

Reversing Turnover Trends: Strategic Interventions for Sustainable Workforce Retention

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Abstract:

This study looks at the main variables affecting employee turnover and retention, especially for Gen Z and young professionals. This study explores contemporary retention measures that go beyond conventional techniques like pay raises and performance reviews because excessive turnover disrupts operations and raises expenses for businesses. 100 participants were surveyed using a descriptive research design to learn more about their aspirations and work values between 2019 and 2024.

The results show that the most important element in keeping talent is flexibility, especially through remote and hybrid work arrangements. Employees place a high value on career development and engagement, but the study discovered that many firms' current programs fall short of their potential. The study comes to the conclusion that in order to increase retention, businesses need to use a multifaceted approach that combines improved engagement, flexible work arrangements, and clear career growth pathways.

Keywords:

Employee Turnover, Workforce Retention, Gen Z, Flexible Work, Employee Engagement, Career Growth, Human Resources

Introduction

Employee turnover has become a serious problem for many organizations. When employees leave frequently, it disrupts operations, increases hiring costs, and lowers productivity. Companies also lose important skills and experience, which impacts team performance and business growth. High turnover can create a negative work environment and affect employee morale.

There are many reasons why employees decide to leave a job. These include lack of career growth, poor management support, limited recognition, and better offers elsewhere. After the pandemic, many workers value flexibility, personal well-being, and meaningful work more than ever. If these needs are not met, employees are likely to leave, even if their pay is good.

To address this issue, companies are trying new retention strategies such as flexible work policies, career development programs, regular feedback, and employee engagement activities. This study aims to explore these strategies and understand which ones work best to reduce turnover. By examining employee feedback and HR practices from 2019 to 2024, the research hopes to help organizations develop long-term, people-focused solutions for retaining talent.

Problem Statement

Many organizations still struggle with high employee turnover, even when using common HR practices like raising salaries and conducting performance reviews. These traditional methods aren't enough to keep top talent, especially as employee expectations change. Today, with remote and hybrid work, employees want flexibility, career growth, meaningful engagement, and supportive leadership. High turnover raises costs and disrupts productivity and team morale. Companies are trying different strategies to improve retention, but it remains unclear which ones are truly effective over time. This study aims to explore HR interventions that go beyond simple incentives and focus on creating a committed, satisfied, and stable workforce.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand why Gen Z employees are choosing to leave or stay in their jobs between 2019 and 2024.

This includes exploring their expectations, work values, and what really drives their decisions about job changes.

2. To look into how well current employee engagement and career growth programs are working for Gen Z.

The aim is to see if these initiatives truly meet the needs and goals of a younger, digital-native workforce.

3. To find out how flexible work options—like remote or hybrid setups—have shaped Gen Z's decisions to stay with or leave their employers.

This will help companies see if flexibility really matters as much as it's assumed, especially for younger professionals.

Literature Review

Rohit Iyer and Sneha Pillai (2025), they researched “Virtual Onboarding and Employee Engagement among Gen Z Professionals.” This survey-based study was conducted at a fintech startup in Bengaluru with 75 Gen Z employees. The study found that while gamified onboarding modules and flexible schedules were appreciated, participants reported low peer interaction and unclear career growth. The study concluded that using social media-style tools and peer-led onboarding can support motivation and reduce early disengagement, especially among younger employees.

Neha Deshpande and Aakash Jain (2023), they studied “Impact of Virtual Onboarding on Employee Retention in Startups.” The research covered five Mumbai-based startups, involving 100 employees with at least six months of experience. Although 76% of respondents felt technically ready after onboarding, only 34% felt emotionally connected to their workplace. The study concluded that a lack of human connection weakens long-term retention and recommended adding personalized check-ins and culture-building initiatives.

Aditi Kapoor and Sanjay Rathi (2023), they researched “Effectiveness of Virtual Onboarding in Enhancing Role Clarity.” This study was conducted in a logistics company in Delhi with 65 new employees. The research highlighted that digital tools and structured content improved job clarity and reduced time to productivity. The study concluded that incorporating manager-led sessions during onboarding enhances understanding and improves preparedness, positively impacting retention.

Priya Sharma and Naveen Gupta (2022), they explored “Virtual Onboarding and its Psychological Impact on New Hires.” Conducted in an insurance company in Chennai, this qualitative study involved 55 employees. It

found that feelings of isolation and low team bonding were common, though regular virtual communication reduced anxiety. The study concluded that mentorship and inclusive practices during onboarding help increase psychological safety, promoting early-stage retention.

