environment around them. Millennials face a lot of criticism from their surroundings. Some of them may be worthy of criticism, but many are not. With millennials dominating a substantial percentage of the workforce, they are naturally the ones with the worst reputations than previous generations. “Millennials are a generation that has no loyalty”, this statement is very often in people's minds, especially in the workplace. Stereotypes occur where and in any situation, many millennials feel generalized when they apply for jobs and are given questions that have connotations of "judging" millennials, mainly if the answers given to Human Resources refer to increasing remuneration obtained.

“Well, after that interview, the question that was the most astonishing for me was hmm, you, if you're not serious here, don't, if you're in doubt, don't, because of this, I don't want to see people for 2 months, 3 months resign, I don't want to see that, if you're serious okay but if you don't have doubts then don't...he really said that, if you feel you are in doubt or don't feel ready you better don't, I don't want to see people resign for 2 months and 3 months..” (R4: Lia, 27 years).

The existence of stereotypes that are increasingly being thrown at millennials affects their mental state and this is due to self-insecurity, distrust, and also the discomfort of being in a place surrounded by people who are constantly judging them. Apart from being in the private sector, stereotypes also occur in government agencies. Their existence is even thicker because the hierarchical culture that is quite strong in the organization creates a rigid work environment and inflexible interpersonal relationships. The inflexible environment also affects the way of thinking of every individual who generalizes millennials as a disloyal generation and cannot be committed to the organizations.

"Well, what's a bit thick is in the government, I think that's it. Because in the past, when I was asked, I was immediately interviewed by the Director. Now the director said, "I have a contract here", that's what it was. Minimum contract is 2 years. Meanwhile, if the contract is on paper, the actual contract is, yes, it's yearly. So I don't think there's a need for us to say yes, that's it. So, in the end, I said, "We'll see in the future, sir, because what am I too, I also have my own career goals... Well, it turned out, I think it was early 2020, anyway. Before the corona announcement, I resigned at the beginning of 2020, right, he finally asked again, "Why does your generation like to move around, it's only been a year since you've been here again, here again. What do you expect?" (R1: Tiara, 27 years old).

3.3 Job-hopping intentions

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many companies have made lay-off (Termination of Employment). With so many employees being laid-off and uncertainty over future conditions, the intention of millennials to change companies is decreasing. With job-hopping intentions decreasing due to the pandemic, the effects are on the negative side and on the positive side, namely that many millennial employees choose to think carefully to decide to change companies due to unfavorable conditions. possible and jobs that do not accept many new employees can overcome turnover which is usually high in many companies.

"With this pandemic, it looks like it will decrease at the beginning, although not drastically, but this is a surprising thing, so maybe hmm, how can it decrease with this pandemic.." (R7: Susi, 28 years old).

But after one year of being hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the government starting to take steps to provide vaccines for its people, the employers had started thinking about rehiring new employees even though they are only for certain specific positions, for example IT (Information Technology). The individuals with these specific skill sets are sought, because they have to execute the digital transformation if the companies want to stay competitive and operate their respective businesses.

"For my company, yes, I have a lot of job vacancy, for IT I think yes, I have hired a lot of people. For IT people, for sure, IT people, because IT people move quickly, because we have few resources. , there are many jobs. There are still few resources in Indonesia, but there are a lot of jobs that are offered, there will be a lot of moving if it's IT, for other industries I don't know.." (R13: Egi, 34 years old).

Unlike previous generations who wanted benefits such as cars, official housing, and more, millennials are looking for flexibility in their roles to thrive outside of work. The purpose of

flexibility includes the duration of work and work location, where they want a work duration that allows them to still have a social life and time to gather with family. In addition, with the nickname of the millennial generation as a generation that grew up with technology, it is no stranger to millennials wanting to be able to work in other places besides the office, such as a coffee shop or at home. Flexible working space may have begun to be known with the government trying to enforce workforce to work from home (WFH) according to the health protocol made to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4 Conclusion

This study concludes that the generalization of perceptions by older generations towards the millennial generation still occurs today, not only in the work environment but also in family and friendship circles. Millennial workers start to view job-hopping phenomenon as not only a way to improve their finances but also to gain self-development and skills, reach their dream jobs, and gain stability in their careers. In addition, with the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia made workers less motivated to finding job opportunities. This has the potential to make a significant impact on the stereotypes attached to the millennial generation.

This paper contributes to give an organization a way to mitigate talented millennials from doing job-hopping and also increasing job satisfaction, such as, provide encouragement in aspects of personal development through mentoring, giving personal feedback regularly, making a space for employees to voice their opinions. In addition, managers can also make regular training sessions that keep millennial workers engaged and productive by increasing corporate knowledge and socializing with colleagues and with the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, it is affecting the job-hopping intentions among millennial workers due to the difficulty of finding job opportunities. This has the potential to make a significant impact on the stereotypes attached to the millennial generation.

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