



Occupational stress and professional burnout among the Millennial generation: A scoping review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Millennials, born between the early 80s and the mid-90s, face distinct work-life challenges shaped by recent cultural, economic, and social shifts, leading to high levels of work-related syndromes. Some authors describe Millennials as a ‘burnout generation’.

Objective: The main objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of occupational stress and professional burnout within the millennial generation. The secondary objectives are to identify how millennials are conceptualised in literature and to map the available information regarding occupational stress and professional burnout in Millennials.

Methods: A scoping review was conducted between January and May 2025 using the PsycInfo, ERIC, Medline, Embase, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases. Both scientific and grey literature were included. Literature reviews older than 5 years were excluded, as well as papers in non-English, French, or Spanish.

Results: 23 international publications were selected. Most are quantitative ($n = 18$), followed by a qualitative ($n = 3$) and a mixed-methods approach ($n = 2$). 5 studies cited a theoretical framework on generations. Burnout was assessed with the Maslach Burnout Inventory - MBI ($n = 8$), followed by the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory CBI ($n = 3$). The remaining studies used the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory - OLBI, other work burnout scales, as well as interviews and focus groups.

Conclusions: Studies are guided by inconsistency in the definition of millennials, heterogeneity in the definition of burnout, and overall methodological imbalance. Future research is needed through qualitative and mixed methods approach. This study lays the foundation for future research by identifying key gaps and providing a theoretical basis on millennials and work-related syndromes.

1. Introduction

The Millennial generation (born between the early 80s and the mid-90s), experiences and navigates through work-life differently compared to previous generations. They have been especially impacted by the economic and social shifts of recent years, facing challenges to financial progress and overall well-being during a crucial stage of life (McLeigh & Boberiene, 2014). This generation experiences lower earnings, wealth gaps, higher unemployment, and poverty rates compared to the two generations before them at the same age (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Saqué, 2023), as well as higher rates of burnout, anxiety, and depression, and these trends can be found across the globe (Jiang & Hui, 2016; McLeigh & Boberiene, 2014).

In the last decades, an array of studies on millennials have been published. Overall, these studies have focused on understanding their consumer behaviour, their purchasing power, and how to influence their choices (Sutcliffe & Virassamy, 2021), while other studies have tried to understand millennials with respect to work (Coates, 2017). According to the most recent literature review on millennials at work that examined twenty years of research, up until the year 2020, studies tend to report contradictory findings (Badar & Lasthuizen, 2023).

In addition, work-related syndromes such as burnout, have been little investigated in this generation (Ford, 2023; Salvagioni et al., 2017), even though burnout seems to be prevalent among them due to the mentioned changes in culture, economy and society (Ford, 2023; Jiang & Hui, 2016). More recently, a shift in burnout research is taking

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place and starting to move towards the younger generations of workers (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). Indeed, Maslach and Leiter (2022) highlight that Millennials are experiencing such high levels of exhaustion and sleep deprivation that sleep experts have dubbed them the 'tired generation'. Other authors have gone further and referred to them as "the burnout generation" (Petersen, 2020), while multiple opinion pieces have been written about stress and burnout in the Millennial generation in recent years.

In 2019, the World Health Organisation recognized burnout as a legitimate occupational phenomenon that could have a negative impact on well-being of workers in the workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). According to the WHO, burnout is a work-related syndrome resulting from chronic work stress that has not been successfully managed (World Health Organization, 2019). Although the WHO included burnout in the newest version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), it was not included as a disease but rather as an occupational phenomenon (Schaufeli et al., 2020).

In recent years, researchers have increasingly questioned the conceptualisation of burnout. To date, there is still no clear consensus on its definition within scientific research. According to Schaufeli et al. (2020), the concept's operationalisation remains one of the least-investigated topics in burnout research and continues to be debated. For instance, burnout is variously conceptualised either as a state - characterised by core and secondary symptoms - or as a dynamic process.

Schaufeli et al. (2020) defined burnout as: "a work-related state of exhaustion that occurs among employees, which is characterised by extreme tiredness, reduced ability to regulate cognitive and emotional processes, and mental distancing. These four core dimensions of burnout are accompanied by depressed mood as well as by non-specific psychological and psychosomatic complaints".

In 2025, Leclercq and Hansze defined burnout as a process that evolves through different stages (e.g., stage 0/ the creation of an ideal towards work with a high work commitment, stage 1/ the loss of the ideal at work, stage 2/ a protective withdrawal from work that becomes threatening, and stage 3/ confirmed burnout).

In 2022, Maslach and Leiter added another layer to the Maslach and Jackson (1981) popular and widely adopted three-dimensional conceptualisation of Burnout (i.e., emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment). They introduced an additional perspective by viewing burnout as a relationship problem, which essentially means an issue with the fit or match between the person and the job. Overall, they conclude that, "burnout is a social phenomenon" (Maslach & Leiter, 2022).

Even if professional burnout is not considered a disease, the lack of consensus around its conceptualisation and its inclusion in the ICD-11 may lead some to associate it with pathological states. Therefore, to broaden our understanding of the millennial phenomenon in relation to work-life, we also included occupational stress into our research scope.

According to the American Psychological Association dictionary of psychology (n.d.), occupational stress can be defined as "a physiological and psychological response to events or conditions in the workplace that is detrimental to health and well-being. Occupational stress is influenced by factors as autonomy and independence, decision latitude, workload, level of responsibility, job security, the physical environment and safety, the nature and pace of work, and relationships with coworkers and supervisors".

Both burnout and occupational stress appear to have a significant impact on worker's well-being. While well-being is defined by some authors as "peoples' positive evaluations of their lives, which includes positive emotion, engagement, satisfaction, and meaning" (Diener & Seligman, 2004). In an occupational context well-being has been frequently investigated through work-specific constructs (e.g. job satisfaction, work engagement and burnout). According to Tummers et al. (2018, as cited in Bakker et al., 2023), job satisfaction reflects hedonic work-related well-being connoting pleasure but also satiation and calmness, work engagement on the other hand reflects eudemonic work-

related well-being connoting pleasure but also high activation, including enthusiasm, excitement, and energy.

As stated by Hobfoll et al. (2018), a widely adopted theory in organisational psychology and across the stress spectrum is the conservation of resources theory (COR) which is also the basis for the work-specific theory of organisational stress: the job demands-resources model (JD-R). The latter has been frequently proposed to study workplace well-being (WWB) as it integrates various job stress and motivational perspectives. The model explains how job demands and resources influence job performance through employee well-being (including burnout and work engagement) and synthesises knowledge from various theories of job stress and work motivation providing more complete understanding of employee well-being and performance (Bakker et al. (2023).

Considering that, a concept treated in research as an outcome of JD-R factors model is work-family balance (WFB). In a recent study conducted by Momin and Rolla (2024) a positive association between WFB and WWB was observed with the first being a crucial factor for the second. In this study, the authors underscore the need for organisations to cultivate a family-oriented work culture to enhance employee well-being. They conclude that targeting WFB to affect WWB is better than targeting variables such as work content and satisfaction, as poor work-family balance increases stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion, directly lowering workplace well-being (e.g. job satisfaction, engagement).

