

**CAREER EXPECTATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS OF
GENERATION Z
IN SRI LANKAN SOFTWARE INDUSTRY**

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Degree of Master of Business Administration in Information Technology

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University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

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The dissertation was submitted to the Department of Computer Science and Engineering of the University of Moratuwa in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Business Administration in Information Technology.

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Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

This research comprehensively assessed the Gen Z perception towards career expectation and aspiration factors and its relation to employee engagement in the Sri Lankan software industry. Generation Z (Gen Z), which is said to be the largest generation cohort of all time is currently starting to enter the world of work which is believed to cause “a generation shift in the workplace”. Generation Z will adjoin to the existing generations namely: “Baby Boomers”, “Generation X”, and “Generation Y” in the workplace.

With the entrance of Gen Z, these multi-generational work environments will form a rich diversity in organizations yielding more complexities who have different views, expectations, and attitudes on workforce behaviors and factors which motivate employee engagement. This will introduce many challenges to organizations in dealing with “managing multi-generational teams” and “different work expectations across generations”. As very little is empirically known about Gen Z perception towards career perception, from an organizational perspective, it is vital to understand the perceptions and characteristics towards career expectation and aspirations of Gen Z. Having empirical evidence will help organizations to effectively derive generation-specific strategies to keep employees engaged to reap the ultimate benefit from the workforce, and to contribute towards organizations goal.

Quantitative research was conducted with a sample of 375 Gen Z undergraduates with work exposure and software professionals who currently employed in a software firm in Sri Lanka. Pearson correlation analysis, linear regression analysis, and descriptive statistics were applied with the use of “Excel” and “SPSS” statistical tools to analyze the data for the present study.

Receiving good pay, management support, and being determined to succeed in a career as initial career expectation factors and receiving good pay, achieving upward promotion, opportunities for self-development as longer-term career aspiration factors were found to be positively related and significant to employee engagement of Gen Z.

Keywords: Gen Z, Career Expectation, Career Aspiration, Personal Traits

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CS	–	Computer Science
ETC	–	Employee Terms and Conditions
Gen Y	–	Generation Y
Gen Z	–	Generation Z
IT	–	Information Technology
MAC	–	Management Approach and Culture
PCD	–	Personal Career Development
PV	–	Personal Values
SLASSCOM	–	Sri Lanka Association of Software and Services Companies

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Overview

This research is about identifying Gen Z's perception of Career Expectations and Aspirations through which software companies can engage them efficiently in achieving organizational goals. This would assist IT organizations or managers to make generation-specific strategies to keep Gen Z employees satisfied, and thereby to reap the ultimate benefit from the workforce and to contribute towards organizations goals in today's competitive global market.

1.2 Research Background and Motivation

Human resources are the most critical factor in any organization's success. Employees are the strategic weapon that companies can use to compete with its competitors. Much of today's workforce of any organization comprises of three prevailing multi-generational employees from Baby Boomers to Millennials. During the last decade, Generation Y represented the position of "the youngest in the workforce". However, a new generation: Generation Z (Gen Z) is currently starting to enter the world of work, and adjoining to the existing workforce and thereby "the youngest in the workforce" will be represented by Gen Z.

Gen Z is seen as "the first truly global generation" which is believed to cause "a generation shift in the workplace" resulting "profound challenges to leaders, managers, supervisors, HR leaders, and educators in every sector of the workforce" (Tulgan, Meet Generation Z: The second generation within the giant "Millennial" cohort, 2013). Gen Z, just like previous generations will affect the professional workplace with their new ideas and expectations. Therefore, it is evident that the existing global multi-generational workforce will yield more complexities with the emergence of Gen Z into the labour force. The complexity arises from the fact that these generations or often referred as cohorts, is said to have different views, expectations, and attitudes on "leadership, management, work values, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, and work ethic" (Jones, 2017). According to Shah (2015), the

significant factors which differ among this multi-generational workforce are the types of labour force behaviours, factors which motivate employee engagement, and the communication tools and practices.

Thus, nowadays, as employees from unprecedented four distinct generations: “Baby Boomers”, “Generation X”, “Generation Y”, and “Generation Z”, are active in the labour market and working side by side with their own styles, skill sets, and opinion (Half, 2015), organizations today face challenges that arise from a multi-generational workforce that they have never faced before (Iorgulescu, 2016). These generations are said to exhibit characteristics which are formed by their environmental background in which they are brought up. This diversified generation cohort creates a new set of challenges for managers and business leaders to come up with more specific strategies that best fit to generations rather than one-fit strategies. According to Jones (2017), managerial challenges are imposed by generational differences such as workplace perceptions, work ethics, and expectations along with their attitudes, beliefs, and values. Among these multi-generational cohorts, their attitudes and expectation for work/job differ (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017). In another study by Robert Half (2015), it was discovered that Gen Z ranked Career Opportunities as their top priority in considering a full-time job.

On the other hand, employee engagement is crucial for organizations’ success. Liyanage & Gamage (2017) stated that as brought up by the “2010 Gallup employee engagement” survey, as a result of the actively disengaged employee, the productivity lost has “costs the U.S. economy \$370 billion annually” (ADP, 2010). Therefore, in today’s business model, employee engagement is considered a crucial factor which impacts organizational growth (Liyanage & Gamage, 2017). Employers’ today give much importance in leveraging employee engagement in organizations as they believe it helps to create a more productive workforce beneficial to organizational success (Markos & Solomon, 2010). Based on the report 2015 Trends in Global Employee Engagement, the relationship between the higher levels of employee engagement and financial performance in an organization is said to be significant (Aon Hewitt, 2015). With the entrance of Gen Z to the workforce with other older generations in the

workplace, employee engagement introduces many challenges. Therefore, from an organization standpoint, it is vital to understand their perceptions and characteristics towards career expectation and aspirations, and how organizations can be prepared to manage and keep them engaged.

The first wave of Gen Z in Sri Lanka will join the workforce in 2021 introducing a new addition to the composition of the workforce. As per SLASSCOM, their vision is to have 200,000 jobs enabled in the IT-BPM sector, and 1,000 start-ups by 2022 (SLASSCOM, 2014). Therefore, it is clear that with the entrance of Gen Z, these multi-generational environments will form a rich diversity in Sri Lankan Software industry and thus, the need to better understand the new generation cohort becomes more important.

1.3 Problem Statement

Generation Z (Gen Z) - those born from 1990 to mid-1990s is on the verge of entering the corporate world, and adjoining to the multi-generational workforce; namely: Baby Boomer, Gen X, and Gen Y. Gen Z is the first “truly global generation” tend to impact “the greatest generational shift the workplace resulting in many challenges to every organization” (Tulgan, 2013). In the context of Sri Lankan software industry, Gen Z will be entering the workforce by 2021 (SLASSCOM, 2016). Expectations and aspirations are said to be focused mainly on individuals’ personal career development and Gen Z, view Career Development as one of the highest contributory factors for job satisfaction (Iorgulescu, 2016). Employee engagement, on the other hand, is seen as the “Silver Bullet for enhancing employee performance in every organization” (Corace, 2007). Therefore, this study aims to explore Gen Z perception and attitudes towards career expectations and aspiration, with which managers may derive generation-specific strategies to keep their employees engaged, resulting in more contribution towards organizational goals.

It is observed that there is lacking research done on career expectation and aspirations of Gen Z. Therefore, this research intends to bridge the gap in the niche of empirical evidence in determining the Gen Z’s career expectation and aspiration and its relation to employee engagement in the Sri Lankan Software Industry.

Thus, the research question for this research is “What are Career Expectations and Aspirations of Gen Z and its relation to employee engagement in the Sri Lankan Software Industry?”

1.4 Research Objectives

- To explore the career expectations and aspirations factors influencing the employee engagement-of Gen Z in Sri Lankan software industry
- To identify personal traits related to career perception of Gen Z
- To assist managers with feasible recommendations in engaging Gen Z workforce

1.5 Research Significance

The current Sri Lankan workforce is composed of Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The composition of the Sri Lankan workforce is on the verge of facing rapid changes and challenges as the older generations are making their way out while new Generations (Gen Z) enters the market. These generations tend to exhibit different traits with regards to career expectations and aspirations, enabling a ripple effect on employers in managing, engaging, and retaining the multi-generational workforce. Employee engagement, on the other hand, is considered a crucial factor which impacts the organization performance. Thus, organizations make their best to keep their employees engaged with the aim of not only to improve employee retention but ultimately to gain the high return on investment due to the engaged and well-aligned workforce (Liyanage & Gamage, 2017). Although there are many studies regarding Gen Y and prior generation, their attitudes and perception towards career expectations and aspirations, similar studies on Gen Z, specifically with relation to employee engagement are lacking, thus the need to explore potential unique career expectations of Gen Z rises (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017). Thus, it is important to explore to Gen Z's perception towards career expectations and aspirations with its linkage to employee engagement in the Sri Lankan context. Having empirical evidence on this regard will help managers to effectively derive generation-specific strategies to keep employees engaged to reap the ultimate benefit from the workforce, and to contribute towards organizations goal.

1.6 Research Challenges

This present study intends to explore the characteristics of Gen Z in the Sri Lankan software industry from career expectations and aspirations perspectives with its linkage to employee engagement. The main challenge in fulfilling this research would be identifying the correct sample population considering the most relevant demographic factors which will help to generalize the outcome of the research fairly. Also, the novelty of this approach lies as the present study intends to predict the career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z, where the majority is with less or no working experience as the majority of them are still students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Much of the academic research has been conducted in studying different generational cohorts in workplaces from many different perspectives. It is said that these generational cohorts exhibit different characteristics, expectations, values, and attitudes; and these differences are important for managers or employers to manage their workforce effectively. As knowing generational specific attributes managers can take effective decisions or approaches in directing, influencing, leading his or team members. As this research tend to explore further on Gen Z perception towards Career Expectations and Career Aspirations, the review of literature is carried out from two broad perspectives. First, studies on previous generations' and their views on career expectations and aspirations are presented. Secondly, studies related to Gen Z are laid out to identify the similarities, and differences among what was found from previous studies. Further, literature will be reviewed to explore about employee engagement and its importance to organizations for the success of the organization.

2.1 Introduction to Career, Career Expectations, Career Aspirations, and Employee Engagement

It is important to understand the relevant keywords in this research context – ‘career’, ‘career expectation’, ‘career aspirations’, and ‘employee engagement’.

In a study conducted by Broadbridge et al., (2007), a person's career is viewed as “an ongoing sequence of educational and work activities that are meaningful to the individual and that add value to the organizations in which the individual participates”. (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007)

Career expectations can be defined as “real, reachable thoughts and career targets that individual wishes to gain” (as cited by Armstrong and Crombie, 2000; Metz et al., 2009). Cambridge Business English Dictionary defines job expectations in a similar way as “the things you want from a job such as responsibility, satisfaction, and good

pay” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). It is said that factors affecting career expectations of an individual are influenced by “individual’s personal interest, family background, educational level, race/ethnicity, and gender” (Kong, Wang, & Fu, 2015).

Career aspiration, on the other hand, is the path that an individual would inspire to follow in the long-term and it is said to be often influenced by ones social, economic, and educational background (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017).

To date, there is no clear definition of employee engagement. Through the literature, the best definition that can be considered as the definition of employee engagement is defined by Robinson et al. (2004) as “a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee” (Markos & Solomon, 2010)

Aon Hewitt defines engagement in a much simpler altitude “as the psychological state and behavioral outcomes that lead to better performance” (Aon Hewitt, 2015)

2.2 Gen Z - The New Generation

Oxford dictionary defines a generation as “All of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively” (Oxford Online, n.d.). More profoundly generation can be defined as “a generation has been defined as a group that shares both a particular span of birth years and a set of worldviews grounded in defining social or historical events that have occurred during the generation’s formative development years” (Cogin, 2012).

Gen Z is said to be the demographic cohort following Gen Y (Strauss & Howe, Generation Z, 1991) and is referred as “generation me” (Iorgulescu (2016) as cited in Bennett et al., 2012), “Net Generation or digital natives” (Iorgulescu, 2016). There are no absolute beginning or end to generational distinction (Stanley, 2010), However,

Gen Z is commonly considered as those social group born after 1995 (Maioli 2017; Iorgulescu, 2016) but Kirchmayer & Fratričová (2017) considered Gen Z as those whose born in or after 1995 which is further strengthened by (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017), and (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018). In another study, a much different period to this is brought up where Gen Z is considered as those born in 1990-1999 (Half, 2015).

2.3 Gen Z – Statistical Overview in Sri Lanka

According to the report “Vision 2022: Sri Lanka IT/BPM sector” by SLASSCOM, there is an increasing trend in the IT workforce in Sri Lanka. The workforce has increased from 33,702 in 2007 to 75,107 in 2013, which is a 123% increase. The vision that SLASSCOM foresee for the year 2022, is to have “the Sri Lankan IT sector in becoming a \$ 5 billion industry by creating 200,000 direct jobs and enabling 1,000 start-ups” (SLASSCOM, 2014). It is evident that the majority workforce who would fulfill this vision would be Gen Z, as the first wave of Gen Z (those born in or after 1995) is on the edge of joining IT workforce in Sri Lanka.

2.4 New Generational Shift in the Workplace and Challenges Introduced

It is spelled out by much recent research that it will not only make organizations to face a generational makeup of workforces, but also transform organizations in coming up with new attitudes and practices. According to Maioli (2017), the biggest challenge that organizations face today is “to learn about managing the multi-generation scope of work”. Further strengthening this, Tulgan (2018) stated that organizations will face a huge transformation in the “very fundamentals of the employer-employee relationship” and thereby presenting many new challenges to employers, employees, and managers at all levels. This study also states that employers these days, particularly in the STEM fields are struggling to attract their young workforce pool by motivating and retaining them. This leaves business leaders asking, “How they can possibly square their business needs with the widespread workforce expectations and demands for greater flexibility in work conditions and career paths” (Tulgan, 2018). Even though Gen Z is not fully entered into the workforce, many companies have already

started to implement a number of changes in their human resource practices (Maioli, 2017). The organizations might have to change their traditional practices in meeting Gen Z needs as it is stated that the main obstacle in retaining Gen Z is between the expectations of Gen Z applicants and what companies offer. An important fact that must be kept in mind is that Gen Z expects not only a good pay and stability in their job but more importantly a clear career plan (Maioli, 2017). This opens up the stage to explore more on Gen Z career expectations and aspirations.

2.5 Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Z

In a study done by (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007) to examine Generation Y perception towards career, job experiences, and initial employment, four different groupings were considered. That is, Generation Y perception towards employment expectation was considered from “Personal Career Development” (PCD), “Employee Terms and Conditions” (ETC), “Management Approach and Culture” (MAC), and “Personal Values (PV)” (Broadbridge et al., 2007). Although this study was conducted in the UK for undergraduate students of the retail industry, the factors identified in this study are generic which can be applied to any industry. Therefore, it is important to identify the essential elements that are grouped under each category for further evaluation with other similar studies, and specifically with Gen Z characteristics. Table 2.1 depicts the groupings and integral elements of each as brought up by Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden (2007). Maxwell et al., (2010) adapts this framework their quantitative study in identifying the career expectations and aspiration factors of Gen Millennial employees in the hospitality industry.

Table 2.1 Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Y

Employee Terms and Conditions	Management Approach and Culture	Personal Career Development	Personal Values
Employment flexibility	Values teamwork Freedom/flexibility	Interest in self-development and improvement	Personal integrity
Fair compensation	Hates micromanagement	Seeks training opportunities and professional development	Wants work-life balance
Performance related salary and bonuses	Desires immediate feedback	Drive for career success and security	Values fairness Strives to make a difference
Professional development	Open and positive bosses	Challenging work	Performing meaningful work
Good working environment	Clear directions and managerial support	Achievement oriented	Enjoyment of work
Provision for training opportunities	Positive company culture	More open to leave for something better	Goal oriented

2.5.1 Employee Terms and Conditions (ETC)

In another study by Maxwell et al., (2010) which attempted to explore Gen Y's career expectations and aspirations in the hospitality industry has considered the same aforementioned framework. This being quantitative research, its findings can be considered with much more solidity compared to the original work by (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007). With the findings of the quantitative research done by Maxwell et al., (2015), career expectation factors which are more prominent or influential to Gen Y can be identified, which can be further evaluated for Gen Z. The study revealed that for Gen Y factors such as "receiving good pay, having job security, having clear career goals, having a good work-life balance, working long hours, moving companies" (Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010) are identified as the most influential factors under ETC groupings.

It is an elementary fact that most basic outcome that an individual at any level in their career looks out for is their salary or pay. According to (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010) Millennials (or Gen Y) seems to have a realistic expectation in receiving fair compensation on their first job. More interestingly this study further revealed Millennials expectation on their first salary is largely affected by an individual's demographic factors such as gender, work experience, year of study, and GPA. Descending the same expectation through generations, Gen Z also expects generous pay from their employers (Iorgulescu, 2016). Even though this study was done for second-year students at the faculty of Business and Tourism in Romania, this factor can be considered for software industry as well, as another study from South Africa revealed that the salary package of software developers belonging to Gen Y stood in top of their lists (Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016). In a recent study done in the telecommunication industry in Sri Lanka on Gen Z, receiving a salary that is on par with the industry is considered as one of the most influential factors for job satisfaction ((Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018).

The need for job security is more vital today than yesterday with the constant changes in the global environment, and this tends to be more related to the software industry with the frequent advancement of new technologies. This fact is further proved as software development students of Gen Y ranked stability of the job as the top priority in determining their career goals (Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016). In another research carried out in Canada, Job security remained in the middle list of factors that Gen Y undergraduates considered for their career expectation (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010) and it was observed that demographic differences such as gender and previous work-related experience to have a minor impact on the need for job security. However, for Gen Z job security remains a strong influential factor to be considered in choosing a full-time job or a potential employer (IORGULESCU, 2016; Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017)

Generation Z view career advancements opportunities as their number 1 priority in pursuing a full-time job list opportunities for career advancements as the topmost priority (Half, 2015). Kirchmayer & Fratričová (2017) also bring out the fact that the development of skills and proficiency, is largely expected by Generation Z in

determining their career expectations. This fact is further strengthened as Robert Half 2015 says, that companies need to both show and talk about Gen Z's clear paths to new opportunities and promotions. On the other hand, Software developers of Gen Y tend to have a moderate consideration on the factor – to be a leader or a manager of people who resemble their need for career advancement. Even though previous generations relating to software industry view advancement in a career as moderately influential in determining their career expectations, since Gen Z generally consider the factor as a top priority, it should be further investigated.

Maxwell et al. (2010) and Ng. et al. (2010) spells out that having a good work life balance is been considered as a favorable factor in determining career expectation from individuals of previous generations. Even software developers of Gen Y consider having a work-life balance as the second most important factor in their career goals. According to Kirchmayer & Fratričová (2017), Gen Z consider nature of the job and work-life balance with given flexibility to work from home (Iorgulescu, 2016) as the most important factor in selecting a future employer.

Although the factors such as performance-related salary and bonuses, professional development, internal promotion, provision for training factors were not exposed as the most influential factors from the study by Maxwell et al. (2010), these factors seem to be essential in the context of this research under this grouping as generation Z consider learning, growing and personal development as a part of their job (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017).

2.5.2 Management Approach and Culture (MAC)

Generation Y considers supportive people in the workplace and people to report to as two leading attributed in their initial employment (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). People to report to imply the immediate supervisors or the report to the person that they will be working for. As for Gen Z in employee-employer perspective, 'Good relationship with my boss' is discovered as one of the most substantial factors keeping them in their future jobs rather than their initial career expectations. However, a contradictory finding was brought up on another study done by (Iorgulescu, 2016) on Gen Z, where it was noted that Gen Z looks for creating a good relationship with the

supervisor by maintaining positive interaction with a manager from whom they can learn as the fourth most important factor in choosing a job rather than for long term career expectation. Therefore, since two studies considering the same factor – supportive supervisors, as an initial career expectation as well as long term career expectation, it would be interesting to see how this attribute fit in the context of Sri Lankan software undergraduates both as an immediate career expectation attribute as well as a long-term career aspiration attribute.

2.5.3 Personal Career Development (PCD)

Integral attributes of PCD grouping include “achieving upward promotion, being determined to succeed, opportunities for self-development, meeting personal goals, doing challenging work, having clear career goals, taking personal responsibility for career, making a difference, working hard, having opportunities for training and development, and using networking skills” (Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010) were found as the most crucial personal career development factors that Gen Y looks from their initial employment. Gen Z also considers the opportunity available in the workplace to learn new things and develop their skills as an important factor which could be facilitated by an employer to develop their career (Iorgulescu, 2016). In the same study, it was found that Gen Z considers the opportunities for career advancement as the most important factor in determining their career expectations. When the company offers the individuals the opportunity to grow and experience new things, and to achieve leading positions, Gen Z becomes more loyal and values such opportunities (Iorgulescu, 2016; Half, 2015). The new generation, unlike its forerunners, tends to work harder in order to have a successful career (Half, 2015). If Gen Z is not happy with the career paths to new opportunists and promotions, they would not hesitate to look for opportunities elsewhere leaving behind the current employer (Half, 2015). This shows the extreme importance of these attributes for Gen Z career expectations.

2.5.4 Personal Values (PV)

According to Maxwell et al. (2015), the personal values category includes “enjoying work, experiencing equal opportunities, employers being fair to all employees and tolerating employees’ diversity differences” (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007). Literature suggests that enjoyment of work can be valued by two statements, “I want to enjoy my work”, “Money is not everything in my career” and the results seem to have varied based on the gender of Gen Y (Maxwell et al., 2015). As more male favors the fact money is too essential from career while more female agreeing to the above statement. These statements are true in this research context as well as Gen Z prefers personal freedom and work flexibility and more specifically, they do not want the job to cause (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017).

Fairness and equality attribute can be measured from – “I want to work with employers who are fair to all their employees.”, “I expect equal opportunities in my career progression.”, “I will tolerate differences in people I work with.” (Maxwell et al., 2015). In research finding it was noted that gender differences were observed in these as more females found these to be more favorable. Although there was a lack of resources in identifying Gen Z’s perception towards this attribute, in general, this factor too can be considered.

Gen Z values work-life balance and give it a high preference when selecting potential employees and also as a retention factor (Iorgulescu, 2016; Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017). Gen Y value challenging work, with a blend of good work-life balance and with fairness and equality represented by in career progression.

The four career expectations grouping discussed above is categorized from two aspects: employer inputs and employee inputs. ETC and MAC culture are formed based on the employer inputs, while PV and PCD are based on employee inputs (Maxwell et al., 2015). Thus, these factors will help to identify the perception of Gen Z towards career expectations from both employee and employer view.

2.6 Employee Engagement Drivers

In the context of this research, it is equally important to understand the employee engagement drivers so that recommendations for managers in managing Gen Z can be derived based on these drivers. The research conducted by AON Hewitt on global trends in employee engagement represents an engagement model having 6 Engagement Drivers, and the respective engagement outcomes, along with the business impact that these drivers would ultimately lead to.

This report further states that an employee who is engaged demonstrates three general behaviors. Employees always “Say” positive things about the organization among customers, co-workers and potential employees; they “Stay” loyal to the company with a sense of belongingness towards the organization, and they “Strive” towards the success in their jobs and the business as they are motivated. As managers are the individuals that work closely with the employees, they become the primary interface where employee engagement can be leveraged in an organization. Managers are said to be driving force who could leverage employee engagement with his or her fellow team members in terms of accountability, work processes, compensation, career opportunities and recognition (Hewitt Associates). The same article state that, HR managers can assist operational managers in driving this process via streamlining the processes related to HR, such as compensation, career progression map, etc.

Managers can create employee engagement by giving coaching and career support, recognition, Accountability, Involvement, and Communication (Hewitt Associates). Accelerated mentoring and career support play an important role in engaging the younger workforce. Managers should be clear about the career opportunities that prevail in the organizations and should give these opportunities to employees which will broaden their experience. Recognition is another factor with which employees can be engaged. Managers should give due recognition for their employees in appreciation of their good work. Recognition can be by means of a simple congratulation or thank you to all the way making organization rewards. This will help to make employees feel valued. It is stated that “employees are more engaged when their managers effectively hold them or their teams accountable for results” (Hewitt Associates). Involvement is

another factor that managers could use to empower employees by involving them in decision making and by getting their expert feedback and thereby coming up with a collective decision. Managers should also often interact with the employees to ensure frequent communication to listen, understand, and respond properly to their thoughts and needs. These drivers can be further justified by another study done by Markos & Solomon (2010) which identify 5 drivers that will help to create highly engaged workforce are: “Align efforts with strategy”, “empower, promote and encourage teamwork and collaboration”, “help people to grow and develop”, “Provide support and recognition”. These engagement drivers have basically derived from over 8 million employee records from the period of 2010 to 2014 from 68 industries operating in 164 countries. Therefore, these drivers can be accepted in the context of this research as well.

