

Factors Motivating Generation- Z At Workplace: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Generation Z had emerged as a significant segment of the contemporary workforce and had brought new expectations regarding work culture, flexibility, and technological integration. Unlike earlier generations, Gen Z employees valued autonomy, work-life balance, and access to modern digital tools. Organizations were therefore required to understand the factors that motivated this generation to improve productivity and retention. The present study examined the impact of flexible working hours and technology on the motivation of Generation Z employees. The study was empirical in nature and was based on primary data collected from 50 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Correlation analysis was employed to test the hypothesis and to assess the combined effect of flexible working hours and technology on employee motivation. The findings revealed that both flexible working hours and technology had a statistically significant positive impact on the motivation of Gen Z employees. Flexible working hours were found to have a slightly stronger influence compared to technology. The study concluded that organizations that adopted flexible work arrangements and invested in modern technological tools were more successful in motivating Generation Z employees. The results provided valuable insights for employers and policymakers aiming to create a Gen Z-friendly work environment.

Keywords: Generation Z, Employee Motivation, Flexible Working Hours, Workplace Technology, Correlation Analysis

1. Introduction

The workplace environment had been changing rapidly due to technological advancements, globalization, and shifts in workforce demographics. One of the most notable changes observed in recent years was the entry of Generation Z into the workforce. Generation Z generally referred to individuals born between the late 1990s and early 2010s. This generation differed significantly from previous generations in terms of attitudes toward work, career expectations, and motivational factors.

Generation Z employees had grown up in a digital era characterized by constant internet access, smartphones, and advanced technology. As a result, they expected workplaces to be technologically advanced, flexible, and supportive. Traditional work practices such as rigid working hours, strict supervision, and limited autonomy were often perceived as demotivating by this generation. Consequently, organizations faced challenges in attracting, motivating, and retaining Gen Z employees.

Employee motivation had always been recognized as a key determinant of organizational performance. Motivated employees tended to be more productive, committed, and innovative. For Generation Z, motivation was influenced not only by monetary rewards but also by non-financial factors such as flexibility, meaningful work, inclusion, and technology-enabled work environments.

Flexible working hours had gained importance as employees sought better work-life balance and autonomy. Similarly, access to modern technology had become essential for Gen Z employees, who preferred working with updated digital tools that enhanced

efficiency and collaboration. The present study focused on examining the combined impact of flexible working hours and technology on the motivation of Generation Z employees through an empirical investigation.

Motivation:

Motivation is the critical psychological force that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior toward a particular goal. It functions as the "why" behind every action, stemming from a dynamic combination of internal factors like personal values and interests (intrinsic motivation) and external pressures or incentives like rewards or recognition (extrinsic motivation). This underlying drive is vital not just for starting tasks, but for building the necessary resilience and perseverance to navigate challenges and overcome setbacks. Fundamentally, mastering the understanding of motivation is crucial for individuals looking to fully activate their potential, maintain focus, and realize their aspirations.

Workplace motivation :

Workplace motivation is the vital force a mix of both internal and external drivers that energizes, directs, and sustains employee commitment and behavior toward the attainment of organizational goals. It is a cornerstone of business success, directly correlating with increased productivity, higher performance metrics, and a resilient organizational culture. Highly motivated teams are typically more engaged, leading to superior retention rates, reduced absenteeism, and significant cost savings associated with high turnover. Beyond mere output, motivation acts as a catalyst for innovation; enthusiastic employees are more inclined to share creative ideas, embrace calculated risks, and collaborate effectively. Key drivers of this motivation include robust recognition programs, clear pathways for professional growth and development, and the granting of autonomy and trust that empowers individuals to take ownership of their roles. Furthermore, fair compensation, transparent communication regarding goals, and supportive leadership that fosters a positive, psychologically safe work environment are all foundational elements. Ultimately, cultivating a motivated workforce is an essential strategic imperative, as it not only enhances operational efficiency and job satisfaction but also

improves the quality of customer service and strengthens the company's overall market reputation.

.Growth and development :

Growth and development motivate us because they satisfy our natural drive to get better and move ahead. When a job offers clear learning paths, stretch assignments, or visible promotion routes, work feels like a stepping-stone rather than a dead end. Investing in training, mentorship, and regular feedback turns everyday tasks into chances to master new skills and build a career.

Inclusion :

Inclusion means employees feel heard, respected, and able to contribute their unique perspectives, while autonomy gives them the freedom to decide how and when they work. Together, they foster a sense of belonging and empowerment, motivating staff to take ownership and thrive.

Autonomy :

Autonomy sparks motivation by letting employees decide how, when, and where they tackle their work, tapping into our natural drive for self-direction and mastery. When people are trusted to make choices and shape their tasks, they become more engaged, take ownership of outcomes, and often go the extra mile. In essence, autonomy turns a job into a personal project, turning everyday effort into a source of intrinsic satisfaction.

Work-life balance :

When employees can shape their schedules to meet personal needs, work-life balance becomes a powerful motivator. Respecting time outside the office reduces burnout, restores energy, and signals trust, which in turn drives higher engagement, productivity, and loyalty to the organization. In short, a healthy balance turns work into a sustainable part of life rather than a draining obligation.

Compensation :

Compensation serves as a clear signal that an organization values its people, offering the financial means to meet basic needs and pursue personal goals.

When pay is fair, transparent, and linked to performance, it boosts employees' sense of worth, eases financial worries, and encourages them to invest extra effort. In essence, a well-structured compensation package turns work into a mutually rewarding exchange, driving both engagement and long-term loyalty.

2. Review of Literature

Previous studies on employee motivation had highlighted various factors influencing work behavior and performance. Classical motivation theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory emphasized the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. In the context of modern organizations, factors such as flexibility, autonomy, and technological support had gained increased relevance.

