

# Indian Gen Z Management Professionals: A Future Roadmap

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*A shift in managerial dynamics, work ethics, and strategic organizational planning is being created by the entry of Generation Z (Gen Z) workforce in Indian scenario. Their distinctive features are their digital proficiency, entrepreneurial zeal, value-driven decision-making, and liking for flexibility and purposeful work. This study focuses on the emerging profile of Indian Gen Z management professionals. The study finds important strategic implications for Indian enterprises and educational institutions by using comparative analysis of worldwide Gen Z trends. The study focused on how Gen Z professionals in India are changing workplace norms. The paper suggests a future strategy addressing legislation, educational changes, and HR activities in order to optimize Gen Z's potential in India's growth path.*

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## Introduction

The rapid digitization of global markets, accelerated by post-pandemic transformations, has ushered in a new workforce paradigm. At the core of this paradigm shift is Generation Z (Gen Z), born between 1997 and 2012, now entering and reshaping professional landscapes globally. In India, Gen Z comprises over 27% of the population, making them a significant demographic force within the managerial and corporate ecosystem. Unlike previous generations, Indian Gen Z professionals are digital natives, raised amidst smartphones, social media, and instant connectivity. Their values are marked by inclusivity, agility, purpose-driven work, and a desire for autonomy. These traits necessitate a reevaluation of conventional management principles, workplace policies, and leadership styles. Organizations that fail to acknowledge this evolution risk disengagement, high attrition, and stagnation in innovation.

The entry of Generation Z into India's workforce marks a significant

shift, presenting both challenges and opportunities for strategic human resource management (SHRM). We examine here how Indian Gen Z management professionals view work, leadership, and organizational practices, combining theoretical insights with empirical observations. As the global workforce undergoes rapid change driven by technology, cultural shifts, and generational turnover, India's unique context—characterized by its demographic dividend, digital growth, and rising middle class—makes this transition especially impactful. Understanding Gen Z's values, expectations, and behaviors is crucial for aligning SHRM strategies with the evolving needs of a future-ready workforce. Generation Z, known as digital natives, is the first generation raised entirely in a tech-saturated world, shaping their distinct worldview through constant exposure to digital media and global events. In India, their professional behavior is further influenced by the co-existence of traditional values and modern technological advancements, creating a unique generational profile. Western generational frameworks alone are insufficient to capture this complexity. This study explores the professional orientation of Indian Gen Z managers by integrating global insights, strategic implications, and case studies, and proposes a culturally grounded roadmap for building inclusive, adaptive management practices in a digitally connected era.

### **Literature Review**

The paper by Hameed, and Mathur, (2020). explored the characteristics of Generation Z in India, including their de-

mographics, social and political concerns, career goals, and workplace preferences. Although not specifically aimed at management professionals, it offers insights relevant to understanding Gen Z's potential in leadership and management roles. The study finds that Indian Gen Z shares common traits with their global peers and holds strong views on how youth can contribute to national development.

Hudson, S. (2018) identified the broader impact of Generation Z on business and management strategies, rather than focusing specifically on Indian Gen Z professionals. It emphasizes the need for customized leadership styles and targeted training to enhance retention and productivity among Gen Z workers. The study underscores that employers must invest in tailored management approaches and skill development initiatives to retain Gen Z employees and ensure their successful integration into a rapidly evolving, tech-driven workplace.

According to Gaan, N., (2022) the role of resonant leadership in influencing turnover intentions and work performance among Generation Z software professionals in India. Drawing on social exchange and social identity theories, it explores how self-efficacy and organizational identification mediate this relationship. Using data from 73 leader-subordinate pairs in large software firms, the study finds that resonant leadership enhances work outcomes and reduces turnover, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research highlights the cross-level effects of resonant leadership

through psychological mediators and recommends implementing such leadership practices to boost engagement, productivity, and retention. It also suggests developing intervention mechanisms and encourages future mixed-method studies to further examine resonant leadership's impact on Gen-Z employees' organizational identification.

