

Research Article

To study Gen Z's vision for the future of work on flexibility and work-life balance among people living in Ahmedabad city

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A B S T R A C T

This study explores Gen Z's vision for the future of work, with a specific focus on flexibility and work-life balance among individuals residing in Ahmedabad city. As workplaces evolve due to technological advancements and shifting cultural values, understanding the expectations of Gen Z—the newest generation entering the workforce—is essential for employers and policymakers. The research was conducted using a structured questionnaire administered to 202 respondents across various age groups within Gen Z. Data were analysed using chi-square tests to examine the relationship between age and a series of attitude-based statements on flexible work and work-life priorities.

The findings reveal that age has no significant association with most of the work-related preferences studied, suggesting that Gen Z as a cohort demonstrates consistent values regarding flexibility, autonomy, and mental well-being, regardless of age. However, a statistically significant association was found between age and the belief that employers should prioritise mental health, indicating a growing emphasis on emotional well-being in the workplace. The correlation strength across all variables was weak, emphasising the generational uniformity in workplace expectations.

These results have strong practical implications for employers seeking to attract and retain Gen Z talent. Integrating flexible work models, prioritising mental health, and promoting work-life balance are not optional but essential strategies for future-ready organisations. The study also provides a foundation for future research on cross-generational work trends.

Keywords: Gen Z, Flexible Work, Work-Life Balance, Mental Health

Introduction

Introduction Of The Topic & Industry

The landscape of work is undergoing a fundamental transformation, driven by globalisation, rapid technological advancements, evolving societal norms, and the rising

influence of Generation Z (Gen Z) in the workforce. Among the most defining elements of this transformation are workforce flexibility and work-life balance (WLB)—concepts increasingly valued by younger generations and critical for sustainable economic growth.¹

Gen Z, typically defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, is entering the professional world with a distinct mindset.² Unlike previous generations that prioritised job security and monetary rewards, Gen Z seeks purpose, autonomy, flexibility, and mental well-being.³ For them, work is not just a livelihood but a component of a broader life vision that values quality of life and emotional fulfilment.⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift globally by mainstreaming remote work, hybrid models, and digital collaboration—trends that Gen Z expects to persist as permanent workplace norms.⁵

In India, urban centres like Ahmedabad serve as important case studies due to their rapid development, tech-driven economy, and youthful population. Understanding Gen Z's expectations in such cities helps organisations tailor workplace models that align with contemporary values. This includes exploring preferences for flexible hours, remote opportunities, and employer support for mental well-being.

The history of work illustrates how the workforce evolved from subsistence labour and industrial rigidity to today's digital, connected, and flexible work environments. However, with the advent of the internet, globalisation, and digital tools, the workplace has become more decentralised and people-focused. In the 21st century, employee well-being, flexibility, and inclusivity are redefining success across all sectors.

Globally, workforce flexibility and WLB have become economic enablers.⁶ The International Labour Organization and OECD confirm that flexible policies increase labour force participation, particularly among women, youth, and under-represented groups. Countries prioritising WLB, such as the Scandinavian nations, consistently outperform others in productivity, innovation, and happiness. The gig economy, which is expected to contribute \$4 trillion to global GDP by 2025, thrives on the principles of flexible work.

In India, the rise of the IT and service sectors has fuelled the adoption of flexible work practices. The country's growing freelance and gig workforce—estimated at 15 million—is reshaping traditional employment models. Reports from NITI Aayog and ASSOCHAM highlight that increasing female participation through flexibility could significantly boost GDP. Furthermore, the pandemic catalysed the acceptance of remote work, with Indian employees showing a strong preference for flexible arrangements.