2.7 Personal Traits of Gen Z Related to Career Expectations and Aspirations

To move forward with this research, it is primarily important to have an understanding of specific traits of Gen Z. They tend to have a clear vision for their (Half, 2015), human connections are important to them and they are less likely to resist authority relationships (Tulgan, 2013), they prefer constant feedback and need to be constantly taught (Iorgulescu, 2016), they are willing to work hard to pursue long career road ahead, requires constant feedback (Half, 2015), extremely self-confident and “have an optimistic view on their future professional life and tend to have entrepreneurial initiatives” (Iorgulescu (2016) as cited in Addeco, 2015). Creativity and innovation are few other strengths that this generation brings on to the table (Half, 2015). Although Gen Z tends to come to the workforce as fully fledged in technology, “they may enter the workforce with a soft skill gap (Half, 2015).

2.8 Related Conceptual Frameworks

In research conducted by Kumar & Velmurugan (2017) to build a conceptual model on the impact of Generation Y employees on IT organizations based on secondary sources. The impact of Generation Y on organizations has been analyzed from 3 perspectives; aspiration of Generation Y, Generation Y attributes, and challenges faced in managing Generation Y. This model is reasonable to be considered in this research context as well since the same IT industry is considered. However, specific characteristics related to Gen Z needs to be reconsidered in this model.

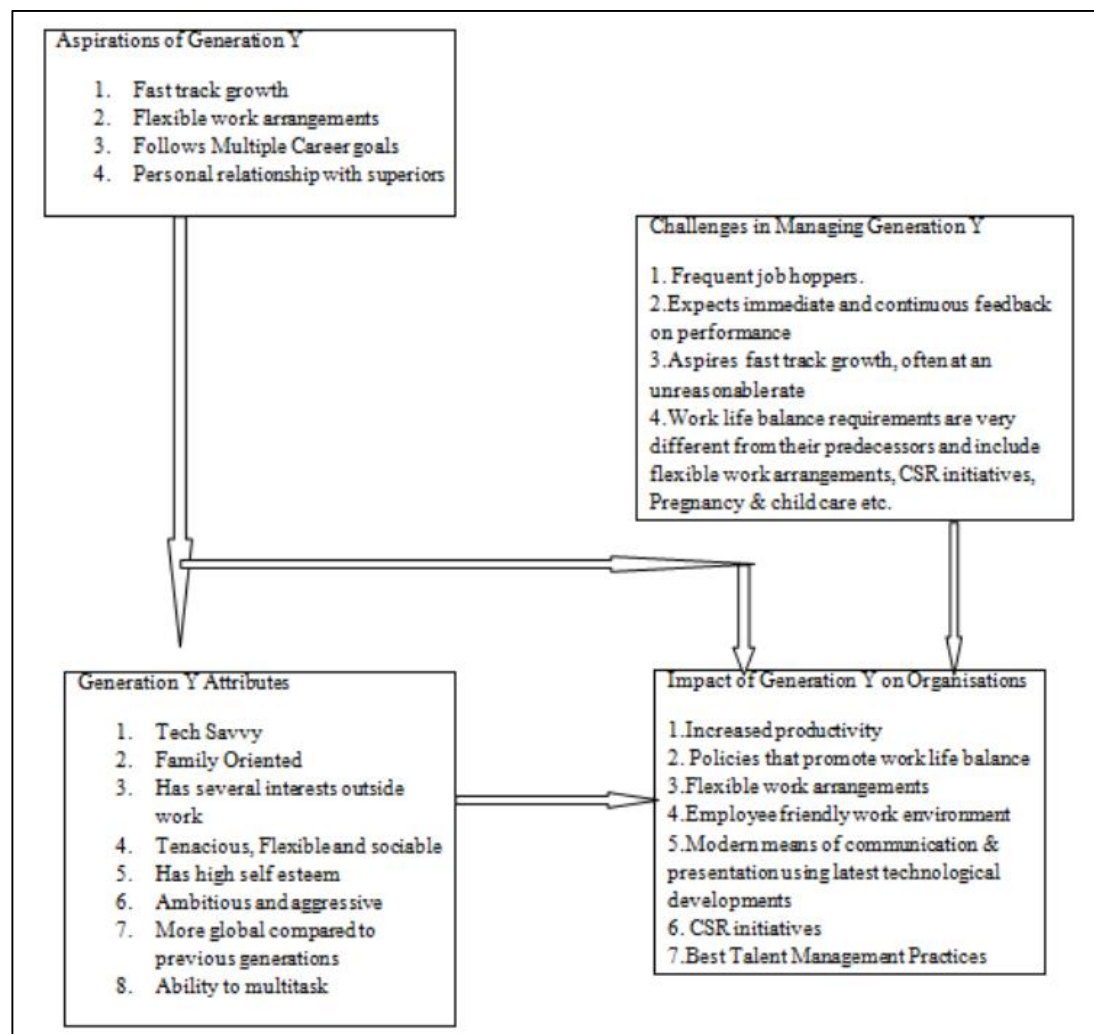


Figure 2.1 Conceptual model depicting the impact of Generation Y on organizations

Source: (Kumar & Velmurugan, 2017)

In another study by Liyanage & Gamage (2017), “career development”, “supervisor behavior”, “work content”, “work-life balance” factors were considered to have a positive relationship towards employee engagement of Generation Y employees. This gives an insight into the possible independent variables that can be considered in this context as well.

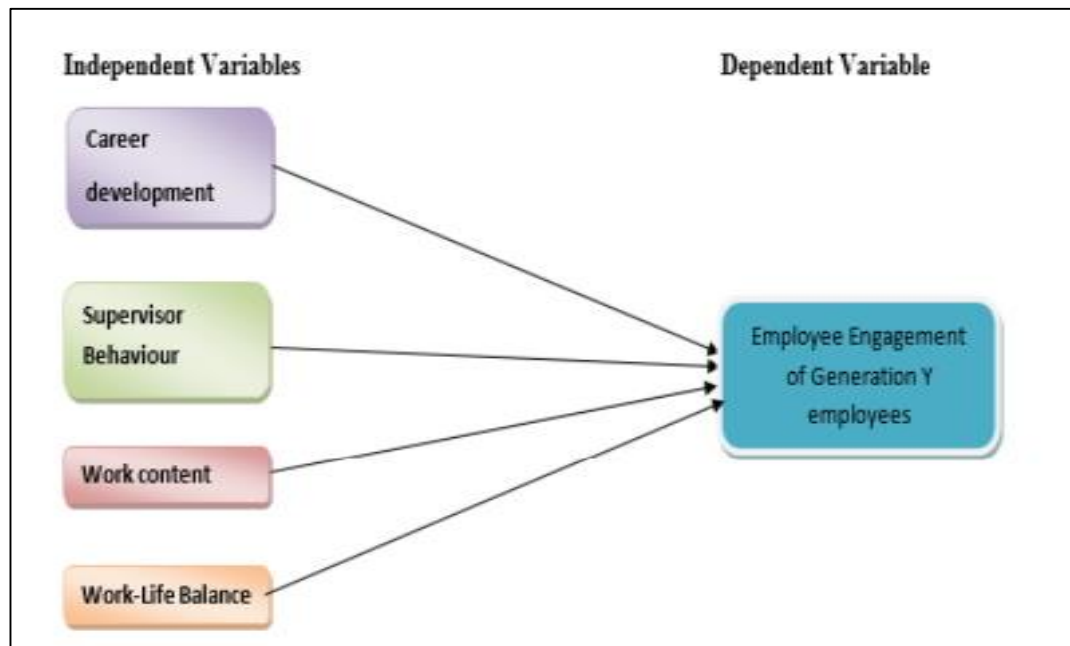


Figure 2.2 Factors influencing the employee engagement of Generation Y employees
Source: (Liyanage & Gamage, 2017)

2.9 Factors Affecting Career Aspirations of Gen Z

Table 2.2 to Table 2.6 represents the summarized view of the factors identified in the literature review. Receiving good pay, having job security, having clear career goals, having supportive managers, being determined to succeed, doing challenging work are considered as the career expectation factors that Gen Z prefer the most in their initial career expectation. Receiving good pay, opportunities self-development, seeing a clear advancement/ promotion path with the employer can be seen as the most influential factors for career aspiration.

Table 2.2 ETC Contributory Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Z

Career Expectations Contributors	Sources	Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor
Receiving good pay	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010 Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010 Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016 Iorgulescu, 2016	High
Having job security	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010 Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010 Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016 Iorgulescu, 2016 Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017	High
Having clear career goals	Iorgulescu, 2016 Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017 Rober Half International Inc, 2015	High
Having a good work life balance	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010 Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017 Iorgulescu, 2016	High
Performance related salary and bonuses, Professional development, Internal promotion, Provision for training factors	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017	Moderate

Table 2.3 MAC Contributory Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Z

Career Expectations Contributors	Sources	Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor
Positive company culture	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010	
Having supportive managers	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010 Iorgulescu, 2016 Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010 Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017	High

Table 2.4 PCD Contributory Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Z

Career Expectations Contributors	Sources	Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor
Upward promotion, Opportunities for self-development, Having clear career goals, Having opportunities for training and development	Broadbridge et al., 2007 Maxwell et al., 2010 Half, 2015 Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017	Moderate
Working hard, Being determined to succeed, Doing challenging work, Meeting personal goals	Half, 2015 Iorgulescu, 2016 Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018	High

Table 2.5 PV Contributory Factors Affecting Career Expectations of Gen Z

Career Expectations Contributors	Sources	Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor
Enjoying work	Maxwell et al., 2010 Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017	High
Experiencing equal opportunities; Employers being fair to all employees and tolerating employees' diversity differences	Maxwell et al., 2010	

Table 2.6 Contributory Factors Affecting Career Aspirations of Gen Z

Career Aspirations Contributor Groups	Career Aspirations Contributors	Sources	Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor
Employee Terms and Conditions	Receiving good pay; Having job security;	Maxwell et al., 2010 Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017	High
Management Approach and Culture	Working in a positive company culture	Maxwell et al., 2010	
Personal Career Development	Achieving upward promotion; Being determined to succeed; Opportunities for self-development; Doing challenging work; Having clear career goals; Seeing a clear advancement/promotion path with the employer	Maxwell et al., 2010 Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017	High

2.10 Research Data Methodologies Used

It is important to compare and contrast the data gathering techniques and analysis methods used in previous studies in order to identify the best model which fit for this study. Table 2.7 represents a summary of the findings of those techniques.

Table 2.7 Summary of Research Data Methodologies Used

Research Techniques	Demographics Considered	Reference
Survey-based exploratory research with convenience sampling	Undergraduate students (second year) in Faculty of Business and Tourism in Romania; Considered Gen Z as those born after 1995; Demographics considered: Age and Sex	Iorgulescu, 2016
Quantitative research with only a preliminary study	237 Slovak university students in a single faculty currently studying towards their BSc in Management; Considered Gen Z who were born in or 1995; Gender and existing work experience were taken into account	Kirchmayer, 2017

Qualitative Research with focus group discussion	Scotland undergraduate students (third and fourth year) in two universities (studying retail management or retail-marketing degrees) with retail employment experiences	Broadbridge, A. M., Maxwell, G. A., & Ogden, S. M., 2007
Survey-based quantitative research with multiple regression analyses	Large sample - Postsecondary students (Gen Y) from across Canada who are undergraduates; Demographic factors considered: Gender, Minorities, Year of Study, Work Experience, GPA	Ng, E. S., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S. T., 2010
Survey-based quantitative research	The target population was four academic year groups of the computing classes at a university in South Africa; Students Profile – Gender, Academic Year, Self-Rated Academic Performance	Liebenberg, J., & Pieterse, V., 2016
Survey-based quantitative research with statistical analysis using “SPSS”	Research centered on undergraduate students of two universities having work experience	Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010
Survey-based quantitative research with analysis using “Minitab”	The sample was considered all the Gen Y employees of KPO companies; Krejcie and Morgan table used in determining the sample size	Liyanage & Gamage, 2017
Survey-based quantitative research with Exploratory Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression	Sample considered Gen Z in the telecommunication industry in Sri Lanka	Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018

2.11 Testing and Analysis Approaches

2.11.1 Hypothesis testing methods

A hypothesis test evaluates “two mutually exclusive statements about a population to determine which statement is best supported by the sample data” (Understanding Hypothesis Tests: Why We Need to Use Hypothesis Tests in Statistics, 2015). A hypothesis is represented by a null hypothesis (denoted by H_0) and an alternative hypothesis (denoted by H_1). A null hypothesis is a claim that is made under the test about one or more population parameters. This statement holds to be true until sufficient statistical evidence is available to reject otherwise. The alternative

hypothesis is the negation of the null hypothesis. That is, the alternative hypothesis is that statement that claims of all situations not covered by the null hypothesis. Based on the test statistic derived from the sample data, a null hypothesis is accepted as true or rejected as false. In the event, when the null hypothesis is rejected, the alternative hypothesis is substantiated. P-Value determines the validity of the test results of the hypothesis test. According to Aczel & Sounderpandian (2009) “the most common policy in statistical hypothesis testing is to establish a significance level, denoted by α , and to reject H_0 when the p-value falls below it.”

The scholarly articles reference in this context does not explicitly state the hypothesis testing methods used, but this method holds the most important method which can be used in the current study as well in finding the answers to the research questions.

2.11.2 Pearson Correlation

Pearson’s correlation coefficient is useful in measuring the statistical relationship between two continuous variables. It is considered as the best-suited method in determining the association between variables of interest as it is based on the method of covariance. This method can be used to “explore information about the magnitude of the associate, or correlation, as well as the direction of the relationship” (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2009).

The degree of the correlation is said to be a perfect positive relationship when the coefficient is +1. The degree of the correlation is said to be a perfect negative relationship, when the coefficient is -1, as when one variable decreases, the other variable tends to decrease as well. And when the value is zero, no correlation exists among the two variables. If the coefficient value lies “between ± 0.50 and ± 1 ”, the degree of relationship is said to be high having a strong correlation between the two variables. If the value lies “between ± 0.30 and ± 0.49 ”, then it is said to be a medium correlation having a moderate degree of relationship. When the value lies “below + .29”, then it is said to be a small correlation, and it is termed as Low degree of relationship (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2009).

This method is used by Ng, E. S., Schweitzer et al. (2010) to determine the strength of the relationship of their career expectations. Since a similar approach is considered for this research, this method can be considered too.

2.11.3 Linear Regression

Regression analysis is one of the most important and widely used statistical technique used “for modeling the relationship between variables”. In simple linear regression, the relationship between two variables (dependent variable and independent variables) are used (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2009). There are multiple reasons for researchers to carry out a regression analysis as stated by Aczel & Sounderpandian (2009); first, to identify “the strength of the effect that the independent variable(s) have on a dependent variable”. Second, to understand “how much the dependent variable changes with a change in one or more independent variables”; thirdly to “predict trends and future values”. Linear regression is one form of regression analysis.

Linear regression analysis is of two forms. Simple Linear regression attempt to determine the strength of the relationship between the variables (dependent variable versus independent variable). Whereas multiple linear regression attempts to identify the relationship between 1 dependent variable against multiple independent variables. The research study was done by Ng, E. S., Schweitzer et al. (2010) has used multiple regression analysis in order to identify whether different demographic factors impact the dependent variables of the study. This gives more visibility to the granular relationships that exist among the factors considered. The same approach can be applied in the present study as well to identify the strength of the relationship between the variables under the study.

2.12 Discussion

Based on the scholarly articles reviewed and the gathered literature, the following can be summarized with regard to this study.

Table 2.8 Summary of Literature Reviewed

Related work	Advantages	Disadvantages
Broadbridge et al., 2007	The research identifies the framework built for career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z	Difficulty to generalize the results as it is an exploratory research
Maxwell et al., 2010	The research explores theoretically and empirically, the linkage between Gen Y perspective on career expectations and aspiration	Difficulty in generalizing the results to the wider population
Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010	A large-sample study of Gen Y which explore Gen Y characteristics to other older generations, with which Gen Y characteristics are benchmarked.	
Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016	Sample considered in this study belongs to the same industry of the present study.	No granular analysis was done on the impact of demographic factors against the dependent variable (career expectations)
Iorgulescu, 2016	Can be used to determine the Gen Z perception as the sample used in this research belongs to Gen Z.	A convenience sampling method is used for generation Z undergraduates studying economic sciences, therefore difficulty in generalizing the results in other domains
Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017	Same as above.	Since it is a preliminary study, the results are not thorough and cannot be generalized
Liyanage & Gamage, 2017	Helps to generalize the findings as the study is related to the KPO industry in Sri Lanka.	The sample population is quite small; therefore, it would be quite difficult to generalize.
Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018	The sample used in this research belongs to Gen Z in Sri Lankan telecommunication industry will aid in generalizing the results being in a similar context.	

Table 2.9 summarizes the factors identified from Employee Terms and Conditions group and the Gen Z perception towards each factor. Table 2.10 summarizes the factors identified from Management Approach and Culture group and the Gen Z perception towards each factor and Table 2.12 summarizes the factors identified from Personal Values group and the Gen Z perception towards each factor. Finally, Table 2.11 summarizes the factors identified from the Personal Career Development group and the Gen Z perception towards each factor.

Table 2.9 Summary of ETC Factors Identified from Literature

Related work	Receiving good pay	Having job security	Having clear career goals	Having a good work life balance	Performance related salary and bonuses	Professional development	Internal promotion	Provision for training factors
Broadbridge et al., 2007	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Maxwell et al., 2010	X	X		X				
Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010	X	X						
Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016	X	X						
Iorgulescu, 2016	X	X	X	X				
Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017		X	X	X				
Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018	X							
Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017					X	X	X	X
Favorable driver for Employee Engagement	Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor	High				Moderate			

Table 2.10 Summary of MAC Factors Identified from Literature

Related work	Positive company culture	Having supportive managers
Broadbridge et al., 2007	X	X
Maxwell et al., 2010	X	X
Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010		X
Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016		X
Iorgulescu, 2016		X
Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017		X
Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017		
Favorable driver for Employee Engagement		Yes
Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor		High

Table 2.11 Summary of PV Factors Identified from Literature

Related work	Enjoying work	Experiencing equal opportunities	Employers being fair to all employees and tolerating employees' diversity differences
Maxwell et al., 2010	X	X	X
Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017	X		
Favorable driver for Employee Engagement	Yes		Yes
Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor	High		

Table 2.12 Summary of PCD Factors Identified from Literature

Related work	upward promotion	Having supportive managers	being determined to succeed	opportunities for self-development	meeting personal goals	doing challenging work	having clear career goals	making a difference	having opportunities for training and development, and using networking skills	working hard
Broadbridge et al., 2007	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maxwell et al., 2010	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010				X		X				
Liebenberg & Pieterse, 2016						X				
Iorgulescu, 2016		X		X					X	
Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017				X						
Favorable driver for Employee Engagement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gen Z Perception towards the Contributor	High	High		High						

2.13 Research Limitations

Through the literature review, it was possible to identify the character traits of Gen Z, the challenges and issues introduced to organizations as a result of these generational differences in the workforce, the factors affecting career expectation and aspirations of Gen Z. Much of the scholarly articles works exist for previous generations and for different industries. As generational differences are carved based on the “historical experiences, economic and social conditions, technological advances, and other societal changes” (Reeves & Oh), and as these factors change slightly from country to

country, the above-identified factors and Gen Z characteristics might change in the Sri Lankan context. As there are lack studies done for Gen Z in Sri Lankan context, this research intends to fill in the niche of empirical evidence in determining the factors affecting career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z software professionals of Sri Lanka. As this will aid managers to identify the new trends that will emerge once the Gen Z enter the workforce, which will help them to be prepared to take generation-specific strategies to accomplish organizational goals.

2.14 Conclusion

According to the related literature, it can be concluded that the career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z will have its own facets in terms of the industry and the country they work in. The literature review is provided with a better understanding of the current related research in different industries and countries. A comparison and evaluation of the related work are presented to review the current theoretical methods and models which have been used for identifying career expectations and aspirations of previous generations which can be adopted in this study.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview to the Chapter

To achieve the objectives of the present study, this research is focused on undergraduate students following a computer science or IT related degree in either state or private university, or those who belong to Gen Z and already working in a software firm in Sri Lanka. This chapter elaborates the research methodology approach taken towards achieving the aforementioned research objectives, by detailing out the conceptual research framework, formulation of hypothesis, development of instruments, data collection method, deriving sample population, and adopted sampling methods.

3.2 Introduction to the Adapted Research Methodology

This research methodology for this research intends to follow a seven-step approach as depicted in the below Figure 3.1.

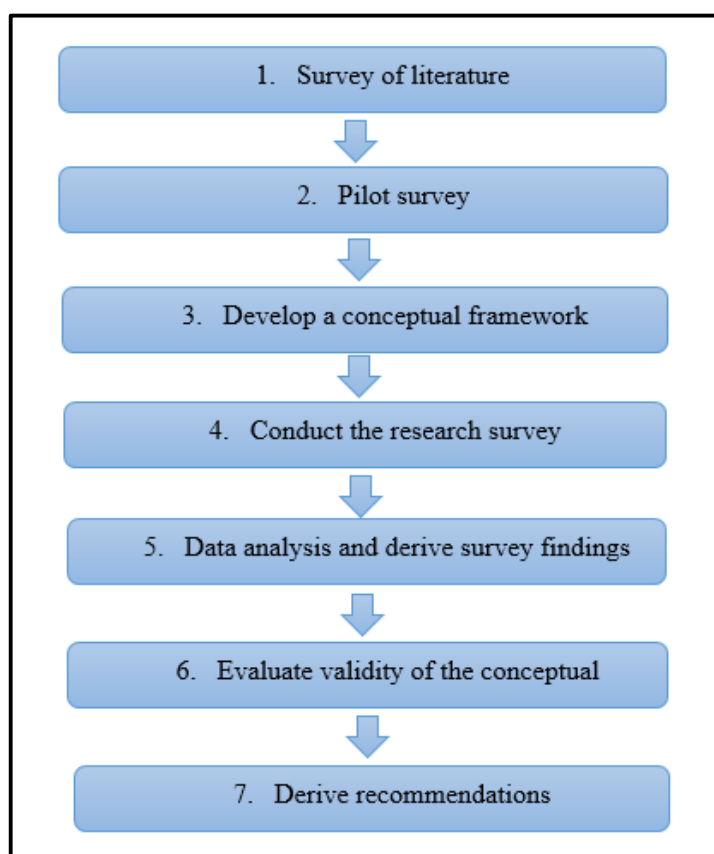


Figure 3.1 Research Methodology

Step 1: Survey of Literature

A literature review was carried out as the initial step to detect the factors that would affect the career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z. This was done, by reviewing similar literature on previous generations, mainly Gen Y, and then reviewing the literature on Gen Z perceptions towards such factors, along with their similarities and differences with the previous generations. Here, the literature survey was not restricted to the software industry as the factors discovered were generic which can be applied to any industry. The literature review findings are summarized in Chapter 2, Section 2.12.

Step 2: Preliminary Survey

From the literature review, career expectation and career aspiration factors from previous generations were identified from three different dimensions, namely; “Employee Terms and Conditions”, “Management Approach and Culture”, and “Personal Career Development”. The factors were then re-assessed from two different perspectives. First, the extent to which the factor is a favorable driver for employee engagement and, secondly, Gen Z perception on the importance of each factor as a career expectation or career aspiration. Since these factors identified were mainly from different researches conducted around the globe, and in order to carefully narrow down the factors which are most applicable to the Sri Lankan context, a preliminary survey was conducted. To identify the most appropriate career expectation and aspiration factors, all the factors identified from the literature survey (a total of 16 factors for career expectation and 9 career aspiration factors) from the three different dimensions will be included. An online survey questionnaire will be developed and distributed among known software professionals in Sri Lankan software industry who belonged to the age group (born in or after 1995) of this study. The results of the preliminary study will be investigated to identify the most appropriate career expectation and aspiration factors in the context of this study.

