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Employee Expectations for Sustainability of Human Resources Management among Gen Z in Vietnam



Abstract: - In recent times, the Gen Z cohort has emerged as a significant force in the workforce in Vietnam. With their bold thinking and action-oriented approach, they present unique challenges for employers. Hence, the objective of this study is to explore the expectations of Gen Z, and then assist organizations in formulating effective strategies regarding Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM). The research follows a two-stage structure: the first stage involves qualitative research, while the second stage focuses on quantitative research. Initially, four mini-focus groups are conducted, comprising three individuals in each group (Undergraduates: no working experience, interns; Graduates: full-time, employment gap). Subsequently, a questionnaire-based survey is developed based on the insights gathered from the initial stage. The survey collects data from 372 variables, which are then analyzed using SPSS 26. The findings indicate that depending on the scale of the organization and occupation field, Gen Z employees show different levels of expectation. Generally, they exhibit a heightened awareness of workplaces aligning with their values and recognition in organizations for future development. These insights provide valuable guidance for businesses seeking to create a work environment that appeals to and retains Gen Z employees.

Keywords— Employee expectations, Gen Z, Sustainability of Human Resources Management (SHRM), Vietnam.

I. INTRODUCTION

The sustainable aspects of human resource management (HRM) have become increasingly important for organizations, owing to the enhanced global awareness of sustainable development. Specifically, employees play a crucial role as a source of knowledge and support for the development and implementation of organizational strategies. According to recent McCrindle's research, it is forecasted that Gen Z will constitute 22% of the worldwide population and 27% of the global workforce by 2025 [1]. This tech-savvy generation holds distinct values and expectations, posing unique challenges and opportunities for HRM. On the other hand, the research [2] revealed that corporations have faced the challenge of limited talent or scarce human resources (HR). While, focusing on sustainable human resource management that fosters a positive work environment, leading to the organization's long-term competitive advantage. Therefore, this paper explores the sustainable practices within HR in Vietnam through the lens of Gen Z expectations.

Compared to previous generations, Gen Z prioritizes purpose, work-life balance, and personal growth alongside financial security. They are digital natives, comfortable with technology [3], and demanding transparency, agility, and inclusivity in their workplaces [4]. Their career choices are heavily influenced by an organization's social and environmental responsibility, making sustainability a key differentiator for attracting and retaining this talent. However, a Bankrate's survey reported that 55% of the GenZ workers surveyed have a tendency to switch their jobs within the next 12 months [5]. This alarming statistic raises the problem: How can HR practices adapt to ensure the sustainability of a Gen Z-led workforce in Vietnam? Thus, the main objective of this paper is to gain a deeper understanding of Gen Z's specific expectations for sustainable HR practices in Vietnam.

The paper is structured as follows: First, the literature review will present the main characteristics, needs, and expectations of Gen Z, and the concept of the sustainability of human resource management. The second section is concerned with the methodology of the study including qualitative research and quantitative research. Then, a critical discussion unpacks the findings, highlighting key takeaways and limitations. Finally, the paper culminates in conclusions, offering valuable insights for HR professionals and organizations seeking to bridge the gap between Gen Z expectations and a sustainable HR landscape in Vietnam.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Human Resource Management (HRM)

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a vital component of an organizational management strategy, fostering coordination across different departments; Through each method, the common objective is to sustain and develop the organization as human resources (HR) is the fundamental foundation for its operation and growth [6]. Over time, due to environmental, economic, and social challenges, sustainability has been integrated into organizational strategies to enhance the effective management of human resources [7]. Through the decades since its discovery, definitions of Sustainable Human Resources Management (SHRM) have been diversely developed and consolidated [8]. With different objectives of each study, the assumptions about SHRM are also different [9]. According to [10], meeting the demands of the company and society without compromising future capabilities and intentions is considered to apply sustainability in HR. Meanwhile, [11] states that SHRM is the use of strategies for businesses to achieve success with positive impacts both inside and outside in the long term as well as preventing negative impacts. In particular, three main points are considered successful in implementing this strategy including resulting in positive outcomes for people, the environment, and economic prosperity [12].

Therefore, SHRM in this study is defined as the strategy an organization uses in human resource management to create value and demonstrate responsibility not only within the business but also for the society based on the 3 pillars (economic, social, and environmental) to retain personnel in facing challenges of generational transfer. Thus, their responses can be considered insights regarding employee expectations for SHRM.

2.2 Gen Z

Gen Z, growing up in the digital era was born from 1996 to 2012. This cohort is anticipated to contribute a quarter of the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region's population by 2025 [13]. Because of this benefit, Gen Z has a tendency to spend six or more hours per day on smartphones [14]. They explore a wide range of information through Internet sources, before making purchasing decisions. However, they place significant concerns about their personal information on online platforms [15]. Since Gen Z workers hold multiple jobs [16], Gen Z holds \$360 billion in buying power, a figure that has probably increased as more individuals from this cohort enter the workforce [17]. Gen Z also values social fairness and equality; Therefore, they seek organizations that provide a friendly atmosphere, fair treatment, and a low-stress environment [18]. According to the Vietnamese Statistics Office, the rate of Gen Z employees is anticipated to contribute 35% in 2025 and increase their impact on the labor force [19]. According to the Gen Z National Survey, seeking a great job is the second top priority in their perception [20]. Another research found the factors that drive them to engage are work environment, colleagues, leadership, and income which account for 57.8%, with the work environment being the most significant [21]. Therefore, a comfortable and well-equipped workspace encourages this tech-savvy generation to be more creative and motivated.

2.3 Employee Expectations

Employee expectations refer to the level of satisfaction from an organization, or a job, often evaluating whether or not they are pleased. It is believed that a firm meets the expectations which might enhance happiness and work experience. Whenever a new generation enters the labor market, they need to adjust to new, distinct attitudes, expectations, and a certain work and cooperation style. Businesses prioritize the requirements of Gen Y and Z, even if many generations exist in the job market. While sharing many similarities with Gen Y, Gen Z emphasizes satisfaction in the workplace more than their seniors [22].

There are several factors that attract Gen Z employees which are career opportunities, working environment, and reward and recognition. Career opportunities criteria account for a major portion because it presents the way an organization creates an equitable and transparent work environment [23]. The research revealed that over half of the respondents placed a significant concern for benefits and compensation; Therefore, it is concluded that rewards can stimulate and diminish turnover rate [24]. Besides, working environment and work-life balance are factors that raise a concern for employees. Leadership is an indispensable component in maintaining an enjoyable workplace and affecting Gen Z workers' pleasure [25].

