

HRM factors in the integration of generation Z into organisations

Szilárd Malatyinszki^{1*}

¹ Department of Management and Business Law, Faculty of Economics, John von Neumann University, Kecskemét, Hungary <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1624-4902>
<https://doi.org/10.47833/2026.2.ECO.017>

Keywords:

Generation Z; onboarding; organisational integration; feedback culture; workplace engagement; HRM

Article history:

Received 9 June 2026
Revised 20 September 2026
Accepted 25 September 2026

Abstract

This study examines the HRM factors that support the organisational integration and workplace engagement of Generation Z employees. It focuses on the quality of onboarding, the feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities. The research is based on an exploratory, pilot questionnaire survey, which identifies preliminary patterns of HRM factors supporting organisational integration and commitment based on the responses of 14 Generation Z employees working in knowledge-based roles. According to the results, work-life balance, regular managerial feedback, the digital work environment, flexible work arrangements and learning opportunities play a key role. The research suggests that Generation Z's long-term organisational commitment can be strengthened through a supportive culture, autonomy and opportunities for development. The results provide a basis for a subsequent study with a larger sample size.

1 Introduction

The transformation of the labour market, digitalisation, the spread of flexible working arrangements, and changing expectations among young employees are creating new challenges for organisations. The arrival of Generation Z on the labour market makes it particularly important to examine what HRM tools companies can use to support the integration, engagement and long-term retention of new entrants. According to the international literature on organisational socialisation, the induction of new employees is not merely an administrative process, but an HRM mechanism that can influence satisfaction, commitment, performance and turnover intentions [1] [2]. This study therefore interprets the onboarding of Generation Z primarily as a matter of leadership, HRM and organisational development.

However, the generational approach should be applied with caution. The literature warns that treating generational groups in an overly simplistic manner can lead to stereotypical conclusions, as workplace behaviour is shaped not only by age or birth cohort, but also by career stage, social background, work experience and the organisational environment [3] [4] [5]. Accordingly, this study treats Generation Z not as a homogeneous group, but as a cohort of young employees whose workplace experiences are shaped by a combination of digitalisation, the career stage (early career or career entry), managerial support and organisational culture.

Based on domestic and international research, flexible working arrangements, regular feedback, a technology-supported working environment, opportunities for development and work-life balance play a key role for young employees. Research by Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós and Juhász [6] in Central Europe highlighted that digitalisation, communication and knowledge sharing are key factors in the workplace behaviour of Generations Y and Z. Domestic research also indicates that

* Corresponding author. Email: malatyinszki.szilard@nje.hu

the expectations of Generation Z employees include professional development, flexibility, opportunities for advancement, workplace culture, innovation and stability [7]. In line with this, global labour market reports emphasise the importance of well-being, skills development and job stability among younger employee groups [8].

The research problem stems from the fact that, although numerous general observations regarding Generation Z appear in professional and public discourse, fewer empirical studies analyse how specific HRM practices can contribute to the organisational integration and commitment of young employees. This study therefore examines the role of onboarding, a feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities. The research is based on an exploratory, pilot questionnaire survey, which identifies preliminary patterns of HRM factors supporting organisational integration and commitment based on the responses of 14 Generation Z employees working in knowledge-based roles.

The study makes a twofold contribution. On the one hand, it systematises the HRM factors that may be relevant to the integration and retention of Generation Z employees. On the other hand, based on pilot empirical results, it provides a preliminary picture of the organisational conditions under which young employees feel supported, motivated and committed. The results are not intended to draw generalised conclusions, but rather to lay the groundwork for the model and measurement dimensions of a subsequent study with a larger sample.

2 Titles Theoretical background

2.1 A critical interpretation of the generational approach

The generational approach is a frequently used framework for interpreting workplace behaviour, value preferences and employee expectations. Generational theories are based on the premise that age groups socialised within the same historical, social, economic and technological environment share certain common experiences that may influence their attitudes towards work, leadership, careers and organisational relationships. Generational categories can therefore serve as a useful starting point in HRM and management science, particularly when organisations seek to understand the expectations of younger groups of employees entering the labour market.

However, applying this approach requires caution. Some of the international literature on generational differences warns that rigidly separating generational groups can easily lead to stereotypical interpretations. According to the critical review by Rudolph, Rauvola and Zacher [4], management conclusions regarding generational differences are often overly generalised and do not always adequately distinguish between the effects of age, career stage, historical period and organisational context. The meta-analysis by Ravid, Costanza and Rios Romero [5] points in a similar direction; based on 143 independent samples, it concluded that generational differences in the workplace are in many cases less systematic and less significant than is often assumed in professional discourse.

This does not mean that the generational approach should be rejected. Rather, it suggests that Generation Z should not be interpreted as a homogeneous group with a uniform behavioural pattern, but as a cohort of young employees whose workplace behaviour is shaped by a combination of experiences with digitalisation, being at the start or early stages of their careers, the work organisation environment, and managerial support. For example, the empirical research by Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance [3], which examined changes in work values, highlighted that certain extrinsic and leisure-related values may be strengthening among younger age groups, but their interpretation can only be grounded in a social and historical context.