Step 3: Develop a Conceptual Framework

Based on the preliminary survey findings, the factors that are deemed to be affecting career expectations and aspiration of Gen Z will be derived. A conceptual framework was then developed capturing these findings, with the aim structuring the research with a solid approach. Section 3.4 illustrates this conceptual framework.

Step 4: Conducting the Research

A quantitative research approach will be followed to accomplish the objectives of this research. Initially, a survey based quantitative research will be carried out for Gen Z undergraduates of Sri Lanka in both state-owned and private institutes offering a Computer Science or IT related degree having work exposure, and Gen Z software professionals currently engaged in the Sri Lankan software industry.

Determination of the sample and sample population is depicted in Section 3.5. The survey questionnaire is available in Appendix A.

Step 5: Data Analysis and Derive Survey Findings

The data gathered will be analyzed via Pearson Correlation, Regression Analysis, and Descriptive Statistics to derive the primary and secondary findings for the present study. Chapter 4 will detail out the results from the data analysis.

Step 6: Evaluate the validity of the Conceptual Framework and Refine

With the findings, the conceptual framework defined previously will be revalidated, with which the refined conceptual framework will be presented.

Step 7: Derive Recommendations

Recommendations will be derived from the research findings for each of the research objectives. Recommendations given will be mainly made to managers to understand Gen Z perception towards career expectations and how they should be prepared to welcome these new generations at the workplace. Chapter 5 will contain these recommendations.

3.3 Research Approach and Design

A quantitative research approach with a structured questionnaire will be followed by the sample of the present study to derive the respective research objectives. A conceptual research framework will be proposed based on the factors identified from the preliminary survey. The hypothesis will be built based on these identified dependent and independent variables with which the conceptual framework is developed. The target population of this research is Gen Z undergraduates of both public and state universities having some work exposure, and also software professionals currently working whole belongs to Gen Z.

3.4 Conceptual Framework

Figure 3.2 represents the conceptual framework for the present study based on the findings from the literature and preliminary surveys. This conceptual research framework depicts the possible interrelationships with the variables that are considered in this study.

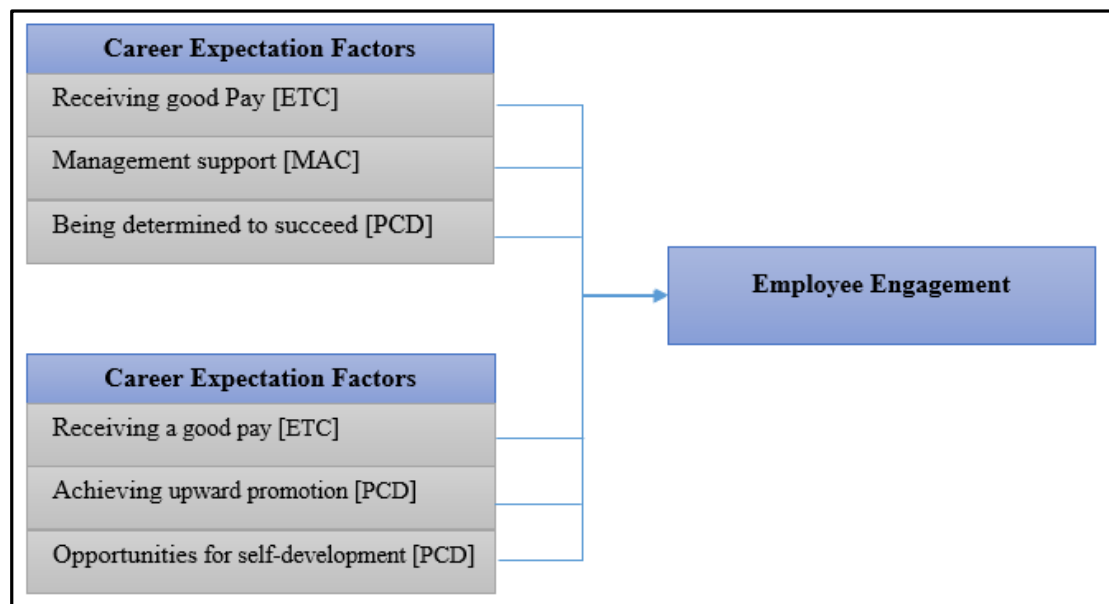


Figure 3.2 Proposed Conceptual Framework for Career Expectations and Aspirations of Gen Z

The factors or variables were categorized into two, career expectation variables and career aspiration variables. The variables belong to three groupings, “Employee Terms and Conditions”, “Management Approach and Culture”, and “Personal Career Development”, following the same classification done by Maxwell (2010).

3.4.1 Variables on Relationships

Employee Engagement is the Dependent Variable, which is the variable of main interest in this study. Factors affecting both career expectation and career aspiration are said to be dependent on Employee Engagement.

The behavior of Employee Engagement is attempted to explain by 3 Independent Variables of Career Expectations, which are: Receiving a good pay, Management support, and Being determined to succeed; and 3 Independent Variables of Career Aspirations, which are: Receiving a good pay, Achieving upward promotion, and Being determined to succeed.

3.4.2 Hypothesis Development

The below-mentioned hypotheses are drawn from the relationships theorized in the conceptual framework.

Let;

H_A : Alternate Hypothesis

H₀ : Null Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

H1_A: There is a positive relationship between receiving good pay as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H1₀: There is a no positive relationship between receiving good pay as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

Hypothesis 2

H2_A: There is a positive relationship between management support as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H2₀: There is a no positive relationship between management support as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

Hypothesis 3

H3_A: There is a positive relationship between being determined to succeed in a career as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H3₀: There is a no positive relationship between being determined to succeed in a career as a career expectation factor and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

Hypothesis 4

H4_A: There is a positive relationship between receiving good pay in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H4₀: There is a no positive relationship between receiving good pay in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

Hypothesis 5

H5_A: There is a positive relationship between achieving upward promotion in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H5₀: There is a no positive relationship between achieving upward promotion in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

Hypothesis 6

H6_A: There is a positive relationship between opportunities for self-development in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

H6₀: There is no positive relationship between opportunities for self-development in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees

3.5 The Population and the Sample Selection

For this quantitative research, the study will be conducted from the undergraduates following an IT or computer science degree in either state-owned or private universities with industrial exposure. Undergraduates who are currently engaged in academic studies in universities (in both public and private), having completed the industrial training programme, and those who currently engaged in the industrial training programme in Sri Lankan software industry, and those Gen Z software professionals who already engaged in the IT workforce will be considered as the population for this study. The reason for considering the undergraduates with industrial exposure is mainly due to the fact, they will have more vicinity and experience on Sri Lankan software industry, and their perception towards career expectations will be based with personal facts. The need for considering undergraduates with industrial exposure is further proved from research studies conducted by Maxwell (2014), Broadbridge et al. (2007), Liebenberg & Pieterse (2016).

3.5.1 Deriving the Population

In deriving the undergraduate population for this study, it is important to understand the Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) offering Computer Science / IT related degree programme. Based on a report findings on a survey done by Gamage & Wijesooriya (2011) on undergraduate degree programmes in Sri Lanka, the HEIs in Sri Lanka are categorized into three based on student's perspective. They are Public-UGC, Public Non-UGC, and Private. The below table describes the nature of these three different HEIs in Sri Lanka.

Table 3.1 Sri Lanka HEIs Categorization

Public-UGC	These are fully funded state institutes which are managed under government regulations having admissions controlled by the University Grants Commission.
Public Non-UGC	These are either fully or partially funded by the state and managed with varying levels of independence from the respective government
Private	These are privately owned profit or non-profit based institutes with no state involvement.

Source: (Gamage & Wijesooriya, 2011)

The below table depicts the undergraduate's enrollments by Sri Lankan state universities for Computer Science academic programme based on the report Sri Lanka University Statistics 2016 by University Grants Commission – Sri Lanka. Based on the report, the number of undergraduate enrolment refers to the count of undergraduate students registered for a particular programme as at the end of the reference year (University Grants Commission - Sri Lanka, 2016). This will help to identify the target public universities for conducting the survey.

Table 3.2 Undergraduate Enrollment by Computer Science / IT Academic Programme

University	Undergraduates Enrollment		
	2014	2015	2016
University of Colombo School of Computing	758	765	767
University of Peradeniya	243	256	254
University of Sri Jayewardenepura	255	255	244
University of Kelaniya	177	231	281
University of Moratuwa	887	1049	1116
University of Jaffna	245	257	301
University of Ruhuna	117	118	114
Eastern University	-	7	21
South Eastern University	271	301	289
Rajarata University	235	247	226
Sabaragamuwa University	266	257	257
Uva Wellassa University	363	410	428
Total	3817	4153	4298

Source: University Grants Commission - Sri Lanka, 2016

The undergraduate in Sri Lankan private universities also serve as an important participant for this research, as Information Technology remains the most offered degree (38%) by private degree awarding institutions in Sri Lanka (Stephen, 2007). Therefore, undergraduates on both state universities and private institutes offering IT related degree should be given equal importance.

The following table lists the Institutes offering IT related degree recognized by University Grants Commission – Sri Lanka which will help identify the private degree awarding institutes that should be considered during the survey.

Table 3.3 Institutes offering IT related degree recognized by University Grants Commission

Category	Institute	IT Related Degrees Offered
Degrees of Institutes Recognized under Section 25 A of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978	Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT)	B.Sc. in Information Technology
	National Institute of Business Management (NIBM)	B.Sc. in Management Information Systems
Degree awarding status granted by the Ministry of Higher Education (Specified authority being the Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education)	National School of Business Management (NSBM)	B.Sc. in Management Information Systems (Special) B.Sc. Honours in Software Engineering B.Sc. Honours in Computer System Engineering
	Horizon Campus	B.Sc. in Information Technology / B.Sc. Honours in Information Technology
	Institute of Technological Studies	Bachelor's Degrees in computer science and in Computer Systems Design
	Aquinas College of Higher Studies	Bachelor of Information Technology Degree (BIT)

Gen Z of Sri Lanka is on the target audience for this research study. Gen Z is those who have birth years starting from “the mid-1900s to early 2000s and ending birth years from the late 2000s to early 2010s” (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Most of the studied literature consider Gen Z birth year as 1995 (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017), (Iorgulescu, 2016), (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017), and (Half, 2018). Therefore, for this study as well, 1995 year will be considered as the early birth years of Gen Z. The sample would be narrowed down to the Gen Z undergraduate having had or currently having an industrial training exposure.

As per the Students Enrollment Report for the year 2015 and 2016 by University Grants Commission (UGC), population size can be derived for both government universities and non-government universities as 4153 and 5567 for the year 2015, and 4298 and 4979 (University Grants Commission - Sri Lanka, 2016) for the year 2016 respectively. Therefore, the total population for this study is 15198.

There was a lack of previous studies in identifying the percentage of undergraduates who receive industrial training exposure during their degree programme. Therefore, assumptions will be made to accommodate this factor. The below table Table 3.4 summarizes the derivations of the sample population for easy reference.

Table 3.4 Derivation of the undergraduate population

Birth Year – Gen Z	1995	1996
Year of University Entrance	2015/2016	2016/2017
Current Level at University	Level 4	Level 3
Population Size – Government Universities (UGC Intake) for IT or CS degree	4153	4,298
Population Size – Non-Government Universities (External, Open & Distance Learning) IT or CS degree	5,567	4,979
Total Population	9,720	9,277
Assumption 1: It is assumed that only 80% of the undergraduates get eligible for Industrial Training	=18997*80%	
Total Population for the study	15198	

3.5.2 Deriving the Sample Size

In order to derive the sample size for the aforementioned two sample population, online sample size calculator was used having the confidence of 95% and the confidence interval as 5%. Therefore, for the given population of Gen Z undergraduates, the sample size is estimated to be 375.

3.5.3 Sampling Techniques Used

Quota sampling will be used as the sampling technique to reach the undergraduates. Since this research is focused on undergraduates with industrial training exposure, this method is said to be the best approach that allows the researchers to sample a subgroup that is of great interest to the study (i.e., undergraduates with industrial exposure) (**Quota Sampling, n.d.**). The selection of both public universities and private degree awarding institutes that this research would focus will be selected based on the convenience sampling technique.

3.6 Process of Data Collection

The intended data collection process for this study is via an online survey questionnaire. The questionnaire would be mainly a structured questionnaire developed based on the factors identified in the conceptual framework, where respondents will be asked to rate each factor with a five-point Likert scale based on their own judgement. Few open-ended questions will too be included to capture certain additional details from the participants. The initial questionnaire will be validated by 10 individuals from each sample population. The questionnaire would be further refined based on the feedback received. The questionnaires will be analyzed quantitatively.

3.7 Questionnaire Instrument Development

A questionnaire instrument will be developed as outlined in Appendix A to capture each respondent's perception of Career Expectations and Aspirations towards employee engagement. The below tables Table 3.5, Table 3.6, Table 3.7, and Table 3.8 illustrates a summary of the measures used.

Table 3.5 Instrument Measures of Independent Variables – Career Expectation

Variable	Item Count	Scale
Receiving good pay	4	Five-point Likert Scale
Management support	4	Five-point Likert Scale
Being determined to succeed in a career	3	Five-point Likert Scale

Table 3.6 Instrument Measures of Independent Variables – Career Aspiration

Variable	Item Count	Scale
Achieving upward promotion	3	Five-point Likert Scale
Receiving good pay	2	Five-point Likert Scale
Opportunities for self-development	4	Five-point Likert Scale

Table 3.7 Instrument Measures of Dependent Variables

Variable	Dimension	Item Count	Scale
Employee Engagement	Career Expectation	4	Five-point Likert Scale
Employee Engagement	Career Aspiration	3	Five-point Likert Scale

Table 3.8 Instrument Measures of Personal Traits

Variable	Item Count	Scale
Personal Traits of Gen Z	8	Five-point Likert Scale
	2	Multiple Choice

In addition to the above a total of 7 demographic items were raised to capture on Age, Gender, Stream of study for A/Ls, Institute of Higher Education, Current year of study, Degree program followed/following.

3.8 Research Methodology Mapping with the Research Objectives

This describes how the research objectives of this study will be achieved from the research method approach taken.

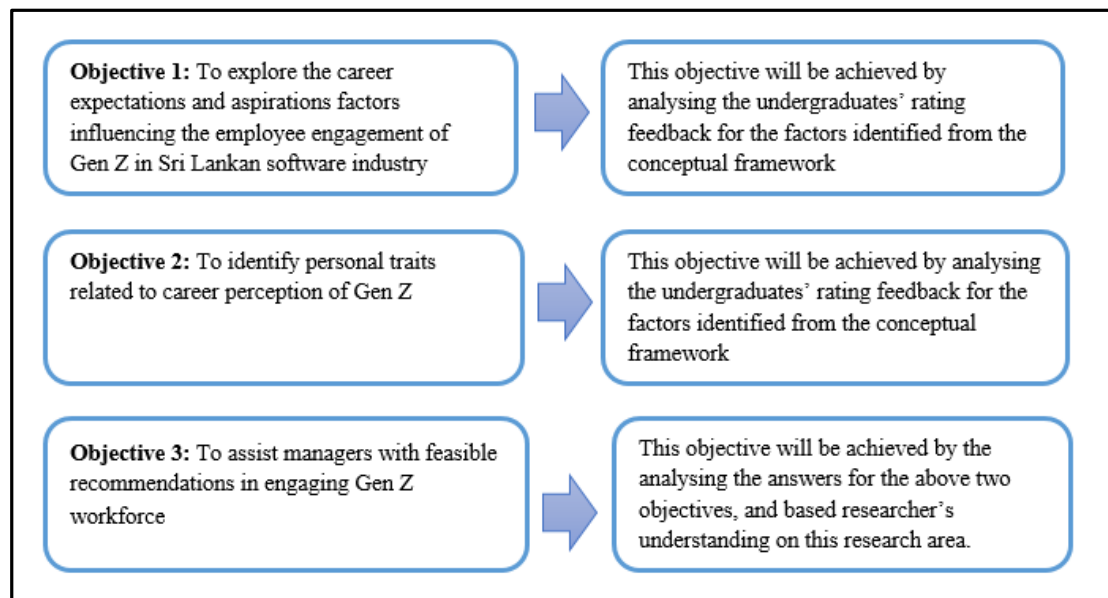


Figure 3.3 Research methodology mapping with the research objectives

4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Overview to the Chapter

This chapter detail out the analysis of the present study through the empirical data gathered from the sample, and discussion on the observations derived from the statistical results of this study.

4.2 Preliminary Research Survey

The initial survey was distributed among 20 industrial trainers belonging to those Gen under 26 years of age. A reliability test was carried out for all the instruments under the study using Cronbach's alpha value. One item from each of the variables 'Receiving a good pay' and 'Being determined to succeed in career', was removed in order to maintain the consistency. The final survey was modified based on the outcome of a reliability test. Appendix A detail out the final survey for this research study.

Table 4.1 Preliminary Reliability Test for Independent Variables

Category	Variable	No of Items used to measure	No of Items eliminated to get reliability
Career Expectation	Receiving good pay	4	1
	Management Support	4	No
	Being determined to succeed in a career	3	1
Career Aspiration	Receiving good pay	3	No
	Achieving upward promotion	2	No
	Opportunities for self-development	3	No

Table 4.2 Preliminary Reliability Test for Dependent Variable

Category	Variable	No of Items used to measure	No of Items eliminated to get reliability
Career Expectation	Employee Engagement	4	No
Career Aspiration	Employee Engagement	3	No

4.3 Research Survey

The data collection was done by distributing the survey questionnaire online using Google forms. The distribution of the survey to the participants was two-fold. Software professionals belong to Gen Z currently employed in software companies were asked to participate in the survey, and to forward the survey to their batch mates and friends falling to the same age category. The other set of participants were approached via universities who are currently following their undergraduate's programs in Level 3 and Level 4. The survey was opened approximately 16 weeks to gather the required sample population. The total no of participants who participated in this study summed up to 429.

4.4 Data Analysis Techniques and Tools Used

Data gathered was cleansed initially by examining each response to assess the validity. This resulted in removing a total of 53 responses due to non-conformance to the survey requirements. The two main non-conformities of the sample were those who were above 26 years of age and those who had no work experience in Sri Lankan software industry. A few other responses were removed due to the duplicity. Having done the data cleansing, a total of 376 responses were considered for the detailed analysis.

The main techniques used for analysis of this study were reliability test using Cronbach Alpha, Pearson Correlation analysis for validating hypothesis, linear regression analysis, descriptive statistics to visualize the sample distribution, and expert judgement; while “Microsoft Excel” with “Data Analysis Toolkit” add-in and ‘SPSS’ were used as software tools.

4.5 Survey Respondents Demographic Analysis

The demographic information of the survey respondents was analyzed to visualize and to group the respondents to meaningful groups. The first graphical representation given in Figure 4.1 visualizes the total responses gathered along with accepted and rejected percentages due to non-conformance to survey requirements. The subsequent figures displayed thereafter (as depicted in Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.5) is extracted from the accepted responses of the survey. This analysis provides a better insight into the research to gain an understanding of certain background characteristics of the research population in the present study.

4.5.1 Survey Completion Profile

Since this research is aimed in finding career expectation and aspiration factors of Gen Z, it is vital that feedback is gathered from those with current or prior work experience in a software firm in Sri Lanka, and who belongs to Gen Z age group (that is born in or after 1995). Therefore, those responses which had “Currently, I am seeking for a job and I do NOT have employment exposure in a software firm in Sri Lanka”, “I am a full-time student, thus I have no employment exposure in any software firm in Sri Lanka” and “I’m employed full time, but not in a software firm” along with those respondents whose above 26 years were disregarded from the context of the present study. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, a total of 88% of the responses were considered as valid in the context of this research, where the detailed analysis was carried out from this sample. 12% of the responses which had non-conformance to survey requirements was rejected.

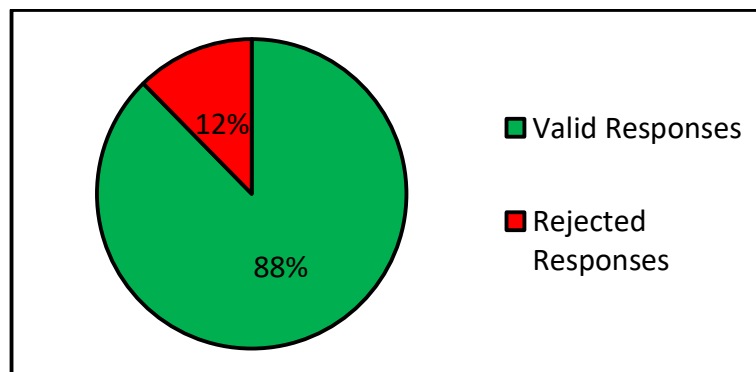


Figure 4.1 Valid Responses versus Rejected Responses

4.5.2 Respondents Age Profile

Figure 4.2 visualizes the age group distribution of the present study. It contained only 6% of respondents below 21 years of age, while the number of respondents between 22-23 years was 33%. The majority respondents of this study belonged to 24-25 years which accounted for 61% of the responses.

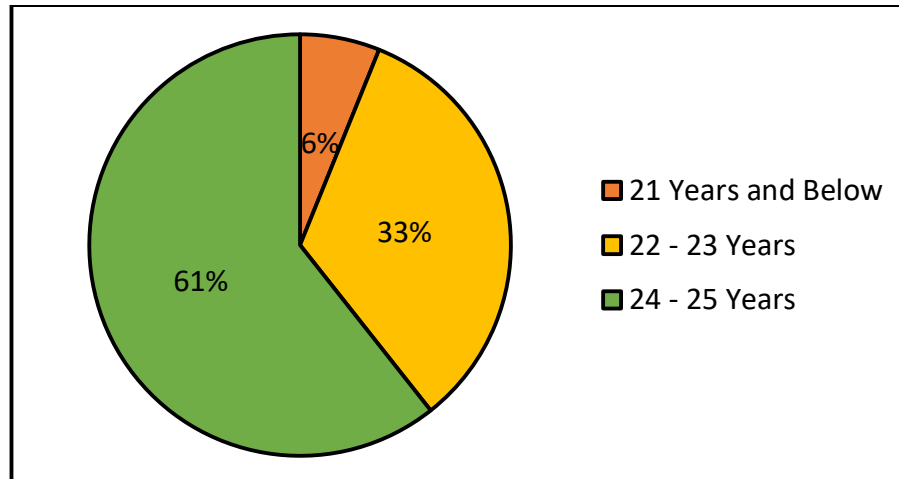


Figure 4.2 Age Distribution of the Respondents

4.5.3 Respondents Gender Profile

Figure 4.3 depicts the gender distribution of the current study. 69% of the respondents were male while the female population of the study was 31 %.

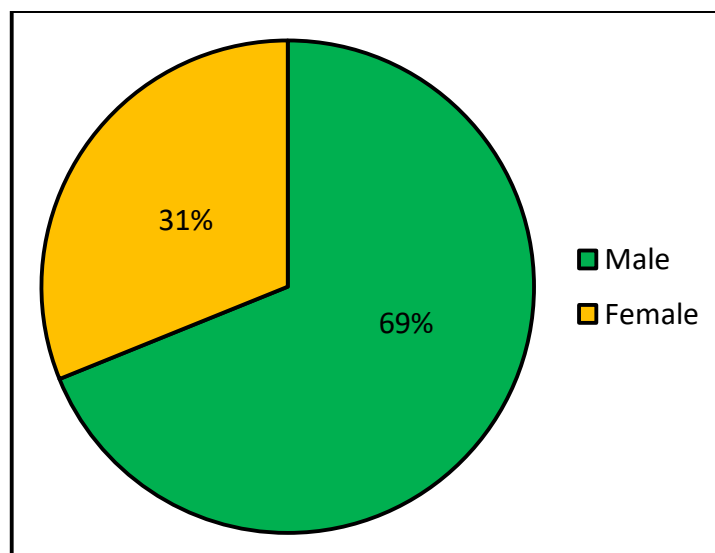


Figure 4.3 Gender Distribution

4.5.4 Respondents Work Exposure Profile

Work experience of the respondents is depicted in Figure 4.4. 35% of the respondents were employed permanently in a software firm in Sri Lanka, while only 1% of the respondents were working part-time basis. 7% of the respondents were currently employed Industrial Trainees in software firms in Sri Lanka and 6% of the sample is said to be seeking for a job but they claim to have some previous work exposure in Sri Lankan software industry. 51% of the majority of respondents are still full-time students but having some work exposure in a software firm, such as industrial training as a part of their undergraduate program. From this sample, it is evident that the detailed analysis is based only on those respondents with a working experience related to a software firm in Sri Lanka.