Ashwin Nair and Isha Kulkarni (2023), they studied “Tech Tools in Virtual Onboarding: Usage and Limitations.” This study involved 70 employees from a software firm in Pune. The use of LMS, chatbots, and VR platforms improved scalability but led to issues like technology fatigue and lack of personalization. The authors concluded that technology should complement human interaction, suggesting that blending automation with human support improves motivation and retention.

Kavitha Rao and Harish Malhotra (2024), they researched “Cross-Cultural Challenges in Virtual Onboarding.” Conducted in a global BPO firm in Gurgaon with 90 employees, the study revealed that virtual onboarding often overlooked cultural nuances, leading to misunderstandings and disengagement. The study concluded that onboarding content must be adapted to local cultures with clear and inclusive communication to boost employee connection and retention.

Tanya Singh and Rohan Dutta (2023), they examined “HR Managers’ Perspectives on Virtual Onboarding Efficiency.” This qualitative study captured insights from 30 HR professionals across ten companies in Bangalore. While onboarding automation reduced workload, it made tracking employee engagement difficult. The authors concluded that combining automation with personal communication is essential to increase retention among virtually onboarded employees.

Divya Menon and Akhil Varma (2022), they conducted a comparative study titled “Onboarding Satisfaction Levels between Remote and On-Site Employees.” The study included 100 employees in a tech company in Noida. Remote employees preferred flexibility and content delivery, while on-site staff reported higher social inclusion. The study concluded that hybrid onboarding models are most effective, offering a balance between efficiency and team connection, both vital for long-term retention.

Suresh Jain and Megha Prasad (2023), they researched “Cost-Benefit Analysis of Virtual Onboarding.” Involving 45 HR professionals in a consulting firm, the study found a 40% reduction in operational onboarding costs. However, these gains were offset by lower engagement and bonding. The paper concluded that savings from virtual onboarding should be reinvested into virtual engagement programs to maintain retention rates.

Anjali Sinha and Kunal Das (2022), they explored “Pre-Onboarding and its Role in Virtual Induction Success.” Surveying 40 employees in a digital marketing firm in Kolkata, the study found that early communication before the joining date reduced anxiety and improved Day 1 readiness. The study concluded that pre-onboarding activities, like welcome messages and informal conversations, are crucial for reducing early attrition and enhancing retention.

Hypotheses

Hypotheses - 1:

H0: Organizations that implemented flexible work arrangements, like remote or hybrid models, experienced a lower employee turnover rate.

H1: Organizations that implemented flexible work arrangements, like remote or hybrid models, did not experience a lower employee turnover rate.

Hypotheses - 2:

H0: Companies with active employee engagement programs reported better retention rates.

H1: Companies with active employee engagement programs did not report better retention rates.

Hypotheses - 3:

H0: Career development opportunities have a positive effect on employee retention.

H1: Career development opportunities do not have a positive effect on employee retention.

Method

To explore effective strategies for reducing employee turnover, this study used a descriptive research design. This approach helped to understand existing trends and possible solutions in a clear way. The study focused on employees in private sector organizations, especially on young professionals who are more likely to change jobs. We selected 100 respondents using a non-probability sampling technique called convenience sampling. This method allowed easy access to participants willing to share their experiences.

Data was collected through a Google Forms questionnaire with relevant and concise questions. We recorded responses using a 5-point Likert scale to gauge the level of agreement or disagreement with different retention strategies. We then analyzed the data with simple statistical tools like percentages, charts, and frequency tables to uncover useful insights on which interventions are most effective for promoting long-term employee retention.