2.3.1 Rewards & Recognition

Rewards and recognition are the group of compensations that the firms grant to employees for attracting, simulating, and retaining them. By keeping capable talents in the companies, they might improve a supportive environment in which employees feel admired [26]. It includes extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards involve tangible awards like promotions, bonuses, and compensations while intrinsic rewards comprise

the compliment, constructive evaluation, or recognition. These types of compensation can be seen as useful elements in maintaining talented and passionate employees [27]. According to the survey [26], half of Gen Z respondents believe their work performance is not acknowledged, which might discourage them. Therefore, rewards and recognition, including financial and non-financial benefits significantly impact job satisfaction.

2.3.2 Working Atmosphere

The working environment consists of work and context; In which, work involves value generation, work diversity, job achievement, and how a job might be completed. The second factor is context, which includes the social and physical aspects of the workplace and attracts a large interest of Gen Z employees. It plays a significant role in attracting and retaining Gen Z employees. For instance, the study showed Gen Z employees in Vietnam are more concerned about the working environment, honesty, or ethics in enterprises. These concerns are raised among them due to cultures, and financial background [28]. Work-life balance may be attained when employment enhances lives rather than forcing us to make decisions about what to prioritize. And they prefer choosing their own free time to do things like do tasks, or meet friends [28]. In addition, they also require a good, welcoming, and sympathetic workplace culture. Not only should colleagues collaborate and support but Gen Z employees also want to be honest and communicate directly with each other [29]. Therefore, the working environment plays an important role in motivating Gen Z employees to be more active in the workplace.

2.3.3 Career Development

Career development is a framework that proposes and arranges for the employees to maintain the needs of the enterprises and each person's career goals [26]. In addition, favorable career development might bring the chance to flourish and cultivate based on their abilities [30]. According to the Statista Research Department, 35% of Gen Z employees placed career development as a significant criterion for them considering a new job [31]. Unlike the prior generation, they have more career preferences due to a better education and abundant career data; Thereby, Gen Z employees seek vacancies for both income and the chance to promote their future career path [19]. As a result, career development is considered one of the vital factors in retaining talented employees.

2.3.4 Leadership

Leadership is when one person guides team members to achieve a shared goal [32]. A key ambition of Gen Z is for management to appreciate and pay attention to their opinions [25]. They are always willing to solve the differences in psychology in Gen Z employees due to their significant demands, the tendency to switch jobs, appreciate requirements, and have trouble accepting criticism [33]. Gen Z employees appreciate a leader who is explicit, reliable, encouraging, and active listening. It is also crucial that the leaders demonstrate resilience in delegating tasks and permit creativity [34]. Additionally, they demand valuable knowledge and deserve recognition and support from directed supervisors for their future development; therefore, they tend to admire leaders who can boost their spirit [19].

III. HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1:

H1₀: There is no association between employee expectations and Sustainability of Human Resources Management (SHRM) among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H1_a: There is an association between employee expectations and Sustainability of Human Resources Management (SHRM) among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 2:

H2₀: There is no association between reward & recognition and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H2_a: There is an association between reward & recognition and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 3:

H3_a: There is no association between working atmosphere and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H3_a: There is an association between working atmosphere and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 4:

H4₀: There is no association between career development and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H4_a: There is an association between career development and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 5:

H50: There is no association between leadership and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H5a: There is an association between leadership and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 6:

H60: There is no association between location and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H6a: There is an association between location and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 7:

H70: There is no association between salary and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H7a: There is an association between salary and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 8:

H80: There is no association between workplace culture and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H8a: There is an association between workplace culture and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

Hypothesis 9:

H90: There is no association between word-of-mouth (WOM) and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

H9a: There is an association between word-of-mouth (WOM) and employee expectations among Gen Z in Vietnam.

IV. RESEARCH MODEL

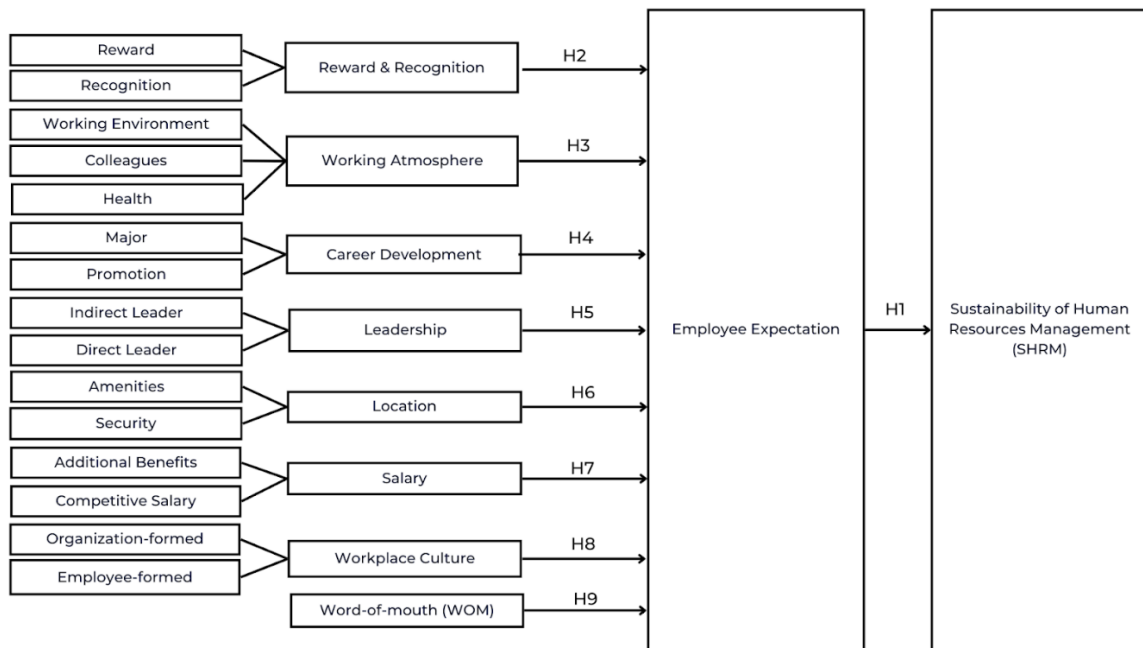


Fig. 1. The research model and hypotheses of researcher (Source: all researchers, 2024)

V. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

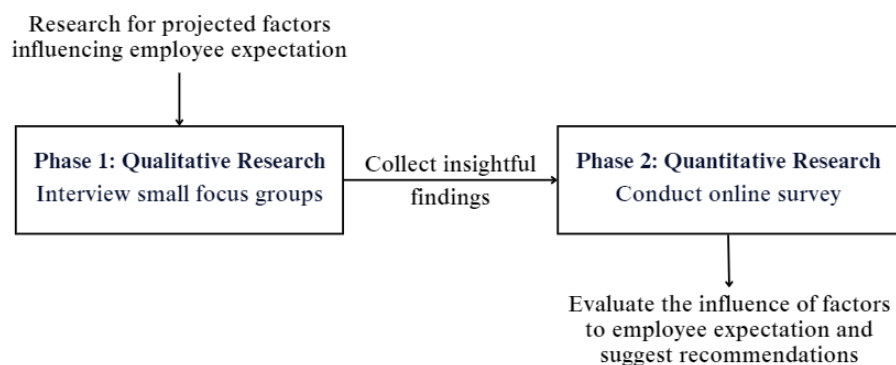


Fig. 2. Phases of research (Source: all researchers, 2024)

As a part of the aim of this research is to elucidate the relationship between factors shaping employee expectations and how this impacts SHRM. Therefore, some factors highlighted influencing employee expectations are identified based on previous studies to create a foundation for Phase 1.