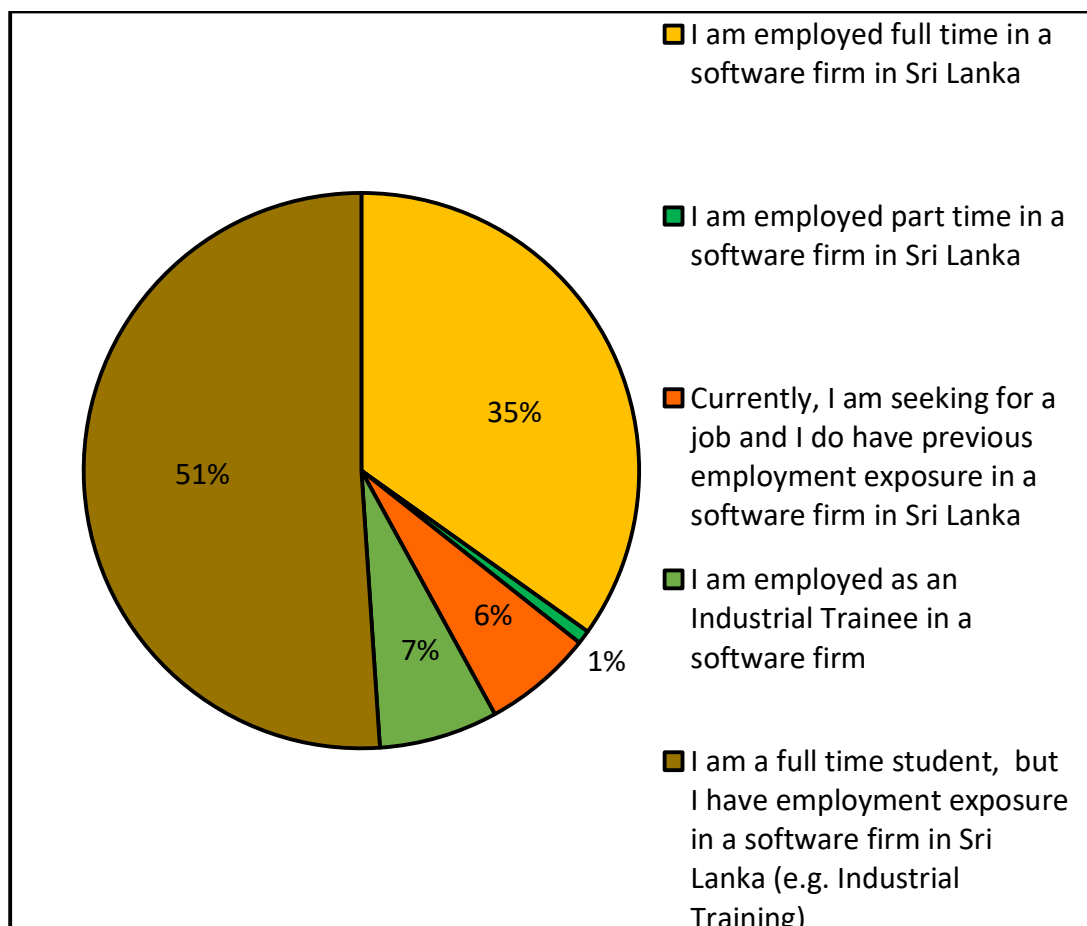


Figure 4.4 Working Exposure Distribution

4.5.5 Respondents University Profile

Figure 4.5 visualize the sample distribution based on the university they attended. 53% of the sample attended state universities while 47% have attended to non-state or private universities.

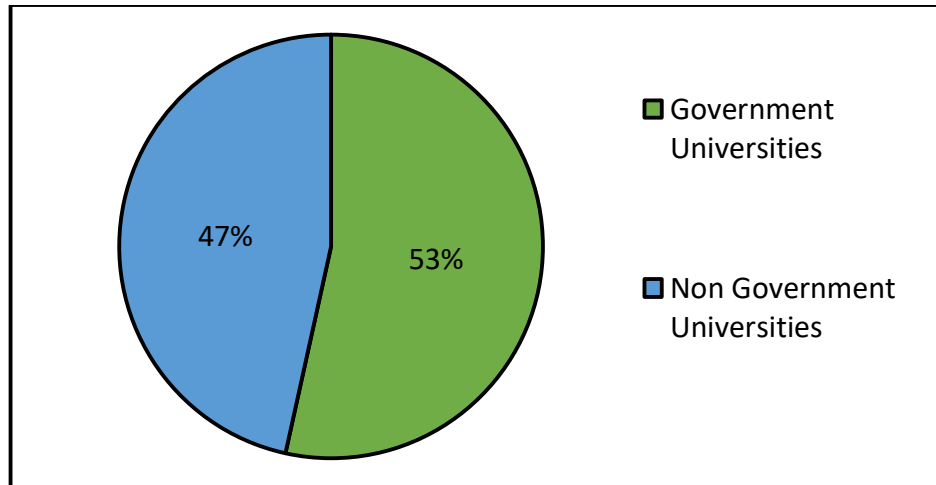


Figure 4.5 University Profile Distribution

4.6 Reliability Test – Cronbach alpha

For any research to produce a high-quality outcome, it is essential to carry out a reliability test to check how good the instruments under the test are. The Cronbach alpha is the technique used in this research to check the internal consistency of the measures. This gives the researcher an idea of whether the data set of the study is suitable for a detailed statistical analysis.

The desirable value for the Cronbach alpha coefficient is said to be between 0.7 – 0.9, while alpha value resulting greater than 0.9 is considered the instruments under the test to be redundant (Cortina, 1993).

The reliability test was carried for the research survey for independent variables and dependent variable separately from the entire sample of 376 respondents using “SPSS” as the tool. Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 depicts the reliability test results for the independent and dependent variables respectively. All the variables under the test passed reliability test resulting Cronbach alpha coefficient to be above 0.7.

Table 4.3 Reliability Test for Independent Variables

Category	Variable	No of Items used to measure	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Value
Career Expectation	Receiving good pay	3	0.735
	Management Support	4	0.856
	Being determined to succeed in a career	3	0.894
Career Aspiration	Receiving good pay	3	0.887
	Achieving upward promotion	2	0.876
	Opportunities for self-development	3	0.888

Table 4.4 Reliability Test for Dependent Variable

Category	Variable	No of Items used to measure	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Value
Career Expectation	Employee Engagement	4	0.703
Career Aspiration	Employee Engagement	3	0.801

4.7 Inferential Statistics –Inter-Item Correlation Analysis

Inter-item correlation is a reliability test which is done to analyze internal consistency among the instruments under the test. That is, it measures whether the questions under the survey or test give appropriate and consistent results (Statistics How To, n.d.). This test was carried out in the present study, for each and every variable to check for the internal consistency among the inter-item variables.

Career Expectation factors: *Receiving a Good Pay*, *Management Support*, *Being Determined to Succeed*; and Career Aspiration factors: *Receiving a Good Pay*, *Achieving Upward Promotion*, and *Opportunities for self-development* variables items were tested under this test. As depicted in Table 4.5 – Table 4.10, all of the items within a variable were positively correlated.

Table 4.5 Inter-Item Correlation for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation)

Receiving good pay (Career Expectation)	[1]	[2]	[3]
I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment [1]	1.000	0.355	0.425
For my first job, If I get selected by two companies, I would definitely join and will be happy to work for the company which offers a good a pay over the other [2]	0.355	1.000	0.704
I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry [3]	0.425	0.704	1.000

Table 4.6 Inter – Item Correlation for Management Support (Career Expectation)

Management Support (Career Expectation)	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths. [1]	1.000	0.834	0.647	0.748
I will be determined to give my best effort at work when I have supportive managers, who often review my work and give constructive feedback and appreciate for good work [2]	0.834	1.000	0.770	0.783
I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support [3]	0.647	0.770	1.000	0.764
I believe that it is essential to have managers who recognize strengths and weaknesses of his subordinates, and who openly discuss and provide feedback to overcome the weaknesses as well as to enhance the strengths to build up the career [4]	0.748	0.783	0.764	1.000

Table 4.7 Inter-Item Correlation for Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation)

Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation)	[1]	[2]
I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career [1]	1.000	0.809
I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up-to-date for a satisfying career [2]	0.809	1.000

Table 4.8 Inter-Item Correlation for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)	[1]	[2]
I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career [1]	1.000	0.799
Receiving a good a pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization [2]	0.799	1.000

Table 4.9 Inter-Item Correlation for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)

Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)	[1]	[2]	[3]
Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, the hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better [1]	1.000	0.758	0.685
I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happen fairly [2]	0.758	1.000	0.663
I would tend to look out for other options elsewhere if there is no clear promotion path in the organization [3]	0.685	0.663	1.000

Table 4.10 Inter-Item Correlation for Opportunities for Self-development (Career Aspiration)

Opportunities for Self-development (Career Aspiration)	[1]	[2]	[3]
If I am to stay in the organization for the long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employees' self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies [1]	1.000	0.851	0.623
Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run [2]	0.851	1.000	0.722
I will be less likely to look out for new opportunities elsewhere if there are opportunities within the organization to improve my skills and knowledge [3]	0.623	0.722	1.000

4.8 Inferential Statistics –Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis is the method used in this study to validate the hypothesis which is under test. This is said to be the best method in determining the relationship between variables of interest (independent variable versus the dependent variable) as this can be used to explore information about the magnitude of the correlation and as well as the direction of the relationship of the variables under the study (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2009). During the analysis of variable, standard averaging had been used to measure the significance.

4.8.1 Correlation Analysis for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.11 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation		Employee Engagement
Receiving good pay	Pearson Correlation	0.681
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

As illustrated in Table 4.11, the relationship between employee engagement and receiving good pay as a career expectation factor is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is substantiated. The correlation between the two variables indicates a positive linear relationship having resulted in 0.681 as the Pearson correlation coefficient. If the coefficient value lies between ± 0.50 and ± 1 , the degree of relationship is said to be high having a strong correlation between the two variables (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2009). Thus, it can be claimed that Gen Z perceives receiving good pay as a career expectation factor has a positive impact on employee engagement.

4.8.2 Correlation Analysis for Management Support (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.12 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Management Support (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation		Employee Engagement
Management Support	Pearson Correlation	0.860
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

As per the results in Table 4.12, the significance of the relationship between employee engagement and management support is 0.000. Since this is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is substantiated. The correlation between the two variables indicates a positive strong linear relationship where the Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.860. Therefore, it is evident that supportive management has a positive impact on employee engagement of Gen Z.

4.8.3 Correlation Analysis for Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.13 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Being Determined to Succeed in Career (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation		Employee Engagement
Being determined to succeed in a career	Pearson Correlation	0.809
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

According to Table 4.13, being determined to succeed in a career as an initial career expectation factor and employee engagement are significantly positively correlated having 0.809 as the Pearson correlation coefficient. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and being determined to succeed in their career as Gen Z is willing to take challenges and work hard in their initial career for better prospects in career establishment.

4.8.4 Correlation Analysis for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.14 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration		Employee Engagement
Receiving good pay	Pearson Correlation	0.799
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

As illustrated in Table 4.14, the relationship between receiving good pay as a longer term career aspiration factor and employee engagement are significant having 0.000 as the significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. A positive strong linear relationship is observed between the variable as the Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.799. This means that Gen Z perceives receiving good pay as a career aspiration factor has a positive impact on employee engagement.

4.8.5 Correlation Analysis for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.15 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration		Employee Engagement
Achieving upward promotion	Pearson Correlation	0.774
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

As shown in Table 4.15, achieving upward promotion as a longer term career aspiration factor and employee engagement are significantly positively correlated. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that Gen Z views achieving upward promotion as an important career aspiration factor that has a positive impact on employee engagement.

4.8.6 Correlation Analysis for Opportunities for self-development (Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.16 Correlation Analysis between Employee Engagement and Opportunities for Self-Development (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration		Employee Engagement
Opportunities for self-development	Pearson Correlation	0.871
	Sig. 2 tailed	0.000
	N	376
*Correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)		

According to Table 4.16, opportunities for self-development as a longer term career aspiration factor and employee engagement are strongly positively correlated. The null hypothesis is rejected as the significance value is 0.000 and therefore the alternate hypothesis remains to be valid. This implies that Gen Z views opportunities for self-development that prevails within the organization as an important career aspiration factor that has a positive impact on employee engagement.

4.9 Linear Regression Analysis

Regression analysis carried out in this research was two-fold. First, to identify the magnitude of the relationship between the independent variable(s) have on the dependent variable. Second, to understand the variation of the dependent variable with a change in one or more independent variables.

4.9.1. Linear Regression Analysis for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

As depicted in Table 4.17, the R and R square for receiving good pay as a career expectation factor and employee engagement are 0.681 and 46.4% respectively. 0.681 positive R value concludes that there is a positive relationship between the two variables, but the linear relationship is moderate as it is not close to 1. R square value denotes that, 46.4% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (receiving a good pay – career expectation factor).

Table 4.17 Summary of Regression Analysis for Receiving good pay (Career Expectation)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.681 ^a	.464	.463	.598
a. Predictors: (Constant), Receiving good pay				

4.9.2. Linear Regression Analysis for Management Support (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

Table 4.18 displays 0.860 of positive R-value which indicates that there is a fairly strong positive relationship between the two variables. That is, as management support increases, employee engagement increases. R square value denotes that, 73.9 % of the variation in employee engagement is affected by the independent variable (management support – career expectation factor)

Table 4.18 Summary of Regression Analysis for Management support (Career Expectation)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.860 ^a	.739	.738	.3389
a. Predictors: (Constant), Management support				

4.9.3. Linear Regression Analysis for Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation) and Employee Engagement

A positive R value of 0.809 (Table 4.19) concludes that there is a positive relationship between the two variables, being determined to succeed as a career expectation factor and employee engagement, and the linear relationship is fairly significant as it is close to 1. R square value denotes that, 65.4% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (being determined to succeed in career – career expectation factor).

Table 4.19 Summary of Regression Analysis for Being Determined to Succeed in a career (career expectation)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.809 ^a	.654	.653	.451
a. Predictors: (Constant), Being determined to succeed in a career				

4.9.4. Linear Regression Analysis for Receiving Good pay (Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

0.779 of positive R-value (Table 4.20) indicates that there is a fairly significant positive relationship between the two variables. That is, as the increase in employees' salary, employee engagement increases. R square value denotes that, 64% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (receiving a good pay – career aspiration factor)

Table 4.20 Summary of Regression Analysis for Receiving Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.799 ^a	.639	.638	.562
a. Predictors: (Constant), Receiving good pay				

4.9.5. Linear Regression Analysis for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

The R and R square for achieving upward promotion as a career aspiration factor and employee engagement is 0.774 and 60% respectively (Table 4.21). 0.774 positive R value concludes that there is a positive relationship between the two variables, but the linear relationship is fairly moderate. R square value denotes that, 60% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (achieving upward promotion in career – career aspiration factor)

Table 4.21 Summary of Regression Analysis for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.774 ^a	.599	.597	.496
a. Predictors: (Constant), Achieving upward promotion				

4.9.6. Linear Regression Analysis for Opportunities for Self-Development Career Aspiration) and Employee Engagement

0.871 of positive R-value indicates (illustrated in Table 4.22) that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables. That is, as the opportunities for self-development increases, employee engagement increases. R square value denotes that, 76% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (opportunities for self-development – career aspiration factor).

Table 4.22 Summary of Regression Analysis for Opportunities for Self-Development (Career Aspiration)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.871 ^a	.759	.758	.464
a. Predictors: (Constant), Opportunities for self-development				

4.10 Descriptive Statistics

4.10.1 Receiving a Good Pay as a Career Expectation Factor of Gen Z

Based on the analyzed responses for the question “I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment” as illustrated in Table 4.23; 64% of the sample has agreed to that they will look out for a competitive salary when they consider their first employment. While 85% majority of the sample also agreed to “I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry”. This implies that having a good competitive salary for their initial employment, will be a positive factor which will make Gen Z happy, and they will be motivated to bring in the best they could to the organization.

The central tendency statistics as depicted in Table 4.24 shows the total distribution and means a score of the variables “I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment” and “I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry”. The overall mean score for these variables stands at 3.85 and 4.30 respectively. For both variables’ median

stands at 4 while the mode is 4 and 5 respectively. Therefore, the majority of responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has agreed to the statements raised in these questions. The skewness obtained for these statements is -.351 and -1.054, which depicts that the sample distribution is negatively skewed. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix B.

Table 4.23 Descriptive Statistics for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: <i>Receiving good pay</i>	I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment		I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%
Disagree	39	10.4%	15	4%
Neutral	97	25.8%	40	10.6%
Agree	123	32.7%	137	36.4%
Strongly Agree	117	31.1%	184	48.9%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.24 Central Tendency Statistics for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: <i>Receiving good pay</i>	I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment	I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry
Mean	3.85	4.30
Median	4.00	4.00
Mode	4	5
Std. Deviation	0.981	0.816
Skewness	-.351	-1.054
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126	0.126
Kurtosis	-.949	0.540
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251	.251

4.10.2 Management Support as a Career Expectation Factor of Gen Z

Table 4.25 illustrates the responses gathered for the two questions: “It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes

on my strengths” and “I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support” on management support category. 90% of the sample has claimed that it would be a great opportunity for a newcomer to working under a supportive manager who is supportive in capitalizing their strengths. Also, 88.8% majority of the sample also agreed that they would feel very much engaged in their career in the presence of a supportive manager.

The central tendency statistics as depicted in Table 4.26 shows the total distribution and means a score of the two variables. The overall mean score for these variables stands at 4.62 and 4.53 respectively with a median of 5 for both. Overall, the majority of responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has strongly agreed to both the statements raised in these questions having mode stands at 5 for both the statements. The sample distribution tends to be negatively skewed the skewness derived for these statements are -2.027 and -1.350, which depicts that the sample distribution is negatively skewed. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix B.

Table 4.25 Descriptive Statistics for Management Support (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: Management Support	It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths.		I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%
Disagree	11	2.9%	4	1.1%
Neutral	25	6.6%	38	10.1%
Agree	59	15.7%	90	23.9%
Strongly Agree	281	74.7%	244	64.9%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.26 Central Tendency Statistics for Management Support (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: <i>Management Support</i>	It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths.	I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support
Mean	4.62	4.53
Median	5.00	5.00
Mode	5	5
Std. Deviation	0.738	0.719
Skewness	-2.027	-1.350
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126	0.126
Kurtosis	3.434	0.921
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251	.251

4.10.3 Being Determined to Succeed as a Career Expectation Factor of Gen Z

From literature, it is identified that Gen Z is hard working and willing to take challenges to have a satisfying career. The two instruments “I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career” and “I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up-to-date for a satisfying career” were asked. Table 4.27 illustrates the overall responses gathered for the two questions. 91% of the sample has claimed that they would work hard and accept challenging work to succeed in a career. Also, 90% of the sample also agreed that would like to constantly learn new technologies and keep their knowledge up-to-date.

The central tendency statistics as depicted in Table 4.28 shows the total distribution and means a score of the two aforementioned variables. The overall mean score for these variables stands at 4.279 and 4.319 respectively with a median and mode of 5 for both the instruments. Therefore, the majority of responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has strongly agreed to both the statements raised in these questions as the mode stands at 5 for both the statements. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix B.

Table 4.27 Descriptive Statistics for Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: <i>Being determined to succeed</i>	I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career		I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up- to-date for a satisfying career	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	5	1.3%	1	0.3%
Disagree	8	2.1%	10	2.7%
Neutral	20	5.3%	27	7.2%
Agree	93	24.7%	100	26.6%
Strongly Agree	250	66.5%	238	63.3%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.28 Central Tendency Statistics for Being Determined to Succeed (Career Expectation)

Career Expectation Factor: <i>Being determined to succeed</i>	I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career		I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up- to-date for a satisfying career	
Mean	4.279		4.319	
Median	5		5	
Mode	5		5	
Std. Deviation	0.803		0.766	
Skewness	-2.117		-1.629	
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126		0.126	
Kurtosis	5.014		2.475	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251		.251	

4.10.4 Receiving a Good Pay as a Career Aspiration Factor of Gen Z

Based on the analyzed responses for the question “I will be happy to stay and keep working for a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry for the respective job position” as illustrated in Table 4.29; 83% of the sample has agreed that they will look out for a competitive salary for the respective job position if they are to stay in the same company. While 85.1% majority of the sample also agreed to “Receiving a good pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization”. This implies that Gen Z would consider receiving a competitive salary as an important career aspiration factor in the long run.

The central tendency statistics as depicted in Table 4.30 shows the total distribution and means a score of the above-mentioned variables. The overall mean score for these variables stands at 4.33 and 4.25 respectively. For both the variables, mode stands at 5 while the median remains at 4 and 5 respectively. Therefore, the majority of responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has agreed to the statements raised in these questions. The sample distribution tends to be negatively skewed the skewness derived for these statements are -1.173 and -1.421, which depicts that the sample distribution is negatively skewed. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix C.

Table 4.29 Descriptive Statistics for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: Receiving good pay	I will be happy to stay and keep working for a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry for the respective job position		Receiving good pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.3%	6	1.6%
Disagree	16	4.3%	21	5.6%
Neutral	47	12.5%	29	7.7%
Agree	107	28.5%	136	36.2%
Strongly Agree	205	54.5%	184	48.9%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.30 Central Tendency Statistics for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: Receiving good pay	I will be happy to stay and keep working for a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry for the respective job position	Receiving good pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization
Mean	4.33	4.25
Median	5.00	4.00
Mode	5	5
Std. Deviation	0.871	0.934
Skewness	-1.173	-1.421
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126	0.126
Kurtosis	0.645	1.757
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251	.251

4.10.5 Achieving Upward Promotion as a Career Aspiration Factor of Gen Z

To capture Gen Z perception towards this factor, the two instruments “Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better” and “I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happens fairly” were asked. Table 4.31 illustrates the overall responses gathered for the two questions. 88.5% of the sample has claimed that having clear visibility on the promotion path is essential to keep them motivated and to do their job better. Also, 89% of the sample also agreed that would consider opportunities elsewhere in the absence of fair promotions in the organization.

The central tendency statistics as depicted in Table 4.32 shows the total distribution and mean score of the two aforementioned variables. The overall mean score for these variables stands at 4.47 and 4.55 respectively with a median and mode of 5. Therefore, the majority of responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has strongly agreed to both the statements raised in these questions as the mode stands at 5 for both the statements. The skewness obtained for these statements is -1.666 and -1.830, which depicts that the sample distribution is negatively skewed. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix C.

Table 4.31 Descriptive Statistics for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: Achieving upward promotion	Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, the hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better		I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happen fairly	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	2	0.5%	1	0.3%
Disagree	12	3.2%	11	2.9%
Neutral	29	7.7 %	29	7.7%
Agree	96	25.5%	73	19.4%
Strongly Agree	237	63%	262	69.7%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.32 – Table of Central Tendency Statistics for Achieving Upward Promotion (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: <i>Achieving upward promotion</i>	Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, the hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better	I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happen fairly
Mean	4.47	4.55
Median	5.0	5.0
Mode	5	5
Std. Deviation	0.813	0.781
Skewness	-1.666	-1.830
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126	0.126
Kurtosis	2.563	2.886
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251	.251

4.10.6 Opportunities for Self-Development as a Career Expectation Factor of Gen Z

Table 4.20 illustrates the responses gathered for the two questions: “If I am to stay in the organization for the long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employee’s self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies” and “Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run”. 90% of the sample has claimed that they would consider the self-development opportunities that prevail in the organization if they are to work in the long term. Also, 89% majority of the sample also agreed that they would feel very much engaged in their career in the presence of continuous self-development opportunities in the organization. The sample distribution tends to be negatively skewed the skewness derived for these statements are -2.135 and -2.059, which depicts that the sample distribution is negatively skewed. Histograms derived for these statements are included in Appendix C.