However, the meaning and importance of work-family balance has evolved over time and across generations, shaping workplace well-being outcomes in distinct ways. According to Saqué (2023), today's socio-economic context is characterised by economic precarity, which has a direct impact on the younger generations (e.g. millennials). While older generations, namely baby boomers benefited from what sociologists affirm were exceptional economic conditions, stable access to employment and tended to value hard work within a meritocratic system - often at the expense of work-family balance- some studies affirm that Millennials prioritise flexibility, autonomy and holistic well-being making work-life balance a central aspect of job satisfaction (Buzza, 2017; McLeigh & Boberiene, 2014). Nevertheless, achieving WLB in a society marked by high unemployment, large wealth gaps and growing social, political and environmental crises that reduce the opportunities for upward social mobility, may be a significant source of generational stress.

According to Costanza et al. (2023), traditional generational research has primarily focused on the idea that a generation consists of a grouping of individuals born within specific ranges of years and labelled accordingly to distinguish them. These cohorts are assumed to share common characteristics resulting from exposure to a similar set of significant events. Moreover, the focus of traditional research has been on generational differences which has been criticised in recent years. The most frequently adopted approach to study generations is the Strauss and Howe (1991) model based on delineated generational breakpoints and labels. They defined a generation as: "a special cohort-group whose length approximately matches that of a basic phase of life, or about twenty-two years" meaning that generations are made up of non-overlapping, biological and calendar-based cohort-groups, (Costanza et al., 2023).

There are several challenges associated with the Strauss and Howe model. First, a generation does not equal a birth-year cohort: the latter is an objective grouping, while generations are subjective social constructions representing a range of years. Second, because the model emphasises the grouping of ages rather than the experiences that shape generational identities, several limitations have been noted, including: the extent and effect variation of historical events, the lack of evidence for clear generational boundaries and the significant variation of historical events depending on where individuals live and what they experienced (Costanza et al., 2023).

Two alternatives to traditional generational research exist: (1) the

social constructionist perspective, which views generations as social constructs with flexible boundaries and a sensemaking function that enables individuals to give meaning to differences observed through social interactions, contrasting with traditional generational thinking by changing the focus from the characteristics of the generational group to examining how these social constructions influence individuals' understanding and interpretation of the behaviour of others (Costanza et al., 2023). Thus, this perspective calls for a theoretical change, rather than testing for presumed differences between generational groups, research should investigate the processes through which generations and beliefs about generational differences are socially constructed. (2) the life-span perspective which views human development as continuous, incremental, and modifiable, while also including the role of significant events in impacting individuals. This perspective recognises that individuals can actively shape their own development and environmental contexts and that individual development is embedded within the broader sociocultural and historical context, including the historical period, economic conditions, as well as education and medical systems in which development unfolds (Costanza et al., 2023).

Taken together, the social constructionist and the lifespan perspectives are two alternative and complementary approaches to guide thinking about the notions of generations and generational differences. These perspectives challenge the previously adopted generational frameworks (e.g. Strauss & Howe's model) offering a more dynamic one for understanding how individuals, in this case millennials' experience work-life, particularly in relation to work-related syndromes. Instead of looking for differences between millennials and previous generations, these perspectives could be deployed to gain insights into both why millennials experience work-related syndromes and how social contexts shape their understanding and reporting of those syndromes.

Moreover, integrating these perspectives would encourage future studies to move beyond static generational frameworks and avoid generational stereotyping (Costanza et al., 2023). Social constructionism for instance may help examine how generational stereotypes themselves shape experiences or contribute to the perception of work-related syndromes while life-span theory may explain how millennial workers' age and developmental stage affect susceptibility to work-related syndromes. Together, they provide a more holistic lens: both the personal (developmental) and social (contextual) factors that influence work-related health outcomes.

We can conclude, on one hand that well-being at work and specifically work-life balance is undermined due to the socio-economic context. On the other hand, the concept of burnout lacks a unified definition adding ambiguity to its comprehension. Furthermore, the generational term "Millennial" is likewise characterised by definitional heterogeneity, specifically regarding the start and end dates of each generation.

Taking the latter into consideration, the lack of consensus in the literature around the conceptualisation of Millennials, the prevalence of work-related syndromes (i.e., burnout) in this generation and their significant presence in the workforce (Thomas & Reyes, 2024), we decided to conduct a scoping review and directly address the mentioned challenges. Indeed, the aim is to clarify the conceptualisation of millennials in literature, as well as to map and present the extent of evidence available regarding occupational stress and professional burnout in the millennial generation and identify potential research gaps to set a framework for future research.

2. Review question

Our scoping review is guided by the following research question: What is the current state of knowledge regarding occupational stress and professional burnout among millennials?

We formulated two sub-questions:

- How are millennials named, defined, and conceptualised in literature? What birth cohort do they belong to?
- How has occupational stress and professional burnout been studied among millennials? What research objectives? Who are the participants? What assessment tools? How were these studies conducted? What were the main results and research perspectives?

3. Methods

A scoping review of international literature was conducted between January and May 2025. According to Arksey and O'Malley (2005) a scoping review is a type of literature search that is recommended for mapping the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available, as well as identifying potential gaps in the existing literature. This method is advisable when the research question is related to a topic that has not yet been studied extensively, such as the case with millennials and work-related syndromes.

This Scoping review was conducted following JBI best-practice recommendations, including a team approach with regular meetings throughout the entirety of the review process. Furthermore, The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) Checklist guided this scoping review (Tricco et al., 2018).

To be included in the review, papers with the term Millennials or any other term used to refer to this generation were included. The term "Digital Natives" was also included, as it sometimes comprises Millennials or both Millennials and Generation Z. In those cases, papers with the words Digital Natives were included only if the article clearly distinguished between these two generations. Papers that we included needed to measure the concepts of generational affiliation, as well as occupational stress or professional burnout. Therefore, both the generational aspect and the work-related syndrome had to be mentioned and measured. Additionally, the term exhaustion disorder was used as it is cited as an equivalent of the term burnout in Scandinavian countries (Grossi et al., 2015). Research that focused on other types of burnouts (e.g., parental burnout) or studies on burnout in non-relevant contexts (i.e., outside the workplace, such as athlete Burnout) were excluded, as well as studies on children or adolescents, except if they concerned Millennial parents and the workplace.

Studies addressing generational differences (i.e. studies comparing Millennials to other generations) were also included if the millennial generation was mentioned, measured, and distinguished from other generations. Furthermore, we included papers about Millennials in the workplace in a broad sense. This means that we included diverse sectors, different types of professions, and work settings in our scope (e.g., helping field, healthcare, education, hospitality, public, and private sectors). Similarly, diverse worker status was included (e.g., white-collar, blue-collar workers, contract or self-employed, working partially or full time).

Since we are researching a field with limited literature available, we decided to broaden our scope and include both published scientific literature (e.g., articles, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses) and grey literature (e.g., reports, conference papers or proceedings, and doctoral theses), with no temporal delimitation. Only literature reviews older than 5 years were excluded. Furthermore, we included diverse study designs, including quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches. We included studies in which occupational stress and/or professional burnout were assessed. Additionally, interventional studies addressing burnout among millennials were also considered within our scope.

Studies that did not align with the object of this Scoping review were excluded (e.g., studies on other generations such as Generation Z, Generation Alpha, etc.) unless they were comparative studies. We also excluded studies lacking a clear explanation of methodology or results, as well as opinion papers and studies written in languages other than

English, French, or Spanish.