In the Hungarian literature, Dajnoki and Héder [9] discuss generational management, retention management, HR branding, talent management and work experience management among the changing challenges of HRM. In this regard, Malatyinszki [10] draws attention to the fact that the emergence of new generations can be interpreted not merely as a difference in age, but as an interrelated challenge concerning employment, digitalisation and human resource management. This reinforces the view that the integration of Generation Z into organisations should be examined not through the lens of generational stereotypes, but along specific HRM and leadership intervention

points. According to their approach, the generational issue is not a standalone, isolated HR problem, but rather part of an organisation's adaptability, management practices and employer attractiveness. This perspective fits particularly well with the logic of the present research, which interprets the integration of Generation Z not merely as an age-related characteristic, but as an issue of HRM and organisational development. From the perspective of the research model, this means that the integration of Generation Z employees is not derived from generational characteristics, but from the functioning of specific organisational and HRM factors.

2.2 Generation Z's workplace expectations

The examination of Generation Z's workplace expectations has become a key research topic because members of this age group were socialised during a period of widespread adoption of digital technology. For Generation Z, digital presence, the rapid flow of information, online communication, personal development, flexibility and work-life balance play a decisive role in shaping workplace expectations. Based on the empirical part of the research, a supportive workplace environment, regular feedback, state-of-the-art technology, flexible work arrangements and opportunities for development are particularly important to the young employees surveyed.

Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós and Juhász [6] examined the workplace characteristics of Generations Y and Z in a Central European context, highlighting that the behaviour, communication habits and knowledge-sharing practices of younger generations may, in the longer term, also influence corporate operations and competitiveness. Based on their findings, the digital environment, rapid information exchange and intergenerational knowledge sharing are factors to which HRM practices must also adapt.

Flexibility is often highlighted as a key expectation regarding Generation Z. This does not merely refer to the need for home working or flexible working hours, but in a broader sense also encompasses the demand for autonomous work, independent task completion, rapid feedback and individual development pathways. According to the research findings, a significant proportion of respondents regard work-life balance and flexibility as important prerequisites for job satisfaction, which is consistent with trends emerging from international generational and HRM research. At the same time, it is not appropriate to derive Generation Z's workplace expectations solely from generational labels. Workplace preferences may also be influenced by a lack of work experience, early-career status, labour market uncertainty, organisational culture and managerial support. Therefore, this study interprets the expectations of Generation Z employees in terms of HRM dimensions such as onboarding, feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, development opportunities and intention to stay.

In the research model, therefore, Generation Z expectations are presented not as general personality traits but as specific HRM variables: onboarding, feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, development opportunities and retention intention.

2.3 Onboarding and organisational socialisation

Onboarding is one of the key HRM tools for integrating new employees into the organisation. According to the literature on organisational socialisation, the integration of new entrants is not limited to administrative induction, but is a process of learning and connection that can influence role clarification, employee satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to leave [1] [11].

In the research presented, onboarding and mentoring are examined in terms of information transfer, the structure of induction training, personal support, feedback and monitoring of progress. The integration of young employees can be particularly aided if they receive clear information before starting work, are supported by a mentor or a supportive colleague during the initial period, and if the integration process is later accompanied by regular managerial feedback and opportunities for development.

In this study, onboarding is not treated as an administrative induction process, but rather as a precursor to organisational socialisation and integration satisfaction.

2.4 Feedback culture and managerial support

A feedback culture is a key factor in the integration and commitment of young employees. For employees at the start of their careers or in the early stages of their careers, feedback is not only a performance appraisal tool but also an orientation and learning mechanism: it helps them understand performance expectations, identify areas for development and develop a sense of security in the workplace.

The line manager plays a key role in this process, as they communicate performance expectations, interpret organisational norms and, through their feedback, influence the new employee's self-assessment and organisational commitment. According to Ashforth, Sluss and Saks [12], the learning of new entrants is shaped by a combination of socialisation tactics and feedback processes. The results of the present study also suggest that a significant proportion of Generation Z respondents require regular, specific and developmental feedback.

In the research model, the feedback culture is given a distinct role because managerial support can directly contribute to integration satisfaction and workplace commitment.

2.5 Flexibility, technological support and commitment

Flexibility is one of the frequently identified elements of Generation Z's workplace expectations, but it cannot be reduced to the issue of working from home or flexible working hours. In a broader sense, it encompasses autonomous work, support for work–life balance, task-based operations and ensuring employees' scope for decision-making. Research by Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons [13] also highlights that development opportunities, meaningful work and favourable working conditions are important to younger employee groups.

