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HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN LEBANON EXPLORING MOTIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION IN GENERATIONS Y AND Z

Walaa Riachy[1*], Mario Sassine[2], Satya Subrahmanyam[3]

[1]CIRAME Research Center, Business School, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Jounieh, Lebanon. e-mail: walaa.k.riachy@net.usek.edu.lb ,*
orcid: https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8726-5912
[2]CIRAME Research Center, Business School, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Jounieh, Lebanon. e-mail: mariosassine@usek.edu.lb ,
orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6808-4296
[3]Professor & Dean (Research), CIRAME Research Center, Business School, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Jounieh, Lebanon. e-mail: satya.sub@usek.edu.lb,
orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0441-2742

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SUMMARY

This study examines the influence of HR practices on the rate of retention among Generation Y and Generation Z employees in Lebanon. This is accomplished via intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, which serve as two critical mediating factors. The data were gathered through an online survey involving 906 participants, divided equally into Generation Y (n=455) and Generation Z (n=451). Quantitative methodology was adopted during the data collection process. Structural Equation Modeling and Confirmatory Factor Analysis were utilized for analysis purposes. The findings indicate that both intrinsic motivation (β = 0.177, p< .001) and job satisfaction (β = 0.305, p< .001) have a positive effect on retention. Generation Y employees were more receptive to HR policies such as servant leadership and Work-life balance, servant leadership, and organizational career development were found to exert significant indirect effects on employee retention through job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation (β = 0.080, $p < .001$; β = 0.037, $p < .001$; and β = 0.091, $p < .001$, respectively). On the other hand, servant leadership and job satisfaction had a negative association for Gen Z employees (β = -0.256, $p < .001$). According to the results of the current study, HR policies and procedures should be unique to each particular generation. Generation Y employees are keen on career development, whereas Generation Z employees will feel more comfortable in an environment where careers are independent and autonomous. The present research adds to the body of literature on employee retention because there are not many studies that explore the role of generations in employee retention in Lebanon.

Key words*: employee retention, human resource practices, intrinsic motivation, job Satisfaction, generation Y, generation Z, organizational practices.*

INTRODUCTION

The significance of generational differences in diverse settings, particularly within the working environment, has gained considerable attention [8]. The current workforce consists of four distinct generations: Baby Boomers (1946, 1964), Generation X (1965, 1980), Generation Y (1981, 1994) and Generation Z (1995, 2012). According to Deloitte's survey on Gen Z and Millennials in 2025, it is projected that in the next five years, Generation Y and Generation Z will make up three-quarters of the worldwide labor force [7]. This underscores their increased impact on human resource management and organizational activities. Moreover, Gallup's State of the Global Workplace 2025 suggests that there is a reduction in the global employee engagement rate, from 23% in 2023 to 21% in 2024. Furthermore, 51% of the employees are looking for other job opportunities [11].

A thorough analysis of both groups, their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors at the workplace would be necessary for companies aiming to gain complete understanding of generation Y and Z demands and implement appropriate management measures aimed at enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment as well as retaining talented staff [14][20]. Firstly, generation Y or millennials attach significant importance to personal interaction and challenging tasks [3]. Secondly, generation Y gets motivated by the possibility of developing professionally and having work-life balance [15]. Finally, generation Z will comprise a large proportion of the workforce within the next years, hence making this group an important area of study for those aiming to increase employees' commitment and dedication to the organization. Generation Z representatives can also be referred to as "digital natives" because technology plays a key role in defining generation Z [18].

Individuals belonging to Generation Z have the capability of adapting quickly to different situations, learning continuously throughout life, and emphasizing the significance of organizational strategies aimed at developing skills and careers. Although a lot of research has already been conducted on the subject of generational differences within the working environment, the topic of retaining Generation Z employees is rather unexplored. With respect to the issue of retaining young employees, there is a considerable lack of empirical evidence on such important motivational elements as recognition. Motivational factors are highly relevant for organizational behavior and HRM in general due to the fact that contribute to improving employees' experience, wellbeing, level of involvement into the activities of the firm, and help to create job satisfaction and motivation, thus increasing intention to stay within the organization. The aforementioned gap in the literature not only does not allow developing theoretical insights, but also hinders the emergence of certain strategies for HR managers aimed at satisfying Generation Z's demands. Thus, it becomes crucial to bridge this gap by introducing a theoretical framework, which is going to address the relationship between motivational factors and organizational strategies, employees' intention to stay, and the moderating roles of job.

Key Contribution

- Conducts a comparison of the variables that influence employee retention for generation Y (millennials) and generation Z.
- Use various theories such as social exchange theory, expectancy theory, and Herzberg's two factor theory in the formulation of a theory on employee retention.
- Focuses on the importance of HR policies such as work-life balance, servant leadership, organizational career development and flexible working arrangements in improving retention, across generations of workers.
- Provides an empirical basis for employee retention in an emerging context that contributes to the understanding of employee retention dynamics in emerging markets, particularly among the younger generation in Lebanon.

Research Questions

1. How do human resource practices (work-life balance, servant leadership, organizational career development, flexible work arrangements, employee recognition, job autonomy, and perceived

organizational support) influence employee retention among Generation Y and Generation Z employees in Lebanon?
2. To what extent do intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction mediate the relationship between human resource practices and employee retention among Generation Y and Generation Z employees?
3. What are the differences between Generation Y and Generation Z employees in terms of how human resource practices affect their job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and intention to remain in the organization?

Research Objectives

This research aims to investigate the role of HRM practices in retaining employees in Lebanon in the context of Generation Y and Generation Z employees. In particular, the study is designed to:

- Explore how human resource practices (work-life balance, servant leadership, organizational career development, perceived organizational support, flexible work, employee recognition and job autonomy) affect employee retention.
- Discuss the mediating effect between HR practices and employee retention between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction.
- Compare the differences between Generation Y and Generation Z personnel with how it was reacting to HR practices and retention drivers.

Research Hypothesis

- **Hypothesis 1.a.:** Work-life balance has a significant positive relationship with employee retention
- **Hypothesis 1.b.** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 2.a.:** Servant leadership has a significant positive relationship with employee retention
- **Hypothesis 2.b.** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between servant leadership and employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 2.c.** Intrinsic motivation has a mediating role in the relationship between servant leadership and employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 3.a.** Organizational career development has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 3.b.** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between organizational career development and employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 4.** Perceived organizational support has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 5.a.** Flexible work arrangement has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 5.b.** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 6.a.** Recognition has a significant positive relationship with employee retention
- **Hypothesis 6.b.** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between employee recognition and employee retention
- **Hypothesis 7.a.** Job autonomy has a significant positive relationship with employee retention.
- **Hypothesis 7.b.** Intrinsic motivation has a mediating role in the relationship between job autonomy and employee retention.

