



Generation Z At the Workplace: Leadership and Management Style (A Review of Related Literatures)

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z poses both a threat and an opportunity for any organization's management. Generation Z are those born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s and are known to have a distinctive professional approach, traits, and work habits that are shaped by technology. To effectively manage this new generation of employees, this study collated various research that determine the identity of Gen Z in terms of work ethics, professionalism, management, and leadership approach. Through this analysis of multiple research outputs, this paper aims to provide different understandings and approaches one may use to manage the new generation of professionals well. In addition, this will be used as a review of related literature in a study that will be conducted in the Philippines, particularly in industries known to have more Gen Z employees: Technology and BPO industries. The goal is to provide an evidence-based recommendation to increase the productivity, retention, and efficiency of the new generation.

Keywords: Gen Z, Habits, Leadership, Management, Professionalism, Technology, and Traits.

I. INTRODUCTION

This narrative study is part of a research for a Doctor of Philosophy Major in Management entitled Generation Z at the Workplace: Leadership and Management Style. This sheds light on how organizations can effectively handle the new generation of professionals in the workplace. Relevant studies were collated as part of this research and will be presented for a research webinar facilitated by the International Association of Management in Human Resource Development.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This paper utilizes explanatory research to justify the cause and effect of Generation Z behavior in corporate management in the 21st century. This research aims to uncover behavioral patterns and formulate hypotheses that can serve as a jump-off point for corporate leaders and serve as background for further studies of academic researchers in the future. To make this research more comprehensive, the scope of this literature is not just limited to one locale, but rather multiple locations to provide a more in-depth understanding of the motivation, leadership, and management styles preferred by Generation Z. This is a review of related literature for a dissertation proposal of the researcher at the Graduate School of De La Salle Araneta University, Philippines.

III. DISCUSSION

Generation Z (Gen Z), born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, is joining the workforce in growing numbers with distinctive traits, motives, and preferences (Schroth, 2019; Talmon, 2019; Magano et al., 2020). Gen Z, the first real digital natives, has been shaped by technology, affecting their personal and professional attitudes, habits, and expectations (Schroth, 2019; Raslie, 2021; Janssen & Carradini, 2021). This group, like Millennials, values practicality, diversity, entrepreneurship, and social impact in their job (Talmon, 2019; Magano et al., 2020; Çora, 2019). Their technology acumen, multitasking skills, and penchant for individualized experiences set them unique at work (Schroth, 2019; Bulut & Maraba, 2021; Mărginean, 2021). Gen Z's unique talents, attitudes, and aspirations will lead to workplace transformation, challenging norms and promoting innovation (Talmon, 2019; Çora, 2019; Magano et al., 2020). To effectively lead and manage Gen Z, firms must understand and adapt to their demands and preferences as the workplace becomes more multigenerational (Magano et al., 2020; Schroth, 2019; Mărginean, 2021). Talent management must be proactive, incorporating Gen Z-friendly leadership and management methods (Bulut & Maraba, 2021; Talmon, 2019; Magano et al., 2020). Reducing engagement, productivity, and retention within this increasing

labor sector may hurt organizational success in the long run (Bulut & Maraba, 2021; Magano et al., 2020; Schroth, 2019).

Despite Gen Z's growing importance in the workplace, little is known about their leadership and management styles and how they match their job motives (Chillakuri, 2020). Literature has primarily examined Gen Z's traits and compared them to earlier generations (Magano et al., 2020; Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022; Çora, 2019), but has neglected its practical implications for effective leadership and management. Empirical studies on leadership styles, management methods, and Gen Z's workplace motivation and engagement are needed. This information gap is significant since leadership and management styles can affect employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Barten, 2022; Lee et al., 2021; Pauceanu, 2021). Understanding Gen Z's leadership and management needs can help create a productive and engaged staff as more of them enter the workforce. As firms become more intergenerational, study on how leadership and management styles affect generational motivation and participation is needed. This is significant because intergenerational disparities in work values, expectations, and communication styles may necessitate leadership and management modifications (Talmon, 2019; Schroth, 2019; Raslie, 2021). Rapid technology change and company complexity may require Gen Z-specific leadership and management styles (Mărginean, 2021; Janssen & Carradini, 2021; Çora, 2019).

