

**Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations in IT Sector: A
comparative study on Gen Z and Millennials**

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Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations in IT Sector: A comparative study on Gen Z and Millennials

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABSTRACT

The rapid evolution of the IT sector has created a dynamic workplace shaped by the unique expectations and workplace Preferences of two dominant generational cohorts: Generation Z (born 1995–2012) and Millennials (born 1981–1994). This comparative study investigates how Gen Z and Millennials differ in their Workplace Preferences, such as preferred work arrangements, flexibility, values & Employment Expectations and explores how these preferences influence their workplace satisfaction organizational commitment and intention to stay. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional approach, data collected from Indian IT professionals in both groups will be analyzed to identify significant generational differences. The findings aim to deliver actionable insights for IT organizations, facilitating the design of tailored talent management and retention strategies suitable for a multigenerational, digitally native.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Millennials and Generation Z now make up a significant share of IT workforce, bringing new values and expectations to the workplace. Unlike earlier generations, these cohorts strongly prioritize flexible work arrangements, career advancement, work-life balance and purposeful employment over traditional job security and monetary benefits. In addition, from an organizational perspective, workplace flexibility can represent an organization's ability to improve organizational profitability through practices such as employment, quality and job rotation. The Indian IT sector is at the forefront of organizational transformation, driven largely by the work values and expectations of Gen Z and Millennial employees, who now comprise a substantial proportion of the professional workforce. Unlike previous generations, Millennials and Gen Z exhibit distinctive employment preferences, prioritizing flexible work arrangements, digital engagement, opportunities for personal growth and a sense of purpose in their work environments. These generations expect organizations to accommodate hybrid or remote work, support diversity and inclusion, promote well-being and ensure avenues for continuous learning and meaningful work. Understanding their expectations and aligning organizational policies accordingly is critical for enhancing organizational competitiveness, fostering employee commitment and reducing costly turnover in the highly competitive IT sector.

1.3 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

As global competition intensifies, attracting and retaining talent provides organizations with sustainable competitive advantage, particularly in India's dynamic IT sector where workforce demographics are rapidly shifting. Millennials (born 1981-1996) and Gen Z (born 1997-2012) now dominate the 20-30 age group jobseekers, bringing distinct workplace preferences and Employment Expectations that differ markedly from previous generations, creating a "management quagmire" for employers (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Stuart & Lyons, 2008). While Millennials exhibit confidence, diversity and structured career aspirations as they filled workforce gaps left by retiring Baby Boomers (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2010). Emerging research suggests that Gen Z introduces heightened demands for flexibility, purpose-aligned careers, mental health support and digital integration (Deloitte, 2023; McKinsey, 2024). Gen Z's influx is closing gaps but amplifying turnover risks, as both generations exhibit job-hopping tendencies which is uncommon among Boomers (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012)

Despite abundant studies on Millennial students, (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010; Johnson & Lopes, 2008), gaps persist in understanding their in-workforce preferences, especially compared to Gen Z. This is critical in IT, where employee shortages persist amid retirements and skill mismatches (Szinovacz, 2011). The general business problem is that talent attrition erodes company finances and operations (Yang, Wan, & Fu, 2011). Specifically, mismatched workplace preferences lead to voluntary turnover, costing 90–200% of an employee's annual salary in replacement, recruitment, training and lost productivity (Hom, Mitchell, Thomas, & Griffeth, 2012; Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2013). Employers invest more in replacements than retention, underscoring the need to tailor IT job offerings such as hybrid models, upskilling opportunities and inclusive cultures to Gen Z and Millennial expectations and preferences.

Understanding these generational differences in the way how they perceives the workplace expectations and employment preferences is essential for the employer to attract and retain talent, reduce shortages and sustain competitiveness.

In context of Kerala, a southern Indian state with a rapidly growing IT ecosystem anchored by hubs like Technopark (Thiruvananthapuram) and Infopark (Kochi), the comparison among the generational differences related to the employment preferences and workplace expectations are under-explored.. This study aims to compare the Workplace Preferences and

Employment Expectations among Gen Z and Millennials in the IT sector, in Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study seeks to compare the Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations of Gen Z and Millennial employees working in the IT sector at Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram. As Millennials and Gen Z constitute a substantial segment of the present and emerging workforce, understanding the differences in their expectations concerning work flexibility, career growth organizational culture, learning opportunities and work-life balance has become increasingly important for employers in the IT industry.

The study is undertaken in the specific context of Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram, one of Kerala's most significant IT ecosystems, which hosts a large concentration of IT and IT-enabled service firms and a substantial employee base, making it an appropriate setting for examining generational differences in Employment Expectations. By identifying similarities and differences between Gen Z and Millennial employees, the study intends to generate empirical insights that can help organizations align HR practices with generational needs and improve talent attraction and retention strategies in a highly competitive sector. Thus, the study contributes to addressing an important contextual and empirical gap in the literature on generational workforce preferences within Kerala's IT sector

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is classified for the Organization, for the Employees and for the Academics.

For organizations, aligning workplace practices with the preferences of Millennial and Gen Z employees fosters fair & diverse environments that ensure equal opportunities, strengthen employee satisfaction, improve relationships among coworkers, families and communities and promote generational equity in policies and practices, thereby enhancing organizational culture and supporting long-term employee well-being.

For employees, the research supports greater workplace satisfaction and engagement by validating that many expectations are shared across generations while offering actionable insights to guide career development, change management and improved workplace experiences tailored to different employee profiles.

For academics, the study contributes a multidimensional framework that integrates tangible dimensions like monetary benefits and job security with intangible dimensions like recognition, diversity, equity and inclusion and sense of purpose, creating avenues for future empirical work and enabling comparative and longitudinal research on Gen Z and Millennials, particularly regarding shifts in work values, digital work environments and evolving organizational expectations in contemporary workplaces.

1.6 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to

1. To analyze Workplace Preferences among the Gen Z and Millennials in the IT sector.
2. To analyze Employment Expectations among the Gen Z and Millennials in the IT sector.
3. To conduct a cross-generational comparative analysis of workplace preferences and expectations between Gen Z and Millennials.
4. To provide practical guidelines and recommendations for hiring practices, compensation structures and workplace flexibility policies to the distinct needs of Generation Z and Millennials in the IT sector.

1.7 DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPTS

1. WORKPLACE PREFERENCES

Theoretical Definition:

Workplace Preferences denote the conditions, surroundings and characteristics that employees value when selecting or assessing a workplace. It shows what people prioritize in their workplace, including organizational culture, job responsibilities, advantages etc. For example, (Leslie et al., 2021; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Ruhil et al., 2020).

Operational Definition:

Operational definition frames Workplace Preferences as measurable factors like diversity, tasks and projects which stands for the professional development, ergonomics of the workspace, psychosocial support, technology preferences & organizational culture, job rotation and the freedom of work on your own initiative, stress-free working environment and flexibility in work schedule that can be assessed via surveys and assessments.

2. EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Theoretical Definition:

Rousseau, in the Psychological contract, defined Employment Expectations are the unwritten mutual beliefs and obligations that employees and employers hold about roles, rewards and treatment; these expectations form a psychological contract whose perceived fulfilment or breach shapes employee attitudes and behaviour.

Operational Definition:

The extent to which employees perceive that their job will meet expected standards in pay, role clarity, workload, working conditions, career advancement organizational support value and contribute directly to a purposeful result, recognition, freedom to quit the responsibilities, regular learning and development options, long-term job and monetary security as measured by their responses to questionnaire items.

3. MILLENNIALS

Theoretical Definition:

Strauss & Howe in the generational theory, defined Millennials are a generational cohort identified by shared birth years and recurring archetypal arising from common formative experiences that create a distinctive generational personality.

Operational Definition:

Millennials refer to the generation of participants born between 1981 and 1996, identified in this study as the cohort following Gen X and preceding Gen Z.

4. GENERATION Z

Theoretical Definition:

In the Generational theory perspective, Generation Z is defined by the unique historical and social milieu during their formative years (widespread internet/smartphone access, social media, economic uncertainty, climate awareness and the COVID-19 pandemic), which produces a shared "generation" identity and distinct attitudes toward work, authority and social issues.

