



## Navigating Generational Diversity in the Thai Hotel Industry: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Workforce Dynamics

Martin Goerlich and Thanapon Suksawat

Dr. Graduate School, Stamford International University, Thailand

Former Student, Stamford International University, Thailand

E-mail: martin.goerlich@stamford.edu, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2914-1463>

E-mail: thanapon.suks1998@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4474-7159>

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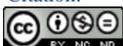
### Abstract

**Background and Aims:** Thailand's hospitality industry has been globally recognized for its outstanding service quality, but at the same time also faces increasing complexity because of an increase in a multigenerational workforce. This study explores how generational diversity, from Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z, that has been shaped by Thai cultural values and various levels of technological exposure, interacts with human resource management (HRM) practices. Particularly for recruitment, retention, and training. This research aims to provide actionable recommendations, based on empirical insights and culturally responsive strategies for managing generational differences in the Thai hotel sector. To guide this cross-cultural examination, the study draws upon various cultural dimensions from Hofstede, Trompenaars, Hall, and others, and Thai-specific concepts such as "kreng jai" to better interpret how cultural norms influence intergenerational perceptions, communication styles, and workplace expectations.

**Methodology:** A quantitative approach was used, surveying 385 hotel employees across five tourism regions via stratified sampling. A structured questionnaire assessed perceptions related to technology use, job satisfaction, communication preferences, and training needs. The survey instrument was systematically designed and pre-tested to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency across diverse generational cohorts, thereby reinforcing the reliability and validity of the data collected. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including ANOVA and regression analysis, identified significant generational differences.

**Results:** Results show that younger cohorts value flexibility, digital engagement, and purpose-driven work, while older generations emphasize job stability, formal processes, and hierarchical leadership. Thai cultural traits, such as high-power distance, collectivism, and "kreng jai," strongly influence these generational preferences, shaping communication and leadership expectations.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that a one-size-fits-all HRM approach is no longer viable. Instead, culturally informed and generation-sensitive HR strategies are essential to enhance engagement, reduce turnover, and promote organizational cohesion. These findings provide





practical guidance for building inclusive, high-performing workplaces in Thailand's competitive hospitality sector. Future research could explore the transferability of these culturally responsive HR models to other Southeast Asian nations facing similar demographic and cultural dynamics, thereby broadening their regional applicability.

**Keywords:** Generational Differences; Human Resource Management; Thai Hospitality Industry; Thai Cultural Values; Employee Recruitment; Employee Retention; Training and Development

## Introduction

Thailand's hospitality sector is known and recognized worldwide for its outstanding level of service quality and is a key contributor to the nation's tourism industry, but has also experienced a significant generational shift over the past decades (Aung, 2024). The current workforce spans four generational cohorts: Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Millennials or Generation Y (1981–1996) (Williams, 2021), and Generation Z (born 1997 onwards) (Urwin, 2011). As a result, those generational cohorts have developed in unique ways, adapting and guided by distinct socio-cultural and technological contexts. Developing into their own specific workplace values and attitudes, guiding every day's behaviors (Campbell, 2008). This divide in generational differences can be theoretically explained with the Cohort Theory, which suggests that individuals are generally shaped by common social, cultural, and historical conditions during their formative years and consequently develop into shared norms, values, and expectations (Mannheim, 2013; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Moreover, Social Learning Theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977) advocates the idea that workplace behavior and attitudes are learned through social interaction, and later reinforce generational differences, resulting in unique communication preferences, motivation, and learning styles.

Given the increasing complexities of the demographic workforce in Thailand's hospitality industry, this requires a shift from a more traditional human resource management (HRM) approach. Historically, most hotels have adopted a rather uniform approach across all age groups, with a consistent management style (Gursoy et al., 2013). According to Twenge (2010), Baby Boomers tend to favor structured training, formal communication, and clear hierarchical systems, whereas Millennials and Generation Z prefer informal, tech-enabled learning environments and collaborative, autonomy-supportive cultures (Twenge, 2010). In fast-paced, customer-facing hotel operations, these generational differences can lead to workflow disruptions, communication breakdowns, and inconsistent service delivery, especially when feedback styles, conflict resolution, or multitasking expectations differ across cohorts (Kusluvan et al., 2010; Testa & Sipe, 2012). King (2017) notes that ignoring such generational disparities can reduce engagement and increase turnover, both of which are costly in a service-intensive sector.