As depicted in Table 4.26, the overall mean score for both the variables stands at 4.42 for the aforementioned statements with a median of 5. Overall, the majority of

responses from the sample based on the Likert scale has strongly agreed to both the statements raised in these questions as the mode stands at 5 for both the statements.

Table 4.33 Descriptive Statistics for Opportunities for Self-Development (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: <i>Opportunities for self-development</i>	If I am to stay in the organization for the long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employee's self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies		Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	16	4.3%	13	3.5%
Disagree	9	2.4%	7	1.9%
Neutral	14	3.7%	22	5.9%
Agree	100	26.6%	101	26.9%
Strongly Agree	237	63%	233	62%
Total	376	100%	376	100%

Table 4.34 Central Tendency Statistics for Opportunities for Self-Development (Career Aspiration)

Career Aspiration Factor: <i>Opportunities for self-development</i>	If I am to stay in the organization for the long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employee's self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies		Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run	
Mean	4.42		4.42	
Median	5.00		5.00	
Mode	5		5	
Std. Deviation	0.987		0.943	
Skewness	-2.135		-2.059	
Std. Error of Skewness	0.126		0.126	
Kurtosis	4.328		4.296	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.251		.251	

4.11 Findings on Personal Traits of Gen Z

This section aims to analyze the Gen Z personal traits and their perception towards workplace aspects.

4.11.1 Gen Z Perception towards Enjoying the Work at Workplace

As illustrated in Figure 4.6, 95% of the majority of Gen Z prefer to enjoy the work they do at the workplace, while only 5% remained neutral for this instrument. Enjoy of work for Gen Z typically the flexibility that prevails within the workplace, autonomy in the work they attend to, and the management supports personal and works development.

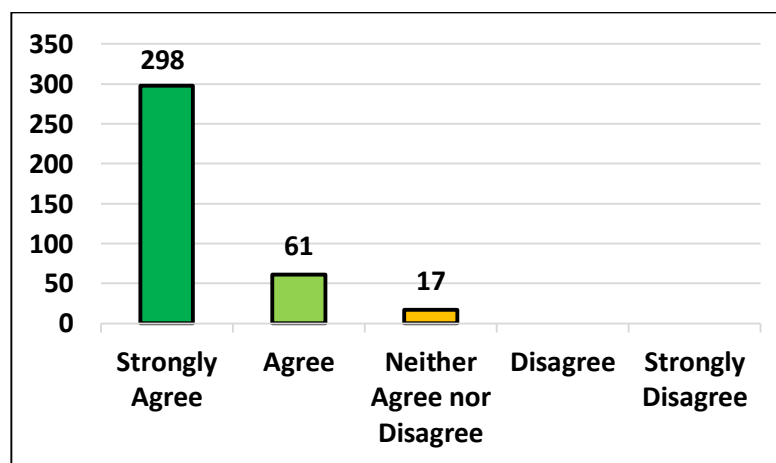


Figure 4.6 Perception towards Enjoyment of Work

4.11.2 Gen Z Perception towards Fairness and Equity in Treatment of Employees at Workplace

Of the sample population, as depicted in Figure 4.7, 90% of Gen Z expect that at their workplace, employers treat all their employees with fairness and equity in every aspect. 8% of the population remained neither agreeing nor disagreeing to this statement, while 2% disagreed to this fact. Thus, in general, we could conclude that Gen Z is a generation which accepts and understand that there are generational differences among the co-workers at the workplace, and such differences should be accommodated, and treated with fairness and equity among all employees of the organization.

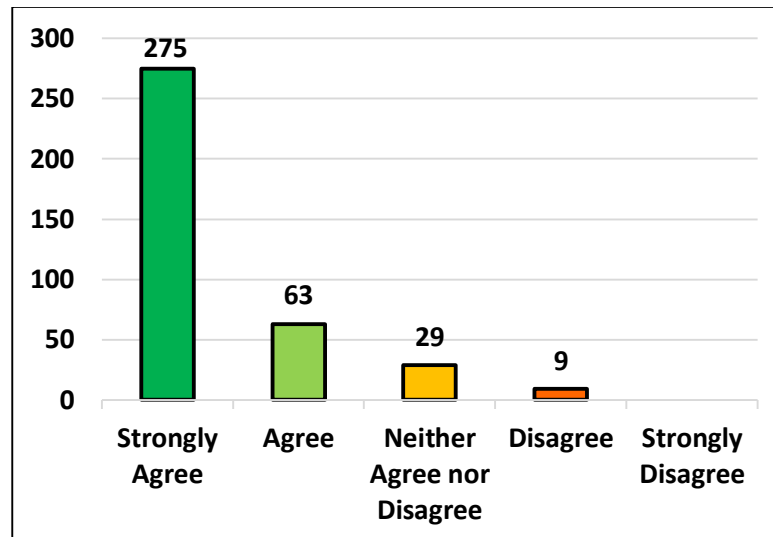


Figure 4.7 Perception towards Treatment of Employees with Fairness and Equity

4.11.3 Gen Z perception towards Equal Opportunities for Career Progression

As depicted in Figure 4.8, 91% of the sample population agreed to the fact that they expect equal opportunities within their workplace for their career progression, while 6% and 3% remained neutral and disagreed respectively to this statement. That is, irrespective of their job role, job designation, and skill level, Gen Z would be happy to work in a workplace where equal opportunities exist for their career growth.

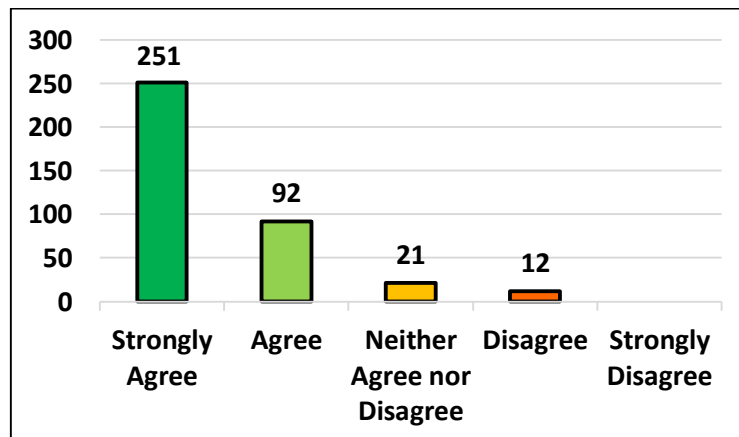


Figure 4.8 Perception towards Equal Opportunities for Career Progression

4.11.4 Gen Z Perception towards Respecting the Differences among the People at Workplace

Of the sample population, as depicted in Figure 4.9, 86% of Gen Z claimed that they would respect the differences that exist among the people they work at their workplace. 9% of the population remained neither agreeing nor disagreeing to this statement, while 5% disagreed to this fact. Thus, in general, we could conclude that Gen Z is a generation which accepts and understand that there are generational differences among the co-workers at the workplace, and they respect such differences and work collaboratively.

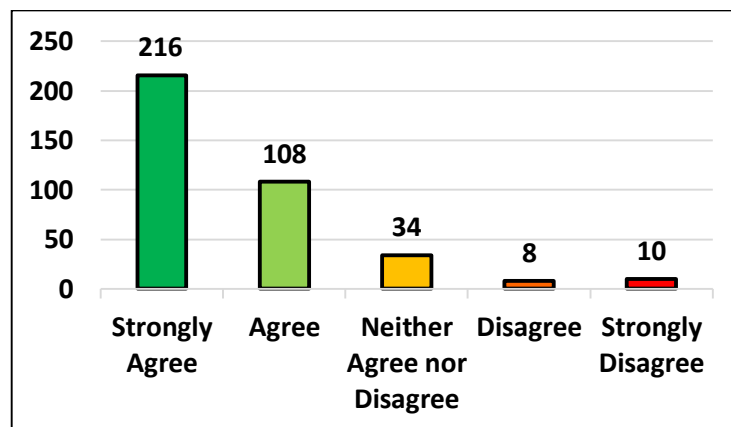


Figure 4.9 Perception towards Respecting Differences in People at Work

4.11.5 Gen Z Perception towards Preference of Direct Communication

According to Figure 4.10, 81% of Gen prefer face to face communication as a communication style. 11% of the population remained neither agreeing nor disagreeing to this statement, while 8% disagreed to this fact. Therefore, as managers

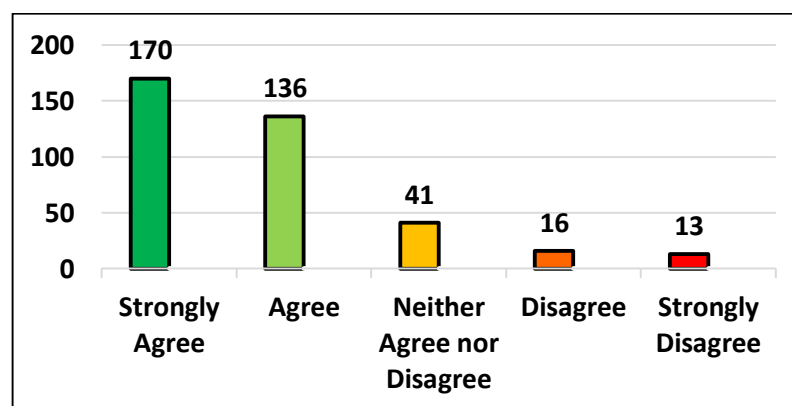


Figure 4.10 Perception towards Preference of Direct Communication

4.11.6 Gen Z Perception towards Continuous Learning and Self-Development

As illustrated in Figure 4.11, 97% of Gen Z claimed that they would like to constantly learn and keep growing themselves. This implies that Gen Z is a generation where who are constant learners in the changing world of technology. This result also aligns with the hypothesis H6_A: There is a positive relationship between opportunities for self-development in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees.

Thus, as Gen Z are constant learners, they seek for the self-development space that is available in the workplace if they are to work in the same organization for a longer term, and more importantly, they would feel engaged, be motivated to such a workplace where there are ample space and opportunities in the workplace which helps Gen Z's to achieve this trait.

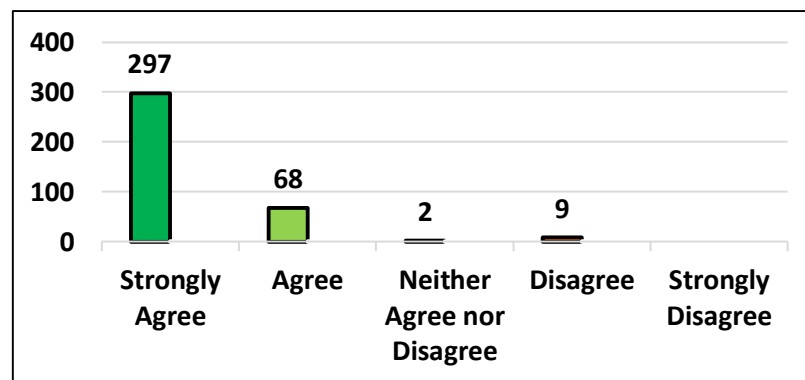


Figure 4.11 Perception towards Preference to Keep Learning and Grow

4.11.7 Gen Z perception towards Being Mentored and Taught

Figure 4.12 represents that 88% of the sample population prefer to be mentored and taught, while 8% remained neither agreeing nor disagreeing to this and 4% disagreed. This personal trait also aligned with the aforementioned hypothesis H2_A. There is a positive relationship between management support and employee engagement of Gen Z employees. Gen Z prefer to get feedback from their managers, immediate supervisors on the tasks assigned and they would feel engaged to work in such a work environment that this support is exhibited.

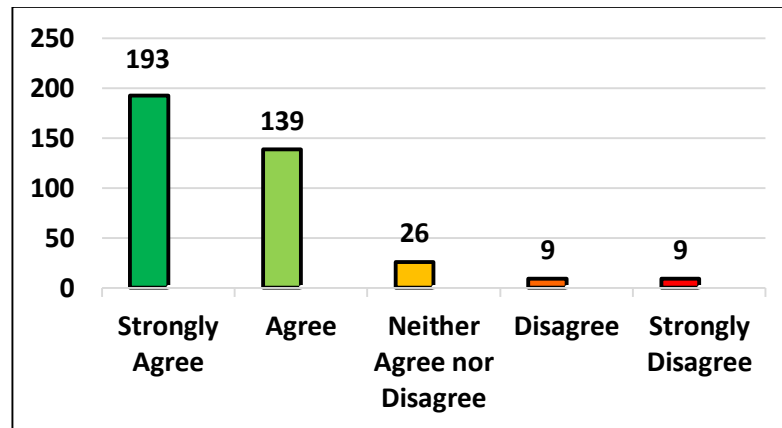


Figure 4.12 Perception towards Preference for Being Mentored and Taught

4.11.8 Gen Z Perception towards the Most Valued Characteristic in Reporting Manager / Leader

In order to understand Gen Z perception towards the single characteristics that they value most in their reporting manager, the below responses were gathered. As represented in Figure 4.13, 44% of the majority of Gen Z from the sample claimed that “Mentoring Ability” is the most preferred characteristics while “Honesty/Integrity”, “Vision” and “Passion” scored the subsequent highest preference in the given order. This also confirms and align with the findings observed for the question “I prefer to be mentored and taught”. Gen Z is a generation which prefers to be mentored and taught, and it is understood that they expect their leader/managers to have the mentoring capability to support their need for mentoring. The findings were further narrowed to identify if there is any gender-based perception difference towards this statement. The results are depicted in Figure 4.14 for female and male responses respectively and it can be concluded that there is no gender base difference observed with regards to this statement.

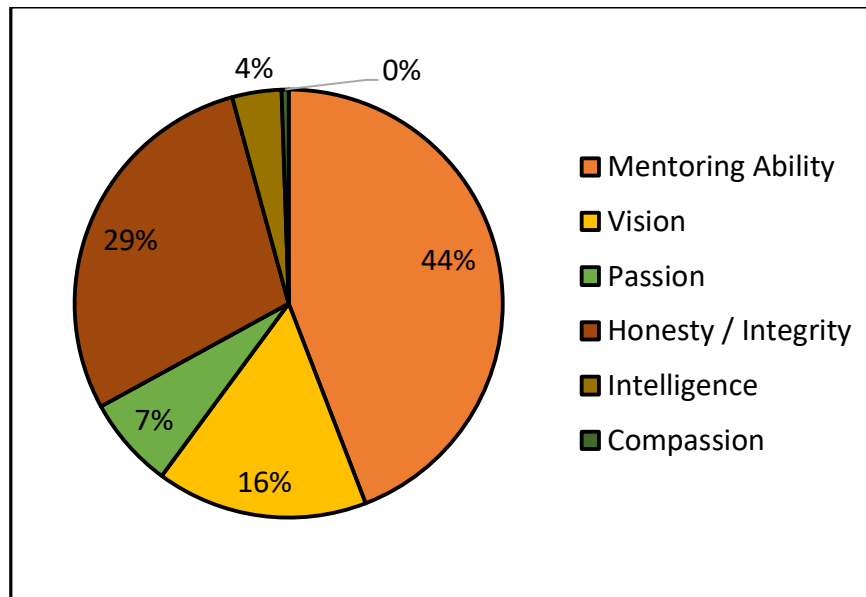


Figure 4.13 Most Valued Single Characteristic of Reporting Manager

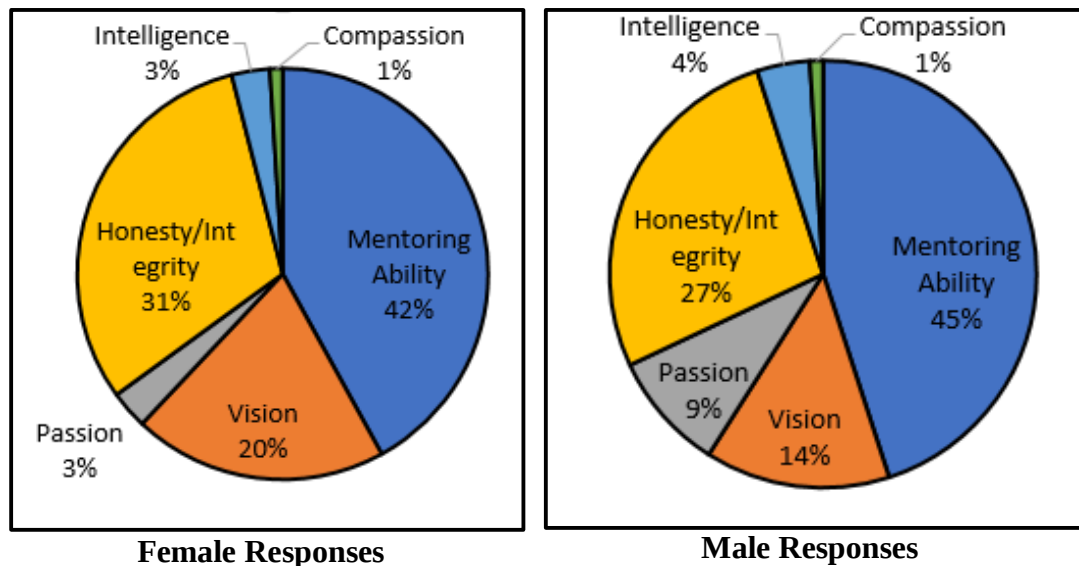


Figure 4.14 Distribution for Most Valued Single Characteristic of Reporting Manager (Gender Based)

4.11.9 Gen Z Future Career Expectation on 5 Years after Graduation

Apart from the findings of career expectation and aspiration factors of Gen Z, it is equally important to understand where Gen Z expect to be in their career after 5 years upon graduation. As depicted in Figure 4.15, 41% of majority population from the sample claimed that they would expect to be in a managing position in a corporate environment, while 22% responded that they would be working their way up the

corporate ladder but not yet in a managerial position. 28% claimed that they would start their own business/or be an entrepreneur and 9% would pursue in higher education. Therefore, these results indicate that Gen Z likes to climb up the ladder in the organization to reach a managerial position within 5 years. This also aligns with the hypothesis, H5_A. There is a positive relationship between achieving upward promotion in long term career aspiration and employee engagement of Gen Z employees. As Gen Z would prefer to reach a managerial position in a very short period of time, the presence of a clear promotion path in the organization is vital. Thus, if they do not see a clear promotion path, they would not hesitate to look for opportunities elsewhere. When analyzed this to see any gender-based differences exists for this instrument as depicted in Figure 4.16, irrespective of gender the majority of male and female sample claimed that they would be Managing or supervising employees in a corporate environment (38% and 47% respectively) while 19% of male sample and 26% of female sample responded that they would be working their up the corporate ladder but not yet in a managerial position. The significant difference that can be observed is that 33% of male responded that they would like to start their own business while only 11% of female responded in favor of this. However, 16% of the female sample responded that they would pursue in higher education while only 10% of the male has the interest to pursue in higher education.

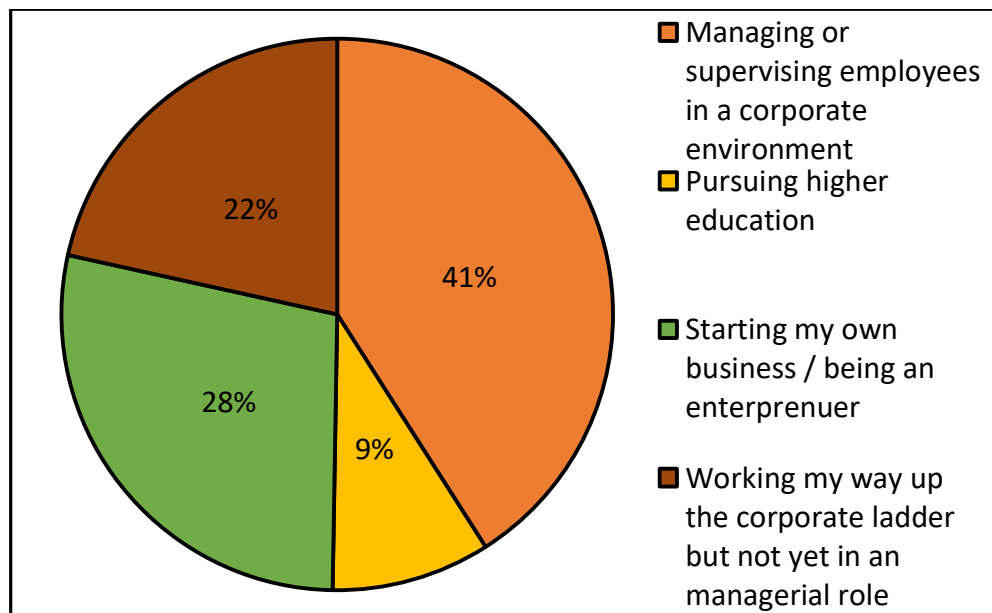


Figure 4.15 Career Expectation from Five Years Graduation

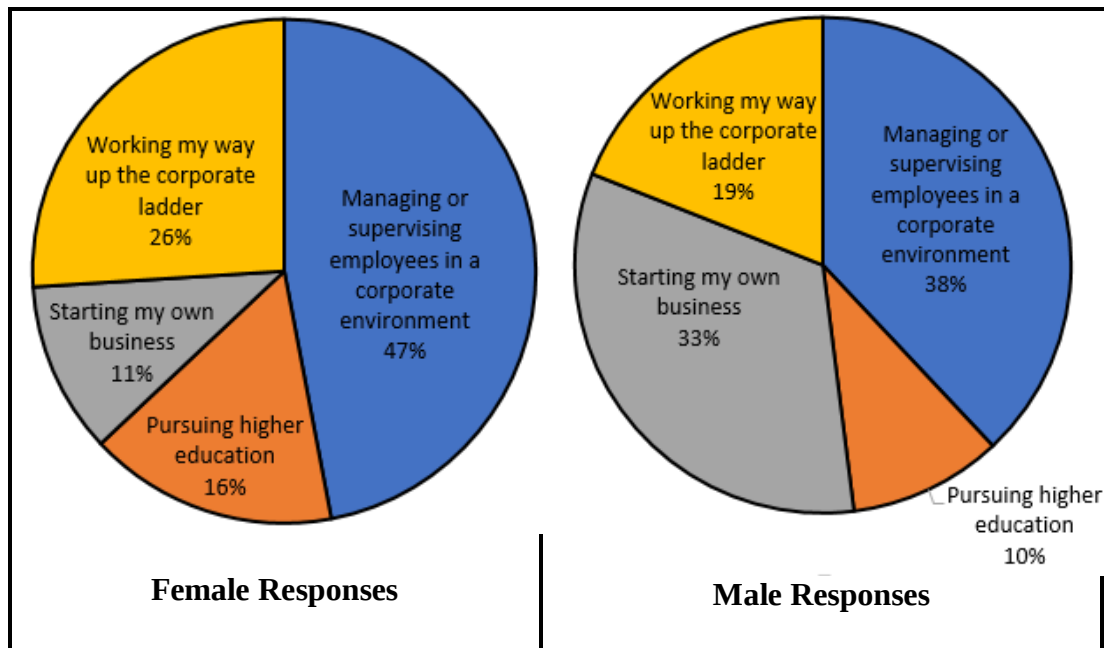


Figure 4.16 Career Expectation from Five Years Graduation (Gender Based)

4.12 Gender Based Perception for Career Expectation and Aspiration of Gen Z

4.12.1 Perception towards Receiving Good Pay for the Initial Employment

According to the responses as displayed in Figure 4.17, 69% of male population from the sample consider receiving a good pay for their initial employment, while only 53% of the female population claim that receiving good pay will be something important for them to consider and 40% of female from the sample remained neutral (neither agreeing nor disagreeing). This depicts that, there is a moderate change in perception of this factor based on the gender of Gen Z. That is, the preference of receiving good pay for their initial employment in male is more than the preference of the female population.

