Building sustainable human resource work meaning: A case study of Generation Z

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ABSTRACT

This study explores meaningful work for Generation Z and its impact on employee retention. The study was conducted through an online survey of 310 Generation Z employees in Makassar who were born between 1995 and 2010. This study analyzed the influence of five job characteristics on the meaning of work and intention to stay in the company for Generation Z using a mixed-methods approach. The analysis was conducted using SEM PLS through SmartPLS 4.0. The results indicated that Generation Z in Makassar has a unique view of the meaning of work that focuses on self-development, work-life balance, social contribution, and personal value alignment. Digitalization, pandemic experiences, social media, and local economic conditions influence their views. Generation Z expects flexibility, innovation, competitive salaries and a supportive work environment. Internal factors such as personality, life experiences, intrinsic motivation, expectations, and mental health play a dominant role. External factors such as interpersonal relationships, challenges, and organizational culture influence their perceptions of meaningful work. This research provides new insights into Generation Z's unique views on work which are influenced by internal and external factors and the job characteristics they consider important such as self-development and work-life balance.

Contribution/Originality: The originality of this study lies in its in-depth exploration of the sustainability aspect of the meaning of work, involving social, economic, and individual perspectives. The results of this study can help organizations design more adaptive and innovative HR management strategies by understanding the factors that drive Generation Z's retention and job satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Meaning in work refers to employees' subjective experiences as something that has purpose and significance (Popaitoon, 2022). It is an important element of sustainability because meaningful work experiences can improve employee well-being, support self-development, and encourage goal achievement (Zhang & Chin, 2024). Recent studies have shown that meaning in work serves as a mechanism to attract and retain talent, maintain employees' intrinsic motivation and engagement, and improve their performance (Ali, Niu, & Rubel, 2024). Thus, meaning in work can be a driver of human capital sustainability that contributes to improve organizational performance and competitiveness in the long- term (Campos-García, Alonso-Muñoz, González-Sánchez, & Medina-Salgado, 2024).

This study explores the job characteristics that can enhance meaningful work experiences for Generation Z and influence their decisions to stay in an organization.

Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2010 is now entering the workforce and is expected to make up a quarter of the global workforce by 2025 (Yılmaz, Dinler Kısaçtutan, & Gürün Karatepe, 2024). Digital evolution and technological advancements have set this generation apart from previous generations. Generation Z values purpose, meaning, and intrinsic motivation. Empirical research shows that this generation focuses more on satisfying needs, especially intrinsic motivation and meaning in work than previous generations (Krishna & Agrawal, 2024). Generational characteristics and values may influence how they identify the most motivating aspects of work (Karim, Ruslan, Chahyono, Yunus, & Ahmad, 2024). Similar phenomena have been reported in countries including the United States, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, and Thailand (Popaitoon, 2022). Managers need to be prepared for different employee expectations as more members of Generation Z enter the workforce. Designing jobs that create meaningful work experiences is important to motivate and retain employees of this generation.

Perceptions of meaningfulness, especially in the early stages of a career can be enhanced through work experiences that align with employees' work values and allow them to develop and build their careers (Lee, Chong, & Ojo, 2024). The intrinsic quality of a job can strengthen meaningfulness and retention of work experiences among Generation Z (Abduh, Remmang, Abubakar, & Karim, 2024). Work activities such as facing new challenges, taking on greater responsibilities, learning new skills, and contributing to the community in which they work can help employees. Generation Z realizes their potential, finds meaning in their work, and achieves higher goals (Chenavaz, Couston, Heichelbech, Pignatel, & Dimitrov, 2023). Previous research on Generation Z has examined the alignment of generational characteristics with specific jobs, such as hospitality and service, flexibility and work commitment (Vieira, Gomes da Costa, & Santos, 2024). Subjective well-being, ongoing volunteerism, work values, and different cultural community contexts (Seyfi, Vo-Thanh, & Zaman, 2024). This study makes an additional contribution by explaining Generation Z's workplace behavior in terms of meaningful job characteristics that support employee retention.

This study specifically examines job characteristics that are considered meaningful by Generation Z and analyzes the mediating role of job meaningfulness in the relationship between job characteristics and intention to stay in the organization (Hernita, Surya, Perwira, Abubakar, & Idris, 2021). This study contributes to the literature on job meaningfulness and generations by exploring Generation Z's views on meaningful job characteristics and work activities that support employee retention. In addition, we respond to the need for further evidence from Indonesia, especially Makassar City, regarding job meaningfulness (Surya et al., 2020). Not all job characteristics can motivate this generation, but some of them have the potential to create meaningful work experiences and strengthen relationships with the organization. Thus, this study validates the job characteristics model in the context of Generation Z, who grew up in the era of digitalization and technological disruption (Daga, Karim, Nawir, Lutfi, & Jumady, 2024). The results of this study can help managers to design selective job design strategies, such as arranging work activities that provide positive and meaningful experiences, according to the needs and characteristics of Generation Z. This strategy is expected to increase Generation Z's desire to stay in the organization, thus supporting the effectiveness of human resources.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Generation Z in the Era of Digital Disruption