In this context, technological support becomes relevant in terms of the digital work environment, online communication platforms, modern work systems and the flow of information. Technology alone does not guarantee commitment, but it can support integration by enabling more transparent work processes, more effective collaboration and faster communication. According to the research cited, the majority of respondents have a positive attitude towards new technologies; however, technological support only becomes truly relevant when combined with managerial support and opportunities for development. The importance of the technological and learning environment is also reinforced by Malatyinszki's [14] methodological approach to adult education, which argues that the learning needs, digital competences and information processing characteristics of different generations require differentiated development solutions. This is also relevant in workplace HRM, as digital learning tools, internal knowledge sharing and personalised development pathways can play a key role in retaining Generation Z.

In the research model, flexibility and technological support appear as HRM environmental factors that can promote integration satisfaction, and through this, workplace commitment and the intention to stay.

2.6 Synthesis of the theoretical background and establishment of the research model

Based on the literature, the organisational integration of Generation Z employees is not merely a generational issue, but a problem within HRM and management science. In addition to generational socialisation, the workplace behaviour of young employees is shaped by the early career stage, managerial support, organisational culture, the quality of onboarding, and the overall employee experience. Therefore, the study does not start from generational characteristics but from organisational intervention points, in line with those domestic approaches that interpret the emergence of new generations in the workplace as an interrelated challenge of digitalisation, employment and HRM [10].

The independent variables of the research model are the quality of onboarding, the feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities, as these are directly linked to young employees' integration experiences, based on the literature and the pilot study. These factors simultaneously affect information transfer, managerial support, autonomy, the digital working environment and opportunities for professional development.

The central mediating variable of the model is integration satisfaction, which reflects the extent to which the employee feels their integration into the organisation, the clarity of their role and their

connection to the team are successful. The model's outcome variables are workplace commitment and intention to stay, as these indicate the extent to which integration experiences may be linked to longer-term organisational commitment. On this basis, the following chapter of presents the research model and the research hypotheses interpreted at the pilot level.

3 Research model and exploratory research hypotheses

Based on the literature review, the organisational integration of Generation Z employees can be understood as the result of several interrelated HRM factors. The research model is based on the premise that the quality of onboarding, the feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities can contribute to integration satisfaction. Onboarding satisfaction may play a mediating role between HRM factors and workplace commitment, as well as intention to stay. The logic of the model is also summarised in the figure included in the manuscript, which shows a pathway from the five HRM factors through integration satisfaction to workplace commitment and intention to stay.

3.1 The logic of the research model

In the model, the quality of onboarding, the feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities appear as independent variables. These factors are hypothesised to influence the extent to which young employees feel their integration has been successful, how clear their job role is to them, the degree to which they experience managerial and organisational support, and how well they are able to connect with the team (*Figure 1*).

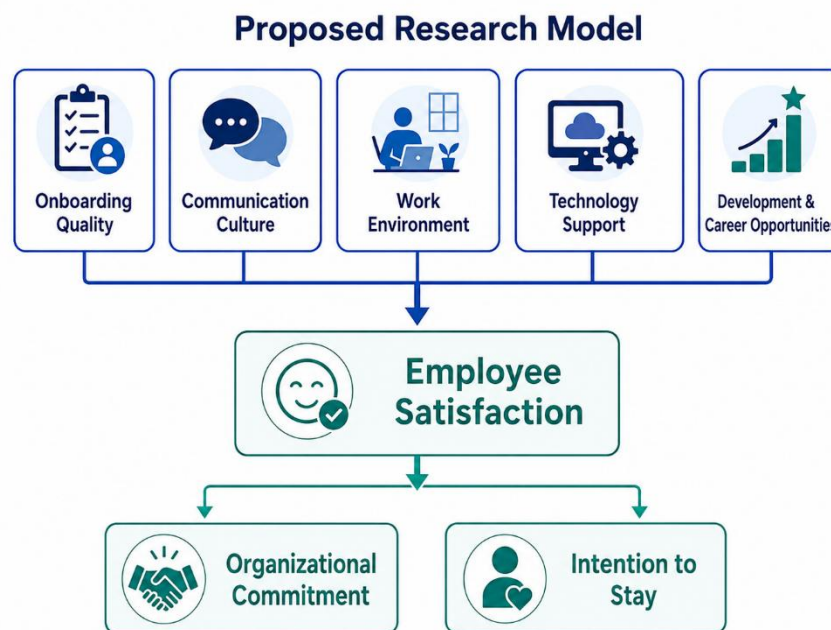


Figure 1. Diagram of the research model

Source: own compilation

The central element of the model is integration satisfaction, which can be interpreted as a mediating variable. The output variables of the model are workplace commitment and intention to stay, which indicate the extent to which positive integration experiences may be linked to longer-term organisational commitment.

3.2 Research questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

Q1: Which HRM factors are most effective in supporting the organisational integration of Generation Z employees?

Q2: What role does the quality of onboarding play in shaping integration satisfaction?

Q3: How is regular and supportive managerial feedback linked to workplace commitment?

Q4: How important are flexibility and work-life balance in terms of retention intentions?

Q5: How does technological support contribute to the organisational integration of young employees?

Q6: What role do development and career opportunities play in retaining Generation Z employees?

