



การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบวัฒนธรรมการทำงานของคนเจนเนอเรชันซี ระหว่างนักศึกษาฝึกงานและบุคลากร ในองค์กรการท่องเที่ยวและการบริการไทย

A Comparative Study of Generation Z's
Working Culture Among Apprentices and Employees
in Thai Tourism and Hospitality Organisations

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บทคัดย่อ

ประชากรเจนเนอเรชั่นซีเป็นกลุ่มวัยทำงานที่มีขนาดใหญ่ที่สุดในตลาดแรงงาน อุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยวและการบริการของประเทศไทยมีความต้องการประชากรกลุ่มนี้เข้ามารажทำงานเพิ่มขึ้น การวิจัยนี้จึงมุ่งศึกษาวัฒนธรรมของคนเจนเนอเรชั่นซีที่มีประสบการณ์ในการฝึกงานและกำลังทำงานในองค์กรด้านการท่องเที่ยวและการบริการ มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์วัฒนธรรมการทำงานของคนเจนเนอเรชั่นซีโดยการประเมินตนเอง และเพื่อจำแนกความแตกต่างของการรับรู้วัฒนธรรมการทำงานระหว่าง พนักงานและนักศึกษาฝึกงาน การวิจัยนี้ใช้วิธีการศึกษาเชิงปริมาณ โดยใช้ แบบสอบถามแบบมีโครงสร้างในการเก็บข้อมูลกับประชากรที่มีอายุระหว่าง 18-29 ปี ใช้วิธีเลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบส�ดวาก โดยใช้สูตรของโคงแครนแบบไม่ทราบจำนวนประชากรที่แน่นอน ได้ขนาดกลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็นนักศึกษาฝึกงานและเป็นบุคลากร กลุ่มละ 200 ตัวอย่าง การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนาเพื่ออธิบายการรับรู้วัฒนธรรมการทำงานและการวิเคราะห์เปรียบเทียบแบบกลุ่มที่เป็นอิสระต่อกัน t-Test เพื่อวิเคราะห์ ความแตกต่างของการรับรู้วัฒนธรรมการทำงานของกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ผลการศึกษาพบว่า กลุ่มตัวอย่างรับรู้คุณลักษณะที่สอดคล้องกับวัฒนธรรมการทำงานในระดับมากที่สุด มี จำนวน 6 คุณลักษณะ และรับรู้ในระดับมาก จำนวน 18 คุณลักษณะ ผลการวิเคราะห์ ความแตกต่างของการรับรู้วัฒนธรรมการทำงานของพนักงานและนักศึกษาฝึกงานเจน เนอเรชั่นซีพบว่า มีความแตกต่างกันโดยมีระดับนัยยะสำคัญทางสถิติ 0.001 จำนวน 14 คุณลักษณะและระดับนัยยะสำคัญทางสถิติ 0.05 จำนวน 2 คุณลักษณะ ผลการศึกษาให้ข้อเสนอแนะเชิงกลยุทธ์แก่แผนกทัพยากรณ์นุชร์เพื่อใช้ในการจ้างงาน และช่างรักษาประชารกรกลุ่มเจนเนอเรชั่นซีแก่องค์กรการท่องเที่ยวและการบริการของประเทศไทย

คำสำคัญ : วัฒนธรรมการทำงานของคนเจนเนอเรชั่นซี อุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยว และการบริการ วัฒนธรรมองค์กร ภาพลักษณ์องค์กร วัยแรงงานเจนเนอเรชั่นซี

Abstract

This study examined Generation Z's work culture based on their experiences as apprentices and employees within tourism and hospitality organisations, comparing the two groups. The objectives encompassed examining the working culture of Generation Z by self-assessment and to compare perceptions of apprentices and Gen Z employees toward working culture in Tourism and Hospitality organizations of Thailand. The research technique is a quantitative approach with a structured questionnaire to gather data from persons aged 18 to 29, encompassing both apprentices and employees. Cochran's formula determined the sample size using convenience sampling for infinite populations. The sample comprised 200 employees and 200 apprentices to ensure adequate representation for analysis. Data analysis employing descriptive an independent samples t-test to examine differing perceptions between two sample groups. The findings reveal notable differences in the perceptions of Generation Z working culture between apprentices and Generation Z across fourteen and two attributes of twenty-two assessments, supported by one-way simple t-Test results of p-value less than <0.001 and 0.05 respectively. The study recommends various strategies to attract and retain Generation Z in Human Resource Management, including Personalized Training, Incorporating Social Responsibility and Flexible Workplace Environment.

