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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Bridging the Gap: Understanding the Workplace Environment and Leadership Preferences of Generation Z**

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**| ABSTRACT**

This study explores the unknown workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z and employers. Using Employee Engagement Theory (EET) as the theoretical framework, a qualitative multiple case study approach was employed to investigate these preferences and employers' perceptions. The study involved eight Generation Z employees and eight employers. Key themes identified include the impact of supervisor kindness, fairness, and work ethic on employee motivation and mood; the influence of leadership and social characteristics on workplace environment effects; the association of employee experience and growth prioritization with strong motivation and performance; and the positive effects of relaxed or well-organized fast-paced environments on mood and performance. Findings indicate that leadership styles significantly impact Generation Z perceptions. Future research should explore the preferences of Generation Z employers and other generational employees, including a quantitative approach to measure perceptions of leadership effectiveness.

**| KEYWORDS**

Generation Z, workplace environment, leadership preferences, employee engagement, qualitative study

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### **1. Introduction**

Generation Z, the cohort born between approximately 1997 and 2012, is entering the workforce with a distinct workplace environment and leadership preferences that are yet to be fully understood by employers. This article aims to explore these preferences in detail, drawing insights from my dissertation on the subject. By understanding Generation Z's unique characteristics and preferences, organizations can develop effective strategies to retain and motivate this new generation of employees, ultimately contributing to organizational success.

Generation Z's workplace expectations and preferences are shaped by their upbringing in a digital and globalized world. As digital natives, they have grown up with technology as an integral part of their daily lives, influencing their communication styles and work habits. Additionally, their exposure to diverse cultures and global issues has made them more socially conscious and open to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. These characteristics necessitate a reevaluation of traditional management practices to cater to the evolving workforce.

#### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The advent of Generation Z into the workforce presents a significant challenge for employers who lack a comprehensive understanding of this generation's distinct workplace environment and leadership preferences. Generation Z, defined as individuals born between approximately 1997 and 2012, exhibit unique characteristics shaped by their upbringing in a digital and globalized world (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018). These traits include a strong inclination towards technology, social justice, diversity, and intrinsic motivation for meaningful work (Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, the workplace and leadership styles that effectively engage

and retain Generation Z employees remain largely unexplored and misunderstood by many organizations (LeBlanc, 2022). This knowledge gap hampers employers' ability to develop targeted strategies that address the specific needs and preferences of Generation Z, potentially leading to increased turnover, decreased employee engagement, and suboptimal organizational performance (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016; Mahmoud et al., 2020). This study aims to bridge this gap by exploring the workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z members and understanding employers' perceptions of these preferences. By doing so, the study seeks to provide actionable insights that can inform the development of evidence-based strategies to enhance the engagement, retention, and performance of Generation Z employees, thereby contributing to overall organizational success (LeBlanc, 2022).

### **1.2 Significance in the Field**

Understanding the workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z is of paramount importance for organizations aiming to attract, retain, and motivate this new generation of employees. Generation Z, characterized by their technological adeptness, social consciousness, and desire for meaningful work, represents a significant portion of the emerging workforce (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018). Their unique preferences and expectations necessitate a reevaluation of traditional management practices to ensure that organizations can effectively engage this cohort.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to fill the existing knowledge gap regarding Generation Z's workplace and leadership preferences. By exploring these preferences and understanding the perceptions of both Generation Z employees and employers, this research provides valuable insights that can inform the development of tailored strategies to enhance employee engagement, motivation, and retention (LeBlanc, 2022).

Employee engagement is a critical factor for organizational success, as engaged employees are more productive, committed, and likely to stay with their organizations (Kahn, 1990; Bailey et al., 2017). Previous studies have shown that engagement is influenced by leadership styles and workplace environments (Gandolfi et al., 2017; Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016). However, the specific preferences of Generation Z in these areas have not been extensively studied, leaving a gap that this research aims to address.

The findings from this study have the potential to contribute significantly to the field of management by providing empirical evidence on effective leadership styles and workplace practices for Generation Z. This can guide organizational leaders and HR professionals in creating environments that not only attract top talent from this generation but also foster their long-term engagement and development (Mahmoud et al., 2020). By aligning organizational practices with the values and expectations of Generation Z, companies can enhance their competitive advantage and drive sustained organizational performance (LeBlanc, 2022).

