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From HR Practices to Talent Sustainability: An Empirical Study of Organizational Predictors

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Abstract: In today's environment, the most challenging part is to identify the HR practices that fits workforce across generations. Most of the widely used three variable and one newly adopted variable has been taken for the study. The independent variables are Work-Life Balance Policies, Leadership and Supervisory Support, Career Growth Opportunities, and Digital HR Tools Adoption strategies. This study analyse the impact of these four variables on the dependent variable, Talent Sustainability. The respondents were a mix of Gen Y and Gen X. Questionnaire was given to 350 respondents and a total of 285 respondents responses were found to be correct, comprising 135 from Generation Y and 150 from Generation Z. The results obtained through regression and Annova suggested Digital HR tools adoption as the strongest predictor of Talent sustainability. One more interesting finding was Gen Y gave very less importance to digital adoption in comparison with Gen z. This study act as the guiding torch on guiding the organization in framing the HR strategies to generational expectations.

Keywords: Talent Sustainability; Work-Life Balance; Leadership Support; Career Growth Opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

Generation Y and generation Y are forming the big share of the trusted and energetic workforce in India. How to retain them is the biggest challenge and threat in front of the organization now. Researchers names it as Talent sustainability. The expectations of both the generations discussed in the study are different and many findings of the researches supported this argument. The Gen Z expects transparent career pathways, and they no longer like regular unchallengeable work.

(Adkar & Shaikh, 2023), found that good policies of organization with stress importance on work -life balance could improve the satisfaction and in turn the

the organization achieve talent sustainability(Breevaart et al., 2019).

Career growth opportunities, including transparent promotion systems and skill development, are critical for sustaining employability in knowledge-driven economies (De Vos & Van der Heijden, 2017). Finally, Digital HR Tools adoption has transformed HRM practices, offering efficiency and engagement particularly valued by digital-native Gen Z employees (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016).

Recent studies emphasize that generational differences shape how employees perceive these HR practices. Millennials tend to prioritize career growth and work-life balance, while Gen Z places stronger

emphasis on digital integration and purpose-driven work (Kulkarni & Rai, 2020; Parihar & Singh, 2025). Understanding these differences is vital for designing HR strategies that sustain talent across cohorts. This study therefore examines the influence of Work-Life Balance Policies, Leadership and Supervisory Support, Career Growth Opportunities, and Digital HR Tools Adoption on Talent Sustainability, comparing perceptions between Generation Y and Generation Z employees.

The following research questions were raised

Do policies promoting work-life balance have a different impact on talent sustainability for employees of Generation Z compared to Generation Y?

Do policies promoting **Leadership and Supervisory Support** have a different impact on talent sustainability for employees of Generation Z compared to Generation Y?

Do policies promoting **Growth Opportunities** have a different impact on talent sustainability for employees of Generation Z compared to Generation Y?

Do policies promoting digital HR adoption have a different impact on talent sustainability for employees of Generation Z compared to Generation Y?

Materials and methods:

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design. Millennials and Gen Z employees' perception on the aspects of HR practices like Work-Life Balance Policies, Leadership and Supervisory Support, Career Growth Opportunities, and Digital HR Tool Adoption were identified as key independent variables, their impact on Talent Sustainability were compared in this research.

Population and Sample

The sampling technique used in the research is convenience sampling with 135 respondents from Gen Y and 150 from Gen Z. The total number of respondents for the research was 285. The representation from both the generation were almost similar.

Data Collection Instrument

Questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents. All the Independent variables and dependent variables taken for the study has 4 items. Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was adopted.

Data Analysis

The results were obtained using the tests, ANOVA and regression were run by SPSS. The ket parameters like β coefficients and p-values reported. The threshold was set at $p < 0.05$, consistent with Lakens (2021). Summary of responses in terms of mean and SD were

computed using Descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

The study was conducted among a total of 285 respondents, comprising employees from both Generation Y and Generation Z. Of the total sample, 135 respondents belonged to Generation Y, while 150 were from Generation Z, ensuring a balanced representation of both cohorts. The gender distribution was nearly equal, with 142 male respondents (49.8%) and 143 female respondents (50.2%), reflecting diversity and inclusivity in the sample. In terms of educational qualifications, 98 respondents (34.4%) held undergraduate degrees, 132 respondents (46.3%) had postgraduate qualifications, and 55 respondents (19.3%) possessed professional degrees, indicating a highly educated workforce. Employment sectors were also well represented, with 102 respondents (35.8%) working in academic roles, 88 respondents (30.9%) in administrative positions, and 95 respondents (33.3%) in technical or support functions. This demographic profile highlights the diversity of the sample across generational, gender, educational, and occupational categories, thereby strengthening the validity and generalizability of the study's findings.