The structure of the study includes the following sections: Section 2, Literature Review, which discusses theories and points out research gaps. Section 3, discusses sampling and the methods of analysis used. Section 4 discusses results and implications of human resource management practices on employee retention by different generations. Section 5 summarizes main findings and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent research emphasizes the importance of HR practices in retaining employees, a critical factor, especially with younger generations [17]. The benefits of work-life balance on retention are regularly observed and particularly affect Generation Y, which is a factor that affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment [4][10]. This can be explained by the Social Exchange Theory, which says that it is likely that employees will remain with their organization when think it values their personal life balance [8][9]. The effects of servant leadership are also positive on retention, with the greatest effect on the retention of Generation Y when leadership takes into consideration the needs of the employee [3][16]. The mixed results from Generation Z, however, indicate that it's more important to them to have some autonomy and flexibility in their approach to leadership, rather than the traditional ways [1][2].

Another major reason for Generation Y's retention is organizational career development – as career growth opportunities lead to higher job satisfaction and retention intentions [12]. But Gen Z employee retention is more driven by direct job satisfaction than career development [17][19]. Furthermore, perceived organizational support is positively associated with retention, which helps to promote feelings of belonging and commitment in both generations [5][13].

Lastly, flexible work options and employee recognition are further mediators of retention, especially via job satisfaction, with Generation Z demonstrating a greater desire for flexible work options [6][15].

The literature review shows that human resource practices greatly affect employee retention, but with varying impacts on generation Y and generation Z. Work-life balance and servant leadership positively correlate to generation Y through satisfaction and commitment; while Generation Z values autonomy, flexibility, and instantaneous job satisfaction. HR career development is a more relevant construct to generation Y, where as flexible work arrangement and recognition are more applicable to Generation Z. Across both generations, POS increases belongingness to increase retention. In sum, it's recommended that these generational differences require unique strategies of HR practices for increased retention outcomes.

RESEARCH METHOD

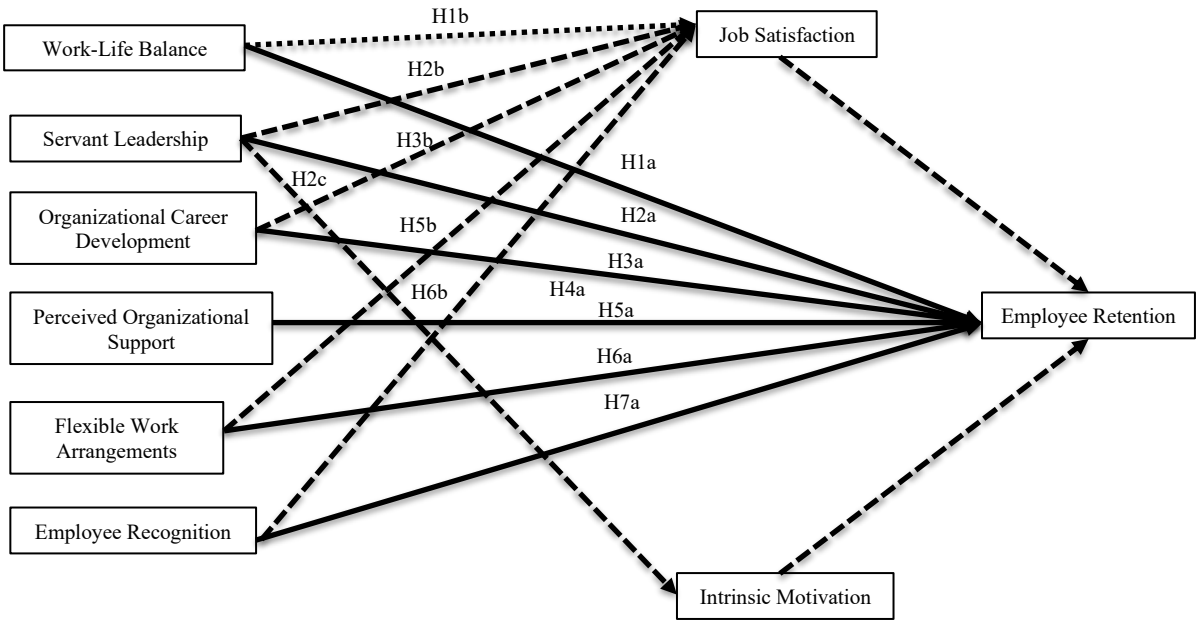

Figure 1. Conceptual model of employee retention

The conceptual model will be derived using key theories such as the Social Exchange Theory, the Expectancy Theory, Herzberg's Two Factor theory, and the Self Determination Theory. The aforementioned theories were selected based on the importance of motivation and job satisfaction in

employee retention via intrinsic motivation. Social Exchange Theory and the Expectancy Theory focus on the give-and-take nature of the relationship between the organization and its employees, while Herzberg's Theory explains the difference between hygiene and motivation factors.

In figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual framework showing how various HR practices such as work-life balance, servant leadership, organizational career development, and other HR practices influence employee retention. This model also shows the mediating effects of job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation on the relationship between HR practices and employee retention. The theory behind the proposed conceptual model rests on various theories such as the Social Exchange Theory and Herzberg's Two Factor Theory.

Sample and Data Collection

The following section entails the access to the sample, the collection procedure, the variables measurement, and the data analysis.

Sampling Strategy

The target population of this study comprises Generation Y and Generation Z employees working in Lebanon across various sectors. Since there wasn't a complete sampling frame, a non-probability convenience sampling method was used. An online questionnaire sent out through professional networks and organizational contacts was used to gather data. A total of 906 valid responses were collected, comprising 455 employees from Generation Y and 451 employees from Generation Z, surpassing the required minimum sample size for structural equation modeling. Participants had to be working and be in the age range that was set for their generation. Participation was optional, and respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Collection Procedure

In table 1 shows the results of the gender of Generation Y respondents. A total of 455 Generation Y respondents were involved in this study and a total of 267 (58.7%) were male and 188 (41.3%) were female. In Generation Y, males outnumbered females. There was no missing gender data. Table 2 outlines the age categories of the Generation Y sample. As can be seen, all 455 (100%) of the respondents fit into the Generation Y age category. Thus, the sample is totally in line with the sample universe. None of the age category responses were missed, so all respondents had answers for the category.