Keywords: Generation Z working culture, Tourism and Hospitality Industries, Organizational Culture, Corporate Image, Gen Z workforce

Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry is considered one of the most vulnerable sectors during times of crisis and widely recognised as one of the most profoundly affected by the pandemic, with governments

primarily implementing lockdown and travel restrictions to contain the virus's spread. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the economies, societies, and cultures of numerous countries across the globe. (Abbas et al., 2021; Cheer, 2020; Huynh et al., 2021). The tourism and hospitality sectors in Thailand have to make adaptations in order to endure the crisis. Due to unforeseen employee departures, many businesses have had to adjust their personnel or create job rotations. Multiple organisations implemented a downsizing strategy to reduce expenses. Even-though, experts predict a positive shift in the global hospitality sector once the COVID-19 pandemic concludes in the final quarter of 2022, surpassing the pre-crisis levels (UNWTO, 2024). However, the tourism and hospitality sectors continued to deal with other external challenges, such as labour shortages, air route capacity, capital investment productivity, and other sector supply factors that have not kept up with the increase in demand.

In several nations, the job market has had a strong comeback despite the COVID-19 outbreak. Nevertheless, labour shortages have been severe in several countries, notably Australia, Canada, and the United States. These shortages have had a significant impact on various enterprises, particularly those that require close interaction with customers, such as the accommodation and food services industry. Recruiting employees for these positions has become increasingly difficult due to the worsening epidemic, which has highlighted the negative effects of low wages, unfavourable working conditions, and inadequate social

security on workers' quality of life, health, and well-being. Over time, this may result in unfavourable outcomes (Huynh et al., 2021).

To meet the tourism demand, Thailand's tourism and hospitality sectors currently require approximately three to five hundred thousand employees. The largest demographic cohort entering the labour market is Generation Z, which accounts for 32% of the global population (Herman, 2015; Miller, 2019). This demographic group constitutes 20 percent of the Thai population (Tantipanit, Thawornratana, Aticomswan, 2024). We anticipate Generation Z to be the primary labor force driving the future economy. Demography specialists contend that generation Z possesses unique characteristics that differentiate them from other population groups. Although Generation X, Generation Y, and the current generation may exhibit some behavioral similarities as a result of their early exposure to digital technology, there are significant distinctions in their habits, needs, expectations, and motivations, resulting in different style working culture in the organizations. (Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Mejia & Pinto, 2021; Nguyen Ngoc, Viet Dung, Rowley & Pejić Bach, 2022).

As the new generation enters the labor market, HRM needs to take into consideration, and adapt to the previously mentioned characteristics of this cohort. However, there are only few research papers on how the labor market adapts to the working culture of the Gen Z cohort. Therefore, deep understanding on Gen Z working culture will aid in attracting this generation to fill unfilled positions. What are working culture of Generation

Z in tourism and hospitality organisations? How can businesses adjust or pursue strategies to cultivate allure? Therefore, the objective of this research is to examine in working culture of Generation Z based on self-assessments from Generation Z apprentices and employees.

Literature Review

Generation Z's working culture in the Tourism and Hospitality workplaces

The majority of cohort studies utilise birth year identification as a means of defining different generations. For example, Hansen & Leuty (2012); Mencl & Lester (2014) defined Baby Boomers as individuals born between 1946 and 1964, Generation X as those born between 1965 and 1978, Generation Y as those born between 1979 and 2000, and Generation Z. Even-though, the year of their birth remains uncertain. Nevertheless, the researchers carried out a supplementary examination of existing literature and discovered that numerous articles indicated that the vast majority of individuals belonging to Generation Z have birth years ranging from 1995 to 2010 presenting an age range between 14-29 years old in 2024 where majority about to graduate and enter the workforce. (Goh & Lee, 2018). Generation Z is said to change jobs more frequently; thus, HR does not only have to worry about how to attract the new generation, but how to focus their efforts on giving Gen Z what they need to stay in the company. Considering the scant research done in terms of what attracts Gen Z toward companies, it is said that Gen Z is enticed by the work flexibility and a balance with their life outside the workplace. They seek direct

contribution to the company, they desire to have an impact on the outcomes, they are driven by an entrepreneurial mindset, and an already established and known company is a plus (Randstad, 2014).

Most research concur that populations of the same generation exhibit comparable psychological features, including attitudes, behaviors, and values (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022), as a result of the experiences they have had throughout specific historical periods. For instance, occurrences that result in a modification of the governmental, economic, and educational systems, as well as the emergence of a new culture such as Pop Culture, might lead individuals or groups to exhibit similar characteristics (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). The Age-Period-Cohort model argues that people of the same age may display similar behavior, regardless of generation, notwithstanding period effects. Nguyen Ngoc et al. (2022) asserted that Generation Z shares certain traits or behaviors with Generation Y, such as the notion of maintaining a balance between work and personal life. Furthermore, both cohorts were born during a period of significant technological advancement and the proliferation of the internet. Thus, this demographic possesses a high level of proficiency in utilising contemporary communication gadgets. The reason for this is that they serve as the main instruments for social connection. Research on Generations is primarily located within studies on motivation. Due to the psychological data, it is highly advantageous for analysing and utilising in marketing efforts and fostering motivation in many organisations.