Febriana and Mujib (2024) emphasize that Generation Z employees favor flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and participative leadership styles, valuing freedom and flexibility in the workplace. The research finds that both FWAs and participative styles enhance productivity, with emotional engagement serving as a mediator for productivity—but FWAs alone do not significantly influence emotional engagement. The authors recommend that organizations implement FWAs and encourage employee participation to improve Gen Z productivity and workplace engagement.

Borgave (2024) focuses on the legacy of Indian management gurus and their philosophies, rather than directly examining Gen Z management professionals. It highlights the valuable insights for future leaders drawn from the contributions of these management experts. The study emphasizes the practical applications of their management principles in contemporary business settings and their relevance to modern leadership challenges. Pandita, D. (2021). focused on Generation Z in India, concentrating on their preferences, career aspirations, and innovative mindset. It emphasizes that organizations must adapt their em-

ployer branding strategies to attract and effectively integrate this emerging workforce. Gen Z values diversity and community support in workplaces and prioritizes career growth over monetary rewards. The study suggested that organizations should implement innovative employer branding practices to attract and engage the Gen Z workforce, promoting tools that can influence and retain them. Dugar and Madhavan (2023) studied on Gen Z in India regarding their investment preferences and financial independence, rather than management professionals specifically. It explores their saving habits, investment choices, and influences, but does not address management professionals directly. Findings showed Gen Z in India invest in equity, mutual funds, fixed deposits and they are influenced by family, long term gains, historical performance. Applications of the study covers new age investing apps that are commonly used by Gen Z and investment avenues include equity shares, mutual funds, and Crypto. Pooja, Sharma, & Kumar (2022) studied the employment expectations of Indian Generation Z business School students, identifying the organizational attributes that attract them. They analyzed the differences in preferences based on gender, specialization, and work experience, and compared these with the Millennial preferences. The findings reveal that Gen Z places strong emphasis on growth opportunities, distinguishing them from previous generations in terms of career priorities. Wajdi (2024) does not specifically address the behavioral traits of Indian Gen Z. It focused on Generation Z characteristics in a broader context, empha-

**Generation Z has a digital orientation and multitasking abilities.**

sizing their digital orientation, multitasking, creativity, inclusivity, social engagement, and environmental concerns, applicable across various cultures. Generation Z has a digital orientation and multitasking abilities. They value inclusivity, social engagement, and environmental concerns. Applications of the study draws responsive and innovative educational approaches for Generation Z. Curriculum development and teacher training are aligned with Generation Z characteristics also. The study by Palanichamy, Mohanty, & Kennell (2024) investigates the behavioral traits of Indian Generation Z in the context of shared mobility, emphasizing their environmental consciousness, social influences, economic considerations, and perceived risks. These factors collectively shape Gen Z's intention to use shared mobility platforms for sustainable urban travel. The study finds that while these factors influence behavior, their impact is indirect, mediated through attitudes toward shared mobility.

Kwartawaty, Ismail, & Martadi. (2024), examined the effectiveness of transformational leadership for Generation Z across public, corporate, and social settings, though it does not specifically focus on Indian Gen Z. It finds that transformational leadership enhances enthusiasm, efficiency, and engagement among Gen Z. The study emphasizes the need for further in-depth research on suitable leadership styles for effectively

managing and motivating this generation in diverse organizational environments. Aksakal & Ulucan (2024), examined the leadership characteristics valued by Generation Z, highlighting traits such as foresight, emotional intelligence, and strong communication skills. While it does not specifically focus on Indian Gen Z, the study identifies the leadership qualities. Gen Z expects and the skills they need to lead effectively in modern business environments. Lambe (2024) explores Generation Z employee characteristics in a broad context, without focusing specifically on Indian Gen Z. It emphasizes the importance of strategic leadership and organizational culture in maximizing Gen Z's potential across industries. The findings reveal that strategic leadership has limited impact on Gen Z's motivation and performance, whereas a collaborative and flexible organizational culture significantly enhances their performance. The study offers practical guidance for managers on aligning leadership and culture with Gen Z values.