From an economic standpoint, these trends reduce employee burnout, lower operational costs, improve resource utilisation, and promote innovation.⁷ They also support national initiatives like Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat by making jobs more accessible to rural populations and promoting entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, workforce flexibility and work-life balance are no longer perks—they are essential strategies for economic growth, inclusivity, and future workforce sustainability. Particularly for Gen Z in cities like Ahmedabad, embracing these shifts is crucial for businesses seeking to attract, engage, and retain top talent while contributing to India's broader development agenda.⁸

Research Objectives

- To understand the perception of Gen Z in Ahmedabad towards flexible work models (H1, H2, H14)
- To analyse the importance of work-life balance in Gen Z's career decision-making (H3, H11, H15)
- To assess the impact of technology on enabling work flexibility and work-life balance (H5)
- To examine Gen Z's expectations from future employers regarding mental health and wellness support (H6, H13)
- To investigate whether Gen Z associates flexible work with greater job satisfaction and career growth (H8, H10)
- To explore Gen Z's openness to non-traditional work roles such as freelance, gig, or project-based employment (H9)
- To measure the availability and awareness of flexible work opportunities in Ahmedabad city (H14)
- To identify how Gen Z aims to shape or redefine workplace culture in the future (H12)

Literature Review

Published Jan 24, 2025 · Jonathan Christian Matthew Nainggolan, S. Purba

This research was conducted with the aim of determining the effect of flexible working arrangements on organizational commitment with work life balance and job satisfaction as mediating variables in generation Z employees who work in Jakarta and its surroundings. In this research, the population used as the research object is generation Z employees or those with birth years from 1998 to 2009 who work in Jakarta and its surroundings.⁹ Apart from that, the convenience sampling technique was used as a sample determination technique. The questionnaire distributed was in the form of a Google Form with the criteria for respondents being permanent employees who can or have worked with flexible working arrangements and have currently worked at the company for at least 1 year. 176 respondents were obtained and data processing was carried out using SMART PLS 4.0 software. The results obtained in this research are that Flexible Working Arrangement has a significant effect on Organizational Commitment, Work Life Balance, and Job Satisfaction. Job Satisfaction has a significant effect on Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction mediates the effect of Flexible Working Arrangements on Organizational Commitment. Meanwhile,

Work Life Balance does not have a significant influence on Organizational Commitment and Work Life Balance cannot mediate the influence of Flexible Working Arrangement on Organizational Commitment.

Published May 1, 2025 · Jonathan H. Westover

This article examines the evolving landscape of organizational leadership as Gen Z and millennials increasingly comprise the workforce, revealing their diminished interest in traditional corporate hierarchies. Unlike previous generations, these younger workers prioritize flexible arrangements, meaningful impact, and work-life balance over conventional career advancement.¹⁰ The research highlights their preferences for collaborative environments, continuous learning opportunities, and transparent leadership structures, driving them toward alternative career paths such as entrepreneurship, horizontal moves, and portfolio careers. Organizations seeking to attract and retain this talent must adapt by flattening hierarchies, offering developmental rotations, formalizing flexible work arrangements, and measuring social impact. The case study of Redfin demonstrates successful implementation of these strategies, suggesting that companies embracing these leadership transformations will better position themselves for future success in an evolving workforce landscape.

Published Aug 30, 2023 · Ahmad Farhan Akbar, Ilimi Amalia

The work-life balance is the ability of individuals to effectively manage resources such as time and energy across multiple roles within the professional and personal life domain, extending beyond the confines of familial responsibilities. This balance significantly correlates with life satisfaction, job contentment, work dedication, and better mental health. This study aimed to explore the impact of Flexible Work Arrangements, Social Support, Gender, and Job Categories on Generation Z Workers. Conducting a quantitative analysis and using a non-probability sampling method, the study comprised a sample of 258 workers aged between 18 to 28 years residing in Jabodetabek. The Work/Nonwork Interference and Enhancement Scale measuring tool developed by Fisher et.al (2009) was used to evaluate the work-life balance.¹¹ The evaluation of flexible work arrangements used the assessment tool developed by Hyland (2000), while the measurement of social support used the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet et al (1988). The validity of the measuring instrument underwent scrutiny through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), with hypothesis testing conducted via Multiple Regression Technique. The results showed that five independent variables significantly influence the work-life balance, namely the use of adaptability, the availability of flexibility, preference for resilience, family support, and gender. However, variables such as aid from

friends, significant other support, and job category are not significant in this context. Keyword: Work-life balance, generation z, flexible work