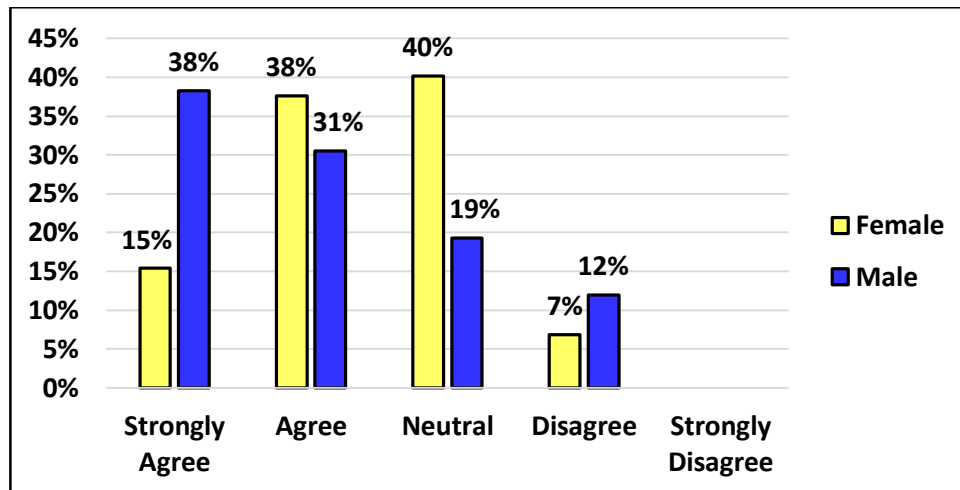


Figure 4.17 Gender Based Distribution for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Expectation)

4.12.2 Perception towards Management Support in the Initial Employment

In the question raised “I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked”, 87% of the male in the sample test population, agreed to this statement, and 93% of the female population also agreed to the same. Therefore, as illustrated in Figure 4.18 there is no significant difference in management support and employee engagement is perceived based on the gender of Gen Z.

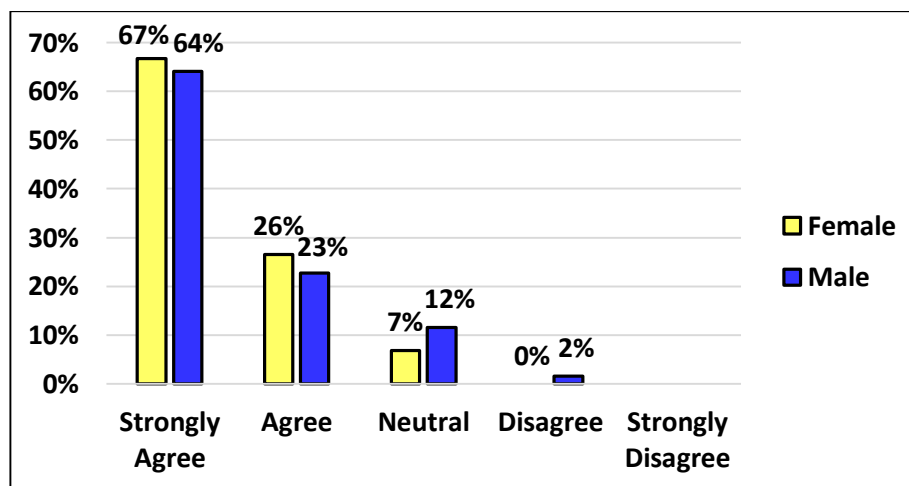


Figure 4.18 Gender Based Distribution for Management Support (Career Expectation)

4.12.3 Perception towards Willingness to Work Hard

In order to capture the willingness to work hard and to accept any challenge, the question “I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career” was asked. From the responses as depicted in Figure 4.19, 91% of male and 90% of the female population responded in favor of this. None of the sample “Strongly Disagreed” to this statement. This implies that irrespective of Gender, the majority of Gen Z generally are self-determined and are willing to work hard to have better prospects in career. This further strengthens the Hypothesis H3_A, that by giving challenging work, they are happy and are motivated to be engaged.

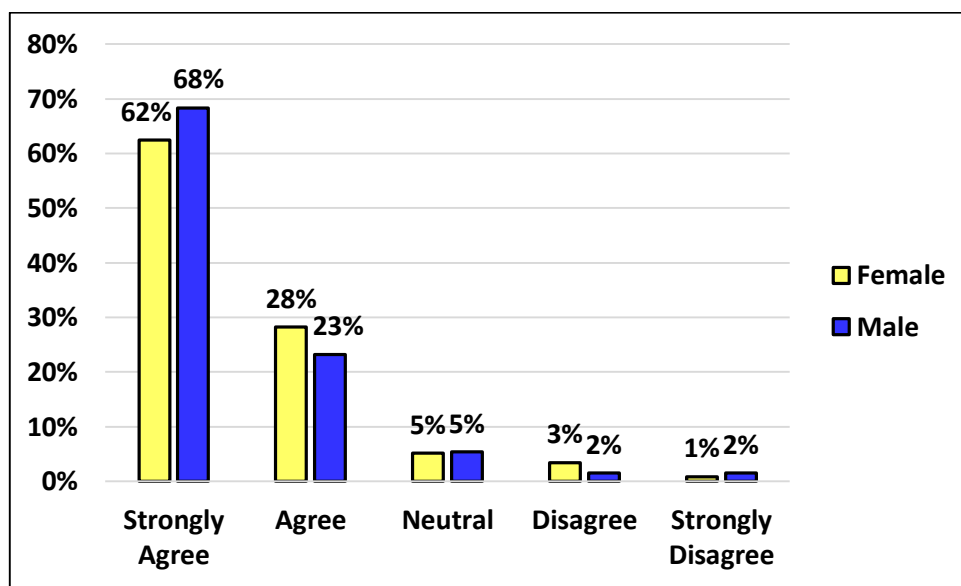


Figure 4.19 Gender Based Distribution for Willingness to Work Hard (Career Expectation)

4.12.4 Perception towards Looking for Opportunities Elsewhere in the Absence of Clear Promotion Path

To analyze Gen Z perception towards the presence of clear promotion path as a career aspiration factor, the question “I would tend to look out for other options elsewhere if there is no clear promotion path in the organization” was raised. As depicted in Figure 4.20, 85% of the female population and 87% of the male population has agreed to this statement. While 12% of the female and male population remained neither agreeing nor disagreeing to this statement. These outcomes reveal that irrespective of gender, Gen Z consider having a clear promotion path with a defined hierarchy of job titles

along with required skills is something that would consider if they are to remain in the same organization for a longer term.

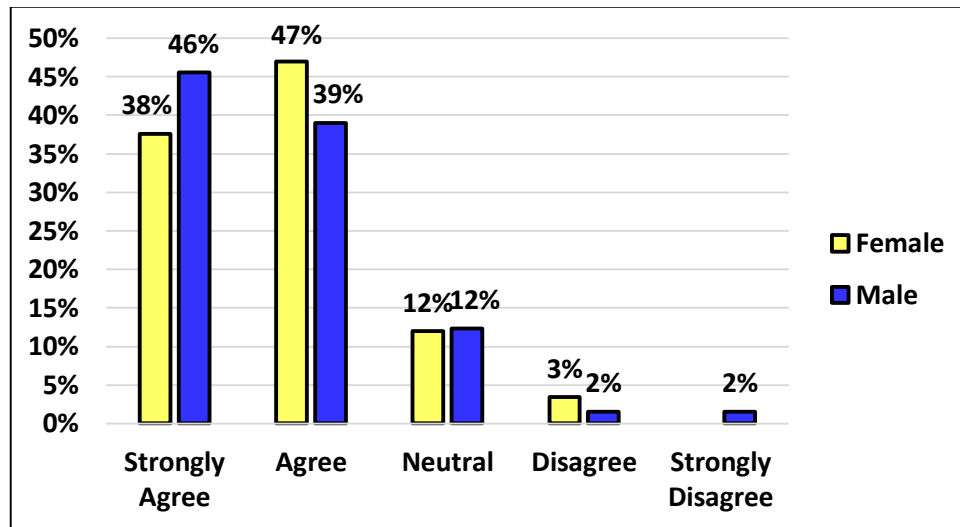


Figure 4.20 Gender Based Distribution for Looking for Other Opportunities in the Absence of Clear Promotion Path

4.12.5 Perception towards Opportunities for Self-development and Opt to Look for Opportunities Elsewhere

In order to capture whether is a change in perception towards opportunities for self-development and opt to look for opportunities elsewhere based on gender, the question “If I am to stay in the organization for a long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employees self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies” was asked from the sample. As depicted in Figure 4.21, 88% of male and 93% of the female population responded in favor of this. This implies that irrespective of Gender, the majority of Gen Z generally look out of the prevailing self-development opportunities within the organization. In the absence of such opportunities and training programs, Gen Z would not hesitate to look out for other opportunities elsewhere.

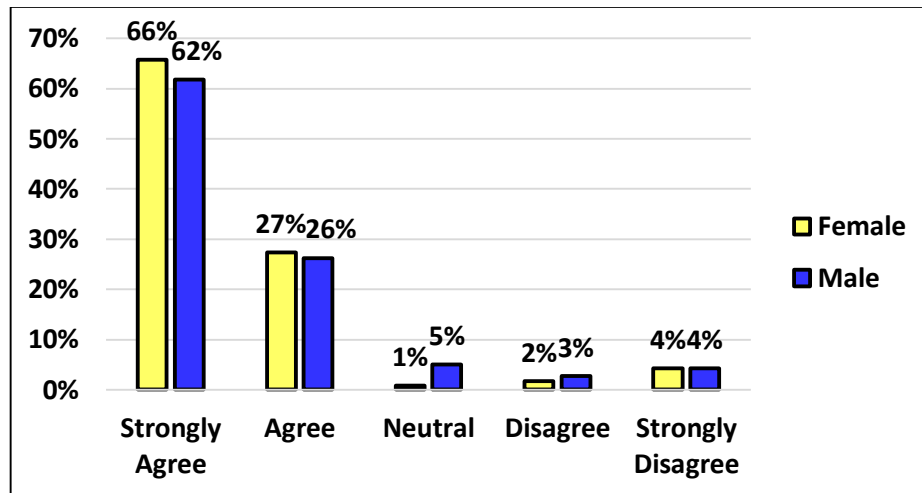


Figure 4.21 Gender-based Distribution for Opportunities for Self-Development

4.12.6 Perception towards Receiving a Good Pay as a Motivation Factor for Long Term Career Aspiration

According to the responses as displayed in Figure 4.22, 90% of male population from the sample consider receiving a good pay as a career aspiration factor, while 83% of the female population claim that receiving a good pay will be something important for them to consider. This depicts that unlike receiving a good pay as a career expectation factor, there is no change in perception of this factor based on the gender of Gen Z.

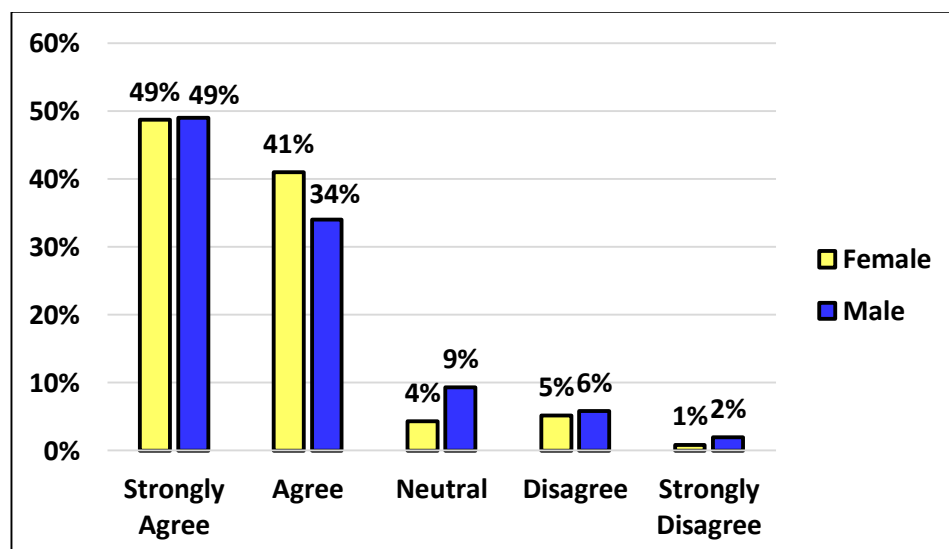


Figure 4.22 Gender Based Distribution for Receiving a Good Pay (Career Aspiration)

4.13 Gen Z Top 5 Priorities in Seeking their First Employment

As given in Figure 4.23, it was observed that the top 3 priorities that Gen Z rated which they would look out for their initial employment were: ‘Having supportive managers’, ‘Being determined to succeed’, and ‘Receiving a good pay’. While the 4th and 5th priorities were ‘Having a good work-life balance’ and ‘Opportunities for self-development’ respectively. Thus, it can be claimed that Gen Z also looks out work-life balance and opportunities for self-development, when they tend to look for their initial career; and as managers or organization, these aspects should also be given importance while recruiting, engaging, retaining Gen Z.

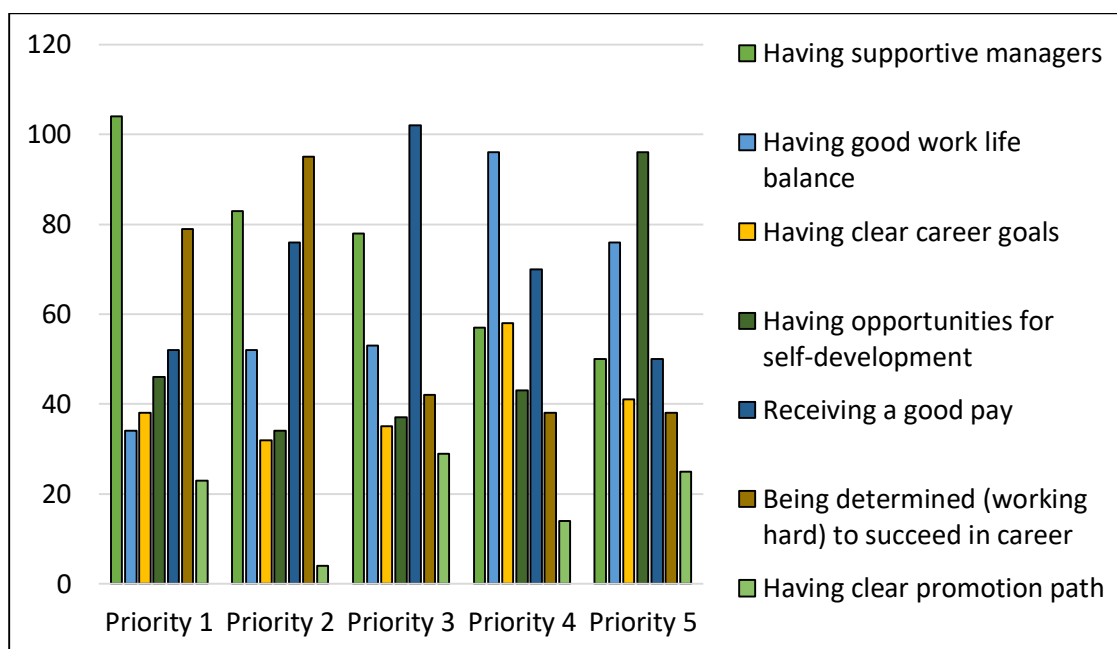


Figure 4.23 Gen Z Top 5 Priorities in Seeking their First Employment

4.14 Summary

4.14.1 Findings from the Hypothesis

The aim of this study was to identify the most influential career expectation and aspiration factors of Gen Z in Sri Lankan software industry and its relevance to employee engagement. Based on the Pearson Correlation Coefficient obtained for career expectation factors, ‘Management Support’, and ‘Being Determined to Succeed’ showed significant correlation with employee engagement, while ‘Receiving Good Pay’ showed a moderate correlation. The career aspiration factors: ‘Receiving a

Good Pay’, ‘Achieving Upward Promotion’, and ‘Opportunities for Self-Development’ showed a strong positive correlation with employee engagement. The empirical findings gathered from this study align and seem to be consistent with previous research studies in the same area.

4.14.2 Findings from the Gen Z Personal Traits in Career

Gen Z personal traits toward career and workplace attributes were studied from 9 different dimensions, namely: Enjoying the work at the workplace, Fairness and equity in treatment of employees at workplace, Equal opportunities for career progression, Respecting the differences among the people at workplace, preference of face to face communication, Preference for continuous learning and self-development, preference towards being mentored and taught, Single Characteristic Values Most in Reporting Manager / Leader, and Future Career Expectation on 5 Years After Graduation. Based on the results obtained from the study, the majority of the sample responded in favor of these traits and it can be claimed that the results observed are consistent with previous studies done for Gen Z.

4.14.3 Findings on Gender-Based Perception of Career Expectation and Aspiration of Gen Z

As secondary findings, the data obtained from the sample was analyzed to identify whether there are any gender-based perception changes in view of Career Expectation and Career Aspiration. This was analyzed from 6 dimensions: Receiving a Good Pay for the Initial Employment, Management Support and Employee Engagement in the Initial Employment, Willingness to Work Hard, Looking for Opportunities Elsewhere in the Absence of Clear Promotion Path, Opportunities for Self-development and Opt to Look for Opportunities Elsewhere, Receiving a Good Pay as a Motivation Factor for Long Term Career Aspiration. It was noted that more males in Gen Z lookout for good pay when they seek their first employment than females. However, there was no gender-based perception change in considering good pay for their long term career aspiration. Apart from that, there were no significant gender-based perception changes in the career expectation aspiration factors considered in the context of this study.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter provides a discussion on the research outcomes, recommendations, limitations and future works that are derived based on the analysis of statistical data gathered from the present study.

The main aim of this research study was to empirically examine the career expectations and aspirations of Gen Z in the Sri Lankan software industry. These career expectations and aspiration factors were scoped from three different perspectives; namely; “Management Approach and Culture”, “Employee Terms and Conditions”, and “Personal Career Development”. The main focus of this study was to identify the career expectation and aspiration factors of Gen Z with relation to employee engagement. This study was also focused on identifying personal traits related to career perception of Gen Z and providing recommendations for managers to assist them with feasible recommendations in engaging Gen Z workforce.

The conceptual research framework depicted in Figure 3.2 was instrumental in analyzing the main focus of the present study; that is to identify the career expectation and aspiration factors of Gen Z with relation to employee engagement. Based on the conceptual research framework, six hypotheses were formulated with which survey questions were developed to capture the Gen Z perception towards career expectations and aspirations. The analysis of statistical data gathered from the responses was done via Cronbach’s alpha, Pearson’s correlation analysis, regression analysis, and descriptive statistics.

5.2 Research Outcomes on Demographic Analysis

The main demographic characteristic of the sample is that Gen Z with work exposure in a software firm is only considered for the detailed analysis. The majority of the participated sample belong to males while only 31% belonged to the female population (Figure 4.3). The majority of responses were received from Gen Z undergraduates studying in Colombo and suburbs. This is mainly due to the reason that, convenience sampling was used for the present study.

5.3 Research Outcomes on Career Expectation Factors

5.3.1 Relationship between Receiving a Good Pay and Employee Engagement

In the present study according to Hypothesis 1, as depicted in Table 4.11, it is observed that *Receiving a Good Pay* as an initial career expectation has a positive impact on employee engagement. As highlighted in Table 4.17, 46.4% variation in employee engagement is explained by receiving a good pay as in initial career expectation factor. This finding of a positive relationship with receiving a good pay as a career expectation factor and employee engagement is consistent with previous researches (Iorgulescu, 2016) and (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018), which reinforce that these variables are associated.

5.3.2 Relationship between Management Support and Employee Engagement

The instruments used in the second hypothesis; *Management Support* as an initial career expectation factor has a strong impact on employee engagement as per the results depicted in Table 4.12 from the present study. The variation between these two instruments obtained from Linear Regression model as depicted in Table 4.18, shows that 73.9 % of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable – *Management Support*. This finding is also consistent with previous empirical studies (Half, 2015), (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017), and (Iorgulescu, 2016) carried out in Gen Z in identifying their initial career expectation factors. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to align their management support for Gen Z in a customized fashion. In other words, the more the Gen Z feels that their immediate managers are supportive, that is, who coaches, and mentors them, gives them constant feedback while clearing out their doubts, the more Gen Z would feel engaged, and give a maximum commitment to the organization.

5.3.3 Relationship between Being Determined to Succeed and Employee Engagement

Gen Z, perception towards ‘Being determined to succeed in a career’ as an initial career expectation factor and its relation to employee engagement is tested from Hypothesis 3. In the present study, these two instruments are positively and significantly correlated with the value of 0.809 as illustrated in Table 4.13. And as per the linear regression analysis, as summarized in Table 4.19, 65.4% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (being determined to succeed in career – career expectation factor). These findings are also consistent with the findings from previous research studies by (Half, 2015) and (Montana & Petit, 2008). More importantly, this strengthens the findings of a previous study done in Sri Lanka for Gen Z in Sri Lankan Telecommunication industry where the findings revealed that giving more challenging work to Gen Z would yield in increasing their job satisfaction (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018). Therefore, these outcomes claim that the more challenging work given to Gen Z with the correct direction, input, and frequent feedback from supervisors or immediate managers, the more they would feel engaged, and will be determined to succeed their career by working hard in their initial career for better prospects in career establishment.

5.4 Research Outcomes on Career Aspiration Factors

5.4.1 Relationship between Receiving a Good Pay and Employee Engagement

Most of the researchers have considered Generous Pay as an important career expectation and as well as a career aspiration factor for Generation Y and Gen Z (Iorgulescu, 2016), (Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010), (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Hypothesis 4 is related to finding the relationship between ‘Receiving good pay’ as a career aspiration factor and employee engagement of Gen Z. As per the results obtained and depicted in Table 4.14, there is a positive strong correlation between the two variables. And as per the regression analysis carried for this two variable as displayed in Table 4.20, 64% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable (receiving good pay – career aspiration factor). This finding is consistent with previous studies conducted around the globe including

in Sri Lankan context (Iorgulescu, 2016), (Half, 2015), and (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018). Another important factor to consider is that Hypothesis 1 and 4 tested the same instrument – ‘Receiving a good pay’ as a career expectation factor (Hypothesis 1) and as a career aspiration factor (Hypothesis 4) with its impact to employee engagement, and as per the results achieved, the correlation between ‘Receiving good pay’ as a career aspiration factor (with a value of .799 as mentioned in Table 4.14) is significantly positively correlated than ‘Receiving a good pay’ as a career expectation factor (with a value of .681 as mentioned in Table 4.1). This implies, Gen Z consider Receiving a good pay more significantly as a career aspiration factor, and if organizations are to retain this Gen Z workforce, the need to consider in giving them a competitive salary in par with the industry as this will increase their job satisfaction (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018) which will ultimately increase the employee engagement.

5.4.2 Relationship between Achieving Upward Promotion and Employee Engagement

‘Achieving upward promotions’ and its relationship to employee engagement was measured and tested from Hypothesis 5. As depicted in Table 4.15, these two variables are positively and strongly correlated. In other words, Gen Z would be engaged more in their work, when there is a visibility of a clear promotion path and where promotions happen fairly. The results from linear regression analysis showed that 60% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the independent variable – achieving upward promotion in a career (Table 4.21). These results are also in harmony with previous studies carried out in Gen Z (Iorgulescu, 2016), (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018), and (Half, 2015) where opportunities for career advancement or growth in a company is viewed as the most influential factor to retain the Gen Z workforce in an organization.

5.4.3 Relationship between Opportunities for Self-Development and Employee Engagement

According to the findings of the present study as depicted in Table 4.16, there is a significant positive (with a correlation value of 0.871) relationship between ‘Opportunities for self-development’ as a career aspiration factor and employee engagement of Gen Z. As per the linear regression analysis, 76% of the variation in employee engagement is explained by the opportunities for self-development as displayed in Table 4.22. These findings also contribute and strengthen the existing research findings (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017) and (Iorgulescu, 2016). Thus, organizations should create a culture where there are ample opportunities for Gen Z to learn, explore, and try new things to enhance their career skills, to retain and keep Gen Z workforce engaged to reap the organizational objectives. Gen Z professionals will consider personal growth potential as the first priority when it comes to making career decisions (Half, 2015), therefore, failing to fulfill their needs for self-development activities will result in losing Gen Z workforce, as they would not hesitate to look for opportunities elsewhere which match their needs.

Based on the findings of the primary focus of the present study, the revised conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 5.1 which is in accordance with previous studies carried out in a similar context. The revised conceptual remains the same with all the factors depicted in the initial conceptual framework (Figure 3.2) with the only difference observed in the strength of the relationships between the variables under the study. From the three career expectation factors, Receiving good pay is the only factor that remains with a moderate relationship with employee engagement when compared to the other factors of this research. This outcome is in par even with previous studies, as although Gen Z expects a generous pay for their first employment, their considerations towards the career opportunities (that is supportive management with whom they can learn and get feedback; challenging work to keep them motivated and engaged) within the organization is far more important for them to step and build up their career. All the other career expectation factors: Management support and Being determined to succeed, and career aspiration factors: Receiving good pay, Achieving

upward promotion, and Opportunities for self-development depicted a strong relationship with employee engagement.