Again, in the study by Casimiro (2023) found the need for organizations to restructure HRM policies to remain competitive in attracting, motivating, and retaining Generation Z talent. As the first fully digital-native generation, Gen Z brings unique expectations that often clash with traditional business models. The study, using a mixed-method approach (survey of 97 workers and interviews with 12 employees), reveals that Gen Z values job satisfaction rooted in autonomy, creativity, flexibility, recognition, and fair remuneration. However, these factors must be supported

by an organizational culture that ensures equality, diversity, inclusion, freedom of expression, moral integrity, and social justice—without which Gen Z employees are likely to disengage or leave.

Aggarwal (2022) explored how HR policies and practices influence job satisfaction among Generation Z employees, using the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Based on a sample of 493 Gen Z employees and analyzed through structural equation modeling, the findings show that flexible work arrangements, reward and recognition, compensation, feedback-seeking behavior, and opportunities for volunteering significantly enhance Gen Z's job satisfaction. Moreover, job satisfaction mediates the impact of HR practices on task performance and affective organizational commitment. The paper offers a new model to help employers align with Gen Z expectations and highlights both practical implications and directions for future research. The impact of work motivation on employee retention among Indian Generation Z as well as Generation Y, with a focus on the moderating role of demographic factors was studied by Roy (2024); Roy, (2025) and Ganguli, & Padhy (2023). Using data from 755 respondents and a quantitative research approach, the study found that work motivation significantly enhances retention, and this relationship is moderated by gender, income, and industry type, but not by education level. The authors highlight the importance for HR practitioners to implement inclusive and motivating strategies that promote gender equity and tailored retention practices

for Gen Z employees. Collins (2020) conducted a qualitative case study to explore retention strategies for Generation Z at Company A, focusing on their early workplace experiences and expectations. Based on semi-structured interviews with seven employees (born in 1995 or 1996), thematic analysis identified key themes: goal setting, intrinsic motivation, desire for travel, and the need for strong managerial support. The study recommends customized HRM initiatives to retain Gen Z talent. Though limited by its small sample and single-case design, the research offers a useful starting point for further exploration into Gen Z's role in shaping retention strategies.

Reddy and Dawlinmaria (2020) examined the expectation-reality gap for Generation Z employees (born 1995–2010), including Indian Gen Z management professionals. Using a survey of 147 employees, the study identifies the mismatch between Gen Z's preferred working conditions and actual experiences, which negatively impacts job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. The research underscores the importance for HR professionals to align workplace practices with Gen Z's values such as flexibility, purpose, and growth to improve engagement, retention, and to better manage a multi-generational workforce. Nakash, (2024) identified the broader perspectives of Generation Z regarding their ideal workplace, emphasizing preferences for substantial remuneration, benefits, adaptable working conditions, and professional growth opportunities. The study, based on a Gen-Z survey, reveals that this generation highly

values financial security, flexibility, and career advancement. It suggests that employers who prioritize employee development and progression are more likely to retain Gen Z talent. The paper highlights the importance of understanding Gen Z's expectations and aligning workplace practices to attract and engage them, thereby reducing turnover rates. Tidhar (2023) discussed the characteristics of Generation Z and their impact on employee commitment and management practices. The paper emphasizes that organizations must adapt their leadership and management strategies to meet Gen Z's expectations, focusing on personal development, rapid outcomes, and a supportive work environment. It redefines employee commitment as not just the duration of employment but the connection employees feel to the success and progress of their roles. The study stresses the need for intergenerational leadership development, where managers understand the values and behaviors of Gen Z and foster open communication, trust, and learning. Additionally, the paper advocates for rapid employee induction processes, ensuring quick integration with organizational goals to enhance performance and productivity. Reddy and Dawlinmaria (2020) assessed in their study about the workplace expectations of Generation Z employees in India, particularly management professionals born between 1995 and 2010. The study investigates the gap between Gen Z's preferred work conditions and their actual experiences, emphasizing how this mismatch can affect job satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment. A survey of 147 Gen Z employees

across various sectors revealed key insights into their values and preferences, challenging traditional HR practices. The authors argue that by understanding and addressing these expectation gaps, HR professionals can better manage a multi-generational workforce and create environments that foster higher engagement and productivity among Gen Z employees.