To identify potentially relevant documents including both scientific articles and grey literature, the following bibliographic databases were searched from January 2025 to May 2025: PsycINFO, Medline, Embase, Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar. The search strategies were drafted with the collaboration of two experienced librarians from the University of Liège library's network, further refined by the researchers and

executed by one of the two researchers (KV).

The following search terms were used: (Millennial* or Generation Y or GenY or Generation Me or GenMe or nGen or iGen or Net Generation or Netgens or Nexters or Digital Natives).ti,ab,id. AND (Burnout or burn out).ti,ab,id. OR ((burnout or stress*) adj3 (occupation* or profession* or job* or work* or employ* or career*).ti,ab,id. OR "Burnout" (keyword) OR "Exhaustion disorder" (keyword).

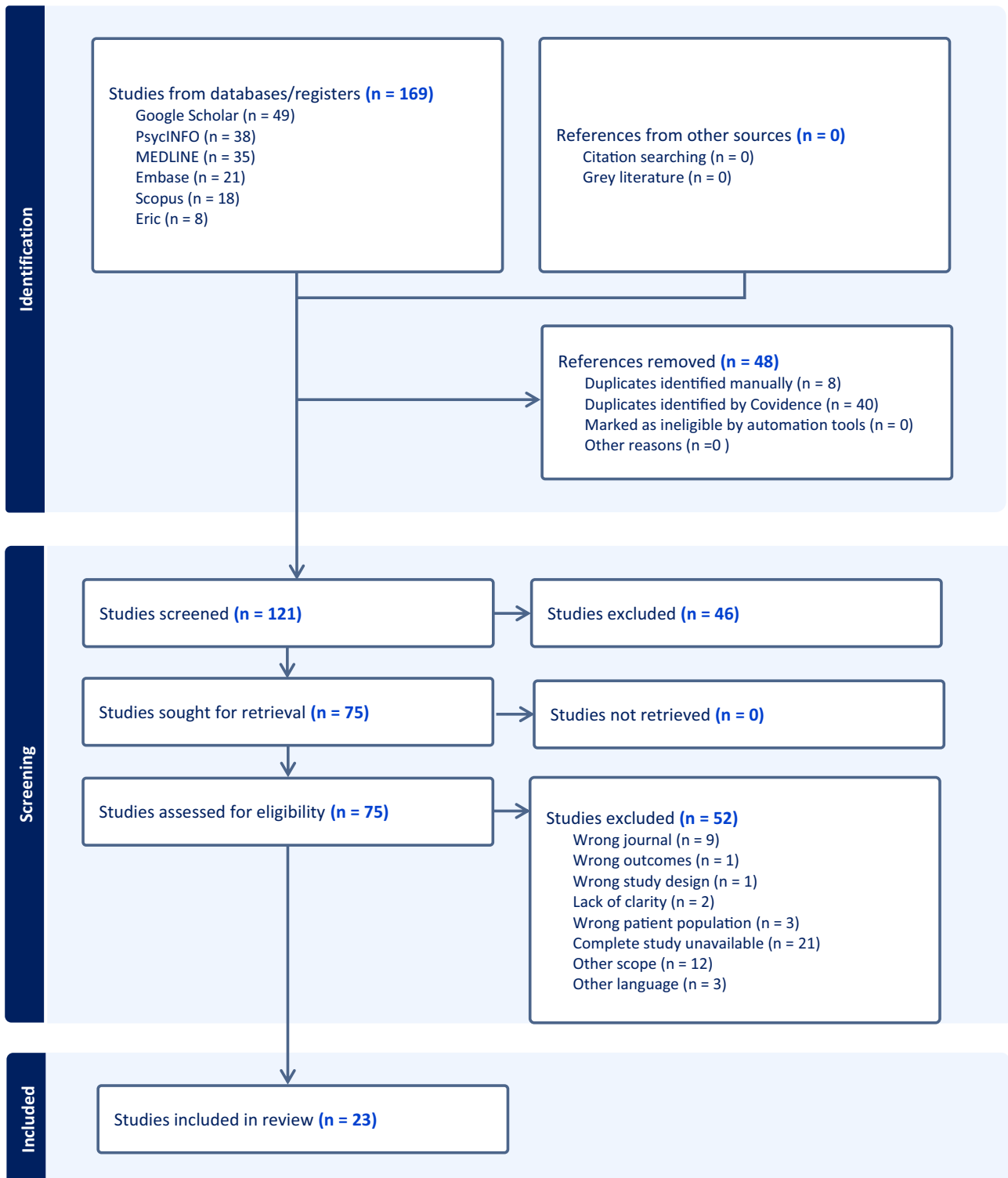


Fig. 1. Prisma flow diagram.

A total of 169 papers (including grey literature) were obtained. The selection of studies was carried out in two phases, phase 1: an initial screening based on title and abstract, followed by phase 2: A full-text screening of the studies selected in phase 1. The platform [Covidence](#) (n.d.) was chosen as the tool to carry out phases 1 and 2, due to its collaborative nature and blind voting system.

In the case of grey literature, databases frequently redirected to ProQuest, specifically for doctoral theses. These papers were included if they met the same eligibility criteria as the published studies and imported into Covidence for title/abstract screening as well. When access to the full thesis was denied via ProQuest or via the University's library network, we proceeded to contact the author who chose to send or not their full thesis work and then we uploaded the full document into Covidence.

From the 169 papers, 40 duplicates were removed automatically by the platform Covidence, and 8 were removed manually by the researchers. 121 studies were then screened. The two researchers (KV and MM) reviewed the titles and abstracts of all the papers. A third researcher was consulted when a divergence in analysis arose. After reading the titles and abstracts of each study, 46 were judged irrelevant, leaving 75 full-text studies to be assessed for eligibility. From these 75 studies, 52 were excluded as they did not meet the inclusion criteria mentioned above, leaving 23 articles for eligibility. The two researchers (KV, MM) proceeded then to screen the full text of the 23 publications independently, discussed the results and resolved disagreements on study selection and data extraction by consensus and discussion with a third researcher if needed. Indeed, review group discussions were conducted frequently to agree on all aspects of the data to be extracted and reach agreement on queries or conflicts.

Overall, the reasons for exclusion were a) studies for which we did not had complete access (i.e. doctoral theses); b) studies out of our research scope; c) wrong journals; d) studies with a wrong population; e) studies with an unclear methodology or lacking clarity in the presentation of their results; f) wrong outcomes measured and wrong study design and finally; g) articles written in languages other than English, French or Spanish.

In the end, 23 articles were selected for our research, according to the defined criteria. [Fig. 1](#) illustrates the different stages carried out.

The next phase involved classifying and analysing the data: For that purpose, a standardised data-extraction form was jointly and previously developed by the two researchers (KV and MM) to determine which variables to extract. Indeed, this data-extraction form was drafted based upon our review question and structured around the PCC framework (i.e. population, concept and context). This framework also allowed us to structure our eligibility criteria in Covidence prior to uploading the studies. Our data-extraction form also included article characteristics (e.g. author, year, country, journal), the aim of the study, the research questions and hypothesis, the variables measured as well as the tools, the methodology (e.g. study design), the main results and the research perspectives.

The two researchers independently charted the data, discussed the results and continuously updated the data-extraction form in an iterative process. Once again, disagreements on data extraction were carried out by consensus and discussion with a third researcher. [Table 2](#) presents a summary of the characteristics of the studies including themes, study design, outcomes measured and the key findings.