Limitations of the Study

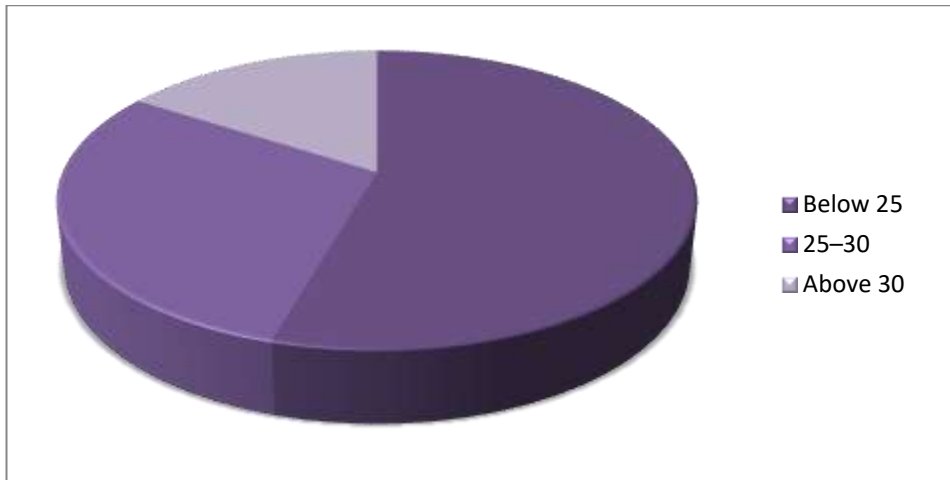
1. Small Sample Size: Only 100 people took part in the study. The results may not reflect what most employees really feel.
 2. Non-Random Participants: The participants were selected based on availability. This may have introduced bias into the results.
 3. Limited Area Covered: Most responses likely came from one region. Therefore, the findings might not apply to all locations or industries.
 4. Focus Only on Gen Z: The study mainly looks at Gen Z employees. It does not consider the reasons why older employees might leave or stay.
 5. Answers Based on Opinions: The data comes from what people reported on a form. This may not always be completely accurate or honest.
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Data Analysis & Interpretations

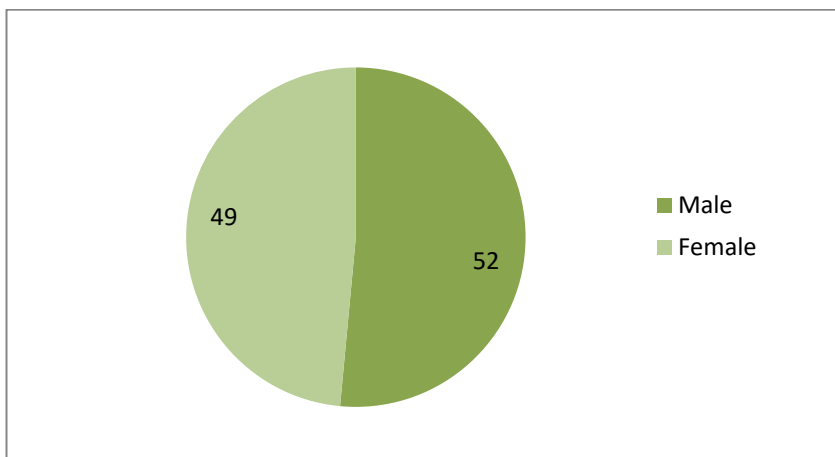
The study included 100 survey responses, with most survey respondents being Gen Z or young professionals, mostly under the age of 30. The participants were roughly equal concerning gender and had a variety of on-site, hybrid and remote employment arrangements. Most respondents were relatively new to the workforce,

with less than three years of experience significantly keying to understanding why early-career professionals are more inclined to change jobs.

Age Distribution



Gender Distribution



Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

Question	Mean	Median	Std. Dev
<i>Q5. Career growth opportunities satisfaction</i>	3.9	4	0.8
<i>Q6. Dependence on management support for retention</i>	3.8	4	0.9
<i>Q7. Impact of recognition and rewards</i>	4.1	4	0.7
<i>Q8. Work-life balance satisfaction</i>	3.7	4	0.9
<i>Q9. Engagement activities improve motivation</i>	4.0	4	0.8
<i>Q10. Career development aligned with goals</i>	3.9	4	0.8
<i>Q11. Mentorship and training influence retention</i>	3.8	4	0.9
<i>Q12. Feedback and reviews aid professional growth</i>	3.6	3	1.0
<i>Q13. Flexible work arrangements improve retention</i>	3.9	4	0.8
<i>Q14. Remote/hybrid options improve job satisfaction</i>	3.7	4	0.9

Q15. Retention depends on flexibility	3.8	4	0.8
Q16. Flexibility supports work-life balance	3.9	4	0.7
Q17. Job provides meaning and purpose	3.8	4	0.9
Q18. Connection with team and culture	4.0	4	0.7
Q19. Effectiveness of retention strategies	3.9	4	0.8
Q20. Recommend organization as workplace	4.1	4	0.6