### **Research Gap**

Existing research on Generation Z in the workplace lacks a context-specific focus on Indian Gen Z management professionals. Most studies are either centered on Western settings or provide only broad analyses of Gen Z in India, without exploring their strategic impact in managerial roles. There is limited insight into how Indian organizations can engage and retain Gen Z talent through adjustments in workplace culture, HRM practices, and leadership approaches. Comparative studies between global trends and India's unique socio-cultural environment are scarce, and comprehensive frameworks that link Gen Z behavior to organizational strategy are largely missing. Additionally, critical areas like intergenerational collaboration, Gen Z-led organizational change, and policy or educational reforms remain underexplored in the Indian context.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To figure out theoretical and international perspectives on Gen Z professionals and their impact on the evolving management ecosystem.

2. To develop a strategic roadmap for Indian organizations to effectively integrate, retain, and leverage the capabilities of Gen Z management professionals

### **Methodology**

This study utilizes a hybrid methodological approach combining qualitative conceptual analysis with a quantitative exploratory factor analysis (EFA), aimed at identifying the key behavioral dimensions and organizational expectations of Gen Z professionals in the Indian corporate context. The research design is aligned with the dual objectives of exploring theoretical and international perspectives and developing actionable strategic insights for Indian organizations.

### **Research Design**

The study follows an exploratory and descriptive design, integrating both secondary and primary data sources. The Exploratory Factor Analysis qualitative component involves a comprehensive review of academic literature and global workforce reports to map generational trends, workplace behavior models, and the evolving role of Gen Z employees. The quantitative component comprises a survey-based data collection followed by the efforts to uncover latent factors affecting Gen Z's workplace orientation. Exploratory research is appropriate when the variables are not well-defined or when new dimensions are being identified (Hair et al., 2019). EFA, in particular, helps in determining the underlying structure of large sets of interrelated variables when theoretical foundations are still emerging (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2012).

### **Data Collection & Sources**

The conceptual framework was developed from secondary data, including scholarly journals, industry white papers (e.g., Deloitte, McKinsey), and case studies from Indian organizations such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, and Byju's. Global perspectives were also incorporated to contextualize Indian Gen Z professionals within broader international frameworks (Schroth, 2019; Twenge, 2017).

For the empirical component, primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire developed from themes identified in the literature. The questionnaire consisted of 32 items across 10 dimensions, measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to target Gen Z professionals aged 22–30 years employed in various Indian firms. The final sample size of 200 respondents met the minimum requirement for EFA.

### **Re-defining Generation Z in the Indian Context**

Generation Z in India, typically born between 1997 and 2012, is entering the workforce, especially in fields like business, IT, finance, and creative industries. They are digitally fluent, socially aware, value autonomy and purpose in their work, and prioritize work-life fusion over traditional job security. Shaped by India's evolving educational and economic landscape—including private business schools, online learning, and global ex-

posure—Gen Z professionals differ from Millennials in their entrepreneurial drive, dislike for rigid hierarchies, and preference for flexible or gig-based work. Despite their growing presence, limited academic research exists on Indian Gen Z’s workplace attitudes, often generalizing them with Millennials or using Western-centric data. This gap risks creating ineffective HR practices and leadership models. Understanding Gen Z is essential for strategic human resource management (SHRM) to fully leverage their transformative mindset, which can reshape organizational culture, communication, and leadership. Studying this cohort in depth can help organizations build

more inclusive, adaptable, and future-ready workplaces.

**Re-Defining Generation Z in the International Context**

Various management theories have relevance to understanding Gen Z’s workplace behavior. These include McGregor’s Theory Y (autonomy and motivation), Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (motivators like growth), and contemporary models like Digital Natives Theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Additionally, Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions offer insight into generational variances across countries.

