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Drivers of Employee Engagement among Generation Z

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Abstract

This study explores how three traditional engagement drivers - Learning & Development Opportunities, Supervisory Support, and Empowerment - relate to Employee Engagement and Intention to Leave among Generation Z (Gen Z) employees - the newest entrants into the workforce. Drawing on a quantitative survey of 127 Gen Z respondents, the research employed correlation and multiple regression analyses to identify the most influential factors. Results indicate that both learning & development opportunities and supervisory support exert a strong positive influence on employee engagement, reinforcing the importance of formal training programs and supportive leadership for sustaining Gen Z motivation. Although empowerment also correlates positively with engagement, it did not remain significant when considered jointly with the other two factors. In a surprising contrast to established literature, no relationship emerged between engagement and intention to leave; Gen Z employees in this sample reported moderate engagement levels yet were still prone to contemplating turnover. Additional exploratory analyses revealed that being a student alongside employment did not affect engagement or turnover intentions, nor was tenure a factor in explaining turnover desires either. These findings highlight the need for organizations to craft nuanced engagement strategies that integrate strong professional development, coaching, and feedback. Furthermore, the weak link between engagement and turnover intentions signals that Gen Z retention hinges on factors extending beyond engagement alone.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Generation Z, Learning & Development, Supervisory Support, Empowerment, Turnover

Abstract

Diese Studie untersucht, wie drei traditionelle Treiber für Mitarbeiterengagement – Lern- und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten, Vorgesetztenunterstützung und Empowerment – das Mitarbeiterengagement und die Fluktuationsabsicht von Beschäftigten der Generation Z (Gen Z) beeinflussen, den jüngsten Neueinsteigern in die Arbeitswelt. Basierend auf einer quantitativen Befragung von 127 Gen-Z-Teilnehmenden kamen Korrelations- und multiple Regressionsanalysen zum Einsatz, um die einflussreichsten Faktoren zu ermitteln. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sowohl Lern- und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten als auch Vorgesetztenunterstützung einen starken positiven Einfluss auf das Mitarbeiterengagement haben und damit die Bedeutung formaler Schulungsprogramme und unterstützender Führungsstile für die Motivation der Gen Z untermauern. Zwar korreliert auch Empowerment positiv mit dem Engagement, erwies sich jedoch in Kombination mit den beiden anderen Faktoren nicht als signifikant. In einem überraschenden Gegensatz zu den bisherigen Forschungsergebnissen zeigte sich zudem keine Beziehung zwischen Engagement und Fluktuationsabsicht: Trotz mittlerer Engagementwerte neigten Gen-Z-Beschäftigte in dieser Stichprobe weiterhin dazu, einen Arbeitsplatzwechsel in Betracht zu ziehen. Darüber hinaus ergaben explorative Analysen, dass weder ein gleichzeitiges Studium neben der Arbeit noch die Betriebszugehörigkeit einen bedeutenden Einfluss auf Engagement oder Fluktuationsneigung hatten. Diese Befunde unterstreichen, dass Organisationen differenzierte Engagement-Strategien entwickeln müssen, die umfassende berufliche Weiterentwicklung, Coaching und Feedback integrieren. Darüber hinaus verdeutlicht die schwache Verbindung zwischen Engagement und Fluktuationsabsicht, dass der Verbleib von Gen-Z-Beschäftigten von weiteren Faktoren abhängt, die über das reine Engagement hinausreichen.

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1. Introduction

In today's fast-paced work environment, the concept of employee engagement has become one of the most important factors driving organizational success and sustainability. Fostering employee engagement has become ever more important due to increasing changes in the workforce dynamics, driven in part by globalization and technological developments. The motivation for this research stems from the recognition that engaged employees are not only more productive and loyal but also serve as the driving force behind innovation and customer satisfaction. However, despite its acknowledged importance, many organizations struggle to achieve a high level of engagement among their workforce, facing challenges in identifying and implementing effective strategies (Gallup, 2023). The entrance of Generation Z (Gen Z) into the workforce introduces new complexities to this challenge. Born after 1995, Gen Z represents a cohort that has grown up with constant access to information and everyday use of technology (Jiao et al., 2023). Characterized by their technological proficiency, preference for immediate rewards, and desire for meaningful work, they differ significantly from previous generations in their workplace expectations and behaviors (Schroth, 2019). Studies have indicated that Gen Z employees exhibit lower levels of engagement and higher turnover intentions compared to their predecessors (Pendell & Vander Helm, 2022). Traditional engagement drivers such as learning and development opportunities, empowerment, and supervisory support have been effective in enhancing engagement in the past, however, it is unclear whether these strategies resonate with Gen Z employees. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of these traditional engagement drivers on the engagement levels, as well as the intent to leave among Gen Z employees. Through this exploration, the paper tries to provide actionable insights and strategies for organizations looking to foster a more engaged and motivated workforce.

Finally, the significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute to the ongoing discussion on employee engagement, generating more understanding of its determinants and outcomes. By attempting to connect theoretical and practical implications, the aim of this study is to provide a foundation for organizations and HR professionals on how to create environments where employees feel supported and valued. In doing so, it aspires to not only advance academic knowledge in the field of organizational behavior but also to inform the development of more effective engagement practices that can lead to higher productivity, innovation, and competitive advantage for organizations worldwide.

2. Motivation & Research Gap

Despite the acknowledged importance and benefits engaged workforce brings to the organization, employers are still struggling to foster high engagement levels among their employees. According to Gallup's 2023 survey, only 23% of employees globally are engaged. (Gallup, 2023)

Furthermore, with Generation Z entering the workforce, these concerns are even more highlighted. According to research by Pendell and Vander Helm (2022), Generation Z employees exhibit the lowest levels of engagement compared to other generational groups. They are more prone to stress and burnout, which adversely affects their performance and well-being. Furthermore, a significant proportion of Gen Z employees demonstrate low organizational loyalty with a high percentage changing jobs after just one year of employment (Pendell & Vander Helm, 2022). This high turnover rate incurs substantial costs related to recruitment and training and therefore affects the overall financial performance of the organization.

Furthermore, as they become a larger segment of the workforce, their attitudes, expectations, and behaviors will increasingly influence organizational dynamics and performance outcomes. However, while there is extensive literature exploring employee engagement and its many influencing factors, there is a noticeable scarcity of research focusing specifically on Generation Z. Most existing studies tend to generalize findings across all employees or concentrate on earlier generations, such as Millennials.

Since every generation has their own unique characteristics, understanding whether traditional engagement drivers remain effective for Gen Z employees is crucial for organizations aiming to enhance productivity, reduce turnover, and foster a committed workforce. The study intends to fill a gap in the existing literature and provide empirical evidence on the applicability of established engagement strategies to Generation Z.

Finally, if it would be found that the traditionally known drivers of Employee Engagement are not actually valid for Gen Z, then all the previous research needs to be updated in such a way to clarify that the term "employee" refers only to employees of all generations up to Gen Z (excl. Gen Z).

3. Objective of the Study

By focusing on Gen Z, the newest entrants into the workforce, this study aims to:

- Assess the impact of traditional engagement drivers: Determine whether Learning and Development Opportunities, Empowerment, and Supervisory Support effectively enhance engagement among Gen Z employees.
- Identify generation-specific responses: Explore how Gen Z employees perceive and respond to these traditional engagement drivers.
- Compare with research of previous generations: Evaluate any differences in the effectiveness of these drivers between Gen Z and earlier generations.
- Examine the relationship between Engagement and Intent to Leave: Investigate how employee engagement influences Gen Z employees' intent to leave their organizations.
- Inform organizational strategies: Provide insights that can help organizations tailor their engagement strategies to better meet the needs of Gen Z employees.

Therefore, the Research Questions this study aims to answer are the following:

RQ1: How do Learning and Development Opportunities influence Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees?

RQ2: What is the relationship between Empowerment and Employee Engagement in the context of Generation Z employees?

RQ3: In what ways does Supervisory Support affect the Engagement levels of Generation Z employees?

RQ4: Do Generation Z employees respond differently to traditional engagement drivers compared to previous generations?

RQ5: How does Employee Engagement influence the Intention to Leave among Generation Z employees?

RQ6: Do Engagement levels differ based on tenure and work-study status among Generation Z employees?

4. Literature Review

In this section we will be covering the theoretical framework and literature behind the key concepts of this research. First, we will be looking at the characteristics of Generation Z. Secondly, we will explore different definitions of employee engagement proposed by various researchers over the years, discuss the importance of employee engagement both for individuals and organizations, and examine the relationship between intention to leave and employee engagement. Finally, we will take a closer look at some of the factors that influence employee engagement, namely learning and development opportunities, supervisory support, and empowerment.

4.1 Characteristics of Generation Z

Generational research has demonstrated that the time in which a person is born impacts their behavior and development of their values, preferences, and beliefs. Additionally, studies have shown that major global events and cultural changes significantly influence each generation's distinct expectations and priorities, particularly in the workplace. (Campbell et al., 2015)

Generation Z, generally defined as individuals born after 1995, is the first cohort to have grown up entirely in the digital age, never knowing a world before the Internet (Jiao et al., 2023).

This upbringing has resulted in a generation that is highly technologically proficient and incorporates technology in all aspects of their daily lives (Osorio & Madero, 2024).

Despite their digital proficiency, Gen Z values human connection in their work and prefer workplaces that blend advanced technology with personal relationships, valuing frequent feedback and measurable performance metrics accessible through technological platforms (Aziz et al., 2021).

Social recognition, appraisal, and, most importantly, appropriate compensation are one of the key motivators for their work efficiency. This generation is less inclined toward traditional hierarchies or team-based work and often prioritizes efficiency and self-reliance over collaboration. (Surugiu et al., 2025)

Their independence and confidence makes them favor an individualistic approach in the way they learn, work and communicate (Osorio & Madero, 2024).

Further studies suggest they are motivated by stable employment, healthcare benefits, and flexible work conditions that respect their personal time. Compared to Millennials, they tend to be less optimistic and are more drawn to large organizations that offer job security and reasonable compensation. However, their motivation isn't purely extrinsic - they also value development opportunities and meaningful work. They place importance on interesting work with cross-functional opportunities, inclusive workplace policies and safety. (Dwivedula, 2024)

Their constant connectivity has made them aware of all the global injustices and they seek organizations that align with their personal values. Their open-mindedness makes them adept for working in multicultural environments. They are interested in companies championing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). (Osorio & Madero, 2024)

Research has also shown that mental health is a significant concern for Generation Z. They are more likely than previous generations to suffer from depression and anxiety (Schroth, 2019). Especially after the pandemic, well-being has become one of the key factors for their motivation and productivity in the workplace (Surugiu et al., 2025).

Flexible work structures, particularly hybrid and remote models, appeal strongly to Gen Z, who view work-life balance and workplace wellness as critical to long-term satisfaction. They value mental health benefits and expect their leaders to be understanding and compassionate. (Osorio & Madero, 2024).

