

# **Workplace Expectations of Gen Z Students Pursuing Post-graduation in Management Study at Ahmadabad, Gujarat**

**Radha Gandhi**

*Research Scholar, Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar, Gujarat*

**Abstract:** With the share of 20.1% of the total Indian population, the Z-generation (born between 1995 and 2012) is all set to occupy major share of workforce in the coming decade. This generation has an entirely unique perspective on careers and how to succeed in the workforce. It is thus imperative for today's leaders to strategize how best to recruit, retain, motivate, and manage Gen Zers (Stillman & Stillman, 2017). In this research paper, a sample of 100 Gen Z students pursuing their post-graduation in Management at various institutes of Ahmedabad are studied to understand their workplace expectations under four heads, *viz.* expectations related to job, work itself, work environment and organization.

**Keywords:** Generation Z, students, Workplace expectations

## **Introduction**

A generation is defined as the group of people who share similar span of birth years. According to most of the researches, people who belong to the same generation tend to have similar kind of values, attitudes, preferences, etc. particularly with regard to work-related topics may be due to the similar events witnessed in their formative years (Gandhi & Ambavale, 2018). For example, Baby Boomers (born between 1946–1961) found to believe in dedication and hard-work, for Gen X (born between 1962–1979) the priority observed were career and skill development while Gen Y (born between 1980–1995) were found to give importance to autonomy and freedom.

Similarly, the Generation Z may also have different expectations from their workplace. It is very much important for today's managers to acknowledge these differences because whenever the poor fit between individual values and organizational values observed there were increased turnover intentions with reduced job satisfaction found among the employees (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

In India, Generation Z (also known as the iGeneration) represents roughly 20.1% million people and they will be entering the workforce in next couple of years or maybe already they would be part of the workforce or internship programs. They are the technologically literate and diversity-tolerant generation. The understanding of their workplace expectations may lead us towards the more effective and productive budding workforce (Mathur & Hameed, 2016).

## Literature Review

Gen Z is all about technology. Today's students are living in a world of remote controls, simulation, automation, instant access to knowledge and information (Rawal & Pandey, 2013). Generation Z grew up on apps and social media. They are the internet babies for whom social media and text messaging are the main streams of information. Face-to-face conversation is less effective with them and leaders will need to look for alternate channels of communication (Forbes Coaches Council, 2017).

Today's young people do not show uniform features except their confidence and their desire for money and success. They may be carefree and ambitious but they also struggle to search for their identity (Töröcsik, Szűcs, & Kehl, 2014). Hence they need a purpose-driven workplace that meets the social change. In a survey administered in the US on 1,004 Gen Zers, they revealed that public speaking and communication are two vital skills where they seek support and training from educators, parents and employers (Center for Generational Kinetics, 2017).

Indian organizations have started hiring Gen Z and are facing challenges while working with them (Ghura, 2017). Leaders are required to understand that this generation is very innovative and entrepreneurial and hence traditional work institutions with list of policies and norms will not work for them. Flexibility and freedom of thought process is something for which Gen Z thrives for. Organizations' recruitment and retention plans must meet these needs (Forbes Coaches Council, 2017).

The most effective way of steering the performance of Gen Z is to clearly define their tasks and directly link them with rewards in a transparent manner (Tulgan & RainmakerThinkingInc., 2013).

Fun work environment and flexible work schedules were found to be the two most desired things for Gen Z. With a more practical mindset, they are much better at earning and spending money wisely as compared to their previous generation (Center for Generational Kinetics, 2017).

In a study (Singh, 2014) some important career views of Generation Z were mentioned which can be summarised as below:

- Expects freedom from permissions, Flexible working hours and enough leaves
- Scope of doing new things in the field attracts Gen Z
- Materialism—they want a 'good life'
- Want to imbibe global values
- Being in an organization for long is not part of their professional commitment
- Gen Z experiments and chooses the field which makes them happy
- Their heroes are from the fields of pure science and technology

Overall, it seems like Gen Z are ready to roll up their sleeves, but they want a really engaging employee experience in return.

