

**ISMC 2019**  
**15<sup>th</sup> International Strategic Management Conference**

**HAPPINESS AND INTENTION TO LEAVE OF Z GENERATION  
IN TERMS OF IHRP**

Nihal Güler (a), Pınar Acar (b)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Bahçeşehir University, Beşiktaş, Istanbul, Turkey, [nguler80@gmail.com](mailto:nguler80@gmail.com)

(b) Beykoz University, Beykoz, Istanbul, Turkey, [pinaracar@beykoz.edu.tr](mailto:pinaracar@beykoz.edu.tr)

*Abstract*

The main objective of this research is to reveal the effects of innovative human resources practices (IHRP) on the happiness and intention to leave on Z generation employees. The sample of the study consists of 198 Z generation employees in the banking sector. In our study mixed method (qualitative-quantitative) is adopted. Firstly, the qualitative research design was taken as a model. In this respect, qualitative interviews were conducted with Z generation employees and managers. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with a small sample of 25 subjects. The reason for face-to-face interviews is that participants can freely express themselves without limitation, so that more in-depth data can be collected. Data were categorized by Nvivo 11 qualitative data analysis. In the second part of the mixed method research strategy, the quantitative research method is used to measure the interaction between the variables in our theoretical model. Data were collected from 198 employees by means of survey method and analyzed with SPSS 20 package program. The findings of the study showed that happiness has a mediation effect on innovative human resources practices and intention to leave.

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**Keywords:** Innovative human resources practices, happiness, intention to leave, generation z, mixed methods research.

## 1. Introduction

The resource based view which makes up the conceptual infrastructure of our research suggests that the business resources should be precious, rare, without substitution and inimitable in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. In this regard, one may suggest that competent employees with high potential are rare and precious resources for businesses. We suggest that it is possible to increase the happiness of employees and reduce their intention to leave through successful and innovative human resources practices. All businesses operating in their sectors need human resources notwithstanding their field of business. And human resources management is the total of the activities and tasks performed without discrimination within personal, organizational and environmental dimension in order to achieve the targeted objectives effectively and efficiently in the field of human resources of the organization undertaking the aforementioned task (Türedi, 2018). Ensuring the human resource to continue to be employed is as important as recruitment of the human resource. Resignation of trained personnel leads to negative influence on productivity and profitability in all sectors. The intention to leave is the thought of the employee related to his/her will to resign in the near future. It is necessary to define the factors that affect the intention to leave because the investments that corporations make for their employees are indeed investments made for the future. Furthermore, the cost of the employees has a significant share in the total costs of any corporation (Şahin, 2011). The intention to leave is related to existence of any thoughts or plans of the employees for resigning from their current jobs or from their business places in any specific process. The intention to leave may be explained with the employee having a thought of resigning from his/her current job or from his/her business place in any specific process (Fong & Mahfar, 2013). Being happy in the working environment attracts the attention as a significant issue for the person who passes a significant portion of his/her life working. The first section of our research performed in this regard consists of conceptualization, the second section consists of methodology, the third section consists of findings and the last section consists of discussion and conclusion parts.

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Innovative Human Resources Practices

Schuler who expresses the strategic dimension of the Human Resources Management (HRM) as “integration” and “adaptation” taking it in a broader context explains this context as “the strategic structure of the human resources management aims at integration of human resources practices in organizations with the strategy and strategic requirements of the company”. “5P model” developed by Schuler examines strategic the human resources management under five titles. This model tries to explain the human resources management principally on the basis of five concepts starting with the letter “P”. Explanation of those concepts which mean philosophy, policies, programs, practices and processes of HRM by taking the same strategically is named as “5P model” (Schuler, 1992). The following hypotheses have been created on this basis:

*H1: Innovative human resources practices have a statistically significant impact on intention to leave*

*H2: Innovative human resources practices affect happiness at a statistically significant level*