Published May 12, 2024 · Dr. (CS) Usha Srivastava, Shagufta Fatima

Work-life balance is a critical concern in today's workplace.³⁰ When employees and employers fail to address this issue, it leads to numerous enduring consequences, mainly due to poor communication and a disconnect between expectations and reality for both sides. Thus, a clear understanding of work-life balance and well-defined expectations are essential.²⁹ Generation Z is the newest generation in the workplace, and it is very important to understand their perspective towards the work and also to understand what the things are that motivate them in the workplace and how they balance their life so that the employers can transform their work environment accordingly and provide a peaceful environment for them to thrive in, which leads to overall growth of the organisation. Research methodology The researcher employed exploratory and descriptive study methods based on primary data.¹² The target population consists of Gen Z employees working in the education sector, specifically in schools. Data was collected from 60 respondents using a convenient sampling technique. Findings Generation Z employees are energetic and prioritise their health and fitness. They thrive in flexible work environments, which accommodate their preference for work-life balance and personal well-being.²⁶ Studies show that Gen Z values workplaces that offer flexibility, wellness programmes, and opportunities for professional growth.²⁷ Their comfort with technology also makes remote and hybrid work models particularly appealing to them. By fostering such environments, employers can better attract and retain Gen Z talent, enhancing overall job satisfaction and productivity.¹³ Luckily, there are great benefits of a multigenerational organisation, including better access to a multiskilled team, increased productivity, a stronger talent pipeline, greater diversity of skills and outlook, better retention of experience and know-how, and increased resilience (OECD, 2020). Organisations aren't the only ones that benefit from a multigenerational workforce: Clients are typically better represented and served (OECD, 2020).²⁸ Research Limitation The study is limited to the Gen Z employees of Raipur working in government or private schools. Geographical Scope: The research focuses solely on Gen Z employees in Raipur, limiting the generalisability of findings to other regions or contexts. Sector Specificity: The study exclusively targets employees in the education sector, thus potentially overlooking insights applicable to Gen Z workers in other industries. [14] Sample Size: With a sample size of 60 respondents, the study may lack sufficient statistical power to detect smaller or less common trends within the Gen Z population. Sampling

Technique: The use of convenient sampling may introduce selection bias, as it relies on readily available participants rather than employing random or stratified sampling methods.¹⁵ **Data Collection Method:** While the study utilises primary data, the reliance on self-reported measures may introduce response bias or inaccuracies due to subjective interpretations.¹⁶ **Temporal Constraints:** The research is conducted within a specific timeframe, potentially limiting its ability to capture long-term trends or changes in Gen Z attitudes and behaviours over time.¹⁷ **Language and Cultural Factors:** The study assumes a certain level of proficiency in the language of data collection (e.g., English or Hindi) and may not fully account for cultural nuances that could influence participant responses. **External Factors:** External variables such as economic conditions, societal trends, or technological advancements may impact the findings but are not explicitly accounted for in the study design.²⁵ **Expanding the research scope beyond these limitations could enhance the comprehensiveness and robustness of future investigations into Gen Z employees' characteristics and preferences.** **Practical Implication¹⁸** This study carries several practical implications for various stakeholders. **Educational institutions,** in particular, can leverage the information and findings from such studies regarding the work-life balance of Gen Z employees. **Policy Development:** Educational institutions can use the insights gained from this study to develop policies and initiatives that promote work-life balance among Gen Z employees. This could include flexible scheduling options, wellness programmes, and support for remote work arrangements.¹⁹ **Employee Engagement:** By understanding the preferences and priorities of Gen Z employees regarding work-life balance, educational institutions can better engage and retain their workforce. Offering benefits and opportunities that align with Gen Z values can enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty. **Recruitment Strategies:** Educational institutions can tailor their recruitment strategies to appeal to Gen Z candidates by highlighting their commitment to work-life balance initiatives.²⁰ This can help attract top talent and differentiate the institution as an employer of choice. **Training and Development:** Incorporating training and development programmes that address work-life balance skills and strategies can empower Gen Z employees to effectively manage their professional and personal lives. This investment in employee development can contribute to long-term organisational success.²¹ Overall, integrating the insights gained from this study into organisational practices can create a more supportive and inclusive work environment for Gen Z employees in educational institutions, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the institution as a whole.