According to Smith & Johnson (2022) Generation Z employees prioritize workplace flexibility, technological integration, and a strong organizational culture that aligns with their values, such as diversity, sustainability, and social responsibility. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z seeks meaningful work experiences, opportunities for skill development, and a balance between their professional and personal lives (Xueyun, Al Mamun, Masukujaman, 2023). Hospitality organizations must adapt to these expectations by implementing innovative HR practices, leveraging technology, and fostering inclusive environments to attract and retain Gen Z talent. Failure to address these needs may result in higher turnover rates and difficulty in maintaining a competitive edge in the industry. Future research should explore cross-cultural differences in Gen Z's working culture and the long-term impact of these preferences on the hospitality sector.

The researchers conducted a literature analysis of research journal papers published between 2019 and 2023. Based on their findings, they identified working culture of generation Z in the workplace, which are presented in the following table.

Table 1 Working culture and characteristics of Generation Z

Generation Z's working culture and Characteristics	(Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019)	(Chillakuri, 2020)	(Goh & Okumus, 2020)	(Gabrielyova & Buchko, 2021)	(Lev, 2021)	(Mejia & Pinto, 2021)	(Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021)	(Barhate & Dirani, 2022)	(Mahapatra et al., 2022)	(Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022)
Characters										
Self-Confidence		x	x		x			x		
Autonomy/liberty/independence	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
Personal-development	x	x		x				x		
Lifelong learning		x		x		x		x		x
Societal Perspectives										
Environmental Concern	x		x			x				x
Social Responsibility			x			x	x			x
Human Rights and Equity						x				
Diversity Acceptance							x			
Competencies										
Technological Proficiency	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
IT and Communication Proficiency	x			x	x	x		x	x	
Interests and Preferences										
Multiple Occupations	x									
Entrepreneurial Skills and Mindset	x	x		x	x		x	x		x
Work-Life Balance	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Instantaneous Satisfaction	x			x	x				x	x
Enthusiastic to acquire knowledge		x		x		x		x		

Note. Working culture and characteristics of Generation Z

Generation Z is a group of young people who were born alongside technology and heavily rely on it for communication and social interaction. They are highly proficient in utilising technology (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Mejia & Pinto, 2021; Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021) making them experts in this field (Mahapatra, Bhullar & Gupta, 2022; Mejia & Pinto, 2021; Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). They value freedom (Mahapatra et al., 2022; Mejia and Pinto, 2021; Racolta-Paina and Irini, 2021). They enjoy challenges because they have high confidence and a desire to learn on their own. They take action and engage in hands-on learning, which leads to a great thirst for knowledge and skill development. Additionally, they can directly acquire knowledge from the convenience of technology, allowing for easy and fast access to information (Barhate & Dirani, 2022; Chillakuri, 2020; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Mejia & Pinto, 2021). Particularly, studying from YouTube (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Furthermore, they anticipate continuous learning of new things (Barhate & Dirani, 2022). They recognise the value of education (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022) since it equips them with new skills acquired through learning or internships. These skills can be effectively applied in their professional lives, leading to their eagerness to acquire further and continuous skills. In addition to their technological skills (Chillakuri, 2020; Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021), they can generate income while studying, which makes them entrepreneurial (Chillakuri, 2020; Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021) or have a high entrepreneurial mindset (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022; Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). They can utilise their technological skills to achieve business success as entrepreneurs.

(Barhate & Dirani, 2022). They willingly embrace change and are adaptable, allowing them to quickly adjust to new things (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). They embrace diversity and inclusivity in various environmental contexts, particularly in terms of social class, religion, ethnicity, and nationality (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). Furthermore, it is also evident the value of achieving work-life balance in one's life (Barhate & Dirani, 2022; Chillakuri, 2020; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Lev, 2021; Mahapatra et al., 2022; Mejia and Pinto, 2021; Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022). They choose employment with flexible working hours because they believe it will lead to a better work-life balance (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). This population group desires to have multiple occupations simultaneously (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019). In addition, they seek immediate feedback (Chillakuri, 2020; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019; Lev, 2021; Mahapatra et al., 2022). They desire regular feedback in order to improve themselves (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022). They are concerned about natural resources, which indicates their concern for the environment (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019). There is a growing acceptance of environmentally friendly practices, sustainability, and social responsibility (Goh & Okumus, 2020; Mejia & Pinto, 2021; Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022).