**Table 1 Global Perspectives on Gen Z Management Professionals**

Country	Key Gen Z Traits	Workplace Culture	Theoretical Alignment
USA	Entrepreneurial, inclusive, demand DEI and work-life balance	Flat structure, innovation-centric	Digital Natives Theory, Hofstede’s Low Power Distance
Germany	Structured, quality-oriented, value vocational training	Hierarchical but efficient and organized	Herzberg’s Theory, Hofstede’s High Uncertainty Avoidance
Japan	Risk-averse, respect hierarchy, prefer structured environments	Collective values dominate	Hofstede’s Collectivism, Maslow’s Hierarchy
Australia	Relaxed, socially conscious, sustainability-focused	Balanced work-life, participative style	Self-Determination Theory, Theory Y
Singapore	Highly ambitious, competitive, technologically immersed	Rigid yet performance-driven	Theory Y, Achievement Motivation Theory

**Indian Gen Z professionals lean toward Western ideologies of autonomy, diversity, and purpose, though constrained by existing hierarchical structures.**

toward Western ideologies of autonomy, diversity, and purpose, though constrained by existing hierarchical structures.

**Theoretical Framework & International Perspectives**

From this framework, it becomes evident that Indian Gen Z professionals lean

Emerging research highlights that Indian Gen Z management professionals

possess distinct traits that set them apart from older generations. They are digitally fluent, expecting seamless tech integration in all work aspects, and are driven by purpose, often aligning with organizations focused on sustainability and social impact. They value flexibility, autonomy, and outcome-based performance over rigid structures. Mental health is a priority, with expectations for supportive and empathetic workplaces. They are also committed to continuous learning, favoring personalized, digital, and gamified upskilling. Theoretical frameworks like Self-Determination Theory and Digital Natives Theory help explain these behav-

iors, which reflect a blend of traditional Indian social values and global, tech-savvy outlooks.

### Strategic Implications & Indian Cases

Indian organizations that understand and adapt to Gen Z's defining characteristics can unlock significant strategic advantages in terms of innovation, engagement, and retention. As illustrated in Table 2, companies across sectors have started to redesign their people strategies in alignment with Gen Z preferences:

**Table 2 Strategic Implications with Indian Cases**

Organization	Strategy Adopted	Gen Z-Centric Initiative	Outcome
TCS	Hybrid workforce policy	3-day in-office rule, remote onboarding	Higher retention among campus recruits
Infosys	Digital skill development	Lex learning platform integrated with gamification	78% Gen Z upskilled in 6 months
Zomato	Cultural rebranding	“Feed the Hunger” mission with social impact focus	Increased Gen Z engagement, lowered attrition
BYJU’S	Flexible hours, digital work culture	Task ownership & digital OKRs	High innovation but reports of burnout
Tata Steel	DEI & Mental wellness support	Gender-neutral policies, Gen Z-friendly helpline	Improved employer branding, especially among women
CRED	Flat hierarchy, transparent leadership	Gen Z-led innovation councils	Breakthrough marketing and UX strategies
Wipro	Mentorship and generational learning	Reverse mentoring: Gen Z mentoring Gen X/Y leaders	Cross-generational learning and faster cultural transformation

### Indian Socio-Cultural Dimensions & Gen Z

Indian Gen Z's work orientation is deeply influenced by the country's diverse socio-cultural landscape, including factors

like region, language, caste, gender norms, urban-rural dynamics, and family structures. Elements such as joint family responsibilities, traditional gender expectations, and hierarchical norms uniquely shape their career choices and workplace behavior.

Additionally, religious diversity, political awareness, and global social media exposure shape their views on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Therefore, organizations must move beyond generic approaches and develop HR strategies that are both culturally sensitive and tailored to the specific needs of this generation.