To mitigate this, HR strategies must move beyond one-size-fits-all models by embedding generational integration into recruitment, onboarding, training design, and performance management (King, 2017). Cross-generational mentoring, blended communication methods, and flexible learning formats have shown promise in enhancing collaboration and cohesion in hotel settings (Baum, 2006; Chen & Choi, 2008). This ensures HR practices align with the expectations of all generational cohorts while fostering a more inclusive and agile organizational culture.

Creating a work culture that focuses on support toward intergenerational collaboration, and that also promotes psychological safety, will ultimately lead to a better understanding among the other generation cohorts, build mutual respect, and higher job satisfaction (Kupperschmidt, 2000). As Zopiatis et al. (2012) noted, such tailored approaches should not be viewed merely as operational enhancements, but as strategic imperatives that contribute to long-term organizational resilience in a highly diverse and competitive service industry (Zopiatis et al., 2012). Despite growing interest in generational workforce dynamics, much of the existing literature remains rooted in Western contexts (Locke et al., 2019) and may not fully account for how generational differences manifest within cultures shaped by collectivism, high power distance, or concepts like “kreng jai.” This study addresses that gap by offering a cross-cultural examination grounded in the Thai hospitality sector, where cultural values uniquely influence generational expectations, communication styles, and HRM practices. In doing so, this research provides a much-needed contextual contribution to the global discourse on managing generational diversity in service-oriented industries.

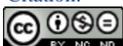
Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine how generational diversity, shaped by both global trends and uniquely Thai cultural values, influences key human resource management (HRM) functions such as recruitment, retention, and training within the Thai hospitality sector. Specifically, the study explores how generational cohorts (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z) differ in their workplace expectations, attitudes toward technology, communication preferences, and perceptions of organizational culture.

The central research question guiding this inquiry is: How do generational differences, shaped by cultural and technological factors, impact HRM practices in Thailand’s hotel industry, and what strategies can enhance generational integration in this context?

To address this question, the paper is structured as follows:

Section 1 reviews relevant literature on generational theory, cross-cultural management, and HR practices in the hospitality sector.

Section 2 outlines the research methodology, including sampling strategy, data collection, and analytical techniques.



Section 3 presents the study's findings through descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

Section 4 discusses the implications of these findings for theory and practice, particularly within the Thai cultural context.

Section 5 concludes with practical recommendations and directions for future research.

## Research objectives and Hypothesis

The following objectives guide the investigation:

1. To analyze how generational differences in technology proficiency and communication preferences influence recruitment strategies within Thai hotels, particularly in relation to hierarchical cultural norms.
2. To examine the extent to which generational expectations regarding job stability and career development affect employee retention in culturally collectivist Thai hospitality organizations.
3. To assess how different generational cohorts respond to training modalities (digital vs. traditional), and how these preferences reflect both age and Thai high-context cultural values.
4. To evaluate how Thai national cultural values (e.g., *kreng jai*, power distance, collectivism) moderate the relationship between generational traits and HRM practices in the hotel sector.

## Hypothesis

Grounded in these objectives, the study tests the following hypotheses to investigate generational patterns and their strategic HRM implications:

H1: There is a significant relationship between generational cohort and preferred recruitment channel, moderated by Thai cultural norms of seniority and respect.

H2: Millennials and Generation Z place greater importance on work-life balance and career progression than on long-term organizational loyalty.

H3: Younger generations (Millennials and Gen Z) demonstrate significantly higher technology proficiency and adaptability than Baby Boomers and Generation X.

H4: Baby Boomers and Generation X show stronger preferences for hierarchical training structures and formal learning formats compared to younger cohorts.

H5: There is a positive relationship between perceived meaningful work and job satisfaction among Millennials and Generation Z.

H6: Older generations are significantly more likely to prioritize job security and employer reputation when evaluating retention decisions.

H7: Younger cohorts are more responsive to flexible work schedules and digital engagement tools in performance evaluations.