Their primary mode of communication through virtual means has influenced their social interactions, sometimes leading to reduced face-to-face communication skills and a tendency to avoid conflict. This reliance on digital communication can impact their ability to effectively interact with colleagues from older generations (Schroth, 2019).

While highly connected through digital platforms, Gen Z workers are also more aware of the challenges technology can bring, such as digital burnout and blurred boundaries between work and personal life (Janssen & Carradini, 2021). They are also aware of the importance of cyber security and digital privacy concerns (Osorio & Madero, 2024).

Finally, understanding the unique characteristics and needs of Generation Z is crucial for employers aiming to integrate them effectively into the workforce.

4.2 Defining Engagement

William Kahn was the first to propose the notion of employee engagement in the 1990s. He described it as “harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances” (Kahn, 1990, p. 694).

The concept of employee engagement goes beyond the traditional view of job satisfaction and delves deeper into the emotional commitment and connection that employees have with their work, their colleagues, and their organization. Furthermore, it can be described as the mental state characterized by how focused and involved an employee is with their job, including how much they think about their work (attention) and how dedicated they are to their tasks (absorption). (Rothbard, 2001)

Engaged employees are not merely satisfied - they are passionate about their roles, enthusiastic about contributing to their organization's mission, and deeply committed to its success. They are the drivers of innovation, customer loyalty, and sustainable growth. (Chanana & Sangeeta, 2021)

Similarly, Cook (2008) describes employee engagement as the extent to which employees have positive thoughts and feelings about their organization, and the proactive steps they take towards achieving organizational goals for all stakeholders (Rameshkumar, 2020). Fleming and Asplund (2007) from Gallup describe employee engagement as the ability of an organization to deeply connect with its employees, engaging not just their minds but also their emotions and values, and instilling in them a genuine desire for excellence. Engaged employees are described as individuals who are deeply committed to their organization's success, feeling a strong personal, social, and spiritual alignment with its goals, vision, and purpose. (Fleming and Asplund, 2007; Rameshkumar, 2020)

To continue, building upon Kahn’s work, Macey and Schneider (2008) argue that employee engagement encompasses three types of engagement: trait, state and behavioral - all three types are connected and build up on each other, making the employee fully engaged. According to May et al. (2004) employee engagement is linked to job involvement and the concept of “flow”, drawing from the works of Brown (1996) and Csikszentmihalyi (1990). Job involvement is

understood as the extent to which one's job is integral to their personal identity and sense of self, and it represents a state of psychological identification with one's work based on cognitive beliefs. Flow represents a state when individuals are fully immersed in the environment and cognitively involved in the activity. However, employee engagement differs from job involvement and flow in that it encompasses active participation of an individual's emotions, behaviors, and thoughts during their work and not merely cognition. (May et al., 2004)

Robinson et al. (2004) also compared employee engagement to other constructs in organizational behavior, namely, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational commitment is about an individual's emotional and mental attachment to their organization, reflecting their overall attitude towards it. In contrast, engagement is about how focused and involved an individual is in their job tasks, not their attitude. Unlike organizational citizenship behavior, which includes voluntary actions that benefit colleagues and the organization without necessarily being part of the job description, engagement specifically targets the effort and concentration an employee puts into their formal job responsibilities, rather than these additional, voluntary contributions. (Saks, 2006)

Hewitt organization (2011) refers to employee engagement as the extent to which employees are dedicated to the company, which can be measured in three behaviors: 1) "Say": employees speak positively about their workplace. 2) "Stay": indicating a strong intention to continue being part of the organization; 3) "Strive": reflecting a readiness to invest extra effort towards organizational achievements (Zhang et al., 2014; AON Hewitt, 2011).

Finally, Saks (2006) views employee engagement as the level of an individual's focus and absorption in their job and association with their organization. He distinguishes between two forms of engagement: job engagement, which relates to how engaged an employee is in their specific role and tasks, and organizational engagement, which refers to an employee's psychological investment and connection as a member of the wider organization.

For the purpose of this study we will be looking at the definition of Schaufeli et al. (2002). According to them, employee engagement is a positive and rewarding mental state characterized by three main components: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor represents an employee's energy and willingness to put effort into their work. Dedication is about being highly involved and finding meaning in work. And finally, absorption refers to being fully focused and immersed in work. (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Schaufeli's framework is one of the most cited and recognized definitions of employee

engagement in organizational psychology. On top of that, Schaufeli et al. (2002) developed the work engagement survey which is one of the most commonly used engagement surveys in literature. Therefore, their definition and scale will be used in this research.

4.3 Impact of Engagement on Business Outcomes

Kahn (1992) argued that employee engagement has a dual impact on both individual and organizational level. On the individual level it leads to increased quality of an individual's work as well as positive experiences while doing the work. On the organizational level it leads to higher growth and productivity.

Reijseger et al. (2017) found that employee engagement plays a crucial role in enhancing both in-role and extra-role performance in the workplace. Their research showed that when employees are engaged, they not only fulfill their core responsibilities more effectively but are also more likely to go beyond their formal duties by helping colleagues, showing initiative, and contributing to a positive work environment. A key mechanism behind this relationship is open-mindedness - engaged employees tend to be more mentally flexible, receptive to new ideas, and proactive in addressing challenges. This mindset not only boosts creativity and collaboration but also reduces counterproductive behaviors. The study underscores that fostering engagement is more than just increasing motivation - it activates deeper psychological processes that improve overall job performance and organizational outcomes (Reijseger et al., 2017).

To continue, performance, while complex, can be dissected into task performance, adaptive performance, and proactive performance at individual, team, and organizational levels, as suggested by Griffin et al. (2007). Task performance refers to the effectiveness with which job responsibilities are executed; adaptive performance indicates the ability to adjust to change; and proactive performance involves taking initiative to improve conditions or create new value.

Engagement is found to enhance performance at all these levels. At the individual level, engaged employees are more productive and often exceed job expectations. At the team level, engagement fosters a collaborative environment where the collective effort is directed towards achieving common goals, thereby enhancing team productivity and innovation. This team-level engagement is increasingly being recognized for its contribution to gaining a competitive edge, as explored by researchers like Albrecht (2010) and Costa et al. (2014). Furthermore, at the organizational level, studies like that of Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) in the fast-food industry

have demonstrated a direct correlation between employee engagement and daily financial returns. This underscores the broader impact of engagement, not just on the qualitative aspects of workplace culture but also on quantifiable financial outcomes. (Albrecht et al. 2015) Nazir and Islam (2017) in their study also highlight the importance of employee engagement for performance. They argue that performance management can be used as a tool of enhancing employee engagement which in turn increases the employee performance and thus the overall organizational performance and effectiveness. Highly engaged employees not only tend to be more productive, but they also transfer these positive attitudes to their teams and throughout the entire organization. Finally, this collective engagement drives the organization towards higher productivity and effectiveness. Furthermore, Gonring (2008) states that highly engaged employees are more accurate in performing their tasks as opposed to disengaged employees.

Evidence from meta-analyses and reviews, such as those by Demerouti and Cropanzano (2010), supports the notion that engagement positively impacts a range of outcomes, including attitudes, behaviors, and various performance metrics. This reinforces the idea that engaged employees contribute more effectively to their roles, demonstrating both better task performance and going beyond their job requirements with extra-role behaviors. Further research shows that high employee engagement can increase the competitive advantage of the organization. Studies by Macey et al. (2009) indicate clear financial benefits for organizations with highly engaged employees, including superior return on assets, profitability, and market value, when compared to organizations with lower levels of employee engagement. This suggests that investing in employee engagement can increase performance and yield tangible financial returns.

Engagement plays a crucial role in employee retention. When employees feel empowered and satisfied in their jobs, they are less likely to seek employment elsewhere, thus lowering the turnover ratio. Research by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) suggests that employees who are engaged are more likely to feel a strong connection to their company and are less likely to want to leave it. This is because they find their work rewarding and meaningful, have strong relationships at work, and feel valued and supported by their organization. This reduces turnover costs for companies and helps maintain a stable, experienced workforce.

Furthermore, high employee engagement also leads to higher customer satisfaction, as noted in an article from (Salanova et al., 2005). Engaged employees, feeling empowered and with the autonomy to make decisions, tend to take ownership of their work. This also increases their accountability, and they tend to act proactively, thinking about what's best for the situation. This

empowerment allows them to use their knowledge and passion to assist customers effectively, often going above and beyond to ensure customer satisfaction.

Pandita & Ray (2018) further emphasizes that engaged employees tend to perform better and provide higher quality service, which enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. They tend to form deeper connections with customers and actively improve their job performance, unlike disengaged employees who lack an understanding of customer needs. In addition, engaged employees often act as brand ambassadors, recommending their company's products or services. This is important as it fosters a positive brand image and favorable perceptions of the employer, demonstrating the significance of employee engagement in both customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Pandita & Ray, 2018).

Finally, employee engagement is crucial for maintaining a healthy workforce. The findings indicate that when employees are engaged in their work, they tend to develop favorable attitudes toward both their job and their organization, which in turn supports their overall psychological well-being. This has important implications for managers as these healthy and highly engaged employees are more likely to support the organization (Jena et al., 2018).

Aspect	Impact/Outcome	Reference
Organizational Performance	- Increased overall growth and productivity - Higher likelihood of organizational success - Tangible financial returns, superior profitability, and market value - Financial benefits from investing in engagement	Kahn (1992); Macey et al. (2009)
Productivity	- Improved task accuracy and efficiency - Exceeding job expectations - Demonstration of proactive performance and extra-role behaviors	Gonring (2008); Demerouti & Cropanzano (2010)
Employee Retention	- Reduced turnover rates - Enhanced workforce stability - Lower recruitment and training costs	Schaufeli & Bakker (2004)
Competitive Advantage	- Strengthened market position - Attraction of top talent - Enhanced reputation as an employer of choice	Macey et al. (2009); Pandita & Ray (2018)
Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty	- Higher quality of customer service - Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty - Positive brand image and advocacy	Salanova et al. (2005); Pandita & Ray (2018)
Brand Ambassadorship	- Employees advocate for company products or services - Enhanced brand reputation - Increased word-of-mouth promotion	Pandita & Ray (2018)
Organization Loyalty	- Stronger emotional and psychological attachment - Feeling valued and supported - Increased organizational loyalty	Schaufeli & Bakker (2004)

Aspect	Impact/Outcome	Reference
Health and Well-being	- Improved physical and mental health	(Jena et al., 2018)

Table 1. Impact of Employee Engagement on Business Outcomes

4.4 Intention to Leave and Employee Engagement

Turnover intention, often referred to as the intention to leave, can be described as employees willingness to leave the organization. It is considered the final cognitive step in the decision-making process before voluntary turnover occurs. Turnover intention has a significant relationship with actual turnover behavior, as it serves as a strong predictor of employees' decisions to quit. Intentions are recognized as immediate determinants of behavior, highlighting the importance of addressing turnover intention to mitigate actual turnover. This makes turnover intention a critical focus for managers and human resource professionals aiming to retain talent and maintain organizational stability. (Towers Perrin, 2003; Sandhya & Sulphey, 2020) Research has consistently shown that employee engagement is a significant predictor of various positive organizational outcomes. Saks (2006) found that higher levels of engagement are associated with increased job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and a reduced intention to quit. Similarly, studies by Demerouti et al. (2001) and Salanova et al. (2005) indicate that elevated engagement not only enhances positive attitudes toward work and the organization but also leads to greater job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. Furthermore, Turnley et al. (2003) suggest that when employees are more engaged, they are less likely to consider leaving their jobs. (Sandhya & Sulphey, 2020)

The 2003 Towers Perrin Report highlighted that 66% of highly engaged employees had no plans to leave their organization, compared to 36% of moderately engaged employees and only 12% of disengaged employees. Furthermore, only 2% of highly engaged employees were actively seeking other job opportunities, in contrast to 8% of moderately engaged and 23% of disengaged employees. This data suggests a strong inverse relationship between engagement levels and turnover intentions (Towers Perrin, 2003).