Organizational Culture and Corporate Image attracting Generation Z employees

Organizational culture significantly shapes the work environment, influencing employee interactions and external relations (Widjanarko et al., 2023). It encompasses communication styles, hierarchies, innovation

openness, risk attitudes, and decision-making processes. A positive organizational culture enhances employee motivation and performance by fostering belonging and purpose, while a detrimental culture can decrease morale, increase turnover, and harm corporate reputation (Widjanarko et al., 2023). Corporate image is closely linked, aiding in talent acquisition and retention by instilling a sense of purpose. Culture embodies operational practices and values, acting as a critical factor in organizational change, either facilitating or hindering such efforts (Widodo, Silitonga & Azahra, 2019). Recent research highlights the evolving expectations of Generation Z in the workplace. Nguyen Ngoc et al. (2022) found that Generation Z, having experienced economic recession and high unemployment rates, prioritizes remuneration, welfare, flexible benefits, work-life balance, and symbolic attributes like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) when evaluating employment. This aligns with the broader consensus that Generation Z seeks employers with strong values, inclusivity, and innovation commitment. Diversity and inclusivity are particularly valued by Generation Z. The potential for workplace discrimination, including gender and gender identity discrimination, remains a concern, especially in the diverse hospitality industry (Ineson, Benke, & László, 2013; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). Generation Z expects equal opportunities and actively supports LGBTQ+ rights and underrepresented groups. Sakamduang & Nonsiri (2022) note the hotel industry's increasing acceptance of transgender employees, recognizing their talents and positive contributions to the work environment, including humour, stress reduction, and enhanced vibrancy.

Furthermore, transgender individuals often possess valuable soft skills, creativity, and service-oriented abilities that enhance service delivery. Moreover, Generation Z values collaboration, creativity, continuous learning, and work flexibility. Inclusive and diverse cultures are appealing due to their alignment with Generation Z's social justice and equity values. Flexible work arrangements and autonomy are also key factors in attracting and retaining this generation. Flexible work hours, remote options, and autonomy in task management are highly desirable, with travel opportunities serving as a significant motivational factor (Brown, Arendt, & Bosselman, 2014; Buzinde, Kalavar, & Melubo (2018); Farrell & Phungsoonthorn, 2020). In conclusion, attracting and retaining Generation Z employees in the Tourism and Hospitality sectors depends on organizations' ability to personalize their needs, foster inclusive environments, and offer flexible work arrangements.

Apprentices and Generation Z employees in the Tourism & Hospitality workforce

The apprenticeships not only equip employees with job-specific skills but also enhance loyalty and reduce recruitment costs for organizations. (Hughes, 2023; Ravichandran, 2023). Whittard's (2022) research indicates that individuals aged 18-24 in higher education represent a significant portion of the UK labor market, with apprentices demonstrating higher educational attainment and a willingness to accept lower wages for provisional positions. This demographic is characterized by enthusiasm and adaptability, making them valuable assets in addressing skill shortages. According to the landscape of vocational education in

Thailand, where a substantial number of higher education institutions offer diverse curricula, and many apprentices participate in internships across various formats. We found that organizations in the tourism and hospitality sectors are increasingly engaging in cooperative education initiatives, which not only reduce early costs but also enhance the skill development and employability of graduates. Despite the existence of common traits among Generation Z, the literature indicates that a one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient due to regional variations in attitudes and expectations (Scholz, 2019), particularly in Thailand. This underscores the necessity for further research to understand the distinct expectations of apprentices compared to Generation Z employees.

Objectives

1. To analyse working culture of Generation Z in the Tourism and Hospitality organization of Thailand
2. To compare perceptions of apprentices and Gen Z employees toward working culture in Tourism and Hospitality organizations

Conceptual Framework

The central idea is that the type of employee (Apprentice or Gen Z Employee) is expected to influence their perception of the working culture. The perception of the working culture is a multi-faceted construct, influenced by factors like work-life balance, teamwork, opportunities for growth, management style, company values, and technological readiness. Apprentices, due to their training status and limited experience, may perceive the working culture differently compared to general Gen Z

employees who might have more job experience and different expectations. The hypothesis posited in this study are:

H0: There is no significant difference in the perception of working culture between Generation Z apprentices and Generation Z employees in Tourism and Hospitality organizations in Thailand.

H1: There is a significant difference in the perception of working culture between Generation Z apprentices and Generation Z employees in Tourism and Hospitality organizations in Thailand.