Published Apr 30, 2025 · Muh. Dedi Miswar, Alfian Maulana, Herawaty

This research aims to determine the partial influence of technological changes and social awareness on the work-life balance of Gen Z in the city of Makassar. This research is associative research with a quantitative approach.²² The sample in this research consisted of 120 worker respondents in the city of Makassar, and the data collection technique used in this research was a questionnaire, and the data analysis technique used was multiple regression with SPSS software. The test results show that the technological change variable has a significant influence on Gen Z's work-life balance and social alertness has a significant positive influence on Gen Z's work-life balance.²³

Research Gap

While several studies have explored the relationship between flexible work arrangements, work-life balance, and organisational commitment, most existing research is geographically concentrated in metro cities or sector-specific, such as education.²⁴ These contexts may not fully reflect the experiences and expectations of Gen Z individuals living in tier-1 Indian cities like Ahmedabad, which is rapidly growing in economic and technological significance.

Moreover, the majority of the studies have been limited to specific sectors (e.g., government schools, IT companies) or small sample sizes, affecting the generalisability of the results. Many studies have also used structured organisational samples, focusing on permanent employees, whereas the modern workforce—especially Gen Z—is increasingly embracing freelance, gig, and hybrid roles, which are under-represented in current academic literature.

Additionally, although some studies have examined mediating variables like job satisfaction and mental well-being, they often neglect region-specific challenges or preferences, such as local availability of flexible opportunities, cultural work norms, or digital readiness in cities like Ahmedabad.

There is also a lack of comprehensive primary research that aligns flexible work expectations with emerging Gen Z values—such as purpose-driven work, mental health awareness, and autonomy—within the Indian urban ecosystem.

Thus, this study aims to bridge these gaps by:

- Focusing on Gen Z in Ahmedabad, capturing their unique work expectations;
- Exploring their views on flexibility, technology, and mental well-being;
- And providing data-driven recommendations to employers and policymakers for building future-ready workplaces.

Hypothesis (Only List)

H1 There is a significant association between age and the

belief that flexible work hours will become the norm in the future.

H2 Here is a significant association between age and the opinion that remote and hybrid work models should be permanent options for employees.

H3 There is a significant association between age and the belief that work-life balance is more important than a high salary.

H4: Here is a significant association between age and the preference for jobs that allow control over when and where to work.

H5 There is a significant association between age and the belief that technology has made it easier to maintain work-life balance.

H6 There is a significant association between age and the opinion that employers should prioritise mental health and well-being.

H7 There is a significant association between age and the willingness to turn down a job offer that does not offer flexibility.

H8 There is a significant association between age and the belief that flexible work arrangements increase productivity and job satisfaction.

H9 There is a significant association between age and the expectation to work in multiple short-term or freelance roles in the future.

H10 There is a significant association between age and the belief that flexible work leads to greater career growth opportunities.

H11 There is a significant association between age and considering work-life balance as a critical factor in choosing a future employer.

H12 There is a significant association between age and the belief that Gen Z will redefine workplace culture with an emphasis on autonomy and balance.

H13 There is a significant association between age and the expectation for paid time off and mental health days as a standard benefit.

H14 There is a significant association between age and the belief that Ahmedabad offers enough opportunities for flexible work.

H15 There is a significant association between age and the confidence that the future work environment will support both career success and personal life.