Finally, when it comes to Generation Z in particular, understanding their intention to leave is especially important due to their lower levels of engagement compared to other generational groups. In addition, they are more prone to stress and burnout, which adversely affects their performance and well-being and increases the likelihood of leaving the company (Pendell & Vander Helm, 2022). Furthermore, a significant proportion of Gen Z employees demonstrate low organizational loyalty where a 2020 study indicated that Gen Z workers stay in a job for an average of 1 year and 8 months, which is significantly shorter than previous generations (Speet, 2023).

4.5 Drivers of Employee Engagement

Over the years, many drivers of employee engagement have been studied. For the purpose of this research, we will be focusing on three drivers commonly discussed in the literature, namely learning and development opportunities, supervisory support, and empowerment.

4.5.1 Learning & Development Opportunities

The concept of investing in employee development has long been recognized as crucial for organizations. Such investments are part of a high-commitment approach that significantly influences employee dedication and drive. Evidence across various sectors shows that this strategy leads to higher productivity and improved financial outcomes. Data suggests that sectors investing heavily in employee training tend to be the most competitive globally. Investing in employee development means providing employees with the training and skills necessary to meet future job demands. This investment is a core aspect of human resource development, aimed at offering learning opportunities for both performance enhancement and personal growth. Such continuous learning opportunities give organizations a competitive edge by allowing employees to improve their existing skills and acquire new ones, thereby enhancing their ability to adapt and perform effectively. (Lee & Bruvold, 2003)

The concept of Perceived Investment in Employee Development (PIED) arises from employees' perceptions of their organization's efforts to support their learning and skill acquisition, preparing them for new roles either within or outside the organization. When employees see

that their company is invested in their growth, they are more likely to exert more effort in their roles. Research supports that organizational efforts in employee development not only boost retention and morale but also empower employees, contributing to a strategic advantage. The effectiveness of these development initiatives, whether formal or informal, underscores the importance of their outcomes. (Lee & Bruvold, 2003)

According to Herjuna et al. (2024), training and development programs play a key role in improving employee performance. Different upskilling approaches help employees fill the gap between their current skills and what the organization needs. Apart from just teaching new skills, these programs also boost employee confidence by replacing old, less effective ways of working with new, more efficient methods, which leads to better job performance. Such strategic efforts aim to equip employees with the skills they need to help the organization reach its goals, while also making them feel less stressed and more satisfied with their jobs. This can lead to less turnover, as employees understand the importance of their work and they feel more competent, valued, and motivated (Herjuna et al., 2024).

Similarly, other studies also show how investing in training significantly enhances employee productivity and performance. Huang & Su (2016) revealed that job training serves as a platform for employees' success and progress, shaping positive work attitudes and motivations and thus increasing engagement. Additional research, including a study in Uganda's health sector by Sendawula et al. (2018) confirmed that training, especially when employee engagement acts as a mediator, significantly improves individual and organizational performance. Employees who participate in training programs show higher levels of engagement in their work, highlighting the importance of training in enhancing employee engagement and contributing to organizational success. (Sendawula et al., 2018)

According to Fletcher (2019), offering employees chances for personal development, like leading new projects or gaining qualifications through certifications, shows that the organization values their contribution and sees them as vital to its success. Personal development acts as a form of social exchange, where employers provide opportunities for employees to gain and enhance valuable skills, abilities, and knowledge, and investment in the employee's growth which will at the end reflect positively on the company through higher engagement and productivity.

Tiwari & Lenka (2020) also argued continuous learning is positively linked to employee engagement. In their research they discuss how upskilling events like trainings, workshops, conferences, and seminars, significantly enhance employee competences and knowledge. In

addition, when organizations offer such learning opportunities, employees also see it as a psychological safety signal that encourages them to experiment with new ways of doing business as well as learning from previous errors. This approach not only prepares employees for current and future challenges but also supports their overall development and adaptability within the workplace.

Investing in employee training and development significantly impacts their skills, career progression, and sense of value within an organization. This investment is crucial for both personal and professional growth, leading to better performance. Career development opportunities are vital for maintaining high levels of employee engagement, with analyses showing career development as a key driver of engagement, second only to recognition. (Antony, 2018)

Furthermore, organizations that provide educational opportunities and encourage employees to pursue additional certifications and training not only enhance individual skill sets but also contribute to organizational growth. Such initiatives create a workforce that is engaged, motivated, and sees long-term value in staying with the organization.

A study by the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp) and the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) found that the quality and variety of learning and training opportunities have a positive effect on employee engagement levels. Highly engaged organizations often place great importance on learning and development practices in order to promote a culture of learning. This approach not only boosts engagement but also offers a mutually beneficial scenario for both employees and organizations, enhancing overall corporate potential and building an engaged and skilled workforce. (Antony, 2018)

Anitha (2014) also argues training and career development play a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement. Effective training boosts service accuracy, directly benefiting service performance and employee engagement. Participation in training and development programs increases an employee's confidence in their skills, fostering greater job engagement. Also, providing opportunities for growth serves as a form of reward, fulfilling employees' growth needs and enabling them to realize their potential. Management's commitment to facilitating career progression through training and development is key to unlocking opportunities for employee growth, which, in turn, significantly increases engagement levels. (Anitha, 2014)

4.5.2 Supervisory Support

Kahn (1990) argued that supportive leaders who build trusting relationships with their employees have a positive influence on their employee's engagement levels. Following Kahn's research, May et al. (2004) and Saks (2006) also discovered a positive correlation between supportive supervisors and engagement.

What's more, Swanberg et al. (2011) found that employees with supportive leaders tend to be more engaged compared to those who do not perceive their leaders as supportive. Employees who don't receive recognition and appreciation from their managers tend to feel less valued and engaged with their work and the organization. (Panda et al., 2021)

Holland et al. (2017) also argues that supervisor support significantly influences employees' attitudes and behaviours, with the trust between employees and their immediate supervisors being a key element in this dynamic. The presence of a supportive environment created by supervisors correlates with higher levels of employee engagement. Based on the social exchange theory, if employees feel supported by their managers, they feel obligated to reciprocate this support by being more productive and committed to the organization. (Holland et al., 2017)

According to Ogueyungbo et al. (2020), supervisory support is critical in how employees perceive their value and well-being within an organization. Due to the direct and immediate relationship with their subordinates, supervisors heavily influence their behaviour and engagement (O'Driscoll and Beehr, 1994).

Additionally, supervisors act as the main link between the organization and its employees, guiding and assessing their work. The feedback and support provided by supervisors are often seen by employees as a reflection of the organization's perception of them. This type of support fosters a positive work environment where employees feel their contributions are appreciated. Supervisory support encompasses both assisting with work related tasks and providing emotional support, showing care for employees' interests and well-being. It includes offering feedback, guidance, and resources necessary for job performance, as well as emotional empathy and understanding. (Ogueyungbo et al., 2020)

Similarly, Panda et al. (2021) argue that the quality of the relationship between managers and their subordinates influences employee engagement and performance. They suggest that supervisors who actively support their teams contribute to a positive organizational culture where employees feel psychologically safe. This positive atmosphere enables employees to find

deeper meaning in their work, increases their engagement, and, as a result, enhances their job performance. (Panda et al., 2021)

Support from supervisors plays a vital role in strengthening employee retention by boosting their sense of psychological empowerment and encouraging organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). When employees receive consistent guidance and the resources needed to succeed, they tend to feel more confident and positive about their roles. This sense of support increases their likelihood of remaining with the organization long-term. Additionally, individuals who experience strong supervisory support are more inclined to go above and beyond their formal responsibilities, which contributes to reduced turnover and improved retention. (Mittal & Kaur, 2022)

Aksoy & Yalçınsoy (2018) in their research found a statistically significant and positive relationship between supervisor support and both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. They talk about how a supervisor's behaviour significantly influences a subordinate's attitude and morale, fostering an ethical commitment to the organization. This relationship is critical for employee satisfaction, contributing to a deeper personal commitment to the organization. More specifically, employees crave recognition and respect from their leaders, and they value a work environment where their contributions are acknowledged and appreciated. When they perceive their work environment as supportive, they are more likely to reciprocate this support towards their supervisors and engage actively in achieving organizational goals. (Aksoy & Yalçınsoy, 2018)

Finally, the study by De Carlo et al. (2020) also found that the level of support from top management plays a role in determining employees' engagement levels and performance. The study revealed that when supervisors act with integrity, responsibility, and care, employees are more likely to feel a deeper sense of purpose and connection to their work environment. This sense of workplace spirituality, in turn, fosters higher levels of engagement, which ultimately leads to improved job performance. The research highlights the importance of ethical and supportive leadership as a driver of desired performance outcomes. (De Carlo et al., 2020)

4.5.3 Empowerment

According to Vogt (1997), empowerment is often characterized as an act of giving employees autonomy in decision making when it comes to their jobs.

Similarly, Conger & Kanungo (1988) regard it as a process in which leaders help employees feel more confident in their abilities by identifying what makes them feel powerless and addressing those issues.

Empowerment enables employees to make decisions independently, without needing to consult their supervisors, thereby fostering organizational initiatives from the ground up. Such practices distribute power more evenly, inviting employees into the decision-making process and enhancing their sense of autonomy over their tasks. This approach depends on the behaviour of supervisors, who are encouraged to act more as coaches or mentors, supporting the idea that valuable insights and decisions can emerge from all organizational levels. Empowerment is also about nurturing an employee's belief in their capacity to handle work challenges effectively. Finally, by empowering frontline service employees, organizations can enhance service quality through the employees' voluntary efforts to go above and beyond in their roles. (Wong & Perry, 2011)

Jose and Mampilly (2014) examined how different aspects of empowerment influence employee engagement. Their study revealed that when employees find their work meaningful, feel competent in their abilities, and believe they have a significant impact on outcomes, they are more likely to be actively engaged in their roles. Among the four components of psychological empowerment - meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact - all but self-determination were found to significantly predict higher levels of engagement. The findings suggest that organizations aiming to boost employee engagement should focus on enhancing employees' sense of purpose, confidence, and influence within the workplace.