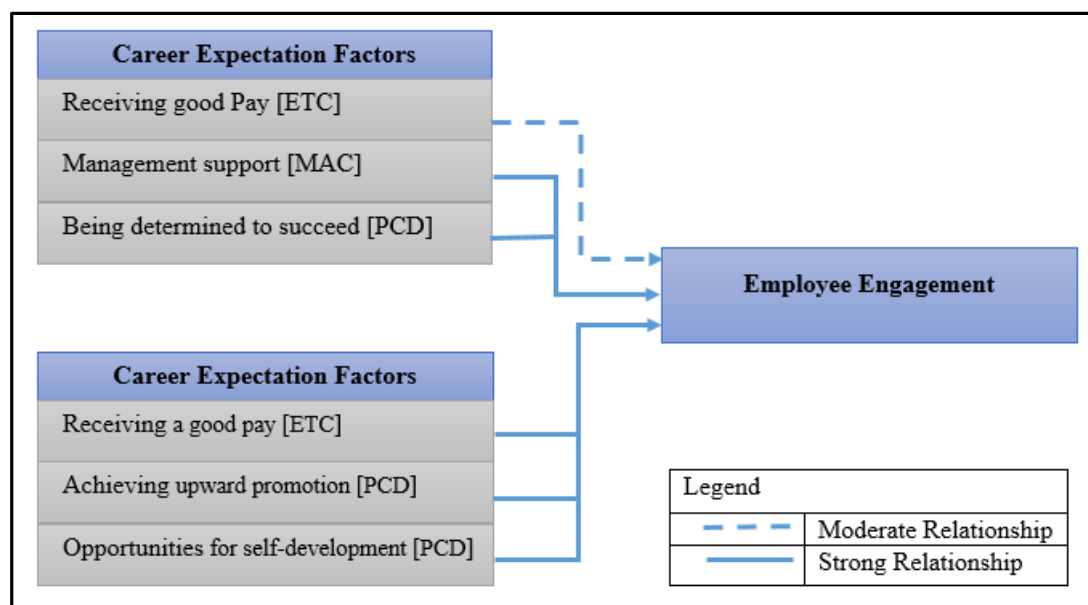


Figure 5.1 Revised Conceptual Framework for Career Expectations and Aspirations of Gen Z

5.5 Research Outcomes on Gen Z Personal Traits related to Career Perception

The secondary focus of this research was to identify the personal traits related to career perception of Gen Z which was analyzed from 9 different instruments.

As represented in Figure 4.6, 95% of the majority of Gen Z prefer to enjoy the work. This is consistent with previous studies on Gen Z (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017), (Arar & Yuksel, 2015), (Montana & Petit, 2008) where Gen Z typically prefer the flexibility that prevails within the workplace, autonomy in the work they attend to and the management support for personal and work development.

90% of Gen Z of the present study (Figure 4.7), expect that at their workplace, employers treat all their employees with fairness and equity in every aspect. Most importantly Gen Z accepts the fact that there are generational differences that exist in the workplace, and all should be treated fairly and equally. This fact also aligns with the findings from (Half, 2015).

Gen Z perception of equal opportunities for career progression is another instrument measured with regards to personal traits. 91% of Gen Z (Figure 4.8) of the present study. Like most of the previous researches, Gen Z views career progression as one of the main priorities in selecting a full-time employer (Half, 2015). Therefore, to recruit, retain and engage Gen Z, organizations should create a workplace culture where equal opportunities exist for their career growth irrespective of their job role, job designation, and skill level. This fact further reinforces the findings of previous (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2017), (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018), and (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017).

86% of Gen Z as illustrated in Figure 4.9 agreed that they would respect the differences among the people at the workplace. This “The ability to work in a diverse cultural environment” is a positive factor for organizations as they know for a fact that Gen Z accepts such differences among different generations, and that they could seamlessly be deployed to work collaboratively in a team with other generational cohorts. This finding also aligns with a previous study (Iorgulescu, 2016).

As illustrated in Figure 4.10, 81% of Gen Z of the present study prefer face to face communication. Gen Z would prefer their managers and co-workers to communicate with them in person. Organizations can leverage one-on-ones and direct communication with Gen Z co-workers as they prefer quality face-to-face communication as they feel motivated by such communication style (Half, 2015).

Gen Z perception on continuous learning and self-development instrument resulted in 97% of Gen Z in the present study (Figure 4.11). This is one of the most common stereotypes of Gen Z as outlined by many research studies – they want to constantly learn and grow (Iorgulescu, 2016), (Half, 2015), (Tewari & Bhattacharyya, 2017), and by having such opportunities Gen Z would feel satisfied (Kodithuwakku, Mazuki, & Karuthan, 2018) with which they would effectively be engaged in achieving organization goals.

Majority of Gen Z in the present study as depicted in Figure 4.12 prefer to be mentored and taught. Gen Z is used to be mentored and taught and they expect constant and

frequent feedback (Half, 2015). This fact is further strengthened as 44% (Figure 4.13) of the majority of Gen Z of the present study considers “Mentoring Ability” as the single characteristic they value most in their reporting manager/leader followed by “Honesty and Integrity”. These findings are slightly contrary with the previous study done by Robert Half (2015) where “Mentoring Ability” ranked the second highest while “Honesty and Integrity” stood as the most valued single characteristic that Gen Z value in their reporting manager. But this finding in the context of this research aligns with the second hypothesis as depicted in Table 4.12, where Gen Z claimed that having supportive leads or managers is highly correlated with employee engagement. It was also found that there is no gender-based perception toward this attribute as illustrated in Figure 4.14.

Gen Z future career expectation on 5 years after graduation is another instrument that was tested under the present study. Majority of Gen Z as depicted in Figure 4.15, claimed that they would be “Managing or supervising employees in a corporate environment” followed by “Starting my own business/being an entrepreneur”. These findings are also slightly in conflict with a previous study done where “Starting my own business/being an entrepreneur” ranked as the third position (Half, 2015). It was discovered that more male population preferred to be entrepreneurs than females, while more female population preferred to pursue high education (Figure 4.16)

5.6 Recommendations

One of the objectives of this study was to assist managers with feasible recommendations in engaging Gen Z workforce. The following recommendations are derived based on the research outcomes derived in Section 5.2 to Section 5.5 from the survey results and literature survey conducted and based on the researcher’s knowledge. The recommendations are categorized into the same groupings “Employee Terms and Conditions” (ETC), “Management Approach and Culture” (MAC), “Personal Career Development” (PCD), and “Personal Values” (PV) that was considered in previous studies (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007) and (Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010) as this in-line with framework of the present study.

Employee Terms and Conditions:

- Organizations should attract Gen Z workforce for their initial employment with a generous pay which is on par with the software industry of Sri Lanka. Giving them a sense of feeling that they are paid on par with the industry gives them a feeling that they are being looked after well which in return constructively affect their engagement.
- To retain the existing Gen Z workforce, it is more important to offer a competitive salary along with other benefits which are on par with the industry for the respective designation, job role, and experience. The more this is achieved, the more the Gen Z workforce would feel engaged and strive to contribute towards organizational goals.

Management Approach and Culture:

- Unlike another Generational workforce, there is a strong need for Management Support for Gen Z. Therefore, organizations should develop a culture which makes their leaders more supportive, managers or immediate leads to be more approachable, managers to be perfect with mentoring ability while portraying honesty and integrity values, and to implement people-oriented leadership practices.
- Managers should give frequent feedback, either constructive or suggestive that helps the development of Gen Z without waiting for traditional periodic performance appraisals which happen once or twice a year. Having continuous and constant feedback would make feel Gen Z workforce that they are regularly being monitored, mentored, and being looked after that they are directed in the correct path.
- As Gen Z workforce accept to be mentored, create opportunities for cross-generation mentoring: Reverse Mentoring (Meister & Willyerd) programs can be accommodated. Reverse mentoring refers to pairing a Gen Z with a senior Generation, for example, Gen X or Baby Boomers and sharing the mentorship where Gen Z mentors the older generation in achieving certain outcomes with new technologies, the older generation could give an insight to the work aspects of old mentees. Thus, relationships are built among different

generations, where collaboration is coherently achieved while gaining an understating to respect different diversities among different generations.

- Organizations should develop communication culture where direct face to face communication is promoted, with frequent one-on-one with Gen Z workforce
- Gen Z workforce prefers to enjoy the work with autonomy, and flexibility in their work or work schedules. Therefore, managers should give the freedom and flexibility to Gen Z workforce understanding their generational characteristics while being less micromanaging. By showing them, that they are trusted and offering flexibility, they could be engaged effectively.
- Provide work-life balance having flexible schedules and allowing to remote work when necessary

Personal Career Development:

- Gen Z by nature is willing to take any challenge to have a satisfying career. As Gen Z is also a generation, who prefers multi-tasking and diversified work, managers or leads role in Gen Z workforce task assignment plays a crucial role. They should have a clear understanding of individual capacities, capabilities, needs and wants (i.e. preference in their work) of Gen Z so that tasks could be aligned to accomplish organization goals while motivating individual needs. A job which is challenging to Gen Z will make them more satisfied with their job which in turn increase their engagement in organizational activities.
- Having a clear promotion path along with the skill matrix required for each job designation will help to increase the visibility and transparency of promotion paths that exist among the organization. Having more career growth opportunities will be a strong determinant for Gen Z to stay in the organization for the long term.
- Organizations should adopt customized training programs which align with Gen Z needs to enrich their self-development.

5.7 Research Limitations and Future Work

This research was limited to 3 Career Expectation and Aspiration factors, among 24 factors from the initial framework from previous studies (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007) and (Maxwell, Ogden, & Broadbridge, 2010). Therefore, further studies can be conducted on other factors and their relationship to employee engagement. Also, although the survey related to this study was passed to all state and majority of private universities, majority responses received were mainly from universities in Colombo district. Therefore, future work can consider having a broader nation-wide sample.

5.8 Conclusion

The research problem of the present study “What are Career Expectations and Aspirations of Gen Z and its relation to employee engagement in Sri Lankan Software Industry?” was intended to be answered from three research objectives:

- To explore the career expectations and aspirations factors influencing the employee engagement-of Gen Z in Sri Lankan software industry

Based on a thorough study of previous studies the most influential career expectation (Receiving a good pay, Management support, Being determined to succeed) and aspiration factors (Receiving a good pay, Achieving upward promotion, Opportunities for self-development) influencing the employee engagement of Gen Z applicable to the current context of the study was chosen with utmost diligence. The research framework was formulated based on the identified factors and through a pre-survey. Based on the research results, the factors and its relationship to employee engagement were identified as mentioned in Section 5.2 and 5.3 under Research Outcomes. Therefore, this research objective successfully achieved by the present study.

- To identify personal traits related to career perception of Gen Z

Personal traits generic to gen Z were which was identified from previous studies, was also tested in the present study under the current context. Based

on the analysis and interpretation of data, personal traits of Gen Z related to career perception of Gen Z were identified and consolidated in Section 5.4

- To assist managers with feasible recommendations in engaging Gen Z workforce

Based on the data analysis and interpretation of data several recommendations were made (Section 5.5) which would help managers to take feasible actions when engaging Gen Z workforce.

In summary, it is vital to find out what makes Gen Z feel engaged at work, as without knowing what they would prefer the most and their needs and priorities at work, as new a generation who enters the workforce, getting the best out of employees would be quite impossible for organizations. Becoming well known of the Gen Z workforce is essential to develop their engagement with which organization can reap the maximum benefits from their most valued asset. This highly engaged workforce will contribute to organizational growth in every aspect. Thus, this research has accomplished to gather the true opinion of Gen Z about their career expectation and aspiration prospects and its relationship to employee engagement which was able to fill a gap of a real need of the corporate world.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Career Expectations and Aspirations of Generation Z in Sri Lankan Software Industry

This survey is conducted as partial fulfillment of MBA-IT of the University of Moratuwa to gather information on career expectations and aspirations of Generation Z.

The main objective of this research is to explore the career expectations and aspirations factors influencing the employee engagement of Gen Z in Sri Lankan software industry

Highly appreciate for your contribution, time spent and for an honest opinion.

Thank you!

H.K.C. Nishani

Email: chamika.nishani.17@cse.mrt.ac.lk

***Required**

Demographic Information

1. Age * *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 26 years and above
- ☐ 24 - 25 years
- ☐ 22 - 23 years
- ☐ 21 years and below

2. Gender * *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

3. Stream of study for A/Ls * *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Mathematics Stream
- ☐ Biological Science Stream
- ☐ Commerce Stream
- ☐ Arts Stream

Other:

4. Current Institute of Higher Education* *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ University of Colombo School of Computing
- ☐ University of Peradeniya
- ☐ University of Sri Jayewardenepura
- ☐ University of Kelaniya
- ☐ University of Moratuwa
- ☐ University of Jaffna
- ☐ University of Ruhuna
- ☐ Eastern University
- ☐ South Eastern University
- ☐ Rajarata University
- ☐ Sabaragamuwa University
- ☐ Uva Wellassa University
- ☐ Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT)
- ☐ National Institute of Business Management (NIBM)
- ☐ National School of Business Management (NSBM)
- ☐ Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology (APIIT)
- ☐ Informatics Institute of Technology (IIT)
- ☐ Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)
- Other

5. Current year of study?* *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ First Year
- ☐ Second Year
- ☐ Third Year
- ☐ Fourth Year
- ☐ Not Applicable, as I am already graduated
- Other:

6. The degree program that I am following/followed is * *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Computer Science (CS)
- ☐ Information Technology (IT)
- ☐ Management Information Systems (MIS)

- ☐ Management Information Technology
- ☐ Software Engineering (SE)

7. My employment status as of now * *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ I am employed full time in a software firm in Sri Lanka
- ☐ I am employed part-time in a software firm in Sri Lanka
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ I am a full-time student, thus I have no employment exposure in any software firm in Sri Lanka
- ☐ I am a full-time student, but I have employment exposure in a software firm in Sri Lanka (e.g. Industrial Training)
- ☐ Currently, I am seeking for a job and I do have previous employment exposure in a software firm in Sri Lanka
- ☐ Currently, I am seeking for a job and I do NOT have employment exposure in a software firm in Sri Lanka

Other:

Career Expectation Factors

Career expectations can be defined as “real, reachable thoughts and career targets that individual wishes to gain” in your in initial employment

Employee Terms and Conditions

8. I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

9. I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

10. For my first job, If I get selected by two companies, I would definitely join and will be happy to work for the company which offers a good a pay over the other * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

Management Approach and Culture

11. It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths. * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

12. I will be determined to give my best effort at work when I have supportive managers, who often review my work and give constructive feedback and appreciate for good work * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

13. I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

- 14. I believe that it is essential to have managers who recognize strengths and weaknesses of his subordinates, and who openly discuss and provide feedback to overcome the weaknesses as well as to enhance the strengths to build up the career** * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

Personal Career Development

- 15. I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career** * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

- 16. I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up-to-date for a satisfying career** * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

- 17. What are your top 5 priorities when seeking your first employment following your graduation?** * *Mark only one oval per row.*

	Receiving Good Pay	Having Supportive Managers	Being Determined (working hard) to Succeed in Career	Having Clear Career Goals	Provision for Training	Having Opportunities for Self-development	Having Good Work-Life Balance	Having a Clear Promotion Path
Priority 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Priority 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Priority 3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Priority 4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Priority 5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Career Aspiration Factors

Career aspirations are the path that an individual would inspire to follow in the long-term

Employee Terms and Conditions

- 18. Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, the hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better *** *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

19. I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happen fairly * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

20. I would tend to look out for other options elsewhere if there is no clear promotion path in the organization *Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

21. I will be happy to stay and keep working for a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry for the respective job position * Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

22. Receiving good pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization *Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

Personal Career Development

23. If I am to stay in the organization for the long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevail in the organization for its employees self - development along with the ability to learn new technologies. **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

24. Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run. **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

25. I will be less likely to look out for new opportunities elsewhere if there are opportunities within the organization to improve my skills and knowledge. **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

Personal Traits in the Workplace

28. Which of the following best describe your personal belief towards below statements ** Mark only one oval per row.*

	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to enjoy the work I do at my workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

At my workplace, I expect all employees are treated with fairness and equity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I expect equal opportunities are offered by my employer for my career progression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At my workplace, I will respect differences in people I get to work with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer face to face communication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I want to keep learning and grow my self	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would prefer to be mentored and taught	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

27. Which of the following single characteristic do you most value in your reporting manager/leader? * Mark only one oval.

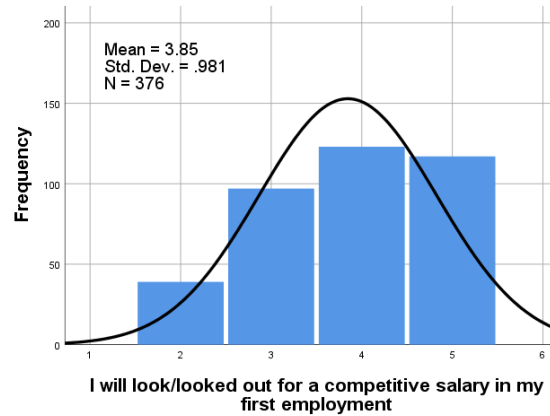
- ☐ Honesty/Integrity
- ☐ Mentoring Ability
- ☐ Passion
- ☐ Vision
- ☐ Compassion
- ☐ Intelligence

28. Which of the following best describes you where you expect to be in your career five years from your graduation? *Mark only one oval.

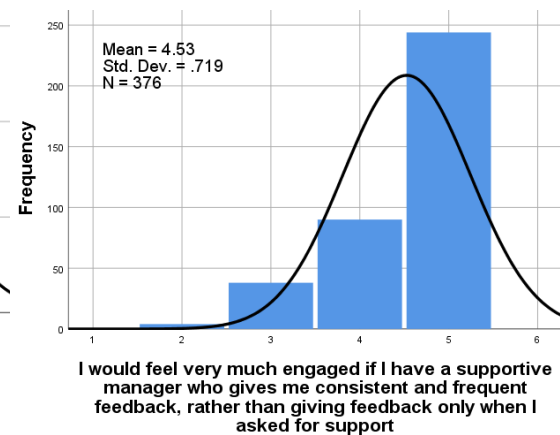
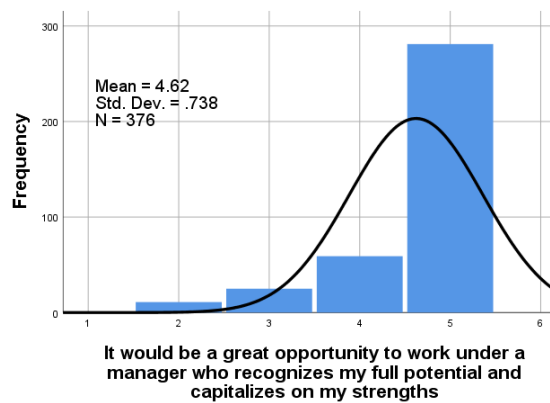
- ☐ Managing or supervising employees in a corporate environment
- ☐ Working my way up the corporate ladder but not yet in a managerial role
- ☐ Starting my own business / being an entrepreneur
- ☐ Pursuing higher education

APPENDIX B: CAREER EXPECTATION HISTOGRAMS

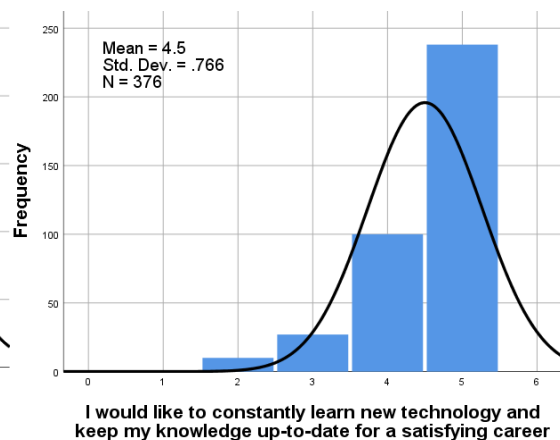
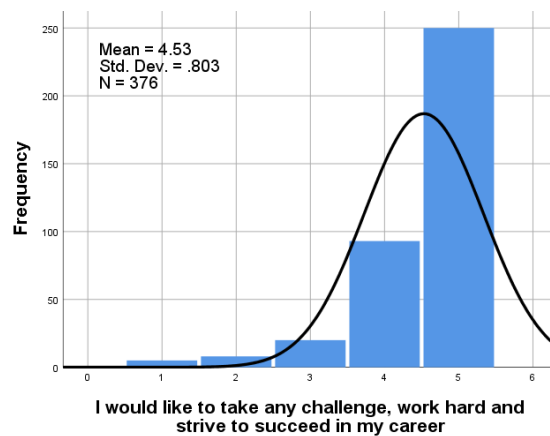
Career Expectation: Receiving good pay



Career Expectation: Management Support

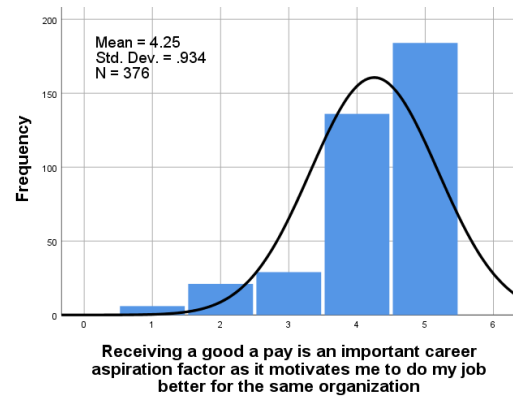
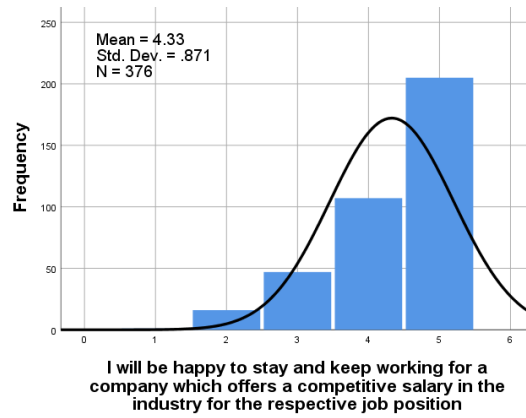


Career Expectation: Being determined to succeed

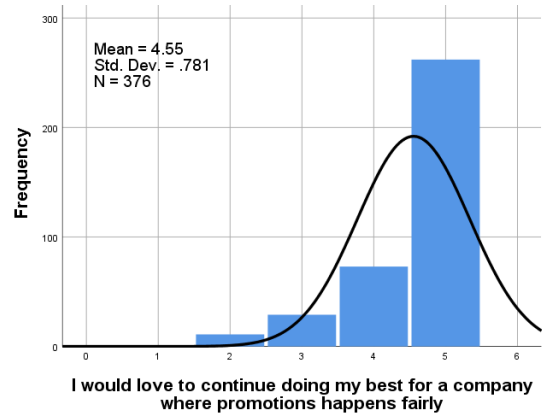
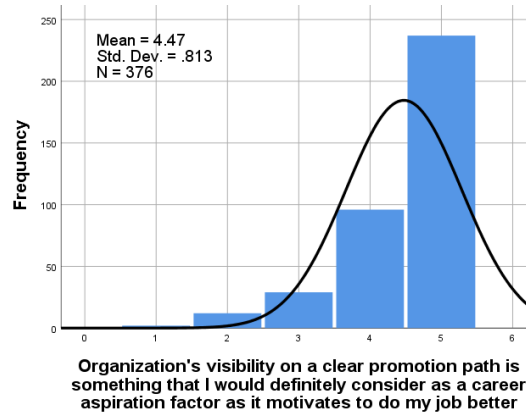