It is important to underline a limitation regarding our study related to the heterogeneity in the definition of both "Millennials" and "burnout". The studies included may employ varying conceptualisations, making the comparing of results challenging given that these may not be directly or easily comparable. In this context, our study aims to identify and report the different theoretical models mobilised to frame these concepts, thereby gaining a better understanding of the research orientations adopted by different authors.

We will present the results of our study in three parts to illustrate the evidence gathered about our research questions. First, the articles will

be analysed according to their characteristics (i.e., type of study, origin, etc.). Secondly, the articles will be analysed regarding labels used for the millennial generation, as well as definition, birth-cohort attributed, and information regarding whether the article gives a theoretical framework around the definition of Millennials or the concept of generation. Thirdly, the content of the articles will be examined.

4. Results

4.1. Studies characteristics

Among the 23 selected studies, 8 came from the United States, 3 are from India, 2 from Indonesia, 2 from Malaysia, 2 from South Africa, 2 from China, 1 from Brazil, 1 from Finland, 1 from Turkey, and 1 from France.

Among these studies:

- 20 are scientific articles
- 2 are doctoral dissertations
- 1 is a conference paper

Most of the studies are quantitative ($n = 18$), followed by a qualitative design ($n = 3$) and a mixed-methods approach ($n = 2$). Of the 23 studies, two are intervention programmes.

Regarding the work sphere, participants came from divers' sectors such as small and medium size enterprises, the education sector (public schools and universities), the helping field sector (including mental health therapists, social workers and lawyers), the medical sector (nurses, doctors), the public sector (government and community services), as well as the hospitality and the IT sector.

4.2. How are millennials named, defined, and conceptualised in literature? What birth cohort do they belong to?

Millennials are labelled by the studies as: Millennials, Generation Y, Gen Y, Nexters, N-Geners, Echo Boomers, Millennials, Digital natives, and Net Generation.

Concerning the conceptualisation of the Millennial generation, we looked for definitions and for a theoretical framework. Most of the studies begin their definition by citing the birth year or including it within their general definition. From the 23 studies, 5 studies make a reference to a theoretical framework. From these 5 studies, one study indicates that there is no single time range for millennials and that birth range varies based on the author. The rest of the studies do not provide a clear theoretical framework. However, they indicate the source and year from which they based their definitions ([Table 1](#)).

Regarding birth-cohort, 15 studies included the birth cohort (i.e. start and end date) ranging from 1980 to mid-1990's, being 1994/1996 the most frequent age cutoff. 7 studies used a birth cohort that ranged from 1977 to 2003.

Overall, 1981 was most frequently cited as birth year for the millennial generation ($n = 9$). Nevertheless, 1977 is the earliest cohort attributed ($n = 1$) and 2003 the latest ($n = 1$). 1 study did not make a reference to a clear cohort ([Fig. 2](#): Millennials birth cohort).

4.3. How has occupational stress and professional burnout been studied among millennials? What research objectives? Who are the participants? What assessment tools? How were these studies conducted? What main results?

From the 23 selected studies, 17 studies researched burnout, 5 studies focused on occupational stress, and one study assessed both concepts (occupational stress and burnout). We categorised the different outcomes measured into three main categories, with some outcomes overlapping into more than one category 1) work-related attitudes (e.g. turnover intention, job satisfaction). 2) work well-being related

Table 1
Millennial birth-cohort, definition and conceptualisation in selected studies.

Study	Country	Birth-cohort	Label	Definition	Source and year	Generational Theoretical framework? Yes/No Source
Ambarwati et al. (2024)	Indonesia	1981–1996	Millennials	Those who currently dominate the workforce, born between 1981 and 1996.	(Rosariana, 2021)	No
Zainal Badri et al. (2025)	Malaysia	1981–1996	Millennials	Those falling within the birth years between 1981 and 1996.	(Magni & Manzoni, 2020)	No
Geyser et al. (2023)	South Africa	1981–1994	Millennials	The Millennial generation were born between 1981 and 1994.	(Dimock, 2019)	No
Ford (2023)	USA	1981–1994	Millennials	Those born between 1981 and 1994.	(Coates, 2017)	No
Filippatos (2020)	USA	1977–1999	Generation Y, Gen Y, Nexters, N-Geners, Echo Boomers, Millennials and Millennials.	The group of young individuals born between the years of 1977 and 1999 is commonly known as Generation Y.	(Glass, 2007)	No
Hamm et al. (2020)	USA	1982–2000	Millennials	Persons born between 1982 and 2000.	(United States Census Bureau, 2015)	No
Jiang and Hui (2016)	China	Born in 1980's	Millennial	Individuals who were born in the 1980s.	(Li, 2015)	No
Jiang et al. (2017)	China	Born after the 1980s	Millennial	The contemporary group born after the 1980s.	(Li, 2015)	No
Karani and Jayswal (2020)	India	1980–1996	Millennials	Individuals born between 1980 and 1996.	Not available	No
Koç and İlic (2024)	Turkey	1983–1995	Millennials, Generation Y	Participants between the ages of 27–39 were defined as Generation Y in when the research was conducted.	(Strauss & Howe, 1991)	Yes Cohort theory and (Howe & Strauss, 2000).
Le and Barboza-Wilkes (2024)	USA	1981–1996	Millennials	Respondents born in or between 1981 and 1996 are coded as Millennials.	Not available	No
Lu and Gursoy (2016)	USA	1980–2000	Millennials	Millennials' birth years begin somewhere around 1980 and generally end in 2000.	(Cennamo & Gardner, 2008)	Yes Cohort theory and (Howe & Strauss, 2000).
Mupanduki (2020)	USA	1980–2000	Generation Y, Millennials	Generation Y employees, interchangeably known as Millennials, are the latest members entering the workforce.	American Psychological Association, 2014	No
Oksa et al. (2021)	Finland	1979–2000	Generation Y, Millennials, Digital natives, Net Generation	There is no single time range for members of Generation Y. Some define millennials as people born from 1982 to 2004. Others define them as born between 1982 and 2000, and some even use the years 1979 to 1994.	(Howe & Strauss, 2000) (Wong et al., 2008) (Smola & Sutton, 2002)	Yes Cultural–sociological theory of generations. (Eyerman & Turner, 1998)
Oosthuizen et al. (2022)	South Africa	Not available	Generation Y	Aged 25 to 35, Generation Y.	Generation project. (Generation Project, 2018; Kane, 2019) (Pyöriä et al., 2017)	No Generational cohort, (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998)
Pradipto and Ibrahim (2022)	Indonesia	1980s - 1990s	Millennials, generation Y	Generation Y or commonly known as millennials are individuals who born between 1980s and 1990s and they started to work in the 2000s.		No Generational theory, (Mannheim, 1952)
Rutledge et al. (2024)	USA	1981–1996	Millennials	Millennials born between 1981 and 1996.	(Dimock, 2019)	No
Said et al. (2023)	India	1981–1994/1996	Generation-Y, Millennials	Generation-Y or Millennials, born between 1981 and 1994/1996, is one of the three newest generations often characterised in demographic literature studies.	(Mahmoud et al., 2020)	Yes Cohort perspective (Mahmoud et al., 2020)
Thomas and Reyes (2024)	India	1980s - mid-1990s	Millennials	Millennials, born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s	(Chopra & Bhilare, 2020)	No
Vacheron et al. (2025)	France	1984–1996	Generation Y, Millennials	According to their date of birth, Generation Y, Millennials (born from 1984 to 1996).	(Bresman & Rao, 2017)	No
Wakim (2014)	USA	1981–2003	Gen Y, Millennials	The literature reports that GenY or Millennials (born1981–2003), which represent 12% of the US workforce, want	(Lavoie-Tremblay et al., 2010)	No