Phase 1: The qualitative research was employed by implementing interviews within 4 small focus groups. This method not only re-evaluates the previously researched factors but also can discover new insights regarding influences on employee expectations.

Phase 2: By leveraging the findings collected in Phase 1, then quantitative research was conducted through the online survey. A sample including 286 valid responses was utilized to substantiate the influence of new factors while assessing old factors on employee expectations.

Thereby, this study is able to discuss and provide valuable recommendations for businesses in human resources management.

5.2 Data Collection

The qualitative research, a small focus group approach, involved a total of 12 participants residing and working in Ho Chi Minh City, divided into 4 groups. These groups include the “No Jobs” (3 participants); “Interns” (3 participants); “Full-time” (3 participants); and “Employment Gap” (3 participants). An open-ended and informal interview process was conducted with these four groups in Ho Chi Minh City, each interview lasted approximately one hour. This approach fostered a sense of belonging and cohesiveness within each group, creating a safe environment for participants to openly share their thoughts [35]. Moreover, the interactions among participants bring valuable data, offering deeper insights into the factors influencing employee expectations [36]. By interviewing multiple groups with a sufficiently large sample size [37], the study enhanced the reliability of the data, which allowed for more accurate analysis and comparison of various aspects of the labor market in Ho Chi Minh City.

Quantitative research is conceptualized as the research framework in academic research that is used to address the research question or hypothesis through the analysis of numeric patterns [38]. The research was implemented by an online survey with 24 close-ended questions on Google Forms from July 30th, 2024, to September 15th, 2024. Particularly, the questions were designed in the form of statements and utilizing a five-point Likert scale to determine the factors of greatest concern to employees. Within the 372 questionnaires sent, 282 respondents were valid for this study, whereas respondents were excluded owing to being outside of Gen Z.

5.3 Data Collection

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were implemented using probability sampling, specifically stratified sampling, which is considered to enhance accuracy [39]. For the qualitative research, all participants were from Generation Z, then they were divided into 4 groups based on the same employment statuses, reflecting shared characteristics. In the quantitative research, stratified random sampling was employed. Initially, the online survey was distributed randomly; However, only responses from Generation Z were retained for analysis, ensuring the validity of the data for the intention of this study.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Qualitative Research

*Demographics from interviews

The study involved in-depth interviews with a total of 12 interviewees (N=12), detailed in Table 1. All interviewees were between the ages of 18-25, representing a high proportion of the anthropological population in the study. Among this group, 6 interviewees were male representing 50% and 6 were female, accounting for 50% of the total. The geographic distribution of the interviewees was in Ho Chi Minh City, reflecting the centrality of the city discussed in the study. The interviewees were divided into four different groups to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The first group consisted of individuals without jobs, who were pursuing academic environments and had not yet entered the labor market - “No Jobs”. The second group consisted of interns, who participated in 3-6 month internship programs at businesses to gain practical experience - “Interns”. The third group included full-time employees, providing a comprehensive view of individuals fully engaged in the workforce - “Full-time Jobs”. The fourth group, referred to as the employment gap group, offered perspectives from individuals who had previously been employed and are currently seeking new opportunities.

Table 1: Demographic from interviews

Number	Age	Gender	Area	Status
1	21	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	No Jobs
2	21	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	No Jobs
3	20	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	No Jobs
4	21	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	Interns
5	21	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	Interns
6	21	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	Interns
7	25	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	Full-time Jobs
8	24	Female	Ho Chi Minh City	Full-time Jobs
9	23	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	Full-time Jobs
10	24	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	Employment Gap
11	24	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	Employment Gap
12	24	Male	Ho Chi Minh City	Employment Gap

*Open coding:

This study follows a deep structure (latent analysis), consisting of four steps: decontextualization, recontextualization, categorization, and compilation (as shown in Table 2) [40]. In the first step, decontextualization, meaning unit is coded using either an inductive or deductive system. The second step, recontextualization, compares these units with the original data to retain essential content, shown as condensed meaning units. Then, in categorization, the meaning unit is grouped into homogeneous categories, with accuracy ensured through triangulation to uncover deeper connections, represented by the codes in the table. Finally, in compilation, conclusions are drawn through member checks, peer reviews, and audit investigations, helping to analyze the data comprehensively and better understand the speaker's intent, referenced in the category section.

Table 2: Recording interviews with respondents in the Gen Z age group

Group	Meaning Unit	Condensed Meaning Unit	Code	Category
No jobs	I preferably one close to my home to save on fuel costs and avoid traffic jams.	I prefer a nearby location to save on fuel and avoid traffic.	I want to work near my house	Location
No Jobs	I will search for reputable companies online and check for any negative feedback before applying.	I search for reputable companies and review feedback before applying.	Search for information from different sources.	WOM
No Jobs	Colleagues must be both cooperative and competitive in work. I want to work in an environment where they can grow together.	I desire a cooperative and competitive environment for mutual growth.	Balanced working environment	Working Atmosphere
No Jobs	I am interested in job opportunities, especially companies that give me experiences. I am willing to do anything within my capabilities.	I am interested in job offering experience and willing to devote.	Seeking experience and contribution opportunities.	Career Development
No Jobs	I prefer working in a multinational corporation because, firstly, they offer an international environment with diverse cultures, and secondly, they provide a clear career progression path with good benefits.	I prefer multinational companies due to diverse cultures and clear career progression.	Multinational companies offer diversity and career growth.	Career Development
No Jobs	Career development plays an important role for me in applying for this job.	Career development is an important factor in selecting	Career development as job motivation	Career Development