### **Rational behind the Study with Objectives**

From the review of past literature, it can be observed that Generation Z is joining the workforce with their own set of attitudes and expectations (Forbes Coaches Council, 2017) which may pose the thoughtful challenges to educators, leaders and HR managers. It will be even more important to comprehend where they are coming from and what they are looking from their workplace. The only key strategy to attract and retain this youngest Generation is the ability to create dream jobs for which through understanding of their workplace expectations is inevitable (Singh, 2014).

This study aims to analyse the expectation of those Generation Z students who are about to enter the workforce. Study has two main objectives as mentioned below:

1. To study the Gen Z workplace expectations
2. To analyse if workplace expectations varies significantly across the gender groups.

The work-place expectations are studied under four heads, *viz.* expectations related to job, expectations related to work itself, expectations related to work environment and expectations related to the organization.

### **Research Methodology**

For the present study, the students pursuing their post-graduation in management studies at various institutes of Ahmedabad, were contacted using convenience sampling. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire having various workplace related attributes to be ranked on a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was also developed on online platform on Google docs and link was shared to the participants to enable them to fill the same at their convenience. The reliability of instrument was good with the Cronbach's alpha value = 0.839

Sample size: 100

Sampling Method: Convenience sampling

Data Collection Instrument: Structured questionnaire developed by researcher

Data Analysis Tools: Descriptive Statistics, ANOVA, Tables & graphs using SPSS

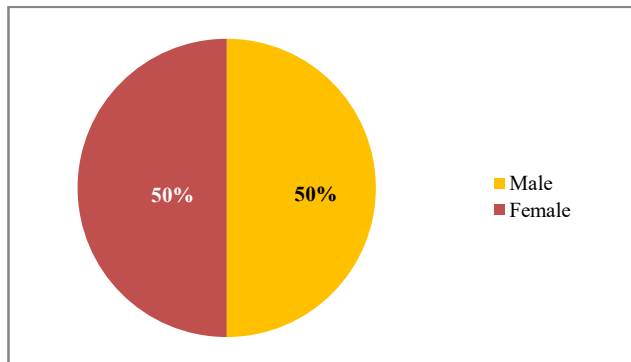
### **Data Analysis**

Demographic details of the data

#### ***Gender Proportion***

**Table 1**

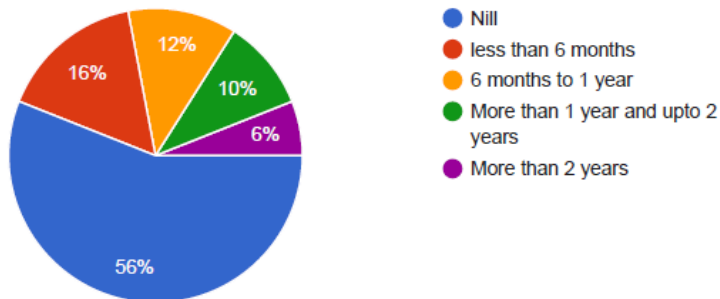
<b>Gender</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	50	50
Male	50	50
Total	100	100



### *Work Experience of Respondents*

**Table 2**

Work Experience	No of Respondents	%
Nil	56	56
Less than Six Months	16	16
6 months to 1 year	12	12
> 1 year and upto 2 years	10	10
More than 2 years	6	6
Total	100	100



### *Workplace Expectations Covered under the Study*

**Table 3**

Sr. No.	Work-place Expectations	Code
	<b>Related to Job</b>	
1	Assurance of Job Security	J1
2	Nice Salary	J2
3	Good Designation	J3
4	Scope to Earn Incentives, Commission or Performance Bonus	J4
5	Opportunity to Continuously Acquire New Knowledge/ Skills–raining and Development Opportunities	J5

*Table 3 (Contd.) ...*

... Table 3 (Contd.)