3.3 Exploratory research hypotheses

Due to the small sample size and pilot nature of the research, the hypotheses do not form the basis for classical statistical hypothesis testing, but should be interpreted as an exploratory analytical framework. Their aim is to preliminarily examine the patterns in which the HRM factors identified in the literature appear in Generation Z respondents' experiences of integration and commitment.

H1: Structured onboarding may be positively associated with Generation Z employees' satisfaction with their integration.

H2: Regular and supportive managerial feedback may contribute to increased workplace commitment.

H3: Flexible work arrangements may support a positive perception of work-life balance.

F4: A positive perception of work-life balance may strengthen the intention to stay.

F5: A technologically supported work environment can facilitate the perceived success of organisational integration.

F6: Development and career opportunities may contribute to workplace commitment.

F7: Satisfaction with integration may act as a mediator between the quality of onboarding and workplace commitment.

F8: Onboarding satisfaction may be positively related to retention intention.

3.4 Interpretation of variables

Table 1. Variables used in the research

Variable	Role in the model	Meaning
Quality of onboarding	Independent variable	Structured induction, handover, mentoring, role clarification
Feedback culture	Independent variable	Frequency, quality and developmental nature of managerial feedback
Flexibility	Independent variable	Flexible working hours, home office, autonomy, work–life balance
Technological support	Independent variable	Digital tools, online communication, state-of-the-art work systems
Development and career opportunities	Independent variable	Training, mentoring, promotion, learning opportunities
Satisfaction with integration	Mediating variable	Successful integration, role security, connection to the team, organisational support
Workplace commitment	Dependent variable	Organisational commitment, motivation, identification
Intention to stay	Dependent variable	Intention to remain with the organisation in the longer term, reduced intention to leave

Source: own compilation

The table summarises the main variables in the research model, their role within the model and their interpretative meaning. In the model, the quality of onboarding, the feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, and development and career opportunities appear as independent variables, as these are HRM factors that are presumed to influence the organisational integration of Generation Z employees. Integration satisfaction can be interpreted as a mediating variable, as it reflects the extent to which the employee perceives their own integration, the clarity of their role, their connection to the team, and the presence of organisational support as successful. Workplace commitment and intention to stay are the dependent variables in the model, as they demonstrate the extent to which positive integration experiences may be linked to organisational attachment, motivation, and the intention for longer-term organisational membership. This arrangement of variables allows the research to examine the organisational integration of Generation Z not as a general generational characteristic, but in terms of specific HRM practices and their potential consequences.

3.5 The role of the model in the research

The research model links the HRM factors identified in the theoretical background with the variables of the empirical study. Based on the current pilot study involving 14 participants, the aim is not to conduct a comprehensive statistical test of the hypotheses; however, the model is suitable for providing a preliminary analytical framework for interpreting response patterns, as well as laying the groundwork for a subsequent study with a larger sample size using validated measurement tools.

4 Methodology

The research can be interpreted as an exploratory, pilot questionnaire-based study aimed at the preliminary identification of HRM factors related to Generation Z employees' organisational integration and workplace commitment. The study was conducted on a non-representative sample; therefore, its aim was not to test statistical hypotheses but to identify response patterns that could form the basis for a subsequent study with a larger sample. The research focused on onboarding, feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, development opportunities, integration satisfaction, workplace commitment and intention to stay.

4.1 Research design

The research can be described as a cross-sectional, exploratory empirical study. The data collection captured the respondents' workplace experiences, integration experiences, feedback needs, expectations regarding flexibility and technological preferences at a specific point in time.

The research logic contained both deductive and inductive elements. It can be considered deductive because the questionnaire was based on HRM factors identified in the theoretical background. Its inductive nature is evident in the fact that the small sample size allowed for the identification of preliminary patterns regarding the integration and retention conditions of Generation Z employees.

4.2 Sample and sampling

The target group of the research consisted of Generation Z employees with work experience working in knowledge-based roles. The sampling was targeted and convenience-based: the study included Generation Z employees working at a single company site.

The sample size was 14 people. The participants had direct workplace experience, enabling them to assess their own integration experiences, workplace expectations, experiences regarding managerial feedback, flexibility needs and development opportunities. Due to the small sample size, the results cannot be considered representative; however, they are suitable for the preliminary identification of key HRM factors.

4.3 Data collection

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 48 questions and had a mixed structure: it contained 6 open-ended, descriptive questions as well as closed, multiple-choice questions.

The open-ended questions were designed to provide a deeper understanding of integration experiences, workplace expectations, communication preferences, motivational factors and Generation Z's contribution to the organisation. The closed-ended questions focused, among other things, on work-life balance, feedback, technological support, stability, flexibility, freedom at work, communication, teamwork and opportunities for development.

Respondents were given approximately 48 hours to complete the questionnaire. The data collection was based on self-reporting, meaning that respondents assessed their own workplace experiences and perceptions.