Interns	I want to be recognized in different ways such as compliments, bonuses, or promotion in the workplace environment.	I desire to receive the recognition through compliments, bonuses, or promotion.	Desire for workplace recognition	Rewards & Recognition
Interns	I think being recognized is important because it might get better opportunities. It also motivates me to go to work.	Recognition offers opportunities and motivates work attendance.	Recognition as motivation and opportunity.	Rewards & Recognition
Interns	I need to be recognized for my achievements in front of other employees. Because it is crucial in building my profile.	I desire to gain recognition in front of my colleagues for profile building.	Public recognition is helpful for profile building.	Rewards & Recognition
Interns	Unclear career development negatively affects my motivation and work achievements.	I want a clear career development	I want a clear career development	Rewards & Recognition
Interns	The company where I am currently interning does not have a clear career progression path, which makes me unmotivated.	Lack of clear career progression makes me motivated	Desire a clear career progression path.	Career Development
Interns	In the short term, the priority in the 20-30 age group is career development, choosing companies that provide the best opportunities for learning and growth.	The 20-30 age group prioritizes career development and learning opportunities.	Career growth priority at 20-30 age group	Career Development
Interns	For example, in a meeting, when the campaign has achieved high performance, I just need to receive the recognition that it was my idea.	I desire recognition for ideas in successful campaigns.	Recognition for idea contribution.	Reward & Recognition
Interns	I need a creative and comfortable space to stay motivated and work productively. Privacy is especially important, so there must be partitions to create separation.	Working space needs to be creative, comfortable, and private.	Importance of privacy and workspace comfort.	Working Atmosphere
Full-time Jobs	If the leader is too negative, the employees will also be affected because they are working directly with the leader. Therefore, it leads to a stressful and negative working environment that affects the performance and quality of work of the entire team.	Leaders create a negative workplace environment that lowers team performance.	Leadership impact on the entire team	Leadership
Full-time Jobs	I am affected by the working space like hygiene makes me feel comfortable to work. Therefore, it can boost my spirit when going to work.	Clean workspace makes me feel comfortable and motivated.	Impact of workspace hygiene on morale	Working Atmosphere
Full-time Jobs	Colleagues as friends because they work alongside me, understand the challenges I face, and are the ones I often meet to share and empathize with.	Colleagues are friends who share and empathize with work challenges	Colleagues as supportive partners.	Working Atmosphere
Full-time Jobs	I also prefer my workplace for its great amenities, such as a game room and a ping-pong table for relaxation. There's even a designated nap room if needed, which is a big reason why everyone enjoys it.	I enjoy the workplace amenities (such as a game room, ping-pong table, and nap room) for relaxation.	Workplace amenities for relaxation and enjoyment.	Working Atmosphere
Full-time Jobs	I enjoy team-building activities and year-end parties as they provide opportunities for everyone in the company to bond more closely. However, it's not a big deal if they don't happen.	Team building and parties foster bonding, but they don't be a big problem.	Team-building activities promote bonding.	Workplace Culture
Full-time Jobs	I want to apply to a company that offers a high salary.	I want to receive a high salary.	High income	Salary
Employment Gap	Whether a company organizes experience-sharing workshops effectively or not. It significantly depends on the leader. Leaders should know how to exploit the story, create attraction, and encourage employees to attend.	Workshop success depends on leaders. They should motivate employees.	Leaders drive employee's engagement	Leadership
Employment Gap	My teammate and the boss are factors that contribute to staying with the company.	Teammates and boss influence staying with the company.	Humans are an important factor for staying long-term.	Working Atmosphere

Employment Gap	Leader is a vital factor to retain me in the enterprises.	Leadership is key to retaining employees.	Leadership's role in retention	Leadership
Employment Gap	Previously, each member of my team had different individual orientations, and the team's energy declined because the former leader left the company. Working with the new boss, I felt dissatisfied because he didn't bring positive energy to the team. Of course, at that time, finances were no longer a problem.	Team energy declined after the former leader left, and dissatisfaction arose with the new boss who lacked positive energy.	Leader plays a vital role in bolstering the team's energy.	Leadership
Employment Gap	Since I had previously worked at a company considered to have the best working environment in Vietnam, with amenities such as a gym, swimming pool, golf course, and many different meeting rooms, I have high expectations that my next work environment will be even better than the previous one.	High expectations for future work environments due to prior experience with great amenities.	High expectations from past workplace amenities.	Working Atmosphere

6.2 Quantitative Research

From July 30th, 2024, to September 15th, 2024, a total of 372 respondents participated in the online survey. However, focusing on Generation Z, specifically those who currently or will be part of the Vietnamese workforce, 282 respondents aged 18 to 25 years old were deemed valid for this study. The survey did not limit participation by gender, resulting in a significant gender disparity, with females comprising 71% of the respondents.

Despite this gender imbalance, the respondents' diverse employment statuses provided a range of experienced perspectives and expectations based on their real-life work experiences. This diversity is further reflected in the educational background of the respondents, with 72% having graduated from university/ college. Recognizing income as a characteristic that influences employee expectations, the monthly income of respondents was also considered for further analysis.

The raw data collected from the online survey was imported from Google Sheets and analyzed using SPSS 26 to evaluate the influence of various factors and test the hypotheses.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics		Sample size (N=282)	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25 years old	282	100%
Gender	Female	199	71%
	Male	78	28%
	Other	5	2%
Employment status	No experiences	49	17%
	Intern	89	32%
	Part-time job	94	33%
	Full-time job	50	18%
Education	High school	75	27%
	University/College	203	72%
	Master	3	1%
Monthly income	Under 3 million VND	99	35%
	3-5 million VND	86	30%
	5-10 million VND	64	23%
	10-15 million VND	17	6%
	Over 15 million VND	16	6%

VII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Qualitative Findings

After collecting the insights from the focus group, it is obvious that there are several similarities and differences among the four groups. Overall, all of them have shown attention to clear career development and opportunities that offer personal growth, learning potential, and challenges to help them improve. One respondent shared:

“I prefer working in a multinational corporation because, ...they provide a clear career progression path with good benefits.”

Another individual shared that:

“The company where I am currently interning does not have a clear career progression path, which makes me unmotivated.”

Furthermore, these groups share a common appreciation for the working environment factor, yet the priority level of each aspect differs among them.

Regarding the dissimilarities, each group places distinct value on the factors discussed in the interview. Firstly, the undergraduate and intern groups revealed that they considered career development as the most valuable for internships. Since many are still deciding on their career paths, they seek companies that offer an obvious plan for future career development. One of them said:

“...In the short term, the priority in the 20-30 age group is career development... that provides the best opportunities for learning and growth.”

Undergraduates, particularly those without jobs, prioritize company reputation based on word-of-mouth and location to minimize commuting costs. In contrast, interns are focused on gaining real-world experience and long-term career preparation. Leadership, rewards, and recognition significantly influence their decision to stay beyond career development. In which, they focused on gaining recognition and intangible rewards rather than receiving physical rewards. One marketing intern mentioned:

“...when the campaign has achieved high performance, I just need to receive the recognition that it was my idea.”