### **Generational Theory & Work Behavior**

The theoretical underpinning of this study draws upon generational theory, particularly the work of Strauss and Howe (1991), who argue that generational cohorts develop distinct characteristics based on shared socio-historical experiences. Applied to the Indian context, this means that Gen Z's work behavior is shaped by exposure to globalization, the COVID-19 pandemic, digital consumerism, and a growing entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Also relevant are psychological contract theories, which suggest that employees hold implicit expectations about their work relationship that evolve over time (Rousseau, 1995). Gen Z's psychological contract with employers is characterized by expectations of trust, transparency, quick feedback, and mutual respect. Breaches of these expectations often result in disengagement, quiet quitting, or high attrition—issues of serious concern for Indian employers.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Grounded in generational theory and modern work psychology, Indian Gen Z's

approach to work is shaped by five key factors: their identity as digital natives drives a preference for real-time, tech-enabled workplaces; they seek purposeful roles aligned with social impact and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) values; they reject rigid work structures in favor of autonomy and flexibility; they prioritize continuous learning to stay agile in a rapidly evolving job market; and they emphasize mental health and work-life fusion, expecting organizations to support emotional well-being and psychological safety. Together, these factors reflect a shift toward a more adaptive, value-driven, and tech-integrated work culture.

### **Analysis & Interpretations**

Ten thematic constructs were identified, each operationalized with three items (except for the “Workplace Orientation” dimension, which includes five). These include:

- Digital Proficiency
- Autonomy and Flexibility
- Purpose-Driven Orientation
- Mental Health Awareness
- Learning and Upskilling
- Organizational Culture
- Socio-Cultural Sensitivity
- HRM Strategies
- Global Practices
- Workplace Orientation

Items were developed and validated through pilot testing and expert feedback

to ensure content validity and clarity. To identify latent constructs among the observed variables, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation. EFA is a widely used technique in scale development and construct identification (Field, 2018).

Prior to factor extraction, data suitability was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 were excluded from further analysis.

**Table 3 Development of Constructs**

Construct Name	Associated Variables
Digital Proficiency	Digital_Proficiency_1, Digital_Proficiency_2, Digital_Proficiency_3
Autonomy and Flexibility	Autonomy_Flexibility_1, Autonomy_Flexibility_2, Autonomy_Flexibility_3
Purpose-Driven Orientation	Purpose_Driven_1, Purpose_Driven_2, Purpose_Driven_3
Mental Health Sensitivity	Mental_Health_1, Mental_Health_2, Mental_Health_3
Learning and Upskilling	Learning_Upskilling_1, Learning_Upskilling_2, Learning_Upskilling_3
Motivation	Org_Culture_1, Org_Culture_2, Org_Culture_3
Organizational Culture Fit	Social_Cultural_1, Social_Cultural_2, Social_Cultural_3
Socio-Cultural Awareness	HRM_Strategies_1, HRM_Strategies_2, HRM_Strategies_3
HRM Strategic Alignment	Global_Practices_1, Global_Practices_2, Global_Practices_3
Global Practices Orientation	Workplace_Orientation_1, Workplace_Orientation_2, Workplace_Orientation_3, Workplace_Orientation_4, Workplace_Orientation_5

**Table 4 Reliability Statistics for the Scale Items**

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.838
Cronbach's Alpha (Standardized Items)	0.844
Number of Items	32

Note. A Cronbach's alpha value above 0.70 indicates good internal consistency reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

**Table 5 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sampling Adequacy**

Test	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure	0.801
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	
– Approx. Chi-Square	1890.614
– Degrees of Freedom (df)	325
– Significance (p-value)	< .001

Note. A KMO value above 0.80 is considered meritorious, and a significant Bartlett's test ( $p < .05$ ) indicates the suitability of the data for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974).