4.4 Measurement tool and variables

In line with the research model, the questionnaire examined several groups of variables. The onboarding dimension encompassed experiences of the induction process, training, information transfer, mentoring and role clarification. The feedback culture related to the frequency, quality and supportive nature of managerial feedback.

Flexibility was measured in terms of flexible working hours, home working, autonomous work and work-life balance. Technological support focused on the role of digital tools, online communication platforms and modern work systems. The dimension of development and career opportunities was linked to training, promotion, mentoring and professional learning. Satisfaction with integration, commitment to the workplace and intention to stay appeared as outcome variables of organisational integration.

The questionnaire did not use a classic, numbered Likert scale. Most of the closed-ended questions contained nominal or ordinal multiple-choice response options, for example, with categories relating to importance, frequency, preferred form of communication, place of work or development resources.

4.5 Analytical methods

Data processing was descriptive in nature, in line with the exploratory, pilot nature of the research and the small sample size. For the closed-ended questions, frequency and percentage distributions were produced, showing which workplace factors were most prominent among Generation Z respondents.

Responses to open-ended questions were processed based on a summary of content and thematic interpretation. This allowed the respondents' workplace experiences, expectations and interpretations to be reflected in the analysis alongside the numerical results.

Due to the small sample size, the analysis did not focus on statistical hypothesis testing. The aim of the research was to identify the main patterns, to explore the relevant HRM dimensions preliminarily, and to lay the foundations for the research model and measurement dimensions of a subsequent study with a larger sample.

4.6 Ethical considerations

The research was based on voluntary participation. During the questionnaire-based data collection, respondents provided statements regarding their own workplace experiences, expectations and preferences. Data collection was conducted anonymously, and the results were processed exclusively in aggregated form, thus ensuring that respondents could not be identified.

The research did not involve any special categories of personal data and did not include any intervention that would have posed a risk to the participants.

5 Results

The results of the research can be interpreted as exploratory, as the study was based on the responses of 14 Generation Z employees working in knowledge-based roles. The results cannot be generalised to the entire Generation Z workforce, but they do provide a good indication of the preliminary patterns associated with the integration, motivation and retention of young employees. The main findings can be grouped around work-life balance, a culture of feedback, technological support, stability, flexibility, autonomy, communication, teamwork and opportunities for development.

Table 2. Key findings of the pilot study

Area	Key finding	Interpretation
Work-life balance	64% consider it very important	a fundamental workplace expectation
Feedback	79% would expect feedback at least once a week	a key element of managerial support
Technology	64% consider it to play a central role	a fundamental requirement of the digital workplace
Stability	64% plan for the longer term	Loyalty is conditional, but present
Flexibility	All respondents consider this important	doesn't just mean working from home
Development	50% would like more learning opportunities	an important retention factor

Source: based on our own research

5.1 Work–life balance

Work–life balance emerged as one of the strongest workplace expectations among respondents. 64% of respondents considered this factor to be very important, whilst a further 29% considered it important but not a priority. This suggests that for the Generation Z employees surveyed, balancing work and private life is seen not as a supplementary benefit but as a fundamental workplace condition.

However, the actual situation presented a more nuanced picture: 43% feel that their work and private life are fully balanced, whilst 57% believe this could work better. This suggests that supporting work–life balance could be an important area for HRM and managerial intervention.

5.2 Need for feedback

The culture of feedback was also highlighted as a key factor. 50% of respondents would like to receive managerial feedback once a week, and 29% would like it 2–3 times a week; in other words, 79% of those surveyed would consider feedback at least once a week to be ideal. Based on this, feedback can be interpreted not only as a performance evaluation tool, but also as an important factor in integration, motivation and role security.

At the same time, the responses also show that the need for feedback is not entirely uniform: some respondents expect continuous reassurance, whilst others prefer targeted, situation-specific feedback. This highlights the importance of personalising managerial communication.

5.3 Technological support

Technological support emerged as a fundamental workplace factor among Generation Z respondents. 64% of respondents believe that technological tools play a central role in their work, whilst 36% consider them important but do not regard them as decisive for every task.

The attitude towards new technologies is decidedly positive: 71% of respondents fully welcome the introduction of new technologies and would actively participate in testing them. This indicates that a modern digital working environment is not a perk for Generation Z, but a prerequisite for effective work.

5.4 Stability and intention to stay

The results qualify the common assumption that Generation Z is less loyal to their workplace. 64% of respondents consider workplace stability important and plan for the longer term, whilst 36% also consider stability important but are open to a change if necessary.

In terms of how long they plan to stay at their current workplace, 43% of respondents expect to stay for 2–5 years, 21% for 5–10 years, and 36% for more than 10 years. This suggests that it is possible to retain young employees in the long term, but this depends on supportive management, flexibility, opportunities for development and a positive workplace culture.

5.5 Flexibility and autonomy

Flexible working hours proved to be important to all respondents: 43% considered them essential, whilst 57% found them useful but not essential. Based on this, flexibility is one of the key workplace expectations of young employees.