Also, employees believe it's important to have a voice in decisions impacting their roles. In environments where engagement is high, leadership fosters a culture of challenge and trust, encouraging employees to question standard practices and contribute innovative ideas for organizational growth.

Empowerment plays a significant role in boosting job satisfaction by fostering a sense of belonging among employees, which in turn reduces their stress levels. When employees are entrusted with decision-making power, they tend to experience positive emotions and a stronger acceptance of the organization. This empowerment helps build a trustful relationship between employees and their leaders, encouraging creativity and innovation. By promoting critical thinking, empowerment allows employees to operate at an enhanced level of performance. This, in turn, positively influences their perception of their roles, diminishes stress, and ultimately, increases their job satisfaction. (Choi et al., 2016)

Finally, the research by Ugwu et al. (2014) shows a clear positive relationship between empowerment and work engagement, with empowerment contributing significantly to how engaged employees feel. This may be because empowerment is closely tied to motivation - it reflects both the individual's inner drive and the organization's ability to recognize and support that potential. These findings align with the idea that when employees feel trusted and capable, they're more likely to be involved and committed to their work. The results are also consistent with earlier studies that have connected empowerment with beneficial outcomes like job satisfaction, commitment, productivity, and proactive behavior. Overall, the study supports the view that empowerment is a strong contributor to positive workplace attitudes and behaviors, especially engagement. (Ugwu et al., 2014)

5. Methodology

5.1 Hypothesis Development

Learning & Development Opportunities

Investments in Learning & Development (L&D) opportunities are known to improve employee engagement by equipping employees with the skills necessary to grow within their roles (Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Herjuna et al., 2024). Generation Z employees highly value career growth and continuous learning, seeing it as a signal of the organization's commitment to their success. Organizations that fail to offer these opportunities risk losing talent, as younger employees may perceive stagnation and seek opportunities elsewhere (Fletcher, 2019; Tiwari & Lenka, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***H1.** Learning & Development Opportunities have a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.*

Supervisory Support

Supervisory support plays a crucial role in fostering employee engagement. Supportive

supervisors build trust, provide feedback, and create a positive work environment, enabling employees to feel valued and secure (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004). Studies have consistently shown that employees who perceive strong supervisory support are more engaged and less likely to leave their organization (Holland et al., 2017) Generation Z employees, in particular, value frequent feedback and recognition, possibly making supervisory support a key factor in their workplace satisfaction (Panda et al., 2021). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. *Supervisory Support has a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.*

Empowerment

Empowerment enables employees to take ownership of their roles by granting autonomy and decision-making authority. This fosters a sense of control, motivation, and job satisfaction, which are directly linked to higher levels of engagement (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Jose & Mampilly, 2014). Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. *Empowerment has a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.*

Intention to Leave

Finally, engaged employees tend to be emotionally invested in their work, feel a sense of purpose and belonging, and are more likely to perceive their organization positively, leading to lower turnover intentions (Saks, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Salanova et al., 2005)

Therefore we hypothesise:

H4. *Employee Engagement has a negative relationship with Intention to leave among Generation Z employees.*

5.2 Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research design, which is well-suited for exploring relationships between variables and testing hypotheses. A survey design was used, allowing for the collection of data at a single point in time from a sample of Generation Z employees. The primary goal was to examine how various factors, such as Learning & Development

Opportunities, Empowerment, and Supervisory Support, influenced Employee Engagement and Intention to Leave among this demographic. The proposed research model is illustrated in Figure 1.

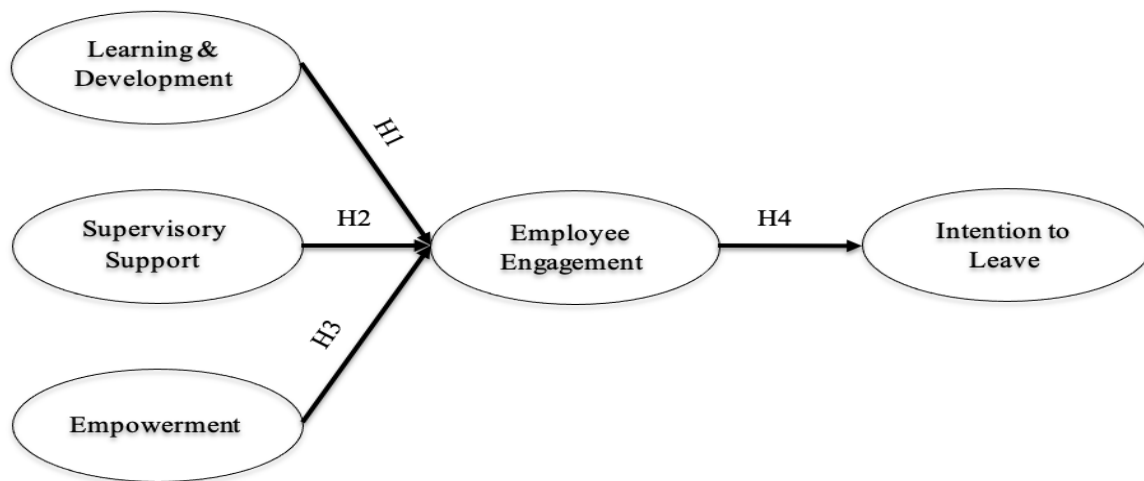


Figure 1. Research model

5.3 Survey Design

Given the objective of this research - examining the relationship between learning and development opportunities, supervisory support, empowerment, employee engagement, and intention to leave - an online analytical survey was chosen as the most appropriate method for data collection. Online surveys are an efficient and cost-effective way to gather large-scale data, eliminating potential bias introduced by interviewers and ensuring respondents can complete the questionnaire at their convenience (Evans & Mathur, 2018). The survey consisted of multiple sections, including an introductory description and four question blocks, which are detailed below.

The first block contained demographic questions, asking participants about their year of birth and their employment status in order to make sure only viable participants continue with filling out the survey.

The remainder of the demographic questions such as gender, industry of employment, tenure at their current company, weekly working hours, highest education level, and whether they were

currently studying alongside their job were asked at the end of the survey. These questions helped categorize the respondents and provided valuable context for analyzing engagement levels within different groups.

The second block assessed learning and development opportunities, using a scale from Fletcher (2019). This section measured employees' perceptions of career growth opportunities and organizational investment in professional development. Example statements include *"This organization actively supports my personal development and learning"* and *"I have opportunities to advance my career here, e.g., promotions, increased responsibilities."* Respondents answered on the 7-point Likert scale.

The third block evaluated supervisory support, employing the ten-item scale from May et al. (2004). These statements examined the extent to which supervisors provide guidance, fairness, and support to employees. Respondents rated items such as *"My supervisor encourages employees to participate in important decisions"* and *"My supervisor does what they say they will do."* on the 7-point Likert scale.

The fourth block measured empowerment, using the scale developed by Hayes (1994). The eight items assessed employees' autonomy and control in their work environment, using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Example items include *"I have a lot of control over how I do my job"* and *"I am encouraged to handle job-related problems by myself."*

Following this, employee engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9 Item Scale), developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The UWES-9 Item Scale is a well-validated and widely used instrument designed to assess employee engagement through three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption.

- Vigor refers to high levels of energy, mental resilience, and willingness to invest effort in one's work. Example items include *"At my work, I feel bursting with energy"* and *"At my job, I feel strong and vigorous."*
- Dedication captures a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration, and significance regarding work. Items such as *"My job inspires me"* and *"I am enthusiastic about my job"* measure this dimension.
- Absorption reflects deep involvement in work, with respondents feeling happily immersed in their tasks. Example items include *"I am immersed in my work"* and *"I get*

carried away when I am working."

Participants rated their agreement with each statement using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Never* to 7 = *Always*). Higher scores indicate stronger engagement levels. The UWES-9 has been extensively used in organizational research and has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, making it a reliable measure of employee engagement. Although the scale can be divided to measure the three separate dimensions of engagement, for the purpose of this research, the entire scale will be used to measure one construct of engagement. This has also proven to be the most reliable measure of engagement in the previous research (Sonnentag, 2003).

Finally, intention to leave was assessed using the Colarelli (1984) scale. The three-item measure asked respondents to indicate their likelihood of leaving their organization, with statements like *"I frequently think of quitting my job"* and *"I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months."* The third item was reverse-coded to enhance response reliability.

5.4 Participants and Data Collection

Procedure

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling, leveraging a mix of online and offline networks. The survey link was distributed via LinkedIn, Facebook survey exchange groups, university group chats, and personal connections. Additionally, participants were encouraged to share the survey within their networks, further expanding its reach. As no randomization occurred and recruitment relied on participant availability, this method was chosen due to its practicality and feasibility within the study's constraints.

The survey targeted Generation Z employees (born between 1995 and 2010) who are actively employed. Relevant criteria for inclusion included:

1. Participants must be between the ages of 18 and 30.
2. Participants must be employed (either part-time or full-time) at the time of the study.
3. Individuals working in diverse industries and roles were encouraged to participate to capture a wide range of experiences.
4. Participants who are currently pursuing education alongside employment were also

eligible.

Data collection began in November 2024 and ended on the 31st of January 2025.

Based on previous studies investigating employee engagement and its predictors, such as learning and development opportunities, supervisory support, and empowerment, which often report medium to large effect sizes, the sample size for this study was calculated assuming a medium effect size ($f^2=0.15$). With a desired power of 95% and a significance level of 0.05, it is estimated that the study requires a minimum of 119 participants to ensure sufficient statistical power for detecting significant relationships. In the end, the total number of participants collected was 127.

5.5 Data Analysis

Once data were collected, the results were analyzed using statistical software JASP. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data and understand the distribution of responses. This included calculating means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions for the key variables.

Next, to test the hypotheses, correlational analyses (e.g., Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ) were conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships between the key variables. For the relationship between multiple predictors and Employee Engagement, a multiple linear regression was performed to understand the unique contributions of each predictor.

Finally, for the exploratory analysis on in between group differences, ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to examine differences in Employee Engagement and Intention to Leave based on Tenure and Work-Study Status, with appropriate assumption checks.

6. Results

6.1 Demographics

What is your age?

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-20	5	3.94	3.94	3.94
21-24	46	36.22	36.22	40.16
25-29	76	59.84	59.84	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 2. Age Groups

The sample consists of 127 respondents from Generation Z, categorized into three age groups: 18-20, 21-24, and 25-29. The largest proportion of respondents (59.84%) falls within the 25-29 age group, making it the most represented category. The 21-24 age group comprises 36.22% of the sample, while the 18-20 age group is the least represented, accounting for only 3.94% of respondents.

What is your gender?

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	52	40.94	40.94	40.94
Female	75	59.06	59.06	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 3. Gender

The sample has a higher representation of female participants (59.06%) compared to male participants (40.95%).

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
High School Diploma	23	18.11	18.11	18.11

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bachelor's Degree	68	53.54	53.54	71.65
Master's Degree	32	25.20	25.20	96.85
PhD	2	1.57	1.57	98.43
Other	2	1.57	1.57	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 4. Education

Majority (53.54%) of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree, followed by 25.20% who have completed a Master's degree. A smaller proportion (18.11%) reported having a High School Diploma, while only 1.58% of respondents hold a PhD or other degrees.

