



A study on the impact of employee recognition initiatives on the morale of Generation Z workforce.

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I.ABSTRACT

The Generation Z workforce consists of employees who began their career in the digital era. This generation of employees have a completely different approach towards work compared to previous generations of the workforce. Keeping the morale of employees high impacts the overall performance of an employee and eventually leads to the achievement of the organisational goals. Boosting the morale of Generation Z employees can be challenging as they have unique motivating factors. Employee recognition is one method used by organisations to make employees feel valued and motivated. In this research, a sample size of 105 responses were used, where a Multiple Linear Regression test showed that there is a positive relationship between the employee recognition initiatives and the morale of the Generation Z workforce.

Key words: *Generation Z, morale, employee recognition, employee recognition initiatives*

II.PROBLEM STATEMENT

Given the challenges, uncertainties, risks in today's work environment, organisations will have to look at a broader perspective in terms of recognition of the Generation Z workforce. Generation Z employees have a completely different approach towards work. In order to ensure consistency of such employees, organisations will have to ensure that the morale of employees are high. In order to do so, organisations will have to come up with initiatives that can keep the morale of Gen Z employees high. This research deals with the impact of initiatives taken by organizations in recognizing Gen Z employees for their work and also suggesting effective ways of recognizing the Gen Z workforce.

III.NEED FOR RESEARCH

Generation Z workforce have a very modern approach towards work. They expect their work environment to be more dynamic and flexible. Employee recognition initiatives are implemented in organisations with the objective of enhancing employee productivity. These initiatives are huge expenditures that organisations will have to incur. There is a need to understand if these initiatives have any impact on the productivity and performance of employees in the Generation Z category.

IV. INTRODUCTION

Generational Change in the workforce has made it necessary for organisations to change the way human resources are managed ([Setiawan R,2020](#)). The Generation Z workforce, who are born to a globally connected world are slowly entering their first jobs have their own set of expectations, perceptions and expectations. The Generation Z workforce are expected to share a unique and noticeable change to organizations in the future([Kirchmayer, Z,2020](#)). The presence of the Generation Z workforce in the labour market will create significant change in the organisations today. There arises a need of reconfiguration of the principles of the Human Resource practices by organisations to benefit from the qualities of the Generation Z employees. The Generation Z workforce gravitate towards gamified processes as they are natives of global communication and are self-motivators who appreciate transparency and honesty([Dobrowolski, Z,2022](#)). The generation Z workforce are considered to be a smart consumer for technology and are digital natives. They bring new skills, expectations and have a desire to bring changes in the industry([Yunos, S,2019](#)). Organisations will have to develop strategies and policies that will ensure that the Generation Z workforce are productive & profitable. It is important to take into account the newest generation's need and outlook([Pichler, S,2021](#)). Employee recognition is not only limited to good extrinsic compensation, but also making employees feel valued for the efforts they put at work ([Khan S,2011](#)). Several Organisations today are making use of employee recognition as a tool to motivate employees to work efficiently([Amoatemoa,2016](#)). One particular type of recognition method may not motivate all employees. One person's reward may be perceived as a punishment by another person([Ismail A,2015](#)). Organisations should avoid the error of not providing recognition, both through organisational practices and supervisory support ([Chenevert.D,2022](#)). Unannounced public recognition causes a significant increase in performance of employees ([Bradler.C,2016](#)).

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

([Singh, A. P., & Dangmei, J,2016](#)) examined the characteristics and preferences of the generation Z workforce in order to provide suggestions to organisations to build a workforce which is suitable for them, which will impact the performance of the organisation. It was concluded in the research that Gen Z employees have a different requirements and motivating factors than earlier generations. Thus, it is important for organisations to understand the requirements of Gen Z employees and establish a culture that will motivate and sustain them for a longer duration. ([Lee, C. C,2021](#)) examined factors that engage the Gen Z employees at workplace. Six factors were identified which positively impact employee engagement of Gen Z employee. The study concluded that factors like leadership, work-life balance and autonomy can impact the engagement of employees in a positively way. Leadership plays an important role in how Gen Z employees perceive their work. The study also concluded that organisations should come up with leadership training to managers and make the workplace flexible and facilitate employee engagement. The study also concluded when the Gen Z workforce is engaged at work, the organisation makes higher profits as well. ([Gaan, N,2022](#)) attempted to develop a thorough theoretical framework that offers a wide range of opportunities for future research to explore the controls over Gen-Z cohorts' expectations. In a time of crisis, a research that explains how leadership affects the