Table 1. Frequencies for gender (generation Y)

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	267	58.7	58.7	58.7
Female	188	41.3	41.3	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	455	100.0		

Table 2. Frequencies for age (generation Y)

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Generation Y	455	100.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	455	100.0		

In table 3 represents the sector distribution for Generation Y, with the largest sectors being retail, wholesale trade, and real estate. The sample, belonging to Generation Z, consists of 451 respondents. In terms of gender distribution, 58.5% of the respondents are male (n = 264) and 41.5% are female (n = 187). Hospitality and tourism represent the largest share (20.6%), followed by advertising (18.0%), real estate (17.7%), retail and wholesale trade (15.7%), transportation and logistics (15.1%), and Banking (12.9%). Table 4 shows the gender distribution for Generation Z, with 58.5% male and 41.5% female.

Table 5 illustrates the age distribution for Generation Z, with 100% of respondents belonging to Generation Z. Table 6 represents the sector distribution for Generation Z, with the largest sectors in hospitality, tourism, and advertising.

Table 3. Frequencies for sectors (generation Y)

Sector	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Retail and wholesale trade	87	19.1	19.1	19.1
Banking	73	16.0	16.0	35.2
Hospitality & Tourism	78	17.1	17.1	52.3
Advertising	82	18.0	18.0	70.3
Real estate	87	19.1	19.1	89.5
Transportation and Logistics	48	10.5	10.5	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	455	100.0		

Table 4. Frequencies for gender (generation Z*)*

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	264	58.5	58.5	58.5
Female	187	41.5	41.5	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	451	100.0		

Table 5. Frequencies for age (generation Z)

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Generation Z	451	100.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	451	100.0		

Table 6. Frequencies for sectors (generation Z)

Sector	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Hospitality & Tourism	93	20.6	20.6	20.6
Advertising	81	18.0	18.0	38.6
Transportation and Logistics	68	15.1	15.1	53.7
Banking	58	12.9	12.9	66.5
Retail and wholesale trade	71	15.7	15.7	82.3
Real estate	80	17.7	17.7	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	451	100.0		

Variables Measurement

All of the constructs were used as reflective latent variables and measured by multi-item scales based on previous research. Correctly choosing observed indicators for each latent construct is an important prerequisite in SEM models to achieve identification and robust estimations. Methodology stresses that models that have fewer than three indicators per latent construct could have problems of identification and validity. Thus, it is recommended that at least three items should be used per each latent construct, while four-five indicators will improve measurement quality even further. Two steps SEM technique began with CFA to estimate the measurement part of the model. This phase included an analysis of standardized factor loadings, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The testing of the hypothesized structural relationships was done only after satisfactory results in evaluating measurement quality were achieved. This two-step approach provided the rigorous assessment of latent and observed variables before the structural model estimation.

Work-Life Balance Variable

WLB scale items. Thus, WLB was assessed using three items: "WLB1: At the present time, I feel that I am in good work-life balance", "WLB2: I think the balance between my work responsibilities and leisure activities is appropriate," and "WLB3: Overall, there is work-life balance in my life.".

Servant Leadership Variable

The Servant Leadership (SL) construct is assessed using a five-point scale. The items include, "SL1: I feel that I work alongside my supervisor rather than working under my supervisor", "SL2: The leader focuses on my career growth" and "SL3: The leader places my well-being above his/her own interest", which have factor loadings 0.797, 0.790, and 0.818 respectively.

Organizational Career Development Variable

Organizational Career Development (OCD) is measured using a five-item scale, namely: OCD1, which means "I have received training to facilitate my career development"; OCD2, which means "I have received work assignments that will foster the development of my skills in the future"; and OCD3, which means "I have been given a mentor to facilitate my career development". The loadings of these variables are 0.709, 0.759, and 0.709, respectively.

Perceived Organizational Support Variable

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) was measured through three variables; "POS1: The organization genuinely cares about my well-being", "POS2: The organization appreciates my contributions", and "POS3: The organization is ready to assist me whenever I need help from it", with factor loadings 0.78, 0.82, and 0.79 respectively.

Flexible work Arrangements Variable

Assessment of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) was conducted using three items on a five-item scale created, namely; "FWA1: Flexible work arrangements enable me to manage my personal responsibilities effectively," "FWA2: Reduced working hours will be detrimental to my career growth in this firm," and "FWA3: Flexible work schedules are critical for me to fulfill family responsibilities," where the respective factor loadings were 0.815, 0.70, and 0.84.

Employee Recognition Variable

Employee recognition (REC) was measured based on the following three statements: "REC1: My contribution at work is appreciated by management," "REC2: The management of my organization respects me," and "REC3: I am treated with justice at my workplace," with their corresponding factor loadings being 0.744, 0.859, and 0.885.

Job Autonomy Variable

Autonomy at Work (Autowrk) was measured through JA1: "I have a great deal of autonomy in determining how I perform my job."; JA2: "I have the independence in carrying out my job in my own way."; and JA3: "I have a lot of freedom and independence in doing my job." with the respective factor loading scores 0.85, 0.79 and 0.82.

Job Satisfaction Variable

Five items measuring Job Satisfaction (JS) included "JS1: I enjoy the type of work I am engaged in", "JS2: I enjoy my work more than an average employee", "JS3: I experience real pleasure at work", "JS4: I get a high degree of satisfaction from my job performance" and "JS5: On the whole, I am satisfied with my job", their factor loads being 0.82, 0.78, 0.86, 0.80 and 0.84 respectively.

Intrinsic Motivation Variable

Intrinsic Motivation (IM) was measured through four statements: "IM1: I like to do this task a lot," "IM2: I find this task interesting," "IM3: I derive pleasure from this task," "IM4: This task is enjoyable to do," with factor weights of 0.934, 0.82, 0.919, and 0.853, respectively.

Employee Retention Variable

Three items were used to measure Employee Retention (ER): "ER1: Unless something unforeseen happens, I would work in this organization forever", "ER2: If I had total freedom of choice, I would wish to work in this organization", "ER3: I anticipate working in this organization as long as possible", with factor loadings of 0.84, 0.82, and 0.86, respectively.

