



## Phenomenology of Career Sustainability on Teachers from Millennial Generation.

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### Abstract

Sustainability career for teachers has not been a concern due to the assumption teaching will always be a sustainable career. Data from UNESCO stated that to achieve the 2030 Education goals, the world needs almost 69 million new teachers. The article analyzes teacher career sustainability using the Phenomenology methods to get the perspective of Millennial Generation teachers specifically from schools based on Islamic religion on the sustainability careers of the teachers. Method of data gathered using interviews and observation for 3 years starting from 2020-2023. The interview research is broken down into word codes which resulting in these keywords that affect teachers' career sustainability in Millennial Generation teachers who work in Islamic religion school base (mostly Muhammadiyah): Teachers Motivation, Teacher Commitment, Principals Leadership, Teacher Perspective of workload, and internalization of Islamic Values in the Teachers From the interview result, the internalization of Islamic values holds a deep impact on increasing the sustainability career of teachers who hold Islam as their religion and work in Islamic schools.

**Keywords:** Teacher's Sustainability career, Islamic Values Internalization, Teacher, SDG.

### Abstrak

Sustainabilitas karir guru belum menjadi perhatian karena adanya asumsi bahwa profesi guru akan selalu menjadi karir yang berkelanjutan. Untuk mencapai tujuan Pendidikan pada tahun 2030, dunia membutuhkan hampir 69 juta guru baru. Artikel ini menganalisis sustainabilitas karir guru dengan menggunakan metode Fenomenologi untuk mendapatkan pandangan guru Generasi Milenial khususnya sekolah berbasis agama Islam terhadap sustainabilitas karir guru. Data diambil melalui wawancara dan observasi selama 3 tahun dimulai dari tahun 2020-2023. Penelitian wawancara dijabarkan ke dalam kata-kata kode yang menghasilkan kata-kata kunci yang dapat mempengaruhi keberlangsungan karir guru pada guru Generasi Millennial yang bekerja di lingkungan sekolah agama Islam (mayoritas Muhammadiyah), kata - kata kunci tersebut adalah : Motivasi Guru, Komitmen Guru, Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Perspektif Guru Terhadap Beban Kerja, dan Internalisasi Agama Islam. Dari hasil wawancara, internalisasi nilai-nilai Islam mempunyai dampak yang besar dalam meningkatkan keberlangsungan karir guru yang menganut Islam sebagai agamanya dan bekerja di sekolah Islam.

Kata Kunci: Keberlanjutan Karir Guru, Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Islam, Guru,

## **Introduction**

Phenomenology defined according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy is a study of "phenomena", the appearance of things, or things as they appear and appear in our experience, the way we understand an experience, the meaning of an experience. Phenomenology studies experiences that occur consciously as subjective experiences from a first-person perspective (Smith 2003).

There is a phenomenon of the millennial generation who choose a profession as a teacher and do not find a match with the profession. The teacher profession has an image as a demanding and less rewarding profession. The interest of fresh graduates to become a teacher and the desire to stay in the profession as a teacher in these few decades are continuing to decrease (Han and Yin 2016).

The number of teachers in Indonesia is still below the actual number needed. The Indonesia government has tried several ways to increase the number of teachers, such as PPPK (Contract Program for teachers as Civil Servants with agreement), the job desk for PPPK teachers are the same as regular civil servant teachers but the benefits that they will get are different, this also considered to have contributed to the teachers career sustainability. There is also a moratorium on CPNS (candidates of civil servant) for teachers position, this is also considered to cause a shortage of teachers in

Indonesia for the next 5 years (Andina and Arifa 2021).

There is also a perception from Indonesian society that those who can't do anything else or cannot become anything else then the person will become a teacher. The reason someone chooses to enter the profession of teaching comes as a last choice. Teachers are "backward" careers for those with less (Paul W. Richardson, Stuart A. Karabenick 2014).

This study will be focusing on Career sustainability, which is a variable that focuses on individuals, it is more personal on their views of the careers that they have, giving individuals ownership of the careers they are pursuing (Wang and Zhang 2021).