Operational Definition:

Gen Z refers to the generation of participants born within the defined birth-year interval of 1997–2012, used in this study to represent the youngest adult workforce and late adolescent cohort.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent literature demonstrates diverse generational workplace expectations. Millennials emphasize real-world skill application, mentorship and career progression, seeking clarity in career paths and valuing collaborative, tech-driven work cultures. Gen Z, while similarly valuing flexible schedules, place particular importance on digital environments, continuous learning, Mental health support and workplace diversity.

Contemporary literature indicates marked generational shifts in workplace expectations and workplace preferences.

Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Mercer, 2003; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2004, in their study showed that millennials in the IT sector value real-world skill application, structured career progression, technological integration, collaborative work culture and effective mentorship. They often seek clarity in career paths and emphasize tangible benefits such as pay, stability and career development and in contrast, Gen Z places a premium on flexibility, digital fluency, opportunities for continuous learning, personal growth, diversity and organizational values aligned with well-being and purpose (Punia & Sharma, 2008; Jones et al., 2016; Gallup, 2022).

Latham in his study in 2012 found that work values develop based on individual needs within situational contexts. Consequently, the Gen Z cohort will have unique work value systems compared to other generations due to their distinct generational challenges (Twenge et al., 2010).

Estimo and Aguilar's (2017) study reinforces intrinsic values and contextual factors that shape motivation and behaviour, and multidimensional view by showing that employees prioritize spirituality, mutual respect, goal achievement, open communication, support, effective leadership, and recognition within a fast-paced, organized environment. Their findings align with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory which distinguishes intrinsic motivators from hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction, suggesting organizations must supply both meaningful work and supportive contexts to sustain commitment. Prior work also links creativity and performance to intrinsic interest, social support, and recognition, supporting the study's emphasis on creative, analytical, and helping activities as preferred tasks. Demographic moderators such as age, tenure, gender and role have been shown to shape work-value priorities and interaction styles, indicating that HR practices should be tailored rather than one-size-fits-all. Collectively, the literature implies that aligning institutional values,

recognition systems, leadership transparency and job design with employees' expressed preferences improves well being and productivity recommendations Estimo and Aguilar advance through calls for workshops, recognition programs, and role alignment.

Lee and Gilke in 2024, by utilizing a choice-based conjoint design, showed that the employment sector indeed matters for the initial attraction to a job, but only as long as little additional information about job attributes is available and suggested that sector signals are not equally powerful at every stage of the job-choice process. They may matter more at the beginning, when job seekers know about the role and rely on general impressions. However, as more information becomes available about salary, work-life balance, advancement opportunities, workload and job content, applicants tend to shift their attention from sector labels to concrete job attributes. This means that sector may function more like a first impression than a final deciding factor. Studies using choice-based conjoint designs are especially useful here because they measure how people make real trade-offs between multiple job features at the same time. Such methods help show whether sector remains important after other attributes are introduced.

Employment sector influences job attraction, but its effect is limited and context-dependent. It matters most when little else is known and less when applicants can compare detailed job features. This also suggests an important research gap, many earlier studies may have overstated the role of sector because they considered only a few job attributes. A more realistic view is that job seekers evaluate both sector signals and specific work conditions together. Therefore, the study is useful for understanding how attraction develops from broad impressions to informed job choice and it also has practical value for employers that want to strengthen recruitment through clear communication of job features rather than relying on sector image alone.

2.1 TRAINING PREFERENCES

Research on training preferences highlights cross-generational demand for workplace learning, with Millennials showing a need for development programs that align with their distinct preferences (Garrett, 2010). Scholars argue that younger cohorts, having grown up in environments that emphasized continuous education arrive in the workplace with heightened expectations for ongoing skill development (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008). Empirical and theoretical work suggests these expectations reflect a desire not only to acquire immediate

job-relevant competencies but also to build capabilities for future career mobility and adaptability.

2.2 MENTAL WELLBEING

Meta-analysis by Carr and colleagues in 2003 demonstrated that positive emotionality influences organizational commitment more than cognitive or instrumental climate factors, entrenching companies deeper in the necessity to consider workers mental well-being.

Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse and Mohr in 2004 measured organizational personality traits and found that organizations had distinct personalities. In addition subjects had shared perceptions of organizations that related to their assessments of organizations overall reputation and whether they would pursue employment there.

2.3 WORKPLACE CULTURE

Culture is an abstract concept with diverse definitions emphasizing its shared nature, yet **Martin (1992, 2002)** identifies three underlying philosophies, the traditional integration perspective, which portrays culture as homogeneous societies with unified meanings, values and norms (criticized as overly simplistic by Smerek, 2010; Alvesson, 2011; Parker, 2000) differentiation acknowledging subcultures and subgroup consensus amid conflicts and fragmentation, viewing consensus as fleeting and ambiguity as inherent, fostering multiple interpretations. Contemporary research further divide the culture into measurable elements like values, norms and actions (prevalent in international management organizational behavior, intercultural communication and cultural intelligence studies Adler & Gundersen, 2008; Ting-Toomey, 1999; Ang & Van Dyne, 2008) versus a more complex, shared phenomenon encompassing language, symbolism and subjective meanings in public interactions (Alvesson, 2011; Yanow, 2000). Models like Schein's (1985, updated 2016) cultural layers, Sackman's (1991) Iceberg Model and Cameron & Quinn's (2011) Triangle of Culture distinguish visible artifacts and behaviors from underlying invisible assumptions and beliefs, revealing culture's stratified structure

Lievens and highhouse in 2003 found that both instrumental traits (tangible characteristics such as pay and benefits) and symbolic traits (less tangible characteristics such as sincerity and innovativeness) were related to perceptions of organizations and the ratings of symbolic traits were more differentiated across the IT organizations. They expect organizations to support mental health, provide inclusive work environments and offer flexibility in terms of

when, where and how work is accomplished (Diwaker Ugargol & Patrick, 2018; Klindzic & Maric, 2019).

Wood et al. (2019) posited that person-organization fit primarily stems from shared "normative" preferences, suggesting organizations need only meet universal minimum standards (respect) while idiosyncratic individual preferences contribute minimally to fit variance. The authors counter this by acknowledging broad consensus on baseline acceptability but argue that, among options meeting these thresholds, decisions hinge on personal priorities, such as prioritizing stimulating work over pay or vice versa.

They advocate for fit assessments that evaluate optimization of top individual preferences, urging organizations to consider these idiosyncrasies beyond mere minima. This perspective underscores the role of personalized attributes in talent attraction and retention, particularly relevant for diverse generational cohorts like Gen Z in modern workplaces.

Aggarwal, U. and Bhargava, S. (2011) in their research 'Examining psychological contract contents in India, found that the psychological contract has become a key concept in understanding the employment relationship because it focuses on the Employment Expectations hold about what they should receive from their organization in return for their contributions. Unlike the formal employment contract, the psychological contract includes both written and unwritten promises such as fair treatment, career growth, job security, recognition, support and development opportunities. Rousseau's work established that these expectations strongly shape employee attitudes and behavior, making the psychological contract an important part of organizational research.

Research showed that psychological contract contents are not the same for everyone. They differ across employee groups, occupations and organizational settings and they are influenced by culture and social context. In India, employees may place strong importance on career development, respectful treatment, support from managers and recognition. These expectations may be especially important for managerial employees, who play a critical role in organizational success and are often expected to contribute beyond their formal roles. At the same time, most earlier studies have been conducted in Western settings, so there is limited understanding of how psychological contracts work in the Indian private sector.

This study helped in identifying what employees in the Indian private sector, especially employees, expect from their organizations. By examining the contents of the psychological contract, the study can contribute to theory by extending psychological contract research into

a non-Western context and to practice by helping organizations manage expectations more effectively. In this way, the literature suggests that understanding employee expectations is essential for building stronger, more stable and more productive employment relationships.