Furthermore, this research contributes to the broader theoretical understanding of employee engagement by applying Kahn's (1990) Employee Engagement Theory to a new generational cohort. It expands the application of this theory and provides a nuanced understanding of how engagement is influenced by generational characteristics and preferences. This theoretical contribution is valuable for future research and practice, offering a foundation for further studies on intergenerational dynamics in the workplace.

In summary, this study is significant in its potential to provide actionable insights for practitioners and contribute to the theoretical framework of employee engagement, ultimately helping organizations to harness the full potential of Generation Z employees and achieve greater organizational success.

## **2. Theoretical Framework: Employee Engagement Theory**

Kahn's (1990) Employee Engagement Theory (EET) serves as the theoretical framework for this study. EET posits that employee engagement is a multifaceted construct involving emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects. Employees who are fully engaged are more likely to invest their personal identities into their work roles, leading to higher levels of performance and organizational commitment. This theory is particularly relevant for understanding Generation Z, whose engagement levels can be influenced by their unique workplace environment and leadership preferences.

Employee engagement has been extensively studied, with various models and theories developed to explain its antecedents and outcomes. Kahn's (1990) model, however, remains one of the most influential, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive engagement. According to Kahn, engagement is influenced by three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. These conditions are critical for Generation Z, who seek purpose, support, and resources in their work environments.

### **3. Research Methodology and Design**

This study employed a qualitative multiple case study approach, which is suitable for exploring complex social phenomena within their real-life contexts. The research involved semi-structured interviews with eight Generation Z employees and eight employers to gather insights into their workplace environment and leadership preferences. The qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of the participants' perspectives and the emergence of unanticipated themes.

#### **3.1 Participants**

The study involved two distinct groups of participants:

Generation Z Employees: Eight undergraduate students aged 18-21, each with at least one year of cumulative work experience.

Employers: Eight employers who are currently business owners or managers, each with experience employing at least two undergraduate students aged 18-21 for a cumulative total of at least one year.

#### **3.2 Recruitment**

Participants were recruited through purposeful sampling from social media groups targeting college students and employers. Digital flyers were posted in these groups to invite participation. This method ensured that the sample included individuals with relevant experience and perspectives on the workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z.

#### **3.3. Data Collection**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with each participant. Separate interview protocols were developed for Generation Z employees and employers to gather comprehensive insights.

Generation Z Employee Interviews: Included approximately six close-ended demographic questions. Four open-ended questions focused on workplace environment and leadership preferences.

Employer Interviews: Included approximately four questions to explore employers' perceptions of Generation Z members' workplace environment and leadership preferences. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility, enabling the interviewer to probe deeper into specific areas of interest based on participants' responses.

#### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview data. This method involved several steps:

Transcription: All interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy.

Coding: The transcripts were systematically coded to identify significant statements and patterns related to workplace environment and leadership preferences.

Theme Development: Codes were grouped into themes that represented the core findings of the study. This process involved iterative review and refinement to ensure the themes accurately captured participants' perspectives.

#### **3.5 Themes Identified**

The analysis revealed several key themes related to Generation Z's workplace environment and leadership preferences:

Supervisor Kindness, Fairness, and Work Ethic: Generation Z employees associate supervisor kindness, fairness, and a strong work ethic with increased motivation and positive mood. They value leaders who demonstrate empathy and fairness in their interactions (LeBlanc, 2022).

Workplace Environment: A positive workplace environment characterized by supportive leadership and a collaborative culture enhances employee motivation and performance. Generation Z employees prefer environments that prioritize employee experience and growth (LeBlanc, 2022).

Employee Experience and Growth: Prioritizing employee experience and offering growth opportunities are crucial for retaining Generation Z employees. They are motivated by environments that support their personal and professional development (LeBlanc 2022). 10.4. Relaxed or Well-Organized Fast-Paced Environments: Generation Z employees perform well in relaxed or well-

organized fast-paced environments. They appreciate clear structure and standards but also value flexibility and a dynamic work pace (LeBlanc 2022).

