

Cracking the

Gen Z

Happiness Code



hellohappiness

List of Chapters

01.

Context, Objectives & Methodology

What, Why and How - Project Happiness

02.

Gen Z Illumination: Context, Beliefs and Future

Generation of Hope shaped by Adversity

03.

Gen Z and Happiness

Keys to Happiness – family, boundaries,
mental health & purposeful career

04.

Gen Z, Work & Happiness

Work is not worship BUT a liberating, necessary
aid to fulfil their purpose

05.

Gen Z & Workplace: Current, Toxic & Ideal

Gen Z is in the process of redefining
a work normal

06.

Our Advice

What Must We Do?

What, Why & How

This study aims to understand Gen Z & their concept & manifestation of happiness, with a focus on workplaces & what must we do to foster a positive & efficient working environment for them.

Context, Objectives
& Methodology

Why the Research

At RPG, our brand tagline, "Hello Happiness," forms and dictates our work ethos. We are perhaps the only diversified conglomerate around the world that uses "Happiness" as the key contributor to enhance employee engagement.

However, today our world is changing at a breakneck speed, and our workforce is evolving faster than our own industries. So, how can we base the future simply on yesterday's behaviour?

Gen Z is the future workforce, but they are burdened by our past. Our past that needs to be altered by them.

From dealing with uncertainties of climate change to the treacherous ways products are marketed to them, Gen Z wades through tricky waters. They are



burdened each day with social media hurling numerous options of trends and opinions complicating their choices that were otherwise simple to make, in the past. All of this, hinder the benefits that an old system of happiness can offer.

Therefore, we embarked on an extensive research commissioned to our partner, Yuvaa, to understand the needs of this new generation. The study spanned across 13 Indian cities with the aim of understanding what happiness means for Gen Z and what we can do to offer an efficient work environment for this future generation.

Our effort is an intent not just to conduct this in-depth research but also to make it available to every corporation. All of this is our humble endeavour to make the world a more welcoming place for the future workforce.

This study addresses the concerns of Indian employers preparing to make their workplaces Gen Z-friendly

Indian employers have noticed a stark difference between their Gen Z employees and others at work, in terms of different value systems, beliefs and ways of working and interacting. It is clear that business cannot run as usual, and workplaces need to make changes to accommodate the incoming workforce in great numbers. Growing dissatisfaction among the young workforce around the country and their expression on various social platforms have left employers questioning their work culture and trying different ways of attracting, employing & retaining Gen Z employees.

With millions of Gen Z entering the workforce every year - Gen Z who will shoulder the responsibility of sustaining these businesses - it is crucial for employers to understand this generation, their worldview, struggles, desires, their concept of happiness, and expectations from their workplaces.

Research Objectives

Gen Z understanding & illumination:
context, beliefs, & future expectations

Happiness & Gen Z:
what does happiness mean for Gen Z, what makes them happy & unhappy, and context & behaviours

- **Overall** happiness and barriers, mental & emotional states and life context
- **Happiness in personal relationships** – what are relationships like for Gen Z, relationship expectations, maintaining relationships, and what is an ideal relationship for them
- **Happiness in society and the environment** – their place in society, their experience of how society perceives them, the impact of society on their behaviours and expectations, what they want

Happiness at the workplace:
understanding the current state, happiness goals, work practices to implement to create a Gen Z-friendly work environment, Employee Policy, and Employer-Employee relation- to create a happier work environment.

Research Methodology & Sample Size

Demographics

Age: 18-25yrs
Gender: All
SEC: A + B
Lifestage: Non-working (students + gap year + interns) + Working Professionals (>4months)

Geography

Centres: Metro (6) & Non-Metro (6)
Metro: Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai & Hyderabad
Non-Metro: Pune, Ahmedabad & Gandhinagar, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Guwahati & Bhubaneswar

Research

Research: Qualitative Immersions + Quantitative Survey
Qualitative: 24 Group Discussions + 48 personal interviews
Quantitative: 2500+ sample
Total Gen Z Persons: 4000+
Secondary Research: 50+ research papers + 80+ articles



Qualitative Research Design

City Tier	City Name		
Metro Cities	Delhi NCR	24 Group Discussions	
	Kolkata		
	Mumbai		
	Bangalore		
	Chennai		
Hyderabad			
Non-Metro Cities	Chandigarh		48 In-Depth Immersions
	Guwahati		
	Bhubaneswar		
	Jaipur		
	Ahmedabad & Gandhinagar		
Pune			

Quantitative Research Design

City Tier	City Name	Group Discussion
Metro Cities	Delhi NCR	260
	Kolkata	284
	Mumbai	267
	Bangalore	307
	Chennai	256
Hyderabad	239	
Non-Metro Cities	Chandigarh	130
	Guwahati	167
	Bhubaneswar	165
	Jaipur	143
	Ahmedabad & Gandhinagar	150
Pune	172	
Total		2540

Recruitment Methodology and Quality Checks

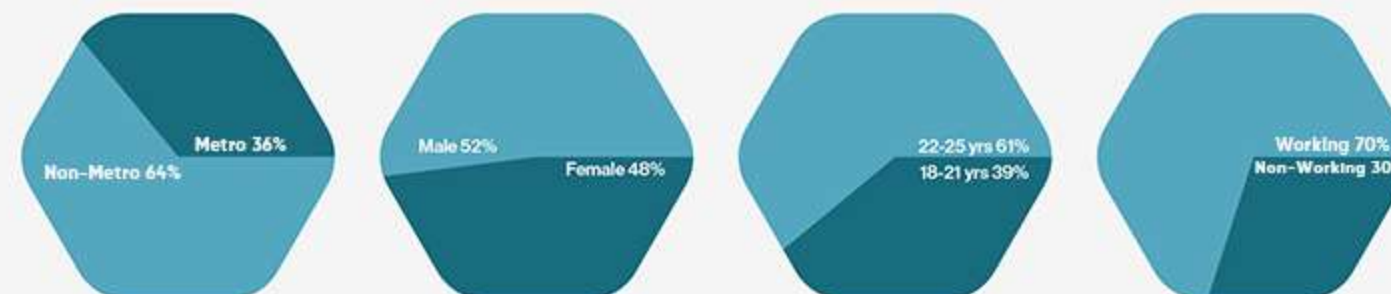
Qualitative Research: all participants were handpicked after qualifying through the rigorous screener criteria based on-

- ◊ City, Age, Gender, SEC
- ◊ Work experience
- ◊ Ability to articulate with clarity
- ◊ Attitudinal statements
- ◊ Social Profiles
- ◊ A mix of colleges and companies

Quantitative Research: To ensure the right participants were selected, an experienced HR professional recruiter & consultant, Sylvia Dhingra, led the quantitative recruitment process with Yuva's field team. To maintain a high quality of participants, the following quality checks were performed-

- ◊ CV verification
- ◊ Scrutiny
- ◊ Back-checks – LinkedIn, Instagram, Phone verification
- ◊ More than 4000+ participants were shortlisted and about 2540 made the last quality check

72 units | 250+ Gen Z | 13 cities
 24 Group Discussions
 48 In-depth Immersions
 Male, Female, Non-Binary & Others
 Online interviews



While the survey includes youth from all genders, folks who identify as gender-fluid or non-binary have been absorbed into the overall sample size as we did not observe significant deviations in responses based on gender or sexuality.

😊 hello
happiness



About RPG & Happiness

Happiness comes in different forms. For us at RPG, it's not just a feeling, it is a promise that we have made, to ourselves and to you. Happiness is also this place called RPG. A place where we meet some amazing colleagues, learn from the most inspiring of leaders, and do meaningful work that truly leaves an impact, to our businesses and lives around us.

A few years ago, we asked ourselves, "what are we all about?" We figured that we do great things because we are a bunch of happy people. It was then that we coined our identity 'Hello Happiness'.

That was just the beginning. We wanted to know what is it that really makes us happy. What are those little or big things that drive each one of us here at RPG? We decided to find this out.

We reached out to more than 6000 RPGians worldwide who shared their thoughts through surveys and extensive personal conversations. In the end it was truly overwhelming to see what came about.

We dived deeper with this information, and we saw patterns emerge. Six key strategic themes came out which went on to form the foundation of our very own RPG Happiness Framework.

Today, we are perhaps the only diversified conglomerate around the world who has picked up this bold theme of Happiness which is the common glue that binds us all.

Happiness is our biggest agenda and our greatest strength. We continue on our journey to which our Happiness Framework is the guiding star, and the driving force behind everything that we do, every day.

That's who we are. RPG. We are a group of happy people and immensely proud of it.

Foreword by Harsh Goenka



RPG's brand promise is "Hello Happiness". It is a promise that we make to ourselves and to each other every day.

Our people are our greatest strength and their happiness our biggest asset. As such it was only a natural progression that we would delve into the aspect of "Happiness" of our future workforce, the Gen Z

The decision to delve into this subject and do an in-depth research stemmed from a deep-rooted care for the well-being and success of this generation.

It was in my numerous meetings cutting through various age groups, that I began to observe a unique set of challenges and aspirations. This generation, born in the digital age and navigating a rapidly changing world, has showcased remarkable talent, innovation, and determination.

Yet, I couldn't help but notice a lack of fulfilment among some of our young employees.

This realization sparked within me a strong need to understand the generation better, to know the underlying factors contributing to the happiness and overall satisfaction of Gen Z at work.

We embarked on an extensive research journey, engaging in discussions, conducting surveys, and analysing data across the length and breadth of the country. We wanted to uncover the key elements that foster a sense of well-being, purpose, and fulfilment for this generation in their professional lives.

What we discovered through this research was both enlightening and motivating, and at times, even overwhelming. We now know, what we thought we knew about this generation was only skimming the surface. This generation is one of a kind, shaped by the extremes of the humanitarian and socio-political crisis coupled with climate change witnessing rapid changes with the boom of technology & social media integrating offline & online worlds. We are glad we spent the time and the effort to find out.

Armed with a treasure trove of insights and findings, we are sharing this knowledge with everyone, so that collectively, the corporate world could take action. By doing so, not only we hope to create happier and more engaged employees, we will also unlock the full potential and innovative spirit of this generation.

This research paper is a call to action for leaders, HR professionals, and individuals alike, to embrace the evolving expectations and desires of Gen Z, and create workplaces that inspire, motivate, and bring forth the best in our young talent.

Let us embark on this journey together, prioritizing the happiness and fulfilment of Gen Z, and shape a workplace culture that not only resonates with them but also lays the foundation for a prosperous and harmonious future.

With best regards
Harsh V Goenka

S 'Venky' Venkatesh
Member-Group Management Board
President-Group HR



"Understanding and nurturing the happiness of Gen Z at the workplace is not just a choice; it is an imperative for any organization committed to sustained success. I firmly believe that by investing in research on the happiness of Gen Z, we are investing in the very essence of our company's culture and future. This research paper serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path towards creating an inclusive, engaging, and purpose-driven workplace that not only attracts and retains top talent but also unlocks the immense potential within our Gen Z workforce, from whom one day our future leaders will emerge."

Supratik Bhattacharyya
Chief Talent Officer



"There is no questioning that the future will soon be driven by the young and very bright Generation-Z. Understanding their needs, even if unique, will be paramount in harnessing their full potential and driving organizational success. I am very thrilled today as we launch this elaborate Research Report, which not only focuses on factors that contribute to their happiness but also provides actionable insights on how we can foster an environment where they flourish.

This is our moment for all of us in the industry. I urge that we seize this opportunity to shape our workplaces that empower and inspire this promising new generation. By prioritizing their well-being, we can pave the way for a brighter future. Let us together create a legacy of happiness and success that extends beyond the hard line realms of our organizations."

#WeTheStories

Yuva is India's most loved Gen Z-driven youth media and insights & impact organisation. We listen to the stories of young India and create purpose-driven solutions to make meaningful content online and start meaningful conversations offline.

We talk about urgent issues like youth empowerment, mental health, gender, sexuality, internet safety, misinformation, climate change and many more and have found great success in creating impact-driven content and entertainment and making these themes shareable and accessible to the youth of India. As the years have gone by, Yuva has explored its potential in all forms possible.

Our unique selling point is our youth community, and we take great pride in being a platform that listens to them. Our work is rooted in 4+ years of actively listening to the voices and stories of India's Gen Z, and we strive to approach everything we do with empathy, kindness, and love.

Nikhil Taneja
Co-founder and Chief, Yuva



"In a world where every young person has something to say, Yuva was founded to be a platform that listens. Over the last five years, Yuva has visited over 150 campuses across India offline, and made over 10,000 pieces of content online, to create safe spaces where Young Indians could express without judgement. India has the largest youth workforce in the world, so it was a natural progression of our mission to also create safe, inclusive, empathetic and happy spaces at the workplace.

It has been a privilege for us to work with one of India's most respected, recognized and revered organizations, RPG Group, to help put this research report together, and to shine a light on the wants, needs, hopes, and aspirations of India's Gen Z, so we could together help create a mental health positive work environment for them."

Generation of Hope Shaped by Adversity & Tech

Shaped by the extremes of the humanitarian and socio-political crisis, coupled with climate change while witnessing rapid changes with the boom of technology & social media, and integrating offline & online worlds, the first-generation of Digital Natives demands to work collectively towards world issues.

Gen Z Illumination:
Context, Beliefs & Future

Who are Gen Z in India?

400 MN+

Born between 1997 and 2010, Gen Z make up a third of the Indian population, over 400 million. The oldest Gen Z are 25 years old today, and millions of them are entering the workforce every year.

Source: Business Insider | 2020

But to typecast the whole generation under a label is unjust to them (and to us)!

A whole generation cannot be defined by mere demographics - especially with the complexity and diversity of cultures, economies & geo-politics in India. The generational cohort helps us dive into understanding them better, but not at the cost of denying the polyphony in the youth culture of India. The Indian Gen Z is different from its global counterparts, and within India itself they are not identical. Hence, it is imperative to dig deeper to understand the context of the world they grew up in, using the nuances of metropolitan & non-metropolitan context, life stages, and gender as starting points.

This research study focuses on the urbanised section of Gen Z in the top metropolitan and non-metropolitan cities who have access to smartphones and who are either pursuing or have completed a graduate level degree.

With this as the starting point, with a total sample interaction of over 4000, and with expert researchers with over 8 years of experience understanding Gen Z, it is safe to say that the larger themes and core value belief systems will find coherence with the generation with well-stated, nuanced differences.

A Generation that grew up in the era of rapid economic progress & adversity

India saw a drastic shift in its economy post 1991's liberalisation policies with a great increase in disposable incomes and a change in the cultural fabric and lifestyles, with access to Western media, and rapid digitalisation by the time Gen Zers reached their pre-teens.

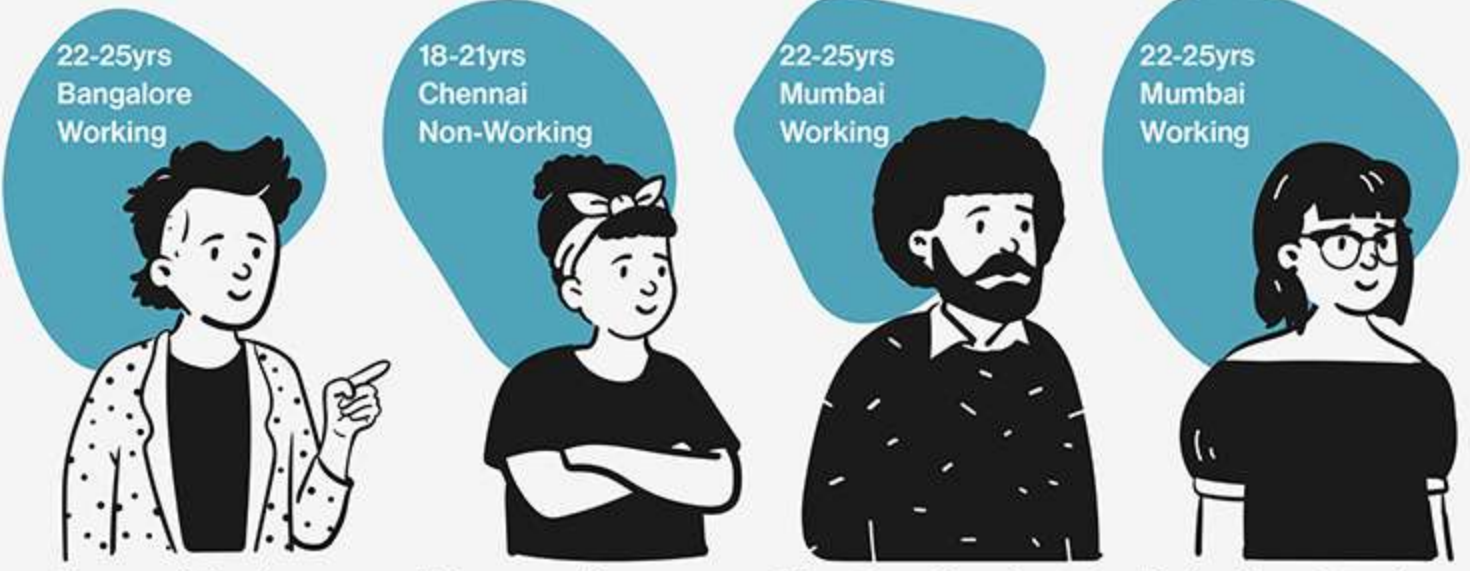
While the trio of liberalisation, westernisation and digitalisation set the Gen Zers' impressionable years to be more open, diverse & easy, it also exposed them to a world of sheer violence & uncertainty.

Add to the mix sheltered parenting with conflicting value systems. On one hand, their parents made many sacrifices to provide them with an economic cushion, opening up their world so they could reach their full potential & optimism; on the other hand, parents passed down their own scarcity-driven & conformist fears, leaving Gen Zers confused & conflicted. With the absence of role models at home & society - and even in media, with no youth icons & representation - in their formative years, they were left to find a community of their own online - with instant gratification & infinite choices, yet no real guidance.

Living in a perpetual conflict with society impinging on individual values

Gen Zers are non-conformists, - they accept differences & value diversity. The existing societal values feel problematic & orthodox to them while their ideas & beliefs are not accepted by society, putting Gen Zers in a difficult position, managing and negotiating their identity on a daily basis.