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Country	Birth-cohort	Label	Definition	Source and year	Generational Theoretical framework? Yes/No Source
Zainal Badri and Ngo (2025)	Malaysia	1981–1996	Millennials	flexible working arrangements and to achieve a work-life balance Millennials, individuals born between 1981 and 1996 are recognized for their emphasis on harmonizing work and family commitments as well as valuing themselves and interpersonal relationships over work.	(Dimock, 2019; Le et al., 2020; Ribeiro et al., 2023)	No
Roveri et al. (2020)	Brazil	1980–2000	Millennial, Generation Y	Millennials, also known as Generation Y, refer to the most recent generation to enter the workforce. Therefore, considering the definitions of Zemke et al. Generation Y, cover the population born between the years 1980 to 2000.	(Zemke et al., 1999)	Yes Generational cohort Zemke et al. (Howe & Strauss, 2000)

Millennials birth-cohorts

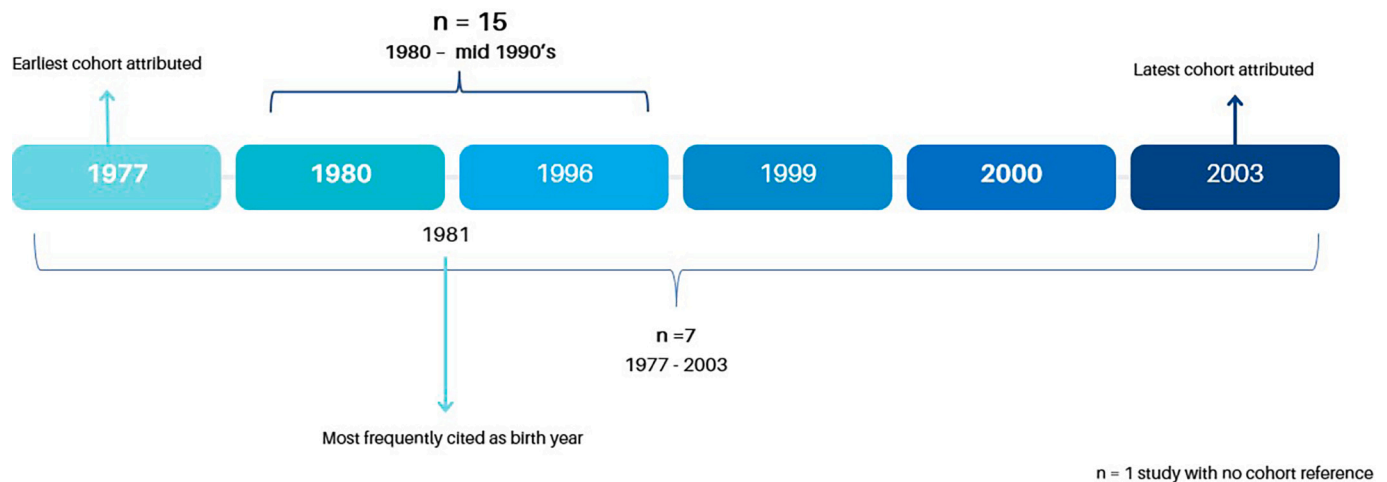


Fig. 2. Millennials' birth cohorts from selected studies.

constructs (e.g. job satisfaction, job optimism, organisational justice, job engagement, work-family conflict, job crafting, coping strategies). 3) Other work-related concepts or job-related characteristic (e.g. work shift length, job autonomy, role ambiguity, leadership and coworker support).

Burnout was researched through a quantitative ($n = 14$), a qualitative ($n = 2$), and a mixed methods approach ($n = 2$), as an independent, dependent, and mediating variable. Measured as an independent variable through correlation, burnout was shown to strongly increase turnover intention. As a dependent variable, burnout was studied in relation to: Job crafting, which was observed to enhance job satisfaction, while not directly reducing burnout. Optimism, and specifically the trait optimism dimension which reduces burnout, while work overload and role ambiguity increases it. Distributive and procedural justice predicted burnout levels as did occupational stress. Furthermore, studies indicated that a negative coping style increases job burnout and worsens mental health, while a positive coping style reduces burnout and improves mental health. Additionally, a negative working environment significantly impacts on burnout levels while leadership support, coworker support, and job autonomy reduce burnout. As a mediating variable, burnout was shown to fully mediate the relationship between family-to-

work conflict and turnover intention as well as the relationship of the latter with job satisfaction.

The qualitative studies on burnout explored the uniqueness of the millennial generation and their lived experiences. Millennials' upbringing is highlighted as both challenging and exciting, marked by pressure to succeed, the high expectations placed on them and the fear of failure. Additional results included the challenges in maintaining work-life balance, excessive workload, fatigue, insufficient organisational support, lack of resources and the psychological consequences of rapid technological advancement, such as loneliness and depression as contributing factors in burnout.

Concerning the instruments used when measuring burnout, 9 studies made a reference to Maslach & Leiter, Maslach & Jackson, or Maslach et al. framework, which are all theoretical frameworks based on the same conceptual model of burnout. Furthermore, burnout was assessed with the Maslach Burnout Inventory - MBI, in its original or adapted version ($n = 8$), followed by the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory ($n = 3$). The remaining studies used other tools, including the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory - OLB, other work burnout scales, as well as interviews and focus groups (Table 2).

Occupational stress was assessed mainly through a quantitative

Table 2
Characteristics of included studies.