H8: Baby Boomers and Gen X express greater loyalty to organizations due to collectivist values and respect for seniority.

H9: Generational differences significantly influence training preferences, moderated by high-context communication styles embedded in Thai culture.

H10: There is a significant generational gap in communication preference, with Baby Boomers and Gen X favoring face-to-face and formal feedback, and younger generations preferring digital and continuous feedback formats.

## Literature Review

### 1. Generational differences in hospitality contexts

The purpose of this literature review is to identify workplace attitudes, expectations, and technology exposure of Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Z in Thailand's hospitality industry. Furthermore, to examine the various cultural theories and cultural dimensions that can help to explain generational workplace differences globally. Finally, how Thai cultural dimensions, such as high-power distance, collectivism versus individualism, high versus low-context communications, and uncertainty avoidance, have an impact on leadership preferences, teamwork, service, and HR practices in Thai hotels.

According to Solnet (2012), in general, Baby Boomers value job stability and hierarchical organizational structures. Generation X has more emphasis on autonomy, efficiency, and work-life balance. And by contrast, Millennials are keen on flexibility, meaningful work, and feedback from their supervisors (Solnet, 2012). Gardner (2008) argues that Generation Z, on the other have been growing up during the beginning of the digital age and therefore are quite skilled, what he calls 'digital fluency' and favor individuality and innovation (Gardner, 2008). In hotel operations, generational values impact day-to-day practices. Baby Boomers often prefer standardized roles and formal procedures, while Millennials and Gen Z favor flexibility, teamwork, and digital tools (Gin Choi et al., 2013). These differences can cause friction during high-pressure, guest-facing tasks, where coordination and adaptability are essential. Gursoy et al. (2008) highlight how communication gaps and conflicting leadership expectations often arise from such generational misalignment (Gursoy et al., 2013). Ratasuk (2022) found that cultural intelligence (CQ) training improves interpersonal trust among Thai hotel employees and lowers turnover intention, particularly among older staff (Ratasuk, 2022). This underscores the need for HR strategies that acknowledge generational diversity. Chiang (2020) similarly advocates for deeper integration through shared values, inclusive leadership, and culturally sensitive practices. Tailored



interventions, such as cross-generational mentoring, adaptive training, and CQ programs, can strengthen collaboration and overall team performance (Chiang, 2020).

## 2. Digital Natives vs. Digital Immigrants

2.1 Digital transformation is essential for improving efficiency, guest satisfaction, and competitiveness in the hospitality sector. Technologies such as AI, IoT, cloud-based PMS, and big data analytics are widely used to optimize operations and personalize services. For instance, cloud PMS can increase efficiency by 30%, while AI chatbots may reduce staff workload by up to 70% (Anwar et al., 2024). However, successful implementation depends on staff digital readiness. According to Prensky (2001), generational differences in the workplace are also shaped by the era in which individuals were raised, especially their exposure to digital technologies. Prensky introduced the terms digital natives and digital immigrants to describe this divide. Prensky (2001) distinguishes between “digital natives” (Millennials and Gen Z), who adapt easily to new technologies, and “digital immigrants” (Baby Boomers and Gen X), who may need more structured support (Prensky, 2001). Mantha & Krishna (2024) confirm that these generational differences affect how staff interact with training platforms, mobile apps, and communication tools. To bridge this gap, HRM must offer blended, age-responsive training and ongoing support (Mantha & Krishna, 2024). With over 70% of hoteliers prioritizing digital check-in and real-time service personalization, ensuring cross-generational adoption is key to long-term success (Dennis, 2024). Thai Cultural Values

Thailand, also known as the “Land of Smiles,” has a unique cultural identity because it has never been invaded or ruled by another country and therefore preserved the religious and social roots (Shoocongdej, 2007). Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Hall's High-Context Culture, the World Values Survey (WVS), and Trompenaars' dimensions provide valuable insights into Thai cultural norms (Pichaphob & Phoewhawm, 2021). Hofstede (2001) identified Thailand as a nation that ranks high in power distance and collectivism, which also appreciates hierarchical respect and overall group harmony, which is rooted in Buddhist values (Hofstede, 2001). The emphasis on “sanuk” (enjoyment) and social harmony further demonstrates this collective approach (Punturaumporn, 2001; Jaokaew, 2005; Chaisilwattana & Punnakitikashem, 2017).