In which country are you currently employed?

The sample consists of 127 respondents working in 19 different countries. The majority of participants (58.27%) are employed in Austria, making it the most represented country. Other notable groups include the UK (7.09%), Germany (6.30%), and Serbia (6.30%). A smaller proportion of respondents is distributed across various countries, with most contributing less than 2% of the sample each. The total breakdown of all countries can be found in the Appendix A.

In which industry are you currently employed?

Industry of employment	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Construction & Real Estate	5	3.94	3.94	3.94
Financial & Insurance Services	40	31.50	31.50	35.43
Industry	2	1.57	1.57	37.01
Information Technology & Communication	17	13.39	13.39	50.39
Public Administration, Defence, Education, Human Health and Social Work	13	10.24	10.24	60.63
Wholesale & Retail Trade, Transportation, Accommodation & Food	13	10.24	10.24	70.87
Other	37	29.13	29.13	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 5. Industry of employment

The largest proportion, 31.50%, is employed in Financial & Insurance Services, followed by 29.13% in the "Other" category, which suggests a diverse range of sectors not explicitly categorized in the table. Information Technology & Communication accounts for 13.39% of the respondents, while Public Administration, Defence, Education, Human Health & Social Work, and Wholesale & Retail Trade, Transportation, Accommodation & Food each represent 10.24% of the sample. Smaller proportions of respondents work in Construction & Real Estate (3.94%) and Industry (1.58%).

How long have you been working in your current position?

Tenure	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
12 months or less	64	50.39	50.39	50.39
1-3 years	51	40.16	40.16	90.55
4-6 years	10	7.87	7.87	98.43
more than 7 years	2	1.57	1.57	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 6. Tenure in the current position

The majority, 50.39%, have been employed for 12 months or less, while 40.16% have a tenure of one to three years. A smaller proportion, 7.87%, have been with their employer for four to six years, and only 1.58% have worked for more than seven years.

Are you studying next to your work?

Work-Study status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I only work	28	22.05	22.05	22.05
I work and study	99	77.95	77.95	100.00
Missing	0	0.00		
Total	127	100.00		

Table 7. Work-study status

Majority (77.95%) of respondents are balancing both work and studies, while 22.05% report that they only work.

6.2 Reliability Analysis

To ensure the internal consistency of the scales used in this study, Cronbach's alpha (α) was calculated for each construct: Employee Engagement, Intention to Leave, Supervisory Support, Learning & Development, and Empowerment. Cronbach's alpha assesses how closely related the items within a scale are, with values of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ considered acceptable, ≥ 0.80 considered good, and ≥ 0.90 considered excellent (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

As presented in Table 8, all scales demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal consistency. The Employee Engagement and Supervisory Support scales showed excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.92$), while the Learning & Development scale also demonstrated excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.90$). The Empowerment scale exhibited good reliability ($\alpha = 0.81$). The Intention to Leave scale, despite having only three items, demonstrated acceptable reliability ($\alpha = 0.79$).

These results confirm that the scales used in this study are reliable for measuring their respective constructs within the current sample of Generation Z employees.

Internal Consistency of Study Scales (Cronbach's α)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's α	Reliability Interpretation
Employee Engagement	9	0.92	Excellent
Intention to Leave	3	0.79	Acceptable
Supervisory Support	10	0.92	Excellent
Learning & Development	4	0.90	Excellent
Empowerment	8	0.81	Good

Table 8. Internal Consistency of Study Scales

6.3 Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the results of the statistical analyses conducted to examine the relationships between employee engagement and the key independent variables: supervisory support, learning and development opportunities, and empowerment, as well as the intention to leave.

First, descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the central tendencies, dispersion, and distribution of the key study variables. Table 9 provides an overview of the sample size, mean, standard deviation, and results of the Shapiro - Wilk test for normality.

The results indicate that participants reported moderate to high levels of *Supervisory Support* ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.15$), *Learning and Development Opportunities* ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.44$), and *Empowerment* ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.94$). The mean *Employee Engagement* score was 4.76 ($SD = 1.20$), suggesting that most participants felt moderately engaged in their current roles. In contrast, the average *Intention to Leave* score was 3.73 ($SD = 1.73$), indicating a moderate inclination toward considering turnover.

To determine the appropriate statistical approach for hypothesis testing, the Shapiro - Wilk test and visual inspections through distribution plots were conducted. The Shapiro - Wilk test indicated significant deviations from normality for *Supervisory Support*, *Learning & Development*, *Employee Engagement*, and *Intention to Leave* ($p < .001$). Only *Empowerment* showed a non-significant result ($p = 0.064$), suggesting an approximately normal distribution.

Distribution plots further illustrated slight right-skewness for *Supervisory Support*, *Learning & Development*, and *Employee Engagement*, while *Intention to Leave* demonstrated a more dispersed pattern with bimodal tendencies. When it comes to *Empowerment*, this distribution appears more symmetrical, resembling a bell curve.

Given the mixed results from the normality tests and visual inspections of the distributions, both parametric and non-parametric analyses were conducted to ensure the robustness of the findings.

Descriptive Statistics

	Supervisory Support	Learning & Development	Empowerment	Employee Engagement	Intention to Leave
Valid	127	127	127	127	121
Missing	0	0	0	0	6
Median	5.40	5.25	4.88	4.78	3.33
Mean	5.26	5.02	4.83	4.76	3.73
Std. Deviation	1.15	1.44	0.94	1.20	1.73
Shapiro-Wilk	0.92	0.91	0.98	0.98	0.95
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	< .001	< .001	0.06	0.03	< .001
Minimum	1.40	1.00	1.62	1.00	1.00
Maximum	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics

H1. *Learning & Development Opportunities have a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.*

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between *Learning & Development Opportunities* and *Employee Engagement*. The results revealed a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.636$, $p < .001$), indicating a large effect size and meaning that higher perceived opportunities for learning and development are associated with greater employee engagement among Generation Z employees.

The non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation produced a consistent result ($\rho = 0.624$, $p < .001$), further supporting the robustness of this finding. Therefore, H1 is supported.

H2. *Supervisory Support has a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.*

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between Supervisory Support and Employee Engagement. The results indicated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.616$, $p < .001$) with large effect size, suggesting that higher levels of perceived supervisory

support are associated with greater employee engagement among Generation Z employees.

To confirm the robustness of this finding, a non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation was also performed, yielding a consistent result ($\rho = 0.631$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H2 is supported, indicating that supervisory support is positively associated with employee engagement.

H3. Empowerment has a positive relationship with Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees.

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between *Empowerment* and *Employee Engagement*. The results indicated a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.501$, $p < .001$), suggesting that higher levels of perceived empowerment are associated with greater employee engagement among Generation Z employees.

To verify the robustness of this finding, a non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation was also performed, yielding a consistent result ($\rho = 0.478$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H3 is supported, indicating that empowerment is positively associated with employee engagement.

H4. Employee Engagement has a negative relationship with Intention to leave among Generation Z employees.

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between *Employee Engagement* and *Intention to Leave*. The results indicated a non-significant negative correlation ($r = -0.128$, $p = 0.161$), suggesting that there is no statistically significant association between employee engagement and the intention to leave among Generation Z employees.

To further verify this finding, a non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation was performed, which similarly showed a non-significant negative correlation ($\rho = -0.154$, $p = 0.092$). Therefore, H4 is not supported, as the results did not reveal a significant negative relationship between employee engagement and intention to leave. As a result, further regression analysis was not conducted for H4.

The results from the parametric (Pearson's r) and non-parametric (Spearman's ρ) analyses were compared as presented in Table 10 and the strength and direction of correlations were highly consistent across both approaches.

Correlation Matrix

Variable		SS	L&D	EMP	EE	ITL
1. SS	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
	Spearman's rho	—				
	p-value	—				
2. L&D	Pearson's r	0.65	—			
	p-value	< .001	—			
	Spearman's rho	0.60	—			
	p-value	< .001	—			
3. EMP	Pearson's r	0.56	0.61	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—		
	Spearman's rho	0.50	0.58	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—		
4. EE	Pearson's r	0.62	0.64	0.50	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
	Spearman's rho	0.63	0.62	0.48	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
5. ITL	Pearson's r	-0.04	-0.15	-0.13	-0.13	—
	p-value	0.69	0.10	0.15	0.16	—
	Spearman's rho	-0.02	-0.10	-0.08	-0.15	—
	p-value	0.85	0.28	0.38	0.09	—

Table 10. Correlation Matrix

Since the results were consistent across both approaches, the decision was made to proceed with the parametric results for hypothesis testing and regression analysis.

6.4 Regression Analysis

While the correlation analyses offered an initial look at how each predictor - Learning & Development Opportunities, Supervisory Support, and Empowerment - relates to Employee Engagement, they do not reveal the unique contribution of each variable when considered alongside the others. Therefore, a multiple linear regression was conducted to control for overlaps among predictors and to isolate how much each one explains beyond the variance accounted for by the others. This approach not only helps determine whether each factor remains a significant predictor of Engagement when the other factors are included, but also quantifies the overall explanatory power of these variables combined. In doing so, it provides a more robust test of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, shedding light on the relative importance of each engagement driver for Generation Z employees. Before proceeding with the regression, the assumptions for linear regression were evaluated to ensure the appropriateness of the analysis. Linearity and homoscedasticity were assessed through the residuals vs. predicted values plot, which showed a random scatter of residuals around the horizontal axis, indicating that the relationships between the independent variables (*Supervisory Support*, *Learning & Development*, and *Empowerment*) and the dependent variable (*Employee Engagement*) were linear and that the variance of residuals was consistent across all levels of predicted values. The normality of residuals was evaluated using the Q-Q plot of standardized residuals, which revealed that most data points closely followed the diagonal line, suggesting approximate normality. Although minor deviations were observed at the tails, they were not substantial enough to violate the assumption. Multicollinearity was checked through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which were below the critical threshold of 5 for all predictors (*Supervisory Support* = 1.876, *Learning & Development* = 2.072, *Empowerment* = 1.713), confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity. Additionally, Cook's Distance indicated no influential cases, suggesting that no single observation unduly impacted the model. Overall, the assumptions for linear regression were satisfactorily met, supporting the validity of the subsequent analysis.

Therefore, the multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to further investigate the extent to which *Supervisory Support*, *Learning & Development*, and *Empowerment* predict *Employee Engagement* among Generation Z employees. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(3, 123) = 37.85, p < .001$, indicating that the combination of predictors significantly explained variation in *Employee Engagement*. The model accounted for approximately 48.0% of the

variance ($R^2 = 0.480$). The adjusted R^2 of 0.47 indicates a strong predictive relationship between the independent variables and *Employee Engagement*. The *Durbin-Watson* statistic was 1.878, close to the ideal value of 2, confirming the absence of autocorrelation in the residuals.