Author and year	Theme	Outcomes measured	Instruments	Method	Key findings
Ambarwati et al. (2024)	Burnout and work-related outcomes: Turnover Intention, work-Life balance, engagement	Burnout Turnover intention Work-life balance Employee engagement	Questionnaires with indicators for each outcome	Quantitative Correlation	Burnout has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention and a negative but insignificant effect on work-life balance.
Lu and Gursoy (2016)	Comparative study Moderating effects of generational differences on the relationship between burnout vs satisfaction and turnover intention.	Burnout Job satisfaction Turnover intention	The Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI-GS (Schaufeli et al., 1996) Job satisfaction, (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996) Turnover intention, three-item scale (Boshoff & Allen, 2000)	Quantitative	Millennials reported significantly lower job satisfaction and higher turnover intention when they are exhausted. When experiencing job burnout (through 3 dimensions), turnover intention will not be significantly different between Gen-Xers and Millennials. There is a significant moderating effect of generation (Millennials vs. Boomers) on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. Millennials are more affected by emotional exhaustion, and more likely to attribute it to their jobs.
Zainal Badri and Ngo (2025)	The linkage between work-family conflict, turnover intention, job satisfaction and the role of burnout	Burnout Work-to-family conflict (WFC) Family-to-work conflict (FWC) Turnover intention Job satisfaction	Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ-III) (Llorens et al., 2019) WFC & FWC (Netemeyer et al., 1996) Turnover intention (Cammann et al., 1979) Job satisfaction (Lee & Bruvold, 2003)	Quantitative Cross-sectional single wave self-report	Work-family conflict and family-to-work conflict were positively linked to burnout. Burnout had a significant positive relationship with turnover intention and a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Burnout fully mediated the relationship between family-to-work conflict and turnover intention as the relationship with job satisfaction.
Zainal Badri et al. (2025)	Job Satisfaction and Job Crafting	Job burnout Job satisfaction Job crafting	Copenhagen Psycho-social Questionnaire (COPSOQ-III) (Llorens et al., 2019) Job satisfaction (Lee & Bruvold, 2003) Job crafting scale (Tims et al., 2012)	Quantitative Cross-sectional single wave self-report	Job crafting does not directly reduce burnout. No evidence of a direct link between job crafting dimensions and burnout. Supportive environments recommended to reduce burnout
Geyser et al. (2023)	Long work shifts and burnout	Burnout, Work-shift length	The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory - CBI (Kristensen et al., 2005)	Quantitative Cross sectional single wave Self-report Correlation	Shift length is a significant predictor of burnout. Longer work shifts significantly contribute to higher burnout levels.
Pradipto and Ibrahim (2022)	Effect of working environment on burnout	Burnout Working environment Job performance	Maslach Burnout Inventory-MBI (Maslach & Leiter, 2016) Working Environment - Instrument based on work-environment theory. Job Performance - instrument adapted by Pisel Loupatty from John Miner's theory.	Quantitative	The working environment has a significant effect on burnout levels. Job performance does not moderate the relationship between the working environment and burnout. Improving job performance may not alleviate effects of a negative working environment on burnout levels.
Hamm et al. (2020)	Comparative study Generational Differences in (Millennials vs Gen X) on empathy and Burnout	Burnout Empathy	The Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI – HSS (Maslach et al., 2010) Empathy – Jefferson Scale of Empathy - JSPE (Hojat, 2016)	Quantitative	No major association between generational affiliation and empathy or burnout in millennials and generation X. Being a Millennial or a member of Generation X doesn't make a big difference in how much empathy or burnout U.S.-trained medical residents and fellows experience.
Koç and İlic (2024)	Comparative study Intergenerational differences in	Burnout Organisational justice	Oldenburg Burnout Inventory -OLBI (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008)	Quantitative	All dimensions of organisational justice negatively correlated with burnout in both generations. Distributive and

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Table 2 (continued)

Author and year	Theme	Outcomes measured	Instruments	Method	Key findings
	burnout levels and organisational justice perceptions		Organisational justice (Colquitt, 2001)		procedural justice predicted burnout levels. The generation variable did not significantly moderate the relationship between organisational justice and burnout. Millennials exhibited higher burnout scores than generation X. Generational differences in burnout may stem from identity and characteristics rather than experience.
Rutledge et al. (2024)	Comparative study The impact of nurse generation on turnover risk factors (low meaning/joy in work, low resilience, high occupational fatigue, high burnout) and turnover intentions.	Burnout Meaning and joy at work Resilience Occupational fatigue Turnover intentions	Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI-HSS (Maslach et al., 2018) Meaning and joy in work questionnaire (Rutledge et al., 2018) Resilience at Work scale (Winwood et al., 2013) Occupational fatigue exhaustion recovery o-OFER-15 scale (Winwood et al., 2005, 2006) Likert-type response questions	Quantitative	Two burnout measures differed significantly by generation. The same pattern is observed with the overall burnout measure was found. Millennials are 6 times as likely to have overall burnout than Boomers and three times as likely as GenX nurses. Differences in levels of high acute fatigue and low inter-shift recovery across generations was found, with alarmingly high levels among Millennial nurses. More Millennials had high levels of depersonalization than other generations.
Vacheron et al. (2025)	Comparative study Nurse motivation for leaving the ICU, and the factors that influenced the nurse resignation from their units.	Burnout Career Timeline Training and Experience Career Choices and Preferences Future Career Considerations Factors Influencing Resignation Perceptions from Others	Interview Self-reported experience of burnout	Quantitative	Main factors influencing nurse's resignation from their unit were belonging to Generation Y or Z, experiencing symptoms of burnout and pregnancy during the ICU. Main motivations to leave were organisational, personal and related to the ICU workload.
Le and Barboza-Wilkes (2024)	Comparative study Impact of organisational and individual factors on burnout across demographic groups.	Burnout Perceived organisational characteristics: autonomy, competence, and relatedness Individual differences: prosocial motivation, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction.	Questionnaire Factor analysis, composite scores from various survey items: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment.	Quantitative	Perceptions of fairness, autonomy, and cultural competence significantly influence burnout levels. Perceived cultural competence is linked to lower burnout for Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials, but it is associated with greater burnout for Gen Z. Burnout can manifest differently depending on the group. A Need for tailored Interventions based on group characteristics.
Jiang and Hui (2016)	Optimism and Job Characteristics	Burnout Trait/state optimism Job characteristics: work overload, role ambiguity, leadership and coworker support, job autonomy.	The Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI-GS (Schaufeli et al., 1995) Trait optimism (Kluemper et al., 2009) State optimism (Kluemper et al., 2009; Shifren & Hooker, 1995) Job characteristics - Job content questionnaire (JCQ) (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) Occupational stress (Cooper et al., 1988)	Quantitative Cross sectional	Burnout interventions should not only focus on reducing burnout but also on fostering conditions for engagement and empowerment. Optimism and job characteristics significantly influence job burnout of millennials. Trait optimism reduces burnout. Work overload and role ambiguity increase burnout; leadership support, coworker support, and job autonomy reduce burnout. Effective management strategies can enhance optimism, job satisfaction, and mental health, thereby preventing burnout.
Jiang et al. (2017)	The impact of occupational stress, coping style and job	Occupational stress Coping Style	University teacher occupational stress scale (Li, 2005)	Quantitative Cross sectional	Occupational stress can produce significant positive predictive effect on job burnout.

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Table 2 (continued)