It was also supported by another intern in audit that recognition is essential to build a better profile for their future projects in that field. It is notable that they tend to stay with businesses where they experience a clean, airy office environment, with partitions between desks to ensure privacy. In terms of the full-time group, colleagues might be considered the most important criteria for employees due to having common shared values and lifestyles. It is confirmed by a respondent:

“Colleagues seem to be my friends because they work alongside me, understand the challenges I face, and are the ones I often meet to share and empathize with.”

Unlike the two groups mentioned above, full-time employees are more focused on career development, particularly in the areas of salary increases and title advancement. They expressed concern if the growth within the company has slowed, as it directly impacts their opportunities for advancement. As a result, this uncertainty makes them question the long-term potential of the company and can lead to decreased motivation and engagement. Besides, they also take significant consideration into workplace conditions, whereas workplace culture was identified as a minor factor in this group. On the other hand, the last group is also affected by the workplace environment including humans and facilities. They are those who have an employment gap that prioritizes workforce stability and a positive work atmosphere that lasts at least two years. A confirmation from the respondents is that:

“My teammate and the boss are factors that contribute to staying with the company.”

Pressure from managers or leaders is a major factor that can easily reduce their motivation, as they have a direct impact on their team:

“...Working with the new boss, I felt dissatisfied because he didn't bring positive energy to the team., at that time, finances were no longer a problem.”

Furthermore, interviewees believe that if their previous company had a high-standard workplace environment, their expectations for the next company would be higher compared to others.

“...I have high expectations that my next work environment will be even better than the previous one.”

They also value a high-standard workplace environment and seek clear career advancement paths, with an understanding that growth depends on company finances and personal recognition.

In conclusion, employee expectations are influenced by several factors, with four key areas identified through prior research and additional insights revealed during qualitative interviews. The next step is to conduct quantitative research to assess how these factors impact employee expectations.

7.2 Quantitative Findings

The online survey was collected from 372 respondents; However, after removing missing data, 283 valid responses remained. In this study, a cross-sectional method was applied, and the sample was randomly selected from the study subjects. The study includes nine groups of variables, with 8 independent variables 1 and one dependent variable group.

To ensure suitability for factor analysis, an additional criterion is that the analysis should not be conducted with fewer than 50 participants, with a preferable minimum sample size of 100 participants [41]. In this study, the minimum sample size must ensure a ratio of 8 participants per variable, calculated by the formula:

• $n > 100$ samples and $n = 8 * k$ (where k is the number of variables).

Specifically, in this case, with 25 variables, the minimum sample size would be: $n = 8 * 25 = 200$.

Actually, the survey collected 372 respondents, in which excluding the missing data, 283 respondents are valid. Thus, this study meets the requirements for conducting SPSS analysis.

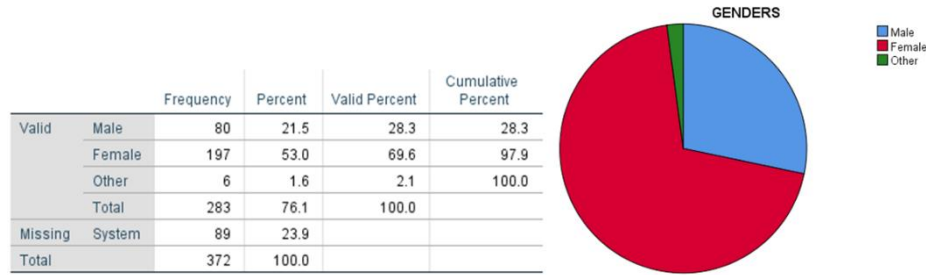


Fig. 3. The percentage of respondents by gender

Through the descriptive analysis, the proportion of females is the highest, at 69.6% (as in Fig 3); Therefore, females illustrate a high concern on this topic, understanding that through this study to express their employee expectations.

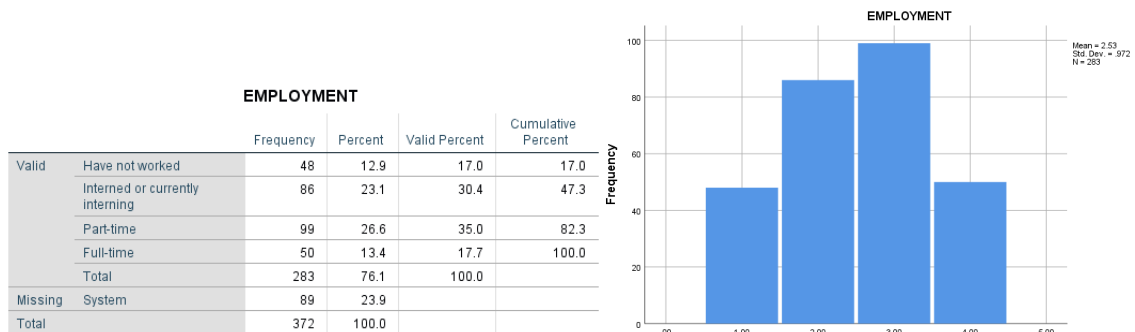


Fig. 4. The histogram of the proportions of respondents by employment status

In terms of employment, as in Fig 4, a significant percentage of respondents currently engaged in part-time jobs or internships demonstrate a notable interest in this study, as they seek stable and satisfying jobs. On the other hand, those without work experience may exhibit lower interest in this topic due to unclear expectations. Individuals with full-time employment and stable positions may show slight concern.

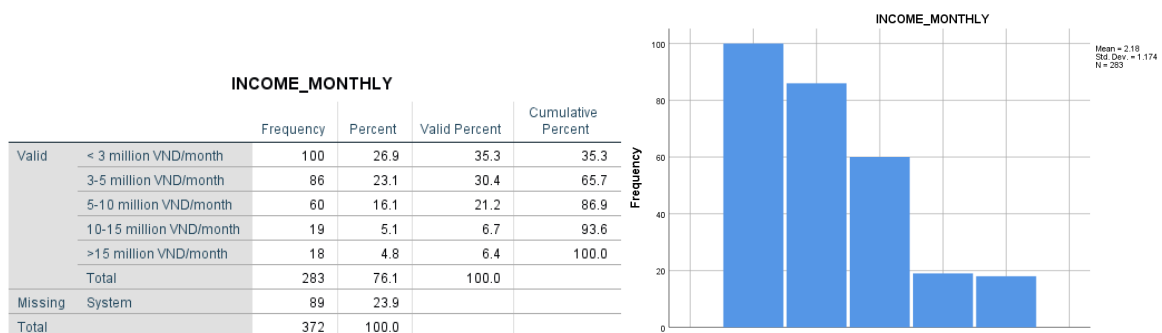


Fig. 5. The histogram of the percentage of respondents by income level

Regarding income level, as in Fig 5, there is a large proportion of respondents having 3 million VND (35.3%) and 3-5 million VND monthly (30.4%). Besides, there is a low proportion of groups with incomes of 10-15 million

VND and above 15 million per month compared to others, at 6.7% and 6.4%, respectively. It is implied that the lower the salary, the higher the level of concern.