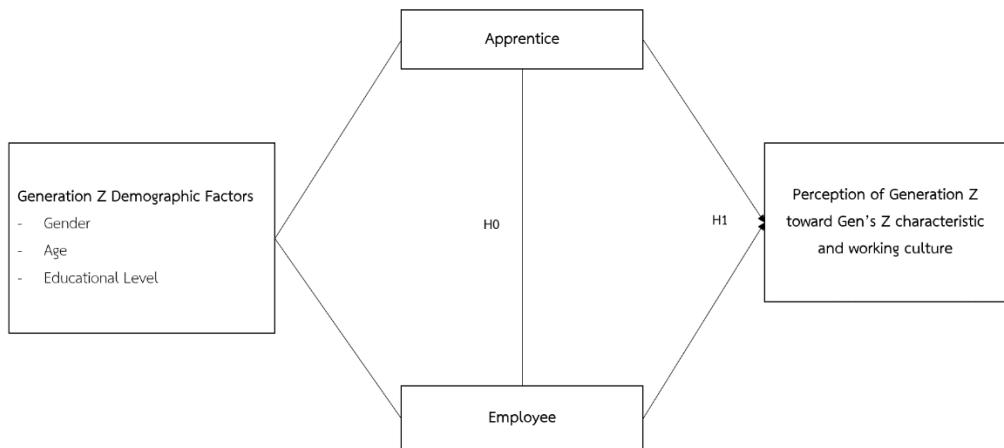


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Research

Method

The study employed a quantitative methodology, utilising established techniques to ensure data validity and reliability while minimising sample bias. Surveys generally utilise quantitative research to collect structured questions and predetermined response options from a large number of participants (Hair, Page & Brunsved, 2019).

Population and sample size

The study focuses on Generation Z individuals who have participated as apprentices in the tourist and hospitality sectors, as well as employees aged 18 to 29 years. We utilise a systematic questionnaire survey to gather data from apprentices or students who have engaged in apprenticeship programs within the tourism and hospitality sectors. For both the apprentices and the employees of the tourism sector, the sample size was determined using an infinite population. The researchers employed the Cochran formula to determine the sample size, utilising a 93% confidence interval and a 7% margin of error. Thus, the required sample size for an infinite population is approximately 200 respondents at a 93% confidence level with a 7% margin of error.

Research Tool

We designed the questionnaire that approved by the Research Ethics Committee: IRBP No. IRB No. P2-0255/2566 valid from 10 July 2023 to 31 May 2024. The questionnaire had closed-ended questions using multiple-choice alternatives and a five-point rating system. The initial component pertains to the demographic information of the respondents. The initial inquiry pertains to the willingness to complete the questionnaire in order to uphold rules of ethics and mitigate bias. The second filter question enquires whether the target demographic is aged 18 to 29 years. The researcher ceases to solicit responses from individuals aged 30 and above for the questionnaire. The second section, comprising respondents rated these items on a scale from 1 to 5 based on their awareness. We utilise a 5-point Likert scale for statistical analysis, with 1 denoting utter

insignificance and 5 indicating utmost significance. Second section comprising 22 items, enquires about respondents' awareness of Generation Z's working culture and characteristics. To ascertain the legitimacy of the data, we adhered to the procedures indicated below.

The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was employed to assess content validity. Throughout this procedure, three specialists evaluated the questionnaire. We employed the item-objective congruence (IOC) to assess the questionnaire items, utilising a scoring range from -1 to +1. Congruent = +1; doubtful = 0; incongruent = -1. We have eliminated the items with scores below 0.5. Conversely, we have retained ratings that are more than or equal to 0.5. We assessed the reliability of the questionnaire to guarantee the dependability and consistency of the replies obtained through the instrument. We utilised Cronbach's alpha to get the reliability coefficient, so ensuring internal consistency among the items. George and Mallery (2010) characterised the significance of Cronbach's alpha as follows: 0.9 = outstanding; 0.8 = good; 0.7 = acceptable; 0.6 = dubious; 0.5 = poor; and below 0.5 = undesirable. To guarantee the questionnaire's reliability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient must be a minimum of 0.7. We conducted a pre-test of this questionnaire with 30 samples to verify its reliability. Ultimately, the questionnaire earned a score of 0.96, signifying the questions were exemplary.

Data Collection

The data was taken from August to September 2023. Upon eliminating responses exhibiting a linear pattern, we acquired a total of 400 responses. The researcher employed a paper-based questionnaire to

gather information from apprentices and Generation Z employees. We collected three hundred questionnaires in person and distributed an additional one hundred using a Google Form link to various entities within the tourism and hospitality sectors across Thailand. Moreover, to effectively reach the appropriate audience for the online questionnaire, we engage with human resource personnel in Tourism and Hospitality organisations, including hotels, restaurants, spas, airlines, and tour operators within our network, to directly distribute the questionnaire to qualified respondents.

Data Analysis

We initially evaluated the validity of the data by re-checked that all questionnaires were completed filling. To investigate the demographics of the respondents, their perception toward working culture of Gen Z and their characteristics, we used descriptive analysis. To examine hypotheses that will yield divergent perspectives between apprentices and Generation Z employees, we utilised an independent samples t-Test. This is appropriate in this context as it compares the means of two independent groups, apprentices and employees, to ascertain whether a statistically significant difference exists between them. This test presupposes the independence of the two groups, indicating that participants in one group have no association with those in the other group.