Author and year	Theme	Outcomes measured	Instruments	Method	Key findings
	burnout of Millennial university teachers.	Mental Health Burnout	Coping style questionnaire (Xie, 1998) Mental health scale, symptom self-rating scale (Wang, 1984) Work burnout scale - general edition Maslachi C, revised (Li & Shi, 2003)		Negative coping style has significant positive predictive effect on job burnout and mental health. Positive coping style has significant negative predictive effect on job burnout and mental health. Job burnout has significant positive predictive effect on mental health and, occupational stress has the greatest effect on mental health through job burnout.
Said et al. (2023)	Occupational stress factors (coworker support, work-life balance [WLB] and expectation conflict) on Millennial employees	Occupational stress Role Expectation Conflict Coworker Support Work-Life Balance	Job Stress inventory (Jamal & Baba, 1992) Questions adapted to each variable (role expectation, coworker support and work-life balance)	Quantitative	Support from coworkers greatly reduced job stress. Work-life balance had a positive impact on work and personal lives. Lack of role specification in Generation-Y employees had a negative impact on their job performance.
Thomas and Reyes (2024)	The effectiveness of an intervention program (ESCOIP) in treating burnout symptoms	Burnout	Focus group Maslach Burnout Inventory- MBI-ES (Maslach et al., 2018)	Quantitative	Findings highlight the effectiveness of the ESCOIP in mitigating burnout symptoms among millennial teachers, emphasizing the need for such interventions in educational settings.
Ford (2023)	Millennials perceptions of their experiences with burnout	Burnout	Semi-Structured Interview	Qualitative	8 themes are developed: demographics, attitudes associated with growing up as a millennial, choosing a career, with burnout, with an organisation's role and job duties, with self-care, self-care techniques to combat burnout, and attitudes associated with needed support for an organisation.
Filippatos (2020)	Factors that contribute to effective supervision of educators in public schools.	Burnout	Interview	Qualitative	Most gen Y teachers (n = 11) reported experiencing burnout during their teaching experiences.
Oosthuizen et al. (2022)	Intervention program on burnout	Burnout	Focus group Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI-GS (Schaufeli et al., 1996)	Mixed-methods	Findings collectively underscore the importance of tailored interventions in addressing burnout.
Oksa et al. (2021)	Comparative study Social media use at work and employee well-being outcomes: technostress, burnout, and psychological distress.	Burnout Well-being	Focus group Interview Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI-GS (Schutte et al., 2000) Well-being measures (technostress, burnout, psychological distress, and background variables).	Mixed methods cross-sectional	Millennials are more active users of social media for work compared to older generations and experience higher levels of technostress and burnout. Motivations for social media use at work differ among millennials and former generations.
Karani and Jayswal (2020)	The psychological risk factors (job stressors) of technocrat millennials from a socio-demographic perspective.	Job stressors	Job stress Inventory (Srivastava & Singh, 1984)	Quantitative Cross-sectional	Income shows no significant impact on psychological risk factors, nor do education, years of service, current position, marital status, or spouse's profession. Number of children, family size, family type and gender significantly impacted various psychological risk factors.
Wakim (2014)	Comparative study Occupational stressors, stress levels, and coping styles among different nursing generations (baby boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y).	Occupational stress Coping styles	Perceived Stress Scale -PSS (Cohen & Williamson, 1998) Nursing Stress Scale- NSS (Gray-Toft & Anderson, 1981) The ways of Coping Scale (WAYS) (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985)	Quantitative Correlation	Age, experience, and education did not significantly influence stress perception. Gen Y reported higher stress levels compared to Gen X and baby boomers.
Roveri et al. (2020)	Work stress and job satisfaction in Millennials	Occupational stress Job satisfaction	Longitudinal survey Work Stress Scale (WSS) (Paschoal & Tamayo, 2004) Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) (Siqueira, 2008)	Quantitative Correlation	A low level of occupational stress was found. A negative correlation between occupational stress and each of the dimensions of job satisfaction was obtained.

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Table 2 (continued)

Author and year	Theme	Outcomes measured	Instruments	Method	Key findings
Mupanduki (2020)	Stress appraisal, emotional climates, and coping strategies.	Occupational stress Coping strategies Self-health related outcomes	Interview: semi-structured and open-ended	Qualitative	A stronger association of millennials with the level of job stress, as well as a moderate association with the levels of job satisfaction. Findings emphasise the need for supportive work environments for millennial RNs.

approach ($n = 5$) versus one study that used a qualitative approach. Occupational stress was studied as an independent and dependent variable and measured through divers' instruments including questionnaires and interviews (Table 2). As an independent variable, occupational stress was found to be a significant positive predictor of job burnout. As a dependent variable, findings indicate that demographic factors do not significantly influence occupational stress among Millennials. Instead, workplace conditions and social support play a more critical role. Specifically, coworker support significantly reduces job stress, while occupational stressors remain strong predictors of perceived stress regardless of demographics. The qualitative study underscored the importance of a supportive work environment while adding the themes of work overload, task complexity and lack of resources as impacting stress levels. These results highlight the importance of fostering supportive work environment and coping strategies to buffer stress and enhance job satisfaction among Millennial employees.

From our 23 studies, 8 were comparative studies, examining generational differences. Across these studies, generational affiliation appears to play a nuanced but meaningful role in shaping work-related well-being. While some studies found no significant effect of generational affiliation, Millennials still consistently exhibited higher burnout levels when compared to other generations. For instance, studies indicated that Millennials exhibit higher stress levels and higher burnout scores when compared to previous generations (i.e. Gen X and baby boomers). One study indicated differences in results when considering dimensions of burnout separately, such as measuring one dimension (e.g., exhaustion) versus the overall concept, which frequently includes two or three sub-dimensions (e.g., exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy). Following that logic, Millennials reported significantly lower job satisfaction and higher turnover intention when compared to previous generations (i.e., Gen X and baby Boomers), specifically when they are exhausted (as measured solely by exhaustion). Other studies also found that burnout measures differed by generation and cited specifically the depersonalisation dimension of burnout (often taken as an equivalent of cynicism). Moreover, significant differences in perceived stress levels were found by one study across three generations, including millennials.

From the 23 studies, 2 studies were interventions programs. These studies emphasised the role of the work environment and the importance of tailored interventions, as well as effective management strategies, including creating a supportive, people-oriented environment, clarifying roles, balancing workloads, and promoting autonomy to enhance optimism, job satisfaction, and overall mental health to mitigate burnout.

The findings are coherent with Millennials vulnerability to work-related syndromes as hinted by literature; however, this vulnerability appears to result from the interaction between multiple factors (e.g. individual traits, job characteristics, work environment factors) with generational affiliation playing a more secondary role.

4.4. Research perspectives

Concerning the research perspectives, these were identified and organised into 3 umbrella themes. 1) The methodology, including the study design, the sample, the sector, the variables, and the data

collection. 2) Other concepts or aspects to consider about millennials in future research, and 3) Interventions and solutions.

Regarding the 1st theme, 9 papers referred to the study design, with a majority suggesting the use of a longitudinal design, followed by a mixed-methods approach, a qualitative approach, and individual or face-to-face interventions. It was also suggested to use larger, heterogeneous populations, as well as to include divers' generational groups, divers' occupational groups, a diverse range of professions within the same field, and to expand the scope to other geographical areas, other ethnic groups, considering employees from diverse industries and sectors. Regarding data collection, suggestions include in-depth interviews, focus groups, varied data reporting methods including different raters, as well as to control for work-related variables, to measure the level of burnout affected by other variables than generation affiliation, and to include sociodemographic variables.

The 2nd theme, regarding other aspects worth investigating in the future, includes heterogeneity within generations and differences with other generations. The impact of technology on burnout. The complex relationship between social media use and well-being. The understanding of the effects of culture on stress and coping. Self-care (i.e., self-affirmation, positive affirmations, spiritual practices). As well as to further burnout research in Millennials working in specific contexts, such as the mental health field, as well as in the healthcare and educational sectors.

Finally, regarding the 3rd theme, a need for tailored interventions that recognises localised differences and heterogeneity within groups is suggested. It is also suggested that organisations assess current workplace conditions with input from diverse employee perspectives to formulate effective strategies for improving well-being, with 3 level interventions (i.e., individual, group, organisation) as well as to address generation specific needs and conduct more work on interventions development and solution-focused research.

5. Discussion

Our study aimed to overview the current state of knowledge regarding occupational stress and professional burnout among millennials, a generation depicted as particularly vulnerable to work-related syndromes. To our knowledge, this is the first scoping review on Millennial burnout and occupational stress and the first to call into question traditional generational research theories applied to the millennial generation, advocating for new perspectives outside of cohort theory to understand this phenomenon.