Societal Values	Gen Z Values
Collectivism	Individualism
Traditional	Desi-Modernism
Resist Change	Negotiate + Reform
Value Liquid Assets	Value Social Capital
Materialistic	Humanistic
Restrained yet show-off	Self acceptance + proud display
Stable Survivalists	Stable Purpose Seekers
Digital Adopters negotiate their identity at a daily basis.	Digital Natives



22-25yrs
Bangalore
Working
"I am a calisthenics instructor. Training people is what makes me happy. People older than me, training them and teaching them makes me feel cool, so yeah.. our community, where we meet up every weekend, get drunk, and have fun."

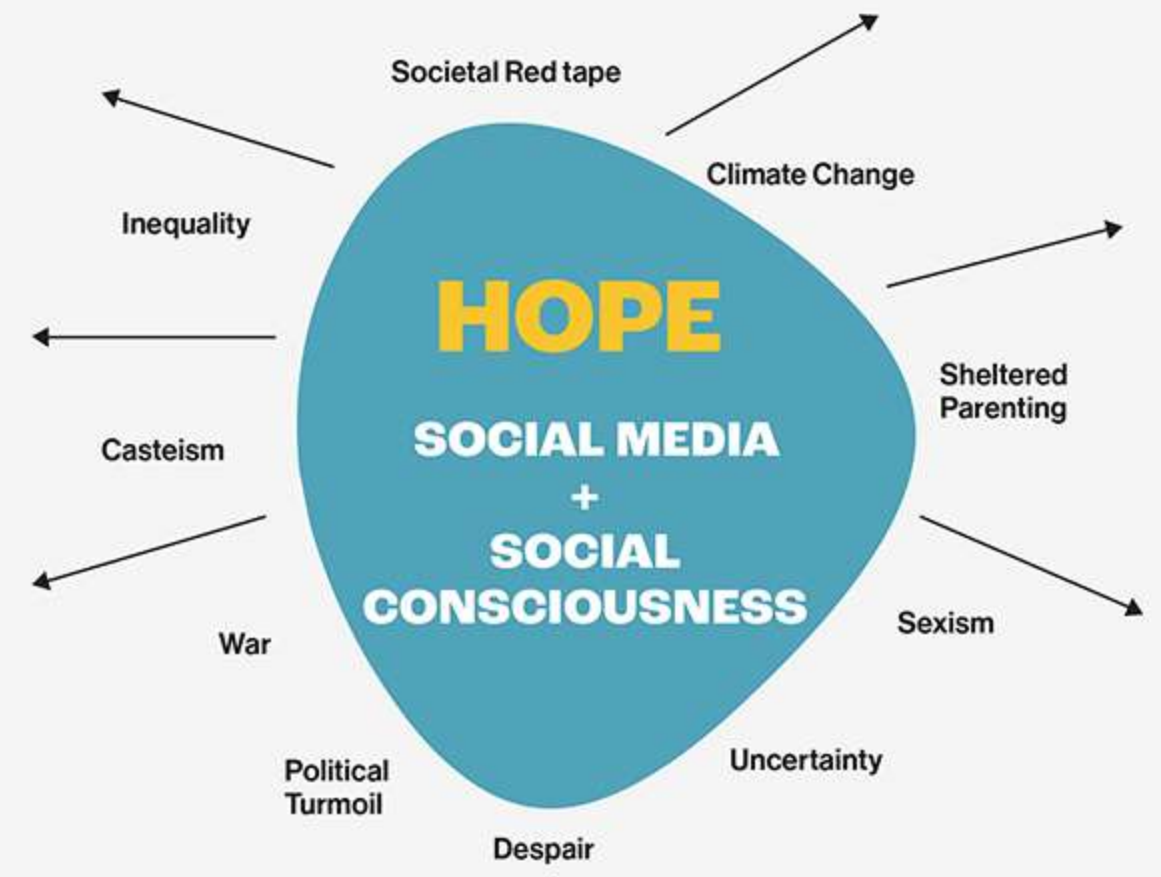
18-21yrs
Chennai
Non-Working
"I always say: if something happens, let's think about the solutions instead of dwelling on the problem."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working
"Even though I graduated last year, not doing a 9 to 5 job was the best decision ever. I got to explore different content and I have a network of people - I could have never imagined this 5 years ago. I don't have a long term vision but I am focusing on the next step."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working
"School doesn't teach you about life, and people around you get serious about jobs and life after 18. I am frightened about what I'm getting myself into. Nobody tells you to talk a certain way or email a certain way."

Gen Z: Digital natives on a hopeful reformist rebellion to change the world of adversity

- They are the **digital natives** who grew up with access to infinite resources, with technology & internet access beginning from their childhood shrinking their world and simultaneously fostering a deep connection with it.
- The digital natives are far more **socially and politically conscious** than their preceding generations, owing to the overall better economic scenario post the 1991 **liberalisation**, challenging toxic value systems through **global influences** & connected shared experiences through **digitalisation**, and fostering a natural alignment towards **standing up against inequality** while growing up in an uncertain world.
- **Advocacy** to make the world a **better, more equitable and more empathetic** place is a prominent drive, and this generation is full of hope & equipped with tech-savviness to shatter the vicious circle.



Breaking the circle of adversity with hope, combined with the power of tech, towards an equitable & empathetic world.

22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



"Nowadays, you have an infinite number of possibilities. Access to information and research has increased. In the early 2000s, one did not have enough access to go abroad and study, unlike today. You can take the average person from India and they could have the best possible education, learn online, and have 3 jobs together."

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working



"The country's situation is not good and we don't know how to handle it. Everything is going wrong and it impacts me in a real way. For example, there are a lot of rape and money laundering cases. I want to go into administration - I can't fix the whole country, but I wish to make change."

18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



"When boredom hits me and I scroll through Instagram, I tend to keep scrolling because I feel pressured. I feel as if something is being imposed on me. Every time I feel sad, I just end up on social media."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"Not many people respected my boundaries the way I did theirs. I have a few best friends that understand me and vice versa. A lot of my friends realised that they were wrong, and apologised for it. As for those who didn't, I've realised that it was never a friendship to begin with."

Change-now focussed doers seeking stability & holistic peace while discovering themselves

The Z-ers are known to be quick-action takers, and with the constant instant gratification through social media, have manifested speed in their nature. Their understanding of time being limited is showcased in their living in micro-moments, while lowered attention spans & memorability also serve as their coping mechanisms for self-preservation from the uncertain turmoil of the world

With their accelerated adulthood, they feel the world's pressures – the capitalistic rat race, the societal & orthodox intrusion, environmental chaos & political – as they eye their future, putting them at almost constant stress.

This leaves them with a need to check-out into their safe haven of me-time, with an increased focus on sharing their suffering, self-care & numbing themselves to the over-stimulating chaos that follows doom scrolling.

Surviving constantly in an uncertain & unstable world witnessing a collapse of institutional trust – governments, religion, marriage, corporations – they seek stability in their life and society with an empathetic approach towards the world that needs an undeniable change.

With such stress, they are the generation feeling the brunt of it with negligible access to resources to best cope with it.

Society has failed to understand them or provide them with access to resources that help them deal with this stress, forcing them to turn to social media to advocate for their mental health well-being and making it their priority.





A generation hobbling forward with immense uncertainties

With infinite choices & no guidance comes the conundrum of choice paradox, putting them into a decision paralysis

Factors such as sheltered parenting, digital communication shortcuts, limited resources and support, and the tendency of Gen X to ignore issues have left Gen Z feeling disempowered. Consequently, they find it challenging to engage in difficult conversations and often avoid confrontation on an individual level

This avoidance is evident through behaviours like quietly quitting, ghosting, concealing their true selves from family and relatives, and avoiding individuals with differing opinions, creating a black-and-white perspective rather than acknowledging the complexities of the world

18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working



"I believe that I have improved my mental health - earlier, I was really introverted, but now I am working on it. I do like talking to people, and I have to restrain myself - for example, complimenting people on the metro - but I am slowly improving."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"The way content creators on Instagram show single life as horrible through their posts, it's kind of troubling."

18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working



"The world is a stage and society is an audience. Society is brutal - they judge you in a way that just goes to show how little they care about you. Parents, however, are less brutal; at the end of the day it's family, and they will look out for you."

22-25yrs
Chennai
Working



"I am worried that I don't know where I will be in the next years, I have short-term goals that help me grow, but I do think I should have long-term goals as well and not having them scares me."

18-21yrs
Chennai
Not Working



"The covid outbreak was something that changed our plans a lot. Online studies were basically a waste of time; our childhood and college life were ruined."

Forcing them to be responsible change-makers with no tools to cope with the chaos

With the context of their childhood, conflicting societal values around them & their beliefs, this generation needs **instant feedback, validation, inspiration and a clear path with support to make the change in the world they have been forcefully designated due to the chaos of the previous generations.**

18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working



"Depending on the topic, I am open with my mom about what is going on in my college, what I do with my friends. However, I don't share more personal things with them, because they don't understand. When I talked about depression and anxiety, they didn't understand - they told me to sleep on time. This is one of the reasons I'm depressed - I'm unable to open up to them."

Childhood Context

Economic Certainty
Global Influences
Digitalisation
Adversity & gloom
Sheltered Parenting
No Role Models
No Guidance
Conflicted Extremes

Societal Values

Collectivism
Traditional
Resist Change
Value Liquid Assets
Materialistic
Restrained yet Show-off
Stable Survivalists
Digital Adopters

Gen Z Values

Individualism
Desi-Modernism
Negotiate + Reform
Value Social Capital
Humanistic
Self acceptance + proud display
Stable Purpose Seekers
Digital Natives

Gen Z Gaps

Identity Conflicts
Failing systems
Confrontation Avoidance
Decision Paralysis
Self preservation
Fear of acceptance by family & society
No map to path
Overwhelmed

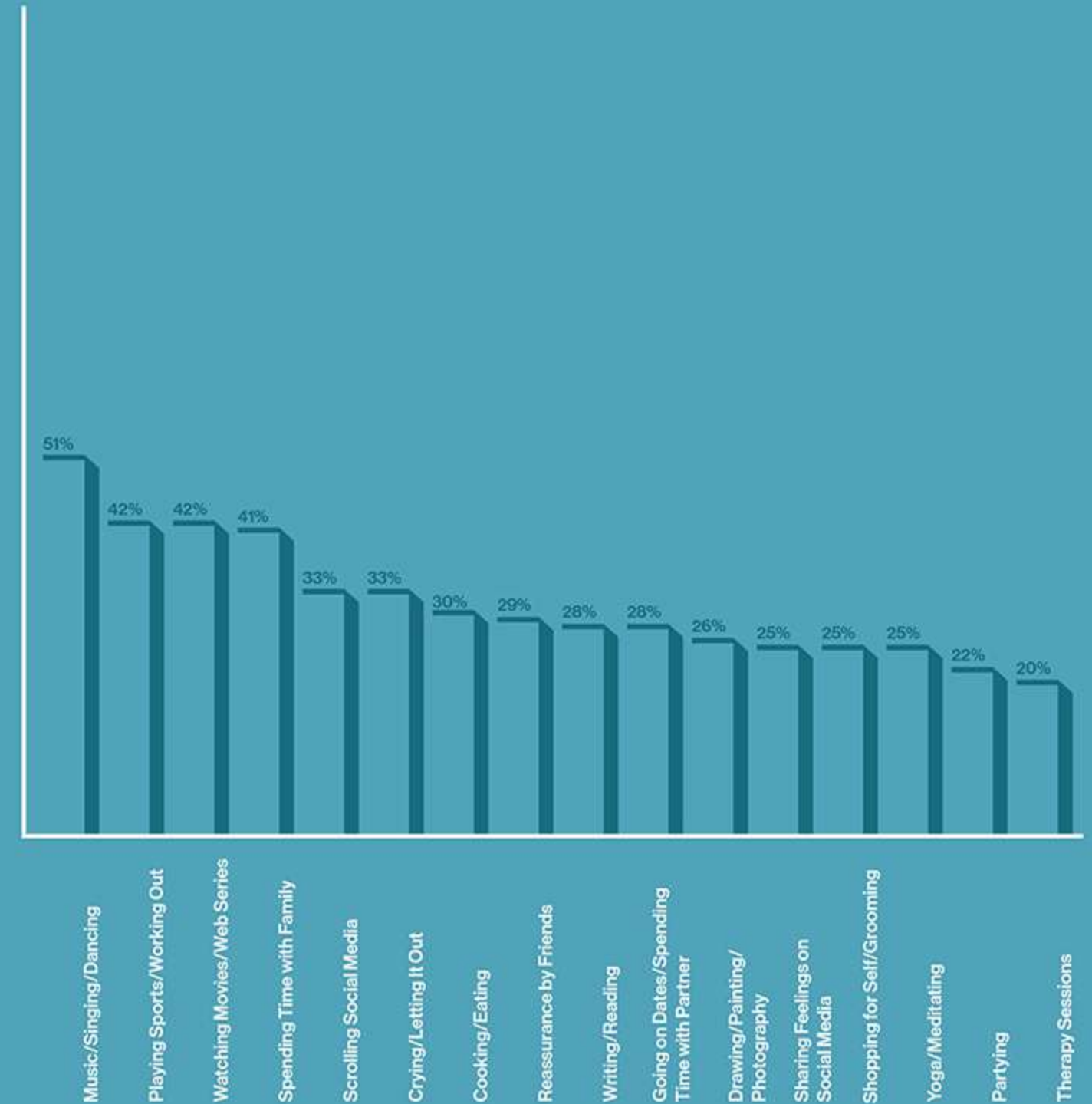
Their expectations of being cared for by society are low & self-care with me-time is their habitual coping mechanism

The pandemic has only increased their digital mileage from planning happy posts to self-care regimes online.

They find solace in their own company more often than not

- ◇ Journaling
- ◇ Stress eating
- ◇ Talking to parents/close friends
- ◇ Cold showers
- ◇ Going for a walk/long drive
- ◇ Meditation
- ◇ Music
- ◇ Smoking a cigarette/ Alcohol
- ◇ Cooking
- ◇ Hanging with friends

To cope with the adversity and gloom that surrounds them they usually resort to a mixed bag of coping mechanisms, some healthy and some far from it; however, they majorly constitute activities that are carried out alone rather than in the presence of another individual.



18-21yrs
Guwahati
Not Working



"Sometimes, I don't feel good; sometimes I get angry or sad, but then I listen to music and sleep - which helps. When you wake up fresh, you don't feel that bad since you've forgotten about it. I also play cricket, or I like to talk to my friends and share my problems with them."

22-25yrs
Chandigarh
Working



"I think I avoid my feelings a lot. Getting out of the house, going to a friend's place, and talking to people gives me perspective."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"I like it whenever the words just flow out naturally without any interruptions when I try to write, or when I listen to music at dawn; I also enjoy going to the mountain top and lighting a cigarette."

18-21yrs
Hyderabad
Not Working



"I like appreciating the small things in life. Prioritising the people in your life, clearing your mind and feelings, caring about your skin, focusing mainly on the body and mind are all important things."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"If I worry about the future, I am not focusing on the present. I meditate and try to be calm because I don't want to spoil my present as well."

18-21yrs
Chennai
Not Working



"Cooking or baking gives me satisfaction because putting so much effort into something and getting a satisfying result makes me feel good about myself. I listen to music or maybe even watch a movie which makes me feel understood."

Gen Z champions authenticity, diversity & expression with new communication style

Gen Zers have beyond mere survival as their goal. To live in complete authenticity is non-negotiable, and they are individually and collectively, as a generation, working towards reforming the world to accept it.

Being who they truly are and building a world to accept others in their truest form provides them with a larger purpose to make the world an equitable and peaceful place, and champion the causes they believe in – diversity, equity, inclusion, good mental health & access to mental health resources, respecting individual boundaries, sustainability, environmentalism, non-violence, sex positivity, gender fluidity, LGBTQ+ rights, smashing the patriarchy & gender norms, and clearing space for the voices of the underprivileged & oppressed to be heard & amplified.

They may not know the path to achieve these goals, but they are paving it gradually with their **expressive, interactive & instant communication style**.

- Using social platforms to connect in creative & expressive ways to build stronger relationships with their peers.
- Visual communication has overtaken words. The digital avatars, GIFs, emojis, reactions, pictures & videos have surpassed the power of words in order to communicate with more clarity, emotion & intimacy.
- Their communication style helps them better express themselves and keeps them connected. Most importantly, this generation knows how to give feedback and interact with it.
They dislike real-life conversations beyond their close social groups.

Digitalisation has shaped their identity & Covid-19 altered further habitual coping mechanism

Phones are their real soulmates; they spend more time in this relationship than any other in daily life - work, relationships, courses, dating, mental health, me-time, gaming, entertainment and more.

And digital content is a reflection of their identity and communication style

Instagram

The new SHARMAji has never been so pressuring at one's own choice to set standards and aspirations of life

My Space, My Time

With self without a mask & drawing boundaries to spend time

Show me my kind of life

It's all about representation. Gone are the days of glory and family dramas and in are the slices of real life with subtle yet powerful stories

It's good that it ends

It is valued more because it's short lived, yet iconic & memorable, instead of being a drag! It caters to Gen Z's reduced memory & attention span

Gen Z Identity

(re)defining, (re)discovering, (re)inventing

Content

Creating the world and rabbit hole I like

Disconnect & Escape

A quick & easy escape from the dystopian world in the pandemic

Unfiltered, Real & Precise

The audience spent their formative years in an extremely challenging environment, especially now, during the Covid-19 pandemic. These are the times of witnessing their representation as it is.

Uncensored & Unpredictable

TV did not serve their mentality and reminded them of societal red tape, while web content offered unpredictability with an uncensored & unfiltered approach, making it more real for Gen Z

The New Desi

Unsuppressed, raw and striving to be non-pretentious; they have stepped into an age where they proactively do not want to hide who they are

They are curating and creating their own expansive world in their little screens everyday.

Future Be Future Be Future

Gen Z are hopeful to be a better version of themselves in the future

Although most of them grew up watching their parents focus on stability, they seem to realise that it's a different time now - inequality is wider, dreams are bigger and the paths to success are many.

They have ambition and audacity, and they have one quality that sets them apart from every previous generation in India: a genuine appetite for risk. But they do feel the need for a map - and role models to look up to.

They are on the lookout to find career areas that exist at the intersection of passion and opportunity, which is a critical component in the self-discovery process.

The wireless generation conducts social media profiling before making friends in the real world. For them, the online world of people is far more important than the offline world. They consume social media content with scepticism.

They are genuinely concerned about their future and the world's, too.