Generation Z includes individuals born between 1995 and 2010 with unique characteristics that distinguish them from previous generations such as Generation X and Y (Millennials). They are known as digital natives because they grew up in an era of technological advancement and digital disruption. From an early age, Generation Z has been familiar with the Internet, social media, and smart technology devices that shape the way they learn, work, and socialize (Pricope Vancia et al., 2023). Digital disruption has changed the work landscape and lifestyle of

Generation Z. Some of the main characteristics influenced by technology include adaptability to technology (Crittenden, Biel, & Lovely III, 2019). Generation Z quickly mastered digital tools and new technologies which makes them more flexible and responsive to changes in the work (Elayan, 2022). Technology-based interactions, social media, and digital-based communication applications play an important role in how they socialize, collaborate and build professional networks (Busalim, Hollebeek, & Lynn, 2024).

Connectivity needs: Generation Z prioritizes a stable internet connection, instant access to information, and flexibility in working remotely. Furthermore, Generation Z has different values and expectations than previous generations in the context of work (Krishna & Agrawal, 2024). Work has a positive impact both for themselves and for society. Work flexibility and digital disruption have created expectations for a flexible work environment, including work-life balance, remote work, and flexible working hours (Chalabi & Dia, 2024). Intrinsic motivation: Generation Z prioritizes inner satisfaction from work, such as developing skills, creativity, and goals that are in line with personal values (Indrayani, Nurhatisyah, Damsar, & Wibisono, 2024). Sustainability and social responsibility are more interested in working in organizations that prioritize sustainability, ethics and social responsibility (Kantabutra & Ketprapakorn, 2020).

However, digital disruption has created challenges and opportunities for organizations to understand and meet the needs of Generation Z. Maintaining the loyalty of Generation Z who tends to have high job turnover rates. Designing jobs provides meaning and continuous learning opportunities and adapting organizational culture to the need for technology-based flexibility and collaboration. In addition, Generation Z has the opportunity to leverage the power of technology to drive innovation and creating a dynamic, inclusive, and technology-based work environment to attract young talent. It facilitates the development of digital and non-technical skills to support their career growth.

Research shows that Generation Z is more focused on the sustainability and meaningfulness of work than previous generations. Studies in countries such as the United States, Canada, and developing countries have found that this generation values companies that support flexibility, well-being, and social responsibility (Ge et al., 2022). In addition, technology plays a big role in the retention of Generation Z employees with their preference for digital collaboration tools and learning opportunities through online platforms (Chang, Kim, & Yoo, 2024). Organizations need to adapt their human resource strategies to support the needs and characteristics of Generation Z (Acheampong, 2021). Thus, Generation Z presents unique challenges and opportunities in the era of digital disruption. Organizations that can understand the values, expectations and ways of working of this generation will be better prepared for the changing work landscape of the future. Further research is needed to explore how technology and sustainability can continue to support the performance and retention of Generation Z in different contexts, including developing countries.

2.2. Meaning of Work and Employee Retention

Meaningfulness of work refers to employees' perceptions that the work they do has a purpose, value and significant impact. This concept is subjective and closely related to personal experiences and how employees interpret their work. Meaningfulness of work occurs when employees feel that their work has a positive, varied, and important impact on the organization and society (Bukth & Fatima, 2024). Meaning not only increases job satisfaction but also supports commitment, emotional well-being, and intrinsic motivation, all of which contribute to employee retention (Ajmal, Rahat, & Islam, 2024). Furthermore, factors that influence the meaning of work include job characteristics: Challenging, varied and socially meaningful tasks increase perceptions of meaning (Tommasi, Sartori, Ceschi, & Dickert, 2024). Relationship with the organization, supportive organizational culture, inclusive work environment and clarity of company vision can influence how employees interpret their work. The congruence between individual values and organizational values plays an important role in building meaningfulness (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024).

Social contribution and employees tend to find greater meaningfulness when their work has a positive impact on the community or society at large (Choi, Lee, Kang, & Lee, 2025). Interpersonal relationships and support from coworkers and superiors also influence the perception of work meaning. Work meaningfulness plays an important role in employee retention because employees who find their work meaningful tend to have a greater commitment to the organization (Gelencsér, Szabó-Szentgróti, Kőmüves, & Hollósy-Vadász, 2023). Increasing employee loyalty and meaningful work creates a stronger emotional attachment between employees and the organization, thereby reducing the desire to leave the company (Chang et al., 2024). Increase job satisfaction and employees who find their work meaningful tend to be more satisfied and motivated leading to the intention to stay with the company (Zacher & Baumeister, 2024).