Validation Of Questionnaire

I believe that flexible work hours will become the norm in the future³¹ and that remote and hybrid work models

should be permanent options for employees.³² Work-life balance is more important to me than a high salary,³³ and I prefer jobs that allow me to control when and where I work.³⁴ Technology has made it easier to maintain work-life balance, and employers should prioritise the mental health and well-being of their employees.³⁵ I would even turn down a job offer that does not provide flexibility³⁶ as flexible work arrangements increase productivity and job satisfaction.³⁷ In the future, I see myself working in multiple short-term or freelance roles instead of a single job,³⁸ and I associate flexible work with greater career growth opportunities.³⁹ Work-life balance is a critical factor in choosing my future employer,⁴⁰ and I believe Gen Z will redefine workplace culture with an emphasis on autonomy and balance.⁴¹ I also expect employers to offer paid time off and mental health days as standard benefits⁴² and I believe that Ahmedabad has enough opportunities offering flexible work options.⁴³ Overall, I am confident that the future work environment will support both career success and personal life.⁴⁴

Research methodology

The research design for this study is descriptive in nature. The sample was selected using a non-probability convenient sampling method.⁴⁵ Data was collected primarily through a structured questionnaire, which consisted of close-ended questions.⁴⁶ The survey was conducted online via Google Forms to reach respondents efficiently.⁴⁷ For data analysis, tables were used to organise and interpret the information, and SPSS and Excel were employed as the primary tools for analysis.⁴⁸ The sample size corresponded to the total number of responses collected through the Google Form.⁴⁹ The survey was conducted in the area where the data was collected, and the sampling units included a diverse group of respondents such as students,⁵⁰ private and government job employees, businessmen, homemakers, and professionals like chartered accountants, doctors, and others.⁵¹

Demographic Summary

The study surveyed a total of 202 respondents. In terms of age distribution, the majority of participants (35.6%) were between 31 and 35 years, followed by 20.3% in the 35-40 years category and 17.3% in the 26-30 years age group. Smaller proportions were observed among those aged 21-25 years (14.9%), 40-45 years (9.4%), and 45 years & above (2.5%). Regarding gender, 61.4% of the respondents were male, while 38.6% were female. In terms of educational qualifications, a significant number of participants were graduates (54%), followed by postgraduates (29.7%) and undergraduates (16.3%). This demographic profile provides a diverse sample across age, gender, and education levels.

Cronbach's Alpha

To assess the internal consistency of the scale used in this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. The analysis

yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.856 for the 15 items included in the instrument. According to widely accepted reliability benchmarks, a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 is considered acceptable, above 0.8 is considered good, and above 0.9 is considered excellent.

Thus, the obtained value of 0.856 indicates high internal consistency among the items, suggesting that the scale used in this research is reliable for measuring the intended construct. This level of reliability strengthens the credibility of the data collected and supports the overall validity of the findings.

Table I. Results Of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
H1	There is a significant association between age and the belief that flexible work hours will become the norm in the future.	.063	>	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis Accepted)	.044	weak
H2	There is a significant association between age and the opinion that remote and hybrid work models should be permanent options for employees.	.197	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.727	weak
H3	There is a significant association between age and the belief that work-life balance is more important than a high salary.	.734	>	H03 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.006	weak
H4	There is a significant association between age and the preference for jobs that allow control over when and where to work.	.245	>	H04 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.655	weak
H5	There is a significant association between age and the belief that technology has made it easier to maintain work-life balance.	.641	>	H05 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.201	weak
H6	There is a significant association between age and the opinion that employers should prioritize mental health and well-being.	.000	<	H06 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	.332	weak
H7	There is a significant association between age and the willingness to turn down a job offer that does not offer flexibility.	.093	>	H07 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.139	weak