behaviour of the Gen-Z cohort is essential. The current study emphasizes the potential factors that may affect Gen-Z workers' remote work outcomes in light of these difficulties and the paucity of literature concerning the Generation Z cohort in relation to remote work practises. The current research added a new component to the Gen-Z cohort by extending the concepts of social interaction and social identity by examining the multilevel impact of resonant leading on the work results of Gen-Z tech workers through self-efficacy and organisational identification. [\(Tirta, A. H,2020\)](#) aimed to examine the impact that rewards and recognitions and work-life balance on employee retention using job satisfaction as a mediating variable. The samples were collected using non-probability sampling method. By using statistical methods for data analysis, the research showed that rewards and recognition, work life balance and job satisfaction have a significant positive impact on the retention of employees in an organisation. [\(Kochachathu, P,2010\)](#) identified the influence of Human Resource practices on employee retention in Intel Malaysia. Responses were collected from employees and regression analysis was used to analyse the data. Among all the independent variables, it was found that employee recognition rewards and compensation followed by work environment and job design are the influencing human resource factors for employee retention in Intel Malaysia. [\(Amoatema, A. S.,2016\)](#) studied the importance of employee recognition in Ghanaian Universities as an important tool in motivating employees to perform better at work. It was concluded in the paper that the organisation should create a culture that supports employee recognition and also focus on making the work environment more supportive and respectful. It was also concluded that is it important to evaluate the effectiveness of the recognition programs. [\(Bradler, C,2016\)](#) investigated the impact of unannounced, public recognition on employee performance. The study showed that recognition increases performance, especially when provided to best performer. [\(Chenevert, D,2022\)](#) studied the impact of non-monetary recognition on employee turnover. The study revealed that when distal non-monetary recognition gets aligned with recognition from proximal sources employees have lower turnover intentions.

VI.OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The primary objective of the study is to identify if employee recognition initiatives of organisations have any impact on the morale of the Generation Z workforce. The study also aims suggest effective ways to keep the morale of the Generation Z workforce high.

VII.HYPOTHESIS

H0: Employee recognition initiatives do not have a positive impact on the morale of Generation Z workforce.

H1: Employee recognition initiatives have a positive impact on the morale of Generation Z workforce.

VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, primary and secondary data has been used. A sample size of 105 responses were used for the purpose of data analysis using the SPSS Software. The respondents belonged to the Generation Z workforce. Multiple Linear Regression was used to identify if there is any relationship between the employee recognition initiatives taken by the organisations and the morale of the Generation Z workforce. In the research, the dependent variables are- Morale of Generation Z workforce, and the independent variables are- Monthly Newsletters, Website placement boosts, A virtual wall of fame, Thank you notes, Formal announcement, Appreciative badges, Monetary employee recognition awards, Weekly shout-outs on social media, Peer-to-Peer Appreciation, Tailor made awards, Learning and development rewards, Website placements, Achievement certificates, Employee appreciation day and Gift cards.

IX. PILOT STUDY

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.959	16



ANOVA with Cochran's Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Cochran's Q	Sig	
Between People	218.644	29	7.539			
Within People	Between Items	28.665	15	1.911	79.044	<.001
	Residual	134.523	435	.309		
	Total	163.188	450	.363		
Total	381.831	479	.797			

Grand Mean = 4.08



A pilot study was conducted using Cronbach Alpha with a sample size of 30 respondents. The Cronbach Alpha value is 0.959, which indicates that the study being conducted is valid.

In order to find if there is any relationship between the employee recognition initiatives and the morale of the Generation Z workforce, Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) test was conducted. The results show that the adjusted R square is 0.530 and the Durbin Watson value is also between the significant range. This shows that there is positive correlation between the employee recognition initiatives and the morale of the Generation Z workforce. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				Sig. F Change	PRESS	Durbin-Watson
				R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2			
1	.770 ^a	.593	.736	.593	9.378	14	90	<.001	74.020	1.765

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Thank you notes boosts the morale of employees., Weekly shout-outs on social media boosts the morale of employees., Website placements boosts the morale of employees., Tailor-made rewards boosts the morale of employees., Appreciative badges boosts the morale of employees., Gift cards boosts the morale of employees., Peer-to-Peer Appreciation boosts the morale of employees., A virtual wall of fame boosts the morale of employees., Formal announcements boosts the morale of employees., Achievement certificates boosts the morale of employees., Monthly Newsletters with employee success stories boosts the morale of employees., Employee appreciation day boosts the morale of employees., Learning and development Rewards boosts the morale of employees., Monetary employee recognition awards boosts the morale of employees.
- b. Dependent Variable: Employee recognition initiatives have a positive impact on the morale of an employee.

X.SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Generation Z workforce feels that employee recognition is a very important part in their work environment as they feel they need to feel valued for the work they do. The Generation Z workforce does feel a sense of confidence when they are recognized for the work they do. The Generation Z workforce look for both, monetary and non-monetary recognition for their work. Organisations will have to ensure that the recognition initiatives are a combination of both, monetary and non-monetary elements. Organisations will have to launch initiative programs which reflects the culture of the organisation they are a part of. The Generation Z workforce feel a sense of satisfaction when even small accomplishments are made public. The respondents feel that they need to be recognized in a monetary as well as a non-monetary form. Organisations will also have to keep a track of employee performance precisely in order to identify the strengths of the employees and recognize them for the same.

XI.CONCLUSION

In today's rapidly changing business environment, the Generation Z workforce, who have a completely new perspective towards the work they do, are changing the dynamics of how organisations are functioning today. The Generation Z workforce, have a unique set of expectations from the job they do. They believe that recognition plays a very important role at work. Employee recognition is one aspect in the workplace which acts as a very powerful tool in keeping the morale of employees high. Thus, coming up with new and innovative initiatives is important for organisations to boost the morale of the Gen Z workforce. Today, organisations are coming up with innovative employee recognition initiatives which appeal to the Generation Z workforce. From the study conducted above, it is concluded that employee recognition initiatives do have a positive impact on the morale of the Generation Z workforce.

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