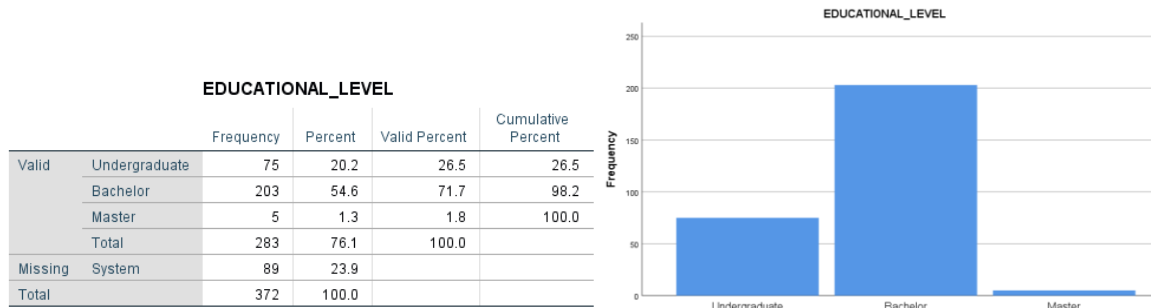


Fig. 6. The bar chart of the percentage of respondents by educational

Bachelor's degree (71.7%) holders are the most engaged in this study, as they are actively involved in the job market and have high expectations for companies to meet their needs (as Fig 6). Undergraduates (26.5%), on the other hand, are preparing to enter the workforce and therefore show significant interest in this topic, seeking insights that may help guide their career paths. In contrast, individuals with a master's degree (1.8%) often already have stable jobs, so their level of interest in this topic tends to be lower, as their immediate career expectations are typically met.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.939
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6111.179
	df	595
	Sig.	.000

According to [42], the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic varies between 0 and 1, a value close to 1 indicates that patterns of correlations are relatively compact. Overall, KMO values (0.939>0.5) for this dataset are favorable (as Table 4), suggesting sufficient intercorrelations within the data to warrant factor analysis [43]. The p-value is below the significance threshold (p-value<0.05), indicating that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and that factor analysis was appropriate for these data.

Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha Test for Reliability

Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Rewards & Recognitions	0.852	4
Working Atmosphere	0.827	9
Career Development	0.837	3
Leadership	0.866	5
Word-of-mouth (WOM)	0.835	2
Location	0.821	4
Salary	0.845	4
Workplace Culture	0.757	4
Human Resource Management	0.808	2

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of items within each construct, with all values exceeding the threshold of 0.6, indicating acceptable to strong reliability [44]. Table 5 shows that each construct demonstrates strong internal consistency ($\alpha > 0.6$), with Leadership ($\alpha = 0.866$) and Rewards & Recognition ($\alpha = 0.852$) showing particularly high reliability. These values indicate that the items within each construct are closely related and measure consistent patterns, supporting their use in subsequent analyses [45].

To identify if these independent variables (IV) have an association with the dependent variable (DV), this paper was implemented by Chi-Square Tests. Employee Expectation had 8 factors which are as follows: Rewards & Recognitions, Working Atmosphere, Career Development, Leadership, Word-of-mouth (WOM), Location, Salary, and Workplace Culture. Each factor was further broken down into smaller indicators. The results revealed a significant relationship between all eight factors and Employee Expectations.

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Table 6: Chi-Square Test for the association between Employee Expectation and Rewards & Recognitions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	171.931 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	68.834	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	60.245	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	283		

a. 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

The significance value shown in the table is 0.000 (p-value<0.05) (as Table 6), which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, based on the indicator Q2_Reward_Effectiveness. This indicates a statistically significant association between the factors and Employee Expectation, specifically showing that Rewards & Recognitions have an impact on employee expectations. This conclusion is consistent across all factors, as they each have a p-value of 0.000.

Table 7: Chi-Square Test for the association between Employee Expectations and the SHRM

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	56.598 ^a	28	.001
Likelihood Ratio	32.900	28	.239
N of Valid Cases	283		

a. 25 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

A separate test examining the relationship between employee expectations and the sustainability of human resource management (SHRM) yielded a p-value of 0.01, which is lower than the significance threshold of 0.05 (Table 7). Consequently, the null hypothesis (H1) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This outcome indicates that there is a statistically significant association between employee expectations and SHRM. In other words, employee expectations have an impact on the sustainability of human resource management practices.

With all hypotheses approved, it is clear that understanding employee expectations is essential for the successful Sustainability of Human Resources Management.

Table 8: Educational differences in Reward & Recognition

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q2_Reward_Effectiveness	Between Groups	2.393	2	1.196	2.354	.097
	Within Groups	142.286	280	.508		
	Total	144.678	282			
Q2_Recognition_People	Between Groups	4.763	2	2.381	3.651	.027
	Within Groups	182.615	280	.652		
	Total	187.378	282			
Q2_RR_Frequency	Between Groups	4.714	2	2.357	3.618	.028
	Within Groups	182.409	280	.651		
	Total	187.124	282			
Q2_RR_Policy	Between Groups	1.783	2	.891	1.837	.161
	Within Groups	135.885	280	.485		
	Total	137.668	282			

Furthermore, to better understand the differences in employee expectations for each factor, it is crucial to discover demographic aspects utilizing ANOVA testing. Regarding the expectations among different educational levels, reward & recognition show differences through Q2_Recognition_People and Q2_R&R_Frequency, with p-

values<0.05 being 0.27 and 0.28 respectively, as shown in Table 8. These differences revolve around personal, desires, and the frequency of receiving recognition from others, especially from direct and indirect managers.