Data Analysis

CFA Measurement Model Analysis

This study used JASP version 0.19.3 to analyze the data. The analytical methodology employed a two-step SEM framework. First, a CFA was performed to make sure that the measurement model's factor structure was correct and that the observed factors were a good representation of their latent constructs. CFA was employed to ascertain the alignment of the data with the theoretical model by evaluating the extent to which the observed items accurately represent their intended constructs. To guarantee reliability and validity, this study utilized standard indicators, including factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), in accordance with widely accepted methodological standards.

These indicators show that are internally consistent, have convergent validity, and are enough to represent each latent construct. Once the measurement properties have been verified as satisfactory, SEM is employed to examine the hypothesized relationships among the latent variables. SEM allows for the simultaneous estimation of multiple dependency relationships and the examination of both direct and indirect effects within an integrated analytical framework. This sequence approach enhances reliability because it ensures that any structural assumptions will be based on a measurement model with good validity testing. According to table 7, it can be noted that the findings for the CFA show that the general fitness of the models is very high. The CFI and TLI fitness measures have a value of 0.998, showing a very high degree of incremental fitness measure.

This fitness measure is above the recommended cut-off level of 0.95. The SEM analysis parameters included maximum likelihood and significance level of 0.05 as well as less than 0.0001 for change in log-likelihood for model convergence. The cutoff for factor loading was set to be more than 0.70, whereas CFI > 0.95 and RMSEA < 0.06 were used for model fit.

Table 7. CFA fit indices

Index	Value
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.998
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.998
Bentler-Bonett Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.998
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.958
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.817
Bollen's Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.951
Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.998
Relative Noncentrality Index (RNI)	0.998

The RMSEA (Table 8) is 0.006, which is extremely small and falls below the threshold value of 0.06. The 90% confidence interval is very small, varying from 0.000 to 0.013, indicating accuracy of the measure.

Table 8. Other fit measures

Metric	Value
Root means square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.006
RMSEA 90% CI lower bound	0.000
RMSEA 90% CI upper bound	0.013
RMSEA p-value	1.000
Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)	0.021
Hoelter's critical N (α = .05)	973.1
Hoelter's critical N (α = .01)	1016
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.970
McDonald fit index (MFI)	0.991
Expected cross validation index (ECVI)	0.760

From table 9, it can be seen that all the constructs exhibit convergent validity as indicated by their AVE scores. The AVE scores range from 0.522 to 0.607, which is above the threshold of 0.50. The AVE scores are clear indicators of the presence of convergent validity in the measurement model and that the constructs are adequate for testing in SEM.

Table 9. Average variance extracted

Factor	AVE
OCD	0.570
WLB	0.548
SL	0.569
POS	0.567
FWA	0.599
REC	0.564
JA	0.582
JS	0.564
IM	0.522
ER	0.607

The reliability of all constructs is relatively high, ranging from 0.785 to 0.866; the minimum acceptable value is 0.70 are shown in table 10. The reliability for Job Satisfaction is the highest at 0.866, followed by the other constructs, which are considered highly reliable. The general reliability coefficient (0.778) indicates that the measuring instrument is reliable.

Table 10. Reliability

	Coefficient α
OCD	0.799
WLB	0.785
SL	0.798
POS	0.797
FWA	0.818
REC	0.795
JA	0.807
JS	0.866
IM	0.813
ER	0.822
Total	0.778

The table 11 shows that all of the standardized factor loadings are strong and statistically significant ($p < .001$), with values between 0.703 and 0.803. Most loadings are higher than 0.70, which means that the indicators do a good job of representing their latent constructs. The confidence intervals are small and don't cross zero, which further shows that the measurements are stable. Overall, the results show that the indicators are reliable and strongly support the measurement model's convergent validity.

Table 11. Factor loadings

						95% Confidence Interval	
Factor	Indicator	Std. estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
OCD	OCD1	0.751	0.021	35.52	< .001	0.709	0.792
	OCD2	0.747	0.021	35.22	< .001	0.706	0.789
	OCD3	0.768	0.021	36.96	< .001	0.727	0.808
WLB	WLB1	0.745	0.022	33.29	< .001	0.701	0.789
	WLB2	0.734	0.023	32.46	< .001	0.690	0.778
	WLB3	0.742	0.022	33.04	< .001	0.698	0.786
SL	SL1	0.775	0.021	37.15	< .001	0.734	0.816
	SL2	0.748	0.021	34.91	< .001	0.706	0.790
	SL3	0.739	0.022	34.19	< .001	0.697	0.781
POS	POS1	0.766	0.022	35.60	< .001	0.724	0.809
	POS2	0.756	0.022	34.83	< .001	0.713	0.799
	POS3	0.736	0.022	33.31	< .001	0.692	0.779
FWA	FWA1	0.762	0.020	38.22	< .001	0.723	0.801
	FWA2	0.778	0.020	39.75	< .001	0.739	0.816
	FWA3	0.782	0.019	40.20	< .001	0.744	0.821
REC	REC1	0.741	0.022	34.15	< .001	0.698	0.784
	REC2	0.756	0.021	35.40	< .001	0.715	0.798
	REC3	0.756	0.021	35.35	< .001	0.714	0.798
JA	JA1	0.765	0.021	37.27	< .001	0.725	0.805
	JA2	0.770	0.020	37.67	< .001	0.730	0.810
	JA3	0.753	0.021	36.22	< .001	0.712	0.794
JS	JS1	0.728	0.019	39.26	< .001	0.692	0.764
	JS2	0.759	0.017	44.26	< .001	0.726	0.793
	JS3	0.766	0.017	45.48	< .001	0.733	0.799
	JS4	0.756	0.017	43.65	< .001	0.722	0.790
	JS5	0.745	0.018	41.81	< .001	0.710	0.780
IM	IM1	0.718	0.021	34.25	< .001	0.677	0.759
	IM2	0.708	0.021	33.24	< .001	0.667	0.750
	IM3	0.760	0.020	38.95	< .001	0.721	0.798
	IM4	0.703	0.022	32.64	< .001	0.660	0.745
ER	ER1	0.735	0.019	37.96	< .001	0.697	0.773
	ER2	0.803	0.017	47.32	< .001	0.770	0.836
	ER3	0.798	0.017	46.52	< .001	0.764	0.831

SEM Structural Model Analysis

The regression analysis (Table 12) demonstrates that both Intrinsic Motivation (IM) (β = 0.177, p < .001) and Job Satisfaction (JS) (β = 0.305, p < .001) contribute to the prediction of Employee Retention (ER). HR practices such as WLB, SL, OCD, POS, FWA, REC, and JA have a positive effect on ER. Moreover, SL and JA have a significant effect on IM, whereas WLB, FWA, OCD, and REC.