APPENDIX C: CAREER ASPIRATION HISTOGRAMS

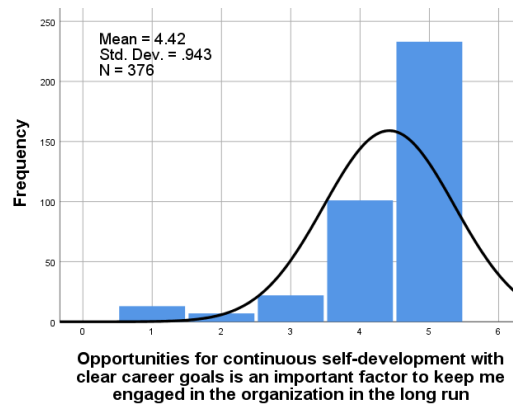
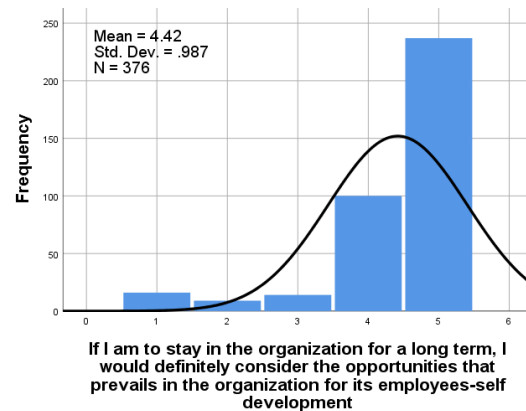
Career Aspiration: Receiving good pay



Career Aspiration: Achieving upward promotion



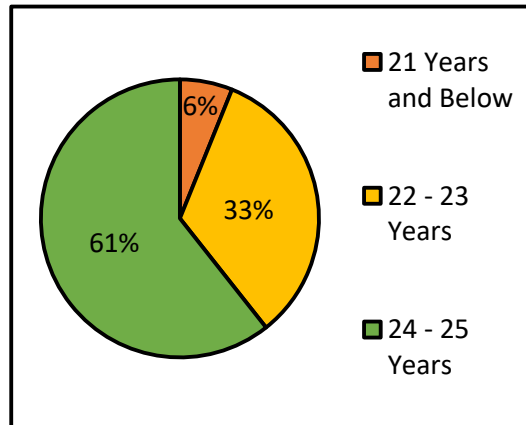
Career Aspiration: Opportunities for self-development



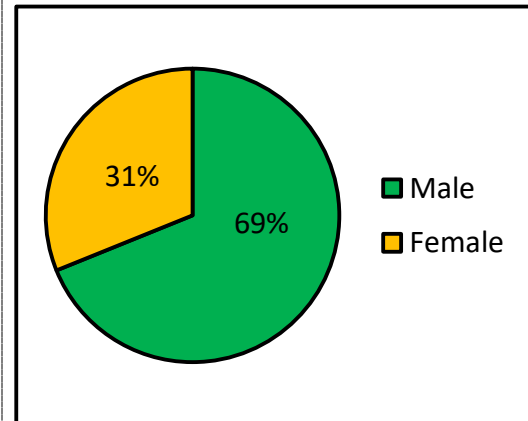
APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES

Demographic Factors

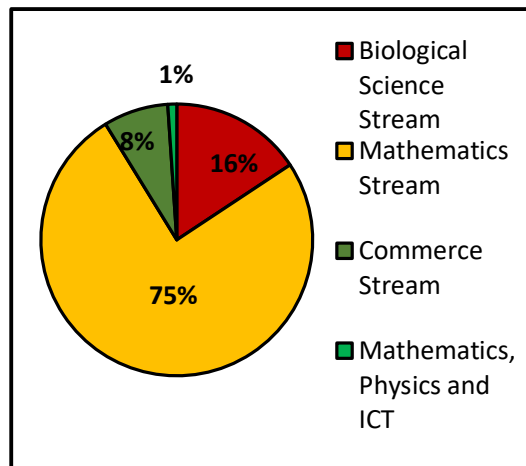
1. Age



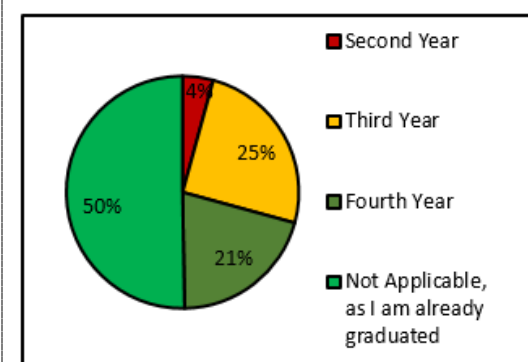
2. Gender



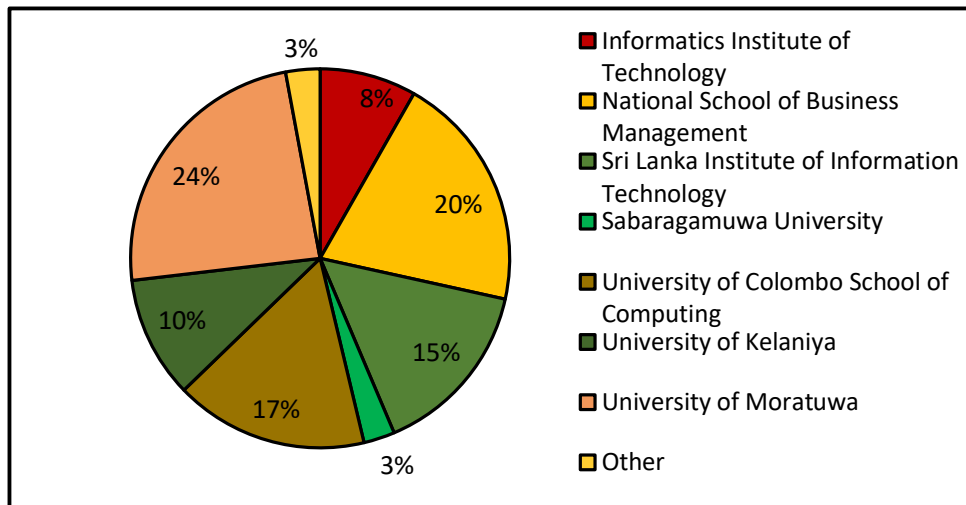
3. Stream of study for A/Ls



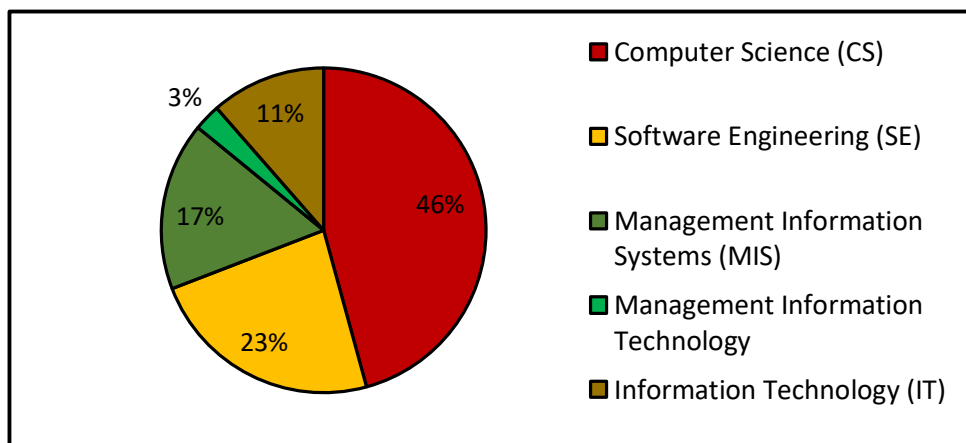
5. Current year of study



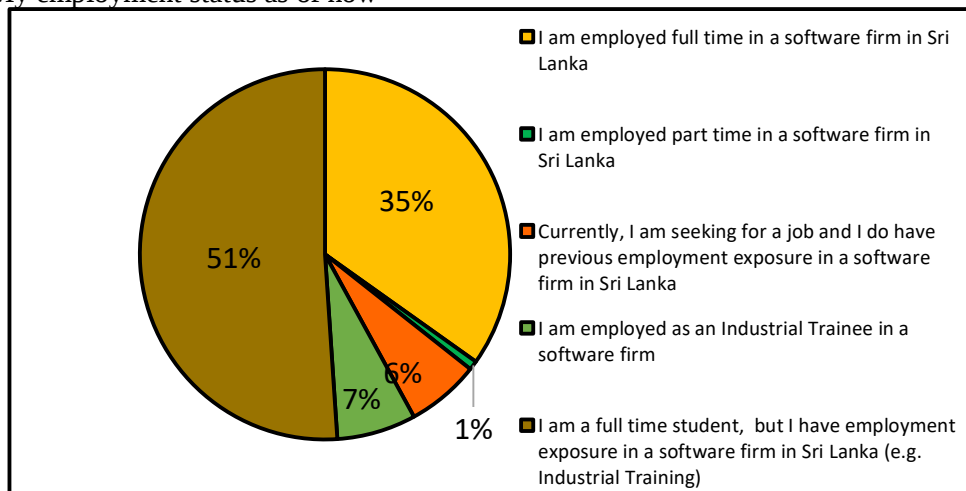
4. Institute of Higher Education



6. The degree program that I am following / followed is:

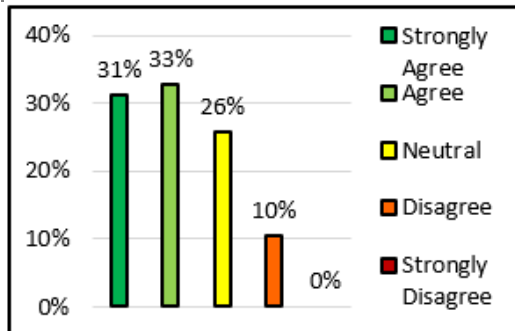


7. My employment status as of now

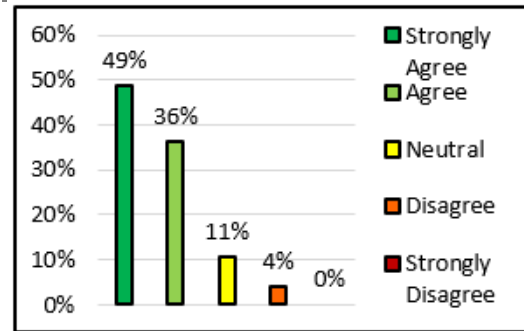


Career Expectation Factors

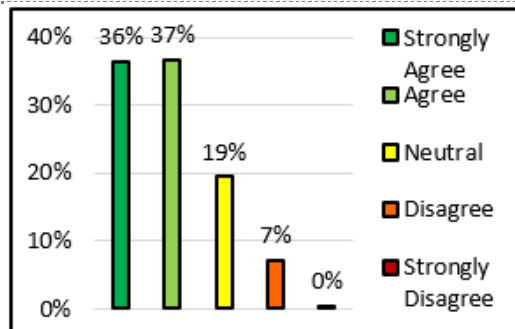
8. I will look/looked out for a competitive salary in my first employment



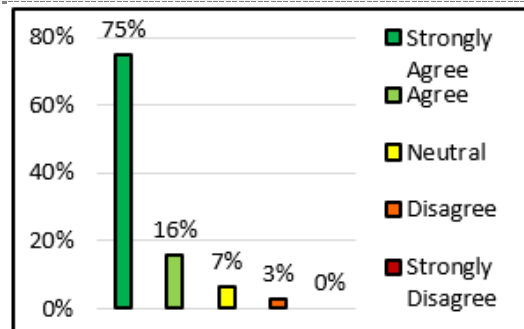
9. I will be happy to start and thrive my career with a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry



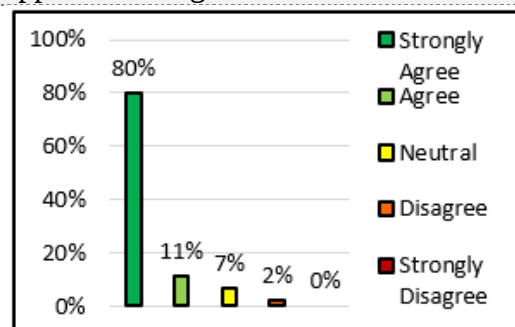
10. For my first job, If I get selected by two companies, I would definitely join and will be happy to work for the company which offers a good a pay over the other



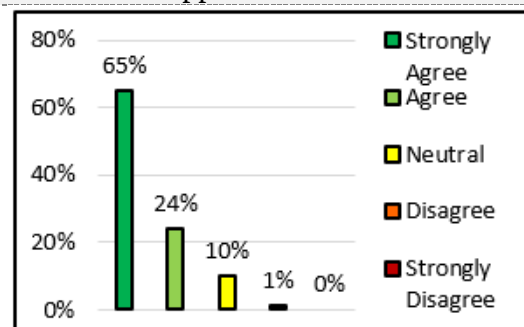
11. It would be a great opportunity to work under a manager who recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths



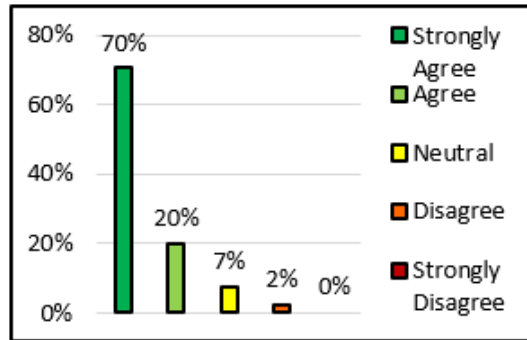
12. I will be determined to give my best effort at work when I have supportive managers, who often review my work and give constructive feedback and appreciate for good work



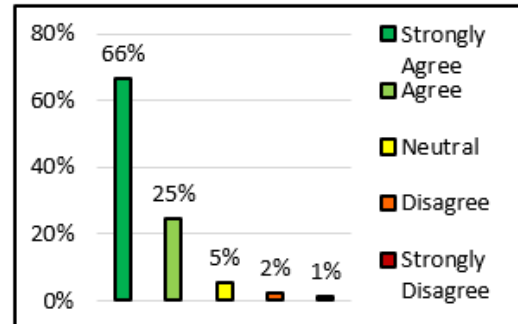
13. I would feel very much engaged if I have a supportive manager who gives me consistent and frequent feedback, rather than giving feedback only when I asked for support



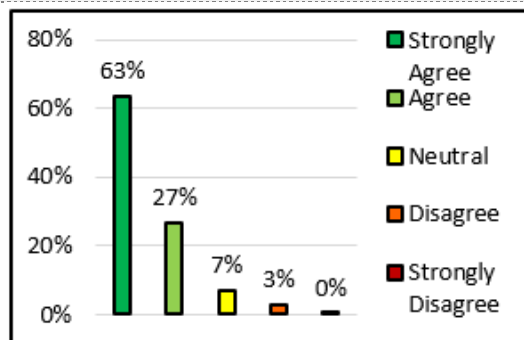
14. I believe that it is essential to have managers who recognize strengths and weaknesses of his subordinates, and who openly discuss and provide feedback to overcome the weaknesses as well as to enhance the strengths to build up the career



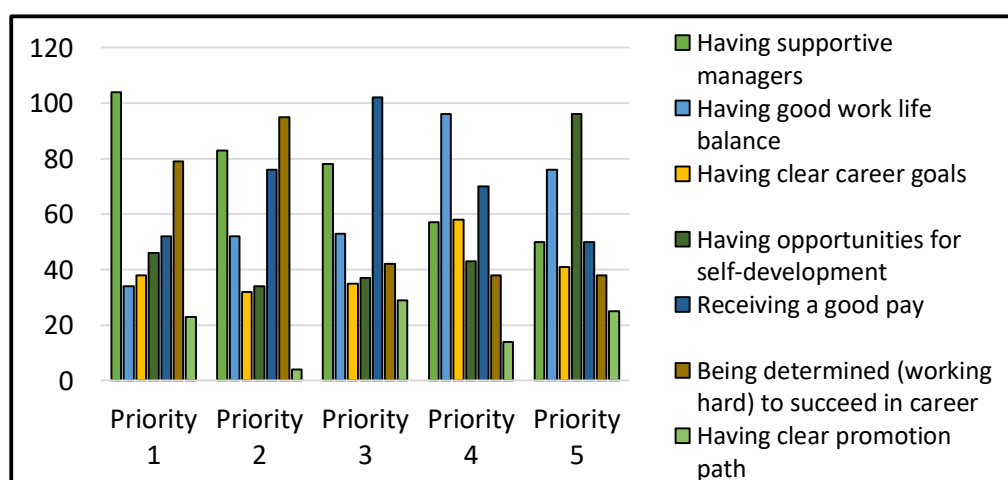
15. I would like to take any challenge, work hard and strive to succeed in my career



16. I would like to constantly learn new technology and keep my knowledge up-to-date for a satisfying career

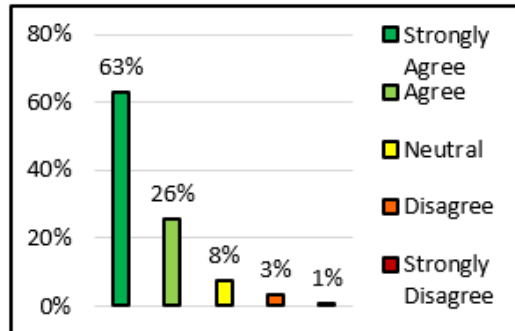


17. What are your top 5 priorities when seeking your first employment following your graduation?

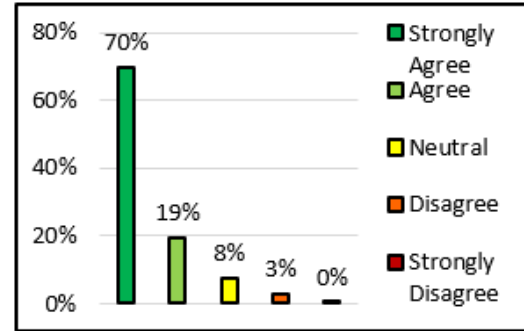


Career Aspiration Factors

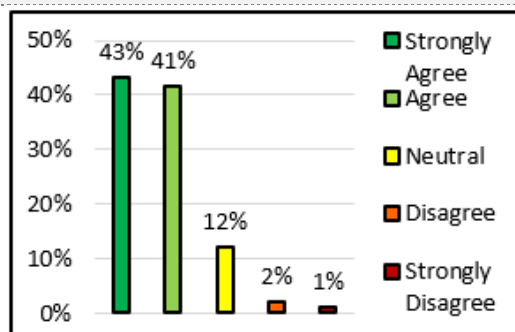
18. Organization's visibility on a clear promotion (that is, hierarchy of job titles along with required skills) path is something that I would definitely consider as a career aspiration factor as it motivates to do my job better



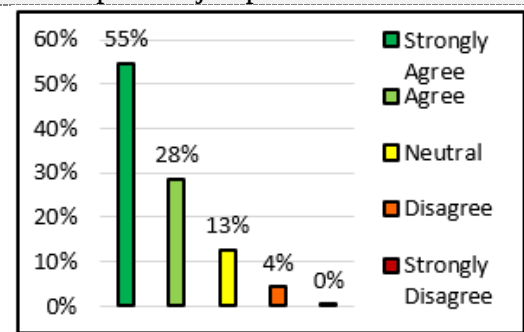
19. I would love to continue doing my best for a company where promotions happens fairly



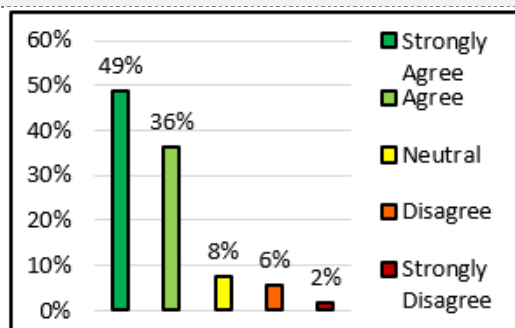
20. I would tend to look out for other options elsewhere, if there is no clear promotion path in the organization



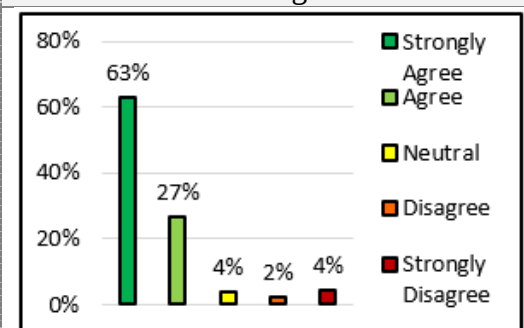
21. I will be happy to stay and keep working for a company which offers a competitive salary in the industry for the respective job position



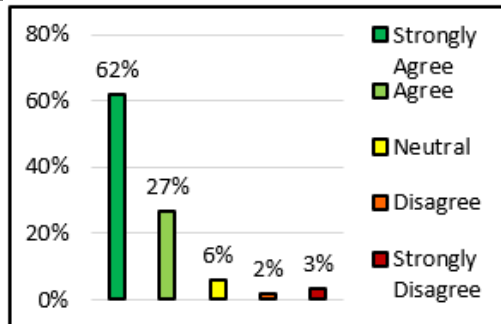
22. Receiving a good a pay is an important career aspiration factor as it motivates me to do my job better for the same organization



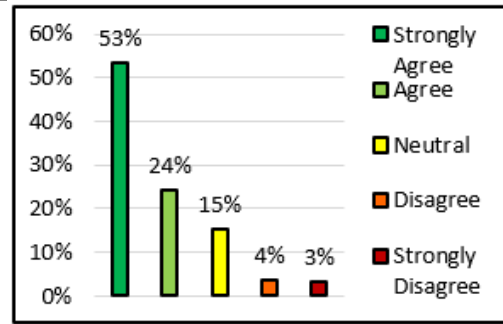
23. If I am to stay in the organization for a long term, I would definitely consider the opportunities that prevails in the organization for its employees self-development along with the ability to learn new technologies



24. Opportunities for continuous self-development with clear career goals is an important factor to keep me engaged in the organization in the long run



25. I will be less likely to look out for new opportunities elsewhere if there are opportunities within the organization to improve my skills and knowledge



APPENDIX E: INTER-ITEM CORRELATION ALL ITEMS

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]	[13]	[14]	[15]	[16]	[17]
CE_Good_Pay_Q1 [1]	1.000																
CE_Good_Pay_Q2 [2]	0.704	1.000															
CE_Good_Pay_Q3 [3]	0.355	0.425	1.000														
CE_Management_Support_Q1 [4]	0.146	0.257	0.173	1.000													
CE_Management_Support_Q2 [5]	0.204	0.295	0.174	0.834	1.000												
CE_Management_Support_Q3 [6]	0.216	0.273	0.244	0.647	0.770	1.000											
CE_Management_Support_Q4 [7]	0.237	0.313	0.234	0.748	0.784	0.764	1.000										
CE_Being-Determined_to_Succeed_Q1 [8]	0.097	0.117	0.094	0.271	0.354	0.283	0.267	1.000									
CE_Being-Determined_to_Succeed_Q2 [9]	0.136	0.158	0.170	0.255	0.313	0.233	0.229	0.809	1.000								
CA_Achieving_Promotions_Q1 [10]	0.424	0.551	0.292	0.339	0.414	0.417	0.429	0.248	0.218	1.000							
CA_Achieving_Promotions_Q2 [11]	0.308	0.460	0.219	0.433	0.516	0.444	0.491	0.216	0.214	0.758	1.000						
CA_Achieving_Promotions_Q3 [12]	0.330	0.489	0.282	0.364	0.380	0.349	0.346	0.163	0.224	0.685	0.663	1.000					
CA_Good_Pay_Q1 [13]	0.415	0.573	0.309	0.495	0.532	0.495	0.504	0.186	0.202	0.598	0.642	0.583	1.000				
CA_Good_Pay_Q2 [14]	0.340	0.508	0.275	0.475	0.494	0.465	0.484	0.163	0.199	0.566	0.579	0.532	0.799	1.000			
CA_Good_Pay_Q3 [15]	0.339	0.548	0.246	0.535	0.554	0.471	0.501	0.228	0.217	0.564	0.581	0.475	0.672	0.658	1.000		
CA_Opportunities_for_SelfDevelopment_Q1 [16]	0.376	0.572	0.286	0.554	0.516	0.412	0.506	0.280	0.303	0.536	0.509	0.473	0.627	0.636	0.851	1.000	
CA_Opportunities_for_SelfDevelopment_Q2 [17]	0.361	0.490	0.361	0.430	0.436	0.401	0.407	0.329	0.413	0.572	0.512	0.495	0.559	0.573	0.623	0.722	1.000