Examining the individual predictors, *Learning & Development Opportunities* emerged as the strongest predictor of *Employee Engagement* ($\beta = 0.366$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater access to development opportunities was significantly associated with higher engagement levels. *Supervisory Support* also significantly predicted *Employee Engagement* ($\beta = 0.322$, $p < .001$), suggesting that supportive supervisors contribute meaningfully to engagement outcomes. In contrast, *Empowerment* did not significantly predict *Employee Engagement* ($\beta = 0.098$, $p = 0.251$), indicating that its unique contribution was not substantial when controlling for the other predictors.

The non-significant result for *Empowerment* aligns with the earlier correlation findings, where the relationship was positive but weaker compared to *Learning & Development* and *Supervisory Support*.

Overall, the regression analysis reinforced the findings from the correlation analysis, demonstrating that *Learning & Development Opportunities* and *Supervisory Support* were significant positive predictors of *Employee Engagement*, while *Empowerment* did not independently contribute to the prediction. These results provide further support for H1 and H2, while clarifying the limited predictive value of H3.

Coefficients

Dependent Variable = Employee Engagement;
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.47$, $F(3, 123) = 37.85$, $p < .001$

Model		B	SE	Beta	t	p	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
M ₁	(Intercept)	0.86	0.44		1.96	0.05		
	Supervisory Support	0.33	0.09	0.32	3.61	< .001	0.53	1.88
	Learning & Development	0.31	0.08	0.37	3.91	< .001	0.48	2.07
	Empowerment	0.13	0.11	0.10	1.15	0.25	0.58	1.71

Table 11. Regression Coefficients

6.5 Group Comparison

Work-Study Status and Employee Engagement

To further explore potential factors influencing *Employee Engagement* among Generation Z employees, an additional analysis was conducted to examine whether engagement levels differ between individuals who are only working and those who are studying while working. The following analysis is purely for exploration purposes and, therefore, no hypothesis was proposed.

The mean *Employee Engagement* score for those only working was 4.63 (SD = 1.04), while for those studying while working, the mean was 4.80 (SD = 1.24). Although the latter group reported slightly higher engagement, the difference appeared small.

To further determine whether *Employee Engagement* levels differed significantly between individuals who are only working and those who are studying while working, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Prior to the analysis, assumptions for ANOVA were evaluated, including normality, homogeneity of variances, independence of observations, and absence of outliers. The detailed overview can be seen in Appendix D.

Normality was assessed using the *Q-Q plot of standardized residuals*, which showed that most data points aligned closely along the diagonal line, indicating approximate normality despite slight deviations at the tails. Homogeneity of variances was confirmed using *Levene's test*, which was non-significant ($F(1, 125) = 0.87, p = 0.35$), suggesting equal variances between the two groups. Independence of observations was ensured by the survey design, where each participant responded individually. Finally, the absence of outliers was confirmed through earlier assessments using *Cook's Distance*, with no influential cases detected.

Therefore, all assumptions for ANOVA were satisfactorily met, allowing for valid interpretation of the results.

ANOVA - Employee Engagement

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Work-Study status	0.61	1	0.61	0.42	0.52
Residuals	180.04	125	1.44		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 12. ANOVA Work-Study Status and Employee Engagement

The ANOVA results revealed no significant difference in *Employee Engagement* levels between the two groups, $F(1, 125) = 0.424, p = 0.516$.

Work-Study Status and Intention to Leave

To examine whether *Intention to Leave* differs between individuals who are only working and those who are studying while working, both parametric and non-parametric analyses were conducted. Descriptive statistics revealed that the mean *Intention to Leave* score was 3.63 (SD = 2.04) for those only working and 3.76 (SD = 1.63) for those studying while working. Prior to analysis, assumptions for the independent samples t-test and ANOVA were evaluated. The Q-Q plot indicated deviations from normality, and Levene's test for equality of variances was significant ($F = 4.18, p = 0.04$), indicating unequal variances between the two groups. Given these violations of assumptions, the decision was made to proceed with a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test as a more robust approach. The initial one-way ANOVA yielded a non-significant result, $F(1, 119) = 0.11, p = 0.74$, suggesting no meaningful difference between the two groups. Detailed overview in Appendix D. Consistently, the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed the absence of a significant difference, $U = 1195.00, p = 0.51$. These findings indicate that whether an individual is studying while working or only working does not significantly impact their intention to leave their current job.

Independent Samples T-Test

	U	df	p
Intention to Leave	1195.00		0.51

Note. Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 13. Mann-Whitney U test

Tenure and Employee Engagement

To investigate whether *Employee Engagement* levels differ based on tenure, a one-way ANOVA was conducted, comparing engagement across four tenure groups: 12 months or less, 1–3 years, 4–6 years, and more than 7 years. Descriptive statistics revealed varying engagement levels across groups. Participants employed for 12 months or less reported the highest engagement ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.10$), followed by those with more than 7 years of tenure ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 0.23$). In contrast, lower engagement levels were observed among employees with 1–3 years ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.23$) and 4–6 years of tenure ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.36$).

Since all of the assumptions were previously met, a one-way ANOVA was conducted and revealed a statistically significant difference in *Employee Engagement* across tenure groups, $F(3, 123) = 2.86$, $p = 0.04$. This result suggests that engagement levels vary depending on the length of tenure.

ANOVA - Employee Engagement

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Tenure	11.78	3	3.93	2.86	0.04
Residuals	168.87	123	1.37		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 14. ANOVA Tenure and Employee Engagement

To further explore which groups significantly differed from each other, a Tukey's HSD post hoc

test was performed. The results indicated that while there were observable differences between groups, none of the pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance after adjusting for multiple comparisons ($p > .05$ for all pairs). The largest mean difference was observed between employees with 12 months or less and those with 1–3 years of tenure (*Mean Difference* = 0.54, $p = 0.07$), though this difference did not reach the conventional threshold for significance.

Post Hoc Comparisons - Tenure

		Mean Difference	SE	df	t	p _{Tukey}
12 months or less	(1-3 years)	0.54	0.22	123	2.47	0.07
	(4-6 years)	0.80	0.40	123	2.01	0.19
	more than 7 years	-0.24	0.84	123	0.29	0.99
(1-3 years)	(4-6 years)	0.26	0.41	123	0.64	0.92
	more than 7 years	-0.78	0.84	123	0.93	0.79
(4-6 years)	more than 7 years	-1.04	0.91	123	1.15	0.66

Note. P-value adjusted for comparing a family of 4 estimates.

Table 15. Tukey's Post Hoc Test

Tenure and Intention to Leave

Descriptive statistics showed slight variations in *Intention to Leave* across groups. Participants employed for 4-6 years reported the highest mean score ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.93$), followed by those with more than 7 years ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.47$). In contrast, those employed for 12 months or less ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.82$) and 1-3 years ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.61$) reported slightly lower levels of intention to leave. Details in Appendix D.

Given the previously established violations of assumptions for ANOVA, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a non-parametric alternative.

The results revealed no statistically significant difference among the groups, $H(3) = 1.60$, $p = 0.66$. This indicates that tenure does not significantly impact employees' intention to leave their current job.

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Factor	Statistic	df	p
Tenure	1.60	3	0.66

Table 16. Kruskal - Wallis Test

7. Discussion

7.1 Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between key workplace factors - Learning & Development Opportunities, Supervisory Support, and Empowerment - and Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees. Additionally, the study explored the relationship between Employee Engagement and Intention to Leave. The findings support several of the proposed hypotheses, while some results deviate from expectations, providing room for further research.

A significant positive relationship was found between *Learning & Development (L&D) Opportunities* and Employee Engagement indicating that employees who perceive greater opportunities for career growth and skill development tend to report higher engagement levels. This finding is aligned with previous research showing that, similarly to previous generations, for Generation Z access to development opportunities is more than just a benefit - it is a key driver of engagement. This implies that organizations offering strong L&D programs are likely to see more motivated and committed employees. Furthermore, L&D emerged as the strongest predictor of engagement in the regression analysis. The findings highlight the importance of organizations investing in training programs and career development initiatives to meet the expectations of this younger workforce, who seek continuous improvement and opportunities to advance.

In line with this, *Supervisory Support* also emerged as a critical factor in fostering engagement. The strong relationship between supervisory support and employee engagement suggests that supportive leadership is essential for motivating Generation Z employees. This finding is

significant because it reinforces the importance of supervisory guidance and feedback in enhancing employee engagement across all generations. Generation Z employees, who often seek mentorship and development opportunities, appear to thrive in environments where supervisors provide encouragement, constructive feedback, and support. In a rapidly evolving workplace, particularly with the rise of remote work, supervisory support becomes even more crucial, as it can help maintain engagement and provide a sense of connection and purpose, even when employees are working from a distance.

While both L&D opportunities and supervisory support were found to be strong predictors of engagement, the relationship between *Empowerment* and engagement was more moderate. The correlation was positive, but when analyzed through regression, Empowerment did not significantly predict Employee Engagement. This is an intriguing result, suggesting that while empowerment is valued by Generation Z employees, it may not be as impactful on engagement as L&D opportunities and supervisory support. It seems that while Generation Z employees appreciate autonomy and the ability to make decisions, the combination of growth opportunities and supportive leadership plays a more substantial role in driving engagement. This could imply that empowerment works best when it is complemented by structures that provide opportunities for skill development and guidance from supervisors, rather than being an isolated engagement approach.

One of the more surprising findings was the lack of a significant relationship between Employee Engagement and *Intention to Leave*. This result challenges the commonly held assumption that higher engagement automatically leads to a lower likelihood of turnover. (Saks, 2006; Demerouti et al., 2001; Salanova et al., 2005; Turnley et al., 2003; Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020)

Generation Z employees, despite being engaged, may still consider leaving for reasons beyond engagement itself. This suggests that while engagement is an important factor in employee satisfaction, it is not the only determinant of retention. For Gen Z, turnover intentions may be influenced by broader, more complex factors than engagement alone. Even though this finding goes against previous research on the relationship between engagement and turnover - it is, in a way, reflective of the current findings of the high turnover rate among Gen Z employees who are changing jobs much more frequently than previous generations (Speet, 2023). They may be engaged - yet still believe that rotating jobs is the norm for development, securing higher pay, or finding a better fit with personal values.

The study also explored whether there is any difference in engagement level among Gen Z employees who are only employed and those who are still studying next to their work. As this was an exploratory research question, no hypothesis was proposed. The findings from the analysis showed that there is no difference in engagement levels between the two groups. This finding is relevant because it shows that employees who are juggling school next to their work are no less engaged than those who only work. Similarly, no difference between the two groups was found when it comes to their intention to leave.

Regarding tenure, the results revealed a small but significant effect on engagement, with employees who had longer tenure reporting slightly higher engagement. However, the post hoc tests showed no significant differences between specific tenure groups. This is particularly interesting because it shows that longer-tenured employees will not automatically have higher engagement. Instead, employees may experience periods of disengagement over time, depending on their experiences in the organization, the challenges they face, and their opportunities for growth. Similarly, there was no difference in intention to leave based on tenure which further emphasizes that turnover intentions are influenced by factors beyond the length of time employees have been with an organization.