This study examines Gen Z employees' preferred leadership and management styles and how they match their working incentives to fill this gap. Organizations can attract, retain, and maximize Gen Z talent by knowing their motivations. Addressing this research gap allows employers to establish evidence-based methods for leading and managing Gen Z employees in a way that matches their work incentives, boosts engagement and productivity, and increases organizational performance in a changing business landscape. This research will add to the body of information on Gen Z in the workplace and offer actionable insights for managers and leaders looking to help and motivate this generation.

This literature study examines Generation Z's workplace traits, motivations, and preferences, as well as leadership and management styles that may suit them. This section examines the present literature to help understand Gen Z employees' distinctive features and expectations and identifies gaps in the material that need more study. Generation Z characteristics, leadership and management styles, and workplace motivation will be reviewed.

3.1 Characteristics of Generation Z

Generation Z's digital upbringing influenced their learning and communication. Interactive, attractive, and brief learning is preferred (Schroth, 2019; Janssen & Carradini, 2021). Because of their fast-changing digital upbringing, Gen Z is adaptive and accepting (Schroth, 2019; Raslie, 2021). Gen Z's short attention spans and multitasking skills affect their work habits and expectations (Talmon, 2019; Bulut & Maraba, 2021). Growing up during economic instability and rapid technology innovation impacted their realistic attitude on life and work (Talmon, 2019; Tang, 2019). They choose socially responsible employers and honesty with peers and leaders (Magano et al., 2020; Mărginean, 2021).

Generation Z workers are becoming more significant in banking, especially frontline roles. Vuong and Suntrayuth (2020) explored how HRM practices affect frontline staff engagement in the Vietnamese banking sector, revealing Gen Z's work dynamics and preferences. They said banks must grasp Gen Z's distinctive traits and expectations to recruit, retain, and engage this group. As digital natives, Gen Z bank frontline workers are expected to be tech-savvy and comfortable using various digital platforms and technologies (Vuong & Suntrayuth, 2020). This fits Gen Z's reputation for tech savvy and workplace integration (Schroth, 2019). Frontline banking roles are customer-facing, therefore Gen Z's in-person and digital communication skills are crucial to providing exceptional service (Vuong & Suntrayuth, 2020).

In addition, Vuong and Suntrayuth (2020) stressed the importance of HRM in engaging Gen Z bankers. Training, rewards and recognition, employee participation, and information sharing improved frontline staff engagement. This implies that Gen Z emphasizes employment skills development, clear performance incentives, decision-making, and open communication. Previous research has found Gen Z preferences for learning, feedback, and meaningful work. These findings provide a sector-specific viewpoint.

Vuong and Suntrayuth (2020) provide light on how Generation Z's work preferences and traits apply to banking frontline employment. It stresses that banks and other financial institutions must customize their HRM strategies to Gen Z employees, especially in customer-facing roles. Organizations can boost Gen Z engagement and performance by creating a supportive work environment that resonates with their values and uses their technology.

Due to globalization, Generation Z embraces variety and inclusivity (Magano et al., 2020; Mărginean, 2021). Gen Z is adaptive and simple to modify because they grew up in a fast-changing digital environment (Schroth, 2019; Raslie, 2021; Janssen & Carradini, 2021). Due to their adaptability and familiarity with digital technology, individuals are open to new experiences and willing to change in their personal and professional lives (Schroth, 2019; Raslie, 2021). The individuals possess an entrepreneurial attitude and prioritize professional innovation and originality (Talmon, 2019; Çora, 2019; Bulut & Maraba, 2021). Generation Z is entrepreneurial because they enjoy personalized experiences and taking risks to attain their goals (Talmon, 2019; Mărginean, 2021). Gen Z is socially conscious and works to better society. Magano et al. (2020) and Mărginean (2021) say they choose socially responsible employers. Their social responsibility shows their ideals and willingness to enhance society for future generations (Magano et al., 2020; Popaitoon, 2022). Several recent studies have shed light on Generation Z's values, career preferences, and traits as they enter the workforce. Benjamin-Márquez et al. (2022) reviewed literature on Generation Z in the workplace and workforce using bibliometrics. They found that "Generation-Z", "generations", "workplace", "management",

"attitudes", "leadership", "career", and "learning-teaching-education" are the main research subjects. They found low keyword stability over time, suggesting this research topic has space for expansion, especially as more Gen Zs enter the workforce.