However, the findings on working from home show that flexibility cannot be equated solely with remote working. 50% of respondents do not make use of the option to work from home two days a week, 43% consider this proportion sufficient, and only 7% would like to work from home more than this. Flexibility is therefore more important in terms of time management, autonomy and trust-based work organisation.

5.6 Communication and teamwork

Based on communication preferences, 47% of respondents prefer to communicate via a company chat platform, such as Teams. Personal communication and email were both selected by 18–18%, whilst 17% chose telephone calls. This shows that digital communication is the dominant, but not the exclusive, form.

When it comes to teamwork, 64% of respondents consider a more relaxed form of teamwork to be ideal, involving a mix of individual and collaborative tasks. A further 36% prefer smaller groups requiring closer collaboration. Not a single respondent rejected teamwork, suggesting that Generation Z employees value collaboration, but in a flexible, task-oriented form.

5.7 Development and learning opportunities

Development opportunities also emerged as an important retention factor. 50% of respondents would like to learn more and gain greater professional knowledge regarding their role, whilst 29% feel that they are developing adequately in their current position.

When it comes to learning resources, 75% of respondents identified learning from colleagues and co-workers as their primary development channel, whilst 25% considered learning from their manager to be the most important. Based on this, alongside formal training, informal knowledge sharing, mentoring and peer learning can also play a decisive role in the development of Generation Z employees.

5.8 Summary interpretation of the results

Based on the results of the pilot study, the integration and engagement of Generation Z employees can be supported by several interrelated HRM factors. Work-life balance, regular feedback, technological support, flexibility, teamwork and development opportunities do not appear as separate elements, but as mutually reinforcing dimensions of the employee experience.

Due to the small sample size, the results cannot be regarded as statistically validated correlations; however, they provide preliminary empirical indications of which HRM areas may be decisive for the integration and retention of Generation Z employees within organisations.

Table 3. Evaluation of our research hypotheses

Research hypothesis	Pilot-level interpretation	Formulation
H1: The relationship between onboarding and integration satisfaction	Preliminarily interpretable	Based on the responses, structured induction and a supportive environment appear to be important factors in integration.
H2: The relationship between feedback and commitment	Supported at an exploratory level	The majority of respondents require regular feedback from their managers.
H3–H4: Flexibility, work–life balance and intention to stay	Preliminary empirical indication	Flexibility and work–life balance emerge as strong workplace expectations.
H5: Technological support and integration	Relevant at the exploratory level	The majority of respondents consider the role of technological tools to be important.
H6: Opportunities for development and commitment	Pre-supported	Learning and development appear as retention factors for a significant proportion of respondents.
H7–H8: The mediating role of integration satisfaction	Requires further research	It is not possible to statistically test the mediating effect on the current sample.

6 Discussion

Based on the results of the pilot study, the organisational integration of Generation Z employees cannot be interpreted merely as a generational characteristic. Rather, the responses indicate that the integration of young employees is a complex HRM and management issue in which onboarding, a feedback culture, flexibility, technological support, development opportunities and

organisational support are interlinked. Integration is therefore not the result of a single HR tool, but rather an employee experience in which the organisation simultaneously provides a clear framework, managerial support, learning opportunities and appropriate working conditions.

The results of onboarding, mentoring and feedback suggest that, for Generation Z employees, the onboarding and integration process can also be interpreted as a leadership function. A structured induction, supportive colleagues, clarification of roles and regular managerial feedback can reduce uncertainty, strengthen the sense of security in the workplace and contribute to the development of organisational commitment. Feedback is therefore not merely a performance appraisal tool, but a form of support for learning, motivation and integration.

Based on the findings, flexibility and technological support emerge as important aspects of the employee experience. For young employees, a modern digital working environment, rapid communication, flexible work organisation and autonomy are not necessarily perks, but rather prerequisites for effective and attractive work. At the same time, flexibility cannot be equated solely with the option of working from home: rather, it refers to trust-based work organisation, the ability to shape one's own schedule, and autonomy in carrying out tasks.

The findings on stability and intention to stay challenge the common assumption that Generation Z has low loyalty to their workplace. Based on the pilot data, we can speak more of conditional commitment: young employees can envisage themselves staying with an organisation in the longer term if they experience opportunities for development, supportive leadership, flexibility, an appropriate technological environment and a positive workplace culture. From a managerial perspective, this means that retention does not depend solely on financial incentives, but also on the quality of day-to-day organisational operations.

When evaluating the research hypotheses, it must be emphasised that the present study is exploratory and pilot in nature. The results are not suitable for establishing causal relationships or statistically validated correlations; however, they provide preliminary empirical indications of which HRM factors may be decisive in the integration and commitment of Generation Z employees. The patterns in the responses particularly reinforce the relevance of onboarding, a feedback culture, flexibility, technological support and opportunities for development. On this basis, the research primarily serves a model-building role and lays the groundwork for further investigations.

7 Practical conclusions

Based on the results of the pilot study, the integration and retention of Generation Z employees requires an integrated HRM approach that simultaneously supports structured onboarding, managerial feedback, flexibility, technological support and development opportunities. The practical recommendations should therefore be interpreted not as separate measures, but as mutually reinforcing HRM tools.