H8	There is a significant association between age and the belief that flexible work arrangements increase productivity and job satisfaction.	.620	>	H08 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	253	weak
H9	There is a significant association between age and the expectation to work in multiple short-term or freelance roles in the future.	.300	>	H09 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.501	weak
H10	There is a significant association between age and the belief that flexible work leads to greater career growth opportunities.	.633	>	H10 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.504	weak
H11	There is a significant association between age and considering work-life balance as a critical factor in choosing a future employer..	.602	>	H11 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	049	weak
H12	There is a significant association between age and the belief that Gen Z will redefine workplace culture with an emphasis on autonomy and balance.	.823	>	H12 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.648	weak
H13	There is a significant association between age and the expectation for paid time off and mental health days as a standard benefit.	.103	>	H13 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	014	weak
H14	There is a significant association between age and the belief that Ahmedabad offers enough opportunities for flexible work.	.307	>	H14 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.026	weak
H15	There is a significant association between age and the confidence that the future work environment will support both career success and personal life.	.225	>	H15 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.013	weak

*Source: Author's compilation

Discussion

The current research sought to investigate Gen Z's future vision of work, specifically flexibility and work-life balance, among the residents of Ahmedabad city. According to the results of the chi-square tests, all of the hypotheses failed to show a statistically significant relationship between age and opinions concerning future work preferences, reflecting that views regarding flexibility and work-life balance were overall in line with varying ages in Gen Z.

Of the 15 hypotheses that were tested, 14 null hypotheses were confirmed, indicating no significant correlation between age and the variables under investigation. Only H6, where the relationship between age and agreement that employers should put mental health and well-being at the top of their agendas, was statistically significant ($p = 0.000$).

This would mean that in the case of Gen Z respondents, age has a bearing on attitudes towards mental health prioritisation in the workplace. While statistically significant, this relationship shows that the association is weak given the value of correlation ($R = 0.332$). Nevertheless, this finding is important since it captures an increasing concern and need among younger subgroups in Gen Z for more emotionally supportive workplaces.

The other hypotheses (H1 to H5 and H7 to H15) had p-values of more than 0.05, indicating no statistically significant relationship between attitude and age regarding several flexible work dimensions, including telecommuting and hybrid work, flexible work hours, technology in work-life balance, freelance work, and paid time off or mental health day expectations. Interestingly, despite these answers exhibiting a low positive correlation (R values between 0.006 and 0.727), none of them were at a moderate or high level, validating the homogeneity of opinion among Gen Z across their specific ages within the 21–45+ category.

This finding underlines one of the most important findings: Gen Z, as a generation, holds fairly cohesive expectations and values regarding the future of work. Their decisive support for flexibility, autonomy, mental wellbeing, and balance is not indicative of the preference of a certain age segment but a collective generational expectation. This is crucial information for employers and HR specialists who seek to entice and retain Gen Z professionals in urban agglomerations like Ahmedabad, which is quickly emerging as an expanding hub for professionals. Another insightful point of note is the uniformly low correlation values for all variables, both those that were statistically significant and those that were not. This suggests that even though the trends are uniform, age in itself is not a great predictor of how Gen Zers feel about work-life balance or flexibility. Other variables, like education, work experience, or field of work, could be stronger determinants and worth exploring in follow-up research.

In summary, the research indicates that Gen Z in Ahmedabad demonstrates high, homogeneous expectations of a future workplace characterised by flexibility, mental health emphasis, and work-life balance.

The absence of substantial variation across age also underscores the unity of Gen Z's work values and necessitates organisational adjustments to meet these demands in order to compete in talent attraction and employee engagement.

Theoretical Implications

The research findings provide a number of significant theoretical contributions within the area of organisational behaviour, generational workforce research, and changing the future of work. Through the investigation of Gen Z's concept of flexibility and work-life balance in the urban city environment of Ahmedabad, this research contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the generational stability of values for Gen Z, specifically autonomy, well-being, and flexible work arrangements.