Çora (2019) analyzes how Gen Z traits impact 21st-century business strategies in Turkey. Gen Z are fast learners and tech-savvy who adapt quickly, according to the author. Honest, entrepreneurial, and comfortable expressing themselves are their strengths. However, disloyalty, discouragement, and preference for individual over teamwork may challenge corporations. According to Çora, managers should create rules that reflect Gen Z's inventive and analytical mindset. Janssen and Carradini (2021) surveyed and interviewed Gen Z workers on their communication expectations. Gen Z was surprised by the amount of personal device usage allowed in the workplace, but self-regulated to avoid appearing unprofessional; they were aware of the negatives of constant technology use and tried to take breaks; email was still prevalent at work, though not preferred for personal use; boundaries between work and personal technology use were blurred; and Gen Z was optimistic that technology would help them succeed.

As Gen Z enters the workforce, organizations must adapt to their unique traits, habits, and expectations shaped by digital living (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022; Çora, 2019; Janssen & Carradini, 2021; Popaitoon, 2022; Tang, 2019). While Gen Z may provide management problems, their abilities and perspectives can alter the workplace if used properly (Bulut & Maraba, 2021; Mărginean, 2021; Raslie, 2021). Research in this field is undeveloped, with potential for further investigation (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022).

The ASEAN study by de Boer et al. (2021) found that Gen Z workers in China and Thailand emphasize intrinsic work values including learning, achieving visible outcomes, and professional growth. According to the study, intrinsic work value was the most important in the sample. Individuals valued learning, promotion, and visible results most. They are adaptable, entrepreneurial, and value purposeful work (de Boer et al., 2021). Generation Z likewise has distinct career goals and intentions. Global dynamics influence ASEAN Generation Z (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). The study indicates that Gen Z in Vietnam is shaped by different events and experiences than previous generations, resulting in different employment views, interests, and aspirations. ASEAN Generation Z workers are tech-savvy and comfortable using many platforms. Professional aspirations are greatly influenced by this proficiency (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Generation Z prefers interactive, graphic, and concise learning experiences due to their digital upbringing, according to study. They value integrity and ethical leadership at work (Barhate & Dirani, 2021). According to the systematic literature review, Gen Z rewards employers who promote CSR and ethical and sustainable company operations. Generation Z in ASEAN countries likewise seeks skill-building and personal advancement. Their motivation is hard and fulfilling work (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Gen Z in Vietnam values groups that help people pursue their hobbies and professional goals, according to the report. Barhate and Dirani (2021) reviewed the literature on Gen Z's cultural diversity and flexibility in ASEAN. Gen Z ASEAN workers are skilled at using digital platforms for communication, collaboration, and project management, according to studies. Employees expect to be given the tools and resources they need to work effectively online. They stress inclusive leadership and operate well in multicultural settings (Barhate & Dirani, 2021). According to the literature review, Gen Z's digital skills are extremely valuable in ASEAN. This area accelerates digital revolution and seeks digital economies. de Boer et al. (2021) found that ASEAN Gen Z workers respect continued education and actively seek companies with training and development programs. A cross-cultural survey found that Generation Z values sustainable skills and expects firms to invest in their education and advancement. They prefer remote and flexible work arrangements to achieve work-life balance (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Regardless of gender, Gen Z in Vietnam favors flexible working hours, time off for hobbies, and remote work, according to the survey.