2.4 REWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

According to **Armstrong (2002)**, employee rewards are based on their value to the organisation, including monetary and non-monetary compensation. Gulyani and Sharma (2018) define employee rewards as the returns workers expect for their efforts, including intrinsic factors such as personal development and extrinsic factors such as financial compensation. With Millennials, the emphasis has shifted towards non-monetary rewards, such as flexible work arrangements and work–life balance, which have become more critical in the post-pandemic world. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated changes in reward preferences, with Millennials valuing remote work, well-being support and growth opportunities. To attract, recruit and retain this new generational cohort into the multi-generational workforce, public organisations must understand the forces that drive their work values, workplace needs and expectations and how their reward preferences may be different from those of the other generations in the public sector workforce (Acheampong et al., 2020). Reward preferences for Millennials Millennials rank salary, work–life balance, benefits, performance management, talent development and recognition as critical factors in the workplace (Cassel, 2020). Business et al. (2019) identified seven reward variables that attract Millennials: leadership and environment, benefits, performance incentives, individual development, a safe work environment, work–life balance and performance recognition. Mahmoud et al. (2021) emphasised that Millennials value work–life balance, meaningful work and recognition. According to Sharma (2020), Millennials desire recognition, prompting organisations to offer career growth opportunities to demonstrate interest in their employees. Lack of recognition can lead to job dissatisfaction and psychological distress (Nayak et al., 2020). Financial incentives and recognition from leaders motivate Millennials to stay with organisations (Yoong & Salamzadeh, 2020).

Sahu’s study (2025) on generation-based motivation provides useful insight into the differing workplace needs of Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z. The study argues that each generation is motivated by distinct factors shaped by its social and technological environment. Gen X employees are described as valuing job security, stability and autonomy, while Millennials place greater importance on work-life balance, recognition and purpose. Gen Z, on the other

hand, is presented as highly motivated by flexibility, meaningful work, growth opportunities and digital comfort. These differences suggest that motivation in the workplace is not uniform across age cohorts, but instead varies according to generational experiences and expectations. The study is particularly relevant to research on Employment Expectations and workplace preferences because it highlights the link between motivation and preferred work conditions. Gen Z's preference for flexibility, rapid growth and innovation reflects a stronger interest in dynamic workplaces, whereas Millennials tend to look for purpose-driven environments with recognition and balance. Gen X employees, by contrast, are more comfortable in stable and independent work settings. This indicates that employees from different generations may evaluate employment opportunities differently depending on whether the workplace meets their motivational needs.

Sahu's research supports the idea that organizations should not rely on one-size-fits-all motivation strategies. Instead, human resource policies should be designed to address the specific expectations of each generational group. This is especially relevant to the study, as it shows that workplace preferences are closely connected to motivational drivers such as flexibility, job security, learning, recognition and autonomy. Therefore, the study provides a useful theoretical base for examining how Gen Z and Millennials differ in their Employment Expectations and workplace preferences.

Mamta et al. (2013) study on expectations of Indian Generation Y reveals that the employee loyalty is higher in organizations that fulfill intrinsic needs and come out with plans for achieving personal goals of their staff. A similar study conducted by Parul and Jain (2012) highlights that the Professionals of Generation Y are highly inspired and performance driven when they are under an empathetic supervisor. Further, they are keen on the achievement of values in both work and social environment. They are critical to superfluous procedure and process.

2.5 FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT

Bal and De Lange (2014) stated that flexible work arrangements are an opportunity for employees to make choices in working, such as when, where and for how long they are involved in work related tasks. Work flexibility is an agreement between superiors and subordinates in a company that has been designed on certain grounds or values according to mutual agreement in the form of flexibility in organizing work so that they can consistently fulfill their job demands (Selby et al., 2001; Erden-Bayazit and Bayazit, 2019).

The work behaviors of Generation Y are positively impacted by flexibility, multitasking, teamwork and optimism (Sa'aban et al., 2013). Generation Z was born in the highly advanced digital era and is growing around technology. They are categorized as the first generation of true digital natives (Lanier, 2017). In the workplace, generation Z is viewed as energetic, transparent, innovative, creative, tolerant, socially conscious, emotional, conservant and independent (Paina and Irini, 2021).

Study of Govender L., Migiro, S.O.; Kyule A.K., (2018) showed that Flexible work arrangements (FWA) prioritize an employee's ability to choose their work location, schedule and workload. These practices aim to keep employees motivated and satisfied with both their professional and personal responsibilities. While existing research on the impact of FWA on performance and job satisfaction has primarily focused on developed countries, this study examines the relationship between FWA, performance and job satisfaction in the context of Durban Westville Eskom, a South African organization. The study is grounded in theories such as the two-factor theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, role theory and spillover theory.

According to the study by Bontrager et al., 2021, stated that the implementation of flexible work arrangements is effective in providing employee work-life balance because employees can divide work time and personal time so that it will provide positive results for employees, which will also have a positive impact on the company by reducing employee intention to leave

The study of Kumar K & Velmururan R in 2018, showed that work-life balance has become an important issue for both Millennials and Generation Z, but their workplace priorities differ. Study indicates that Millennials generally value flexibility, teamwork, meaningful work and a balance between personal and professional life, while Generation Z gives more importance to salary, job security, career advancement, independence and a supportive work culture that includes mental well-being and social responsibility. Research also suggests that flexible work hours, annual leave and work-from-home options improve job satisfaction and performance for both generations, although Gen Z is often described as more idealistic, growth-oriented and individualistic in work style. Therefore, the literature supports the idea that both generations seek work-life balance, but Millennials are usually more inclined toward balance itself, whereas Gen Z is more focused on career growth and organizational support

According to Chandra (2012), rigid separation of work and family roles remains common and work-life balance practices as well as family-friendly policies differ significantly between Western and Eastern countries. In Eastern countries, work-life balance issues are often viewed as more relevant to women, largely because family-friendly policies are not implemented effectively and therefore remain underused. In the current context, India continues to face challenges in increasing women's participation in the workforce, making it important to understand the employment preferences and employer-related factors that influence women's job choices.

2.6 JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is the pleasing reaction or displeasing emotional state that employees have when they work (**Prabowo et al., 2018**). High job satisfaction can increase an employee's commitment to the company and encourage them to put in more effort so that the company can profit in the long term (Raziq and Maulabakhsh, 2015). Employee dissatisfaction can be expressed in various ways, such as through exit, voice, loyalty and neglect (Robbins and Judge, 2012).

Graczyk-Kucharska and Erickson (2020) proposed that the leading organizational factors determining person-organization fit for Gen Z are work environment, atmosphere, innovation, flexibility and offerings for individual opportunities. The authors also assessed that individual factors of gender and work conditions affected preferences across the dichotomies of work preferences investigated.

The study by Alina Elena Mrginean (2021) builds on prior research noting Gen Z's entry into a diverse, multi-generational workforce amid economic events like the 2008 recession, positioning them as more pragmatic and risk-averse than Millennials. It references global demographic shifts (e.g., Gen Z surpassing Millennials in population share by 2019) and biases in generational stereotyping (e.g., Tversky & Kahneman, 1974), setting the context for Romanian Gen Z students' views.

Neetu Jain and Prachi Bhatt (2015), in their study on employment preferences of job applicants, found that certain factors are better managed by the private sector, while others are better addressed by the public sector. They noted that stability of the organization, work-life balance and job security are considered highly important by potential employees and therefore need to be prioritized by both public and private sector organizations.

2.7 EMPLOYEE ATTRITION

Employee attrition in the IT sector has been widely examined as a significant organizational issue, particularly in relation to work pressure, work-life balance, career opportunities and alternative employment options.

Rahman, Naqvi and Ismail (2008) emphasized the importance of turnover intention among IT professionals, showing that intention to leave is influenced by several workplace and individual factors. Treuren (2013) further highlighted that perceived job alternatives and employee attitudes are closely related to leaving intention, suggesting that employees are more likely to quit when they believe better opportunities exist elsewhere. These studies establish that attrition is not caused by a single factor, but by a combination of organizational and personal influences.

Haridas and Basheer Ahmed Khan (2015) in their study identified several factors affecting attrition among IT professionals, including job stress, workload and workplace conditions. Similarly, Kaushik, Verma and Sharma (2015) observed that attrition in the IT sector is shaped by organizational pressures and employee dissatisfaction, while Kadam and Thakar (2014) reported that the IT industry faces persistent attrition challenges due to demanding work environments and limited retention strategies. Sadry (2015) also noted that employee attrition in IT organizations is influenced by broader workplace concerns such as recognition, growth opportunities and employee expectations.

M. Rajeshwari and M.Sulaipher in their study in Technopark (2016) points to the importance of work-life balance and career development in employee retention. Employees often leave organizations when they experience long working hours, unrealistic time pressure, limited appreciation and insufficient developmental opportunities. The study aligns with these findings by focusing on work pressure, supervisor relations, work-life balance and career development as major factors influencing attrition in Techno Park, Trivandrum.