Table 12. Regression coefficients

							95% Confidence interval	
Outcome	Predictor		Std. estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
ER	IM		0.177	0.036	4.977	< .001	0.107	0.247
	JS		0.305	0.039	7.807	< .001	0.229	0.382
	WLB		0.137	0.036	3.846	< .001	0.067	0.208
	SL		0.255	0.034	7.536	< .001	0.188	0.321
	OCD		0.224	0.036	6.260	< .001	0.154	0.294
	POS		0.163	0.033	4.926	< .001	0.098	0.228
	FWA		0.147	0.035	4.264	< .001	0.080	0.215
	REC		0.187	0.036	5.269	< .001	0.117	0.257
	JA		0.144	0.035	4.097	< .001	0.075	0.212
IM	SL		0.211	0.039	5.451	< .001	0.135	0.287
	JA		0.279	0.038	7.359	< .001	0.205	0.353
JS	WLB		0.263	0.036	7.338	< .001	0.192	0.333
	SL		0.009	0.036	0.259	.796	-0.061	0.080
	OCD		0.299	0.035	8.529	< .001	0.231	0.368
	FWA		0.238	0.035	6.774	< .001	0.169	0.307
	REC		0.275	0.035	7.781	< .001	0.205	0.344

The indirect effects analysis (Table 13) revealed that the relationships between Servant Leadership (SL) and Employee Retention (ER) (β = 0.037, p < .001) and Job Autonomy (JA) and ER (β = 0.049, p < .001) go through the mediation of Intrinsic Motivation (IM) (Table 13).

Table 13. Indirect effects

					95% Confidence interval	
	Std. estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → IM → ER	0.037	0.010	3.773	< .001	0.018	0.057
JA → IM → ER	0.049	0.012	4.134	< .001	0.026	0.073
WLB → JS → ER	0.080	0.015	5.400	< .001	0.051	0.109
SL → JS → ER	0.003	0.011	0.260	.795	-0.019	0.024
OCD → JS → ER	0.091	0.016	5.874	< .001	0.061	0.122
FWA → JS → ER	0.073	0.014	5.158	< .001	0.045	0.100
REC → JS → ER	0.084	0.015	5.594	< .001	0.054	0.113

Table 14. Total effects

					95% Confidence interval	
	Std. estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → ER	0.295	0.035	8.535	< .001	0.227	0.363
SL → IM	0.211	0.039	5.451	< .001	0.135	0.287
SL → JS	0.009	0.036	0.259	.796	-0.061	0.080
JA → IM	0.279	0.038	7.359	< .001	0.205	0.353
JA → ER	0.193	0.034	5.762	< .001	0.127	0.259
WLB → ER	0.218	0.035	6.224	< .001	0.149	0.286
WLB → JS	0.263	0.036	7.338	< .001	0.192	0.333
OCD → JS	0.299	0.035	8.529	< .001	0.231	0.368
OCD → ER	0.315	0.034	9.257	< .001	0.249	0.382
FWA → ER	0.220	0.034	6.426	< .001	0.153	0.287
FWA → JS	0.238	0.035	6.774	< .001	0.169	0.307
REC → JS	0.275	0.035	7.781	< .001	0.205	0.344
REC → ER	0.271	0.034	7.869	< .001	0.203	0.338
IM → ER	0.177	0.036	4.977	< .001	0.107	0.247
JS → ER	0.305	0.039	7.807	< .001	0.229	0.382
POS → ER	0.163	0.033	4.926	< .001	0.098	0.228

Job Satisfaction (JS) is a mediator between Work-Life Balance (WLB), Organizational Career Development (OCD), Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) and ER. However, JS does not mediate SL's effect on ER (β = 0.003, p = 0.795). These conclusions indicate that, in part, IM and JS are the potential mediators. The total effects results indicate that several HR practices significantly influence employee retention are shown in table 14.

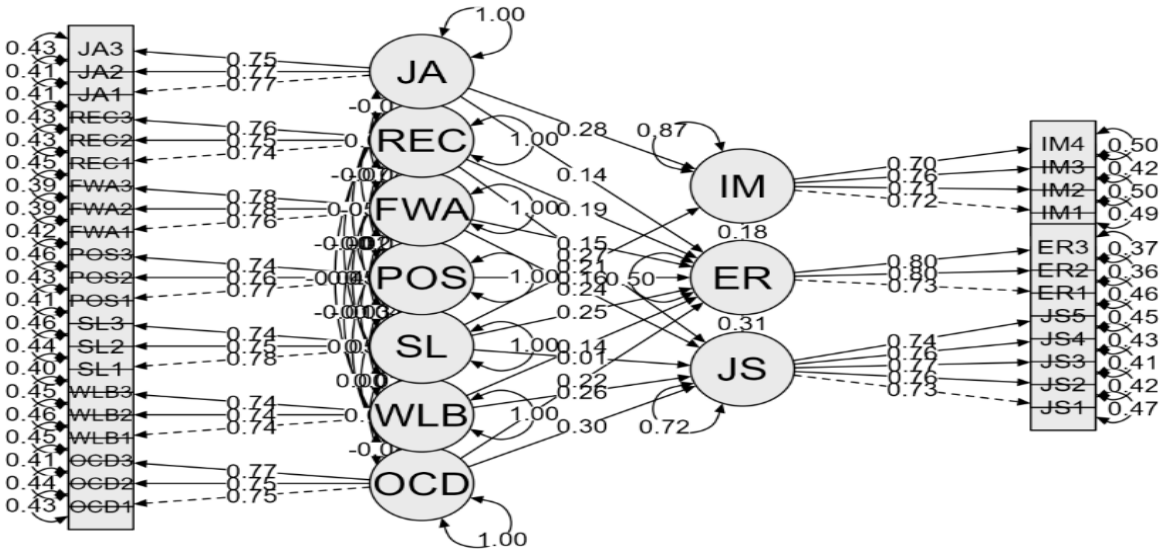

Figure 1. Conceptual model path diagram

SEM Structural Model Analysis Per Generation

To establish a comparative framework between Generation Y and Generation Z, two separate SEM analyses were conducted independently to test the research hypotheses and evaluate the effects of HR and organizational practices on employee retention through the mediating roles of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction are shown in figure 2.