**Table 6 Exploratory Factor Analysis: Rotated Component Matrix and Communalities**

Variable	Component 1 (HRM– Culture)	Component 2 (Work place Orienta- tion)	Component 3 (Auto- nomy)	Component 4 (Upski- lling)	Component 5 (Org. Culture)	Component 6 (Digital Skills)	Component 7 (Lear- ning)	Comm- unality
HRM_	0.769							0.614
Strategies_1								
HRM_	0.765							0.604
Strategies_3								
Social_	0.75							0.608
Cultural_3								
HRM_	0.73							0.588
Strategies_2								
Social_	0.684							0.534
Cultural_1								
Social_	0.658							0.533
Cultural_2								
Global_	0.655							0.508
Practices_1								
Global_	0.53							0.503
Practices_2								
Global_	0.513							0.432
Practices_3								
Workplace_		0.891						0.823
Orientation_3								
Workplace_		0.878						0.778
Orientation_1								
Workplace_		0.839						0.739
Orientation_4								
Workplace_		0.805						0.728
Orientation_2								
Workplace_		0.736						0.591
Orientation_5								
Autonomy_			0.791					0.696
Flexibility_1								
Autonomy_			0.72					0.629
Flexibility_2								
Autonomy_			0.648					0.551
Flexibility_3								
Learning_				0.739				0.69
Upskilling_1								
Mental_				0.705				0.598
Health_3								
Purpose_				0.583				0.602
Driven_2								
Purpose_				0.545				0.622

Driven_3							
Org_					0.779		0.685
Culture_3							
Org_					0.746		0.629
Culture_2							
Digital_					0.795		0.673
Proficiency_2							
Digital_					0.703		0.737
Proficiency_1							
Learning_						0.665	0.675
Upskilling_3							
Initial	5.397	3.572	2.062	1.492	1.428	1.268	1.152
Eigenvalues							
Cumulative %	20.759	34.497	42.429	48.167	53.660	58.535	62.968
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis							
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization							

Note: Only loadings e" .50 are shown. The cumulative variance explained by the seven components is 62.97%.

### Reliability of the Scale

Table 4 presents the reliability statistics for the 32-item scale. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.838 (standardized alpha = 0.844) indicates a high degree of internal consistency among the items, exceeding the generally accepted threshold of 0.70 for scale reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This suggests that the items consistently measure the underlying constructs related to Gen Z professionals' workplace expectations and preferences.

### Sampling Adequacy & Factorability

As shown in Table 5, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.801, which falls within the "meritorious" range as per Kaiser (1974), indicating that the sample is sufficiently adequate for factor analysis. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a highly significant result

( $\chi^2 = 1890.614$ ,  $df = 325$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting the hypothesis that correlations among variables are adequate to proceed with EFA.

### Communalities & Loadings

Most variables exhibit communalities above 0.50, suggesting that the extracted factors account for a substantial portion of variance in each item. This reinforces the adequacy of item selection and grouping for the scale. Notably, the highest factor loadings (e.g., 0.891 for Workplace\_ Orientation\_3) underscore strong variable-construct relationships.

### Factor Extraction & Rotation

The EFA, using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation, extracted seven components with eigenvalues greater than 1, collectively explaining 62.97% of the total variance

(Table 6). This level of explained variance is considered acceptable in behavioral sciences, particularly in early-stage scale development (Hair et al., 2010). Each extracted factor aligns with theoretically relevant dimensions

associated with Gen Z workplace behavior:

The interpretation of our exploratory factor analysis results is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7 Interpretation of Extracted Components from Exploratory Factor Analysis**

Component	Label	Key Items	Interpretation
1	HRM–Culture Integration	HRM_Strategies_1–3, Social_Cultural_1–3, Global_Practices_1–3	Reflects organizational responsiveness to cultural diversity, strategic HR practices, and alignment with global workforce standards.
2	Workplace Orientation	Workplace_Orientation_1–5	Captures Gen Z’s preferences for adaptable, tech-integrated, and communicative workplace environments.
3	Autonomy and Flexibility	Autonomy_Flexibility_1–3	Represents the desire for independence, flexible working conditions, and self-directed work approaches.
4	Upskilling and Mental Well-being	Learning_Upskilling_1, Purpose_Driven_2–3, Mental_Health_3	Highlights Gen Z’s holistic view of personal development where mental health support and purposeful work are tied to learning opportunities.
5	Organizational Culture	Org_Culture_2–3	Indicates emphasis on ethical practices, inclusive leadership, and transparent communication within organizations.
6	Digital Proficiency	Digital_Proficiency_1–2	Reflects ease and expectation of using digital tools and technology as integral to job performance and workplace productivity.
7	Self-Directed Learning	Learning_Upskilling_3	Suggests a proactive approach toward learning and development, underscoring Gen Z’s intrinsic motivation to continually upgrade skills.