Meaningful work can act as a buffer against job stress and emotional exhaustion which are often reasons employees leave organizations to reduce burnout (Maheshwari, Kaur, & Varma, 2024). Support career development and meaningful work provides opportunities for employees to grow personally and professionally making them more likely to stay (Rajahonka & Villman, 2022). Job meaningfulness significantly impacts organizational commitment and reduces employee turnover rates across sectors including healthcare, education, and technology (Abu Orabi et al., 2024). Furthermore, in the context of developing countries, job meaningfulness is often associated with organizational efforts to create social or environmental impact that attract employees to stay (Ali et al., 2024).

Recent studies have shown that Generation Z and Millennials value meaningfulness at work more than previous generations. So organizations need to adapt their strategies to attract and retain these generations (Vieira et al., 2024). Furthermore, meaningfulness at work is a critical element in employee retention, especially in today's competitive work landscape. Organizations that can create a work environment that supports meaningfulness not only increase employee loyalty but also drive productivity and well-being. Companies can develop effective work design strategies, maintain employee motivation, and reduce employee turnover rates by understanding the factors that influence meaningfulness. Further research is needed to explore meaningfulness at work across sectors and cultural contexts, especially in developing countries.

2.3. Job Characteristics

Job characteristics refer to the essential elements of a job that influence how employees perceive and perform their tasks. Certain job characteristics can affect employee motivation, job satisfaction and performance. Skill diversity: The degree to which different skills and abilities are used in a job (Cangialosi, Battistelli, & Odoardi, 2023). Task identity: The extent to which a job involves completing a complete task from start to finish (Tommasi et al., 2024). Task significance: The degree to which the job impacts others or society (Albrecht, Green, & Marty, 2021). Autonomy, freedom, and discretion in making decisions related to the job (Yunus & Mostafa, 2022). Feedback: Information employees receive about their performance (Giamos, Doucet, & Léger, 2024). Jobs play an important role in determining employee motivation and satisfaction levels (Ahmad, 2018).

Intrinsic motivation and dimensions such as autonomy and skill variety encourage employees to work more enthusiastically without the need for external incentives (Mardanov, 2021). Job satisfaction characteristics such as feedback, and task significance create feelings of being valued and satisfied with their work (Gumasing & Ilo, 2023). Employee well-being and well-designed jobs reduce stress and burnout and improve psychological well-being (Divjak & Čič, 2021). Job characteristics not only affect motivation and satisfaction but also contribute to employee performance and retention. Improved performance and employees who have autonomy and receive regular feedback tends to be more productive (Bahtiar & Karim, 2021). Loyalty and retention and work that is meaningful and provides growth opportunities tends to make employees stay longer in the organization (Lee & Kim, 2023). Job engagement: Dimensions such as skill variety and task significance increase engagement and commitment to the organization (Juyumaya, Torres-Ochoa, & Rojas, 2024).

Generation Z and Millennials: Younger generations tend to value job characteristics such as autonomy, flexibility and meaningfulness (Westjohn, Magnusson, Franke, & Peng, 2022). They are more attracted to jobs that allow for self-development and social impact. Cultural context: Cross-cultural studies have found that task significance and autonomy are more valued in countries with high individualism values while feedback and collaboration are more important in countries with collectivist cultures (Lomas et al., 2023). Additionally, improving job characteristics requires a strategic approach to job design, including job rotation. Providing task variety to reduce boredom and improve skills (Arhim, Alzubi, Iyiola, & Banje, 2024). Empowering employees: Increasing autonomy in decision-making (Sousa, Santos, Santos, & Oliveira, 2023).

Constructive feedback: Providing clear and relevant information about employee performance (Vuong & Nguyen, 2022). Increased task significance: Emphasizing the impact of work on the organization or society (Tumi, Hasan, & Khalid, 2022). Job enrichment: Adding challenges and responsibilities to work to make it more meaningful (Suriani, Nur, Mardjuni, Baharuddin, & Karim, 2024). Thus, job characteristics are an important element in creating meaningful, motivating, and satisfying work experiences. Organizations can increase productivity, retention, and engagement by designing jobs that integrate dimensions such as skill variety, autonomy, and feedback. However, successful implementation of job characteristics requires a contextual approach that takes into account employee preferences, organizational culture, and the challenges of the modern workplace. Further research is needed to explore the relevance of job characteristics in the digital age and with new generations, such as Generation Z.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to understand how Generation Z makes sense of their work and the factors contributing to building sustainable work meaning. As more Generation Z enter the workforce, it is important to understand the aspects that drive their engagement, satisfaction, and retention in organizations. This study uses a mixed-method case study approach. Data were collected through quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews to gain a more holistic understanding.