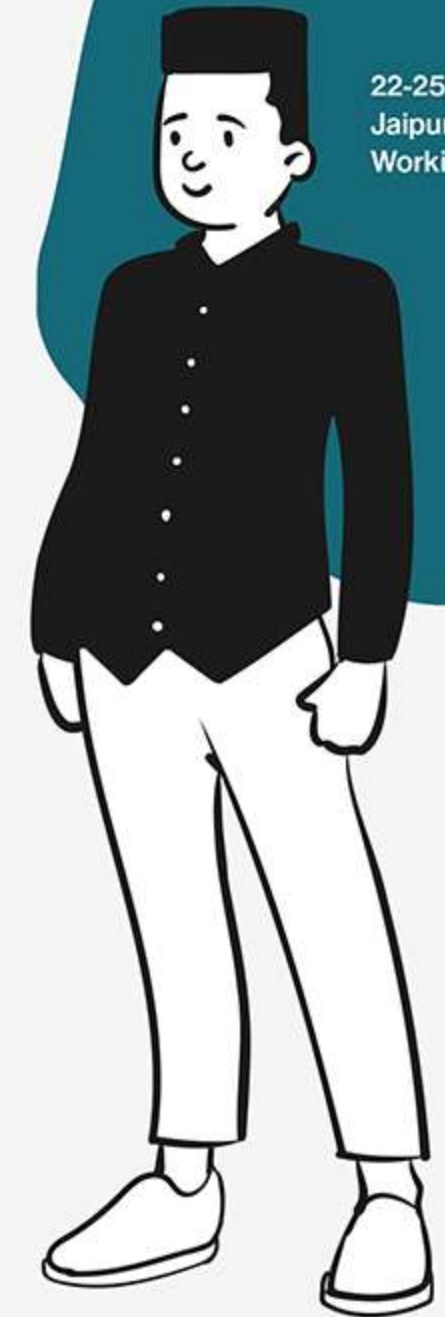
"All the new skills that I learn, I upload on my YouTube Channel. I upload new cover songs all the time. When I post and people appreciate it, it feels good. I feel a sense of achievement. I upload work and studying-based skills, too."

18-21yrs
Bhubaneswar
Not Working



"I enjoy being able to do what I like and what others like, so they can appreciate me. I like appreciation; I lack self-esteem, so I crave validation from others, so if people validate me and see my efforts and it makes them happy, that is what happiness means to me. Happiness is also being satisfied with who I am and where I am."

22-25yrs
Jaipur
Working





**But not one size fits all;
similar values are realised
differently based on –
gender, age, life stage &
city tier**

This study must be viewed keeping in mind the following life contexts.

Gender

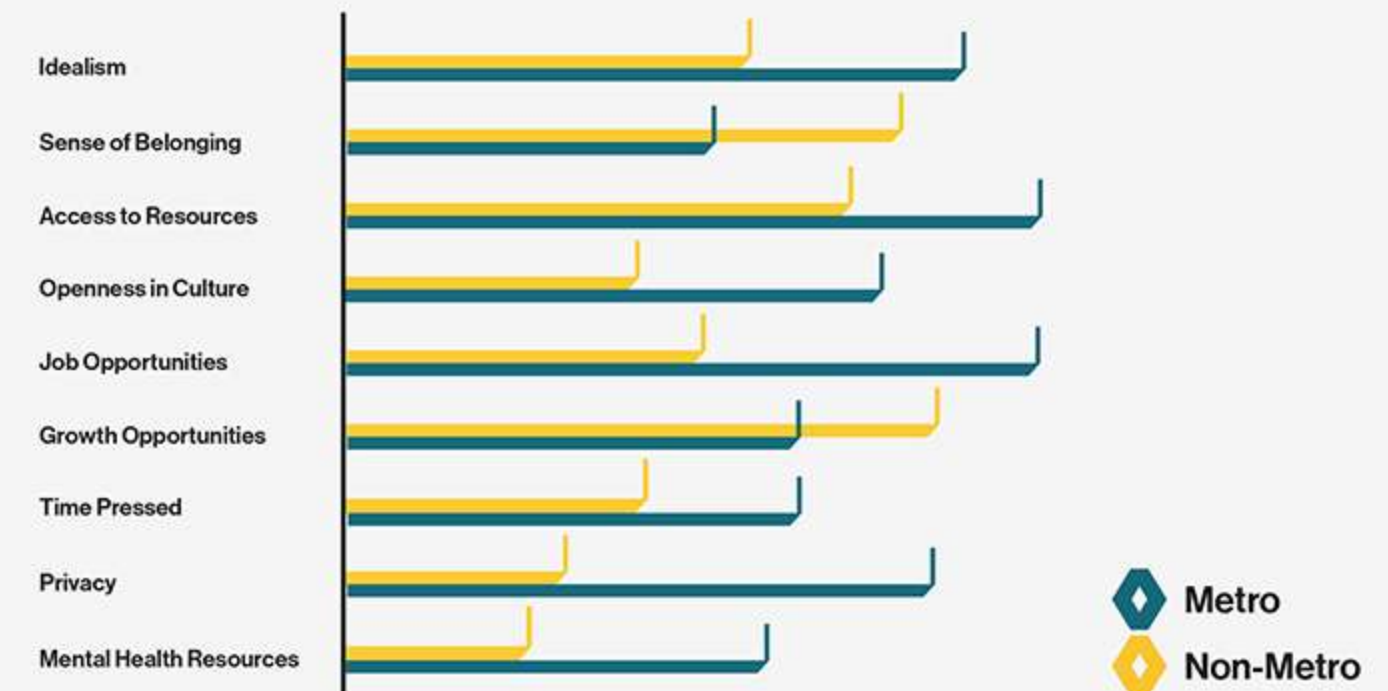
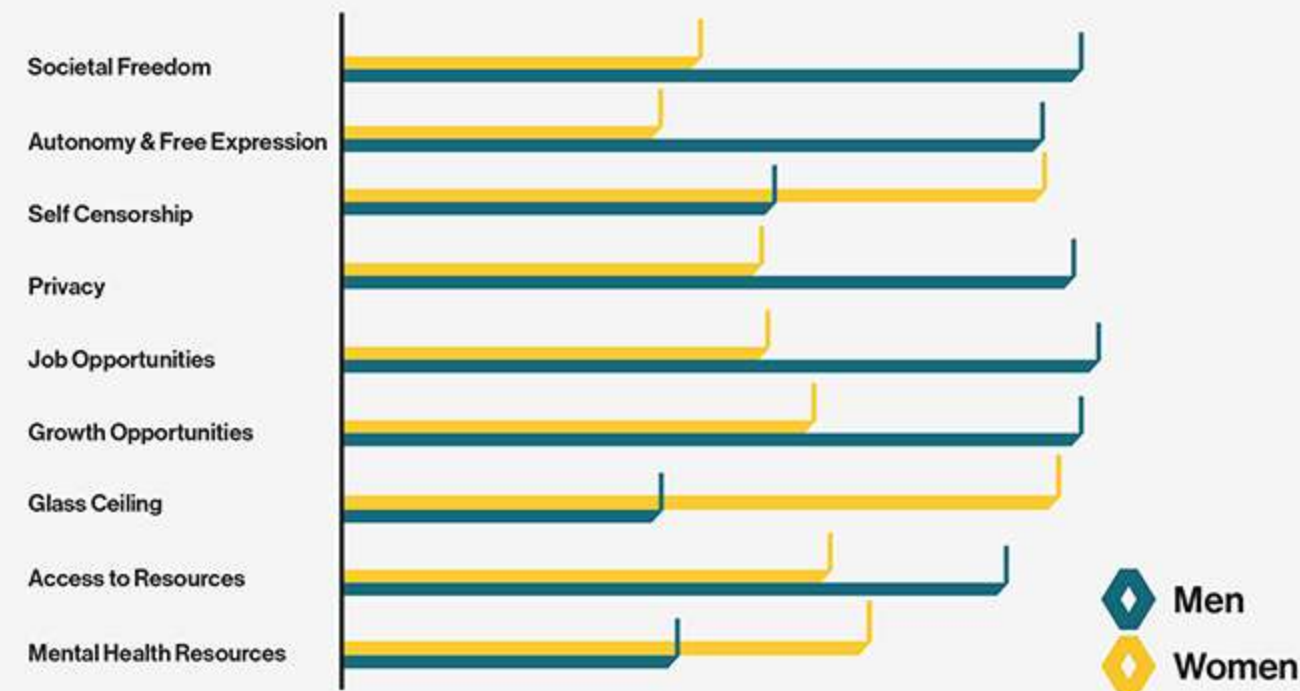
Patriarchal society favours men while non-men go through societal red tape, harassment & harm

- The worlds of men, women, and others are very different. Life for other genders is the cruelest, with real harm & everyday harassment. For women, it is substantially better than other genders, but still unsafe, while men enjoy most of the privileges of a patriarchal society. However, Gen Z men are struggling to keep up with society's idea of masculinity, which is toxic & unhealthy
- It is 2023, and women are still treated as second-class citizens (and others even worse), and do not have fair & equal opportunities, access or autonomy
- Nevertheless, when it comes to mental health resources, women are better equipped than men, owing to the ideas of toxic masculinity that don't apply to them & a more empathetic support system with other women – friends, family, acquaintances, colleagues, etc.

City tier

Metro culture is getting closer to peak capitalism while non-metros have years to become that

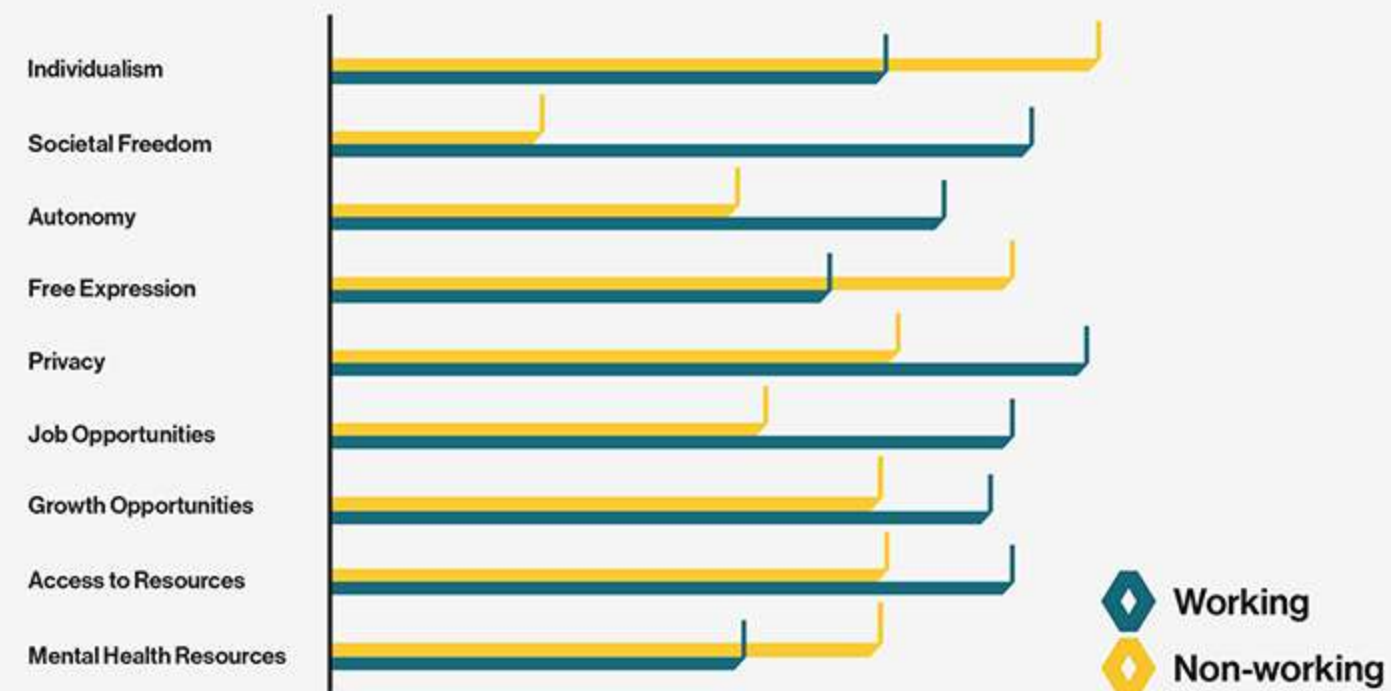
- Non-metros are rooted in community living more than metros, which primes the sense of privacy, sense of belonging, and openness in culture
- It is challenging for non-metro residents to realise their individuality because of societal and cultural barriers. They are itching to break away from societal ties to gain more autonomy and balance individualism with the collective culture
- Simultaneously, for metro inhabitants, the time-pressed & more modernistic culture has alienated them from the existing culture & society. They desire to find a sense of belonging and lean towards community living with no avenues to make it a reality
- Competition is intense in metros - which restricts their growth opportunities - but job opportunities are abundant as compared to non-metros



Lifestage

Non-working Gen Z are entering the real world while the Working ones have had a reality check

- Exposure to the real world and entry into adulthood is initiated by their induction into college, and things change drastically as they enter the workforce
- Financial independence is a major game changer to experience the position of one's self in the society and in the world
- The non-working Gen Z imagine an idealistic world, but soon, these ideas go through a realistic, societal inhibition filter, and are re-calibrated
- While Gen Z believes in their reformist rebellion and is full of hope, being in the working system deflates their hopes & confidence in achieving their dream of an equitable, sustainable, and kind world
- The corporate red tape and the sense of maintaining an employable image force them to censor themselves, robbing them of free reign of their authentic expression



"Youth empowerment, individuality, independence, and not doing what everybody else is doing; since the youth is the future of the country, if we don't empower them, they might end up depending on other generations. If we have the privilege now to help people, then why not?"

"In the urban areas, people are so busy they don't know what is going on with their neighbours, but in rural places, people know what's happening and are there to help."

18-21yrs
Ahmedabad
Not Working



18-21yrs
Guwahati
Not Working



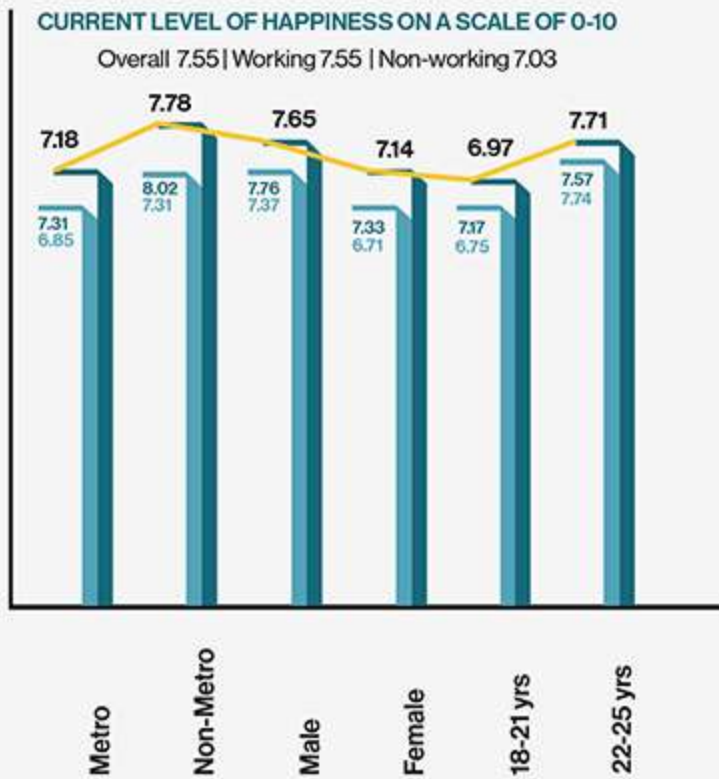


Happiness is a skill, not a Discovery

Gen Z believes that happiness is not an innate emotion or a feeling, nor a discovery, but a skill that is learned. Family comes before everything else, followed by mental health & drawing boundaries, and then a purposeful career.

Happiness is a choice, not a compulsion. It co-exists with other emotions & is not a perpetual state

- Growing up in uncertainty and witnessing the same even more at a global level has had an effect on how Gen Z envisions happiness
- They feel it is a state of acceptance of the current circumstances and a choice to focus on the positives while it co-exists with other emotions
- The current happiness levels as indicated by Gen Z on a scale of 0-10 with 0 being extremely unhappy & 10 being extremely happy indicate the following:
 - Overall, Gen Z feel they are in a happy state. This needs to be understood with the post pandemic peak era with the country resuming normalcy for more than 6 months in the last 2.5yrs
 - Non-metro Gen Z are significantly happier than their metro counterparts. This can be accounted with the difference in the pace of life and stress levels, community ties and general health & environmental aspects
 - The working group feels happier than the non-working & student group – work is a milestone achievement, money is a financial independence indicator, but being a student/unemployed is a cause of stressed concern
 - Significant difference in gender happiness index is not a surprise, owing to the inherent patriarchal setup of the society
 - The 22 - 25 year segment is significantly happier than the younger Gen Z, indicating higher acceptance & discovery of their identity and getting closer to their ambitions, which is seen as an achievement



Sample Size 2540 Fig. Mean Score

"It is a state of mind you can choose; you can find happiness in small things - it doesn't have to be big. The situation matters."



22-25yrs
Chennai
Working



22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working

"How can a person carry one emotion every time - something or someone makes you happy for an instance."

"In the urban side people are so busy they don't know what is going on with neighbours but in rural people know and help."