Naim and Lenka (2018) developed a conceptual framework to explain how organizations can develop and retain Generation Y employees through a combination of mentoring, strategic leadership, social media and knowledge sharing. The study is highly relevant to research on Employment Expectations and workplace preferences because it highlights the developmental and relational factors that younger employees value in the workplace. The authors argue that Generation Y employees are not attracted only by salary or job security, but also by

opportunities for learning, feedback, recognition, inclusion and personal growth. This aligns closely with the idea that workplace preferences extend beyond material benefits to include the quality of organizational support and developmental climate.

A major contribution of the article is its emphasis on competency development as the central mechanism linking workplace practices to retention. Naim and Lenka (2018) propose that mentoring, strategic leadership, social media and knowledge sharing foster employee competencies, which in turn strengthen affective commitment and intention to stay. This is important for studies on Employment Expectations because it shows that employees value workplaces where they can continuously develop their capabilities.

The authors also explain that mentoring supports both career and psychosocial development, while strategic leadership helps align employee goals with organizational vision. Social media and knowledge sharing are presented as modern tools that improve learning, interaction and socialization, especially for Generation Y employees who are comfortable with technology. These findings are useful for workplace preference studies because they indicate that younger employees may prefer environments that are interactive, flexible and technologically enabled. Such workplaces are likely to be perceived as more supportive and engaging, thereby improving retention and commitment.

For the research, this study provides a strong theoretical base for understanding why Employment Expectations and workplace preferences matter to Generation Y employees. It suggests that preferences are shaped not only by demographic generation, but also by developmental needs such as learning, recognition, emotional support and career mobility.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology is a crucial aspect of any academic investigation, outlining the procedures and techniques that will be used to collect, analyse and interpret data (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). This chapter will provide a detailed account of the methodology applied in this study, including the research method and approach, as well as the data collection and analysis methods. The sampling technique and data sources will also be explained. Ethical considerations will be discussed, with a focus on protecting human data and privacy. The chapter will also touch upon the limitations of the methodology employed and how they were addressed.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional research design. A quantitative design enables the collection and statistical analysis of measurable data, which is critical for identifying patterns. Numerical data is collected through structured surveys which targeted both Gen Z and Millennial employees in the Technopark.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population of this research consisted of professionals employed in the Information Technology (IT) sector and includes current Gen Z (born 1995–2012) and Millennial (born 1981–1994). The research is to be conducted among the IT employees in Thiruvananthapuram. The sample is collected through the purposive sampling.

The final sample comprised 60 valid respondents, which has 29 representation from the Millennials and 31 samples from the Generation Z, representing various demographic categories such as age, gender, years of experience and Job Role.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The data collection instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire divided into three main sections. The first section will gather demographic information such as age, gender, job role and industry. The second section include items related to Workplace Preferences, such as flexibility in work, flexible working hours and other related work conditions. The third section will assess job satisfaction and perceived organizational support by using Likert scales to control for confounding variables.

The primary tool for data collection to be used will be a structured questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions, preferences and expectations related to work environment, compensation, work–life balance, career growth organizational culture, leadership style and flexibility in work arrangements. To enhance the reliability and validity of the study, established and standardized scales such as the Work Values Scale, Job Expectations Scale and Work–Life Balance Scale were incorporated. The questionnaire also included a demographic section to classify respondents based on age, work experience and job role, enabling clear differentiation between Gen Z and Millennial employees. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, including descriptive statistics and inferential tests such as the independent samples t-test and chi-square test, to identify and compare significant differences in workplace Preferences and workplace expectations between the two generational cohorts.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data collection was conducted over a span of three to four weeks using an online survey disseminated via Google Forms. The questionnaire was shared through professional networks, email and social media platforms like LinkedIn that cater to IT professionals.

Participants were provided with a brief introduction explaining the purpose of the study, along with assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation was entirely voluntary and informed consent was obtained electronically at the beginning of the survey.

Reliability Testing

- Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each standardized scale to verify internal consistency.

3.5 RELIABILITY STATISTICS

The reliability test is used to check whether the questionnaire items measure the same concept consistently. In the research on Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations, it helps confirm that the statements under each construct are dependable before interpreting the results.

3.5.1 RELIABILITY FOR WORKPLACE PREFERENCES

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.831	9

Table 3.1

3.5.2 RELIABILITY FOR EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.672	9

Table 3.2

INTERPRETATION

The reliability statistics obtained from SPSS indicate that the Workplace Preferences scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.831 with 9 items, which reflects good internal consistency. This means that the items are closely related and reliably measure the same variable. The Employment Expectations scale reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.672 for 9 items, showing moderate internal consistency.

3.6 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques was employed:

Descriptive Statistics

The data were analyzed using frequency distributions for the demographic variables to summarize the sample profile and identify the distribution. Descriptive statistics were computed for all major constructs, including the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, to provide a clear overview of the central tendency and variability in the data. These measures help present the overall pattern of the responses and support further interpretation of the study variables.

Inferential Statistics

This study employed two complementary statistical tests, Independent Samples t-test to compare Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations between Gen Z and Millennial employees. Along with this One way Anova test is used to find the influence of Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations with the Experience in the IT field.

1. Independent Samples t-test: Primary Parametric Analysis

The Independent Samples t-test was selected as the primary statistical test to compare the means of workplace preference scores between the two independent generations (Gen Z and Millennials) for the following reasons:

Two independent groups: The study involves comparing exactly two independent groups Gen Z and Millennials.

Continuous dependent variables: The Workplace Preference and Employment Expectation variables were measured using Likert-scale items that were aggregated to create continuous composite scores, satisfying the continuous measurement requirement for the t-test.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

From the participants side, informed consent was obtained before the survey began. The respondents were clearly informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that participation was entirely voluntary. They were free to decline participation or skip any question they were not comfortable answering.

The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were strictly maintained throughout the study. No personal identification details such as names, phone numbers, email addresses or other identifying information were collected. The responses were used only for academic research purposes and individual participants could not be identified from the findings in any manner.

Since the study was conducted through a survey method, care was taken to avoid collecting unnecessary personal or sensitive information. No location details, IP addresses or other traceable data were recorded. The participants were also informed that their responses would be reported only in aggregated form, ensuring that the results reflected group-level trends rather than individual opinions.

The study followed basic ethical principles of respect for persons, voluntary participation, privacy and non-maleficence. Special attention was given to ensure that the data collection process did not cause any discomfort, pressure or harm to the respondents. Overall, the ethical procedures adopted in the study helped maintain trust, protect participant rights and ensure the integrity of the research process.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION

4.1.1 AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age Distribution of Respondents N=60

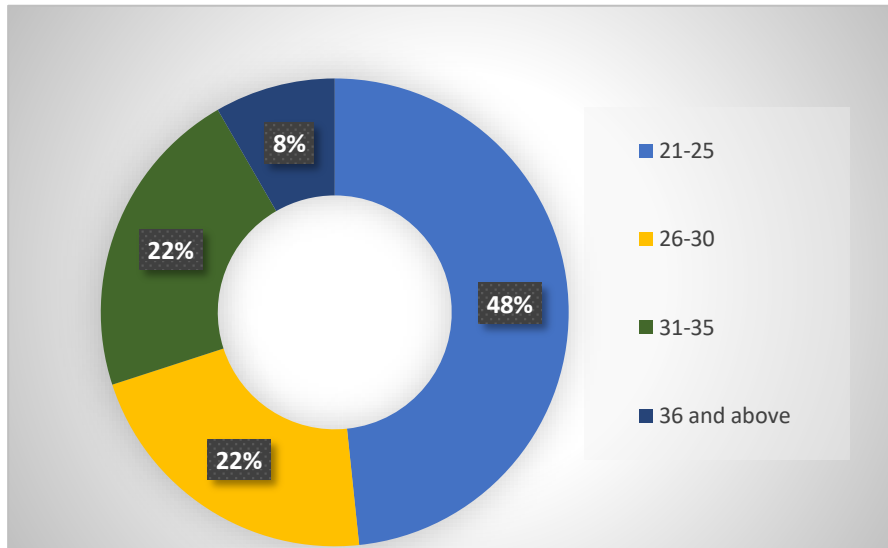


Figure 4.1.1

The age wise classification of respondents shows that the study sample was predominantly composed of younger employees. Of the 60 respondents from whom data were collected, 29 respondents belonged to the 21–25 years age category (48%), constituting the largest share of the sample. The age groups 26–30 years and 31–35 years each comprised 13 respondents (22%), reflecting equal representation from these categories. Meanwhile, only 5 respondents were found in the 36 years and above category (8%), indicating comparatively lower participation from older employees. Hence, the sample structure reveals that the study largely represents the perceptions of employees in the younger age brackets, thereby reflecting the youthful demographic composition of the selected workforce.