3.1. Participant

Participants in this study were individuals from Generation Z (born between 1995–2010) who are currently working in various organizations in Indonesia. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) Aged between 18-29 years. (2) Have worked from 2018 – 2023. (3) Work in various industrial sectors in Makassar City. (4) The number of respondents was 300 people for the survey and 10 people for in-depth interviews. (5) Respondents had a bachelor's degree (96%) and had worked in a company for two years or less (89%). (6) Respondents were in accounting, finance, information technology, engineering, and logistics.

3.2. Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques used were purposive sampling for surveys and snowball sampling for interviews. The survey was distributed online through social media and professional networks. In-depth interviews were conducted with participants selected based on their industry sector variations and work experience.

3.3. Research Instruments
3.3.1. Survey

The survey was designed to measure (1) perceptions of the meaning of work (usefulness, social impact and self-development). (2) Factors contributing to job engagement and satisfaction. (3) Commitment to the organization and intention to remain in the workplace.

3.3.2. In-Depth Interview

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore in more depth. (1) Work experiences and factors that make their work meaningful. (2) Expectations and aspirations for work and (3) Challenges in finding meaning in work.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection, namely (1) Distribution of the survey online through social media and professional networks. (2) Screening of respondents to ensure they meet the inclusion criteria. (3) Initial analysis of the survey results to identify key patterns. (4) Conducting in-depth interviews with participants selected based on the survey results. (5) Transcription and thematic analysis of the interviews.

3.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression to identify relationships between the factors studied. Data analysis in this study includes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions, which are supported by analysis using the Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Square (SEM PLS) method through SmartPLS software version 4.0. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach (Karim, Musa, Sahabuddin, & Azis, 2021). The results of this study are expected to provide insights for organizations in designing better HR management strategies for Generation Z. Organizations can increase engagement, job satisfaction, and retention of young employees by understanding the factors that build the meaning of work for them. This study also contributes to academics and practitioners in understanding of the role of sustainability in the meaning of work for Generation Z.

4. RESULT

4.1. Measurement Model Analysis

4.1.1. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the extent to which the indicators used in the study measure the intended construct. In this study, convergent validity was tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure that each indicator in the survey has a high correlation with the construct being measured. The criteria used to assess convergent validity include (1) Average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5 which indicates that more than 50% of the indicator's variance can be explained by the latent construct. (2) Factor loadings ≥ 0.7 indicates that each indicator has a strong relationship with the construct it represents. (3) Composite reliability (CR) ≥ 0.7 indicates that the research instrument has good internal consistency. This study can guarantee the results obtained truly reflect the meaning of work experienced by Generation Z in the context of sustainable HR by ensuring convergent validity.

Table 1. Average variance extracted (AVE)

Variables	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Task significance drive (Z)	0.591
Skill diversity (X1)	0.574
Autonomy (X2)	0.574
The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	0.616

Table 1 explains that the average variance extracted (AVE) on the lifestyle construct is 0.591, financial inclusion is 0.574, financial literacy is 0.574, and personal financial management is 0.616. All constructs have values higher than 0.50 so the constructs are declared valid.

4.1.2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is the extent to which a construct is truly different from other constructs. A construct can be said to have good discriminant validity if the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value is <0.90.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)

Variables	Task significance drive (Z)	Skill diversity (X1)	Autonomy (X2)	The creation of meaning for generation (Y)
Task significance drive (Z)				0.000
Skill diversity (X1)	0.752			0.000
Autonomy (X2)	0.798	0.883		0.000
The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	0.819	0.812	0.806	0.000

Table 2 shows that the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) for all constructs in this study has a value lower than 0.90. Thus, this confirms that the constructs studied in this study have good discriminant validity, meaning that each construct can be clearly distinguished from each other.

4.2. Reliability Test

In general, reliability is defined as a series of tests to assess the reliability of statement items. Reliability tests are used to measure the consistency of measuring instruments in measuring a concept or to measure the consistency of respondents in answering statement items in questionnaires or research instruments. Reliability testing can be done through composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. A variable can be said to be reliable if it has composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha value > 0.7.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Task significance drive (Z)	0.862	0.896
Skill diversity (X1)	0.853	0.890
Autonomy (X2)	0.853	0.890
The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	0.875	0.906

Table 3 shows that Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability for task importance are 0.862 and 0.896. Skill diversity is 0.853 and 0.890. Autonomy is 0.853 and 0.890. The creation of meaning for generation is 0.875 and 0.906. All constructs obtained Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values higher than 0.7, so it can be said that all constructs in this study are declared reliable.