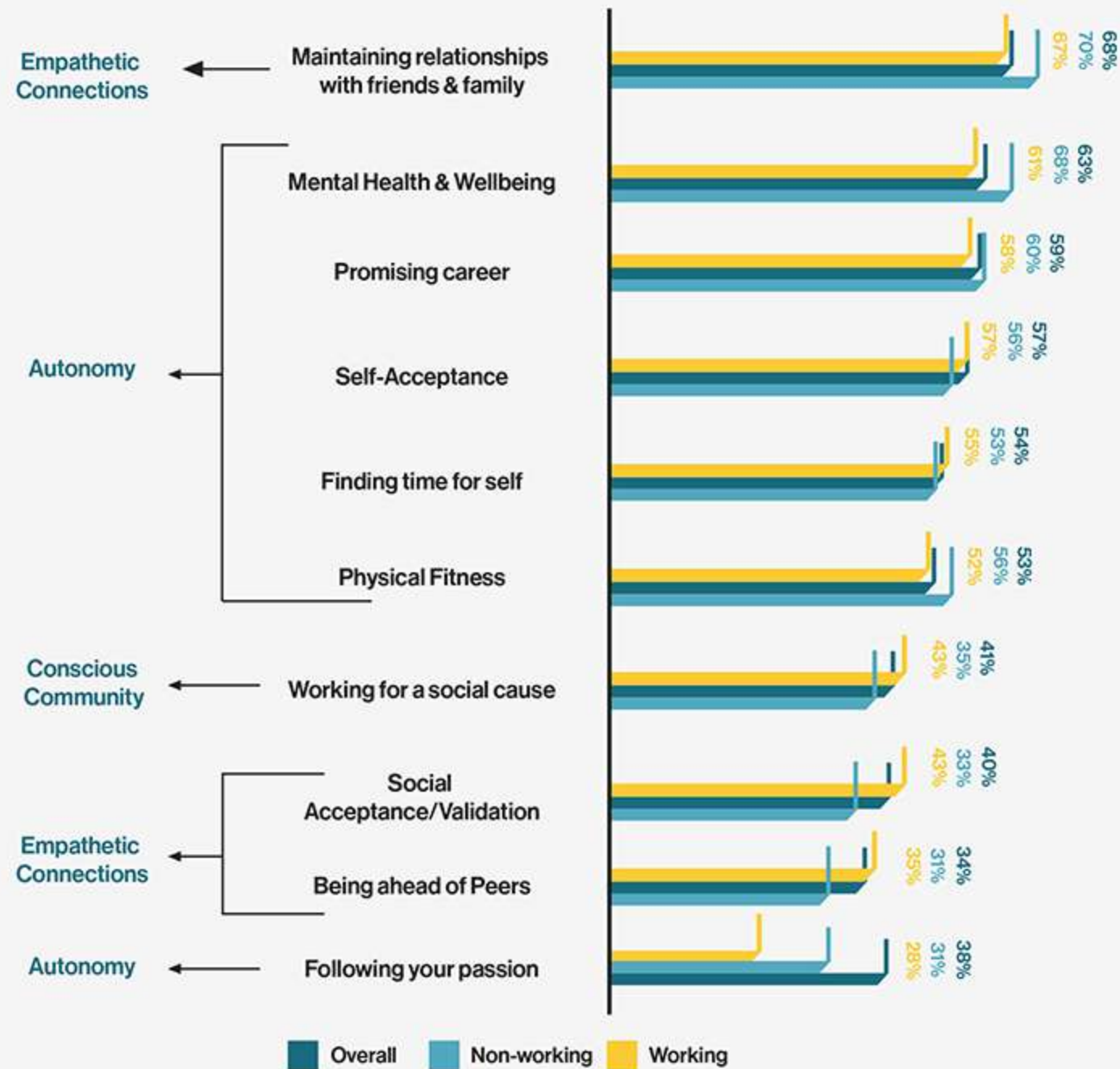
18-21yrs
Guwahati
Not Working

An abstract graphic on a teal background featuring several overlapping shapes: a large yellow circle, a dark teal circle, a black trapezoid, and several smaller yellow and black shapes. The text is positioned in the bottom left corner.

**Gen Z's purpose is to build
a world of autonomy,
conscious community &
empathetic connections**

- Gen Z believes that true happiness lies in being authentic – being true to themselves – while maintaining good mental health and healthy relationships with their family & friends
- A promising career that gives them a deep sense of purpose & power to realise their purpose entails passion, while being able to find time for themselves is a must. But conforming to societal obligations or being in a rat race to be ahead of their peers is not in their purview
- Recognition is an important aspect and correlates with their social capital, manifested in appreciation at work in public and/or a valuable social profile

Core community connection & autonomy are the top priorities in life to be happy



- **Gen Z value their relationships with family and friends the most, and care for their emotional health over everything else. They believe in the sense of community as their safety net and their springboard.**
While family may not be perfect, they believe it is their core community, and hope to reform that relationship. Friends are their chosen family, with whom they let their guards down to be their true authentic self
- **Autonomy** manifests with higher focus on mental health & wellbeing. Gen Z, the accelerated adults, believe that good mental health trumps everything else in life
- **Financial independence** with a promising career of their choice – one that gives them a larger **purpose** – is crucial to find their place in the world as change-makers. They believe that the work they sign-up for must be holistic & purpose driven, and that it must champion social causes
- **Achieving financial independence** and good mental health with self-acceptance, physical fitness & me-time are inclusive. It is not an option
- **Seeking social validation is not a priority**, because this generation gets that fuel from their social media, and it is not new for them. They are against being in a rat race

The path to happiness is to realise autonomy, foster empathetic connections & build a conscious community - in one's personal & professional life.

Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – "I"

- ◇ Freedom to be Authentic
- ◇ Mental & Physical Health
- ◇ Self-acceptance, preservation & drawing boundaries
- ◇ Stability & Joy – long & short term
 - Purpose-driven Promising Career
 - Cherishing the small things

A tough journey owing to the overprotective parenting, societal boundaries & stigma and higher expectations from work & workplaces

Family is their no.1 priority & safety net and primed their concept of society – warmth & deserving appreciation yet at risk

Empathetic Connections

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society – "Us"

- ◇ Safe space to be authentic
- ◇ Acceptance of authenticity – diversity, equity & inclusion
- ◇ Emotional support & collaboration – human first approach
- ◇ Appreciation & Recognition over competition

Conscious Community

A world built on environmental consciousness & social impact over capitalism & consumerism – "All"

- ◇ LGBTQ+ rights – national & global diversity, equity & inclusion
- ◇ Safety & Kindness over political play & violence
- ◇ Environmentalism & Sustainability over capitalism
- ◇ Conscious Consumption with brand accountability

Individualistic beliefs make them more accountable to every day little things and strengthen their belief in 'collective good'

A tough journey owing to the overprotective parenting, societal boundaries & stigma and higher expectations from work & workplaces

Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – “I”

◇ Freedom to be Authentic

◇ Mental & Physical Health

◇ Self-acceptance, preservation & drawing boundaries

◇ Stability & Joy – long & short term

- Purpose-driven Promising Career
- Cherishing the small things

22-25yrs
Pune
Working

“People are not going to change - they can't change. But creating boundaries is in my hand, and I can do that. I need to take care of myself while taking care of them.”



But they are manifested differently based on city tier & gender

Metro

A relatively more open culture than the non-metros dictates the extent of how much they have to keep their feelings to themselves and draw their boundaries indicated by a lower percentage of agreement. While due to their time-pressed lives, the need to say no without being guilty is higher.

Non - Metro

Lower acceptance of Gen Z mindset, lack of privacy and increased societal pressures force them to live more in hiding.

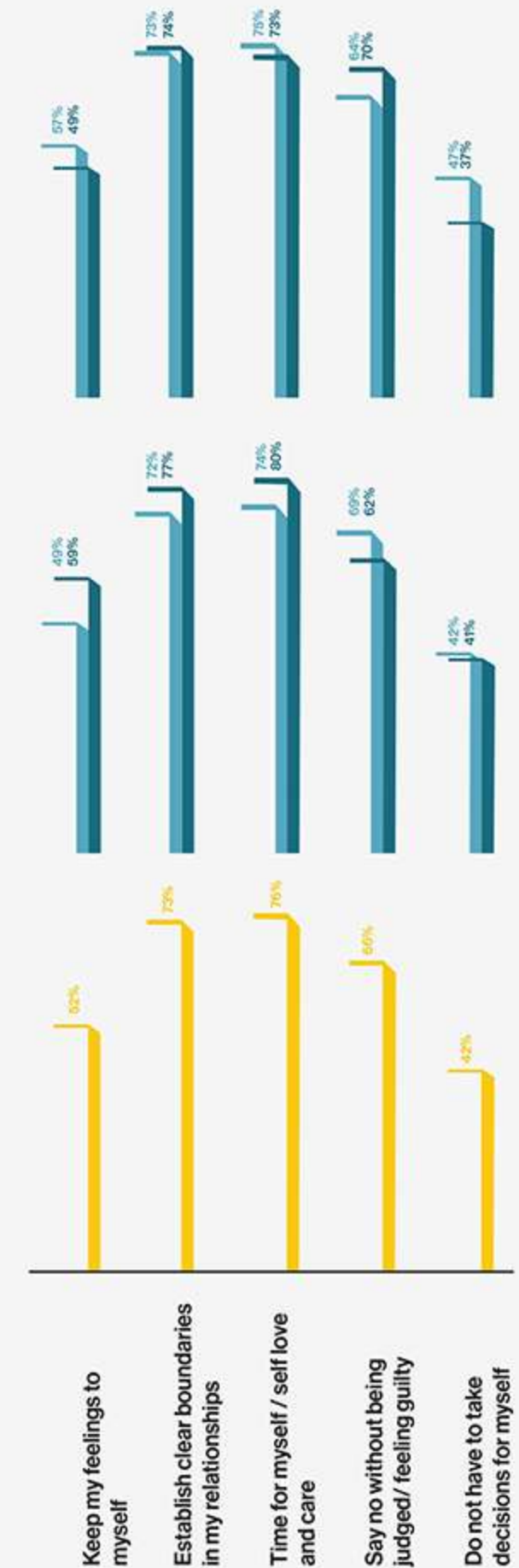
Gender

Women are tired of the increased restrictions imposed on them, and people taking decisions for them. Subsequently comes the greater need to establish boundaries & to say no without guilt. With gendered roles, they hardly get time for themselves.

Female
Male

Non Metro
Metro

Overall



Authenticity is the foundation of autonomy; the first step towards happiness

Freedom to be authentic

- Happiness is breaking the societal restrictions to be an independent adult with open expression of one's autonomy
- But society fears change and shoves its unrealistic & herd-driven expectations on them, leaving them with no option but to give in sometimes, to avoid added stress
- To escape societal expectations & constructs is a harrowing journey. But this generation is leading the path with duty, and their goal is generating awareness and practising the art of being their truest self, and undoing the toxicity & trauma of their previous generations – religious, traditional, cultural & moral compass

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working



"Society pushes me to do things I wouldn't normally do – for example, when I was in college, I was an introvert, but society is the people around you, and they put me in a place to do better."

18-21yrs
Bhubaneswar
Not Working



"Society is intolerant and going to extremes. Look at what have they done with religion."

18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



"Growing up, I couldn't wear what I wanted to, and wasn't able to live most of my childhood – and that's why this makes me happy right now. I also want to be able to talk freely in front of a camera and a crowd."

Happiness is a skill to learn by working on one's Mental & Physical Health

Mental & Physical Health

- The first generation to put focus on and take active steps towards understanding mental health and its close relation with happiness
- In India, while the discussion around mental health is still taboo, Gen Zers are taking an active approach to talk about it among family, friends and colleagues in real-life conversations, and on social media, pushing companies to take responsibility for their employees
- Regular mental health check-ins among friends are becoming more common and Gen Z are actively seeking therapy & counselling with a positive outlook
- While the Indian society at large is still in denial and perceives this generation as overly sensitive and/or more prone to mental health issues, it is crucial to understand that reported incidents of poor mental health issues by Gen Z indicate their high level of awareness

According to NIMHANS, 150MN+ people in India need mental health attention while the actual numbers may be even higher.

22-25yrs
Ahmedabad
Working



"Happiness has been a subjective thing for me from time to time. Right now, it's the little things in general: having mental and physical peace with my body and my surroundings. Moving forward might not be the same, so knowing this fact also makes me happy."

"I identify as an omniseual man. I personally take a stand for letting go of things I can't control. I used to be an uptight person and it got to the point where it started disrupting the aspects of life that I could control."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



22-25yrs
Bangalore
Working



"According to me, happiness is a skill. It's an option. It isn't inborn. We can add it to ourselves in our day-to-day life. Earlier, as children, we would be happy with small things, but as we grow older, we need to look out for ourselves."

And it is initiated with Self-Acceptance & Drawing Boundaries towards Self-Preservation

Self-Acceptance & Drawing Boundaries

- Gen Z are on a quest to (re) discover, (re) define & (re) invent themselves – change is the only constant philosophy – and this quest requires them to introspect, and their value system to understand what is important & acceptable to them towards self-acceptance
- Boundaries help in self-preservation from being overspent, overwhelmed, deceived, hurt, not being treated as an adult & being constantly judged for their identity – gender, sexuality, age, habits
- These boundaries are crucial for them to avoid conflicts between their values and those of our society predicated on collectivism, patriarchy, ageism, materialism, change resistance and so on
- Boundaries are essential to be focussed on their goals & purpose, and to have healthy & meaningful bilateral relationships

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"I started doing it recently. I respect myself, and the person in front of me can't take me for granted. I am taking a stand for myself. Having personal boundaries is very important."

18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working



"It is important to have boundaries. I don't like people constantly trying to talk to me because I enjoy my personal space, so I need that, and I respect other people's boundaries too. I have boundaries with my parents so that they don't check my phone."

A Stable, Promising Career gives them a substantial direction & financial independence

Purpose Driven Career

- Purpose-driven and promising careers provide them with stability, as they have grown up in uncertain times. Workplaces must add fuel to their fire, not douse it
- A career provides them with a sense of purpose, which is crucial, since they are aiming for the stars and are on a mission to make a dent in the fabric of society. It only makes it better if the company has similar values
- They aspire to grow and shatter boundaries and limitations to reform and come closer to their ideals – not just another brick in the wall or pea in the pod
- Ever-hungry to grow as individuals, experimentation is their second nature, to explore the depths & widths of themselves. Having a 2nd or a 3rd career, a passion project, a not-for-profit or volunteer project is the new normal – leaving no room for regrets
- They are ideal-realists and have their long-term future planned out to be stable

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"I bought some gifts for my parents worth rupees 3000 with my own salary. My mom and dad had happy tears in their eyes which made me feel very good."

"For me, it's my career. It is something I am passionate about. I also find happiness in my parents, my friends, dogs, music, and rain."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



Happiness is all about making time and creating a stress free mental state to live in the now

Cherishing the Small Things

- Having witnessed the wrath of Covid and the uncertainty and hardship that it mustered, living in the moment is their new life mantra
- They are trying to cling to the smaller and simpler joys of life: cuddling with dogs, cycling, reading, spending time alone on their terrace, in order to get habituated
- With meticulous planning, they seek stability to secure their future, and by living in the moment they allow serendipity in their lives, relying on spontaneity to enjoy the flavours of today. This is something that is unique to Gen Z, and something none of the previous generations possessed. They are trying to sort out their present and their future simultaneously

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"When I am not happy, I feel stuck. My day is not productive if I am not happy. And I have a sweet tooth, so if I am sad, I like to have desserts. Chocolates help me calm down. I had an anxiety attack so I had choco lava cake, and it helped me."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"Everything feels beautiful and since my childhood, I would sit on my terrace and watch the sunset. It is the way I like to spend my time."

18-21yrs
Ahmedabad
Not Working



"For me, hanging out with friends, reading books, and learning something new always helps me stay happy. Last time I was really happy was 3 days ago, when my team made a good win.."

18-21yrs
Chennai
Not Working



"My biggest source of happiness is when lectures get cancelled and I can do coding. Materialistic things don't make me happy."

Empathetic Connections

Family is their no.1 priority & safety net, and has primed their concept of society – warmth & deserving appreciation are still at risk.

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society - “Us”

◇ Safe space to be authentic

◇ Acceptance of authenticity – diversity, equity & inclusion

◇ Emotional support & collaboration – human first approach

◇ Appreciation & Recognition over competition

18-21yrs
Delhi
Not Working

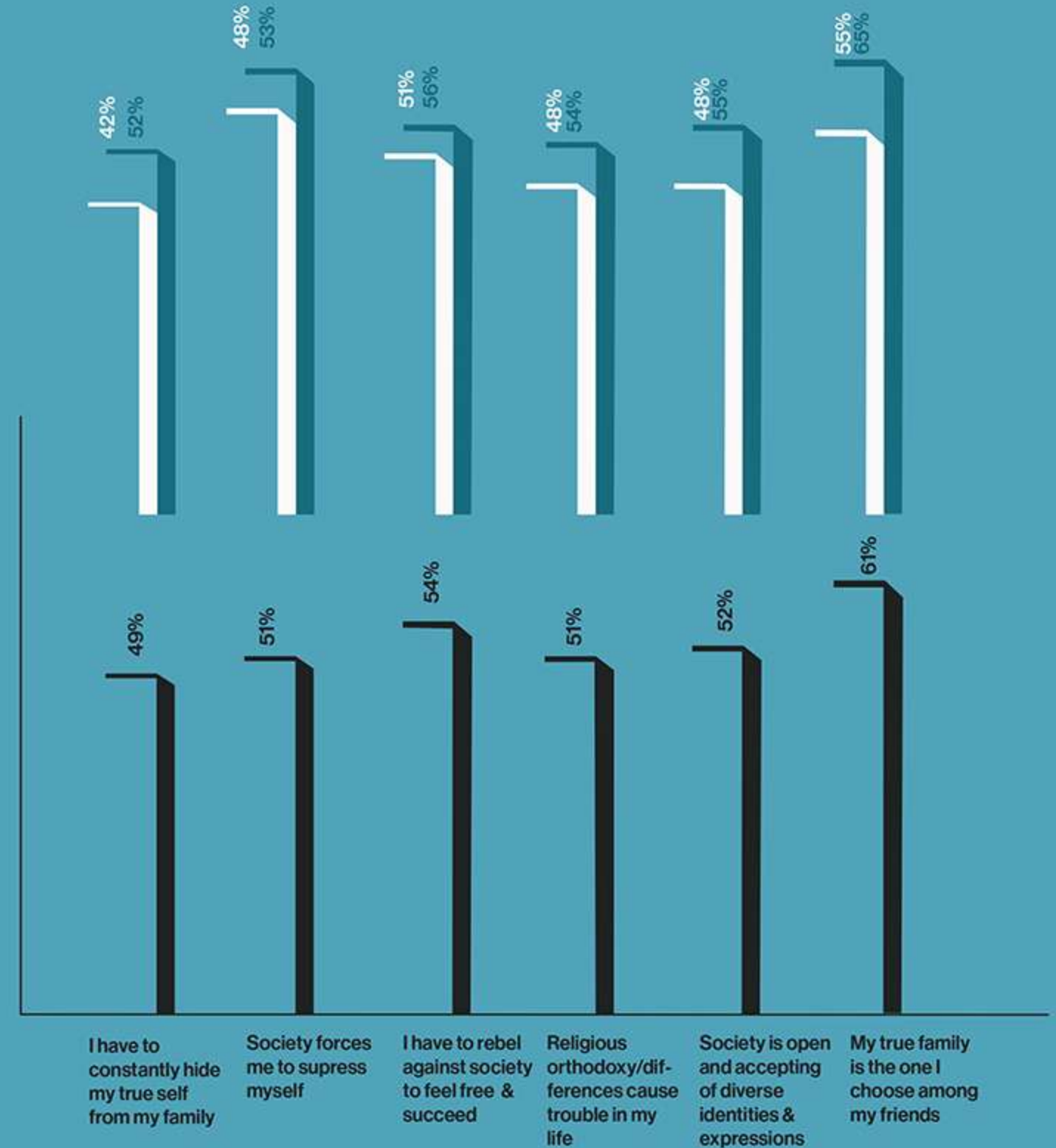


“I compare companies with schools: there are a bunch of people with the same mindset and the same goals, and you share your personal and professional life, so I consider workplaces an extension of schools and colleges.”