Table 9: The median of expectations of Reward & Recognition by Educational level
Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Q2_Reward_Effectiveness	Undergraduate	75	4.51	.645	.074	4.36	4.65	3	5
	Bachelor	203	4.49	.727	.051	4.39	4.59	1	5
	Master	5	3.80	1.095	.490	2.44	5.16	3	5
	Total	283	4.48	.716	.043	4.40	4.57	1	5
Q2_Recognition_People	Undergraduate	75	4.27	.827	.096	4.08	4.46	2	5
	Bachelor	203	4.36	.798	.056	4.25	4.47	1	5
	Master	5	3.40	.894	.400	2.29	4.51	3	5
	Total	283	4.32	.815	.048	4.22	4.41	1	5
Q2_RR_Frequency	Undergraduate	75	4.19	.833	.096	3.99	4.38	2	5
	Bachelor	203	4.32	.789	.055	4.21	4.42	1	5
	Master	5	3.40	1.140	.510	1.98	4.82	2	5
	Total	283	4.27	.815	.048	4.17	4.36	1	5
Q2_RR_Policy	Undergraduate	75	4.61	.613	.071	4.47	4.75	3	5
	Bachelor	203	4.56	.718	.050	4.46	4.66	1	5
	Master	5	4.00	1.000	.447	2.76	5.24	3	5
	Total	283	4.56	.699	.042	4.48	4.64	1	5

As seen in Table 9, for both statements, Bachelors with means of 4.36 and 4.32 respectively show higher expectations for receiving recognition and its frequency compared to other groups, especially the Masters. As a Bachelor's degree at the Gen Z age, they can be seen as those in the early stages of joining the workforce, thus looking forward to recognition as a success for future development.

Table 10: Educational differences in Workplace Culture

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q21_Organization_External activities	Between Groups	8.574	2	4.287	4.343	.014
	Within Groups	276.401	280	.987		
	Total	284.975	282			
Q21_Organization_Internal activities	Between Groups	8.138	2	4.069	3.395	.035
	Within Groups	335.643	280	1.199		
	Total	343.781	282			
Q21_Employee_Support	Between Groups	.449	2	.224	.344	.709
	Within Groups	182.675	280	.652		
	Total	183.124	282			
Q21_Organization_Ethics	Between Groups	.160	2	.080	.128	.880
	Within Groups	175.247	280	.626		
	Total	175.406	282			

Table 11: The median of expectations of Workplace Culture by Educational levels

		Descriptives							
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Q21_Organization_External activities	Undergraduate	75	3.56	.990	.114	3.33	3.79	1	5
	Bachelor	203	3.88	.985	.069	3.74	4.01	1	5
	Master	5	3.00	1.414	.632	1.24	4.76	1	4
	Total	283	3.78	1.005	.060	3.66	3.90	1	5
Q21_Organization_Internal activities	Undergraduate	75	3.36	1.158	.134	3.09	3.63	1	5
	Bachelor	203	3.74	1.079	.076	3.59	3.89	1	5
	Master	5	3.40	.548	.245	2.72	4.08	3	4
	Total	283	3.63	1.104	.066	3.50	3.76	1	5
Q21_Employee_Support	Undergraduate	75	4.24	.732	.085	4.07	4.41	1	5
	Bachelor	203	4.28	.830	.058	4.17	4.40	0	5
	Master	5	4.00	1.000	.447	2.76	5.24	3	5
	Total	283	4.27	.806	.048	4.17	4.36	0	5
Q21_Organization_Ethics	Undergraduate	75	4.44	.721	.083	4.27	4.61	1	5
	Bachelor	203	4.42	.813	.057	4.31	4.54	1	5
	Master	5	4.60	.894	.400	3.49	5.71	3	5
	Total	283	4.43	.789	.047	4.34	4.52	1	5

The significant gap between the Bachelor and Master groups is also observed in workplace culture; Since Table 10 indicates differences in the company's organization of external and internal activities when Q21_Organization_External activities and Q21_Organization_Internal activities both have p-values<0.05. Furthermore, based on Table 11, Bachelors present high expectations for the activities organized by the company, suggesting that when first entering the labor market, they want to build a positive image and a good impression; Meanwhile, the Master group shows less interest in internal activities and does not expect social activities.

Table 12: Educational differences in WOM

		ANOVA				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q15_WOM_Awareness	Between Groups	8.970	2	4.485	6.360	.002
	Within Groups	197.454	280	.705		
	Total	206.424	282			
Q15_WOM_Reputation	Between Groups	4.942	2	2.471	4.065	.018
	Within Groups	170.182	280	.608		
	Total	175.124	282			

Table 13: The median of expectations of WOM by Educational levels

		Descriptives							
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Q15_WOM_Awareness	Undergraduate	75	3.89	.909	.105	3.68	4.10	2	5
	Bachelor	203	4.19	.788	.055	4.08	4.30	1	5
	Master	5	3.20	1.643	.735	1.16	5.24	1	5
	Total	283	4.10	.856	.051	4.00	4.20	1	5
Q15_WOM_Reputation	Undergraduate	75	4.08	.882	.102	3.88	4.28	1	5
	Bachelor	203	4.34	.710	.050	4.25	4.44	1	5
	Master	5	3.80	1.643	.735	1.76	5.84	2	5
	Total	283	4.27	.788	.047	4.17	4.36	1	5

Regarding image building, WOM is a notable factor influencing Gen Z. Since working in a company with high brand awareness and reputation, they are admired and can easily brand themselves. The groups of distinct educational levels demonstrate differences with p-values of 0.002 and 0.018 (<0.05) as in Table 12, the Bachelor group has high expectations for companies with high brand awareness and reputation with mean scores of 4.19 and 4.34 (shown in Table 13). Meanwhile, the Master group shows less expectation for company awareness (mean=3.2). It can be seen that though high brand awareness has an impact, it is important to build a good corporate image, which reflects those who work for that business, affecting their personal branding, which is understood as having a huge impact on their work and image [46], leading to retain employees and SHRM.

Table 14: Gender differences in Working Atmosphere

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q4_Health_Job benefits	6.491	2	3.245	6.048	.003
	150.251	280	.537		
	156.742	282			
Q4_Health_Shuttle	.331	2	.166	.131	.877
	353.747	280	1.263		
	354.078	282			

Table 15: The median of expectations of health (Working Atmosphere) by Genders

Descriptives									
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Q4_Health_Job benefits	Male	80	4.33	.911	.102	4.12	4.53	1	5
	Female	197	4.58	.630	.045	4.50	4.67	3	5
	Other	6	3.83	1.169	.477	2.61	5.06	2	5
	Total	283	4.49	.746	.044	4.41	4.58	1	5
Q4_Health_Shuttle	Male	80	3.55	1.157	.129	3.29	3.81	1	5
	Female	197	3.62	1.121	.080	3.46	3.78	1	5
	Other	6	3.50	.548	.224	2.93	4.07	3	4
	Total	283	3.60	1.121	.067	3.47	3.73	1	5

Another aspect that needs to be considered for building SHRM is gender equality in the workplace. The ANOVA testing discovers that the expectations of job benefits (Q4_Health_Job benefits) differ by gender, with p-values<0.05 (shown in Table 14), indicating that there is a difference in expectations among Gen Z regarding the provision of basic benefits such as insurance and leave days. Additionally, Table 15 indicates that females with the highest median (4.58) exhibit a high concern about these benefits due to their potential of getting married or giving birth. As a result, this should be a concern for companies to maintain talented female employees; Not only contributing to supporting gender equality to build a good reputation but also enabling SHRM and attracting more talent.