## 2.2. Happiness

The thing that humans determine and give meaning as the purpose of their life within the time from the moment of birth till the moment of death has been happiness. For this reason, the humans searched for the means for achieving happiness. Individuals looked for happiness that has been desired from the origin of humanity to date within the society and many researches have been conducted for many years on what it meant and how it could be achieved (Acaboğa 2007 as cited in Akdeniz, 2016). Turkish Language Society defines the concept of happiness as “Situation of pleasure for complete and continuous achievement of all aspirations, joy, prosperity, felicity, bliss, welfare” ([www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)). It has been observed that the meaning of the concept of happiness had started with the concept of Eudimonia with Greek origin which means “perfect continuity of the life” (Demir & Murat, 2017). Happiness refers to the ability of individuals to sustain the life they desire in many domains including family, health, education, welfare level, social and cultural, social, physical and friend circle at a level containing quality phenomenon (Fisher, 2009). The researches conducted reveal that the levels of happiness are high thanks to this. The researcher has expressed that happiness of the individuals in business life is closely related to the atmosphere that predominates in the organization where they work. One of the factors that affect happiness is the perception of the employees for justice or injustice. This issue is a subject emphasized from the past years to date. Happiness in the business place contains job satisfaction and organizational loyalty. Happiness has been conceptualized and measured at multiple levels including the multiple focuses such as experiences in the business places, stable person and level attitudes and collective attitudes as well as job and organization. It has influenced the individuals and organizations at every level. The following hypothesis has been created on this basis:

*H3: Happiness affects the intention to leave at a statistically significant level.*

## 2.3. Intention to Leave

Resignation of the employees may impact the organization negatively. Such negative aspects may be listed as corruption of the business order, performance losses and decrease in the current motivation of the employee. The point to be emphasized here is the qualification of the employee who resigns. If any employee with high qualification resigns from the organization, negative effects for the organization shall be mentioned while it is possible to mention positive effects for the organization when any employee with lower qualification resigns. Loss of experienced workforce in the organization can be mentioned as one of the significant consequences of resigning. Such a loss shall negatively impact organizational productivity, production process, employee satisfaction and loyalty. When the consequences of resigning for the employee are assessed, resignation of an employee from the organization shall negatively impact the work order and performance of the remaining employees in the team. Additionally consequences such as corruption of work harmony and increase in the workload may also be encountered until new work schedules are prepared. The intention to leave is the act of the employee of leaving his/her work on his/her will. This act may be a process that could be prevented through being informed timely and taking the necessary measures (Saygılı, 2018). The following hypothesis has been created on this basis:

*H4: The mediation effect of happiness between innovative Human resources practices and intention to leave is statistically significant*

## 2.4. Z Generation

When the researches conducted on the generations, there is no universally agreed and recognized consensus on naming the generations and classification of the same in specific periods. It has been concluded that concentration in specific periods and generation definitions was in question in the literature. Classification of Oblinger and Oblinger (2005) who takes 1991 and later as basis for classification of Z generation has been taken into consideration in this research.

Z generation has been defined as the generation who was born in 1990's and grew in 2000's. Many social incidents including September 11 incidents, economic stagnation, unemployment were experienced from 1990's to 2000's particularly in the western world, the children born in 1990 and later has gained characteristics discriminative from the other generations due to such macro and micro scale changes. When we look through only the technological innovations, access of this generation to information, ideas, images and sounds is unique in line with the increase in the use of wireless internet access and hand devices. Their natural life is continuous connection and communication (Tulgan, 2013).

Z generation consists of individuals who are connected to the internet all the time in a digital world, for whom access is very significant. They spend more time for their smart telephones compared to the other electrical devices. This generation spends less time for television compared to the baby-boom and X generation (Hampton & Keys, 2016). The individuals of the Z generation like activities containing creativity, changes, innovation and transformism. They are fast and practical with their result focused structures. They prefer to be active and participant rather than being passive. Their sociability is usually over internet access. They may prefer to live alone because of technology addiction and their tendency to remote communication. They are estimated to be at higher levels than the previous generations in terms of motor skills and level of intelligence since they grew up together with the technology. Technology is an integral part of their life (Okumuş, 2016). Being individualist, independent and having received better education positively affect their creativity. Their capability to express the truth without hesitation shall create environments with high motivation. Their capability to eliminate the concept of geographical borders through the use of the internet, their sociability and availability for communication shall be significant factors for eliminating the differences between generations and understanding one another. Their capability to express themselves easily is one of the positive characteristics of this generation (Toruntay, 2011). This generation grows up with fewer siblings compared to the previous generations. This generation is given money, love and attention as much as not in question for the previous generations as a consequence of the family size that has shrank. This causes them to be egoist and self-centered. Furthermore they have trouble with team game, consolidation and sharing (Singh, 2014). The negative characteristic of Z generation is that they will have difficulty in performing specific routine jobs due to having superior qualifications. Particularly being deprives of ambition in crisis periods shall lead to negative effects. Their willingness for personification of everything shall lead to increase in the difference between the rich and the poor (İzmirlioğlu, 2008).