4.3. Structural Model Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was used in this study to examine the causal relationships between latent variables that contribute to Generation Z's work meaning. SEM allows for the analysis of complex relationships between factors that influence work engagement and sustainability. Convergent validity was tested by looking at average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5 and factor loadings ≥ 0.7. Discriminant validity was tested by comparing the square root of AVE with the correlation between latent constructs. Composite reliability (CR ≥ 0.7) ensure the internal consistency of the instrument, testing the relationship between latent variables using regression parameter estimation and significance testing (p-value < 0.05), interpretation of the results to determine the main factors that influence Generation Z's work meaning in the context of HR sustainability, and identifying significant causal pathways and providing recommendations for organizations to improve work engagement.

Table 4. R-square

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Task significance drive (Z)	0.528	0.518
The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	0.643	0.632

Table 4 shows an R-square of 0.528 indicating that about 52.8% of the variation in the task significance drive can be explained by the independent variables in the model. Thus, the model is classified as moderate. Furthermore, the R-square value of 0.643 indicates that 64.3% of the variation in the creation of meaning for Generation Z can be explained by the independent variables. This means that the model is classified as moderate.

The measure is used to assess the relative impact of exogenous (independent) variables on endogenous (dependent) variables. The F- square measurement is also called the effect change which means that the change in value when a particular exogenous variable is removed from the model can be used to evaluate whether the removed variable has a substantial impact on the endogenous construct. The criteria for this test are F- square values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35; then the effect given by the exogenous variable on the endogenous has a large, medium, and weak influence.

Table 5. F-square

Variables	Task significance drive (Z)	The creation of meaning for generation (Y)
Task significance drive (Z)	0.680	0.182
Skill diversity (X1)	0.071	0.094
Autonomy (X2)	0.205	0.049

Table 5 shows that skill diversity has an F-square value of 0.071 when influencing task significance drive. This indicates a weak influence. Meanwhile, skill diversity shows a higher F-square value of 0.205, indicating a moderate influence on task significance drive. However, when looking at the influence of these variables on meaning creation for personal generation, the F-square value for skill diversity is 0.094 and for autonomy is 0.049, indicating that both have a weak influence. The F-square value for task significance drive is 0.182 indicating a moderate influence on meaning creation for generation. Overall, these results highlight that skill diversity and autonomy have a greater impact on task significance drive than meaning creation for a generation.

4.4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is used to determine the path coefficient of the structural model. The goal is to test the significance of each relationship or hypothesis.

This hypothesis testing is carried out based on the results of the bootstrapping test and is divided into direct and indirect effects.

The type of hypothesis test used is a one-sided test. The criteria for testing this hypothesis are if the path coefficient value of the t-statistic value> 1.64, then there is a significant effect. Conversely, if the t-statistic value <1.64, then there is no significant effect. If the probability value (p-value) <0.05, then there is a significant effect. Conversely, if the p-value> 0.05, then it is not significant.

4.4.1. Immediate Effects

Direct effect analysis is used to test the hypothesis of the direct effect of an influencing variable (exogenous) on the influenced variable (endogenous).

Table 6. Direct effect

Variables	T-statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-values
Task significance drive (Z) → The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	2.990	0.001
Skill diversity (X1) → Task significance drive (Z)	2.266	0.012
Skill diversity (X1) → The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	2.658	0.004
Autonomy (X2) → Task significance drive (Z)	3.857	0.000
Autonomy (X2) → The creation of meaning for generation (Y)	1.951	0.026