The teachers that are subject to this study come from the millennial generation. Most of the millennial generation, are now day biggest productive and working age. The uniqueness of the millennial generation is: confident, easy to connect with new things, agile, able to express themselves well, and have good relationships with parents. They are ready to become an educated generation ((Morreale and Staley 2016). However, the Millennial generation has a lower job satisfaction score than the older generation group. There is a need for in-depth research on the professions occupied by the millennial generation. Based on a preliminary study in an education foundation that is engaged in education based on Islam, teacher turnover is quite high. The majority of teachers who resigned were teachers from the

millennial generation, with the reason of being accepted in other schools, needing more reward, needing an increment in welfare, family matters, and even the feeling that the teacher is not the right career decision for them. It is concluded that Based on this, and also to support and reach the United Nations world sustainability goals number 4 (quality education) and number 8 (decent work and economic growth), it is very important to investigate more deeply the factors that can affect the sustainability of the career of the teaching profession, especially in the millennial generation.

#### Research Methods

This study summarizes the meaning of the experiences of several individuals who are or experience the same phenomenon, namely the phenomenon experienced by the millennial generation who work as teachers, the appropriate choice of basic theory is phenomenology.

Phenomenology researchers often use social science techniques such as interviews, observation, and descriptive writing (Van Manen 2017). The research method used in this research was carried out in several ways, namely by interviews followed by observation of sources and then making comparisons using a literacy review. Questions in the interview include:

- Why are informants interested in becoming teachers?
- What do the informants feel regarding their profession as a teacher in the millennial generation?

- Are there certain experiences that you feel are especially related to your profession as a teacher?
- How does this experience influence these teachers' views of their profession as millennial generation teachers?

The reference theories and concepts used in this research are qualitative phenomenologist, consisting of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), grit, and social constructivism, (Ajzen 1991). In TPB, the actions a person takes in any form are determined by factors, the interest which grows from three factors, namely attitude towards the behavior (ATB), subjective norms (SN), and perceived behavioral control (PBC). In this theory, it is stated that ATB is the result of a person's attitude which arises from the evaluation of certain actions, whether in the form of positive or negative actions. The greater the evaluation value of the action appears, the more inclined the person will be to act repeatedly. The SN factor is an attitude that arises due to the demands of social life. SN is influenced by the people around the decision-maker, these people will follow the actions demanded by those around them. Meanwhile, PBC is a person's perception of how easy or difficult it is to carry out the desired behavior. Perceived behavioral control varies across situations and actions. PBC results in each individual having different perceptions of behavioral control depending on the situation, PBC can change a person's interest into

action (Kyle, V. A., White, K. M., Hyde, M. K., & Occhipinti 2014). In this research, the three factors ATB, SN, and PBC became one of the benchmarks in interviews and observing the behavior of the informants.

Data collection was carried out directly by researchers, the data obtained was primarily in the form of interviews regarding why they chose the teaching profession, what experiences were felt by millennial generation teachers, how they dealt with these experiences, and why they chose the teaching profession. Observations of teacher activities are used as comparisons and literature studies as support for research results. Categorization of teachers as the sources of this study, based on age

category that considered to have characteristics in terms of age (early or late millennial), all of them work in Islamic schools, and the ratio between males and females is 3: 4

**Result and Discussion**

All the interview data are detailed in the form of data coding using a top-down system, the order of the questions also uses the same form, which makes it easier for the interviewees to process their thoughts to get answers that match what they feel. The data analysis following analysis method by Miles Huberman, multiple compelling interpretations phenomenology (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014) Results are displayed in Table 1.

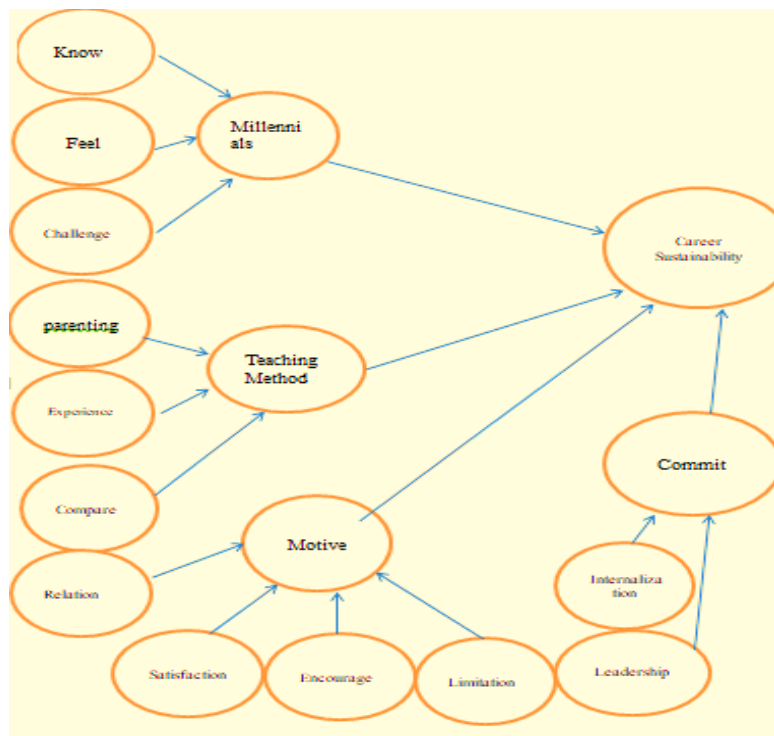
**Table 2.** Sample analysis based on research characteristics