Z generation want to work in the companies which are attentive to business hours and which do not disturb them during their vacancies. They do not want to be told what they should do every time since they have the feeling of responsibility. They want to receive feedback and develop themselves when they need. They need a friend rather than a director (Singh, 2014).

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1. Purpose and Significance of the Research**

The purpose of this research is revealing the impact of innovative human resources practices on happiness and intention to leave of Z generation employees. It is stipulated that different characteristics and tendencies of Z generation youngsters who have newly stepped in the business life shall create difference within the organizations. On the other hand, the businesses and other generations are required to create a working environment convenient for Z generation and increase the happiness of this digital generation through innovative human resources practices. Today, when human is deemed as value rather than resource, resignation of any employee leads to loss of both cost and value. For this reason the basic target is long term adventure of businesses with their employees. On this basis, Z generation employees should be examined very well and a model peculiar to them should be defined. Significance of our research could be assessed within this contexts well.

#### **3.2. Universe and Sample of the Research**

This research has been conducted on young employees of banks operating in the regions of Istanbul, Kocaeli and Izmir. The 4 banks which are the subject matter of the research universe have been preferred since they occupy a leading position among those who employ the new generation employees mostly. The sample of the research was composed of 198 employees of 4 banks, consequently the analysis unit of the study is the individual.

#### **3.3. Scale**

Survey technique has been used in our research as data collecting tool. The first section of the survey consists of demographic questions. The second section consists of the scales of variables of innovative human resources practices, happiness and intention to leave. Happiness scale; The happiness scale consisting of 18 questions for measuring perceived happiness levels of the employees was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). It was applied by Akdeniz (2016) to the health sector and in this study, the reliability analyses performed by Erkuş, Tabak, and Yaman, (2015) Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was detected as 92. The answers were taken using 5 point likert (1=I definitely disagree, 5=I definitely agree) scale. Strategic Human Resources Practices Scale was taken from April Chang and Chun Huang (2005). Cronbach Alpha was used for measuring the reliability of the factors for the scale used by Başar (2016). The answers were taken using 5 point likert (1=I definitely disagree, 5=I definitely agree) scale. İntention to leave Scale; The scale used in the study for the purpose of measuring İntention to leave perception was developed by Rosin and Korabik (1995). Its Turkish adaptation was performed by Tanrıoven (2005). It was reported by Akgün (2018) as scale reliability in this study. The answers were taken using 5 point likert (1=I definitely disagree, 5=I definitely agree) scale.

### **4. Findings**

#### **4.1. Demographic Findings**

According to the frequency analysis results of the answers given to the demographic questions created for the purpose of knowing the employees participating in the research; it is observed that female

employees predominated in the gender distribution of the research. Proportion of male employees is 22.70% (45) whereas this proportion for female employees is as high as 77.30% (153). 11,10% (22) of the employees participating in the survey are university graduates whereas (%11.10) are master graduates and 75.30% (149) have associate degrees. When the period of working in the current business place is examined, it is revealed that 73,20% (145) have been employed for a period of 1-3 years.