7.2 Implications

The findings from this study carry several important implications for both practitioners and scholars seeking to understand and enhance employee engagement among Generation Z. Specifically, the strong positive relationships between Learning and Development (L&D) opportunities, Supervisory Support, and Employee Engagement provide clear directions for organizations aiming to motivate and retain younger workers. Meanwhile, the study's unexpected result - namely, that Employee Engagement did not exhibit a significant negative relationship with the intention to leave - suggests that Gen Z turnover decisions may be influenced by broader or more complex factors than engagement alone.

First, the importance of L&D opportunities indicates that Gen Z employees may regard ongoing skill development and career growth as non-negotiable workplace features. Organizations that invest in formal training programs, diverse career paths, and mentoring initiatives are likely to foster higher engagement among younger employees (Fletcher, 2019; Tiwari & Lenka, 2020).

These programs need not be limited only to technical skills. Opportunities for personal development, leadership experience, and broader, cross-functional projects can help Gen Z workers feel both challenged and supported. This aligns with previously mentioned research suggesting that visible pathways for advancement can reduce stagnation and sustain motivation. Finally, considering the importance of L&D it would be beneficial to further investigate the specific types of learning and growth opportunities Gen Z employees value the most. With the current fast-developing technological advancements and an increasing use of AI across different professions, it might be interesting to see whether these types of technological upskilling opportunities have a motivating effect for Gen Z and make them feel more engaged and secure in their future.

Second, Supervisory Support emerged as another crucial predictor of Employee Engagement - an outcome consistent with earlier studies, highlighting the power of supportive leadership in shaping positive work attitudes (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004). For Gen Z specifically, supervisors who provide regular feedback, recognition, and career guidance help create a sense of psychological safety, thereby promoting greater involvement in one's work (Panda et al., 2021). Managers may consider adopting coaching or mentorship-focused leadership styles to cultivate stronger trust and better day-to-day interactions. Organizations could also train supervisors in communication strategies that resonate with Gen Z's desire for transparency and appropriate feedback (Holland et al., 2017).

Empowerment, although positively correlated with Employee Engagement, did not independently predict engagement when considered alongside L&D and Supervisory Support. This suggests that while Gen Z may appreciate autonomy and decision-making authority, they still require clear growth opportunities and managerial support to sustain high engagement. In practical terms, leaders might re-examine their empowerment initiatives to ensure they are paired with sufficient training and guidance, rather than assuming that granting autonomy alone will produce consistently higher engagement.

Interestingly, no significant differences emerged in either engagement or intention to leave between Gen Z employees who only work and those who simultaneously pursue formal studies. This finding suggests that being a student in addition to working does not, on its own, undermine engagement or prompt higher turnover intentions. From a practical standpoint, this indicates that employees juggling studies and employment can still be just as engaged, provided they receive the same support and growth opportunities as their non-student peers. Employers can

therefore design policies - such as flexible scheduling, tailored development programs, or tuition support - without fearing that students might be more likely to disengage or exit compared to their co-workers.

To continue, when it comes to tenure, the analysis did reveal an overall significant difference in engagement levels across tenure groups, but follow-up tests did not show specific pairwise differences that reached statistical significance. Practically speaking, this inconclusive result might hint at a “honeymoon effect” for new hires (those employed for under 12 months) and a consistently high engagement among the very few long-tenured Gen Z workers in the sample. Those in the mid-range tenure brackets showed somewhat lower average engagement, possibly reflecting transitional or plateau phases after initial excitement but before establishing deeper organizational loyalty. This further emphasizes the importance of establishing effective practices to keep employees continuously engaged and motivated throughout all stages of their career.

Finally, the weak or non-significant link between Employee Engagement and Intention to Leave challenges widely held assumptions that higher engagement reduces turnover (Saks, 2006; Towers Perrin, 2003). Although engagement is often considered a strong predictor of retention, Gen Z employees may weigh other considerations. This result indicates that leaders and HR practitioners should not assume that boosting engagement alone guarantees retention, especially for Gen Z. Understanding what retains Gen Z employees is crucial considering the frequent turnover.

In sum, this study highlights how traditional drivers of engagement, especially training opportunities and supportive leadership, still resonate with Gen Z. However, it also reveals the need for more holistic talent management approaches that address factors beyond engagement, particularly if organizations hope to reduce turnover among the newest entrants to the workforce.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

One of the key limitations of this study is its reliance on convenience sampling. While the method was pragmatic and facilitated data collection, it restricts the generalizability of the findings to a broader Gen Z population. Individuals who self-selected to participate may already

possess higher levels of motivation or interest in workplace topics. Consequently, the results might not fully represent all types of Gen Z employees. Also, all variables were assessed via self-report surveys, raising the possibility of common-method bias and social desirability effects. Participants may have felt compelled (consciously or unconsciously) to present themselves in a favorable light. Additionally, because data were collected at a single point in time, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about causality or examine how engagement dynamics evolve within employees. Factors such as Learning & Development Opportunities or Supervisory Support could influence engagement, but it is also possible that highly engaged individuals seek out or perceive more support and career development. Longitudinal or experimental designs would be better suited to capture causal directions and temporal patterns. Although the research incorporated three important engagement drivers, numerous other factors may also shape Gen Z's work attitudes and retention decisions. For instance, factors such as compensation and benefits, remote-work policies or mental health resources, may moderate or supersede the effects identified here. Omitting them might limit a full understanding of engagement influences and turnover behaviors. Finally, while a significant portion of the sample had under 12 months or 1-3 years of work experience, only a small subset reported very long tenure (>7 years). As a result, the study's insights into how engagement evolves over extended periods are somewhat constrained. Moreover, the inconclusive pairwise comparisons for different tenure categories indicate that findings about how "time in role" affects engagement should be interpreted with caution.

Future studies could employ longitudinal approaches to discern how Gen Z engagement levels shift over time and in response to organizational interventions, such as specific training initiatives or changes in supervisory style. Gathering data across multiple time points would allow researchers to explore potential feedback loops - for instance, whether increased engagement leads to heightened supervisory support or vice versa. Moreover, supplementing survey data with qualitative interviews, field observations, or company records (actual turnover data) could help overcome common-method bias and yield a more holistic view of engagement dynamics.

8. Conclusion

To conclude, this research offers new insights into the drivers of Employee Engagement among Generation Z employees and how these factors interact with turnover intentions. Overall, Learning & Development Opportunities and Supervisory Support emerged as the most relevant predictors of higher engagement, underscoring the continued value of growth paths and supportive leadership styles in motivating Gen Z employees. While Empowerment was also positively linked to engagement, it played a less central role than anticipated once considered alongside these other predictors.

Perhaps the most striking outcome was the lack of any clear link between Engagement and Intention to Leave, a finding that challenges widely accepted assumptions. Gen Z may be engaged yet still inclined to seek other opportunities, suggesting that retention strategies focused solely on boosting engagement may be insufficient. Instead, organizations could adopt more holistic talent management approaches, addressing Gen Z's broader career expectations, external labor market opportunities, and desire for personal growth. Future research could employ longitudinal designs to clarify whether changing levels of engagement over time influence turnover decisions or vice versa. By deepening understanding of these generational nuances, scholars and practitioners can more effectively design the workplace experiences, training and development opportunities, and leadership approaches that ensure both strong employee engagement and enduring organizational commitment.

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Appendix

Appendix A

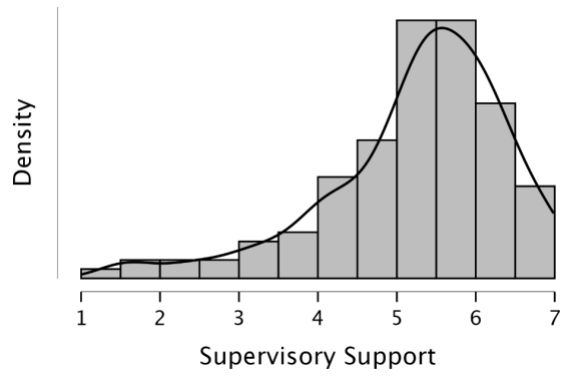
Frequencies for Country of employment

Country of employment	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Austria	74	58.27	58.73	58.73
Belarus	1	0.79	0.79	59.52
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	1.57	1.59	61.11
Bulgaria	1	0.79	0.79	61.90
Czech Republic	1	0.79	0.79	62.70
Germany	8	6.30	6.35	69.05
Hungary	2	1.57	1.59	70.63
Ireland	1	0.79	0.79	71.43
Italy	2	1.57	1.59	73.02
Netherlands	1	0.79	0.79	73.81
Nigeria	1	0.79	0.79	74.60
Pakistan	3	2.36	2.38	76.98
Portugal	2	1.57	1.59	78.57
Romania	1	0.79	0.79	79.37
Serbia	8	6.30	6.35	85.71
Slovenia	1	0.79	0.79	86.51
Spain	2	1.57	1.59	88.10
Switzerland	2	1.57	1.59	89.68
Turkey	1	0.79	0.79	90.48
UAE	1	0.79	0.79	91.27
UK	9	7.09	7.14	98.41
USA	2	1.57	1.59	100.00
Missing	1	0.79		
Total	127	100.00		