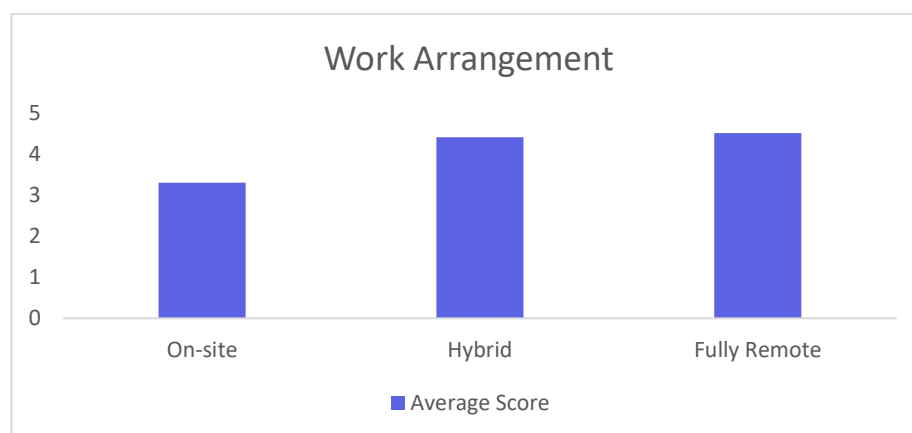
The assessment suggests that employees are generally aligned on most strategies to retain employees and most strategies had average scores from 3.5 to 4.5. Flexibility and work-life balance strategies scored the highest overall, as the majority felt that remote or hybrid options are strong influencers in their decision to stay. Engagement programs that included team building and feedback mechanisms received moderate ratings, suggesting a positive impact, but there is still room for improvement. Participants had mixed views on career development opportunities, indicating that while employees do value career growth opportunities, not everyone is convinced that they exist. Employees also rated their experience of Leadership and Support strategies average, suggesting employees may be looking for more recognition and more support for their managers. Overall, flexibility seems to be the single most salient factor in retaining employees.

Interpretation: Flexibility is the main reason employees stay. However, companies need to do better at engaging their staff and supporting career growth to keep talent.

Comparative Analysis

Work Arrangement: Remote and hybrid employees reported higher satisfaction levels than on-site workers. This confirms that flexible models greatly impact retention.

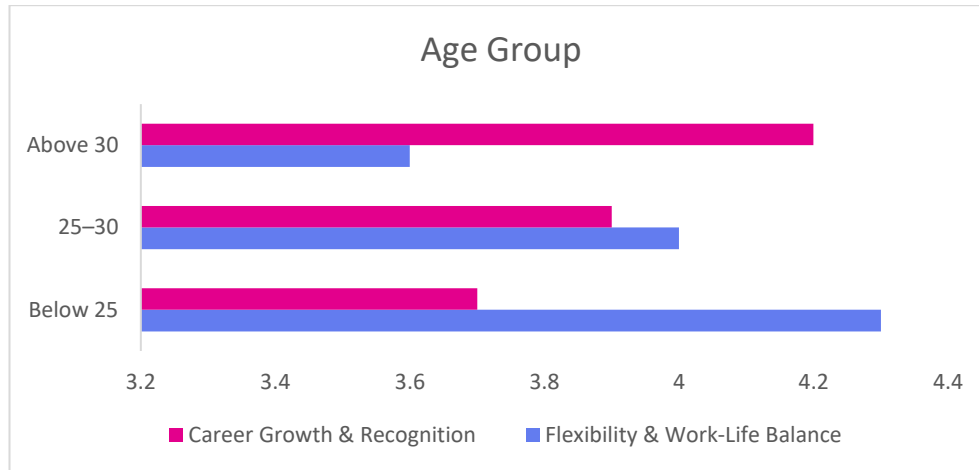
Work Arrangement	Average Score
On-site	3.3
Hybrid	4.4
Fully Remote	4.5



Interpretation: Remote and hybrid employees scored much higher, at 4.3 to 4.5, compared to on-site employees, who scored 3.3. This confirms that flexible arrangements are the strongest predictor of retention. On-site workers feel limited, which makes them more likely to leave.

Age Group: Younger respondents, those under 25, focused on flexibility and recognition. Meanwhile, older groups, those over 30, prioritized stability and career advancement.