Second, the findings indicate that age, as a distinguishing variable within Gen Z, holds little theoretical relevance in accounting for differences in attitudes towards flexible work and work-life balance. This undermines conventional hypotheses in generational theory based on the idea that substantial attitudinal changes even among cohorts happen due to age, maturity, or career progression. Here, the research confirms that Gen Z is a more values-consistent generation, most influenced by digital nativity, economic insecurity, and international consciousness regarding mental health and personal well-being. In addition, the strong link between age and belief that employers are responsible for prioritising mental health is evidence of the increasing theoretical salience of employee psychological safety and well-being as central aspects of Gen Z's work expectations. This is consistent with modern human resource management theories that focus on emotional intelligence, workplace compassion, and sustainable work culture.

The research thus advocates extending classical models of organisational behaviour to more actively incorporate flexibility and mental health as core dimensions of workplace satisfaction, especially among younger groups. In addition, the general weak correlation measures across all variables tested suggest that although Gen Z highly esteems flexibility and balance, these sentiments are not extensively divided by age segments, indicating that other socio-cultural or contextual factors (e.g., education level, career aspirations, or digital work experience) would perhaps more accurately account for differences in perceptions. This result opens new theoretical avenues for researchers to explore multidimensional models of work preference formation beyond demographic factors.

Furthermore, the research adds to workplace flexibility theories by affirming that flexible work is now not a privilege or fad but an anticipated norm. Gen Z's uniform answers indicate redefining what counts as a "normal" job format, lending credence to theories that foresee a paradigm shift away from conventional 9-to-5 arrangements toward outcome-based and employee-focused models.

Lastly, socio-geographically, the research offers preliminary evidence that Tier-1 and Tier-2 Indian city Gen Z urban populations in Ahmedabad are in accordance with international workplace values. This has implications for cross-cultural generational work attitude studies at a theoretical level, suggesting potential convergence geographically in keeping with global trends like digitalisation, hybrid work, and mindfulness about mental well-being. Overall, this study reinforces theoretical models that conceptualise Gen Z as a cohesive, flexibility-orientated, well-being-motivated labour force and also opens the door for future research into more nuanced psychological and contextual factors driving workplace expectations.

Practical Implications

The results of this research provide significant practical implications for employers, HR personnel, and policymakers looking to attract and retain Gen Z talent in Ahmedabad. Even though the majority of the hypotheses employed revealed no statistically significant relationship between age and work-life balance attitudes and attitudes toward flexible work, respectively, the consistently affirmative answers across all age groups in Gen Z suggest that these attitudes are prevalent right across the generation. This consistency indicates that flexibility is not merely a desire of particular age cohorts but a core expectation built into Gen Z's work style.

Managers need to understand that flexibility, be it in the form of work hours or work location, is becoming more and more considered by Gen Z not as a voluntary amenity but as a minimum expectation. Conventional 9-to-5 models might no longer cut it with this new workforce. To engage and retain young professionals, companies in Ahmedabad must incorporate flexible work models as part of their regular functioning, providing options for remote or hybrid work, flexible schedules, and performance assessments based on outcomes rather than time worked. Failing to meet these demands may result in less interest in job positions, increased turnover, and difficulty in creating a motivated labour force.

One of the most striking findings of the research was the strong connection found between age and the view that employers should give priority to mental health and well-being. Despite the weak association, this is further evidence of increasing focus among younger employees on emotional wellbeing as an aspect of the workplace. Consequently, businesses need to integrate mental health programmes into the organisation's culture. Granting access to mental health resources, providing stress management workshops, encouraging mental health days, and creating a psychologically safe workplace are becoming integral parts of a contemporary employer brand.

Along with policies at the workplace, implications of the findings of the study come for how Ahmedabad companies introduce themselves to future employees. Hiring strategies need to openly speak of flexibility, work-life balance support, and concern for well-being through job postings and employer branding initiatives. Gen Z job applicants are likely to join firms who share similar values, and not doing so could prevent an organisation from competing for top talent. In addition, the findings imply that flexibility is not simply a matter of convenience but is linked to career satisfaction and opportunities for growth in Gen Z employees' minds. Hence, organisations need to create career paths that provide autonomy, imagination, and diverse work experience, such as brief projects or freelance-type engagements within formal employment. Enabling this form of dynamic work model will not only be in tune with Gen Z's attitudes but could also lead to increased productivity and innovation.