### **3.6 Trustworthiness of Data**

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, several strategies were employed:

Triangulation: Data from Generation Z employees and employers were compared to identify converging patterns and themes.

Member Checking: Participants were provided with summaries of the findings to verify the accuracy and credibility of the interpretations. 11.3. Peer Debriefing: The analysis process was reviewed by peers to ensure objectivity and reliability.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to protect participants' rights and well-being. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were fully aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing participant data and securely storing all records.

### **3.8 Summary**

This qualitative multiple case study approach provided a detailed and nuanced understanding of the workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z employees and employers' perceptions of these preferences.

## **4. Literature Review**

### **4.1 Workplace Leadership Styles**

Leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the workplace environment and influencing employee engagement. The three classic leadership styles identified by Lewin et al. (1939) – autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire – provide a foundational understanding, but contemporary research has expanded this framework to include transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles.

### **4.2 Autocratic Leadership**

Autocratic leaders make decisions without consulting others, providing clear directions and expectations. This style can be effective in crisis situations but may not be well-received by Generation Z, who value autonomy and participation in decision-making processes (Gandolfi et al., 2017). The autocratic style often results in a hierarchical workplace structure, which might conflict with Generation Z's preference for flatter organizational structures and collaborative environments.

Historically, autocratic leadership has been associated with high levels of control and efficiency, especially in industries where quick decision-making is critical. However, the downside includes low employee morale and engagement, as employees may feel undervalued and disconnected from the organizational goals. For Generation Z, this style can be particularly demotivating as it contradicts their desire for involvement and recognition in their work.

### **4.3 Democratic Leadership**

Democratic leaders involve employees in decision-making, fostering a sense of inclusion and collaboration. Generation Z employees, who are accustomed to team-oriented environments and value fairness, may respond positively to this style (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014). Democratic leadership aligns well with Generation Z's values of transparency and inclusivity, as it encourages open communication and shared responsibility.

The effectiveness of democratic leadership lies in its ability to leverage diverse perspectives and foster innovation. By involving Generation Z employees in decision-making processes, leaders can tap into their creativity and fresh ideas, which are crucial for staying competitive in today's dynamic business environment. Additionally, this style promotes a sense of ownership and accountability among employees, leading to higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction.

### **4.4 Laissez-Faire Leadership**

Laissez-faire leaders provide minimal guidance, allowing employees to make their own decisions. This style can lead to high levels of autonomy but may result in a lack of direction and support, which could be challenging for less experienced Generation Z employees (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). While laissez-faire leadership can foster innovation and self-reliance, it requires employees to be highly self-motivated and disciplined, characteristics that might not be fully developed in younger, less experienced workers.

In a laissez-faire environment, Generation Z employees may struggle with unclear expectations and insufficient feedback. This can lead to frustration and decreased productivity. However, for highly skilled and motivated individuals, this leadership style can provide the freedom to innovate and excel in their roles. It is essential for leaders to strike a balance between providing autonomy and offering the necessary support to ensure that all employees can thrive.

#### ***4.5 Transformational Leadership***

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees to exceed their own expectations by aligning their goals with those of the organization. This style is particularly effective for Generation Z, who seek meaningful work and opportunities for personal growth (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders focus on developing a vision, fostering an inclusive culture, and empowering employees, which resonates with Generation Z's desire for purposeful and impactful work.

The core components of transformational leadership include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These elements collectively create an environment where Generation Z employees feel valued, challenged, and supported. Transformational leaders who exhibit high ethical standards and a strong sense of mission can significantly enhance the engagement and performance of their teams.

#### ***4.6 Transactional Leadership***

Transactional leaders focus on exchanges between leader and follower, providing rewards or punishments based on performance. This style may not be as effective for Generation Z, who prefer intrinsic motivation and meaningful work over extrinsic rewards (Burns, 1978). Transactional leadership can lead to a rigid and transactional work culture, which might not align with the values and expectations of Generation Z employees.

While transactional leadership is effective in ensuring compliance and achieving short-term goals, it often fails to inspire and engage employees at a deeper level. Generation Z employees, who are driven by purpose and personal growth, may find this leadership style limiting and uninspiring. Leaders need to complement transactional practices with transformational elements to create a balanced and motivating work environment.