SEM Structural Model Analysis for Generation Y

The findings of the SEM analysis on the Generation Y population indicate that IM ($\beta = 0.179$, $p = 0.001$) and JS ($\beta = 0.334$, $p < .001$) directly affect ER are demonstrates in table 15. The other HR practices examined, such as WLB, SL, and REC, have direct impacts on ER, which are mediated by IM and JS.

The findings regarding the indirect effects on generation Y indicate that job satisfaction (JS) mediates the link between human resource management practices (WLB, SL, OCD, FWA, and REC) and employee retention (ER) are represented in table 16. The indirect effects of servant leadership (SL) and job autonomy (JA) on ER are mediated by intrinsic motivation (IM), supporting hypotheses H2c and H7c. IM and JS play an important role as mediating factors in improving ER.

Table 15. Regression coefficients (generation Y)

							95% Confidence interval	
Outcome	Predictor		Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
ER	IM		0.179	0.055	3.226	.001	0.070	0.287
	JS		0.334	0.069	4.808	< .001	0.198	0.470
	WLB		0.127	0.049	2.567	.010	0.030	0.224
	SL		0.146	0.059	2.482	.013	0.031	0.261
	OCD		0.203	0.054	3.789	< .001	0.098	0.308
	POS		0.137	0.046	2.970	.003	0.046	0.227
	FWA		0.164	0.046	3.554	< .001	0.074	0.255
	REC		0.202	0.054	3.736	< .001	0.096	0.309
	JA		0.099	0.046	2.163	.031	0.009	0.189
IM	SL		0.231	0.057	4.083	< .001	0.120	0.343
	JA		0.201	0.050	4.022	< .001	0.103	0.298
JS	WLB		0.239	0.049	4.863	< .001	0.143	0.335
	SL		0.352	0.055	6.363	< .001	0.244	0.460
	OCD		0.315	0.051	6.143	< .001	0.215	0.416
	FWA		0.138	0.046	2.998	.003	0.048	0.229
	REC		0.316	0.052	6.059	< .001	0.214	0.418

Table 16. Indirect effects (generation Y)

					95% Confidence interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → IM → ER	0.041	0.016	2.634	.008	0.011	0.072
JA → IM → ER	0.036	0.014	2.588	.010	0.009	0.063
WLB → JS → ER	0.080	0.022	3.566	< .001	0.036	0.124
SL → JS → ER	0.117	0.029	4.034	< .001	0.060	0.175
OCD → JS → ER	0.105	0.026	3.977	< .001	0.053	0.157
FWA → JS → ER	0.046	0.018	2.610	.009	0.011	0.081
REC → JS → ER	0.106	0.027	3.973	< .001	0.053	0.158

The SEM's total effects for Generation Y show that several HR and organizational practices significantly influence employee retention. WLB ($\beta = 0.207$, $p < .001$), SL ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < .001$), OCD ($\beta = 0.308$, $p < .001$), POS ($\beta = 0.137$, $p = .003$), FWA ($\beta = 0.210$, $p < .001$), REC ($\beta = 0.308$, $p < .001$) and JA ($\beta = 0.135$, $p = .003$) and all have significant positive total effects on ER. Therefore, H1a, H2a, H3a, H4, H5a, H6a, H7a are validated. Based on the total effects (Table 17) interpretation, the estimate findings highlight the important role of both intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction in explaining how Human resources and organizational practices contribute, among Generation Y, to employee retention at the workplace.

Table 17. Total effects (generation Y)

					95% Confidence interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → ER	0.305	0.056	5.450	< .001	0.195	0.414
SL → IM	0.231	0.057	4.083	< .001	0.120	0.343
SL → JS	0.352	0.055	6.363	< .001	0.244	0.460
JA → IM	0.201	0.050	4.022	< .001	0.103	0.298
JA → ER	0.135	0.045	2.996	.003	0.047	0.224
WLB → ER	0.207	0.050	4.160	< .001	0.109	0.304
WLB → JS	0.239	0.049	4.863	< .001	0.143	0.335
OCD → JS	0.315	0.051	6.143	< .001	0.215	0.416
OCD → ER	0.308	0.053	5.851	< .001	0.205	0.411
FWA → ER	0.210	0.048	4.343	< .001	0.115	0.305
FWA → JS	0.138	0.046	2.998	.003	0.048	0.229
REC → JS	0.316	0.052	6.059	< .001	0.214	0.418
REC → ER	0.308	0.053	5.779	< .001	0.204	0.412
IM → ER	0.179	0.055	3.226	.001	0.070	0.287
JS → ER	0.334	0.069	4.808	< .001	0.198	0.470
POS → ER	0.137	0.046	2.970	.003	0.046	0.227

In figure 3, the SEM model for Generation Y is presented, which shows that organizational variables (WLB, SL, OCD, POS, FWA, REC, and JA) affect employee retention through HR practices, either directly or indirectly, while intrinsic motivation (IM) and job satisfaction (JS) mediate these relationships, and both play an important role in retaining employees.