4.1.2 GENDER

The gender-wise distribution of the respondents shows that, out of the total sample collected, 33 were male (55%) and 27 were female (45%), while no respondents belonged to the transgender category. This indicates that the sample had a relatively balanced gender composition, with a marginally higher representation of male employees. The presence of both male and female respondents in substantial numbers enhances the diversity of the sample and supports a broader understanding of employee perspectives. Overall, the data suggests that the study captured opinions from both genders in a fairly equitable manner.

Gender Distribution of Respondents N=60

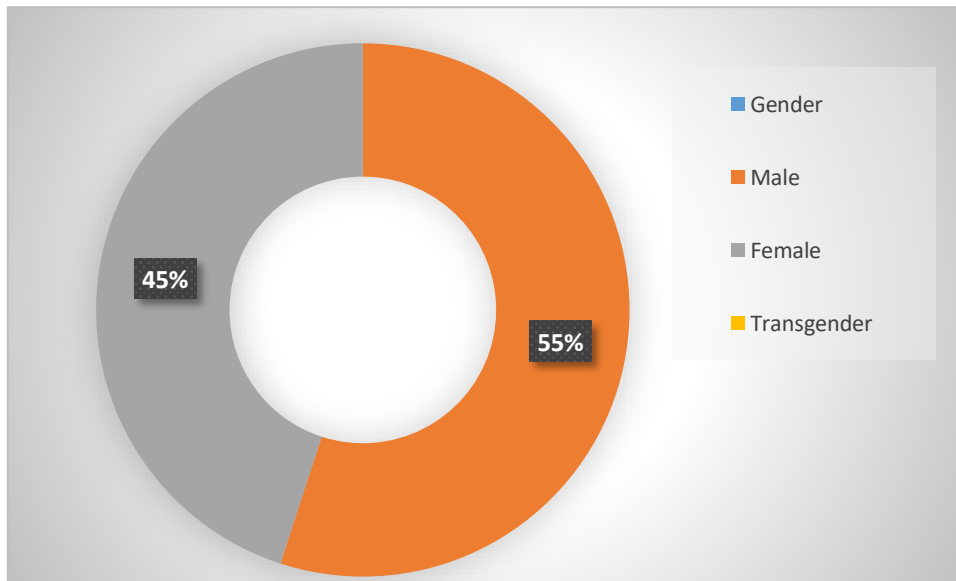


Figure 4.1.2

FREQUENCY GENDERWISE DISTRIBUTION TABLE

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	33	55.0
	Female	27	45.0
	Total	60	100.0

Table 4.1

These demographic characteristics are important as gender influence how employees view career growth organizational support, flexibility, communication and work environment. In male-dominated environments, female employees experience the workplace differently in terms of inclusion, comfort in expression and participation in decision-making. Therefore, the gender composition of the sample provides a useful context for interpreting responses related to Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences. Overall, the sample reflects a workforce that is somewhat male-dominated but still sufficiently diverse to support meaningful analysis of employee perceptions.

4.1.3 WORK EXPERIENCE DISTRIBUTION

Work Experience Distribution of Respondents N=60

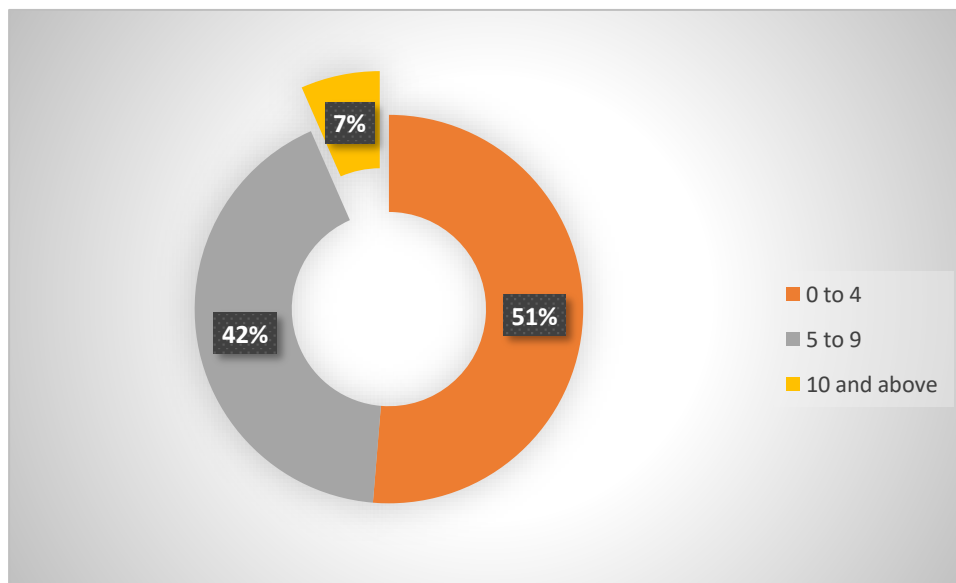


Figure 4.1.3

The work experience of the 61 employees was classified into three categories: 0 to 4 years, 5 to 9 years and 10 years & above. This distribution provides an overview of the respondents' service experience and helps in understanding the composition of the sample in terms of tenure. Such classification is useful for analyzing whether employees with different levels of experience vary in their Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations. It also supports a clearer interpretation of the findings by showing the spread of employees across short, medium and long work experience groups.

4.1.4 JOB ROLE

The respondents occupied various job roles within the organization, reflecting the functional diversity of the sample selected for the study. The inclusion of job role as a demographic variable is important, as employees in different positions differ in terms of responsibilities, authority, workload and exposure to workplace practices. An analysis of job role distribution therefore provides a clearer understanding of the composition of the sample and offers useful background for interpreting variations in employee perceptions and responses across different categories of work.

Job Role Distribution of Respondents N=60

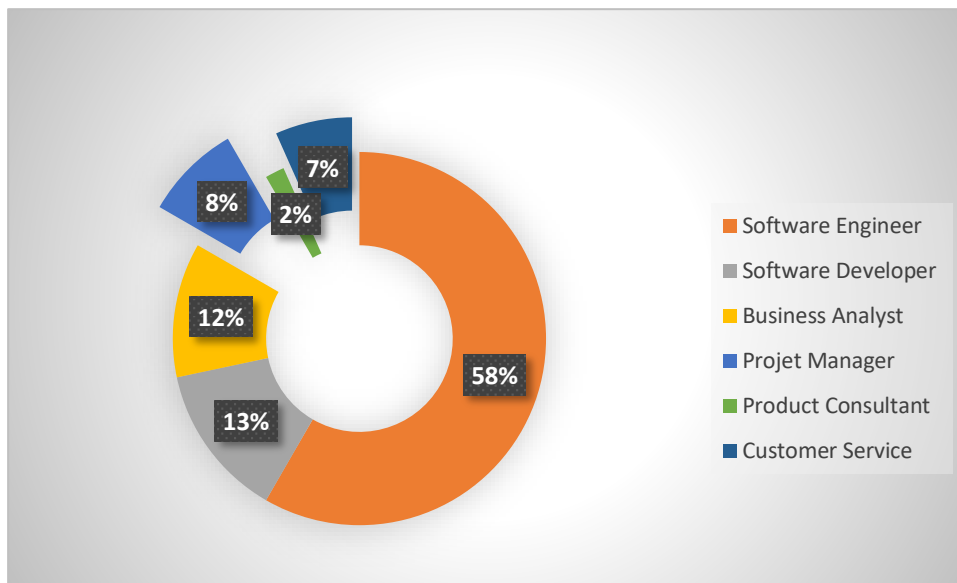


Figure 4.1.4

FREQUENCY JOB ROLE DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Job Role		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Software Engineer	35	58.3
	Software Developer	8	13.3
	Business Analyst	7	11.7
	Project Manager	5	8.3
	Product Consultant	1	1.7
	Customer Service	4	6.7
	Total	60	100.0

Table 4.2

The sample's occupational composition was predominantly technical as 58.3% identified as software engineers, followed by 13.3% software developers and 11.7% business analysts and the remaining respondents included 8.3% project managers, 1.7% product consultants and 6.7% customer service representatives, reflecting a diverse mix of technical and support roles relevant to software development and delivery.