**Note.** This table interprets the factor loadings based on components extracted via Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation. Only items with loadings e” .50 are considered.

**Implications for Strategic Human Resource Practices**

As Gen Z professionals become a larger part of the Indian workforce, HR leaders must shift from traditional models to a strategic human resource management (SHRM)

approach that aligns with generational traits. This includes implementing digital-first HR processes, personalized employee experiences, empathetic and inclusive leadership development, agile learning systems, and prioritizing mental well-being. Ignoring these shifts risks talent loss and reduced organi-

**In India, Gen Z’s work orientation is uniquely shaped by rapid urbanization, digital growth, start-up culture, and government initiatives.**

zational resilience. In India, Gen Z’s work orientation is uniquely shaped by rapid urbanization, digital growth, start-up culture, and government initiatives. However, cultural factors like parental influence, hierarchical work structures, and unequal access to opportunities still play a major role. Indian Gen Z professionals often navigate between global professional norms and cul-

turally rooted personal lives, blending collectivist values with individualist ambitions. Their emphasis on autonomy, inclusion, and work-life integration marks a generational shift, offering both challenges and transformative opportunities for Indian organizations.

### **Future Roadmap for Indian Gen Z Management Professionals**

A future-oriented approach requires a shift in mindset from merely managing Gen Z to co-creating with them. The roadmap presents actionable strategies across organizational, educational, and policy levels:

**Table 8 Organizational Roadmap**

Area	Strategic Recommendation
Leadership	Encourage Gen Z-led cross-functional teams and participative leadership
Technology	Invest in AI-enabled HR systems, digital collaboration tools
Culture	Promote inclusivity, transparency, and environmental responsibility
Rewards	Shift from tenure-based to skill/impact-based incentives
Learning	Implement micro-learning, gamified modules, peer-based certifications
Career Progression	Flatten hierarchies, implement “career lattice” instead of ladder

### **Educational Institutions**

- Integrate soft skill development (empathy, negotiation, resilience) with technical curriculum.
- Offer “Management-in-Practice” courses involving real-life corporate simulations.
- Encourage multi-domain exposure via internships and exchange programs.

### **Government & Policy-Level Interventions**

The entry of Gen Z into India’s management landscape marks a critical cul-

tural and technological turning point, as this generation prioritizes purpose, equity, digital fluency, and fast-paced growth—often challenging traditional organizational norms. To harness their potential, there is a pressing need for national guidelines supporting hybrid work infrastructure, targeted upskilling grants, simplified startup compliance, and industry-aligned research incentives. Without such systemic adaptation, organizations risk losing engagement and innovation. By aligning Gen Z’s aspirations with strategic policy and organizational reforms, India can build inclusive, agile, and future-ready institutions that thrive in the global marketplace.

## Conclusion

Indian Gen Z management professionals represent a transformative force in the organizational landscape, bringing with them a unique blend of digital dexterity, social consciousness, and a strong demand for flexibility and purposeful engagement. This study reveals that aligning management practices, educational pedagogy, and policy frameworks with Gen Z expectations is crucial for sustainable development. Indian corporates are gradually responding, but there remains a gap in fully institutionalizing Gen Z-oriented strategies. The proposed future roadmap—encompassing inclusive leadership, agile work cultures, digital integration, and value-driven training—presents a comprehensive strategy for nurturing and retaining Gen Z talent. By proactively addressing their needs, India can unlock a resilient, innovative, and globally competitive managerial workforce.

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