The everyday rebellion to be free & accepted by society drains Gen Z

- Gen Z, the believers in empathy, have been forced to fight for their freedom of expression and be accepted
- Though they feel that society has opened up a great deal to accept diversity and expression, it is not enough
- They believe that they have the power to choose and curate their family with friends who are accepting and supportive. In non-metro areas, there is a higher need because of the relatively lower open culture
- The 22-25 year old segment, which comprises mostly working people, feels this a lot more with their exposure & experience outside the bubble of their college

22-25 Y
18-21 Y



Family is their #1 priority but not the perfect Safe Space

Safe Space

- A conducive space to explore is key. Authenticity comes into context when there is a safety net to fall back on. Family comes first & foremost, and their more open & progressive relationships with their overprotective parents have allowed them to express themselves, fail repeatedly, and pick themselves up every time with undeterred enthusiasm
- This safe space is realised out of the home when they find a community that they relate with. From Facebook to Instagram to Snapchat, avenues are plenty, and finding spaces where they can identify are more accessible than they have been in the past, but it's still a risky adventure in India
- However, all is not well in their relationship with their parents, and it forces them to hide their true feelings about certain issues

22-25yrs
Bangalore
Working



"My parents support me and have accepted me, but we do have a generation gap although the wavelength is good. I share things with my mom, but not everything. I have mostly stayed away from my parents in PGs and hostels, so I couldn't share anything except for the last 3 years."

"I like that there is a filter between me and the people. As long as their toxicity doesn't affect me, I don't mind. Being in the company of society is okay, but you need to be aware of what you accept and what you don't."

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working



22-25yrs
Chandigarh
Working



"Society allows me to create a community where I feel safe. Coexistence and cooperation. We even have our own groups on Facebook and Instagram where we share stuff."

Gen Z believes that the world can become a better place when everyone attains Equity

Acceptance- diversity, equity & inclusion

- Gen Z grew up appreciating and accepting difference as normal. The concept of diversity is natural to them, and anything that negates it is a serious imposition on the equitable world they imagine
- Happiness is in acceptance, equality, inclusivity, and an overarching emotion of togetherness and empathy towards others
- Acknowledging the fact that no one size fits all, and that every individual is gifted and unique helps relieve the pressure society and family applies on them
- Self-guilt of their privilege makes them more accountable to create a world of fairness

18-21yrs
Bhubaneswar
Not Working



"We have created our workplace in a way that is a safe place for everyone out there. We call it "thikana". It just feels good to refer to my workplace as my "thikana". I can't explain the feeling."

"Once my workplace found out I'm queer, they didn't treat me well and I will now look for a workplace that will respect me."

18-21yrs
Kolkata
Not Working



18-21yrs
Pune
Not Working



"People from different backgrounds. Respecting each other's opinions. Not making anyone feel left out. Welcoming energy."

Life is co-created & co-lived, and it is impossible without Emotional Support

Emotional Support & Collaboration

- A generation that longs for empathetic acceptance, because their relationships are more undefined, as compared to previous generations, and they tend to find a safe space
- While they love and respect their parents and desire to be open and honest about their lives with them, they are unwilling to confide in them, fearing retaliation and backlash
- However, they seek online communities and their close friends to confide in
- For Gen Z, adulting comes with the realisation that true friendship is a bilateral relationship, not one-sided. Sometimes, it's best to cut people out than to be alone in a group
- They are constantly looking to curate their own communities



22-25yrs
Ahmedabad
Working

"I am a very flexible person while in groups. I let go of things that are not hurting me."



18-21yrs
Jaipur
Not Working

"Reciprocate. If I do something, they should reciprocate it. I want stability and an honest relationship."



22-25yrs
Bhubaneswar
Working

"I prefer quality over quantity. I have a small circle of friends and I trust each of them at a different level. If my friends described me, they would say she is kind and helpful. I am a good friend in my circle, and I prefer people similar to me. I don't share much with my friends. If they know, it's okay, but I don't go and tell them. I try to keep things to myself."



18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working

"I like having people around and I do have friends, but I am so insecure about myself that I feel like okay, they don't like me or they don't want me, but my friends reassure me that it's not true."

Appreciating others & Being Appreciated for living & thriving in uncertainty must be normalized

Appreciation & Recognition

- They have grown up in an era where there is constant validation – likes, comments, DMs, swipes, affirmations, friendly check-ins, sheltered parenting, and so on
- They want to be able to stand out, stand up for themselves, and be appreciated for who they truly are, and not just a value add or a transactional benefit
- They believe that everyone deserves appreciation & recognition for being there for their family & friends and surviving in the uncertain world with constant battles with themselves



22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working

"They should understand my situation: you can't expect me to do graphic designing if you tell me things over the phone. A company should make the people believe that they are an asset to the team."



18-21yrs
Jaipur
Not Working

"Getting constant admiration for my work, if I do something really good; appreciation leads to automatic motivation."



22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working

"Something that truly made me happy was that, this August, I received my first paycheque. That was the reward of my own hard work."

Conscious Community

Individualistic beliefs make them more accountable to everyday little things and strengthen their belief in the 'collective good'.

A world built on environmental consciousness & social impact over capitalism & consumerism – “All”

◇ LGBTQ+ rights
– national & global
diversity, equity &
inclusion

◇ Safety & Kindness over
political play & violence

◇ Environmentalism
& Sustainability over
capitalism

◇ Conscious
Consumption with brand
accountability

“Society is us. If I feel something is wrong, I believe in talking about things, so I make a point that my family doesn't judge someone else's son or daughter.”

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working



Kindness is revolutionary & love can change the world: this is their rebellion

Safety & Kindness

- Solely relying on a core group is not the smartest thing to do for this generation, as they ultimately have to venture out into the real world and mingle in society
- Sick of living dual lives because of the societal diktat, they have been smashing and stretching the conservative boundaries of the society
- Kindness is the new revolution. It's about being kind to oneself, to society, to other human beings, towards the environment, and so on
- They take a stand for LGBTQIA+ rights and against patriarchy, discrimination, etc. because any kind of human suffering makes them feel guilty. They are a reflection of society and are mindful of their actions



"Youth empowerment, individuality and independence, and not doing what everybody else is doing. Since youth is the future of the country, if we don't empower them, they might end up depending on other generations. If we have the privilege now to raise people with us somewhere, then why not?"

"I am an advocate. I hate stereotypes and rules for gender and toxic masculinity. No gender has a particular way of behaving and dressing, and I take a stand for mental health."



"I am a social worker & I've made a community with rape survivors. I ask them to come up and tell us their story, talk about their problems and what they expect from society."



"I work for Prabha, which is an NGO that works for mental health awareness, and I am a graphic designer there. It makes me feel good, because a lot of people can't afford therapy, and we provide that at a very minimal charge."

Gen Z's driving principle is Social Justice for all – they want to be a voice of change, not an echo of tyranny

LGBTQIA+ Rights – diversity, equity & inclusion

- The always-on, hyperconnected world they live in has exposed them to the past and present societal oppressions on certain cultures, minorities, gender, orientation and sexualities. Their driving principle is equal treatment for all with natural empathy as they grew up in a diverse, connected world
- While Gen Z has come of age in a world where every issue is scrutinised in real time on social media, it's crucial to remember that actions speak louder than words, and that progressive & equitable societies always prioritise outcomes, not social capital through empty promises
- The actions individuals, societies & governments take or empower their peers/citizens to take on social issues drive more change than a mere stance. Real action requires real courage, and Gen Zers are reforming the societal norms to bring about this reality



"It is a railway track. There are different types of people on different tracks, and it will take time for them to come on one track. There are people living in their own worlds and society is accepting a lot in a really short period of time, for instance, the queer community."

"In Hinduism, there is something called Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means, 'the world is my family'. If we apply this in our society, it will be a better place to live in."



"The part of society that does not want to change really annoys me. The part which does not understand mental health is LGBTQ. They are not even trying to change themselves. The older generations."



"Society is intolerant and going to extremes. Look at what have they done with religion."

Saving The Planet is to save its people, especially the ones denied social justice

Environmentalism & Sustainability

- They are our climate warriors, our young activists who are determined to change the landscape of the world as we know it
- Zero waste, carbon neutrality, electric alternatives, and so on are some of their adaptations to ensure a better tomorrow
- They understand the seriousness of climate change & its disproportionate effects on underprivileged people

22-25yrs
Pune
Working



"I aspire to be a professor, but with the Indian education system, I will have restrictions, and I am worried about the country's future. There needs to be a diplomatic response to it, and I am scared for the next generation."

18-21yrs
Hyderabad
Not Working



"I want to be associated with doing good for the planet. We need to get our act together, and if the company I eventually work for actually cares about the environment and is proactive in doing so, then nothing like it."

Reversing capitalism is their only shot at saving their future

Conscious Consumption

- Human greed has caused a lasting impact, and Gen Z is in a race with time to undo all the damage and ensure that the planet is habitable for our race to survive and thrive. The alarm bells are going off, and Gen Z is on red alert
- This generation is dealing with the repercussions of the deeds of the previous generations
- They are going back to the basics. Chemical-free products, eco-friendly packaging, adopting processes with a low carbon footprint, etc. are all making their way back slowly, but surely

"Irresponsibility in the sense that they don't take care of the plant, and when the government builds infrastructure, people destroy it."

22-25yrs
Pune
Working



22-25yrs
Bhubaneswar
Working



"Self-awareness is important for us to achieve something we want in life. We cannot compare ourselves and our goals."

18-21yrs
Hyderabad
Not Working



"I focus on writing, and I am working on my book right now. Whenever I want to express my feelings, I start writing. I am an artist, so I draw something in the form of abstract art or I go and cook and try out new recipes, or feed stray animals. Since I have a lot of priorities in my life, I love working for a social cause, and I am into sustainability and animal safety. So, when I do something with regards to it, I feel happy. For example, last year, I was in a vaccination drive for stray dogs."

Work Is Not Worship, But A Liberating, Necessary Aid To Fulfil Their Purpose

Work must provide them financial independence, stability, resources and an empathetic community to pursue their larger purpose and passion. Gen Z is redefining work and workplaces by upholding their values with great courage. They know how to draw boundaries and are getting better at it, with no tolerance for toxicity.

Work is the path to realise their dream of an autonomous, empathetic & sustainable world

- Work is not only about money, but financial independence, with a purpose-fuelled community ready to impact the world for good
- Millennials were swayed by the higher inflow of disposable incomes & believed in living the new, lavish experiences they never had with little financial planning. Millennials resisted change, but money & authority trumped their beliefs, creating the hustle culture. The baton passed on to Gen Z, with millennials setting the ground for them
- However, the urban middle & upper-class Gen Z grew up with such experiences as their normal. Gen Zers' need to work is not mere survival, but a path of opportunities to make a real impact, with their values on their terms and a source of freedom to expand their life beyond work – passion, causes, hobbies, focus on relationships & more
- Gen Zers believe in an overall work package with autonomy, empathetic connections & a purpose to build a conscious world. With millions entering the work-force every year, there is already a shift in the old social contracts between employers & employees, pushing them to calibrate with the new mindset

Gen Z understands how capitalism works, and wants to use this power for good – what good are luxuries when others rot in poverty, oppression & depression?

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"We watch documentaries, and after that, we talk about the camera angles and the equipment they used. I am happy to have passionate people to work with, and my colleagues sharing inputs makes me happy."

22-25yrs
Jaipur
Working



"Satisfaction and a good working environment. In my industry, if I have to cut a cloth, it doesn't mean that I am a tailor, having an understanding between everyone that "koi kaam chota bada nahi hota" is important, supervisors shouldn't be bossy, and everyone should be understanding and friendly."

22-25yrs
Chennai
Working

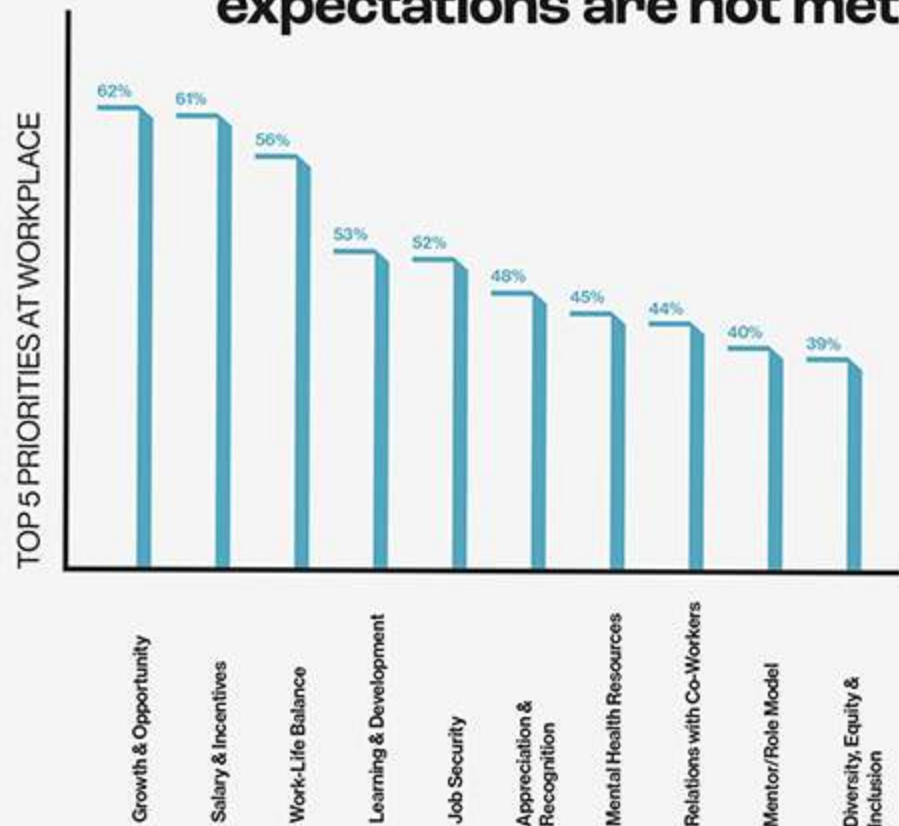


"In terms of my job, I constantly upskill myself because there are more things to learn every day, and learning things will make me better and more knowledgeable. That mindset keeps me motivated."

Gen Z Wants It All – authenticity, autonomy, clear values, equity, fairness, flexibility

- Gone are the times of compromises at work: Gen Zers have already held brands accountable for their actions, and with them entering the workforce, they are changing the work paradigm for the better. **But it's not that they feel entitled: they are on a mission to reform the broken system around them.**
- The economic certainty and the power of digital unity they grew up in have empowered them with raw, unapologetic & authentic confidence to stand up against unfair practices & uphold their value system. They do not want to waste their time chasing a goal that is not theirs.

And will give their all – dedication, loyalty & hard work – for the right employer! But they are also brutal and impulsive enough to change paths & employers if their expectations are not met.



Gen Z is practical in its priorities. They want it all after they secure their future.

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"It should be a company that helps me grow and figure myself out. It shouldn't be limiting my creative flow."

22-25yrs
Bhubaneswar
Working



"A place that allows my creative flow so that I feel like I belong to the workplace, instead of giving work. Also, taking my inputs even if I am a fresher, because it will make me feel like I belong there and that I am appreciated."

18-21yrs
Guwahati
Working



"An employee shouldn't be burdened with work, getting appreciated and bonuses or rewards, they should have good bonding, seniors and juniors should have a good and healthy relationship, if you feel challenged, earning rewards and bonuses will help."

Gen Z's workplace expectations are not different from their societal expectations

Important for employers to understand:

Work must offer them avenues to explore & achieve their full potential with clear work boundaries that do not infringe on their personal space & time. Job security, mental health, and joy are necessities.

Gen Zers are the happiest & most productive when they do not have to hide their identity & emotions. They demand a human-first approach with everyone treated, accepted, and appreciated equally for who they truly are, alongside a caring work culture.

Consciousness for them is action-driven. They want to work at companies with a strong value system that cares for humans, animals & the world. Businesses must work for profit but not at the cost of people and the planet.

Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – "I"

- ◇ Freedom to be Authentic
- ◇ Mental & Physical Health
- ◇ Self-acceptance, preservation & drawing boundaries
- ◇ Stability & Joy – long & short term
 - Purpose-driven Promising Career
 - Cherishing the small things

A tough journey owing to the overprotective parenting, societal boundaries & stigma and higher expectations from work & workplaces

Family is their no.1 priority & safety net and primed their concept of society – warmth & deserving appreciation yet at risk

Empathetic Connections

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society – "Us"

- ◇ Safe space to be authentic.
- ◇ Acceptance of authenticity – diversity, equity & inclusion
- ◇ Emotional support & collaboration – human first approach
- ◇ Appreciation & Recognition over competition

Conscious Community

- ◇ LGBTQ+ rights – national & global diversity, equity & inclusion
- ◇ Safety & Kindness over political play & violence
- ◇ Environmentalism & Sustainability over capitalism
- ◇ Conscious Consumption with brand accountability

Individualistic beliefs make them more accountable to every day little things and strengthen their belief in 'collective good'



A tough journey owing to the overprotective parenting, societal boundaries & stigma and higher expectations from work & workplaces

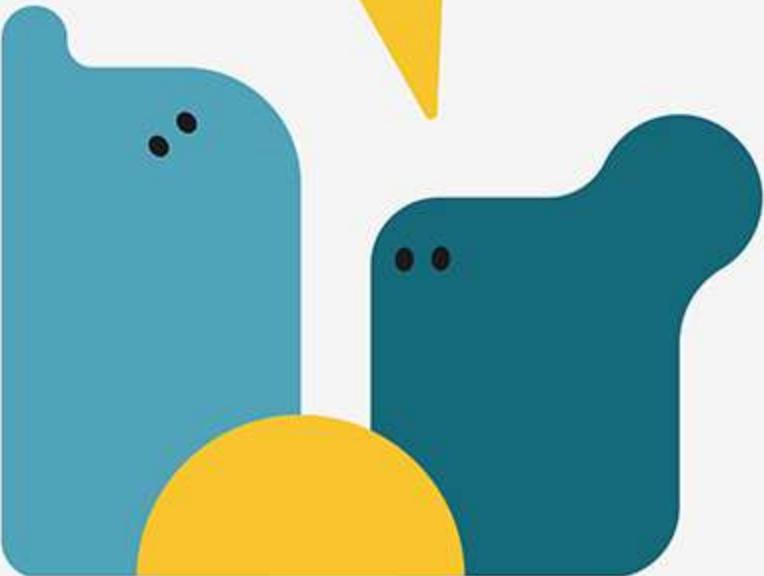
Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – “I”

- ◊ Freedom to be Authentic
- ◊ Mental & Physical Health
- ◊ Self-acceptance, preservation & drawing boundaries
- ◊ Stability & Joy – long & short term
 - Purpose-driven Promising Career
 - Cherishing the small things

“No specific language to speak in, no specific dress code, no gossip or hate towards anyone, a space where everything is clean, completing my promises to my employees, not keeping the best employee awards to avoid competition, encouraging team spirit.”