#### ***4.7 Servant Leadership***

Servant leaders prioritize the needs of their employees and the community, fostering a supportive and ethical work environment. This style aligns well with Generation Z's values of social responsibility and community involvement (Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership emphasizes empathy, humility, and stewardship, creating a workplace culture that values collaboration and mutual respect.

Servant leaders focus on the development and well-being of their team members, which can lead to high levels of trust and loyalty. For Generation Z employees who seek meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging at work, servant leadership can provide the support and guidance they need to thrive. This leadership style also encourages employees to contribute to the greater good, aligning their personal values with organizational goals.

#### ***4.8 Generation Z Characteristics***

Generation Z is characterized by their extensive use of technology, preference for rapid communication, and a desire for meaningful work. They are pragmatic, individualistic, and highly educated, with a strong inclination toward social justice and diversity (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018). Understanding these characteristics is essential for developing workplace environments and leadership strategies that resonate with this generation.

Generation Z's upbringing in a digital world has shaped their communication preferences and work habits. They are adept at multitasking and using technology to enhance productivity. However, this reliance on technology also means they value quick and efficient communication, often preferring digital platforms for routine interactions but appreciating face-to-face communication for more complex and meaningful discussions.

Their social consciousness and commitment to diversity and inclusion are reflected in their expectations for the workplace. Generation Z values organizations that demonstrate a genuine commitment to social responsibility and create inclusive environments where diverse perspectives are respected and valued. They are also more likely to hold employers accountable for ethical practices and sustainability initiatives.

#### **4.9 Motivation and Communication**

Generation Z is primarily motivated by intrinsic factors such as personal growth, development, and meaningful work (Ryan & Deci, 2017). They value clear and concise communication, often preferring digital platforms over traditional methods. However, they also appreciate face-to-face interactions for complex and meaningful discussions (Raslie, 2021).

Effective communication is critical for engaging Generation Z employees. They prefer straightforward and transparent communication styles that provide clear expectations and timely feedback. Leaders need to leverage various communication channels, including instant messaging, social media, and video conferencing, to meet Generation Z's preferences and ensure consistent and effective communication.

Motivational strategies should focus on providing opportunities for personal and professional development. Generation Z employees are eager to learn and grow, and they value organizations that invest in their development through training, mentorship, and career advancement programs. Recognizing their contributions and providing meaningful work that aligns with their values can significantly enhance their motivation and engagement.

#### **4.10 Retention Strategies**

Retaining Generation Z employees requires organizations to provide a supportive work environment, opportunities for professional development, and a clear path for career advancement. Employers should focus on creating a positive work culture that aligns with Generation Z's values and expectations (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016).

Organizations need to develop retention strategies that address the unique needs and preferences of Generation Z. This includes offering flexible work arrangements, promoting work-life balance, and providing a sense of purpose and belonging. Generation Z employees are more likely to stay with organizations that align with their personal values and provide a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Retention strategies should also focus on fostering a culture of continuous feedback and recognition. Generation Z employees value frequent and constructive feedback that helps them improve and grow. Recognizing their achievements and providing opportunities for career progression can enhance their loyalty and commitment to the organization.

#### **4.11 Workplace Environment Preferences**

This study highlights the importance of a positive and supportive workplace environment for Generation Z employees. They value environments that prioritize their experience and growth, characterized by supportive leadership and a collaborative culture (LeBlanc, 2022).

Consistent with these findings, research by Kundu & Gahlawat (2016) and Agarwal (2016) emphasizes the need for a supportive work environment to enhance employee engagement and retention. These studies highlight the significance of organizational support, peer relationships, and positive work culture in retaining Generation Z employees.

Generation Z's preference for flexibility and work-life balance is a key finding of this study. They perform well in environments that offer clear structure and standards but also value flexibility and a dynamic work pace (LeBlanc, 2022).

Studies by Seemiller & Grace (2016) and Mahmoud et al. (2020) corroborate these findings, noting that Generation Z values flexibility and work-life balance. The literature emphasizes the importance of flexible work arrangements and policies that support a healthy balance between work and personal life.