4.1.5 GENERATION

Generation Distribution of Respondents N=60

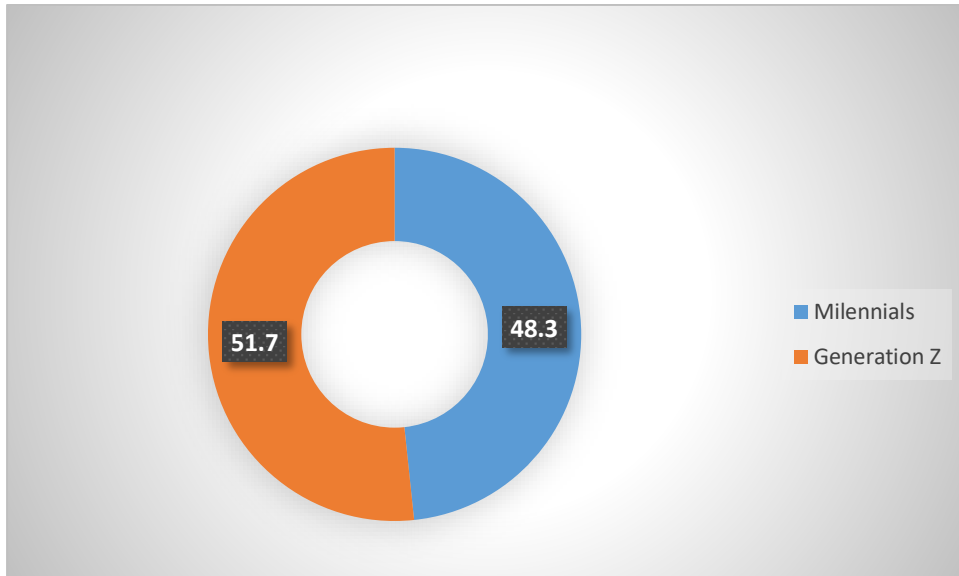


Figure 4.1.5

FREQUENCY GENERATION WISE DISTRIBUTION TABLE

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Millennials	29	48.3
	Generation Z	31	51.7
	Total	60	100.0

Table 4.3

From the above sample, 29 (48.3%) belonged to the Millennial generation and 31 (51.7%) belonged to Generation Z, indicating that Generation Z slightly outnumbered Millennials in the study. The distribution is nearly balanced, suggesting that the views of both generational groups are adequately represented in the sample and the valid percent values confirm that all responses were included in the analysis without any missing data.

4.1.6 EDUCATION LEVEL

The data indicates that the sample predominantly composed of respondents with undergraduate qualifications (85%), with a smaller proportion representing postgraduate education (15%). The valid percent values are equal to the percent values, confirming that all responses were included in the analysis without any missing data.

Educational Distribution of Respondents N=60

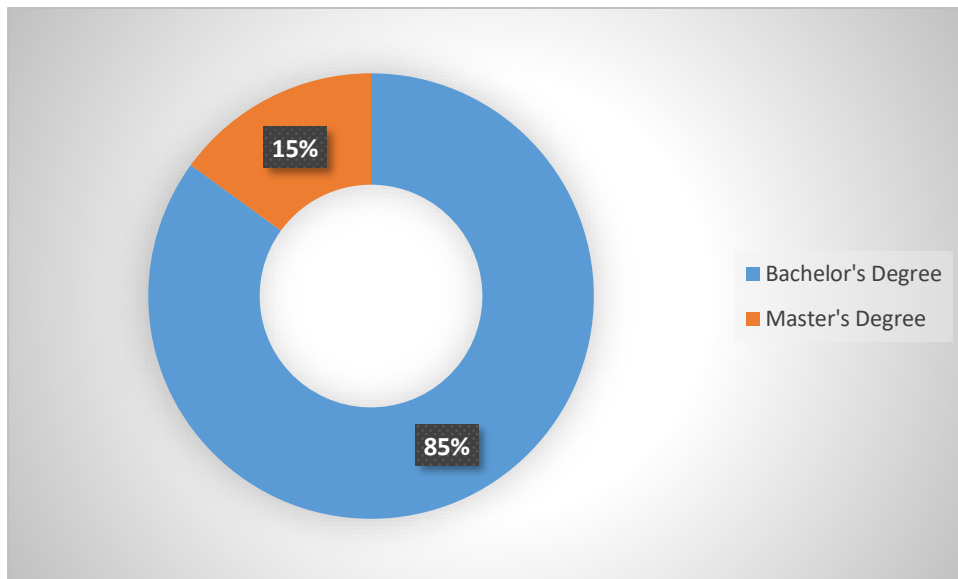


Figure 4.1.6

FREQUENCY EDUCATION WISE DISTRIBUTION TABLE

	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's Degree	51	85.0
Master's Degree	9	15.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.4

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF GENDER, GENERATION, JOB ROLE AND EDUCATION LEVEL

4.2.1 STATISTICS

Statistics	Gender	Generation	Job Role	Education Level
Valid	60	60	60	60
Mean	1.45	1.52	2.02	2.15
Median	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	.502	.504	1.513	.360
Skewness	.206	-.068	1.460	2.011
Kurtosis	-2.026	-2.065	1.170	2.114

Table 4.5

The descriptive statistics indicate that for gender and generation, the means were 1.45 and 1.52 respectively, with very small standard deviations, showing that these variables were coded into only two categories and that the responses were fairly evenly distributed across the available groups. The median values of 1 for gender and 2 for generation indicate that the central tendency falls within the coded categories, while the low skewness values suggest that both variables are symmetrical in distribution.

Job role and education level show greater variation in the data. Job role recorded a mean of 2.02, a median of 1 and a relatively large standard deviation of 1.513 indicates that respondents spreads across multiple occupational categories. The positive skewness value of 1.460 suggests a right-skewed distribution, shows more respondents were concentrated in the lower coded categories of job role. Education level had a mean of 2.15, a median of 2 and a low standard deviation of 0.360 which shows that responses were clustered within a narrow educational category. Its high positive skewness of 2.011 and kurtosis of 2.114 indicate a strongly non-normal distribution, with responses concentrated toward one end of the scale.

4.3 MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION

4.3.1 EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Employment Expectation factors	Millennials		Generation Z	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Monetary Benefits	4.45	.827	4.03	1.224
Job Security	4.14	.990	4.10	1.012
Open to Changes	3.10	.976	4.06	.814
Social Interaction	4.21	.491	4.19	.749
Routine Work	3.52	.986	3.58	.923
Daily Task	4.24	.739	4.06	.727
Recognition	3.76	.912	3.87	.885
International Career	3.55	1.088	3.71	.902
Career Development	4.41	.682	4.45	.768

Table 4.6

The statistics indicate that both Millennials and Generation Z show strong interest in workplace factors, but there are some clear differences in their preferences. Among Millennials, the highest mean scores were observed for monetary benefits ($M = 4.45$), career development ($M = 4.41$), daily task ($M = 4.24$) and social interaction ($M = 4.21$), suggesting that these respondents placed greater importance on compensation, growth opportunities and the day-to-day nature of work.

Generation Z also reported high mean values for career development ($M = 4.45$), monetary benefits ($M = 4.03$), job security ($M = 4.10$) and daily task ($M = 4.06$), indicating that they too value advancement and financial rewards, while also showing slightly stronger preference for openness to change ($M = 4.06$) and international career opportunities ($M = 3.71$) compared with Millennials.

Millennials scored lower on openness to changes ($M = 3.10$) and routine work ($M = 3.52$), suggests that they are less inclined toward flexibility and repetitive task structures than Gen Z respondents. Generation Z, showed comparatively higher acceptance of change ($M = 4.06$) and slightly higher interest in routine work ($M = 3.58$), reflecting a more adaptable approach to work environments. The standard deviations show that responses were fairly consistent across most variables, especially for social interaction among Millennials ($SD = 0.491$), while higher deviations in areas such as monetary benefits for Generation Z ($SD = 1.224$) and international career for Millennials ($SD = 1.088$) suggest more varied opinions among respondents in these areas. The data suggests that both generations prioritize career development and financial rewards, but Millennials appear to place relatively more emphasis on stable and tangible work outcomes, whereas Generation Z shows greater openness to change and broader career mobility.