18-21 yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



Working is a must but not at the cost of Inequality, Toxicity & Mental Health

Mental & Physical Health

- There is absolutely no room for toxicity
- Gen Zers have grown up witnessing adversity and have been robbed of their youthful years by Covid-19, and they demand and need workplaces that do not add to their stress levels
- With one-third of their day engaged in work, they expect companies to step up and address the mental health crisis – office politics, harassment, burn out, lay-offs, no work-life balance, unrealistic deadlines & pressure
- **It is time for companies to draw out mental health policies, give access to resources, and initiate counsellor-certified check-ins**

Freedom to be Authentic

- Gen Z refuses to live dual lives and hide their true selves
- Some examples are – work ethic over buttering, voicing concerns, cordial top-management interactions, flexible work options, personalised work spaces, no dress code & so on
- **An open culture that values free expression boosts loyalty & efficiency**

22-25yrs
Pune
Working



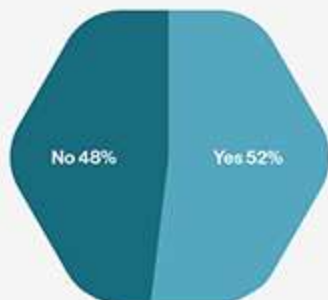
"I would promote that it's okay if you worked for an hour, now let's just go to the gym and maybe do some exercise. Health is as important as work."

18-21yrs
Kolkata
Not Working

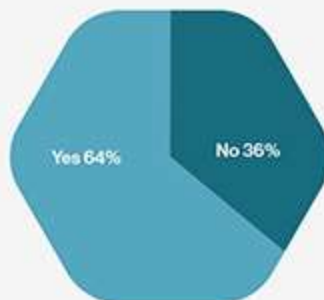


"There shouldn't be formal attire so they can work comfortably, and physically, there should be places for recreation like Amazon and Google, who have an amphitheatre, sleeping pods, etc. This creates efficiency. One needs to feel happy to come to a workplace."

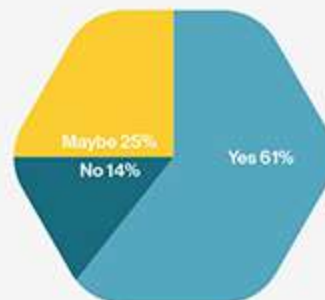
Personalised work place & no-dress code were almost equal – Ranked 3



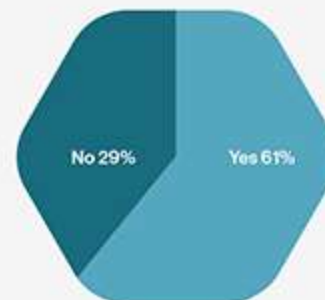
Flexible Work Option in workplace environment – Ranked 1



Work at a company that values mental health & inclusivity for less money



Access to Mental Health Resources in workplace priorities – Ranked 1



18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



"A workplace like Google, has recreational spaces and flexible deadlines, a beautiful workspace, good food, good perks, and anything that a person needs for work, they get that there. Humans are greedy and they are providing them with everything."

Stability, Purpose & Joy with well-defined work boundaries are essential

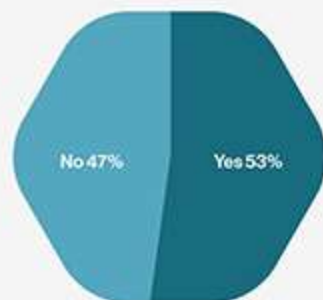
Stability & Joy

- Stability at the workplace is not being stuck with the same responsibility, but it is understood to be learning, growth, job security & the opportunity to make an impact for the company – its goals, values & employees
- The uncertain times in their lives and in the present have made them meticulous planners, focused on chalking out their future to secure themselves in the long-term. Their loyalty is unwavering, but it is a two-way street
- Gen Z does not live by the rules of 'serious business'. They believe happiness is to cherish the small things and that work must be joyful – team vacations (47%), conquering challenges, doing good for society & collaboration over competition

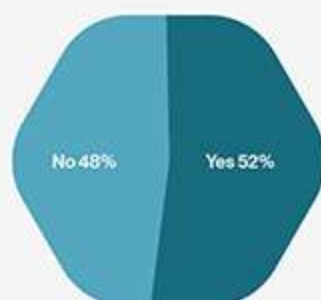
Drawing Boundaries

- Gen Z finds it very odd that their previous generations almost never drew a line with their work and believed in 'work is worship'
- They are clear that life is not all about work – it is family & self first, living life on their own terms, and to discover & work on themselves
- Establishment of clear boundaries is their forte, and they master the art of time segregation. They find it shocking when people use work time for their personal tasks and/or bring work in their personal time
- But sharing their emotions and feelings is not crossing any boundaries: they believe it is healthy, and builds strong ties with colleagues

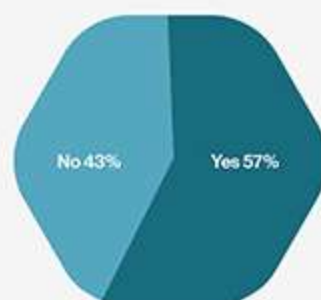
Priority 3 – Learning & Development



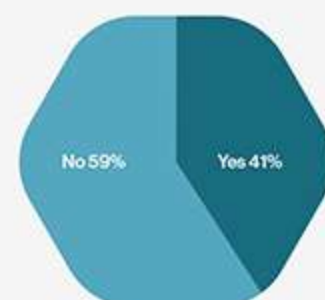
Priority 4 – Job Security



Foster Strict Work-Life Balance



Companies should be strict about deadlines



22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"The place where I'm working does not understand personal space - they message me after work hours about why a particular task hasn't been completed."

18-21yrs
Pune
Not Working



"Anything which can help me grow in a humble and kind way. It can be harsh, but only to an extent. It should always challenge me and be about working together for that one particular goal, not forcing anyone to change their values."

Empathetic Connections

Family is their no.1 priority & safety net and primed their concept of society – warmth & deserving appreciation yet at risk

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society - “Us”

◇ Safe space to be authentic

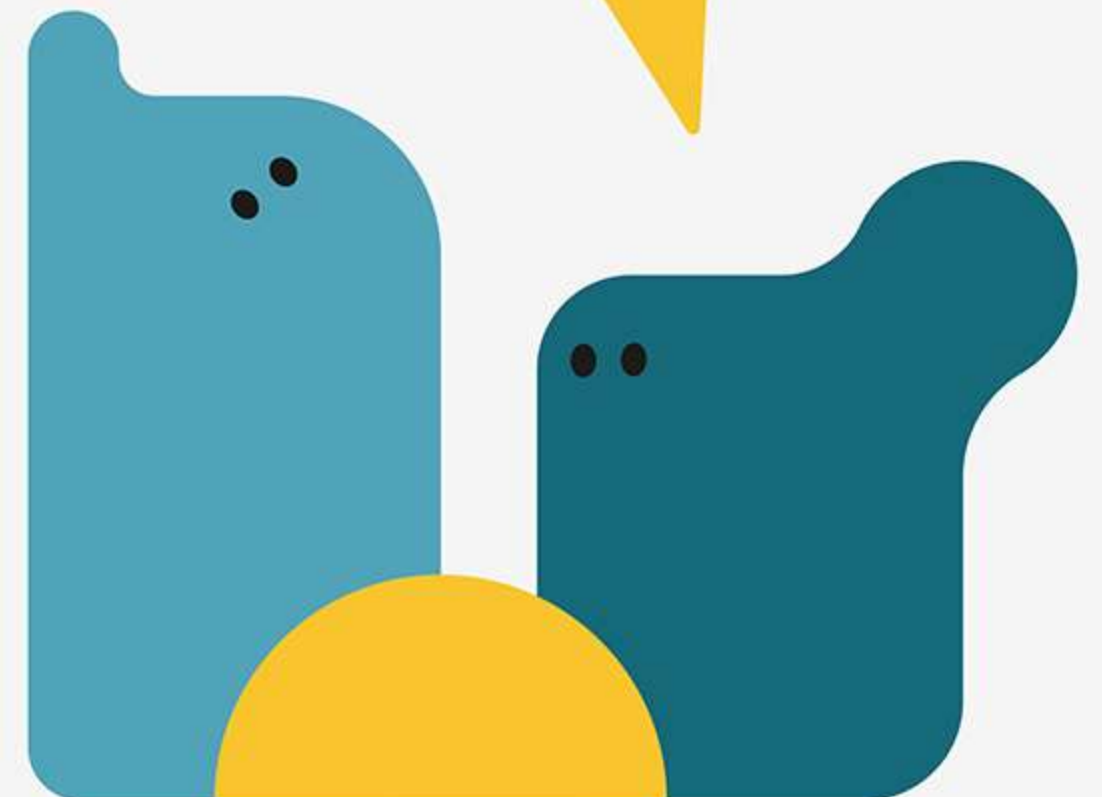
◇ Acceptance of authenticity – diversity, equity & inclusion

◇ Emotional support & collaboration – human first approach

◇ Appreciation & Recognition over competition

“I was working for this local brand as a creative designer, and my seniors and managers gave me freedom instead of telling me what to do. They asked me how to better things and they gave me the creative freedom to express myself, which meant a lot to me.”

22-25 yrs
Bhubaneswar
Working



An open and accepting environment nurtures a stellar squad

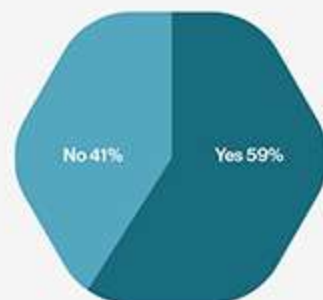
Emotional Support & Collaboration

- Gen Z wants to be understood by the older generations, especially the people in power who control their future. They want them to view the world from their shoes – an intense world of adversity & hustle impacting the mental health of millions of Indians – for easier collaboration and collective achievements
- Growing up without role models, especially professional role models, has left them astray, without a map. They seek mentorship and the support of their colleagues & company, which help them pursue their passions and reach their full potential

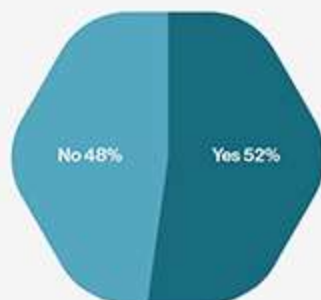
Safe Space & Acceptance

- Gen Z wants to be accepted as human beings first and then as contributing individuals of the team or company
- A safe and accepting space fosters a culture of innovation, clarity & coherence – an environment that is not hostile, and where people can be their authentic selves & speak their minds without any hesitations
- It nurtures strong ties with the team and offers diverse perspectives for accelerated and creative problem-solving when everyone is treated fairly

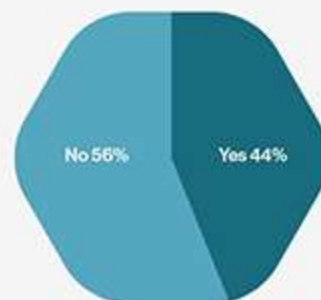
Must Haves – Ranking 3 Treat all employees fairly



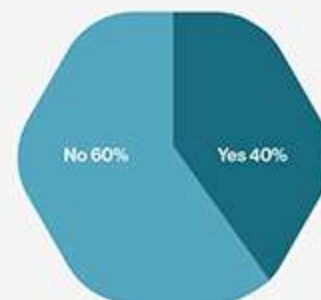
Promotes non-judgemental Self-expression



Top 5 – Effective Harassment Policies & Redressal



Priority to have a mentor/work role model



22-25yrs
Chennai
Working



"Respect everyone's ideas and opinions, and make them work as a team so that they have an internal understanding. If they are interactive, they will work more efficiently, so there should be a balance between your team members."

22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



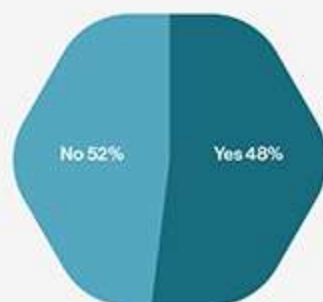
"Being more respectful to everyone because everyone is spending 10-12 hours of their day in the building, working for the firm. They must get a sense of belonging. There should be anonymous dropboxes as well."

An honest appreciation & public recognition keeps the morale high

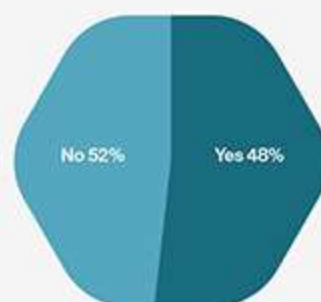
Appreciation & Recognition

- Professionalism is a two-way street. Their hard & smart work must be rewarded with financial incentives, and more importantly, positive reinforcement with compassion & gratitude
- The main drive is to continue working in an organisation and to go the extra mile. They need to know that they have ownership, agency and accountability for the good work they, the team and the company do
- Recognition comes in many packages – from public social posts & features, everyday appreciation, big events & awards and connecting with top management
- This generation knows how to give and receive feedback; they have done it all their life with social media comments, product reviews & recommendations and demand constructive dialogue & feedback, not only from their superiors but more importantly, from their mentors, top management and customers
- The best form of appreciation, recognition and feedback for Gen Z is personalisation with effort. Generic appreciation is off-limits and feels insulting to them. Time, effort, compassion & generosity are key

Prioritise Appreciation & Recognition



Must haves – Personal connect with top management



22-25yrs
Pune
Working



"Higher authorities from the company should come and mingle with us, come and work with us. This will ensure that we don't have a bond that is meaningless, and that I can count on other people. There should be someone we employees can count on."

18-21yrs
Delhi
Not Working



"A good environment, where you find supportive and accepting people. Seniors should have good relationships and make everyone feel involved. Everyone's suggestions should be appreciated and criticisms be accepted, and one should be able to grow in that work environment."



A world built on environmental consciousness & social impact over capitalism & consumerism – “All”

◇ LGBTQ+ rights
– national & global
diversity, equity &
inclusion

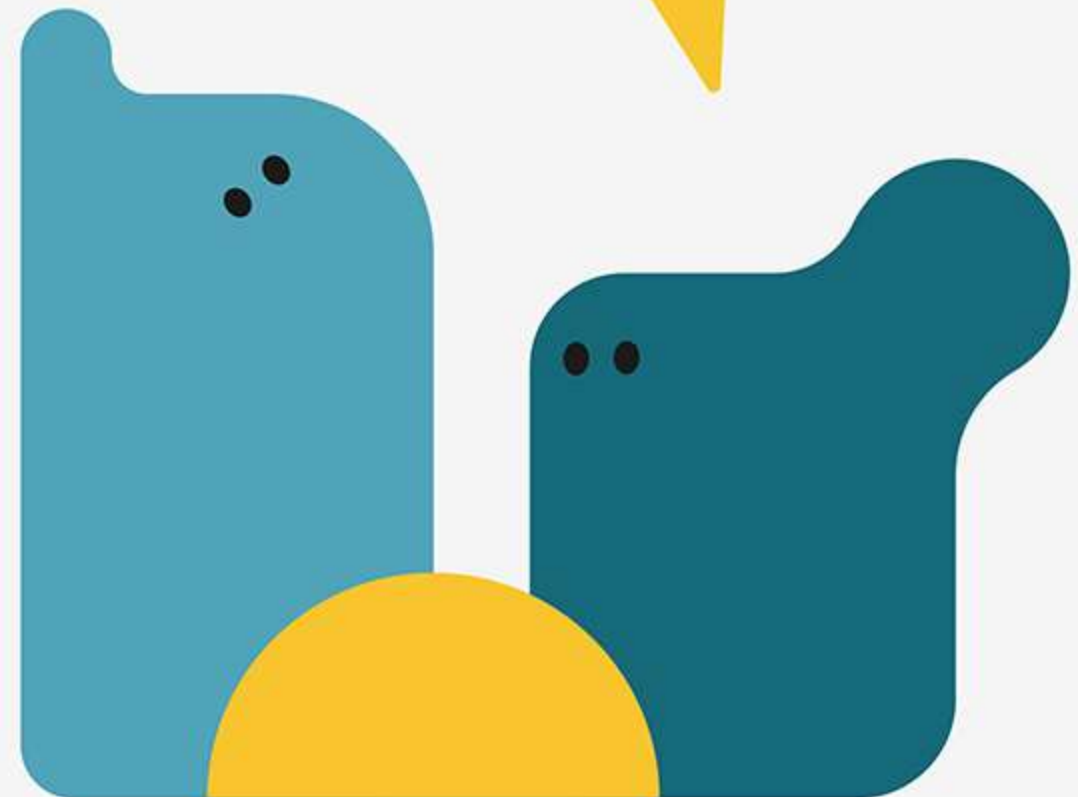
◇ Safety & Kindness over
political play & violence

◇ Environmentalism
& Sustainability over
capitalism

◇ Conscious
Consumption with brand
accountability

“Society is us, if I feel something is wrong I believe in talking about things even if it is wrong so I make a point that my family doesn't judge someone else's son or daughter”.