Sr. No.	Work-place Expectations	Code
<b>Related to Work Itself</b>		
6	Work that is intellectually stimulating	W1
7	Work that has high social status	W2
8	Work that involves creativity	W3
9	Work that allows you to travel and see different places	W4
10	Work that provides opportunity to use different technologies	W5
<b>Related to Work Environment</b>		
11	Physically comfortable and safe work environment	WE1
12	Friendly co-workers	WE2
13	Supportive supervisor	WE3
14	Appropriate work life balance/ flexible working hours	WE4
15	Autonomy to make decision	WE5
<b>Related to Organization/ Company</b>		
16	Organization with good reputation and public image	O1
17	Organization which is impartial and fair	O2
18	Organization that provides constructive feedback and recognition about your performance	O3
19	Organisation which provides scope of influencing (giving opinion in) my work and institute	O4
20	Organization which provides opportunity for career growth	O5

### Cronbach's Alpha (For Overall – 20 items)

Table 4: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.839	.833	20

### Descriptive Statistics for Work Place Expectations Items Under the Study

Table 5: Item Statistics

Job related Expectations	Mean Over All	Mean Male	Mean Female
J1-Job Security	4.5	4.4	4.6
J2-Nice Salary	4.5	4.4	4.6
J3-Good Designation	4.6	4.7	4.6
J4-incentive,commission	4.1	4.2	3.9
J5-Oppurtunity to acquire new knowledge and skills	4.5	4.8	4.2
<b>Work Related Expectations</b>			
W1-Intellectually stimulating work	4.2	3.9	4.4
W2-Work that has high social status	4.0	3.7	4.4
W3-Work that involves creativity	4.3	4.5	4.2
W4-Work that allows to travel and see different places	4.2	4.3	4.0
W5-Oppurtunity to use different technologies in work	4.1	4.4	3.9
<b>Work Environment related Expectations</b>			
WE1-Physically comfortable and safe work environment	4.5	4.6	4.5
WE2-Friendly coworkers	4.4	4.6	4.3
WE3-Supportive supervisor	4.2	4.3	4.2
WE4- Appropriate work life balance/ flexible working Hours	4.3	4.4	4.2
WE5-Autonomy to make decision	4.1	4.3	3.8
<b>Organisation Related Expectations</b>			
O1-Organisation with good reputation and public image	4.4	4.4	4.4
O2-Organization which is impartial and fair	4.2	4.2	4.3
O3- Organization which provides feedback and recognition about performance	4.2	4.3	4.2
O4- Scope of influencing (giving opinion in) my work and institute	4.2	4.3	4.0
O5-Organization which provides opportunity for career growth	4.4	4.5	4.4

The range of scores for workplace expectations was from

1 = Not at all important/ Unimportant,

2 = Less Important,

3 = Somewhat Important,

4 = Important and

5 = Extremely Important.

For the sake of this discussion, work values scores were categorised as below:

1.0–1.5 = not important

1.6–2.5 = less important

2.6–3.5 = somewhat important

3.6–4.5 = important

Above 4.5 = extremely important

### ***ANOVA to Analyse Difference in Workplace Expectations based on Gender***

By treating gender as independent variable and workplace expectations as dependent variable the ANOVA test was run for all four parameters—expectations related to job, work itself, work environment and organization—to analyse the effect of gender on the preference of workplace expectation items.

***H<sub>01</sub>***: There is no significant difference between male and female members of Gen Z with regard to expectations related to ‘Job’

***H<sub>02</sub>***: There is no significant difference between male and female members of Gen Z with regard to expectations related to ‘Work Itself’

***H<sub>03</sub>***: There is no significant difference between male and female members of Gen Z with regard to expectations related to ‘Work Environment’

***H<sub>04</sub>***: There is no significant difference between male and female members of Gen Z with regard to expectations related to ‘Organization’

Out of the four parameters/ aspects of workplace expectations under the study, for the expectations related to work environment a statistically significant difference was observed between gender groups as determined by one-way ANOVA ( $F(1,98) = 5.995, p = .016$ ). Hence, third  $H_{03}$  was rejected and the alternate hypothesis for the same was accepted. The null hypothesis

$H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$  and  $H_{04}$  were accepted as at the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ , no significant difference was found between gender groups on rest of the 3 parameters related to job, work and organization.