Influence of Work-Life Balance Policies on Talent Sustainability

Bouwmeester, O., Atkinson, R., Noury, L., & Ruotsalainen, R. (2020) contributed to the literature in two ways. Eikhof et al. (2007), explored the impact of organizational policies on the work life balance. The same context was explored by the authors mentioned. They found that while antecedents of organization aspect was perceived as more challenging by management consultant than strategy consultant. In their study they found that, organizational work-life balance policies are perceived positively by the Gen Y.

ForWeng, Shen, and Kan (2023) highlighted in their research on factors strengthening the Talent sustainability measures. They found that Work-Life Balance act a the moderator on the relationship between talent management and employees' willingness to stay with the current employer. They also stressed the importance of Organizational support in making the individuals perceive both the responsibilities equally, and in turn making them committed to the employer. Tiwari et al. (2025) argued that the foremost driver for the employees performance is Work-Life Balance. Fostering policies on such driver would help the organization to retain good talents

Influence of Leadership and Supervisory Support on Talent Sustainability

Support from supervisors and leadership is important while determining employee retention

and commitment towards the employer. Regular feedback, professional development, and an approachable atmosphere that builds employee trust are all characteristics of effective leaders. Supportive leadership tend to lowers turnover intentions of talents and in turn increases organizational loyalty, according to various studies. For instance, Breevaart et al. (2019) in his studies reported that transformational leadership contributes to talent sustainability positively by having a positive impact on employee engagement and long-term retention. With Generation Z reporting higher expectations for approachable and responsive leadership than Generation Y, the regression results of this study confirmed that leadership support had a positive and significant effect on Talent Sustainability.

Influence of Career Growth Opportunities on Talent Sustainability

To retain talents, particularly young generation, the organisation must have policies on Career growth opportunities, who prioritize advancement and skill development. Some HR policies like vivid and transparent policies related to promotion and professional development programs will always make employees happy and to stay within the organization. De Vos and Van der Heijden (2017), sustainable employability has a strong connection with employee retention and career development opportunities available in the organization. This research also supports the same connection , career growth opportunities showed a positive and significant influence on Talent Sustainability, with Generation Z respondents gave more emphasis on fair and transparent promotion systems in comparison with Generation Y.

Influence of Digital HR Tools Adoption on Talent Sustainability

With their increased employee engagement, efficiency, and transparency, digital HR tools have completely changed how businesses nowadays handle talent. Adoption of HR technologies is a key consideration for digital natives of Gene Z when deciding whether or not to be with a company. According to research by Bondarouk and Brewster (2016), e-HRM systems support talent sustainability by incresing employee satisfaction and HR service delivery. According to th findings of the research , of the four variables, Digital HR Tools Adoption had the huge and phenomenal impact on Talent Sustainability, with Gen Z reporting mean scores that were noticeably higher than those of Gen Y. This emphasizes how crucial it is to digitally transform HR procedures in order to satisfy generational demands and retain talent.

Descriptive statistics of Work-Life Balance Policies on Talent Sustainability

Descriptive statistics	Mean	Std.dev	N
Flexible work arrangements support employee balance	44.2	48.315	285
Supportive policies reduce stress and improve retention	43.9	47.812	285
Work-life balance positively influences decision to stay	42.8	46.927	285
Employees feel more committed when balance is maintained	44.1	48.221	285

Regression Coefficient of Work-Life Balance Policies on Talent Sustainability

Work-Life Balance Aspects	Standard coefficients (β)	Significance (P)
Flexible work arrangements support employee balance	0.182	0.0312
Supportive policies reduce stress and improve retention	0.205	0.0287
Work-life balance positively influences decision to stay	0.164	0.0375
Employees feel more committed when balance is maintained	0.176	0.0301
R ² = 0.612		

Regarding work-life balance policies, the element that flexible work arrangements promote employee balance has a significant and positive impact on talent sustainability ($\beta = 0.182, p = 0.0312 < 0.05$). Similarly, *Supportive policies reduce stress and improve retention* ($\beta = 0.205, p = 0.0287 < 0.05$), *Work-life balance positively influences decision to stay* ($\beta = 0.164, p = 0.0375 < 0.05$), and *Employees feel more committed when balance is maintained* ($\beta = 0.176, p = 0.0301 < 0.05$) also had positive and significant influences.

The results showed that the aspects related to balancing Work-Life like flexible work arrangements, supportive policies, positive influence on decision to stay, and commitment through balance, all the factors had positive and significant influences on Talent Sustainability. Work-Life Balance Policies accounted for 61.2% of the variation in Talent Sustainability, according to the R squared value of 0.612; The other factors not included in this model accounted for the remaining 38.8% of

variation.