Table 6 illustrates that the path coefficient is positive as seen in the t-statistic so that the influence of one variable on another variable is unidirectional. If the value of a variable increases, then the value of the other variable also increases. The influence of task significance drive on the creation of meaning for a generation has a t-statistic value of 2.990> 1.64 and a probability value (p-value) of 0.001 <0.05, so that task significance drive has a positive and significant influence on the creation of meaning for a generation. The influence of skill diversity on task significance drive has a t-statistic value of 2.266> 1.64 and a p-value of 0.012 <0.05, so financial diversity skills have a positive and significant influence on task significance drive. The influence of skill diversity on the creation of meaning for a generation has a t-statistic value of 2.658> 1.64 and a p-value of 0.004 <0.05, so skill diversity has a positive and significant influence on the creation of meaning for a generation. The influence of autonomy on the drive for task significance has a t-statistic value of 3.857>1.64 and a p-value of 0.000<0.05, so autonomy has a positive and significant influence on the drive for task significance. The influence of autonomy on the creation of meaning for generations has a t-statistic value of 1.951>1.64 and a p-value of 0.026<0.05, so autonomy has a positive and significant influence on the creation of meaning for generations. In addition, path analysis uses SmartPLS in hypothesis testing as in Figure 1.
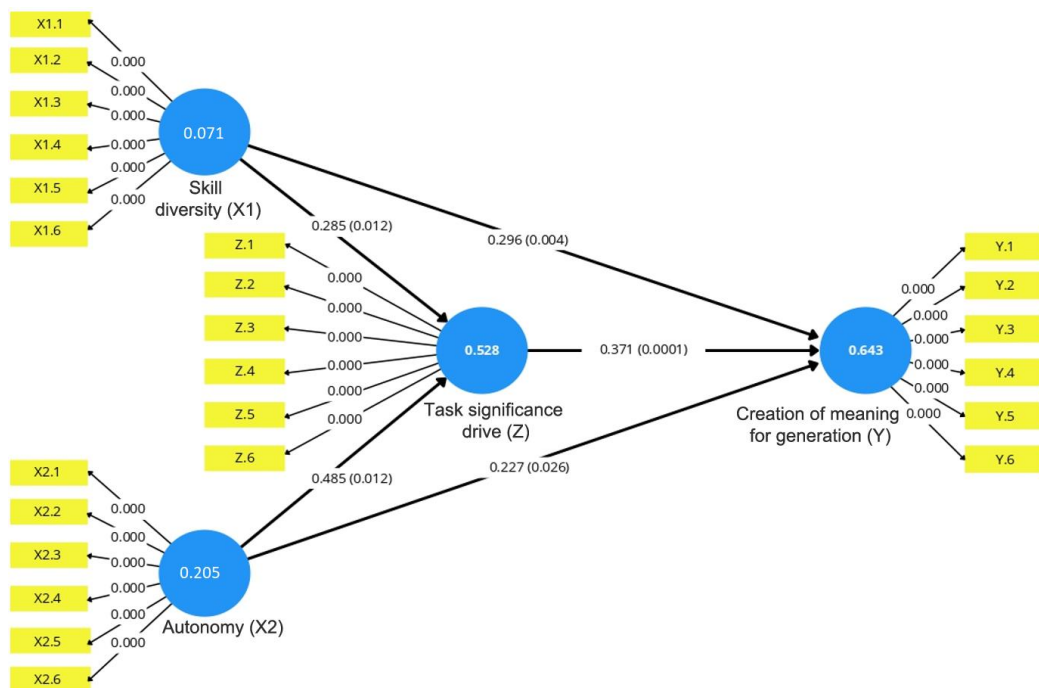

Figure 1. Path coefficient.

Figure 1 shows that all relationships have a positive and significant effect. The skill diversity variable (X1) indicates the extent to which skill diversity influences a particular goal or outcome. The autonomy variable (X2) reflects the degree of autonomy an individual or organization has in completing a task. This is often considered important in creating a meaningful work environment. The task significance and drive (Z) variables measure the

significance of the task and the motivation or drive to complete it. The results recorded can provide insight into how important these tasks are viewed by the individuals involved. The outcome or meaning creation for generation (Y) variable indicates the outcome or meaning creation relevant to a particular generation. This can be the effect of variables X1 and X2 on the success or satisfaction of an individual/group.

In the coefficient data, there is a coefficient value with a number in parentheses (e.g., 0.285 (0.012)). The first value is the correlation coefficient or effect, while the number in parentheses is the p-value (probability) to test statistical significance. The relationship between the variables shows an indication that skill diversity (X1) and autonomy (X2) have a significant relationship with the outcome or meaning creation (Y). Positive coefficients and small p-values (perhaps <0.05) indicate statistically significant relationships. Furthermore, skill diversity, autonomy, and task significance contribute to the creation of meaning or positive outcomes. Emphasizing the development of diverse skills and the provision of autonomy may enhance desired outcomes.

4.4.2. Indirect Effects

Indirect effect describes the indirect effect of an influencing variable on the influenced variable which is mediated by an intervening variable (mediator variable).

Table 7. Specific indirect effect

Variables	T-statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-values
Skill diversity (X1) → Task significance & drive (Z) → Creation of meaning for generation (Y)	1.757	0.039
Autonomy (X2) → Task significance and drive (Z) → Creation of meaning for generation (Y)	2.386	0.009

Table 7 shows the results of the indirect effect test. The effect of skill diversity on the creation of meaning for generations through the significance of tasks and encouragement has a t-statistic value of 1.757>1.64 and a p-value of 0.039<0.05, so that skill diversity has a positive and significant effect on the creation of meaning for generations through the significance of tasks and encouragement. Furthermore, the effect of autonomy on the creation of meaning for generations through the significance of tasks and encouragement has a t-statistic value of 2.386>1.64 and a p-value of 0.009<0.05, so autonomy has a positive and significant effect on the creation of meaning for generations through the significance of tasks and encouragement.