**Table 6: ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Job related means	Between Groups	.410	1	.410	1.657	.201
	Within Groups	24.230	98	.247		
	Total	24.640	99			
Work related means	Between Groups	.002	1	.002	.008	.930
	Within Groups	20.269	98	.207		
	Total	20.270	99			
Work Environment related means	Between Groups	1.254	1	1.254	5.995	.016
	Within Groups	20.506	98	.209		
	Total	21.760	99			
Organization related means	Between Groups	.130	1	.130	.483	.489
	Within Groups	26.304	98	.268		
	Total	26.434	99			

## Discussion

‘Overall mean’ column for generation Z mentioned in the Table 5 shows that with the mean score of 4.6 ‘Having Job with Good Designation’ is the topmost priority for the Generation Z. Also ‘Job security’, ‘Nice Salary’, ‘Opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills’ and ‘comfortable and safe working environment’ topped the list of expectations with 4.5 mean score.

While talking about the Gen Z expectation related to work itself, it was found that they want work which ‘involves creativity’ which is in line with the previous study done by (Singh, 2014) where she defined Gen Z as unconventional.

From the work environment, the expectations of Gen Z were to have ‘friendly co-workers’ and ‘physical safety and comfort’. On the other hand, the ‘autonomy to make decision’ was the least priority for them among the parameters which were asked to rate. As far as organization to work for, is concern the Gen Z expects such organization which provides ‘opportunity for career growth’ and also have ‘good public image’. This finding of the present study is in line with the (Accenture Strategy, 2017) where the report suggested the large organization to develop individualised skill and career plan for Gen Z.

When the workplace expectations were examined, across the gender groups it showed a statistically significant difference for expectations related to ‘Work Environment’. The items like friendly co-workers, autonomy to make decision and physically comfortable environment were

rated high by the male respondents in compare to their female Gen Z counterparts. (Refer Table 5 for mean scores).

Although the ANOVA does not show the significant difference for other three sets of expectations across the gender, if we look at the mean scores for individual workplace expectation items for each male and female respondents it can be observe that for job related expectations female respondents showed more preference for Job security and nice salary while male respondents preferred opportunity to earn incentive and opportunity to acquire new skills more.

For work related expectations female preferred work which is intellectually stimulating and holds high social status while male Gen Z respondents preferred work which offers scope of travelling to the new places and also work which have scope of using different technologies. However, when it came to their expectations regarding the organization for which they will be working irrespective of the gender Gen Z found to expect their organization to be impartial and fair with good public image. Gen Z as a whole also found to prefer organization which provides them the opportunity for career growth (Refer Table 5 for mean scores).

## Way Forward

Imagine a situation where 50 years mature holding position in management tries to apply recognition and loyalty based reward on his or her 25 years old Gen Z subordinate for whom good designation and flexible working hours are the most influential factors. Isn't it a catastrophe? Management will no longer be able to attract, motivate, retain or rather we may say leverage the youngest generation Z which is the future workforce.

Although not everyone born in a generational period shares the same values or experiences, they do share a common context that shapes their worldview. Thus, generational research can provide institutions with valuable information to design effective policies, programs, and practices (Seemiller & Grace, 2017).

The present kind of researches, by way of throwing light on the expectations of rising workforce, will help policymakers to understand the kind of the employment contract necessary to make future workforce effective and productive.

## Limitations of the Study

Study related to Gen Z is an upcoming field of research now-a-days. This is a very primary study with small sample size which is restricted to only one city of Gujarat. The further studies with respect to the urban and rural areas of Gujarat and other states of India with different socio-cultural characteristic are demand of the time. Moreover, the present research only focused on the post-graduate students of management studies, the other streams of commerce, arts, science and vocational studies can also be studied to have bigger picture of Gen Z as a whole.