Thailand has a relatively high level of uncertainty avoidance, with traditions and rituals, particularly Buddhist practices, providing stability in uncertain situations (Hofstede, 2001). Hall (1976) identifies Thailand as a high-context culture, which has primarily consequences on the way Thai people communicate, because indirect communication and non-verbal aspects, like context, need to be taken into consideration (Hall, 1976). Another unique concept in Thai culture is called “kreng jay”, which can be translated into the general tendency of Thai people





to avoid confrontation and to maintain social harmony (Chaisilwattana & Punnakitikashem, 2017; Jaokaew, 2005; Punturaumporn, 2001).

According to the World Value Survey, as described in (Inglehart & Baker, 2000), Thailand is balancing traditional values and a developing trend for more individualism, mainly for self-expression among Thais within Bangkok and other larger Thai cities. The cross-cultural research from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner further suggests that Thailand has a particularist culture, in which personal relationships and networks are more valued than universal rules, explaining the need for social networks and close family ties (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, 2012).

According to (Nicholson & Kongthaewtong, 2021), Trompenaars' cultural dimensions offer insight into generational workplace expectations. In particularist cultures like Thailand, older workers may expect deference based on seniority or relationships, while younger employees learn to navigate through networks. Millennials in such contexts may tolerate unequal treatment aligned with cultural norms, unlike their peers in universalist cultures who expect fairness. Similarly, in ascriptive cultures, young managers may face resistance from older subordinates, as respect is traditionally tied to age or title rather than merit. In achievement-oriented cultures, leadership by younger individuals is more accepted if based on competence, regardless of age. Trompenaars' framework illustrates that generational dynamics are deeply shaped by cultural context. For example, a Gen Z employee in Sweden (individualist, low power distance) approaches work differently than one in Thailand or India (collectivist, high power distance), despite shared global youth traits (Nicholson & Kongthaewtong, 2021).

## 2.2 Research Gap

Although global interest in generational diversity in HRM is growing (Sulaeman et al., 2025), technology preferences and cross-cultural influences are a very important topic as there is a direct link to employee performance (Wanyoike et al., 2025). A few studies examine how traditional Thai work values intersect with younger generations (Jirapornkul & Yolles, 2010; Krancharoen, 2022; Pargell Karlsson & Widén, 2018), how international influences shape employee behavior (Al-Shammari & Al-Sharhan, 2015; Phungsoonthorn & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). As modernization and globalization reshape the industry, there is some insight into how HR practices, such as recruitment, retention, and training (Williams, 2021) adapt to a multigenerational and culturally diverse workforce (Wattanacharoensil, 2017). However, research in Thailand's hospitality sector remains scarce, especially the intersection based on generational differences and Thai values (Krancharoen, 2022; Pichaphob & Phoewhawm, 2021; Siamak, 2024). This gap might hinder the development of inclusive, context-sensitive HR strategies (Krancharoen, 2022). If generational gaps are not managed properly in a hotel, it can lead to decreased



employee morale, increased conflict, higher turnover, and ultimately, a negative impact on guest experience (Holland Jr, 2024; Pittman et al., 2024)