Synthetic Research Results

This research aims to achieve two objectives: first, to analyse the working culture of Generation Z within Thailand's Tourism and Hospitality sector, and second, to compare the perceptions of apprentices and

Generation Z employees regarding the working culture in these organisations. The findings were presented in three tables. Table 2 presents the demographic factors of the respondents. Table 3 illustrates Generation Z's perceptions of working culture and characteristics as articulated by apprentices and Generation Z employees, addressing the first objective. To address objective 2, Table 4 illustrates the varying perceptions of Generation Z's working culture among apprentices and employees.

Table 2 Demographic Data

Demographic	Items	Frequency (N=400)	Percent
Gender	Male	101	25.30
	Female	228	57.0
	LGBTQ+	71	17.70
Status	Apprentice	200	50.0
	Employee	200	50.0
Age	18-22 year old	201	50.25
	23-25 year old	112	28.00
	26-29 year old	87	21.75
Education Level	High School	2	0.5
	Vocational Degree	69	17.25
	Bachelor Degree	321	80.25
	Master Degree and above	8	2.0

Note. Demographic Data

The dataset includes a sample of 400 individuals, distinguished by variables such as gender, marital status, age, and educational attainment. This demonstrates a majority of female respondents in the sample, with a notable representation of men and a lesser number identifying as LGBTQ+, at 57.0%, 25.3%, and 17.7%, respectively. The sample is divided between apprentices and employees, demonstrating a balanced representation of both demographics. The predominant age group among respondents is 18-22, constituting slightly more than fifty percent of the sample, followed by those aged 23-25 and 26-29 years. The majority of respondents possess a Bachelor's degree, representing a significant portion of the sample. The educational attainment is notably elevated, with minimal people possessing merely a high school diploma.

Table 3 Generation Z working culture and characteristics of apprentices and generation Z employees

Working Culture and Characteristics of Gen Z	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of Perception
Self-Confidence	3.69	.811	Significance
Autonomy	4.17	.737	Significance
Freedom	4.49	.664	Significance
Favor challenging task	4.02	.865	Significance
Self-Learner	4.23	.766	Significance
Lifelong Learning	4.32	.717	Significance
Environmental Consciousness	4.24	.723	Significance

Working Culture and Characteristics of Gen Z	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of Perception
Social Responsibility	4.35	.676	Significance
Respect Human Right and Equity	4.71	.542	Utmost Significance
Respect in Diversity and Inclusion	4.75	.531	Utmost Significance
Continuous self-improvement	4.46	.663	Significance
Technological proficiency	3.99	.824	Significance
IT and Communication Competence	4.13	.789	Significance
Proficient in multitasking and rapid learning	4.13	.809	Significance
Additional Employment and Auxiliary Income Sources	4.48	.732	Significance
To engage in their own enterprise	4.40	.817	Significance
Selecting a career aligned with one's passion	4.50	.697	Utmost Significance
Advance alongside the organisation	4.41	.720	Significance
Work-Life Balance	4.50	.708	Utmost Significance
Regular Feedback	4.19	.834	Significance
Financial Security	4.68	.546	Utmost Significance
To attain visibility and acknowledgement from others	4.59	.627	Utmost Significance

Note. Generation Z working culture and characteristics of apprentices and generation Z employees

The findings presented in the table indicate of the utmost of core values, including respect for diversity and inclusion, human rights and equity, financial security, the pursuit of visibility and recognition, the alignment of one's career with personal passions, and a sense of work-life balance. The highest scores for these traits were 4.75, 4.71, 4.68, 4.59, and 4.50 for the final two attributes, respectively. Furthermore, autonomy and learning are valued as significance. Freedom, lifelong learning, self-Learner and autonomy demonstrate a high scores as 4.49, 4.32, 4.23 and 4.17 respectively. Regarding social and environmental awareness, Generation Z has a notable environmental consciousness score of 4.24, while social responsibility is rated at 4.35. Gen Z scored marginally lower in tech skills and adaptability compared to other traits, although IT and communication proficiency, as well as multitasking and rapid learning, were rated equally at 4.13. Technological competence, evaluated at 3.99, indicates that it is not the highest-ranked attribute, implying that, although individuals are tech-savvy, other factors hold greater significance. Gen Z are open to different revenue streams and side projects, as seen by their rating of 4.48 for supplementary job and auxiliary income sources in relation to career growth and participation. Additionally, starting their own business (4.40) demonstrates a propensity for entrepreneurship. As well as advance alongside the organisation rate is 4.41 as well. Despite the fact that most respondents give all traits good ratings, employers are said to want to concentrate on those with the lowest values. Self-Confidence exhibits a minimum score of 3.69. This indicates that certain Gen Z individuals may exhibit a deficiency in workplace confidence. Employers may prioritise

mentorship and training to enhance confidence. Furthermore, regular feedback is assessed with a mean of 4.19, indicating a desire for guidance and affirmation in their employment.