22-25 yrs
Kolkata
Working



Gen Z is holding Brands & Companies accountable towards social causes, sustainability & diversity

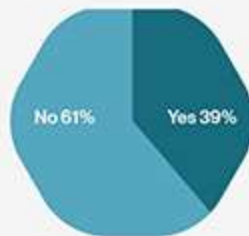
Sustainability & Conscious Consumption

- Gen Zers live in self-guilt of not doing enough for the environment. They hold corporations accountable for the chaos & mess the world is in today
- Having witnessed the environmental damage, global warming, waste management, animal brutality, fast fashion & plastic crisis manifest in their lives with poor AQIs, garbage dumps and more, they demand that their workplaces intervene
- From small steps like eliminating plastic & disposable usage, reducing e-waste and saving energy, to big stances like adopting a dedicated cause and shunning engagement with problematic personalities

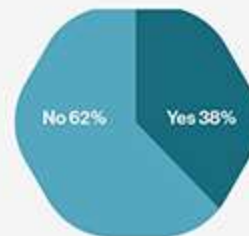
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- A company that holds the values of diversity, equity & inclusion at the company level is hygiene in today's era
- Gen Zers want them to go beyond the talk and see a real representation of youth, LGBTQ+, religious minorities, women & disabled persons in power and in their meeting rooms
- Intellectualization and sympathy are cliched social conversations – they want action from their workplaces & to take up social causes to mend the world – poverty, wealth gap, child labour, domestic abuse, menstrual & paternity offs etc.

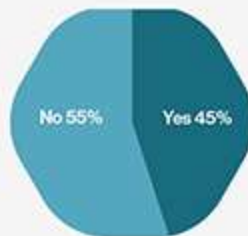
Strongly demand DEI policies



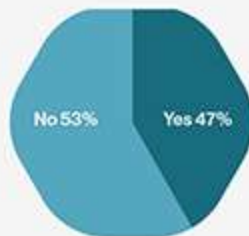
Must have Gender Neutral Washrooms



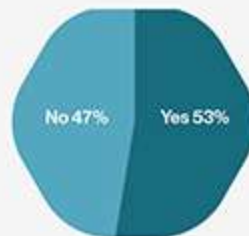
Be engaged in Social Work



Must have Menstrual Leaves



Women want Menstrual Leaves



"No encouragement of discrimination, and sensitisation programs quarterly/monthly, depending on the offence that a potential employee could have cost. Hiring a lot of trans people and Dalit people. Caste and sexuality-based inclusivity."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



22-25yrs
Chandigarh
Working



"A genuine environment wherein there is helping people and people you can actually talk to, not like 'kaam hogaya chale jao'. And be safe in the sense of people treating you; when you're in the workplace, you should not be terrified of anything."

22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



"Sustainability, like reducing the carbon footprint at my level best, maternity and menstrual leave for women, and health care or mental health for employees. Creating a department and monitoring it so people can be happy."

Gen Z is in the process of redefining a new Workplace Normal

The current scenario falls short of their ideal vision. They feel that companies are surface-scratching and making noise for the provisions of the bare minimum, basic human & employee rights.

Current Workplace Scenario



**Companies are warming
up to the Gen Z values of a Kind
and Equitable Environment**

However, they are far from real action and ideal practicalities.

Source: Business Insider | 2020

The benchmark for workplaces is so low that the smallest of things, even conversations, count as efforts

- Though workplaces are raising the bar with the fear of being called out on LinkedIn and Instagram, there are very few organisations that truly walk the talk
- The working conditions in India – due to a lack of effective regulation and laws – have gone unnoticed, and have been accepted as the 'work normal'
- About 26%-30% of the research participants rated 'excellent' or 'fully satisfied' with their company policies
- The non-metro participants rated the parameters higher, skewing the overall results. This must be understood with the benchmark being very low, and through the lens of the comparative context of the working conditions and societal context of non-metro cities
- The male participants across ages, work experience and cities rated higher on the parameters, suggesting a patriarchal skew, gender discrimination at organisations & practices that only favour one gender



22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



"I am happy at my workplace, so I will tell you what makes me happy: A very understanding superior who does not let you feel his superiority; helping people along; people who take initiative; a good environment."

22-25yrs
Chandigarh
Working



"I am the founder of my own company and we have a few interns working, so we appreciate them, we value work over how much time you put in. I think this makes all the difference."

18-21yrs
Bangalore
Not Working

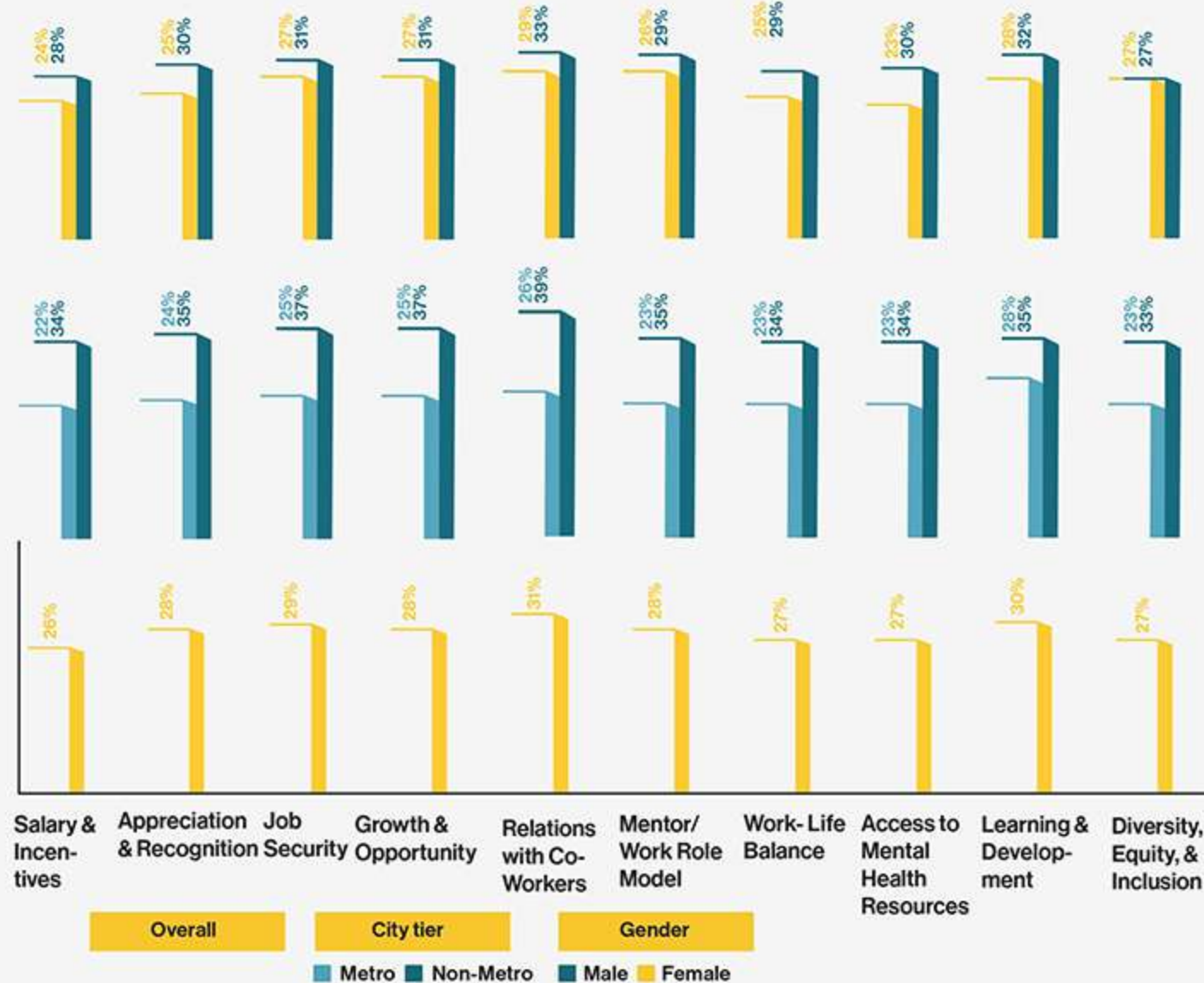


"The HR of my brother's company is warm and welcoming and understands the person's issues. I would like my own start-up workplace, where I would make sure that the female colleagues are able to take leave for menstruation."

The current workplace scenario is skewed towards men & exploits non-metros

It is evident from the data that -

- **Metro** participants are more dissatisfied and expect a lot more. This can be attributed to the aspects of awareness and more cross-culture interaction.
- **Non-metro** participants have ranked all parameters higher, indicating their benchmark and awareness levels are low, and that they are happy with the companies doing very little.
- **Female** participants ranked all parameters lower than **males**, indicating the inherent sexism and patriarchal policies of organisations that need immediate redressal.
- **Other genders** marked DEI really low and, in qualitative immersions, voiced the same.



22-25yrs
Guwahati
Working

"Politics at the workplace. There was something which I was supposed to get from the job but instead, another girl got it because of her good relations with the manager."

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working

"Once my workplace found out I was queer they didn't treat me well and I will look for a workplace that will respect me."

22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working

"We should get mental health day breaks 2-3 times a month. They should allow workcations for creative people - it gives them more exposure."

Toxic Workplace Scenario



**Infringing on Basic
Autonomy & Privacy, Fuelling
Work Competitiveness &
Lack of Accountability makes
work Stressful**

Source: Business Insider | 2020

Reasons for toxicity at the workplace

Autonomy

Hierarchical Impositions

- Micro-management
- High-pressure timelines
- Fear-laced environment

Crossing Boundaries & Privacy

- Constant monitoring – CCTV, Screen Recordings
- Question life choices

Ridiculing Mental Wellbeing

- Calling it "new age drama" or "excuses"
- No outlet, policies or support portal

Instability & Lack of Joy

- Lack of job security, Job threats & hints
- No growth or positions of responsibility opportunities
- Frowning upon team get-togethers
- Not spending in team building

Empathetic Connections

Identity & Background Discrimination

- Gender, Age, Caste, Sexuality
- Nepotism & Favouritism
- Unequal wages

Work politics over collaboration

- Buttering culture
- Voice-up resulting in unfair treatment
- Credit stealing

Lack of Emotional Support

- No mentorship/No clear guidance
- Pinning mistakes on juniors

Unsafe space with no redressal

- Offensive & illicit language
- Gossip Culture
- Inappropriate behaviour towards non-men
- General harassment, abuse & sexual harassment

Conscious Community

Corporate Greed over Sustainability

- Heartlessness
- Not giving back to the society or planet
- Unfair & questionable practices to save costs

Exercising privilege

- Excessive wastage
- Refusal to execute policies
- Not realising the impact of such practices is felt most by underprivileged people

Ridiculing & labelling Gen Z causes of environmentalism & sustainability

- Cracking jokes, calling it a phase or show-off
- Leg pulling & bullying over beliefs

"Senior employees dominate the people at the lower level and put them under a lot of pressure. They should be approachable in case the junior level employee needs help. There is a limit to the respect that we give them. People give priority to people in the inner circle rather than deserving candidates."

18-21yrs
Guwahati
Not Working



22-25yrs
Ahmedabad
Working



"Working with a mental health startup that used to provide mental health services in schools and corporations, the work environment was pretty weird. The employees wouldn't even say hello, no one was allowed to talk to each other, they would spy on us with cameras. There was a constant watch on people and invasions into their personal lives."

18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



"My cousin faced online sexual harassment. When it happened, she didn't realise it, but afterwards, it was too late. The person who did it was her employer, so she couldn't take action against them because she waited for this job for 2 years."

"Last year, when I was working at my previous workplace, I lost my grandma in September. There was no one to fill in for me, so I had to juggle between the rituals and work. During the day, I took care of all the rituals and at night, I got my work done. I still volunteered and completed my work, so there should have been some sort of relaxation. It was very unfair and depressing. They lack some empathy a workplace comes with, and so I quit the job the following month. It became too much for me."

22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



22-25yrs
Ahmedabad
Working



"Another thing that puts me off is the stigma around talking about salaries or possessions at the workplace or outside of the workplace. I don't mind telling people about my salary."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"The lack of opportunities to take lead on certain projects, and the lack of trust from seniors that you can handle projects."

"A lot of politics, as not everyone can climb up the ladder, and it's more of a competitive space than a collaborative one. I am not comfortable working in such places."

18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



22-25yrs
Mumbai
Working



"The place I am working at does not understand personal space; they message me after work hours about why a particular job isn't done."

18-21yrs
Hyderabad
Not Working




"In my mother's college, where she works, they don't consider a woman's point of view to be valuable. It's the opposite of gender equality."

22-25yrs
Pune
Working



"One audit company, where my friends work, puts a lot of workload at the end of the year. They need to understand that people are leaving jobs even after being paid a good salary because of the extreme workload."


Ideal Workplace Scenario



**An Ideal Workplace is
an Extension & an Alignment
of their Beliefs with
Company Values hinged on
Acceptance & Kindness**

Source: Business Insider | 2020

Ideal Workplace Scenario



**An Ideal Workplace is
an Extension & an Alignment
of their Beliefs with
Company Values hinged on
Acceptance & Kindness**

Source: Business Insider | 2020

An ideal workplace fosters its employees to lead a wholesome life - an empathetic tribe

Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – "I"

Gen Zers are the happiest & most productive when they do not have to hide their identity & emotions. They demand a human-first approach with everyone treated, accepted & appreciated equally for who they truly are & a caring work culture.

Conscious Community

A world built on environmental consciousness & social impact over capitalism & consumerism – "All"

Work must offer them avenues to explore & achieve their full potential with clear work boundaries that do not infringe on their personal space & time. Job security, mental health & joy are necessities.

Empathetic Connections

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society – "Us"

Consciousness for them is action-driven. They want to work at companies with a strong value system that cares for humans, animals & the world. Businesses must work for profit but not at the cost of people & planet.

An Ideal Workplace fosters its employees to lead a wholesome life - an Empathetic Tribe

- Gone are the times of compromises at work! Gen Zers have already held brands accountable for their actions and with them entering the workforce they are changing the work paradigm for the better.
- But they aren't entitled. They are on a mission to reform the broken system around them.
- The economic certainty and the power of digital unity they grew up in have empowered them with raw, unapologetic & authentic confidence to stand up against unfair practices & uphold their value system.
- They do not want to waste their time chasing a goal that is not theirs.

With no compromises on their values, desires & beliefs

18-21yrs
Delhi
Not Working



"I don't understand what success in professional life is; if someone is earning 20 lakhs, that is called success, but some people who have a start-up and earn a crore are successful. I feel like if we achieve this, what next? I believe all of this is a rat race; success lies in happiness and not in the rat race. I should be happier with my job as compared to being happy with my salary."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



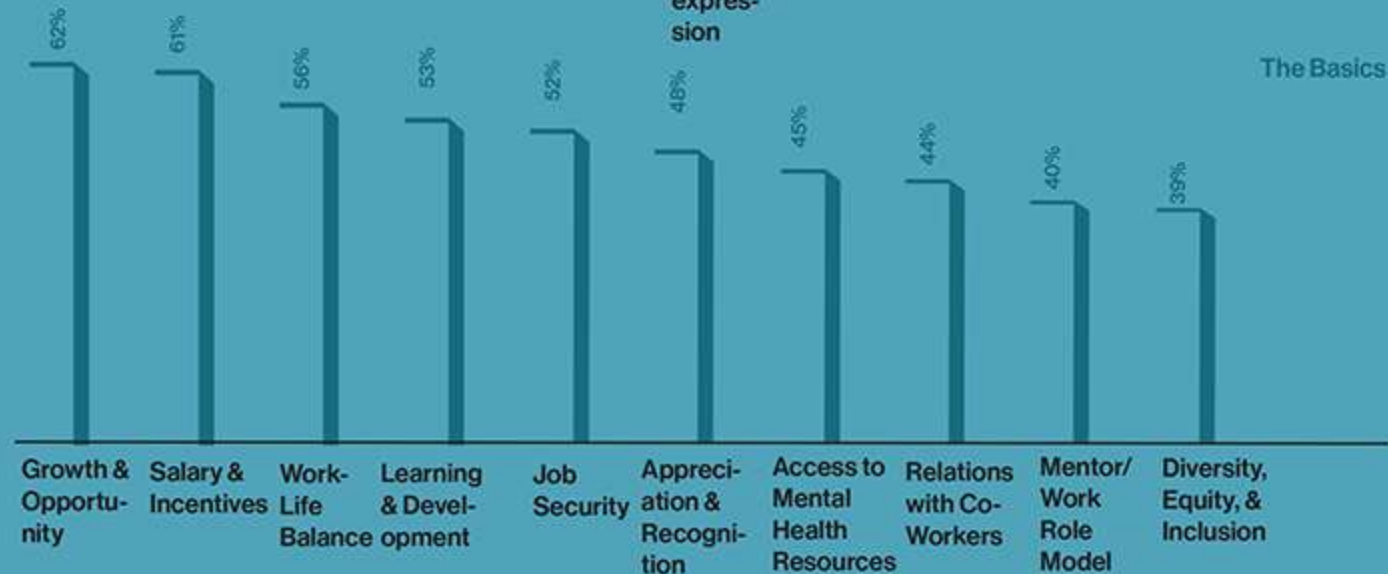
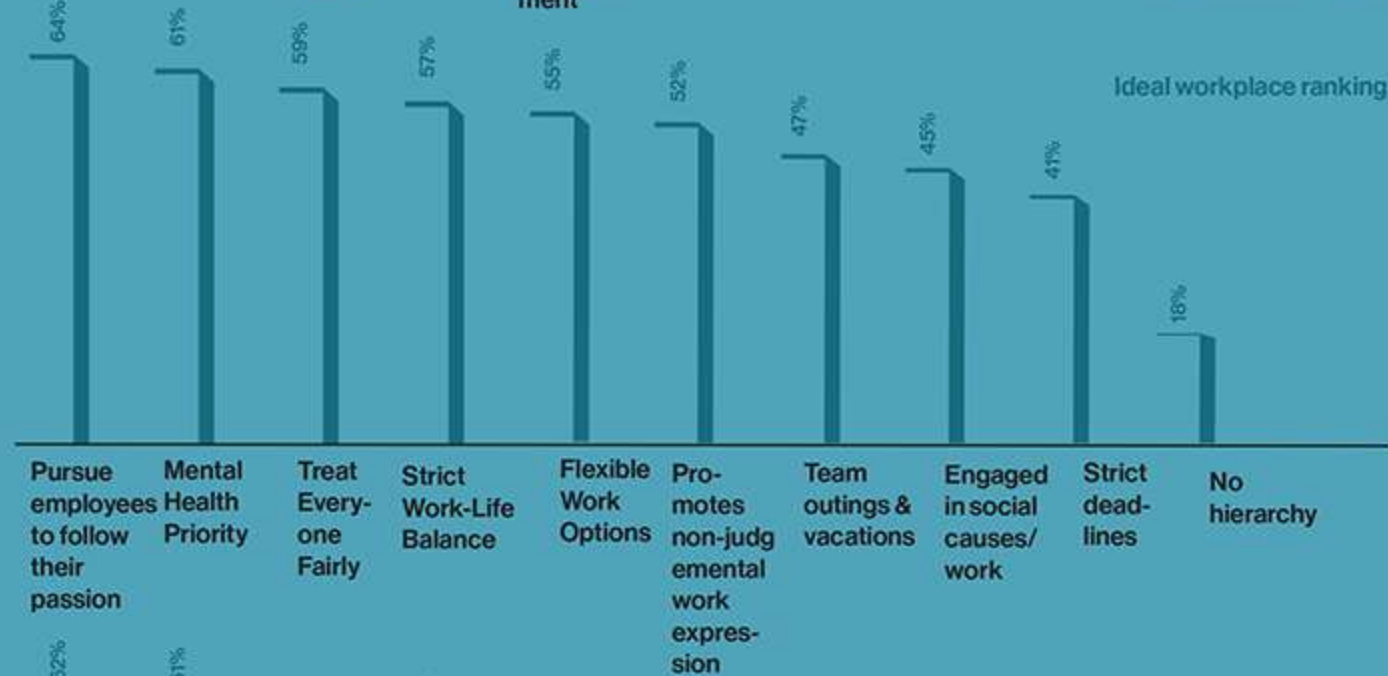
"In my experience I would want to understand the employee, what kind of work they would like to do, what kind of domain they're interested in, what kind of projects they would like to work in, and what kind of empire they want to build for themselves."