Through our results, we identify specific knowledge gaps in terms of 1) **lack of research**: Indeed, few studies have examined work-related syndromes in millennials and previous studies that have focused on millennials at work or their work-life, have tended to focus their research on work attitudes with overall conflicting and contradictory results. 2) **Methodological limitations**: this scoping review emphasises a methodological imbalance in the evidence gathered. On one hand, evidence gathered on millennials' burnout and occupational stress is mostly quantitative in nature. On the other hand, studies have limitations including the use of homogeneous samples in specific sectors, through cross-sectional study designs, thus undermining the

generalisability of findings. In that light, the expert's recommendation is to conduct more qualitative approach, especially when a phenomenon has minimal research and involves an understudied population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) as is the case of millennials and work-related syndromes. **3) Theoretical gaps:** Our results highlight that the literature on Millennials and work-related syndromes is guided by inconsistency, particularly regarding Millennials' conceptualisation concerning their birth cohort (start and end date). Indeed, authors adopted different start and end dates in the selected studies; in most cases, definitions come without an explanation or a theoretical framework to back up the choice of age range. This raises concerns about the arbitrariness and lack of theoretical grounding in generational research in general and literature about millennials in particular.

Furthermore, research on millennials and work-related syndromes lacks integration of novel generational perspectives. Those studies that have provided a framework on generational perspective have frequently adopted the Strauss and Howe generational theory (Strauss & Howe, 1991), yet it has been criticised in the past for its temporally delimited and calendar-based approach. It seems that this approach remains appealing to researchers despite the debate around it. Indeed, research in psychiatric epidemiology has shown that there are behavioural, developmental, and psychological differences between generations. These differences are rooted in material markers (such as technological transitions) that profoundly reshape individuals' relationships to the world and themselves (Twenge, 2023). These generational patterns consist of cultural processes that must be understood as such to effectively act upon them.

Alternative perspectives on the "cohort approach" to study generations exist, such as the social-constructionist theory as well as the lifespan theory (Costanza et al., 2023), and more recently, Tim Ingold's views on generations which questions the idea of generations seen as layers stacked one after the other, which resonates with the popularly adopted cohort perspective (Ingold, 2025). These alternatives emphasise how generational identities are socially constructed, rather than biologically or historically fixed, advocating for a phenomenological understanding of how people internalise and make sense of events and interactions. The aim is thus to understand how individuals collectively make sense of their social reality through a logic of generational belonging. Research on collective memory from a sociocultural perspective has shown that individuals mobilise both memory and imagination (Wagoner, 2017), as a cultural activity of meaning-making that concerns not only lived events but also events more generally (De Saint-Laurent, 2018; Zittoun & Gillespie, 2016). The objective, therefore, is not merely to measure the impact of burnout or occupational stress among Millennials, but also to explore the social construction mechanisms of a generational reality about work.

Taking the latter into account, future research on Millennials is needed with larger and heterogeneous study samples through longitudinal designs and a mixed methods approach to expand the data collected and deepen understanding of their experiences and perceptions. Future research should also prioritise the lived experiences of individuals through in-depth qualitative interviews or narrative methodologies. Such approaches can inform more personalised and culturally sensitive clinical practices, especially when dealing with identity-related or existential dimensions of burnout. Furthermore, existing interventions often fail to account for how sociocultural shifts such as the digitalisation of work, the erosion of job stability, or shifting expectations regarding purpose and fulfilment, uniquely affect Millennial workers.

While these methodological considerations are crucial, it is essential to also situate Millennials' experiences within the broader and complex socio-economic landscape that shapes their working lives. Even though the multiple crises and transitions affect all generations, the challenges faced by Millennials are somewhat unique as they have grown up during the digital revolution, represent a large segment of the active workforce and live in the period of most rapid technological change in history,

having to constantly adapt while struggling with socio-economic crisis (Petersen, 2020; Saqué, 2023). Under these circumstances, millennials may endure work-family conflict to avoid financial strain even though it may lead to burnout. In that light, further exploration of work well-being related concepts such as work-family conflict among them may be a clue into gaining understanding of this generation and their struggles.

Moreover, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory—which underpins the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model—offers an interesting insight through its fourth principle (i.e. the desperation principle): when people's resources are overstretched or exhausted, individuals enter a defensive mode to preserve the self which is often aggressive, and may become irrational (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Building upon JD-R framework, Millennials' decisions to leave dissatisfying jobs, even during periods of economic instability may be considered irrational and reflect an attempt to conserve remaining resources or to adopt alternative coping strategies to mitigate the strain of resource loss. Consequently, future studies could examine how Millennials' manage and conserve their resources in the face of work-related syndromes. Longitudinal and qualitative studies could help clarify whether such behaviours represent adaptive attempts to restore balance or, conversely, signal maladaptive responses stemming from prolonged exposure to resource loss. This may ultimately contribute to a better account of the generational phenomenon in relation to their work-life and the work-related syndromes.

6. Limits

There are several limits to our research. Firstly, the scope of our population is broad. Thus, studies included diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, a variety of sectors and sometimes very specific populations within (i.e., medical-surgical and ICU nurses). Therefore, the results obtained while concerning a wide range of millennial profiles should be considered with precaution given the specificity of certain populations included in our studies. Secondly, we did not include the ensemble of results of our studies as we focused essentially on answering our research questions and concepts (burnout and occupational stress). Furthermore, we did not look for demographic information such as educational background, years of working experience or gender for example that may have shed light to the results.

Additionally, the heterogeneity in the operationalisation of burnout, means that the understanding of this concept varied through studies based on the framework and instruments chosen by the researchers in each study, thus the population's comprehension of burnout was dependent on the theoretical framework chosen and the explanation given to participants which likely varied across studies. Another limitation pertains the literature, as we did not had access to all grey literature available which may have added additional insights into the collected data.

A final limit relates to the possibility of language bias and the challenges related. Given that we selected studies written in English, French and Spanish only, relevant studies published in other languages may have been excluded, potentially misrepresenting the findings. Furthermore, limiting to a few languages could privilege research produced in dominant languages. Thus, overrepresenting perspectives specifically from English speaking countries as this was the language in most of our selected studies. Therefore, our findings may not fully reflect the global state of knowledge on millennials and work-related syndromes.

7. Conclusion

Studies on millennials and work-related syndromes often lack theoretical grounding, as most of them have been guided by the popular yet criticised cohort perspective. Alternative frameworks exist that may allow to understand these phenomena from different angles and explore how the millennial identity is socially constructed in relation to work. In that sense, more research through mixed methods and qualitative

approaches is essential.

This scoping review provides a foundation for future longitudinal and qualitative research. It opens the way for a deeper understanding of Millennials' work-life challenges through more contemporary generational lenses. This is particularly relevant given the high prevalence of work-related syndromes within this generation. From a scientific standpoint, research on such syndromes among Millennials remains limited. Therefore, this study contributes by offering insights grounded in emerging generational theoretical frameworks while situating them within the current socio-economic context.

Furthermore, we combine and encourage the integration of both occupational theories and socio-cultural psychological perspectives to better understand the Millennials phenomenon. On a practical level, our study sets a framework for continued research which may in turn contribute to the development of both organisational and clinical practices tailored to the specific needs of the Millennial generation, thus laying the foundation for future intervention studies.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Karen Valdiviezo: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Conceptualization. **Maxime Morsa:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Methodology, Conceptualization.

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Declaration of competing interest

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Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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