4.3.2 WORKPLACE PREFERENCES

The statistics show that both Millennials and Generation Z reported generally high mean scores across all Workplace Preference dimensions, suggesting a strong positive perception of these factors. Among Millennials, the highest mean was observed for emotional support ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.670$), followed closely by workload and flexible work options (both $M = 4.31$), indicating that emotional well-being, manageable work demands and flexibility are particularly important to this group.

For Generation Z, the highest mean was also recorded for workload ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.807$), followed by skills ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.702$), showing that this generation places comparatively greater emphasis on heavy work expectations and opportunities to develop skills. Both groups reported similarly high ratings for diversity, structured training, job rotation and technological integration, with mean values above 4.0 in each case, which implies that these elements are valued by employees across generations. Noticeable differences appear in purpose connectedness and emotional support, where Millennials scored higher than Generation Z, suggesting that Millennials are more influenced by meaning-oriented and relational aspects of work.

Workplace Preference Factors	Millennials		Generation Z	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Structured Training	4.24	.689	4.06	.727
Diversity	4.28	.702	4.16	.779
Emotional Support	4.34	.670	4.06	.814
Job Rotation	4.28	.649	4.06	.772
Skills	4.21	.774	4.32	.702
Workload	4.31	.850	4.42	.807
Purpose Connected	4.17	.805	3.90	.790
Flexible Work Options	4.31	.604	4.19	.703
Technological Integration	4.14	.743	4.16	.735

Table 4.7

Both generations prioritize supportive and development-oriented workplace practices. Millennials tend to place slightly greater importance on emotional and purpose-related factors, whereas Generation Z shows stronger preference for workload, skills and practical job-related development.

4.4 INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T TEST

The independent samples t-test is conducted to examine whether there is any significant difference between Generation Z and Millennials in relation to Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences.

4.4.1 EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATION

For Employment Expectations, Levene's test for equality of variances was not significant ($F = 1.350$, $p = .250$), which indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met and the equal variances assumed row could be used for interpretation. The t-test result was also not significant, $t(58) = -0.621$, $p = .537$, showing that there was no statistically meaningful difference between the two generations on this variable. The mean difference was very small (-0.07613) and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.32162 to 0.16935,

which includes zero, this further confirms that any observed difference was not substantial enough to be considered significant.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.350	.250	-.621	58	.537	-.07613	.12264
Equal variances not assumed			-.626	56.129	.534	-.07613	.12161

Table 4.8

4.4.2 WORKPLACE PREFERENCES

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.593	.444	.817	58	.417	.10234	.12528
Equal variances not assumed			.823	56.626	.414	.10234	.12435

Table 4.9

For Workplace Preferences, Levene's test was again not significant $F = 0.593$, $p = .444$, indicating that the variance between the two groups was sufficiently equal for the standard t-test interpretation. The t-test result for Workplace Preferences was also non significant, $t(58) = 0.817$, $p = .417$, meaning that Generation Z and Millennials did not differ significantly in their Workplace Preferences. The mean difference was 0.10234, which is very small and the 95% confidence interval from -0.14845 to 0.35312 also crossed zero, confirming that the difference was not statistically reliable.

The results suggest that both generations in the study had almost similar Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences, with no evidence of a significant generational gap

in these two areas. This indicates that age-based assumptions about differences in work-related attitudes has not strongly supported by the data collected in this sample

4.5 ONE WAY ANOVA TEST

4.5.1 EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.132	2	0.066	0.288	0.751
Within groups	13.025	57	0.229		
Total	13.157	59			

Table 4.10

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether Employment Expectations differed significantly across respondents with different levels of experience. One-way ANOVA is used to test whether the mean scores of two groups are significantly different from one another.

The ANOVA results showed that the between-group sum of squares was 0.132, while the within-group sum of squares was 13.025. The calculated F value was 0.288 with degrees of freedom of 2 and 57 and the significance value (p-value) was 0.751.

Since the p-value of 0.751 is greater than the conventional 0.05 level of significance, the result is not statistically significant. This indicates that there is no significant difference in Employment Expectations among respondents based on their level of experience.

It is being concluded that experience does not have a significant influence on Employment Expectations in the study. The very small between-group variation compared with the within-group variation also suggests that the responses across the experience groups were broadly similar.

4.5.2 WORKPLACE PREFERENCES AND EXPERIENCE

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.423	2	0.212	0.902	0.412
Within groups	13.374	57	0.229		
Total	13.798	59			

Table 4.11

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether Workplace Preferences differed significantly across levels of experience. The result showed an $F(2,57) = 0.902$ with a significant value $p=0.412$, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the result is not statistically significant.

This means that there is no significant difference in Workplace Preferences among respondents with different experience levels. The variation observed between the groups was very small compared with the variation within the groups, suggesting that respondents across the experience categories had broadly similar workplace preferences.

It can be concluded that experience does not have a significant influence on Workplace Preferences.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comprehensive, human-centered discussion of findings from the quantitative analysis of workplace preferences and Employment Expectations in the IT sector: a comparative study of Gen Z and Millennials. The analysis examined whether significant differences exist between these cohorts in their Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations. Finally, the chapter offers practical implications and recommendations for future research aimed at aligning organizational practices with generational preferences across team structures and work environments.

5.2 FINDINGS

The present study examined Workplace Preferences and Employment Expectations among Generation Z and Millennial employees. The findings suggest that Millennial employees give considerable importance to the work environment organizational culture and conditions that support their professional needs. At the same time, the study also revealed a significant gap in openness to change between the two generations. In particular, Millennials were found to be more resistant to change compared to Generation Z, that they may prefer familiar routines, established systems and stable work practices rather than frequent organizational change or disruption. This difference highlights an important generational tendency in how employees respond to evolving workplace demands, technologies and management practices.

The study found that the two generations are more similar than different in several respects. The findings indicate that both Generation Z and Millennials share comparable expectations regarding employment, suggesting that their views on job security, career opportunities, work conditions and organizational support do not differ greatly, while certain attitudes, such as openness to change, may vary across generations, broader Employment Expectations appear to be largely aligned. It may be more useful for organizations to focus on the individual values, motivations and characteristics of employees from the entering generation rather than assuming large differences based only on generational labels. Such an approach can help employers better understand employee behavior and create workplace policies that are more flexible, inclusive and responsive to actual employee needs.

Millennials also reported a stronger preference for purpose connection, indicating that they are more likely to value meaningful work and alignment with the mission of the organization. This implies that they do not merely seek employment for financial security, but also want to

understand how their daily tasks contribute to broader organizational goals and social impact. When employees see a clear connection between their work and the purpose of the organization, commitment and engagement are often strengthened.

The priority given to manageable workload also shows that Gen Z is attentive to work-life balance and the sustainability of job demands. Excessive workload, constant pressure or unclear expectations may reduce their satisfaction and performance.

Another area where Millennials showed stronger preference was job rotation. This indicates a greater interest in diverse experiences, internal career mobility and opportunities to broaden professional exposure. Employees who value job rotation often seek learning through experience, variety in assignments and the ability to explore different functional areas before settling into a long-term path.

The difference between the two generations in technological integration was comparatively small, which indicates that both groups recognize the value of modern workplace technology. Although Gen Z might be naturally associated with digital fluency, the small gap suggests that technological support is a broad expectation rather than a generation-specific demand. This makes investment in modern technology a useful strategy for improving the work experience across the workforce.

Overall, the study suggests that the generational differences should not be overemphasized. Although some variation exists in Workplace Preferences and openness to change, the overall pattern shows that Generation Z and Millennial employees are closer in their Employment Expectations than they are different. This suggests that organizational strategies should balance generational awareness with attention to individual differences, since employee behavior is shaped not only by generation but also by personal values, experiences and work-related priorities.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS

The observed differences between Millennials and Gen Z in Workplace Preferences suggest that organizations might avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to employee management. While both generations value supportive and growth-oriented work environments, the areas of emphasis differ in meaningful ways. Millennials place greater importance on emotional support, purpose connection and job rotation, whereas Gen Z gives relatively more importance

to skill development, manageable workload and technology-enabled work systems. These patterns indicate that human resource strategies should be tailored to address the dominant expectations of each generation while also building a shared organizational culture.