#### **4.12 Technology and Communication**

The study found that Generation Z values clear and concise communication, often preferring digital platforms but appreciating face-to-face interactions for complex discussions (Raslie, 2021).

Research by Agarwal & Vaghela (2016) and Meret et al. (2018) supports these findings, indicating that Generation Z prefers digital communication methods such as instant messaging and social media. However, they also recognize the importance of in-person communication for building relationships and addressing complex issues.

#### **4.13 Intrinsic Motivation and Personal Growth**

This study highlights Generation Z's intrinsic motivation, which is driven by personal growth, development, and meaningful work (Ryan & Deci, 2017). They value opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.

Current Literature: The preference for intrinsic motivation and personal growth is well-documented in the literature. Studies by Fratrièová & Kirchmayer (2018) and Mahmoud et al. (2020) emphasize Generation Z's desire for meaningful work and opportunities for development as key factors in their motivation and engagement.

#### **4.14 Recognition and Feedback**

Generation Z values frequent and constructive feedback, which helps them improve and grow. This study found that providing timely and meaningful feedback and recognizing achievements are crucial for engaging and retaining Generation Z employees (LeBlanc, 2022).

Current Literature: Similar findings are reported in studies by Agarwal (2016) and Kundu & Kusum (2016), which highlight the importance of feedback and recognition in enhancing employee engagement and retention. Generation Z's need for continuous feedback and recognition is consistently emphasized in the literature.

### **5. Findings**

The research findings illuminate critical strategies for organizations aiming to effectively engage and retain Generation Z employees, emphasizing the adoption of transformational and servant leadership styles. These leadership approaches are particularly effective as they resonate deeply with Generation Z's core values of personal growth, ethical behavior, and social responsibility.

#### **5.1 Transformational and Servant Leadership Styles:**

- **Transformational Leadership:** This style inspires and motivates employees to exceed their own expectations and fosters an environment ripe for innovation and change. Transformational leaders emphasize personal development, ethical behavior, and a shared vision, aligning seamlessly with the values of Generation Z.
- **Servant Leadership:** This style focuses on serving others and prioritizing the needs of employees. Servant leaders build trust, promote a sense of community, and encourage ethical behavior, creating a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

#### **5.2 Creating Positive and Supportive Work Environments:**

- **Employee Experience and Growth:** Organizations should prioritize creating a work environment that emphasizes the experience and growth of employees. This includes providing opportunities for continuous learning and development, recognizing and rewarding achievements, and fostering a culture of inclusivity and support.
- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** To cater to Generation Z's desire for work-life balance, organizations should offer flexible work arrangements. This could involve remote work options, flexible working hours, and policies that support a healthy work-life balance.
- **Collaborative Culture:** Promoting a collaborative culture is essential for engaging Generation Z employees. Encouraging teamwork, open communication, and mutual support within teams can enhance engagement and foster a sense of belonging.

#### **5.3 Leveraging Digital Communication Platforms:**

- **Frequent and Constructive Feedback:** Generation Z values frequent, constructive feedback that helps them grow and improve. Organizations should implement regular feedback mechanisms, such as performance reviews, one-on-one meetings, and real-time feedback tools, to meet this preference.
- **Clear and Transparent Communication:** Building trust and engagement with Generation Z employees requires clear and transparent communication. Organizations should utilize digital communication platforms to ensure information is disseminated effectively and transparently, fostering an environment of trust and openness.
- **Embracing Technology:** Generation Z employees are adept at using technology as digital natives. Organizations should leverage digital tools and platforms to facilitate communication, collaboration, and innovation. This includes using project management software, communication apps, and other digital tools that enhance productivity and connectivity.

By embracing transformational and servant leadership styles, creating supportive and growth-oriented work environments, and leveraging digital communication platforms, organizations can effectively engage and retain Generation Z employees, ensuring a motivated and committed workforce.