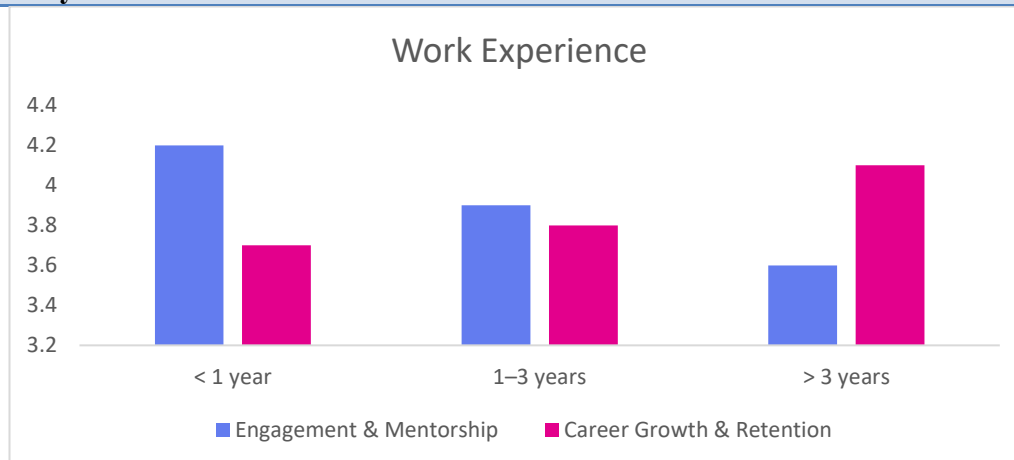
Age Group	Flexibility & Work-Life Balance	Career Growth & Recognition
Below 25	4.3	3.7
25–30	4.0	3.9
Above 30	3.6	4.2



Interpretation: Employees under 25 had the highest scores for flexibility. This means they are likely to stay if given freedom. Employees over 30 placed more importance on career growth and recognition, indicating that their focus shifts from flexibility to stability as they mature.

Work Experience: Fresher's, with less than 1 year of experience, appreciated engagement and learning opportunities. In contrast, employees with more than 3 years emphasized career development and managerial support.

Work Experience	Engagement & Mentorship	Career Growth & Retention
< 1 year	4.2	3.7
1–3 years	3.9	3.8
> 3 years	3.6	4.1



Interpretation: Less experienced employees, those with less than 1 year of experience, showed higher ratings for engagement and learning. This highlights the importance of onboarding. More experienced staff, those with more than 3 years of experience, scored higher for career growth and managerial support. This shows they stay because of opportunities for advancement, not just engagement.

Hypothesis Testing (Descriptive Support)

H1: Flexible work arrangements reduce turnover.

Supported. Remote and hybrid employees consistently reported higher satisfaction and lower turnover intent than on-site employees.

H2: Engagement programs improve retention.

Partially supported. Engagement activities showed some impact; respondents felt these programs exist but are not always effective.

H3: Career development opportunities improve retention.

Supported. Respondents pointed out growth opportunities as a key factor, though many felt these were not enough in their current workplaces.

Findings

The study surveyed 100 participants, mainly Gen Z and young professionals under 30 who have less than three years of work experience. The findings highlight several key factors that influence employee retention:

Flexibility is a Top Priority. Flexible work arrangements, like hybrid and fully remote models, are the most important factor in keeping employees. Remote and hybrid workers reported higher satisfaction levels—4.4 and 4.5, respectively—compared to on-site employees, who scored 3.3. This shows that these flexible options are strong predictors of retention. Younger employees, especially those under 25, rated flexibility the highest, suggesting they are more likely to stay if they have this freedom.

Mixed Views on Engagement and Career Growth. While engagement and career development programs had some positive effects, there is still room for improvement. The study found that participants value career growth, but many were not sure that their current workplaces offered enough opportunities. Engagement programs received moderate ratings, indicating they have a positive effect but are not yet fully effective.

Experience Level and Priorities. Employees with less than a year of experience valued engagement and learning opportunities more, highlighting the importance of effective onboarding. In contrast, those with over three years of experience focused on career development and managerial support as key reasons for staying with a company.

Conclusion

The study's conclusions show that, particularly for young, early-career professionals, flexibility is the most important aspect in keeping personnel. According to the findings, workers who had remote or hybrid work arrangements expressed greater job satisfaction and were less likely to quit than those who worked on-site.

According to the report, employee expectations are not being fully met by present programs, even though engagement and career development are equally crucial. Growth possibilities are valued by employees, yet many believe they are insufficient for their existing positions. Companies should concentrate on a combination approach that gives clear career advancement pathways, increases engagement, and offers flexible work options in order to promote retention.

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