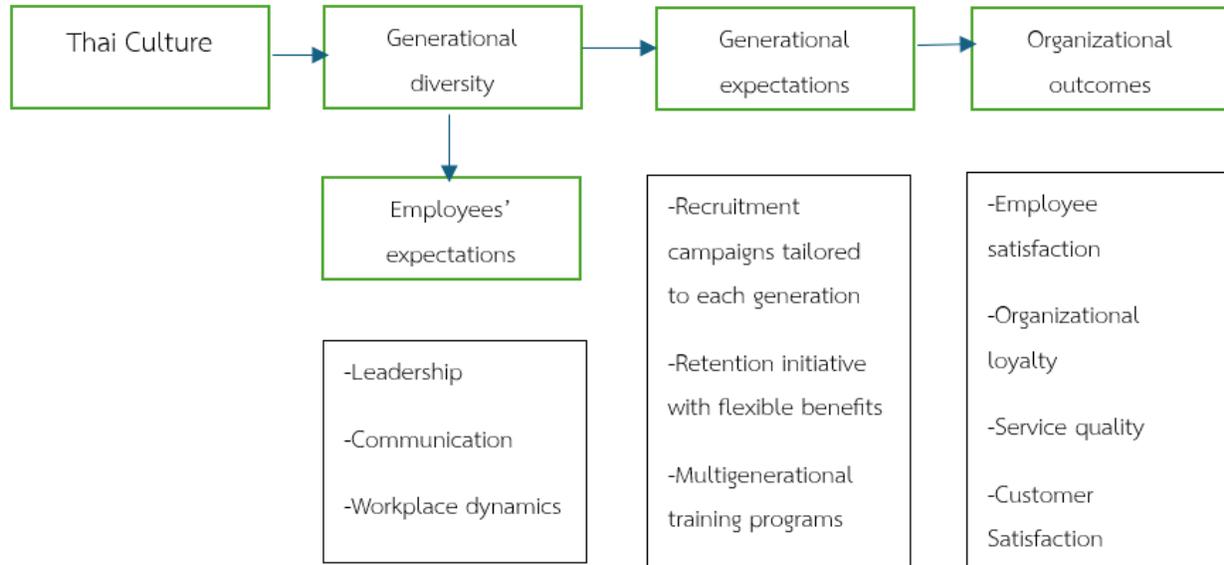


Figure 1 Interconnection Diagram

Source: Own creation

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework explores the impact of Thai culture on generational diversity, including Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z, and their preferences toward Human Resource (HRM) practices within Thailand’s hotel industry. In this framework, generational diversity as impacted by Thai culture serves as an independent variable (IV), those influence employees’ expectations in relation to leadership, communication, and workplace dynamics. To manage those generational differences, generational sensitive HRM strategies are introduced, including.

- Recruitment campaigns tailored to each generation through appropriate messaging platforms
- Retention initiatives designed with flexible benefits and recognition systems
- Multigenerational training programs that integrate both traditional and digital learning approaches

These targeted HR interventions are intended to positively impact the framework’s dependent variables (DV):

- Employee satisfaction

- Organizational loyalty
- Service quality

As Fig. 1 demonstrates, by aligning HR strategies with generational characteristics, hotels should be able to create more inclusive work environments and, at the same time, minimize intergenerational conflicts, ultimately boosting organizational effectiveness. This framework establishes a strategic linkage between Thai cultural values, demographic diversity, and organizational resilience, reinforcing long-term competitiveness and service excellence in the hospitality sector.

### 1. Research Methodology

For this study, a quantitative approach was chosen with the aim of first exploring the generational differences between Thai employees within Thailand's hotel industry and, second, after the results have been presented, to evaluate the findings with Thai national cultural values based on previous studies. A survey was constructed based on validated scales in existing literature. Items related to recruitment and retention were adapted from Gursoy et al. (2008) and Solnet (2012), both of which focus on generational work values in hospitality contexts. Training-related items were based on Chiang et al. (2020), who investigated employee development and satisfaction in hotel settings. Constructs addressing digital fluency and technology integration in HRM were adapted from Prensky (2001) and Parasuraman's (2000) Technology Readiness Index (TRI), ensuring both conceptual relevance and psychometric rigor. To incorporate Thai cultural values into the analysis, several survey items were aligned with dimensions drawn from Hofstede's (2001) model, respectively, power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance, and context-specific Thai concepts such as *kreng jai* and seniority-based hierarchy (Komin, 1991). This cultural alignment was reflected in questions about leadership preferences, communication styles, feedback mechanisms, and group work norms. During the analysis phase, these responses were interpreted considering national cultural values to explore how Thai-specific socio-cultural dynamics shape generational differences in HRM expectations.