## References

- [1] Accenture Strategy (2017). Gen Z Rising—U.S. Edition. U.S.: Accenture.
- [2] Cennamo, L. and Gardner, D. (2008). Generational Differences in Work Values, Outcomes and Person-Organization Values Fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), pp. 891–906.
- [3] Center for Generational Kinetics (2017). Gen Z White Paper—The State of Gen Z 2017 National Research Study—GEN HQ. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://genhq.com>: <http://genhq.com/gen-z-2017-research-white-paper/>
- [4] Forbes Coaches Council (2017). Generation Z—12 Important Things Companies Need to Understand. Retrieved April 24, 2018 from <https://www.forbes.com>, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/03/03/generation-z-12-important-things-companies-need-to-understand/#7c0533a41fe3>
- [5] Gandhi, R. and Ambavale, R (2018). A Comparative Study on Preferred Work Values of Selected Government University Teachers of Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar Cities of Gujarat State. *Commonwealth Journal of Commerce & Management Research*, 5(3), pp. 77–91.
- [6] Ghura, A.S. (2017). A Qualitative Exploration of the Challenges Organizations Face while Working with Generation Z Intrapreneurs. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies*, 3(2), pp. 105–114.
- [7] Mathur, M. and Hameed, S. (2016). A Study on Behavioural Competencies of the Z Generation. *International Conference on Management and Information Systems*, pp. 63–71.
- [8] Rawal, S. and Pandey, U.S. (2013). e-Learning: Learning for Smart Generation Z. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(5), pp. 1–5.
- [9] Seemiller, C. and Grace, M. (2017). Generation Z: Educating and Engaging the Next Generation of Students. *About Campus*, 22(6), pp. 21–26.
- [10] Singh, A. (2014). Challenges and Issues of Generation Z. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 16(7), pp. 59–63.
- [11] Stillman, D. and Stillman, J. (2017). *Gen Z @ Work: How the Next Generation Is Transforming the Workplace*. United States of America: Harper Business.
- [12] Töröcsik, M., Szűcs, K. and Kehl, D. (2014). How Generations Think: Research on Generation Z. *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Communication*, pp. 23–45.
- [13] Tulgan, B. and Rainmaker Thinking Inc. (2013). *Meet Generation Z: The Second Generation within the Giant “Millennial” Cohort*. New Haven: Rainmaker Thinking, Inc.

## Annexure

### Workplace Expectations of Gen Y

\*Required

**1. Name of your Institute**

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Gender**

*Make only one oval.*

Male

Female

**3. How much work-experience do you have\***

*Make only one oval.*

Nil

Less than 6 months

6 months to 1 year

More than 1 year and upto 2 years

More than 2 years

**4. How important for you to have below aspects in your JOB\***

*Make only one oval per row.*

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not at all Important/Unimportant
Assurance of job security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nice salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good designation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scope to earn incentives, commission or performance bonus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to continuously acquire new knowledge/skills-training and development opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 5. How important for you to have below aspects in your WORK\*

*Make only one oval per row.*

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not at all Important/ Unimportant
Work that is intellectually stimulating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work that has high social status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work that involves creativity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work that allow you to travel and see different places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work that provides opportunity to use different technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 6. How important for you to have below aspects in your WORK ENVIRONMENT\*

*Make only one oval per row.*

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not at all Important/ Unimportant
Physically comfortable and safe work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friendly co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriate work life balance/flexible working hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Autonomy to make decision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 7. How important for you to have below aspects in your ORGANIZATION/ COMPANY\*

*Make only one oval per row.*

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not at all Important/ Unimportant
Organization with good reputation and public image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organization which is impartial and fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organization that provides constructive feedback and recognition about your performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organization which provides scope of influencing (giving opinion in) my work and institute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organisation which provides opportunity for career growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>