Philippine Generation Z workers have unique traits and interests that affect their job behavior. Salvosa and Hechanova (2021) found Filipino Gen Z workers, known as the "technological generation," to be tech-savvy, carefree, proud, arrogant, energetic, and adventurous. They differ from the older "political generation" who are job-focused, family-focused, traditional, experienced, decisive, and multitaskers. Generation Z Filipino workers have different leadership styles than their older counterparts. An excellent leader in the technological generation is accountable, gives clear instructions, listens, and acknowledges others. In contrast, the political generation believes an excellent leader cares about others, effectively allocates responsibilities, and can influence people (Salvosa and Hechanova, 2021).

Generation Z University students are also driven by their entrepreneurial spirit and education to succeed in digital entrepreneurship. Prameka and Kurniawan (2023) found that entrepreneurial enthusiasm and management competencies like administration, knowledge and technology competency positively affect Gen Z students' digital entrepreneurial intention in the Philippines. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) may also boost brand loyalty among Filipino Generation Z clients. Lacap et al. (2021) discovered that corporate social responsibility (CSR) improved brand satisfaction, perceived quality, and brand loyalty among Generation Z telecommunication customers. The study also found that brand satisfaction and perceived quality mediate CSR-brand loyalty.

These findings are important for Philippine companies seeking to engage and retain Generation Z customers and employees. Understanding their unique traits, leadership styles, entrepreneurial tendencies, and how CSR affects brand loyalty can help companies develop supportive work environments and build strong brand partnerships with this growing generation.

3.2 Leadership and Management Styles

Leadership and management styles affect Gen Z employee engagement and motivation. Lee et al. (2021) found that transformational leadership, which inspires and empowers followers, works well with Generation Z. Generation Z wants personal growth, progress, and purposeful work, thus this leadership style fits. Transformational leaders provide

Gen Z employees a clear vision, inspire innovation, and provide customized support. Lee et al. (2021) found that transformational leadership had a greater influence on Gen Z employee engagement than transactional leadership. The study stressed the importance of work-life balance and autonomy in engaging Generation Z employees (Lee et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurial leadership, a mix of leadership and entrepreneurship, can help manage Generation Z employees (Barten, 2022; Pauceanu et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial leaders are risk-takers, innovators, and opportunity seekers. They can inspire Generation Z to be creative and assertive. They encourage innovation and learning, which matches Generation Z's goals for personal and professional growth (Pauceanu et al., 2021). Esmer and Faruk (Barten, 2022) emphasize the necessity of entrepreneurial and leadership skills for managers to achieve their firms' development and sustainability goals, especially while managing Gen Z employees. Managers should be trained in entrepreneurial leadership to attract and retain Gen Z talent. Additionally, organizations must create an entrepreneurial environment to foster a sense of ownership and passion among Generation Z employees.

These leadership styles foster trust, cooperation, and open communication, which Gen Z workers like (Barten, 2022; Lee et al., 2021). These leadership styles can help companies attract, engage, and retain Gen Z talent. However, the literature on entrepreneurial leadership is inconsistent (Barten, 2022; Pauceanu et al., 2021). Thus, further research is needed to define this leadership style and its consequences on Gen Z workers. Despite some exceptions, the evidence suggests that a transformative and entrepreneurial leadership style is best for engaging and motivating Generation Z. Businesses must build leadership skills that meet Gen Z's needs to recruit and retain personnel.

The importance of transformational leadership for Gen Z employees is further highlighted in a specific case study of the Malaysian hotel industry. This study provides insights into the impact of transformational leadership on Gen Z employee retention and innovative behavior, as well as the role of cultural factors in shaping Gen Z's leadership preferences.

In ASEAN nations, a study by Gabriel et al. (2022) found that transformative leadership improves Gen Z hotel sector employee retention and innovation. Through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual advancement, and individualized consideration, transformational leaders inspire and motivate Generation Z employees. They value personal growth, meaningful employment, and nurturing workplaces. By utilizing transformational leadership, Malaysian hotels can engage and retain Generation Z and encourage innovation.