Table 16: The median of Employee Expectations

Descriptive Statistics											
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation						
Q2_Reward_Effectiveness	283	1	5	4.48	.716	Q9_Direct_Equity	283	1	5	4.55	.720
Q2_Recognition_People	283	1	5	4.32	.815	Q9_Direct_Vision	283	1	5	4.53	.670
Q2_RR_Frequency	283	1	5	4.27	.815	Q9_Direct_Support	283	1	5	4.36	.771
Q2_RR_Policy	283	1	5	4.56	.699	Q9_Direct_Networking	283	1	5	4.17	.861
Q4_Colleagues_Appearance	283	1	5	3.86	.844	Q9_Direct_Raise voice	283	1	5	4.46	.730
Q4_Colleagues_Support	283	1	5	4.19	.806	Q15_WOM_Awareness	283	1	5	4.10	.856
Q4_Colleagues_Competitiveness	283	1	5	4.04	.906	Q15_WOM_Reputation	283	1	5	4.27	.788
Q4_Colleagues_Interaction	283	1	5	3.97	1.010	Q17_Convenience_Distance	283	1	5	4.31	.783
Q4_Health_Job benefits	283	1	5	4.49	.746	Q17_Convenience_Surroundings	283	1	5	4.13	.888
Q4_Health_Shuttle	283	1	5	3.60	1.121	Q17_Convenience_Extension	283	1	5	4.27	.816
Q5_Environment_Atmosphere	283	1	5	4.43	.728	Q17_Security	283	1	5	4.43	.723
Q5_Environment_Amenities	283	1	5	4.08	.913	Q19_CS_Degree	283	1	5	4.56	.709
Q5_Environment_Privacy	283	1	5	4.17	.915	Q19_CS_Entrant	283	1	5	4.29	.855
Q6_Promo_Networking	283	1	5	4.25	.805	Q19_Addition_OT	283	1	5	4.52	.696
Q6_Promo_Career path	283	1	5	4.49	.686	Q19_Addition_Allowance	283	1	5	4.42	.751
Q6_Major_Programs	283	1	5	4.22	.844	Q21_Organization_External activities	283	1	5	3.78	1.005
						Q21_Organization_Internal activities	283	1	5	3.63	1.104
						Q21_Employee_Support	283	0	5	4.27	.806
						Q21_Organization_Ethics	283	1	5	4.43	.789
						Valid N (listwise)	283				

Although generally all variables show their importance in being considered for building the Sustainability of Human Resources Management (SHRM), some of them demonstrate the outstanding desires of employees to meet their needs. Table 16 clearly presents the specific desire for the company's reward and recognition policies to be clear and fair (Q2_RR_Policy), as well as appropriate salary based on qualifications and competence (Q19_CS_Degree), which are the most expected with a mean of 4.56. This highlights the necessity for businesses to prepare a unified and transparent management foundation when aiming for internal sustainability.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This article examines the factors influencing Gen Z's expectations and introduces the concept of sustainability in human resource management. Through 12 in-depth interviews, the research identified 8 key factors impacting Gen Z's expectations: "reward and recognition," "working atmosphere," "Career Development," "Leadership," "Word of Mouth" (WOM), "Salary," "Work Culture," and "Location." Additionally, an online survey with 372 participants provided a broader perspective on these expectations. As a result, both qualitative and quantitative data suggest that businesses should implement policies tailored to Gen Z employees' expectations. SPSS version 26 was used to conduct these analyses, adding to the study's reliability. Initially, KMO analysis results indicated that the identified factors were suitable for further examination, while Cronbach's Alpha confirmed the reliability of all observed variables. Among the factors, "career development" was found to have the greatest influence on Gen Z, as this generation values clear career progression aligned with their field of study. Specifically, bachelor's degree holders expect recognition from managers, colleagues, and the organization itself. Gen Z employees also prioritize working for reputable companies that offer diverse internal activities (e.g., team building) and external engagements (e.g., charity work, environmental initiatives, and corporate social responsibility) compared to other groups. Additionally, gender differences were observed, with female employees particularly valuing a positive working atmosphere and policies supporting gender equality. Notably, Gen Z values both direct and indirect leadership, emphasizing the need for consistency in communication and principles across different management levels.

In summary, the study concludes that unmet employee expectations can weaken the positive effects of company policies. When employees feel that organizational promises are not fulfilled, their attitude and motivation are likely to decrease. Thus, this research provides critical insights into the complex dynamics of meeting employee expectations, supporting the development of effective HR policies in today's workplace.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

These factors have an impact on SHRM and the expectation in the management process. This research gives some recommendations; however, it also might depend on the scale, capability, and the nature of occupation of the enterprises to adjust suitably for each of them. In terms of direct leadership, the company should have a training program that is consistent in core values or shared principles between employees and tiers due to a huge impact on Gen Z's employees. Therefore, firms need to communicate effectively between departments inside them. Moreover, the most affected factor is career development which implies that the companies need to communicate with the candidates effectively before entering. Hence, it is crucial that companies have clear progress and share it to the candidates with the aim of retaining the talented. Besides, individuals working full-time are less expected in reward effectiveness than the other groups; therefore, firms might provide a variety of rewards based on their size. In terms of educational level, a large number of individuals holding Bachelor's degree are more concerned about receiving the recognition of completed tasks from managers and colleagues than Master's degree; thereby, it is significant to have a training program for executives to meet the behavior, and expectations of this group. This group also concerns working at a company that organizes social activities such as environmental protection, or volunteering and internal activities like team building, year-end party, or bonding. Therefore, each enterprise needs to be based on the number of educational level employees and organize activities that are balanced for both groups. Because this group also places a strong emphasis on the awareness and reputation of a firm, the company needs to offer more benefits to retain highly qualified employees. By creating a good working environment can have a favorable image for the company with the public as well as employees. It can be seen that a group with incomes of less than 3 million are expected to work at firms having convenient locations for commuting; therefore, the firms can consider providing pleasant facilities or creating a comfortable space. Females expect the company to provide basic benefits such as insurance and days off with the official employee position than the other genders. Since 1946, the equality among genders has been prioritized in the national agenda in Vietnam [47]. It implies that companies should have clear policies on issues such as parental leave and support for gender equality.

X. LIMITATION AND FUTURE STUDY

This research was conducted within a specific timeframe, which may result in potential limitations, leading to the need for future updates. Additionally, the sample size primarily focuses on Vietnam, which may reflect cultural and contextual differences when compared to other countries. Further research is needed to explore evolving trends in employee expectations on a larger scale, enabling companies to have a more comprehensive and generalized understanding of building the Sustainability of Human Resource Management (SHRM).

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