No .	Classification/C ategorize	Positive	Netral	Negative
1	Know the term of Millennial Generation	1, 2,3,4,5,6,7 (100%)		
2	Feel as part of Millennial Generation	1,2,4,5,7 (71.4%)	6	3
3	Challenge in teaching younger generation	Technology	Adaptability	
		2, 4,7 (43%)	3,5,6 (43%)	
4	Parenting style from the parents of the teacher affecting their teaching method	2,3,4,5,6,7 (86%)	1	
5	Teachers experience during teenager time	1, 2,4,5,7 (71.4%)		3,6

No .	Classification/Categorize	Positive		Netral			Negative	
6	Comparing Millennial Teaching capability with older generation.	Teaching Method		Superiority	Inferiority			
		1		3,5,6 (43%)	7,2,4			
7	Student relation	Friendship		Trend	Role Model	Younger generation mindset		
		1,2,7 (43%)		3,6	4	5		
8	Satisfaction on the profession	1, 2, 3, 5,6,7 (86%)		4				
9	Urge to change profession	3,5,7 (42.8%)		1,4			2,6	
10	Teacher's career sustainability	4,5,6,7 (57%)					1,2,3	
11	Limitation to the teachers career sustainability	Admi nistrat ion	Famil y	Time Management			Government rules	
		1	2	3			4,7 (28.6%)	
12	Leadership	1,2,3,4,5 (71.4)					6,7	
13	Comparing capability with older generation	Emotion		Experience			Age Gap	technology
		1, 2		1,7			3	5,6,7 (42.8)
14	Effect from Internalization of Islamic Value to teachers proffesion.	7, 6, 3, 1 (57%)					5,4,2	

Table 1. explains the interview data coding into several key word. Coding continued to axial coding, which is shown in diagram 1 as shown below.

Diagram 1. Axis Coding



Based on Table 1 and Diagram 1, the interview result was put into coding to extract the keywords from the resources interview's answer, several keys can be put into consideration on the topic of Teacher's Career Sustainability which are: Commitment, Motivation, Religious (Islamic) internalization value and Principals Leadership.

Based on the interview results, the Leadership of the principals affects teacher's career sustainability, during the interview this statement is the one which gained mostly positive results. Teacher feels leadership does affect their decision to stay or leave the organization and even change their career. The interview method was by meeting the resource one by one with the interviewer the situation becomes more intimate in one session so that the answer becomes deeper. Thus it resulted in a feeling of security and the interviewee felt safe

to confess and answer the question. Examples of the questions are: Regarding the leadership style of the principal where you currently work, is there any influence of his leadership style on your performance? Describe the effect of your principal leadership style on your career. Which then The answers are More than 70% agree the leadership style affects their career. An example of this is an answer from Ms. H a 25-year-old teacher (the interview was done in 2021) when being asked about the principal leadership effect: "My Principal is very influential for me, my principal gives a lot of assignments to the teacher, it's difficult to discuss with him." Ms. H moved to another school a year after the interview.

Another interesting point that was discovered during the interview is that teachers believe teaching is a sustainable career, but they still feel the urge to change professions either it

is because they just want to try other professions or they feel that they are stuck on the career path so to develop their self they need to change profession. They also feel that many burdens come attached to a teacher's career, which are: the administration and government requirements being too much, Even though the Indonesian government already launched a new curriculum in 2021 and 2023, but still, the same burden felt by the teachers, there is also an insight about family matters as the obstacle of keeping the same career path as teachers, since the welfare of teachers in Indonesia still need much more improvement. An example of this answer was given by Mr. A, 29 years old (the interview was done in 2021) "Alhamdulillah, I am satisfied because being a teacher means teaching about knowledge every day" but when he was asked whether he thinks that he need to try other profession and does he think that you can continue to do this profession until retirement age, He said that he still need to try other profession and he doesn't think he can stay in the teacher profession until retirement age. These answers show that for Mr. A. teaching is not a sustainable career. In 2023 Mr. A is still a teacher, but he has another business as the owner of a tea shop, based on the writer's observation he is more focused on his tea shop than improving his career as a teacher.