Descriptive statistics of Leadership and Supervisory Support on Talent Sustainability

Descriptive statistics	Mean	Std.dev	N
Supervisors provide regular feedback and guidance	43.7	47.915	285
Leadership is approachable and responsive to employee needs	44	48.112	285
Employees feel supported in professional growth	42.9	46.832	285
Leadership practices influence employee commitment	43.8	47.921	285

Regression Coefficient of Leadership & Supervisory Support on Talent Sustainability

Leadership Support Aspects	Standard coefficients (β)	Significance (P)
Supervisors provide regular feedback and guidance	0.221	0.0264
Leadership is approachable and responsive to employee needs	0.243	0.0278
Employees feel supported in professional growth	0.198	0.0342
Leadership practices influence employee commitment	0.214	0.0299
R ² = 0.635		

With regard to **Leadership & Supervisory Support**, all the aspects were supported by the values of P and Standard coefficients (β) with P values falls less than 0.05. The R² value of the research indicates that this variable is able to explain to the extent of 63.5% of the variation in the dependent variable Talent Sustainability while 36.5% was due to other factors outside this model which is not included in the study.

Descriptive statistics of Career Growth Opportunities on Talent Sustainability

Descriptive statistics	Mean	Std.dev	N
Clear paths for career advancement exist	42.9	46.832	285
Employees are encouraged to pursue professional development	43.5	47.621	285
Promotion decisions are fair and transparent	42.7	46.745	285
Career growth opportunities influence long-term retention	43.2	47.118	285

Regression Coefficient of Career Growth Opportunities on Talent Sustainability

Career Growth Aspects	Standard coefficients (β)	Significance (P)
Clear paths for career advancement exist	0.298	0.0245
Employees are encouraged to pursue professional development	0.276	0.0259
Promotion decisions are fair and transparent	0.254	0.0311
Career growth opportunities influence long-term retention	0.289	0.0238
R ² = 0.648		

With regard to Career growth, all the aspects were supported by the values of P and Standard coefficients (β) with P values falls less than 0.05. The R² value of the research indicates that this variable is able to explain to the extent of 64.8% of the variation in the dependent variable Talent Sustainability while 35.2% was due to other factors outside this model which is not included in the study.

Descriptive statistics of Digital HR Tools Adoption on Talent Sustainability

Descriptive statistics	Mean	Std.dev	N
Organization uses digital platforms for HR functions	45.2	49.127	285
Employees are trained to use HR digital tools effectively	44.7	48.932	285
Digital tools improve work efficiency	44.9	49.021	285
Digital HR systems enhance engagement and retention	45.1	49.087	285

Regression Coefficient of Digital HR Tools Adoption on Talent Sustainability

Digital HR Tools Aspects	Standard coefficients (β)	Significance (P)
Organization uses digital platforms for HR functions	0.356	0.0197
Employees are trained to use HR digital tools effectively	0.332	0.0214
Digital tools improve work efficiency	0.341	0.0208
Digital HR systems enhance engagement and retention	0.349	0.0189
R ² = 0.672		

For Digital HR Tools Adoption, the aspect *Organization uses digital platforms for HR functions* (β = 0.356, p = 0.0197 < 0.05), *Employees are trained to use HR digital tools effectively* (β = 0.332, p = 0.0214 < 0.05), *Digital tools improve work efficiency* (β = 0.341, p = 0.0208 < 0.05), and *Digital HR systems enhance engagement and retention* (β = 0.349, p = 0.0189 < 0.05) all had positive and significant influences on Talent Sustainability. The R² value of the research indicates that this variable is able to explain to the extent of 67.2% of the variation in the dependent variable Talent Sustainability while 32.8% was due to other factors outside this model which is not included in the study.

ANOVA results comparing Gen Y and Gen Z on HR practices and Talent Sustainability

Variable	Generation	Mean	St. Dev	N	F-value	Sig. (p)
Work-Life Balance Policies	Gen Y	42.8	6.21	135	3.214	0.042
	Gen Z	45.6	5.87	150		
Leadership & Supervisory Support	Gen Y	43.1	6.05	135	4.012	0.031
	Gen Z	46.2	5.74	150		
Career Growth	Gen Y	44.5	6.11	135	2.876	0.049

Opportunities	Gen Z	47.3	5.69	150		
Digital HR Tools Adoption	Gen Y	41.9	6.34	135	5.221	0.021
	Gen Z	48.7	5.52	150		

The ANOVA results show statistically significant differences (p < 0.05) between Gen Y and Gen Z across all four HR practices. The mean scores for Gen Z reported higher mean scores on all the variables considered in the study. This is in consistent with the researches done in recent time. The major difference between the two generation was observed in Digital HR Tools Adoption (F = 5.221, p = 0.021), laid down the foundation for future HR policies that could anchor digital adoption as their utmost priority.

Conclusion:

Digital HR tools adoption has the strongest relationship with the talent sustainability among the four other variables considered for the study. Digital HR Tools Adoption explains the highest variance, confirming its central role. Furthermore, the findings of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) demonstrate that there are noteworthy generational differences (p < 0.05). Generation Z has reported higher mean scores across all HR practices, particularly the use of digital HR tools. On the other hand, Generation Y has placed a greater emphasis on leadership support and work-life balance.

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