After finalizing the instrument, the survey was distributed to employees across all four generational cohorts: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z. Distribution was carried out through personal and academic networks, social media platforms such as Facebook and Line, and brief field visits to hotels in Krabi, Phang Nga, and Phuket. In some cases, HR managers also helped circulate the survey internally. The data was collected between May and July 2024. A stratified sampling method ensured proportional representation across all four generational groups, enhancing the study's validity and reproducibility (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021). The online questionnaire consisted of five sections. It included six demographic questions,



followed by structured questions grouped into four constructs: perceptions of technology in recruitment and retention, training preferences, generational diversity and communication styles, and workplace attitudes and values. Some items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

For example, one item stated: “*I prefer receiving performance feedback through digital platforms rather than in-person meetings.*”

The survey design utilized both Likert-scale and multiple-choice formats to enable robust statistical comparisons (Joshi et al., 2015). This study employed descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data, whereby the descriptive statistics helped to summarize key trends and variations, and the inferential tests, including t-test, chi-square, ANOVA, and regression analysis, were used to examine differences and relationships between generational cohorts and HR related variables (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). These methods will support the hypothesis testing and provide insights into how generational diversity influences HR outcomes within Thailand’s hotel industry.

### 1.1 Sampling

The study employed stratified random sampling to select 385 hotel employees based on the formula of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to achieve a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Stratification was based on generational cohort, age, gender, job junction (e.g., front office, housekeeping), and years of experience to make sure an appropriate level of generalizability within Thailand’s hotel industry (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021).

Participants were recruited from six major tourism provinces: Bangkok, Phuket, Pattaya, Chiang Mai, Krabi, and Phang Nga. These locations were chosen for their high hotel density and tourist activity, as well as accessibility through the researcher’s personal network. The close proximity of Phuket, Krabi, and Phang Nga also allowed for brief on-site visits to support data collection.

To accommodate feasibility while making sure regional representation was accomplished, a flexible sampling approach was employed. The table below summarizes the distribution and final respondent targets achieved by province:

**Table 1** Estimated Number of Respondents by Province

Province	Suggested Range of Respondents	Final Target Respondents
Bangkok	80–100	90
Phuket	70–90	80
Pattaya	70–90	80



Province	Suggested Range of Respondents	Final Target Respondents
Bangkok	80–100	90
Chiang Mai	70–90	80
Krabi	5–15	10
Phang Nga	5–15	10

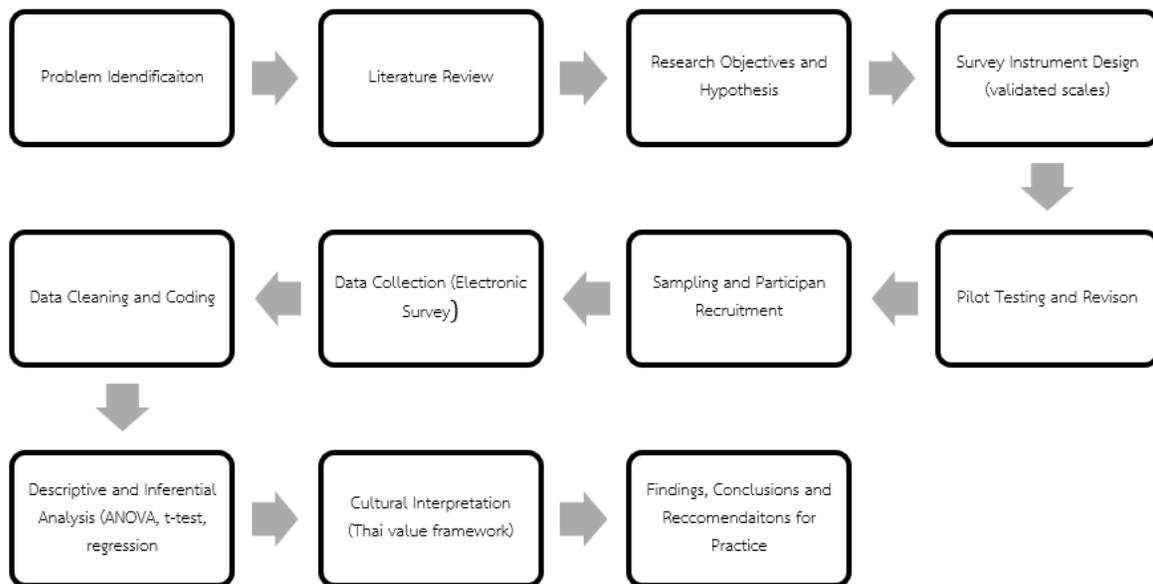
Source: Designed by the authors

In terms of generational representation, the final sample included:

- Baby Boomers (1946–1964): 35 respondents
- Generation X (1965–1980): 92 respondents
- Millennials (1981–1996): 152 respondents
- Generation Z (1997 onward): 106 respondents

This proportional breakdown ensures sufficient statistical power to examine generational comparisons within Thailand’s hotel sector. The stratified method also enhanced data reliability, enabling meaningful inferences about HR practices and generational influences across key regional hubs.