Table 4 Different perceptions of Generation Z working culture among apprentices and employees

To evaluate hypothesis, which aimed to investigate the differing perspectives of employees and apprentices, the study results are shown in the subsequent table.

Gen Z working culture and characteristics	Status	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	P-Value
Self-Confidence	Apprentice	200	3.47	.826	-5.632	<.001**
	Employee	200	3.91	.734		
Autonomy	Apprentice	200	4.07	.757	-2.877	.004*
	Employee	200	4.28	.721		
Favor challenging task	Apprentice	200	3.82	.914	-4.934	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.23	.762		
Self-Learner	Apprentice	200	4.09	.819	-3.781	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.37	.682		
Lifelong Learning	Apprentice	200	4.25	.754	-2.101	.036*
	Employee	200	4.39	.672		
Environmental Consciousness	Apprentice	200	4.05	.762	-5.366	<.001**
Social Responsibility	Employee	200	4.43	.630		
Social Responsibility	Apprentice	200	4.22	.686	-3.914	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.47	.641		

Gen Z working culture and characteristics	Status	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	P-Value
Continuous self-improvement	Apprentice	200	4.35	.721	-3.517	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.58	.579		
Technological proficiency	Apprentice	200	3.76	.858	-5.738	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.22	.722		
Proficient in multitasking and rapid learning	Apprentice	200	3.88	.808	-6.747	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.38	.684		
Proficient in multitasking and rapid learning	Apprentice	200	3.93	.856	-5.232	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.34	.704		
To engage in their own enterprise	Apprentice	200	4.17	.867	-6.139	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.64	.687		
Advance alongside with the organisation	Apprentice	200	4.29	.719	-3.593	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.54	.756		
Work-Life Balance	Apprentice	200	4.37	.759	-3.806	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.64	.627		
Regular Feedback	Apprentice	200	4.01	.901	-3.970	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.35	.774		
Additional Employment and Auxiliary Income Sources	Apprentice	200	4.26	.791	-6.217	<.001**
	Employee	200	4.70	.595		

** = P-Value < 0.001* = P-Value < 0.05*

Note. Different perceptions of Generation Z working culture among apprentices and employees

The analysis results from the one-way t-test indicated that hypothesis 1 was accepted. There is a significant difference in the perception of working culture between Generation Z apprentices and Generation Z employees in Tourism and Hospitality organizations in Thailand with statistically significant differences ($p<0.001$). Among 22 measures, 14 items exhibited differing perceptions of Generation Z characteristics between apprentices and Generation Z employees and two attributes had significant differences lower than 0.05. The results indicated that Gen Z employees typically achieve superior scores across multiple attributes. Principal discoveries the Gen Z personality encompass self-confidence, autonomy, a favor challenging tasks, and a stronger inclination for self-learning. Regarding social concerns, generation Z employees shown heightened environmental awareness and social responsibility. Concerning teach skills, employees had a superior performance in technological tasks, possessed enhanced IT proficiency, and excelled in multitasking. Furthermore, employees exhibited a greater propensity for self-employment and advancement within the organisation. Employee preferences included a greater emphasis on work-life balance, a desire for regular feedback, and additional employment and auxiliary income sources. Tourism and hospitality enterprises can engage apprentices and employees to attract, cultivate, and retain premier talent by comprehending their expectations. This can enhance staff engagement and productivity, facilitating the company's success.

Discussion

The results indicated that Generation Z places significant importance on diversity, inclusion, human rights, and work-life balance. This underscores that Gen Z is driven by purpose and pursues employment that corresponds with their ethical and personal values. This aligns with Forbes Business Council (2023); Gostomska (2024) and Team (2024). Furthermore, financial security and recognition are ranked at 4.68 and 4.59, respectively, which are equally significant. Although Gen Z is frequently depicted as idealistic, research indicates that they are also pragmatic, prioritising financial security and job progression. Research by Girimurugan et al., (2024) and Trivani & Soleha (2023) indicate that Generation Z is prudent regarding finances but encounters considerable difficulties in effective management. Furthermore, the elevated ratings of 4.17 for 'Autonomy,' 4.49 for 'Freedom,' 4.23 for 'Self-Learner,' and 4.32 for 'Lifelong Learning' substantiate the prevailing notion that Generation Z prioritises self-direction and ongoing personal development. They seek autonomy in their work and opportunities to acquire new abilities. As frequently noted by Harvard Business Review and McKinsey Quarterly, a company's ability to retain Generation Z employees hinges on its capacity to customise learning and development opportunities, emphasising their preference for engaging, autonomous, and continuous learning experiences in the workplace. Social and environmental awareness aligns with the general perception that Generation Z exhibits greater environmental and social consciousness than preceding generations. Ahonen & Holmén (2022) assert that Generation Z prioritises social