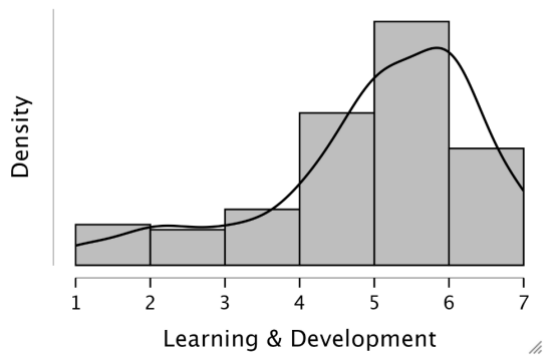
Appendix B

Distribution Plots

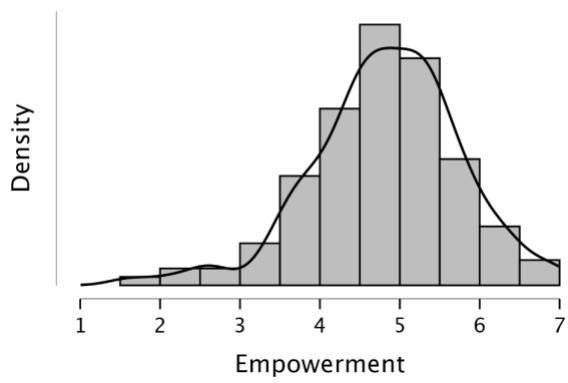
Supervisory Support



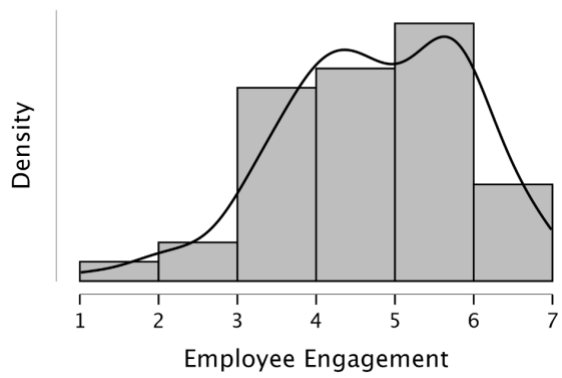
Learning & Development ▼



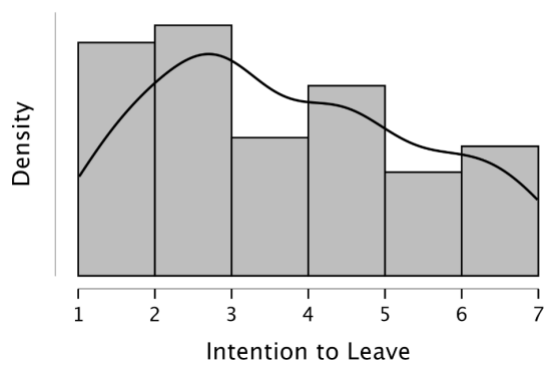
Empowerment



Employee Engagement



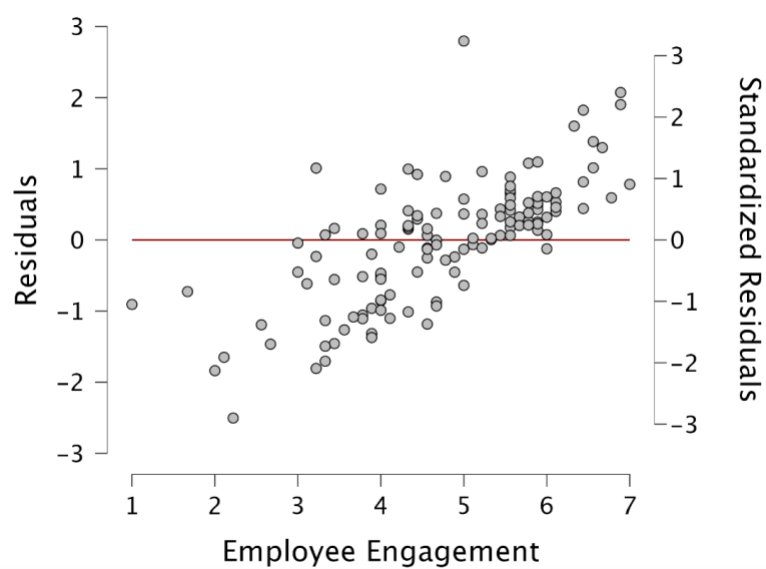
Intention to Leave



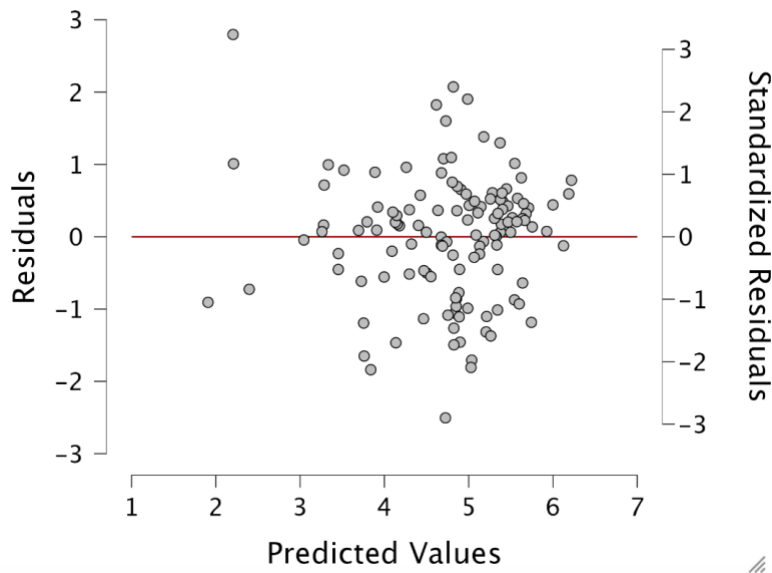
Appendix C

Regression

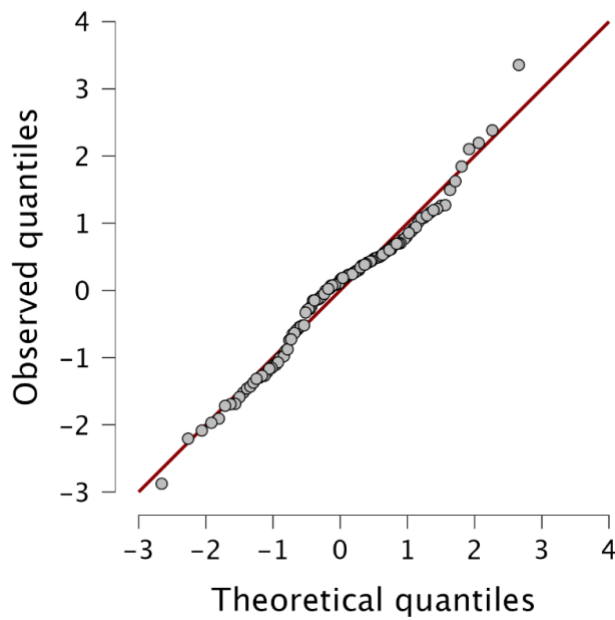
Residuals vs. Dependent



Residuals vs. Predicted ▼



Q-Q Plot Standardized Residuals



Model Summary – Employee Engagement

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE	Durbin-Watson		
					Autocorrelation	Statistic	p
M ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.197	-0.005	1.984	0.927
M ₁	0.693	0.480	0.467	0.874	0.055	1.878	0.489

Note. M₁ includes Supervisory Support, Learning & Development, Empowerment

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
M ₀	(Intercept)	4.758	0.106		44.780	< .001		
M ₁	(Intercept)	0.864	0.441		1.957	0.053		
	Supervisory Support	0.334	0.093	0.322	3.613	< .001	0.533	1.876
	Learning & Development	0.305	0.078	0.366	3.908	< .001	0.483	2.072
	Empowerment	0.126	0.109	0.098	1.154	0.251	0.584	1.713

Influential Cases

Case Number	Std. Residual	Employee Engagement	Predicted Value	Residual	Cook's Distance
.	.	.	.	.	.

Note. No influential cases found.

Appendix D

Exploratory Analysis

Work-Study Status and Employee Engagement

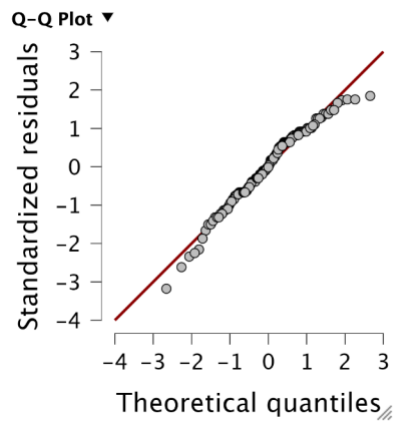
Descriptives – Employee Engagement ▼

Work–Study status	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
I only work	28	4.63	1.04	0.20	0.22
I work and study	99	4.79	1.24	0.12	0.26

Assumption Checks

Test for Equality of Variances (Levene's)

F	df1	df2	p
0.87	1.00	125.00	0.35



Work-Study Status and Intention to Leave

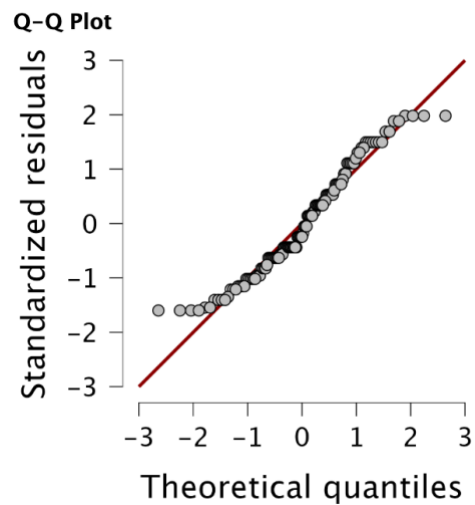
Descriptives – Intention to Leave

Work-Study status	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
I only work	28	3.63	2.04	0.39	0.56
I work and study	93	3.76	1.63	0.17	0.43

Assumption Checks ▼

Test for Equality of Variances (Levene's) ▼

F	df1	df2	p
4.18	1.00	119.00	0.04



ANOVA – Intention to Leave ▼

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Work–Study status	0.34	1	0.34	0.11	0.74
Residuals	357.22	119	3.00		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Tenure and Employee Engagement

Descriptives – Employee Engagement ▼

Tenure	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
12 months or less	64	5.04	1.10	0.14	0.22
1–3 years	51	4.49	1.23	0.17	0.27
4–6 years	10	4.23	1.36	0.43	0.32
more than 7 years	2	5.28	0.23	0.17	0.04

Tenure and Intention to Leave

Descriptives – Intention to Leave

Tenure	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
12 months or less	60	3.72	1.82	0.23	0.49
1–3 years	49	3.59	1.61	0.23	0.45
4–6 years	10	4.30	1.93	0.61	0.45
more than 7 years	2	4.33	0.47	0.33	0.11

ANOVA – Intention to Leave ▼

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Tenure	4.92	3	1.64	0.54	0.65
Residuals	352.64	117	3.01		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Appendix E

Questionnaire

Demographic Questions

In what year were you born?

What is your gender?

In what industry are you employed?

How long have you been working at the current company?

How many hours per week do you work?

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Are you studying next to your work?

Empowerment

I am allowed to do almost anything to do a high-quality job.

I have the authority to correct problems when they occur.

I am allowed to be creative when I deal with problems at work.

I do not have to go through a lot of red tape to change things.

I have a lot of control over how I do my job.
I do not need to get management's approval before I handle problems.
I am encouraged to handle job-related problems by myself.
I can make changes on my job whenever I want

Supervisory Support

My supervisor helps me solve work-related problems.
My supervisor encourages me to develop new skills.
My supervisor keeps informed about how employees think and feel about things.
My supervisor encourages employees to participate in important decisions.
My supervisor praises good work.
My supervisor encourages employees to speak up when they disagree with a decision.
Employees are treated fairly by my supervisor.
My supervisor is committed to protecting my interests.
My supervisor does what he/she says he/she will do.
I trust my supervisor.

Learning & Development Opportunities

This organization actively supports my personal development and learning
I have opportunities to advance my career here, e.g. Promotions, increased responsibilities
This organization provides me with a variety of development opportunities (e.g. Projects, qualifications, CPD, secondments)
I have many opportunities to develop my personal skills and abilities

Intention to Leave

I frequently think of quitting my job.
I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months.
If I have my own way, I will be working for this organization one year from now (R).

Work Engagement (UWES 9)

At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.
I am enthusiastic about my job.

My job inspires me.

When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.

I feel happy when I am working intensely.

I am proud of the work that I do.

I am immersed in my work.

I get carried away when I am working.