There is also a concern about time management in a teacher's career. Some of the subject interviewees said that being a teacher makes it harder to get a work-life balance since teaching is not a 9 to 5 career. An interview with Ms. N a 29 years teacher (the interview was done in 2021) shows this statement "Honestly because I'm already married, my life orientation has started to change, now I'm working on my profession for passion and hobby, but to explore a higher level than my career, I'm not oriented

there" This answer also reflecting that for Ms. N, the teacher is not a sustainable career, especially for a married women who need to divide her time well between career and family matters.

Besides time management, technology which has evolved and improved a lot in the past two years during the pandemic also becomes a thing for some of the teachers, especially in the upper millennial generation. Since the majority of them are used to the classical method of giving lectures in the classroom, shifting it into an online classroom needs some extra effort, and using more technology in the learning process is also one of a burden that pressures the teachers. An answer from Mr. AG a 28-year-old teacher (the interview was done in 2021) reflects this statement "Our current teacher is dealing with technology, the current challenge is how to use technology".

Islamic internalization values from the interview results had a strong effect on teachers' career sustainability. All of the interviewee teachers are Moslem, and they hold their religious values strongly. It is also the reason why they choose to work in an Islamic school although the benefit (salary) might not be as big as another private school. This is another significant sign that for teachers it is not all about the money (salary). Most of the people who choose to be a teacher especially people who hold their religious values highly, have almost the same understanding that being a teacher is also an act of service to God, thus any kind of benefit, money (salary), or other things are not their major priority to look after. This is also a reason that when we want to increase teachers' career sustainability, benefits such as things and money are minor indicators to look after because their religious values have a bigger effect than that.

The interview result also gave insight into the phenomenology of millennial teachers who work in a religion-based school. The millennial generation has a branding of instant generation and has been known to have a low commitment to their profession and organization (King 2019; Morreale and Staley 2016). The millennial generation teachers somehow differ from the stigma. The cultural dictation of teacher becoming "Unsung Heroes" makes the people who choose the profession has a stronger commitment to their profession and organization. These results were taken from the interview question in which 57% of the interviewee samples answered that they believe teaching is a sustainable profession, in 86% of the interviewee samples said that becoming a

### **Discussion**

From the perception of the teacher, their profession has a high workload and is slow in evolving to a more modern structure profession. This perception reduces people's interest in being a teacher. For the millennial generation, teaching is also considered an outdated profession. (Firdaus, Purnamasari, and Akuba 2019). This indicates the need for further research on teacher motivation and its relation to teacher commitment and teacher career sustainability.

In Islam, teaching is seen as a noble profession because education is one of the central themes of Islam. Teachers are portrayed as a source of knowledge and morals. From an Islamic point of view, the internalization of Islamic values that must be possessed by teachers in their professional rules is humanism, cooperation (networking), social-prophetic, tolerance, pluralism, balance, exemplary, dialogical, and improvement (Mucharomah 2017). Based on theory, religion plays an important role in "humanizing" humans, including in terms of

teacher fulfills their satisfaction in the profession.

Although more than half of the sample believe that teaching will be a sustainable profession they still felt the urge to change profession. Almost 43% said they still felt the need to change their profession to a profession that paid more and satisfied them more than teaching. It also can be understood since the majority of the teachers who became the samples of the interview still felt that they were young enough to catch their dreams in other professions than teachers. Most of them said that teaching is not their dream job although they believe that they can stay in the teacher's profession until their pension time being a teacher is not enough to fulfill their needs and dreams.

Religionist values can provide ways for teachers to have sustainable careers, but this is not always the case when it is applied in the real world. There is a need to research the effect of Islamic values internalization on teachers' sustainability careers.

Besides these internal factors of motivation, perception, and Islamic internalization value that can shape the point of view of teachers about career sustainability, it is also important to see the effect of external factors that can hold important value in teacher career sustainability. Leadership from the principal as the direct leader of the teachers in the school can have to effect on the teacher's career sustainability. A good leadership style will bring a positive climate to the school, resulting in teachers, students, staff, and parents being more comfortable and satisfied with the student learning experience, but this also applies the other way around, when leadership is not good, the school climate becomes negative (Bahzar 2019). Therefore, to see the factors that influence the sustainability of a teacher's career, it



is also necessary to look at the leadership style of his superiors.

The samples majority come from specific Islamic organizations, There is a saying from the Muhammadiyah organization "Live for Muhammadiyah don't look for life in Muhammadiyah, which means: That one must have the ethos of life in Muhammadiyah so that he does not become hands down (beggar), but has hands on top (giver).