5.3.1 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

The largest gap was found in emotional support, with Millennials showing a stronger preference for this factor. This suggests that Millennial employees may expect the organization to play a more active role in supporting their mental and emotional well-being. Workplace mental health support can be strengthened through formal counseling services, employee assistance programs, manager sensitization and well-designed peer support systems. Peer support programs are commonly used as part of psychologically safe workplaces and are intended to complement, rather than replace, professional mental health services.

To respond effectively organizations should normalize conversations around emotional well-being and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help. This can be done by introducing confidential counseling mechanisms, periodic well-being check-ins, mental health awareness sessions and internal support networks. A structured support environment can improve employee engagement and help Millennials feel that the organization is responsive to their personal and professional challenges.

5.3.2 PURPOSE CONNECTION

Organizations could communicate their mission clearly and consistently across all levels. Team leaders should explain how departmental tasks contribute to larger strategic objectives and management should highlight the social relevance, ethical commitments or customer value created by the organization. Stories of impact, regular communication of vision and recognition of employees who contribute meaningfully to the mission can reinforce a sense of purpose, particularly among Millennial employees.

5.3.3 JOB ROTATION AND CAREER MOBILITY

Organizations can address the job rotation and career mobility preference by introducing formal or informal job rotation systems, cross-functional projects, temporary role assignments and internal mobility pathways. Such initiatives can help employees build wider organizational understanding, improve engagement and reduce monotony in work. Career

pathing discussions, mentoring support and transparent promotion systems can further help Millennials feel that the organization supports long-term growth and progression.

5.3.4 SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND WORKLOAD

Generation Z respondents placed relatively greater emphasis on skill development and manageable workload. This indicates that younger employees might be focused on employability, continuous learning and maintaining a healthy balance between work demands and personal life. The organizations should invest in their growth through training, upskilling and opportunities to build future-ready capabilities.

Organizations can create structured learning and development systems that include onboarding support, short-term certification opportunities, digital learning platforms, coaching and regular feedback on progress. Skill-building initiatives should be practical, accessible and connected to career advancement. When Gen Z employees perceive that the organization is investing in their development, they are more likely to remain motivated and committed to their roles.

Organizations, therefore ensure realistic targets, equitable distribution of work, flexible work practices where possible and supportive supervision. A manageable workload not only improves well-being but also helps younger employees remain productive without experiencing early burnout.

5.3.5 TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION

Organizations can adopt user-friendly digital tools that support communication, collaboration, learning and performance management. Updated systems, efficient HR technology, digital feedback platforms and accessible knowledge resources can enhance productivity for both Millennials and Gen Z. Technology should not only automate work processes but also make work more transparent, efficient and engaging for employees across generational categories.

From an organizational perspective, the findings indicate that human resource practices should be guided by actual employee needs rather than stereotypes about age groups as Gen Z and Millennial respondents in the current study showed similar Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences, organizations can more effectively improve the overall employee experience by implementing inclusive, evidence-based policies like fair compensation, career

development opportunities, supportive supervision, initiatives for employee well-being and healthy work–life balance and transparent communication, rather than segmenting workers strictly by generation. These results underscore the importance of contextual interpretation in generational research, suggesting that workplace culture, organizational environment, economic conditions and local labor-market realities may shape employee perceptions more strongly than generational membership alone. HR strategies should focus on designing flexible practices that respond to the actual characteristics and shared expectations of the workforce, thereby enhancing employee satisfaction, engagement and organizational adaptability.

5.4 HR IMPLICATIONS

The findings suggest that organizations should design generationally responsive HR practices rather than assuming that all employees value the same workplace features equally. For Millennials, emphasis should be placed on emotional well-being, purpose-driven work and internal career mobility. For Gen Z, greater attention should be given to continuous learning, practical upskilling, workload balance and digitally enabled work environments.

Generational trends provide useful direction, but individual differences remain important. Therefore, the most effective strategy is to combine targeted interventions with flexible policies that allow employees to access the forms of support most relevant to their own needs.

Across dimensions including structured training, diversity initiatives, purpose-connected work, flexibility (FWA) and skill development, Millennials demonstrate stronger engagement with organizational workplace features. This indicates that Millennials invested more in workplace quality and might serve as key drivers for organizational improvement initiatives.

With respect to Employment Expectations, the absence of a significant difference suggests that both generations may prioritize similar features in employment, such as stability, growth opportunities, fair treatment, compensation and supportive management. Similarly, in the case of Workplace Preferences, the findings show that both groups respond in broadly comparable ways to organizational features and working conditions. This implies that employers do not necessarily need to design entirely separate workplace systems for each generation in this context. Instead organizations may benefit more from creating inclusive policies that address shared needs while still allowing flexibility for individual differences.

The present study highlights the value of looking beyond broad generational labels when analyzing employee behavior. Generational research is often useful for identifying trends, but it should not be treated as a fixed explanation for all workplace differences. The current findings demonstrate that generational assumptions may lose relevance when the surrounding context is taken into account. Therefore, researchers and practitioners should interpret generational differences carefully and avoid assuming that patterns observed in other regions, industries or countries will necessarily appear in the present setting

The findings highlight the importance of contextualizing generational research rather than assuming that patterns observed in other regions or sectors will automatically apply in the present. The observed differences between Millennials and Gen Z in workplace expectations suggest that organizations should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to employee management. While both generations value supportive and growth-oriented work environments, the areas of emphasis differ in meaningful ways. Millennials place greater importance on emotional support, purpose connection and job rotation, whereas Gen Z gives relatively more importance to skill development, manageable workload and technology-enabled work systems. These patterns indicate that human resource strategies should be tailored to address the dominant expectations of each generation while also building a shared organizational culture.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The present study set out to examine whether meaningful differences exist between Gen Z and Millennials in relation to Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences. The present study found no significant differences between Generation Z and Millennial respondents in Employment Expectations and Workplace Preferences, indicating that both cohorts in this share broadly similar priorities like job stability, fair compensation, opportunities for career growth, supportive management and a healthy work–life balance. These results imply that factors including workplace culture, the organizational environment and prevailing economic conditions exert a stronger influence on employee perceptions than age based generational membership. Consequently, generational labels should not be treated as a deterministic explanation for employee behavior without consideration of contextual variables. For practitioners, the findings recommend that human resource policies be grounded in empirical evidence and designed to be inclusive, addressing shared needs across cohorts while allowing flexibility for individual differences, rather than creating entirely separate systems for each

generation. This will not only improve employee satisfaction and engagement but also help organizations build a more stable and adaptable workforce.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Age
2. Gender
 - Male
 - Female
 - Others
3. Which generation do you identify with?
 - Millennial (born 1981-1996)
 - Gen Z (born 1997-2012)
4. What is your highest education level?
 - High school
 - Bachelor's
 - Master's
 - PhD
 - Other
5. Job Role
6. Experience

SECTION B: Employment Expectations

7. A stable monthly salary and clear bonus structure is more important to me than Non-monetary benefits.
8. Job security and monetary stability are deciding factors in my employment choice.
9. I am open to frequent job changes for better opportunities.
10. I expect adequate opportunities for social interaction with colleagues in the workplace.
11. Routine work hinders social interaction opportunities among colleagues.
12. My daily tasks must hold value and contribute directly to meaningful outcomes.
13. Regular recognition from my supervisor or organization is essential for my contributions.
14. I favor the organization which provides the opportunity for international career

15. I opt clear opportunities for career development and growth.

SECTION C: Workplace Preferences

16. I go for the organization which provides structured training and orientation on tools, systems and culture.

17. I prefer workplaces with diverse teams representing different genders, ethnicities and backgrounds

18. Colleagues who offer emotional support during work stress make me feel truly valued and respected.

17. Cross-functional job rotations and freedom of work on your own initiative excite me for career broadening.

18. I prefer being assigned tasks and projects that let me learn new skills relevant to my career growth.

19. I chose workplace that provides manageable workloads and allow time for rest and recovery.

20. My job tasks give me a sense of purpose connected to the organization's broader impact.

21. Flexible hours empower me to balance work with personal commitments effectively.

22. High-growth, innovative companies with technological integration attracts me more than traditional, stable ones.