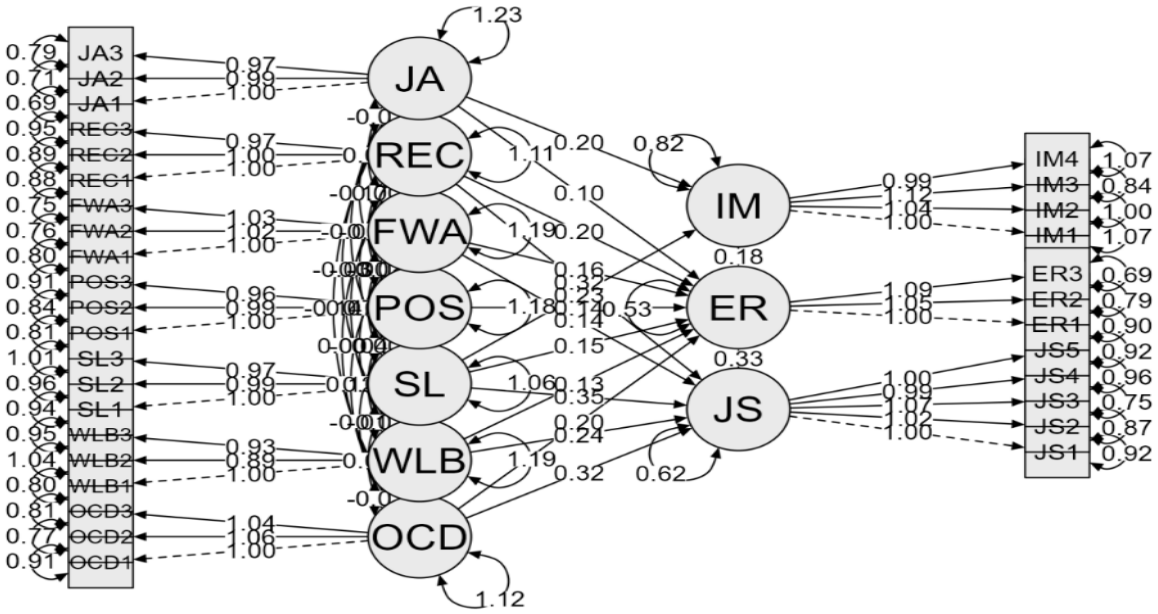

Figure 2. Conceptual model path diagram for Generation Y

SEM Structural Model Analysis for Generation Z

The SEM results for Generation Z show that Intrinsic Motivation (IM) (β = 0.178, p < .001) and Job Satisfaction (JS) (β = 0.346, p < .001) positively influence Employee Retention (ER) are illustrates in table 18. Several HR practices, including SL, OCD, FWA, REC, and JA, significantly impact ER. SL negatively affects JS (β = -0.256, p < .001).

The indirect effects (Table 19) analysis of Generation Z employees shows that IM moderates the effect of Servant Leadership (SL) (β = 0.029, p = .013) and JA (β = 0.061, p = .002) on ER. JS is a mediator of the relationship between WLB, OCD, FWA, and REC on ER. Yet, SL has an adverse effect on ER via JS (β = −0.088, p < .001).

Table 18. Regression coefficients (generation Z)

							95% Confidence interval	
Outcome	Predictor		Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
ER	IM		0.178	0.050	3.545	< .001	0.080	0.277
	JS		0.346	0.064	5.386	< .001	0.220	0.472
	WLB		0.115	0.053	2.173	.030	0.011	0.218
	SL		0.306	0.048	6.341	< .001	0.211	0.401
	OCD		0.202	0.051	3.965	< .001	0.102	0.301
	POS		0.169	0.045	3.729	< .001	0.080	0.258
	FWA		0.103	0.049	2.096	.036	0.007	0.199
	REC		0.147	0.049	3.008	.003	0.051	0.243
	JA		0.173	0.053	3.291	< .001	0.070	0.276
IM	SL		0.161	0.050	3.215	.001	0.063	0.259
	JA		0.343	0.062	5.513	< .001	0.221	0.465
JS	WLB		0.298	0.055	5.403	< .001	0.190	0.406
	SL		-0.256	0.045	-5.652	< .001	-0.345	-0.167
	OCD		0.286	0.051	5.561	< .001	0.185	0.387
	FWA		0.284	0.051	5.562	< .001	0.184	0.384
	REC		0.224	0.051	4.397	< .001	0.124	0.324

Table 19. Indirect effects (generation Z)

					95% Confidence interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → IM → ER	0.029	0.012	2.485	.013	0.006	0.051
JA → IM → ER	0.061	0.020	3.084	.002	0.022	0.100
WLB → JS → ER	0.103	0.026	3.983	< .001	0.052	0.154
SL → JS → ER	-0.088	0.023	-3.883	< .001	-0.133	-0.044
OCD → JS → ER	0.099	0.024	4.106	< .001	0.052	0.146
FWA → JS → ER	0.098	0.024	4.051	< .001	0.051	0.146
REC → JS → ER	0.077	0.022	3.554	< .001	0.035	0.120

In the total effect (Table 20) approach on Generation Z, IM ($\beta = 0.178$, $p < .001$) and JS ($\beta = 0.346$, $p < .001$) both have significant impact on ER. There are a number of other human resource strategies like SL, JA, WLB, OCD, FWA, REC, and POS which have a positive impact on ER. However, H3a has been negatively validated.

Table 20. Total effects (generation Z)

					95% Confidence interval	
	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
SL → ER	0.246	0.045	5.420	< .001	0.157	0.335
SL → IM	0.161	0.050	3.215	.001	0.063	0.259
SL → JS	-0.256	0.045	-5.652	< .001	-0.345	-0.167
JA → IM	0.343	0.062	5.513	< .001	0.221	0.465
JA → ER	0.234	0.051	4.615	< .001	0.135	0.333
WLB → ER	0.218	0.052	4.161	< .001	0.115	0.320
WLB → JS	0.298	0.055	5.403	< .001	0.190	0.406
OCD → JS	0.286	0.051	5.561	< .001	0.185	0.387
OCD → ER	0.300	0.051	5.909	< .001	0.201	0.400
FWA → ER	0.201	0.048	4.147	< .001	0.106	0.296
FWA → JS	0.284	0.051	5.562	< .001	0.184	0.384
REC → JS	0.224	0.051	4.397	< .001	0.124	0.324
REC → ER	0.225	0.050	4.494	< .001	0.127	0.323
IM → ER	0.178	0.050	3.545	< .001	0.080	0.277
JS → ER	0.346	0.064	5.386	< .001	0.220	0.472
POS → ER	0.169	0.045	3.729	< .001	0.080	0.258

Path Diagram (Figure 4) for Generation Z is shown in figure 4, which depicts how the HR practices relate to the mediators and ultimately affect Employee Retention (ER). As depicted in the diagram, both mediators have a considerable positive influence on Employee Retention.