The following are the core research results that summarize the main findings related to the factors that influence the meaning of work for Generation Z as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Meaning of work for generation Z

Variables	Regression coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
Intrinsic factors	0.52	6.21	<0.001	Significant
Extrinsic factors	0.41	4.89	<0.001	Significant
Organizational sustainability	0.47	5.32	<0.001	Significant
Job involvement	0.58	7.14	<0.001	Significant
Job satisfaction	0.49	5.87	<0.001	Significant
Commitment to the organization	0.35	4.22	<0.001	Significant

Interpretation of the results of Table 8, namely, the work involvement factor has the strongest influence on the meaning of work (β = 0.58, p < 0.001). Intrinsic factors such as self-development and social contribution have a greater impact than extrinsic factors. Organizational sustainability plays an important role in strengthening Generation Z's attachment to their work.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Job Attributes that Provide Meaning to Generation Z and their Impact on Employee Retention

Generation Z, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s is the first generation to grow up with digital technology as an integral part of their lives. This generation has unique needs and preferences in the context of work that differ from previous generations. Generation Z seeks jobs that not only provide financial benefits but also have a clear purpose and positive impact on society (Sengupta, Mathews, Bridges, D'Costa, & Bastian, 2024). They want jobs that make a real contribution to social, environmental, or humanitarian issues. For example, they are more likely to choose to work for companies that are committed to sustainability or have strong corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Continuous learning is a priority for Generation Z. They expect jobs that offer training, mentoring programs, and opportunities to improve their skills. Organizations that support career development, such as providing access to online courses, workshops, or professional certifications, are more appealing to this generation (Lim et al., 2024). Generation Z is particularly concerned about mental health and work-life balance. They value flexibility in working hours, remote working options, and a work culture that is not overworked. Companies that offer adequate leave, flexible work locations, and a work environment that supports mental well-being will have an easier time attracting and retaining Gen Z. Furthermore, Gen Z values involvement in decision-making processes at work. They want their voices to be heard and their contributions recognized. Transparency in communication, whether about company policies or career prospects, is a key factor that adds a sense of belonging to an organization. Gen Z cares deeply about issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion. They are more likely to be attracted to companies that promote an inclusive work culture, support gender, racial, and religious diversity, and provide a space for self-expression without discrimination. As a generation familiar with technology, Gen Z expects companies to use modern technology to support work productivity. Advanced digital tools, online collaboration platforms, and technological innovations are additional draws for them.

The impact of Generation Z job attributes on employee retention can be seen from the fact that implementing meaningful job attributes for Generation Z is not only important for attracting talent but also has a significant impact on retention. When work provides meaning that is in line with personal values, Generation Z tends to be more loyal to the company. They feel like an important part of the organization and are more committed to achieving common goals. High turnover is often a challenge for organizations, especially in dealing with the younger generation (Karim, Asrianto, Ruslan, & Said, 2023). However, jobs that offer meaningful attributes can reduce turnover rates. Generation Z who feels satisfied and connected to their work tend to stay longer in the company. Meaningful work increases intrinsic motivation which is the drive to work hard for non-financial reasons such as a sense of achievement, recognition, and personal satisfaction. This contributes to higher productivity in the workplace. Organizations that create a meaningful work environment will build a positive reputation as an ideal workplace. Generation Z often share their experiences on social media, so companies that succeed in creating a meaningful work culture can attract more top talent. Generation Z is known for its responsiveness to change, especially in the face of global challenges such as pandemics or digital transformation. By providing meaningful work and supporting flexibility, companies can maintain workforce stability despite complex dynamics. Furthermore, organizational strategies to support Generation Z and to retain employees from Generation Z, companies need to demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and high work ethics (Hasniati, Indriasari, Sirajuddin, & Karim, 2023). This can be realized through CSR programs, green initiatives, or philanthropic activities and offering technology-based training programs, online learning platforms, and opportunities for career development that aim to meet the development needs of Generation Z.

Companies can implement flexible work policies, provide mental health facilities, and create a healthy and inclusive work culture. Increasing minority representation, supporting gender equality, and creating strong anti-discrimination policies will create a comfortable work environment for Gen Z. Investing in modern technologies, such as digital collaboration platforms and cloud-based work tools, will increase efficiency and support a more

dynamic way of working that aligns with Gen Z's preferences. Gen Z requires meaningful work through clear goals, learning opportunities, work-life balance, and an inclusive and diverse work culture. By understanding and accommodating these attributes, organizations can not only attract but also retain Gen Z talent. The impacts include increased loyalty and productivity, as well as a company's reputation as an ideal workplace. Implementing a strategy that focuses on the needs of this generation is a long-term investment that will give companies a competitive advantage.