## **4.2. Qualitative Research Findings**

Face-to-face interviews, the qualitative section of this research were performed with a working group of 20 individuals. Deepened interviews were performed with Z generation employees and their directors. Later those interviews were subjected to content analysis. The data were provided to be categorized using Nvivo 11 qualitative data analysis. Through performance of the analysis the words that Z generation individuals repeat most frequently were reached, thus key points on their expectations were determined. As a result of word frequency analysis, certain top concepts (e.g.; banking and generation words) were excluded from the scope due to context. The next section of the research continued in the form of literature review over the concepts of Z Generation, Innovative Human Resources, Happiness, Intention to leave which are the key points determined. The concept of “Z generation” includes predominant expressions of used for expressing their expectations from business life and for self-expression such as freedom/flexibility, performance assessments, being objective, lack of hierarchy, effects of high tempo. In the concept of “working”; the employees mentioned various types of working including working hours, overtime work hours, working environment, flexible working methods, Home Office working, working with performance over the standard. In the concept of “education”; education level, seminar, education types predominated among the findings. As a consequence of the findings it was revealed that education diversity in business life of Z generation employees was significant and it was necessary to give place in all levels. Continuity of education and personal development took before being recruited, during the professional life and even after that and at the same time they demand trainings containing the tasks they undertake. In the concept of “director”; it is underlined that the style of addressing of the directors affected Z generation employees, communication was significant and it was necessary not to reflect the work pressure from the top management to the team, that director behavior was more important than money affairs, this influenced their future decisions and their expectation was leader qualification rather than director. In the concept of “New/Innovation”; the employees expressed opinion on the issues of being open to new ideas, paying significance to innovations in education, significance of being assessed in new positions.

## **4.3. Quantitative Research Findings**

### **4.3.1. Factor and Reliability Analysis Findings**

The scales used in the research have been subjected to overall reliability analysis at first. Factor analysis was started without excluding any question from analysis. Cronbach’s alpha value found as a result of innovative human resources practices overall reliability analysis was found as 0,879, KMO value found as a result of factor analysis was found as 0,842 and Total declared variance value was found as 71.236. 4 latent variables were created from innovative human resources scale. Factor analysis result was excluded from analysis since it took a value smaller than 05, in S5 factor load. Cronbach’s alpha values of

reliability analysis result of sub-dimensions of innovative human resources practices scale are 0,810, 0,822, 0,889 and 0,855 respectively. Cronbach's alpha value of happiness integral reliability analysis result was found as 0,887, KMO value found as a result of factor analysis was found as 0,846 and Total declared variance value was found as 64.330 4 latent variables were created from the happiness scale. Factor analysis result was excluded from analysis since they took close vales in M6 and M12 factor loads. Cronbach's alpha values of reliability analysis result of sub-dimensions of happiness scale are 0,820, 0,812, 0,866 and 0,745 respectively.

Finally, Cronbach's alpha value of the result of integral reliability analysis of Intention to leave scale was found as 0,825, KMO value found as a result of factor analysis was found as 0,692 and Total declared variance value was found as 72.426. Factor loads of Intention to leave scale were concentrated on a single dimension. When examined in terms of factor loads; innovative human resources practices took values of: 0,528-0,887 and Happiness took values of: 0,530- 0,846.

#### 4.3.2. Regression Analysis Findings

In the light of this hypothesis of the study, the mediating role of happiness was determined by following the process steps proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). The steps were tested and presented below.

1. The independent (predictive) variable must be associated with the mediating variable. For this purpose, IHRMP (Innovative human resource management practices) has been tested whether it predicts happiness statistically or not. As a result, SIKU predicted happiness significantly ( $R^2 = .18$ ,  $t(171) = 6.106$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $\beta = .424$ ). In addition, this result indicates the acceptance of H2 hypothesis.

2. The independent (predictive) variable and the dependent variable are related. For this purpose, it has been tested whether the IHRMP has a statistically significant predictive of the intention to quit. As a result, it was found that the intention to leave the job was statistically significant ( $R^2 = .081$ ,  $t(170) = -3,866$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $\beta = -.284$ ). Moreover, this result indicates that H1 hypothesis is accepted.

3. The mediator variable and the dependent variable should be related. For this purpose, it is tested whether happiness significantly predicts the intention to quit. Happily, happiness predicted the intention to quit the job significantly ( $R^2 = .125$ ,  $t(170) = -4.931$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $\beta = -.354$ ). In addition, this result indicates that H3 hypothesis is accepted.