18-21yrs
Jaipur
Not Working



"Pehele toh ye hota tha ki jo job mil jaye bass wahi usme hi zindagi nikalni hai. Nowadays, you can change companies if one company doesn't serve you well. Mental health has been introduced, so people take jobs according to their convenience. Today people have many options, unlike in older times."

Gen Z is clear about their wants



22-25yrs
Pune
Working



"Today, when we work in an office, it is more challenging than it was in our parent's time. Back then, work was repetitive. In today's world, if you have to grow, you have to keep improving every day. This has changed the expectations in today's time."

"Treat the employees more like human beings instead of treating them like commodities that you can throw out whenever you want. The workforce should be less expendable. The workplace should be geared a bit more towards constructive criticism. There should be more collaborative places and more communicative places."

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



18-21yrs
Ahmedabad
Not Working



"Having a mental health break, or holidays assigned to physical and mental health days differently, the work environment in Japan has caused creativity to go up. Having a creative interior would also help."

22-25yrs
Kolkata
Working



"I won't tell my team to go home with work because they should spend time with their family and be themselves. I sit with them to resolve problems. We can have a small party if there is pressure on us to ease up so they feel motivated."

18-21yrs
Kolkata
Not Working



"More inclusivity in terms of gender and a rotation of leadership positions so that everyone gets a taste of it. Creating a personal environment at the workplace. Employees should be able to reach employers in the case of problems, a more casual and humane environment."

"I've realised a few things about work culture. Everyone is treated equally. A work-life balance is good, you need to take care of yourself and make sure you are mentally and physically feeling good, your work shouldn't affect your mental and physical health. Companies that give me the freedom to take off for my mental health are good."

22-25yrs
Chennai
Working



Autonomy

Exploring & being their truest self – "I"

Freedom to be Authentic

What to Do

- ◊ Non-judgmental Self Expression
- ◊ Experiential learning through mistakes
- ◊ Voice-up culture
- ◊ Flexible work options
- ◊ Personalized workspace/No dress code
- ◊ Non-hierarchical work culture
- ◊ Employee Leadership Programs

Why is it Important

Resolves primary need for Gen Z to function by feeling free

Outcome

Boosts loyalty, openness, morale and efficiency + Great employer branding

Mental & Physical Health

- ◊ Mental health policy
- ◊ Awareness
- ◊ Normalize to tackle stigma
- ◊ Mental health check-ups, check-ins & offs
- ◊ Routine mental health activities
- ◊ Access to Counsellor/Therapist
- ◊ Sponsored/Discounted Counselling
- ◊ Ai/Digital Wellbeing apps
- ◊ Anonymous Wellbeing Surveys
- ◊ Break/Meditation/Stress-free Room
- ◊ Strict work-life balance policies
- ◊ Incentivize on wellbeing
- ◊ Self-care days/Team Care

Resolves primary need for Gen Z to function by feeling free

Boosts loyalty, openness, morale and efficiency + Great employer branding

Drawing Boundaries

- ◊ Timed working hours - DND personal time
- ◊ Project Deadlines over Daily Deadlines
- ◊ Advance Planning
- ◊ Encourage sharing

Resolves primary need for Gen Z to function by feeling free

Boosts loyalty, openness, morale and efficiency + Great employer branding

Stability & Joy

- ◊ Promising Career
- ◊ Fair Salary & Incentives
- ◊ Learning & Development
- ◊ Growth & Opportunities
- ◊ Financial Transparency
- ◊ Job Security
- ◊ Team get-togethers & vacations

Resolves primary need for Gen Z to function by feeling free

Boosts loyalty, openness, morale and efficiency + Great employer branding

-re
ed
om
ee
om

22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"Incentives to motivate the employees. Health insurance for employees as they work hard for the company. Higher officials must have a good bond with the employees working under them."

"I need people to point me out and tell me I am doing good. Tell me if I'm wrong so I can improve. Two-way communication is key. When one is taking services, they must communicate and tell us what they want and what problems they have so we can help them through. People's behaviour is also important. Cooperation from people is necessary."

22-25yrs
Guwahati
Working



22-25yrs
Hyderabad
Working



"Creating an internal complaints committee along with a committee for sexual harassment."

Empathetic Connections

Acceptance of their truest self by their family, peers & society – "Us"

Safe Space and acceptance

- | What to Do | Why Is it Important | Outcome |
|--|---|--------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Human first sensitization ◊ Empathetic culture ◊ Strong & authentic value system ◊ Diversity, equity & inclusion policies ◊ Representation in Leadership ◊ Rotating Leadership ◊ Fluid Language Options w/ Tools ◊ LGBTQ+, Disability, Minority friendly ◊ A religious & Secular ethos ◊ Effective & Clear communication & dialogue | <p>Core values alignment and a larger purpose to work</p> | <p>Feel Valued</p> |

Emotional Support and Collaboration

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Work Buddy System ◊ Office politics in-check ◊ Strict action against office politics ◊ Mentorship Program ◊ Nurture Employee Passions ◊ Anti-harassment policies ◊ Effective Redressal ◊ Eliminate competitive awards ◊ Focus on team well-being & building ◊ Democratic Thinking ◊ Declutter & Organise – Process driven | <p>The world is a scary place for them, and effective guidance & policies give them clarity to achieve their goals without stressing about the basic</p> | <p>Team coherence, bonding & shared goals</p> |
|---|--|---|

Appreciation and Recognition

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Compassion & Gratitude ◊ Constructive Feedback & Check-ins ◊ Public Recognition – offline & online ◊ Appreciation Meetings ◊ Team & Individual Incentives ◊ Personalized appreciation & awards ◊ Top Management Connect | <p>Positive reinforcement and validation keeps them motivated and offers them an opportunity to improve</p> | <p>High morale & motivation</p> |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|

Em
boat
ny
mp
atk

22-25yrs
Chennai
Working



"Create a value system. A set of values people are supposed to follow, not mandatorily, but consciously."

22-25yrs
Delhi
Working



"Sustainability-led initiatives like reducing the carbon footprint at my level best, maternity and menstrual leave for women, health care, or mental health for employees, creating a department and monitoring it so people can be happy."

18-21yrs
Mumbai
Not Working



"Analysing the situation and planning accordingly, creating work that people look forward to, changing the perspective about the office, and creating a more social and sustainable environment."

18-21yrs
Bhubaneswar
Not Working



"A company that is evolving and is goal-oriented, and for me, a remote working environment, because I work best at night."

Conscious Community

A world built on environmental consciousness & social impact over capitalism & consumerism – "All"

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- What to Do**
- ◊ Value Charter & Implementation
 - ◊ Lead by representation
 - ◊ Tie-ups with NGOs
 - ◊ Adopt social cause
 - ◊ DEI training
 - ◊ Menstrual & Paternity Leaves

Why is it Important

Much needed and has been neglected over centuries. The change needs to be brought in now to gradually make the world an equitable place

Outcome

Drives innovation and different perspectives

Environmentalism Sustainability and Conscious Consumption

- ◊ Company level practices
- ◊ Practices, not activities
- ◊ Environmental impact calculator
- ◊ Sustainable long-term goals
- ◊ Short-term sustainable goals – food saving target, disposable savings, people fed
- ◊ E-waste recycling
- ◊ Company organized awareness camps
- ◊ Incentives

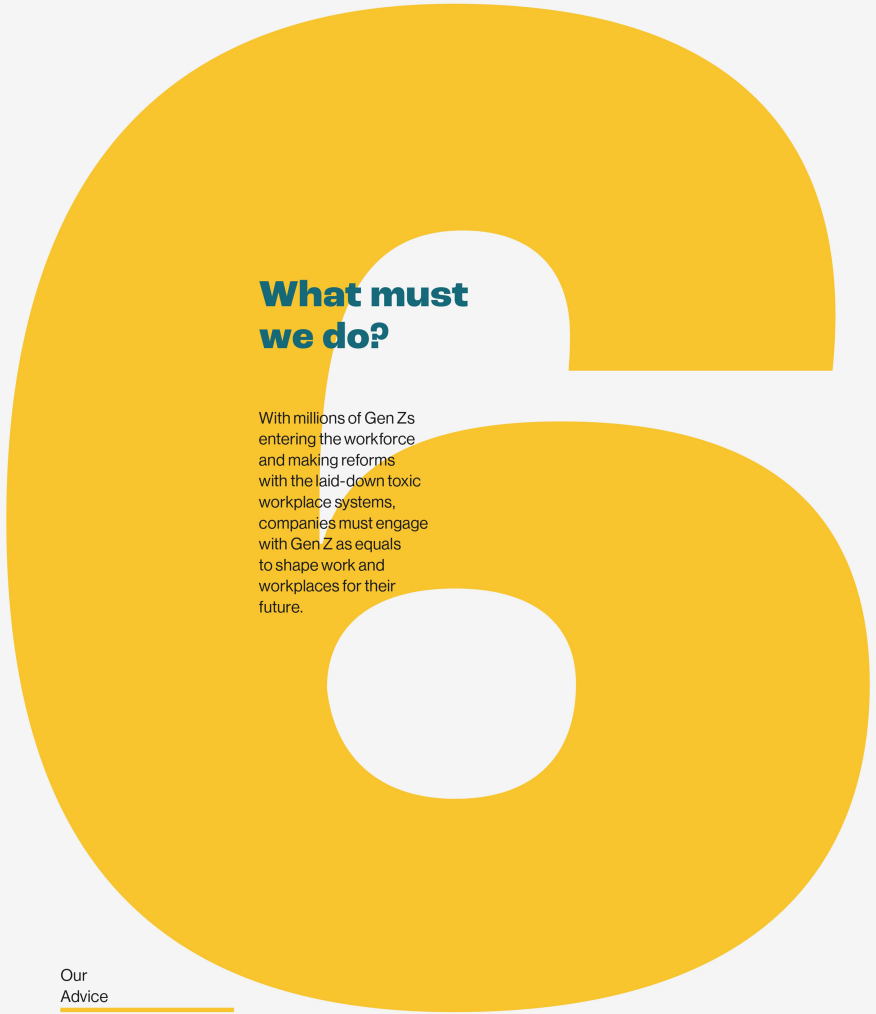
Makes Gen Z feel heard, seen and valued to make a positive dent in the universe

Saving the planet is a better brand story than anything else

Div
ers
ity
Div
ers

**Now it's time to take
transformational leaps to
prepare for Gen Z workforce**

 hello
happiness



**What must
we do?**

With millions of Gen Zs entering the workforce and making reforms with the laid-down toxic workplace systems, companies must engage with Gen Z as equals to shape work and workplaces for their future.

Our
Advice

It all starts with empathy and acknowledgement

Actionable Steps

- Initiate conversations and dialogue to share concerns & struggles
- Spend time crafting a culture of listening to Gen Z and later addressing their problems with policies and action
- Acknowledge you are human and share your struggles to build empathy

To acknowledge their struggles, values and beliefs is the first step. They have been ridiculed at every step by society and have been labelled a 'sensitive generation', which needs to stop.

Empathy is the next step to try to see the world from their eyes and help them foster their hopes in real life.

Empathy

Smash the power silos, glass ceilings and bureaucracy

Actionable Steps

- Redistribute power and responsibilities
- Co-create vision, mission & values with Gen Z rather than dictating them
- Ask them to show others their vision and collaborate to meet them

culture

With dynamism the natural law of our times and growing uncertainty, it is imperative to make foundational work culture changes to nurture the incoming workforce and align company values around people, planet & profit.

Cultural changes are not a one-day task and require experts & meticulous rigour and dedication from the top management to initiate a collaborative dialogue with its employees to envision the company as a community.

Build a safe space and value them for their authenticity

Actionable Steps

- Have conversations around diversity with real action of hiring
- Diverse Representation at top management - enough 50yr old cis-men are in power, change that to survive the new world
- Conduct workshops hosted by Gen Z to learn from them
- Celebrate wins & share losses of culture groups together

Initiate practices to learn from Gen Z. They are a valuable source with immense knowledge about the world, technology and communication.

Valuing them for who they are rather than moulding them into what you want them to become will help the company accelerate its profits and potential.

authentic

Make them feel a part of the larger purpose and inspire them by showing how to achieve goals

Actionable Steps

- Make them feel supported with resources, tools and mentorships
- Inspire them with action and role models
- With your experience and empathy towards their goals, show them a path to achieve their challenging goals

Gen Zers are a highly motivated generation who do not need others to tell them WHAT they can do. They need guidance and mentorship.

Their goal is to reimagine the world and it is a grand challenging task. Show them that they are not alone in this journey. They are the first ones to take on this journey and with no role models!

purpose

Prioritize the holistic wellbeing of employees over the race of targets and profits

Actionable Steps

- Strict work-life balance policies
- Unexpected well-being days/offers/team activities – get a Spa day over a Pizza party for starters
- Access to mental health counsellors, free therapy sessions & resources
- Incentivize mental & physical health

Running for targets and profits is not helpful for anyone. Employees do not want to be burnt out, feel transactional/used or degrade their mental & physical health for work.

Companies that value their employees well-being perform better overall with higher employee retention and loyalty.

wellbeing

Bridge the communication gap by integrating their communication styles

Actionable Steps

- Online company persona and communication with Gen Z's advise
- Integrate their communication style in emails, internal team communication, regular feedback and appraisal meetings
- Inculcate kindness in communication
- Help them learn real life interpersonal communication

Gen Z are the champions of mass communication and have devised a way to give feedback, make others heard and seen with little usage of words. It is time for companies to learn that from them and integrate it in their employee leadership and wellbeing programs, and as a practice in their HR activities and mentorship. Though, Gen Z does need help to build emotional professionalism & real-life interpersonal communication skills.

communicate

Foster a culture of interconnectedness abundance and transparency

Actionable Steps

- Build platforms in the company for people to be interconnected
- Have unmoderated channels for people to talk freely
- Transparency on policies, compensations and omitting favouritism

Whether companies like it or not, Gen Z are talking about everything the company feels they should not in their work environments- from financial transparency, gender & sexuality to favouritism!

It only makes sense that companies own the culture of transparency, and honest abundance and accelerate shared conversations around it. Break the taboo thinking and accept the new culture of openness.

transparent

Support their vision and help them make every moment count

Actionable Steps

- Take action now for a hopeful future
- Create larger-than-life experiences that make them feel special today
- Inculcate the value of time and now-ness

Gen Zers value the NOW and are hyper aware that each moment in their life is valuable but could be scrutinized and shared with the world. They grew up watching the world change in a matter of seconds and that makes them uncertain about their own future and the Earth's pushing them to experience the NOW with full potential. Show them that their vision is achievable and take steps now to secure the future with more time on doing than thinking.

moments

9 Happiness Commandments to work with Gen Z

Here's how we can make Gen Z like working for our company

H A P P I N E S S

HELP THEM HONE HAPPINESS

Take action NOW for a hopeful future. Gen Z believes that happiness is not an innate emotion or a feeling. It is a skill that is to be learned. It is never a discovery or a checkpoint.

ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR STRUGGLES

Gen Z believes that happiness begins with acknowledgement of their struggles, values and aspirations. We need to foster their hopes and create a more empathetic world for their generation.

PRIORITISE THEIR WELLBEING

Gen Zs want us to prioritise their wellbeing over the race of targets and profits. They want us to respect drawing of boundaries and uphold zero tolerance to toxicity. They believe that true success lies in achieving balance across all aspects of life.

PURSUE PURPOSE

Gen Z is redefining work and workplaces by upholding their values with great courage. They know how to draw boundaries and are getting better at it with no tolerance of toxicity. They see work as a bridge between passion and purpose.

BE INCLUSIVE & A SAFE SPACE

Gen Z wants to be valued for their authenticity and would choose companies that are safe, empathetic and inclusive. Focus on mental health is a key consideration towards choosing their prospective employers. They would trade higher salaries in lieu of these.

HAVE NO LABELS

Gen Z is more than an age bracket or a type. They cannot be defined by demographic labels either. They value diversity and are non-conformists who come from a melting pot of cultures.

ENCOURAGE EXPRESSION

Gen Zs are a champion of expression and have devised a way of giving feedback. They know how to be heard without being seen and with minimum usage of words. They want companies to understand their communication style and include them as an accepted form of communication.

SMASH BUREAUCRACY

Gen Zs rebel against bureaucracy. They thrive in environments that promote collaboration and adaptability allowing them to be themselves and drive meaningful change. They value transparency and open communication and want us to initiate collaborative dialogues with employees and envision organisations as communities.

SUPPORT THEIR VISION

Gen Zs need us to support their vision and help them make every moment count. They grew up watching the world change in a matter of seconds which makes them feel uncertain about the future. The Earth pushes them to experience the "Now" fully. They want organisations to show them that this is possible and also take steps to secure the future with more time "doing" than "thinking".

Acknowledgements

Research team:

Chirag Mediratta

Sylvia Dhingra

Saahil Kapoor

Yash Pise

Design team:

Srishti Madan

Srishti Choudhary

Keval Vora

Manish Tiwari

Dinesh Sutar

**Happiness is a skill
to be learned, not a
discovery or a checkpoint.**





hellohappiness