Gen Z workers in collectivist societies with a wide power gap, a focus on long-term goals, and a strong aversion to uncertainty, like Ukraine, have higher expectations of their leaders than those in individualistic nations like Austria (Zehetner et al., 2022). Cultural influences appear to strongly influence Generation Z's leadership style. Gen Z workers expect collectivist leaders to provide clear instructions, maintain cohesion, and provide stability. Gen Z workers value autonomy, recognition, and flexibility in individualistic settings in contrast. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for ASEAN firms, which may need to adapt their leadership styles to meet Generation Z's cultural expectations.

To attract and retain Gen Z workers in ASEAN countries, firms should prioritize a welcoming, innovative, and collaborative workplace. According to Farrell and Phungsoonthorn (2020), Gen Z values intrinsic rewards, social responsibility, and work-life balance. Leaders must consider these factors when planning to recruit and retain Gen Z. Facilitating learning and growth, encouraging transparent communication and constructive feedback, creating an innovative and creative environment, prioritizing social responsibility and sustainability, and supporting work-life balance are all effective strategies.

These methods and appropriate leadership styles can help ASEAN companies attract, engage, and retain Gen Z workers. The growing number of Gen Z workers in ASEAN countries requires firms to adapt their leadership and management styles to meet their needs. To engage and retain Gen Z employees, companies must consider cultural differences and implement methods that foster worker development, innovation, and a supportive work environment.

In the Philippines, according to Venida (2021), Filipino Gen Z workers value improving their skills, advancing professionally, achieving personal goals and recognition, fostering healthy working relationships, promoting teamwork and collaboration, maintaining work-life balance, and ensuring job and financial stability. They are motivated, happy, and perform better at work because of these values. Philippine organizations must use leadership styles that match Generation Z's preferences and qualities to succeed. Gen Z is pragmatic, skeptical, open-minded, independent, hyper-customized, multitasking, and iconoclastic, according to Giray (2022). Leaders should encourage autonomy, creativity, and innovation in the workplace. Offering plenty of personal and professional development and encouraging teamwork can motivate Gen Z workers (Venida, 2021). This technique gives Gen Zs a sense of value and lets them use their unique skills and perspectives to contribute to the organization.

Also, work ethics are crucial to employee engagement across generations, according to Abun et al. (2023). Work ethics was strongly linked to cognitive, emotional, and physical work participation in their study. This shows that executives must prioritize creating a work culture that values and promotes good ethics. A culture of ethics may raise Gen Z employee engagement, dedication, performance, and corporate success. This is important since Abun et al. (2023) found no significant link between generational differences and work ethics or participation. Leadership and management should stress individual differences and age-related factors over generational generalizations. To create an effective and unique leadership and management approach, leaders must spend time understanding each Gen Z employee's needs, preferences, and motivations. They may then develop personalized plans to optimize each person's potential, resulting in the firm's success.

3.3 Motivational Factors for Gen Z

Firms must understand Generation Z employee motivation to create a stimulating and productive workplace. In the cited studies, the main factors that motivate the latest generation to work are revealed. Gen Z is motivated by job satisfaction and goal achievement. Kirchmayer and Fratričová (2020) found that Gen Z business students in Slovakia prioritized "enjoying work" the most. An astounding 64.7% of participants described it as inspirational. Gen Z's preference for occupations that fit their interests and hobbies shows that they value rewarding work. A substantial 33.6% of participants cited "achievement" as a driving motivator, showing Generation Z succeeds at completing tasks, resolving conflicts, and feeling fulfilled from their obligations. This generation is driven by a need for tangible results and professional significance.

Mahmoud et al. (2021) found that Generation Z prefers purposeful work that aligns with their values and helps society and the environment. Generation Z is driven by purpose and the potential to make a difference. Thus, enterprises must clearly articulate how their activity supports a larger goal. This generation wants work that resonates with their values and lets them make a difference beyond their job duties. Numerous studies (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2020; Mahmoud et al., 2021) show that Gen Z values feedback, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth and learning. Generation Z values regular communication with superiors and actively seeks daily input and constructive criticism to improve. Individuals desire recognition because it boosts their self-esteem and organizational influence (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Regular feedback and appreciation motivate Generation Z and match their desire to learn and grow. Gen Z also wants to learn new things, advance in their careers, and face new challenges. They thrive in organizations that prioritize their development with mentorship programs, clear career paths, and various professional growth opportunities. By understanding and addressing these motivational elements, organizations may create a work environment that attracts and engages Gen Z talent, promotes their development, and empowers them to make important contributions that benefit the organization.