sustainability in the labour market, highlighting their expectation for enterprises to implement sustainable practices and demonstrate social responsibility. Research by Deloitte Global indicates that 20% of Gen Z employees had already changed employment owing to environmental concerns, emphasising the significance of sustainability in their career choices. They frequently pursue firms who have a dedication to sustainability and social equity. The marginally lower score for 'Technological Proficiency' (3.99) relative to other criteria is a noteworthy and significant detail. Although Gen Z is technologically proficient, the findings indicate that they may prioritise talents and values beyond mere technological expertise. This may be due to their perception of technical talents as inherent, leading to a greater emphasis on cultivating soft skills and additional competencies. The entrepreneurial spirit is evidenced by a high engagement level of 4.40, indicating that Gen Z individuals possess an entrepreneurial attitude and are inclined to establish their own firms or do side projects. The insights regarding the necessity for consistent feedback (4.19) and the diminished score for self-confidence (3.69) are very significant. Employers are advised to offer increased support and direction to assist Gen Z employees in cultivating confidence and feeling appreciated.

Generation Z employees emphasise diversity, inclusion, human rights, and work-life balance in their career decisions, pursuing firms that reflect their ethical principles. Although frequently perceived as idealistic, they nevertheless demonstrate realism, prioritising financial stability and acknowledgement. Furthermore, they underscore autonomy and self-

improvement via ongoing educational opportunities. Organisations within the Tourism and Hospitality sector must adjust to these preferences to effectively attract and retain Gen Z talent.

The analysis of Generation Z's working culture and characteristics identified notable differences between apprentices and employees across 14 attributes and 2 attributes of 22 assessments, corroborated by t-test values of $p < 0.001$ and 0.05, respectively. The findings demonstrate that Generation Z employees display heightened self-direction. This study corroborates the assertions of Gratton (2024) and Total People (2024), who similarly posited that Generation Z employees favour autonomy and flexibility in their work environments. Secondly, concerning technological proficiency, Generation Z exhibits significant tech-savviness, as shown by Deloitte's assessment emphasising their adaptability to digital technology. This competency is essential for manoeuvring through contemporary workplaces where technology is pivotal. The diminished levels of self-confidence and technological proficiency among apprentices and employees is a significant finding. Generation Z is widely acknowledged for its self-assurance and adeptness in digital technology. Generation Z represents a demographic that has recently embarked on careers in the hospitality industry. Specifically, the apprentices who are inexperienced and insufficiently qualified to deliver customer service. Despite Generation Z's considerable technological proficiency, this does not guarantee their thorough comprehension of technology in the service sector required for delivering effective customer service, due to the ongoing advancement of technology (Baum, 2019). Therefore, regular training in the specific

technological software employed in their daily tasks is essential. By doing so, the Gen Z apprentice and employee can enhance their competence, ultimately resulting in heightened self-assurance (Koc & Bozkurt, 2017). Third, social responsibility in relation to Gen Z apprentices aligns with research demonstrating that this generation values ethical practices and sustainability. This corresponds with the assertions of Marginean (2021) and Böhlich & Anxmann (2020), who proposed that firms should integrate these principles into their organisational culture to attract and retain Generation Z talent.

In addition, the findings underscore the importance of apprenticeships as viable career pathways for Gen Z, providing both financial stability through earning while learning and structured professional development opportunities. This contrasts with traditional education routes where students often accumulate debt without immediate work experience.

Research Recommendation

Organizations seeking to attract Generation Z employees must ensure their organisational culture aligns with Generation Z's perspectives. The findings indicate that emphasising social responsibility, work-life balance, and personal development can enhance employee satisfaction. The results indicate the subsequent recommended actions:

Recommendations for the Educational Institutions

The study's findings indicate that apprentices from educational institutions often perceive themselves as inadequately prepared to provide effective customer service and recognise the necessity for

additional training and skill enhancement pertinent to their roles. Educational institutions aiming to place students in internships within the tourism and hospitality sectors must adequately prepare them to enhance their comprehension of the associated tasks, responsibilities, and requisite competencies for these positions. Moreover, fostering close collaboration with host enterprises to delineate the appropriate scope of intern responsibilities may mitigate the issue of "culture shock," which can cultivate negative perceptions of employment in this sector.

Recommendations for the Human Resources Manager

The Human Resource Manager should provide personalised training through customised courses that focus on technological skill enhancement and role-specific competencies. Moreover, integrating social responsibility initiatives into organisational culture and corporate identity would align with Generation Z's values.

Employers who effectively manage these aspects will cultivate an environment that attracts, retains, and develops talented young professionals from this demographic.

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