Lastly, for policymakers and city planners, these results highlight the need to establish a catalytic ecosystem for flexible work for cities such as Ahmedabad. Digital infrastructure investments, co-working spaces, and equitable labour laws can shape the environment that enables this new world of work. Broadly speaking, the research emphasises a shift in strategic thinking toward rethinking the organisation and management of workplaces—a shift that prioritises flexibility, autonomy, and mental wellbeing as fundamental values of work's future.

Recommendations For Future Research/Future Scope Of The Study

Expand Geographical Scope

Future research should include respondents from other cities, rural areas, and diverse regions of India to compare urban vs. non-urban Gen Z perspectives on flexibility and work-life balance.

Explore Additional Variables

Go beyond age and consider variables like education, industry, income level, work experience, and personality traits to understand what influences Gen Z's workplace preferences more deeply.

Use Mixed Methods

Incorporate qualitative research methods such as interviews or focus groups alongside surveys to capture more detailed insights and motivations behind Gen Z's attitudes.

Conduct Longitudinal Studies

Study Gen Z over time to track how their views on flexibility and work-life balance evolve as they grow older and advance in their careers.

Examine Organisational Impact

Investigate how actual workplace practices (e.g., flexible policies, mental health programmes, and leadership styles) affect Gen Z's engagement, satisfaction, and retention.

Include Employer and HR Perspectives

Compare employee expectations with the views and limitations of employers and HR professionals to identify practical gaps and opportunities for better alignment.

Cross-Generational Comparisons

Conduct comparative studies between Gen Z and other generations (Millennials, Gen X, and Boomers) to understand differences in values and help design inclusive workplace strategies.

Focus on Sector-Specific Analysis

Study Gen Z preferences within specific sectors (IT, education, healthcare, etc.) to identify industry-specific needs and flexible work trends.

Investigate Technology's Role in Greater Depth

Explore how digital tools and remote platforms influence Gen Z's productivity, stress levels, and ability to maintain work-life balance.

Policy-Level Research

Evaluate how local and national labour policies can adapt to support the growing demand for flexibility, mental health, and autonomy in the workforce.

These recommendations can help build a broader and deeper understanding of Gen Z's expectations and support the development of more adaptive and future-ready work environments.

Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate the future of work as envisioned by Gen Z, with emphasis on flexibility and work-life balance among those people in Ahmedabad city. The findings indicate that although there is no considerable relationship between age and the majority of attitudes towards work, Gen Z overall has a keen, single-minded preference for flexible work arrangements, mental health, and balanced lifestyles. The one statistically significant link was between age and the view that employers must take mental health into consideration, which shows that even among this quite young generation, expectations and awareness about emotional wellbeing are increasing. Whereas most hypotheses were not statistically significant, the ubiquitous high levels of agreement on the necessity of flexible work, hybrid or remote arrangements, and mental health benefits point to a shift in work values across generations. Gen Z workers are transforming the conventional model of work in preferences for autonomy, meaning, and balance as opposed to set schedules or just monetary rewards. Weak correlation values indicate that age within Gen Z does not significantly change these attitudes, which supports the argument that these preferences are fundamental aspects of the generation, not age-related issues.

The research adds to theoretical and practical knowledge of how Gen Z sees the changing world of work. It puts forward counterintuitive HR beliefs on age-influenced work preferences and underlines the need for rethinking organisational policies, culture, and leadership practices in line with the requirements of a value-driven, flexibility-orientated workforce. Employers in urban centres like Ahmedabad have to react by integrating flexibility, well-being, and autonomy into their work settings to attract and retain Gen Z workers.

In summary, work for Gen Z in Ahmedabad in the future is not simply a matter of where or when work occurs, but how work integrates with their wider life ambitions. As organisations and policymakers look ahead to the next decade, recognising and responding to these demands will be critical to building sustainable, productive, and meaningful workplaces.

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