Hampton and Welsh (2019) and Wennqvist (2022) also reveal Gen Z's worldwide motivations. Hampton and Welsh discovered that Gen Z nurses in the U.S. prioritized social/altruistic values like assisting others and working with pleasant coworkers over extrinsic considerations like job security, benefits, and compensation. Seldom significant were prestige values. Wennqvist's qualitative study found that Gen Z employees in a Norwegian firm in Finland were motivated by influence, trust, clarity, personal growth chances, positive connections, open communication, equal treatment, and common aims. Both studies emphasize Gen Z's preference for social connections, collaboration, work-life balance, and transparent communication over prestige and authority.

Generation Z in Asia is said to be different from other generations due to various factors. According to Racołta-Paina and Irini (2021), Human Resources (HR) professionals in Romania perceive Gen Z employees as dynamic, transparent, creative, innovative, involved, tolerant, socially responsible, emotional, knowledgeable, and individualistic. However, they also noted that Gen Z employees have unrealistic wage expectations, especially those without work experience seeking their first job. Flexibility, transparent communication, salary benefits, opportunities for advancement, and challenging projects were among the most expected elements from the workplace for Gen Z employees in Romania. Bińczycki et al. (2023) conducted a study in Poland and found that the key motivators for Gen Z representatives were high salaries and opportunities for professional development. They also found that a friendly work atmosphere, clear criteria for receiving bonuses and promotions, and a fair job evaluation were highly valued by Gen Z employees. The study highlighted cultural differences, with Gen Z in rural areas placing more importance on factors like public praise from superiors, overtime pay, fixed working hours, and fair job evaluation compared to their urban counterparts. In Indonesia, Wennqvist (2022) explored what motivates Gen Z employees at work through qualitative interviews. The study found that Gen Z employees are motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, including flexibility, compensation, success, relationships with coworkers and leaders, equal treatment, acceptance of diversity, shared objectives and goals, purpose, feedback, awareness, trust, clarity, personal growth through variation, advancement, and influence. The study emphasized the importance of creating a workplace environment that meets the motivational needs of Gen Z employees. Vasilyeva et al. (2020) in Russia found that Gen Z's digital economy motives include convenient locations, online flexibility, career-related pay, and varied jobs for personal improvement. Sentoso et al. (2024) observed that leadership and salary improved Gen Z employee performance in Batam City, Indonesia, while training, motivation, and work environment did not. Asian studies support Gen Z's goals of work-life balance, flexibility, career progression, fair appraisal, remuneration, and digital technology like remote work. Regional cultural disparities exist in prioritized factors.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. The review of related literature on the motivation, management, and leadership styles preferred by Generation Z can aid management in how to handle efficiently the new generation of employees.
2. Generation Z is known to be tech-savvy, can multi-task, has a short attention span, and is characterized by the urge to continuously grow in shorter periods compared to other generations of professionals.
3. Due to their digital exposure, awareness of diversity and globalization, and lack of experience, they tend to have unrealistic views of salaries, work set-up, and misalignment that leads to higher attrition rates.
4. To effectively manage this group, management must be able to decode the habits, attitudes, motivation, and leadership applicable to unleash the potential of Generation Z.
5. It is proven that leadership and management styles affect the engagement and motivation of employees. Transformational and Entrepreneurial leadership styles can help manage Gen Z employees.

6. The new generation of employees has both standards for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as their primary reason to stay or leave an organization.
7. Gen Z employees thrive in an environment that promotes job satisfaction and goal achievement. They enjoy it when they are happy in the workplace and there is growth in the organization.
8. To effectively manage the new breed of professionals, it is recommended that organizations learn the dynamics and capabilities of these employees. In addition, a revamp in the work environment, practices and processes, and compensation and benefits.

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