Graph 2 The research process



Graph 2 demonstrates the whole process as applied in this research.

Source: Created by the authors

## 1.2 Reliability Testing

To ensure the validity of measurement instruments, Cronbach's Alpha was employed to test internal consistency across six key factors. The overall reliability score was 0.812, indicating strong reliability. Subscales such as "Perceptions of Technology" ( $\alpha = 0.880$ ) and "Training Needs" ( $\alpha = 0.850$ ) reflected particularly high consistency. These results confirm that the instrument used was suitable for assessing the variables of interest reliably.

Table 2 Subscale reliability

Factor	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Demographic Information	6	0.750
Generational Differences	6	0.820
Perceptions of Technology	7	0.880
Recruitment Factors	4	0.800
Training Needs	10	0.850
Job Satisfaction & Work Values	8	0.790

Source: Own creation

These results confirm that each subscale demonstrated acceptable to high internal consistency, supporting the instrument's reliability in measuring the intended constructs.

In terms of validity, the instrument benefited from face and content validity, as items were adapted from previously validated scales in peer-reviewed HRM and hospitality studies, e.g., (Chiang, 2020; Gursoy et al., 2008; Solnet, 2012). Items were also reviewed for cultural and contextual appropriateness in the Thai hospitality context. Although full construct validity testing (e.g., via factor analysis) was beyond the scope of this phase, prior use of these instruments in similar populations lends support to their validity in this study.

## 2. Research Findings

This section presents the main empirical findings of the study, offering a structured analysis of data collected to explore the dynamics of generational differences within Thailand's hotel industry. This section first elaborates on the descriptive findings, followed by the inferential statistics to assess workforce perceptions and behaviors across Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z, particularly in the context of technology use, job satisfaction, recruitment, retention, and training.

### 2.1 Descriptive Analysis

**Table 3** Descriptive Statistics Summary for Survey Responses

Factors	Mean	Std. Error	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Count
Job Satisfaction Level	4.11	0.04	4	4	0.74	385
Factors Contributing to Job Satisfaction	4.08	0.04	4	4	0.68	385
Likelihood of Leaving Current Job	4.03	0.04	4	4	0.73	385
Motivators to Stay in Current Job	1.17	0.02	1	1	0.38	385
Opportunities for Career Advancement	4.50	0.03	4	4	0.50	385
Importance of Work-Life Balance	4.33	0.04	5	5	0.79	385
Satisfaction with Recognition	4.44	0.04	5	5	0.73	385
Communication and Transparency Level	4.29	0.04	4	4	0.78	385
Challenges Affecting Stay/Leave Decision	4.16	0.04	4	4	1.09	385
Perception of Organizational Culture	3.94	0.06	4	4	1.00	385
Comfort Level with Technology	4.25	0.02	4	5	0.76	385
Importance of Technology in Job	4.08	0.03	4	4	0.76	385
Frequency of Technology Use	4.46	0.04	4	4	0.80	385
Confidence in Using New Technologies	4.22	0.04	4	4	0.70	385
Impact of Technology on Work	1.50	0.00	1	1	0.70	385
Pace of Technological Change	1.94	0.03	2	2	0.50	385
Staying Informed about New Technologies	1.50	0.04	1	1	0.50	385

Source: Designed by the authors

Demographics:

The sample of 385 hotel employees was geographically distributed across Thailand's primary tourism provinces and spanned various roles. Respondents were moderately young (Mean Age = 2.21 on a 4-point scale), fairly experienced (Years of Experience Mean = 2.64), and highly educated (Education Level Mean = 4.96, close to a bachelor's degree or higher).