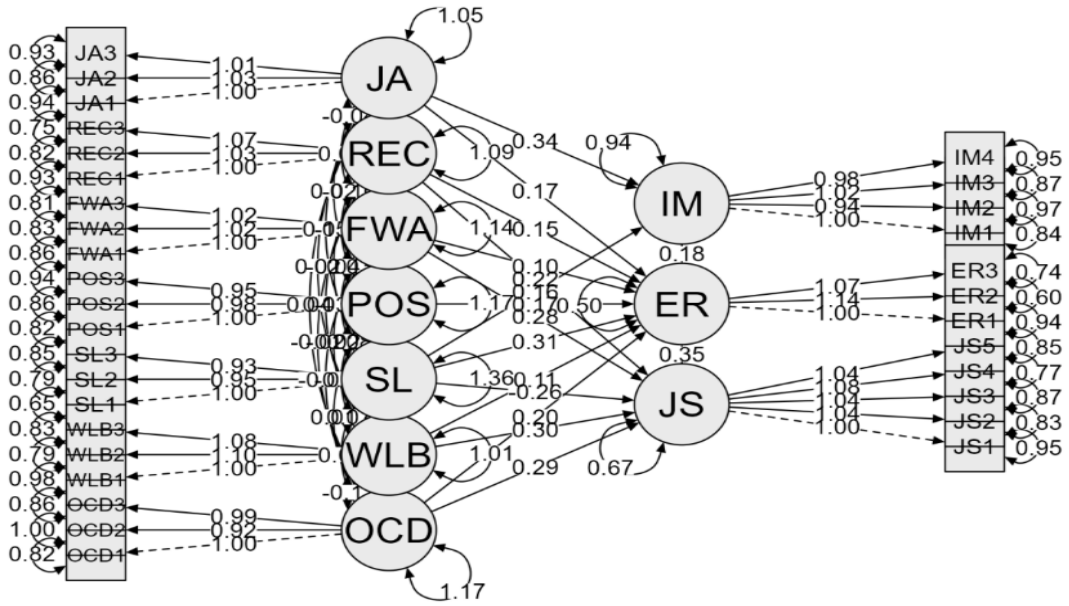

Figure 3. Conceptual model path diagram for generation Z

In table 21 compares the overall hypotheses model validation with those for Generation Y and Generation Z. The research hypotheses for Generation Y and Generation Z seem to be confirmed, either positively or negatively, based on the predicted path for each group. However, if the same hypothesis is confirmed for both groups, it is also significant for the overall model. In other words, when the same hypothesis is validated in the opposite direction, it does not show up as statistically significant in the overall model.

Table 21. Comparative summary of hypothesis testing

H	Path	Overall (Estimate; p)	Validation	Generation Y (Estimate; p)	Validation	Generation Z (Estimate; p)	Validation
H1.a	WLB → ER	0.218, *p< .001*	+	0.217, *p<.001*	+	0.218, *p< .001*	+
H1.b	WLB → JS → ER	0.080, *p< .001*	+	0.080, *p<.001*	+	0.103, *p< .001*	+
H2.a	SL → ER	0.295, *p< .001*	+	0.305, *p< .001*	+	0.246, *p< .001*	+
H2.b	SL → JS → ER	0.003, *p= 0.795*	**NS**	0.117, *p<.001*	(+)	-0.088, *p=.002*	(-)
H2.c	SL → IM → ER	0.037, *p< .001*	+	0.041, *p= .008*	+	0.029, *p=.013*	+
H3.a	OCD → ER	0.315, *p< .001*	+	0.308, *p< .001*	+	0.300, *p< .001*	+
H3.b	OCD → JS → ER	0.091, *p< .001*	+	0.105, *p< .001*	+	0.099, *p=.001*	+
H4	POS → ER	0.163, *p< .001*	+	0.137, *p=.003*	+	0.169, *p< .001*	+
H5.a	FWA → ER	0.220, *p< .001*	+	0.210, *p< .001*	+	0.201 p< .001	+
H5.b	FWA → JS → ER	0.073, *p< .001*	+	0.046, *p=0.009*	+	0.098, *p< .001*	+
H6.a	REC → ER	0.271, *p< .001*	+	0.308, *p< .001*	+	0.225, *p< .001*	+
H6.b	REC → JS → ER	0.084, *p< .001*	+	0.106, *p< .001*	+	0.077, *p< .001*	+
H7.a	JA → ER	0.193, *p< .001*	+	0.135, *p=.003*	+	0.234, *p< .001*	+
H7.c	JA → IM → ER	0.049, *p< .001*	+	0.036, *p=.010*	+	0.061, *p=.002*	+

DISCUSSION

The study underscores how job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation are significant factors impacting employee retention within the Gen Y and Z cohorts, and also shows differences in how HR works across generations. In both groups, work-life balance was a significant predictor of retention, which provided support for the Social Exchange and Two-Factor Theories because it increased satisfaction with care provided by the organization and decreased dissatisfaction. A positive relationship, positive influence, between servant leadership and retention at the job level was found for Generation Y but not for Generation Z, suggesting the need for different kind of leadership styles for younger employees to ensure their loyalty and commitment to the organization. Job satisfaction was found to be positively associated with organizational career development, perceived organizational support, flexible work arrangements, and employee recognition in both cohorts, positively influencing the retention intentions. Authonomy was the main contribution via intrinsic motivation, highlighting the significance of empowering job design.

On the operational level, HR practices should be tailored to the needs of different generations, not the same. There are several important aspects of the worklife balance that are important to the retention of Generation Y employees, including structured career paths, leadership development and support, and positive career progression. Compared to this Generation Z needs more flexible, independent, and recognition-based engagement systems. HR managers should revisit their leadership styles to be more autonomy-supportive, rather than traditional and hierarchical, for younger workers. The results indicate that HR practices that match motivational drivers for each generation can help decrease employee turnover rates within organizations. To enhance generalizability and gain insight into changing workforce expectations, future studies could examine the longitudinal effects as well as industry-specific differences.

CONCLUSION

This research study highlights the association of Human Resource (HR) practices with employee turnover in Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z in Lebanon. The results highlight the importance of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction as mediators linking HR practices and retention. Important statistical findings include that both generations have positive relationships between intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.177$, $p < .001$) and employee satisfaction ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < .001$) with employee retention. Further, HR practices like work-life balance ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < .001$), servant leadership ($\beta = 0.295$, $p < .001$) and organizational career development ($\beta = 0.315$, $p < .001$) were identified as significant contributors to the retention of Gen Y and Z, making them relevant to both generations. These results do show, however, that there are different generational differences of the effectiveness of these practices. Work-life balance positively influenced employee retention among both Generation Y and Generation Z employees. Generation Y showed stronger preferences for career development opportunities, whereas Generation Z demonstrated stronger preferences for job autonomy, flexible work arrangements, and recognition. Interestingly, servant leadership negatively affected the satisfaction with their work of Generation Z ($\beta = -0.256$, $p < .001$), suggesting that this may not be in line with their expectations. The results indicate that having a flexible HR policy towards the needs of every generation could lead to better engagement and retention. Autonomy/flexibility is a central consideration for Generation Z when it comes to career development and work-life balance are key retention factors for Generation Y. A longitudinal design could be used in future research to examine how these HR practices impact on retention in the long-term. Furthermore, qualitative research could offer more insight into the reasons for the differences in HR practice preferences between generations. The findings could be confirmed and more generalized through expansion of the research to other cultural contexts or industries.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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