Table 4. Recommended HRM measures for the integration and retention of Generation Z employees

HRM area	Practical recommendation
Onboarding	3-month structured induction plan
Mentoring	Designated mentor during the initial period
Feedback	Weekly or fortnightly brief management meetings
Flexibility	hybrid and task-based work arrangements
Technology	use of digital tools and knowledge bases
Development	career discussions, training pathways, internal learning

Structured onboarding, mentoring, regular feedback, flexibility, technological support and development opportunities can, as interlinked HRM tools, support the successful integration of

Generation Z employees. The onboarding process should ideally be viewed as a period of at least three months, covering not only the transfer of administrative information but also familiarisation with the role, organisational expectations, teamwork and internal communication standards. A designated mentor can play a particularly important role in this process, supporting the new recruit during the initial period in understanding both formal rules and informal working practices.

Feedback from managers can also be a key element of the onboarding process. Short weekly or fortnightly meetings with managers can help to clarify role security, motivation and areas for development. At the same time, flexibility should not be interpreted solely as working from home: for Generation Z employees, the ability to shape their own schedules, autonomous work, task-based operations and trust-based management may be just as important. Technological support can complement all this, as digital communication platforms, internal knowledge bases, project management tools and online training materials can accelerate the flow of information and aid integration.

However, to retain young employees in the long term, it is also necessary for the organisation to offer them clear career progression opportunities. Career discussions, training pathways, mentoring opportunities and internal knowledge-sharing sessions can help ensure that employees see not only short-term opportunities to perform tasks, but also a longer-term professional future within the organisation. According to Malatyinszki [14], due to the differing learning characteristics of generations, development systems should also focus on digital learning formats, self-directed learning pathways and practice-oriented knowledge sharing. Overall, the successful integration of Generation Z employees does not depend on a single HR tool, but on the organisation treating onboarding, mentoring, feedback, flexibility, technological support and development opportunities as an integrated employee experience.

8 Limitations and future research directions

The exploratory nature of the research provided an opportunity to gain an initial insight into Generation Z employees' experiences of integration, their need for flexibility, their expectations regarding feedback, their technological preferences and their development needs. The sample of 14 respondents can be regarded as a pilot study: it is suitable for identifying key patterns and laying the groundwork for a subsequent, larger-scale study. The value of the research lies in the fact that it provides a starting point for examining the organisational integration of Generation Z from an HRM perspective.

The questionnaire-based data collection focused on exploring the employees' perspective, thus providing a clear picture of how young employees perceive their own workplace environment, managerial support and opportunities for development. In the future, it may be worthwhile to supplement this perspective with the experiences of managers and HR experts, which could provide an even more nuanced picture of the organisational conditions for integrating Generation Z.

The cross-sectional research design provided an opportunity to explore current employee opinions. A longitudinal study examining the relationship between onboarding, mentoring, feedback and retention intentions at multiple time points could further enrich the topic. This could be particularly useful for understanding how integration experiences affect commitment during the first few months and throughout the first year of employment.

An important opportunity for future research is to include a larger sample of at least 150–250 participants. This would enable a statistical analysis of the relationships, for example, using correlation, regression or factor analysis. A larger sample could also help to ensure that the research findings are more widely applicable.

Another possibility is to compare multiple sectors. It would be worth examining how the expectations of Generation Z employees manifest themselves in industry, the service sector, retail, the IT sector, the financial sector or public administration. This could help distinguish more general generational patterns from sector-specific characteristics.

Intergenerational comparative research could also be a valuable avenue for further exploration. It would be worthwhile to compare the expectations of Generation Z with the workplace preferences of Generations Y, X and the Baby Boomers, to better identify which factors are truly

linked to generational characteristics and which stem more from age, career stage or work experience.

As a methodological development opportunity, the use of validated measurement scales is also recommended for measuring commitment, perceived organisational support, managerial support, work–life balance and turnover intention. This would enhance the reliability, comparability and publication value of the research.

Overall, this study provides a solid foundation for a broader investigation employing multiple methods. Further research could provide an opportunity to examine the issue of Generation Z's organisational integration with greater precision, from multiple perspectives, and on a stronger empirical basis.

9 Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that the organisational integration of Generation Z employees cannot be treated solely as a matter of age or generational characteristics. Successful integration is rather a complex HRM and management task in which structured onboarding, regular managerial feedback, flexible work organisation, technological support, autonomy, team relationships and development opportunities all play a role. Based on the research, young employees are not merely looking for a job, but for an organisational environment in which they are given autonomy, support and prospects for development within a clear framework.

One important conclusion of the study is that the simplistic statements often made about Generation Z need to be nuanced. For example, workplace stability and the intention to stay for the long term were also mentioned by respondents; however, supportive leadership, work-life balance, learning opportunities and flexible work arrangements were highlighted as key factors in this regard. This suggests that young employees' commitment is not inherently low, but depends to a large extent on the kind of employee experience and development environment the organisation can provide for them.