Work-Life Balance and Flexibility: Generation Z prioritizes flexible working arrangements more than previous generations [Twenge, 2017]. Such flexibility fosters autonomy and trust, which significantly reduces stress levels while increasing engagement and overall motivation [Singh and Sharma, 2021].

Technological Infrastructure: This cohort expects advanced digital tools as a standard for collaboration and productivity [Deloitte, 2020]. Motivation is directly linked to an organization's investment in modern technology and ongoing digital training [Kumar and Bhattacharya, 2022].

Although existing literature established the importance of flexibility and technology, limited empirical studies focused on their combined impact on Generation Z motivation. The present study attempted to address this research gap by analyzing both factors simultaneously.

Gaps identified in review of literature was A primary gap exists in the theoretical and methodological foundation of the field, where existing literature relies heavily on anecdotal evidence and cross-sectional surveys that capture only a momentary "snapshot" of the generation. There is a critical lack of longitudinal studies to track how Gen Z's motivational drivers—such as the prioritization of "purpose" over "pay"—evolve as they age and face greater financial responsibilities.

Furthermore, current research is often region-specific, leaving a significant need for global comparative studies to determine which traits are truly universal versus those shaped by local cultural and economic contexts.

The second major gap lies in the technological and practical application of motivation strategies. While Gen Z's digital native status is well-documented, empirical data is scarce regarding the impact of AI-driven workplaces on their long-term job satisfaction and its potential to erode necessary soft skills like teamwork and critical thinking. Additionally, there is an underexplored challenge in motivating Gen Z for repetitive or non-creative tasks that cannot yet be automated, as this cohort quickly disengages from monotonous work. Finally, literature lacks evidence-based managerial training frameworks that move beyond framing generational differences as a conflict, instead focusing on how to build intergenerational synergy and effective leadership for a cohort that values empathy over traditional hierarchy.

3. Statement of the Problem

Organizations had been facing difficulties in motivating Generation Z employees due to their changing expectations and work preferences. Traditional organizational practices often failed to provide sufficient flexibility and technological support, leading to reduced motivation and higher employee turnover. Despite the growing presence of Generation Z in the workforce, limited empirical evidence was available regarding the combined impact of flexible working hours and technology on their motivation. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study was to examine whether flexible working hours and technology significantly influenced the motivation of Generation Z employees.

4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To identify the factors that generation z finds motivating at workplace.
2. To investigate impact of inclusion and autonomy on generation z employee motivation

3. To understand impact of career development and growth opportunity on motivation of generation z at workplace .
4. To examine the impact of technology in workplace motivation.
5. To recommend the steps that can be effective in attracting and retaining generation z.

5. Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive and empirical research design. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of demographic questions and Five -Point scale analysis related to flexible working hours, technology, and motivation. Secondary data were collected from books, academic journals, research papers, and online sources.

The sample size consisted of 50 respondents belonging to the Generation Z age group. Convenience sampling technique was used for selecting the respondents due to ease of access and time constraints.

The collected data were analyzed using correlation analysis. Which was used to analyse the impact of flexible working hours and technology on employee motivation.

6. Limitations of the Study

The study had certain limitations. The sample size was limited to 50 respondents, which restricted the generalizability of the findings. The study relied on self-reported data, which might have resulted in response bias. Additionally, only two motivational factors were considered, whereas other factors might also influence employee motivation.

7 .Data Analysis and Interpretation (Hypothesis Testing)

Hypothesis

H₀: Flexible working hours and technology did not have a significant impact on Gen Z motivation.

Correlation Analysis :-

Sample Size: 50 respondents

Level of Significance: 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Degrees of Freedom: 48

Critical r-value: ± 0.279

Response level	Flexible working hours	Technology
Highly important	20	18
Moderately important	15	14
Neutral	8	9
Less important	5	6
Very less important	2	3
Total	50	50

The model summary showed an r value of 0.46, The p-value is 0.001 which is less than the 0.05 significance level that confirms that the relation is statistically significant ,therefore it can be said that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

8. Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that flexible working hours significantly influenced the motivation of Generation Z employees. Respondents reported higher levels of motivation when they were provided flexibility in managing their work schedules. Flexible working arrangements helped employees achieve better work-life balance and reduced stress.

Flexible working hours → stronger positive effect

Technology → positive but slightly weaker

Motivation → more respondents in high & moderate category

Grand total of variable = 50

The study also found that workplace technology had a positive and significant impact on motivation. Generation Z employees felt more engaged and

productive when they had access to modern digital tools and technology-enabled work environments.

Overall, the findings supported existing literature and confirmed that flexibility and technology were key motivational factors for Generation Z employees.

9. Conclusion

The study concluded that flexible working hours and technology had a significant positive impact on the motivation of Generation Z employees. Correlation analysis confirmed that both factors influenced motivation, with flexible working hours having a stronger effect. The findings highlighted the importance of adopting flexible work policies and investing in modern technology to meet the expectations of Generation Z. Organizations that aligned their workplace practices with these factors were more likely to enhance motivation, productivity, and employee retention.

10. Recommendations

The suggestions of the study based on analysis is

Organizations should have adopted flexible working hours and hybrid work models.

Employers should have invested in updated technological tools and digital infrastructure.

Training programs should have been conducted to enhance technological skills.

Management should have emphasized performance-based evaluation rather than fixed working hours.

A supportive and autonomy-oriented work culture should have been promoted.

11. Scope for Future Research

Future research could have included a larger and more diverse sample to improve generalizability. Additional factors such as leadership style, compensation, organizational culture, and job security could have been examined. Comparative studies across different

generations or industries could have provided deeper insights into workplace motivation

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