5.2. The Influence of Skills, Autonomy, Task Significance and Drive on Generation Z

The direct influence of Generation Z skills in terms of autonomy, task significance, and drive toward meaning-making. Generation Z skills such as adaptability to technology, collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving play a direct role in creating meaning at work. When these skills are optimally utilized at work, they feel relevant, competent, and valued. This increases their sense of meaning because their work is considered important to the organization and the work environment. Autonomy gives Generation Z the freedom to organize their work, choose methods, and make decisions relevant to their tasks (Karim, Ahmad, & Syamsuddin, 2024). This sense of trust and responsibility makes them feel respected as individuals who can contribute independently. This directly creates a sense of meaning in work because they have control over the results of their work. Task significance creates direct meaning when Generation Z feels that their tasks have a positive impact on others, be it customers, colleagues, or the wider community. Understanding that their work makes an important contribution to a larger purpose motivates them to see their work as valuable and meaningful. Intrinsic drive or motivation, such as the desire to grow, learn, and achieve personal goals, gives Generation Z a direct drive to find meaning in their work. When they are internally motivated, work is not just about fulfilling obligations but also about achievement and self-actualization, which directly strengthens the sense of meaningfulness. These four elements directly influence the creation of work meaning by increasing the sense of relevance, contribution, control, and achievement in the workplace. Organizations that can integrate these elements into job design will create a work environment that is not only engaging but also meaningful for Gen Z. Gen Z's skills, such as technology adaptability, creativity, and collaboration, have an indirect impact on meaning-making through recognition and development. When organizations provide training programs, mentoring, or opportunities to hone skills, Gen Z feels valued and supported. This process increases their self-confidence and satisfaction, which indirectly creates meaning in the workplace. Autonomy provides freedom in the workplace, which not only increases a sense of control but also impacts relationships with superiors and coworkers. In a work environment that provides autonomy, Gen Z tends to be more confident in collaborating and sharing ideas. These positive interactions create a more satisfying work experience, indirectly increasing their sense of meaning. Task significance not only directly influences meaning but also how organizations communicate the impact of those tasks. When organizations explicitly show how individual tasks impact company goals or the well-being of others, it strengthens Gen Z's sense of connection to the work. Good communication creates a greater sense of pride and engagement, which indirectly increases meaning-making. Intrinsic motivation, such as the desire to learn and grow, influences meaning-making through recognition of achievement and growth opportunities. When organizations provide a platform for Gen Z to achieve personal or professional goals, such as promotions, recognition, or innovative projects, they feel cared for and appreciated (Wahyuni, Kalsum, Asmara, & Karim, 2022). This indirectly builds deeper meaning in their work. The indirect effects of skills, autonomy, task significance, and encouragement are seen in how organizations support, recognize, and facilitate Gen Z's work experiences. These factors create a work environment that strengthens employees' emotional connection to the organization, increases their sense of belonging, and gives deeper meaning to their work. Organizations that can strategically manage these aspects will be able to create meaningful and satisfying work experiences for Gen Z.

6. CONCLUSION

Gen Z, who grew up with digital technology as part of their daily lives bring unique needs and preferences to the workplace. This generation seeks not only financial gain but also meaning in work that aligns with their values. They want to work with a clear purpose, a real social impact, and a commitment to sustainability and social responsibility. Job attributes provide opportunities for skill development, work flexibility, work-life balance, and an inclusive and supportive work environment are critical to Gen Z. When work reflects these attributes, Gen Z feels more connected, motivated, and valued. This contributes to increased employee loyalty and retention. Meaningful work not only boosts Gen Z's intrinsic motivation but also builds an emotional connection to the organization. Companies can create a work environment that fosters high productivity, workforce stability, and a positive corporate reputation by offering them opportunities to learn, innovate, and contribute significantly. Additionally, organizational strategies that support Gen Z's needs, such as CSR initiatives, technology-based career development, work flexibility, and inclusive and diverse work culture, are long-term investments. Companies that successfully understand and meet the expectations of Generation Z will gain a competitive advantage through increased loyalty, productivity, and attractiveness as an ideal workplace.

Generation Z skills such as adaptability to technology, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving, along with autonomy, task significance, and intrinsic motivation (drive), contribute directly and indirectly to the creation of meaning in their work. The direct effect is seen when Generation Z feels relevant, competent, and valued because their skills are being used optimally. Autonomy increases their sense of responsibility and control over their work, while task significance creates meaning through real contributions to the organization and society. Intrinsic motivation drives them to work hard, achieve personal goals, and feel satisfied with their achievements, all of which strengthen their sense of meaningfulness in their work. The indirect effect comes from organizational support, such as training, mentoring, and good communication about the impact of work. Organizations that provide opportunities for Generation Z to develop skills, build positive relationships with coworkers, and feel emotionally connected to the company's purpose can increase their sense of meaningfulness in their work. By strategically integrating these elements, organizations not only create an engaging and meaningful work environment for Generation Z but also build employee loyalty, engagement, and productivity. Highly meaningful work creates a satisfying and sustainable work experience while giving organizations a competitive advantage.

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