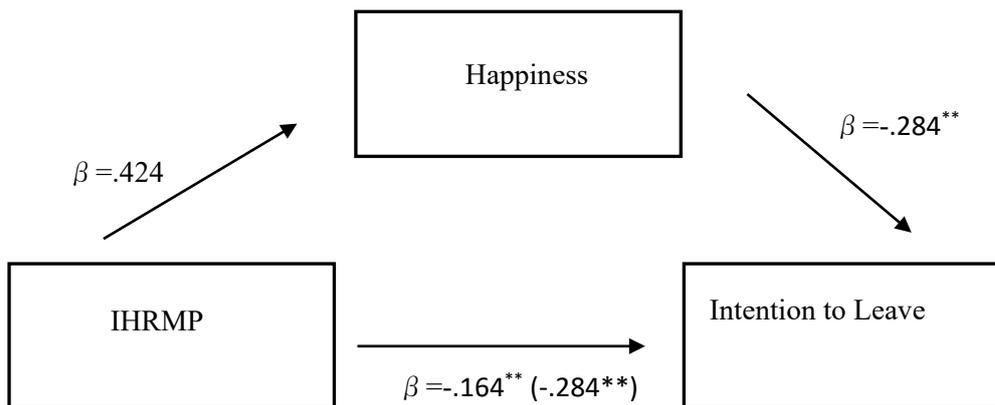
**Table 01.** Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Role of Happiness in the Relationship between YIKU and the Intention to Leave

	Model	$\Delta R^2$	B	SH <sub>B</sub>	$\beta$
<b>Model 1</b>	Constant		11.694	1.278	
	IHRMP	.081**	-0.090	0.023	-.284**
<b>Model 2</b>	Constant		16.395	1.791	
	IHRMP	.066**	-0.52	.025	-.164**
	Happiness		-0.098	.027	-.284**

\*\*  $p < .01$ ; Model 1: IHRMP, Dependent variable: Intention to leave

Model 2: IHRMP, Happiness, Dependent variable: Intention to leave

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the beta ( $\beta$ ) coefficient for IHRMP is -0.284 in Model 1 and the  $\beta$  coefficient for IHRMP is increased to -0.164 in Model 2 with the happiness variable taken for the model. This result shows that the increase of  $\beta$  coefficient is statistically significant and it has the mediating effect of happiness. The statistical significance of this effect was investigated by Sobel test. According to the Sobel test, the mediator effect of happiness was statistically significant ( $z = -5.72$ ;  $p < .01$ ). This result indicates that H4 hypothesis is accepted. In addition, while 8% of the variance in Model 1 was explained by IHRMP, approximately 15% of the variance in the Model 2, which was formed by the inclusion of happiness in the model, was explained with IHRMP and happiness.



**Figure 01.** Beta Coefficients of the Mediator Role of Happiness in the Relationship Between IHRMP and Intention to Leave

As it is understood from the regression equation, IHRMP and the intention to leave are decreasing as happiness increases.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussions

The basic purpose of this research is to reveal the impact of innovative human resources practices on happiness and intention to leave of Z generation employees. Our research was conducted using mixed method containing both qualitative and quantitative research design. It was revealed as a consequence of our findings that happiness of Z generation had mediator effect in the relation between innovative human resources practices and the intention to leave. It has been revealed that the happiness level of Z generation employees shall increase through innovative human resources models of organizations sensitive to their tendencies and requirements and this would positively impact the behaviors of resignation.

On this basis, the businesses are required to produce solutions which integrate digitalization processes to their structures, which are education focused, which contribute to development and which could respond the expectations of Z generation. The businesses may follow intention to leave of Z generation through activities such as satisfaction surveys, face-to-face interviews etc. to be performed in definite periods, may take convenient measures necessary for innovative human resources practices and play active role in keeping the qualified employee in the organization.

It has been observed that there were 13 published theses in the research performed with the thesis name of “Z Generation” among the theses registered in the National Thesis Center. It is significant for understanding the generation in question to increase continuously the number and content of researches. Additionally, there are very different opinions on the issues of classification and naming the generations and there is no consensus. The research contains separate assessment of the employees born in and after 1990 and 1995 in terms of classification of Z generation and it makes up an exemplary model for tendencies and similarities of the employees in both classes. The research aims at contributing to the literature for this aspect as well.

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