This motto is shown in the daily life of Muhammadiyah members. They work to give the best for their God and their organization. The Islamic values internalization comes in a good hand in hand with the rules that they have in the workplace, they pray sholat together which means they can sholat on time, and there are no prohibitions during their religious practice. Thus it gave a relaxing ambiance for the teacher to perform their religious duties and reflected in their teaching and learning process with the students.

Based on the results of interviews and observations that were analyzed using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen 1991). The result shows that based on the Attitude toward the behavior (ATB) the reducing number of the millennial generation who join in teacher's career as the result of high workload and low reward in teachers career, but these respondents choose to stay in their career because of the religion value and organization value, which show the subjective norm (SN) factors that affecting their action, these people will follow the actions demanded by those around them. This result also shows the factor of perceived behavioral control (PBC), where each individual will have a different perception. In the majority teaching are perceived as unattractive as be career that is sustained until pension time, the answer from the respondents and their action are varied. Some of them identified that teaching is a sustainable career until pension time, which they upgraded their capability in this career, and others chose to stay as a teacher but also pursue another career (double job), another respondent

after staying in the career for some times they choose to persuade other career or move to teach in other school.

### Conclusion

Based on this study, taking the data from interviews and observation. Sustainability career for a teacher can be achieved by increasing teacher motivation, increasing teachers' commitment to their career and organization, giving teachers a way to increase their character to good characters which including good religion and endurance to cope with high workload demand, and also a good regulation on choosing good leaders as the principal in a school.

Based on the motivation, to increase motivation can be done in several ways, such as choosing for example to improve teacher welfare, and/or making the teaching profession a prestigious profession in society because currently the teaching profession is considered a profession that is not prestigious and perceived as a small, second-rate profession. However, considering only financial motivation is not enough, because based on qualitative data from interviews and observations, it is known that in the Muhammadiyah Organization, salary is not the main priority for someone who chooses to be a teacher as a career.

We can also improve the sustainability of teachers' careers by increasing teacher commitment through providing training, regular awareness of the teaching profession about the reasons for becoming a teacher, and commitment to their career and organization. Therefore, it will also help to remind them of their intrinsic motivation to become teachers, to increase two important variables of career sustainability, namely commitment and motivation.

Perception of workload on teachers, most teachers perceive that the workload is heavy and heavy. This kind of perspective can be overcome by having a fair division of work by the leadership so that each teacher in the team has the same or almost the same workload. It is also a good idea

to overcome workloads that are considered dense and heavy by recalculating teachers' workloads in government regulations which are currently 40 hours a week (including 2.5 hours for rest time) because teachers' working time is not just the time they spend in school. teaching but also the service time they provide to customers (students parents and other stakeholders) which makes the actual working hours higher. If government regulations regarding working hours can be calculated at less than 40 hours a week, then the burden of regular working hours will be reduced and can help provide a new perspective for teachers, possibly increasing the sustainability of teachers' careers.

Through the variable internalization of Islamic values, it is also known that religious values have a positive influence on the sustainability of teachers' careers. To improve the sustainability of teachers' careers, organizations and/or schools as places, where teachers work, can provide regulations, policies, facilities, and infrastructure that make it easier for teachers and employees to practice religious rules, teachings, and values. The more comfortable teachers are in practicing religious values in their workplace, the better the value of the organization in the eyes of teachers, thereby increasing organizational commitment and also improving the sustainability of teachers' careers.

Looking at the leadership variable, teachers need to have good leaders. The principal's leadership style has important value and influences the sustainability of the teacher's career in the school he leads. For national schools, the government can provide leadership tests and training to school principals so that they can develop and have good leadership. Private schools can also make better regulations and screening to become school leaders, to ensure that only those who can truly become leaders in their schools.

The research results are interesting to discuss further, especially regarding the contradiction between what millennial generation teachers believe and how they act to improve the

sustainability of teachers' careers. The majority of the sample thought that teaching was a sustainable profession, they could develop individually in a teaching career, but they also said this career was not their dream job so they wanted to try another career path or profession.

It can be concluded that to improve the sustainability of teachers' careers, the variable with the highest influence is increasing teachers' organizational and professional commitment, then increasing their teaching motivation both internally (from within themselves) and externally (salary, needs). fulfilled, etc.) followed by managing better workload calculations and placing the right leaders with the right competencies by making strict rules and policy provisions to become leaders in schools or educational organizations.

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