## **6. Conclusion**

The entrance of Generation Z into the workforce marks a significant shift in organizational dynamics, presenting both challenges and opportunities for employers. This study provides a comprehensive exploration of the workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z, uncovering crucial insights that can inform effective management strategies. By understanding and addressing these preferences, organizations can better attract, engage, and retain this emerging generation of employees, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance and success.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of adopting leadership styles that resonate with Generation Z's values and expectations. Transformational and servant leadership styles, which emphasize personal growth, ethical behavior, and community involvement, are particularly effective in fostering engagement and motivation among Generation Z employees. These styles not only align with Generation Z's intrinsic motivation for meaningful work but also create a supportive and inclusive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction and retention.

Moreover, the study highlights the significance of creating a positive workplace environment that prioritizes employee experience and growth. Generation Z employees thrive in settings characterized by supportive leadership, collaborative cultures, and opportunities for continuous learning and development. Organizations that invest in creating such environments are likely to see increased levels of engagement, productivity, and loyalty among their Generation Z workforce.

Effective communication and feedback practices are also critical for engaging Generation Z employees. This generation values clear, transparent, and frequent communication, often preferring digital platforms for routine interactions while appreciating face-to-face communication for complex and meaningful discussions. By leveraging various communication channels and providing timely and constructive feedback, organizations can build trust and enhance engagement among Generation Z employees.

The study's findings align with and expand upon existing literature, providing a robust foundation for future research on Generation Z's workplace preferences and leadership styles. It contributes to the broader theoretical understanding of employee engagement by applying Kahn's Employee Engagement Theory to a new generational cohort, offering valuable insights into how engagement is influenced by generational characteristics and preferences.

### **6.1 Study Limitations**

One area of limitation in this study was the low number of participants. The study involved eight Generation Z employees and eight employers, which, while providing valuable insights, limits the generalizability of the findings. A larger sample size would have allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's workplace environment and leadership preferences and could have revealed additional themes and nuances not captured in this study.

Another limitation was the reliance on self-reported data through interviews. Self-reported data can be subject to biases such as social desirability bias, where participants may respond in a manner they perceive to be favorable to the interviewer. This could influence the authenticity and accuracy of the responses. Additionally, the qualitative nature of the study means that the findings are interpretive and context-specific, which may not be applicable to all organizations or settings.

The study also focused exclusively on Generation Z employees and employers within a specific age range and work experience. This narrow focus may not fully represent the diverse experiences and preferences of Generation Z as a whole, particularly those in different industries, regions, or with varying levels of work experience.

Lastly, the recruitment method, which involved purposeful sampling from social media groups, may have introduced selection bias. Participants who are active in such groups may differ in significant ways from those who are not, potentially affecting the study's findings.

### **6.2 Suggestions for Future Research**

Future research should aim to include a larger and more diverse sample of Generation Z employees and employers to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Expanding the study to different industries, regions, and demographic backgrounds can provide a more comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's workplace environment and leadership preferences.



Additionally, incorporating quantitative methods alongside qualitative approaches could strengthen the study's findings. Quantitative data, such as surveys with larger samples, can provide statistical validation to the themes identified in qualitative research and offer more robust insights into Generation Z's preferences.

Further research could also explore longitudinal studies to examine how Generation Z's workplace preferences and perceptions of leadership evolve over time as they gain more work experience and as workplace dynamics change. This would provide a deeper understanding of the long-term trends and shifts in their expectations and engagement levels.

Investigating the specific impact of different leadership styles on Generation Z across various organizational contexts could yield practical insights for managers and HR professionals. For example, comparing the effectiveness of transformational, servant, and other leadership styles in different settings could help organizations tailor their management practices to better suit Generation Z employees.

Finally, future studies should consider exploring the intersectionality of Generation Z's preferences with other factors such as gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. Understanding how these factors influence workplace expectations and leadership preferences can help organizations create more inclusive and supportive environments for all employees.

By addressing these suggestions, future research can build upon the findings of this study, contributing to a more nuanced and actionable understanding of Generation Z in the workplace.

In conclusion, organizations that understand and adapt to the unique workplace environment and leadership preferences of Generation Z are better positioned to harness the full potential of this dynamic and diverse cohort. By adopting appropriate leadership styles, creating supportive work environments, and enhancing communication and feedback practices, employers can effectively engage and retain Generation Z employees, driving sustained organizational success. Future research should continue to explore the evolving preferences of Generation Z as they gain more workplace experience, providing further insights into effective management strategies for this influential generation.

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