From a practical perspective, the study's contribution lies in identifying the organisational factors that can support the integration and retention of Generation Z employees. Based on the results, it is particularly important for organisations to implement an onboarding process spanning several months, provide mentoring, offer weekly or fortnightly managerial feedback, establish flexible work arrangements, ensure a modern technological environment, and create clear development and career paths.

From an academic perspective, the study relates to the Hungarian literature on generational management, onboarding and employee engagement. The value of the research lies primarily in its exploratory nature: it provides a preliminary empirical picture of the conditions under which Generation Z employees feel supported, motivated and committed. The topic is particularly relevant to the Management Science journal because it touches upon current issues in leadership, HRM, organisational culture, digitalisation and workforce retention.

Overall, it can be concluded that the successful integration of Generation Z into an organisation is not the result of a single HR measure, but rather a system of consciously designed, interlinked HRM practices. Organisations that are able to combine structured onboarding, supportive leadership, flexibility, technological readiness and opportunities for continuous development are likely to be successful in retaining young employees.

In preparing this work, the author used ChatGPT to create the research model diagram and to check and format the references. Following the use of the tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as necessary and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication."

Ethical statement

Participation in the research was voluntary and anonymous. The information collected during data collection was processed exclusively in aggregated form. The research did not involve any special categories of personal data and did not include any intervention that would have posed a risk to participants.

References

- [1] T. N. Bauer and B. Erdogan, "Organizational socialization: The effective onboarding of new employees," in *APA Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 3: Maintaining, Expanding, and Contracting the Organization, S. Zedeck, Ed. Washington, DC, USA: American Psychological Association, 2011, pp. 51–64, doi: 10.1037/12171-002.
- [2] T. N. Bauer, B. Erdogan, A. M. Ellis, D. M. Truxillo, G. M. Brady, and T. Bodner, "New horizons for newcomer organizational socialization: A review, meta-analysis, and future research directions," *Journal of Management*, advance online publication, 2025, doi: 10.1177/01492063241277168.
- [3] J. M. Twenge, S. M. Campbell, B. J. Hoffman, and C. E. Lance, "Generational differences in work values: Leisure and extrinsic values increasing, social and intrinsic values decreasing," *Journal Of Management*, 36(5), 1117–1142. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309352246>
- [4] C. W. Rudolph, R. S. Rauvola, and H. Zacher, "Leadership and generations at work: A critical review," *The Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 44–57, 2018, doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.09.004.
- [5] D. M. Ravid, D. P. Costanza, and M. Rios Romero, "Generational differences at work? A meta-analysis and qualitative investigation," *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 43–65, 2024, doi: 10.1002/job.2827.
- [6] A. Bencsik, G. Horváth-Csikós, and T. Juhász, "Y and Z generations at workplaces," *Journal of Competitiveness*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 90–106, 2016, doi: 10.7441/joc.2016.03.06.
- [7] A. Farkas, "A Z generáció menedzsment ambíciói, munkahelyi elvárásai és gazdasági hatásai – kérdőíves kutatás eredményei," *Észak-magyarországi Stratégiai Füzetek*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 86–94, 2025, doi: 10.32976/stratfuz.2025.28.
- [8] Deloitte, 2025 Gen Z and Millennial Survey. Deloitte Global, 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.deloitte.com/global/en/about/press-room/deloitte-2025-gen-z-and-millennial-survey.html>
- [9] K. Dajnoki and M. Héder, "„Új szelek fújnak” – a HR válasza a globalizáció és a változás kihívásaira," *Hadtudomány*, vol. 27, E-szám, pp. 84–93, 2017, doi: 10.17047/HADTUD.2017.27.E.84.
- [10] S. Malatyinszki, "Az új generáció, mint erőforrás," *Multidiszciplináris Kihívások, Sokszínű Válaszok*, vol. 2020, no. 1, pp. 90–101, 2020, doi: 10.33565/MKSV.2020.01.0791.
- [11] D. G. Allen and L. R. Shanock, "Perceived organizational support and embeddedness as key mechanisms connecting socialization tactics to commitment and turnover among new employees," *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 350–369, 2013, doi: 10.1002/job.1805.
- [12] B. E. Ashforth, D. M. Sluss, and A. M. Saks, "Socialization tactics, proactive behavior, and newcomer learning: Integrating socialization models," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 447–462, 2007, doi: 10.1016/j.jvb.2007.02.001.
- [13] E. S. W. Ng, L. Schweitzer, and S. T. Lyons, "New generation, great expectations: A field study of the millennial generation," *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 281–292, 2010, doi: 10.1007/s10869-010-9159-4.
- [14] S. Malatyinszki, "Generációs különbségek a felnőttképzési módszertanban," in *HuCER 2022 Tanuló társadalom: Oktatókutatás járvány idején*, Magyar Nevelés- és Oktatókutatók Egyesülete, 2022, pp. 414–425.