Technology Use:

Respondents reported high comfort levels and frequent use of workplace technology (Means > 4.0), particularly in day-to-day tasks. However, the relatively low score for “Staying Informed about New Technologies” (Mean = 1.50) suggests that, despite technological competence, many employees may lack continuous exposure or training regarding emerging tools. This highlights a gap that HR departments may need to address through ongoing digital literacy initiatives.

#### Job Factors and Satisfaction:

Job satisfaction (Mean = 4.11), recognition (Mean = 4.44), and especially career advancement opportunities (Mean = 4.50) received strong ratings, suggesting that professional growth is perceived as attainable. However, this contrasts sharply with the low score for “Motivators to Stay” (Mean = 1.17), which could indicate that while advancement exists, factors such as compensation, engagement, or organizational loyalty may be insufficient to retain employees. This misalignment warrants attention, as it could translate into high turnover if not addressed strategically.

#### Organizational Culture and Communication:

Communication and transparency (Mean = 4.29) were generally rated positively, though “Perception of Organizational Culture” received a lower mean score of 3.94. This gap suggests that while communication may be effective, the underlying culture, perhaps in terms of inclusivity, support, or alignment with employee values, may need strengthening to foster a more cohesive work environment.

#### Recruitment and Career Priorities:

The perceived importance of job-related factors and recognition of generational differences scored high (Means > 4.2), showing that employees are aware of diverse workplace needs and values. However, the lower mean score for initial attraction to the industry (2.44, reported elsewhere) suggests that many employees enter the hospitality field out of necessity rather than aspiration. This may influence long-term engagement and retention patterns.

#### Training Needs:

Although opportunities for growth and development (Mean = 4.03) are viewed positively, satisfaction with existing training opportunities (Mean = 2.44) and unmet training needs (Mean = 1.28) indicate a gap between employee expectations and the current delivery of training. This signals a strong case for investing in more tailored, accessible, and generation-sensitive learning and development initiatives.

## 2.2 Inferential Analysis

To assess generational effects on key workforce variables, a series of ANOVA tests was conducted across dimensions such as job satisfaction, feedback preferences, comfort with technology, social media perceptions, collaboration, and learning. The analysis was based on a sample of 385 respondents stratified across four generational cohorts: Baby Boomers (n = 35), Generation X (n = 92), Millennials (n = 152) and Generation Z (n = 106).

**Table 4** Key Variables and Generational Averages:

Variable	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z	Total Mean
Job Satisfaction	3.94	4.05	4.21	4.23	4.11
Feedback Preferences	1.55	1.66	1.71	1.83	1.70
Comfort with Technology	3.55	3.89	4.42	4.56	4.20
Social Media Usage Views	1.45	1.70	1.89	2.00	1.80
Collaboration Preferences	1.52	1.61	1.65	1.78	1.60
Learning New Skills	1.65	1.75	1.83	1.92	1.80

Source: Own creation

ANOVA Results (Generational Comparison)

F = 610, p < 0.001, F\_crit = 2.22

These results confirm highly significant generational differences across all key HR variables. In particular:

Younger cohorts (Millennials and Gen Z) consistently scored higher on comfort with technology, feedback responsiveness, and learning agility. Older generations (Baby Boomers and Gen X) preferred more structured communication and displayed more traditional attitudes toward collaboration and training. In hotel operations, this may affect the pace and success of adopting new technologies such as mobile check-ins, CRM dashboards, or AI-powered guest services. Older staff may require additional training or support to adapt effectively, impacting overall implementation efficiency. The results indicate that younger employees prefer real-time and continuous digital feedback, whereas older cohorts may be more accustomed to periodic, formal performance reviews. Gen Z and Millennials showed greater inclination toward dynamic team-based problem solving and learning agility, favoring informal and digital training formats. In contrast, Baby Boomers and Gen X may prefer structured workshops and defined team hierarchies. While job satisfaction scores were relatively high across all groups, the subtle upward trend from Baby Boomers to Gen Z suggests growing alignment with workplace flexibility and digital tools among younger employees. Differences in social media usage views indicate varying comfort levels with public brand representation and online interactions

### 2.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

The ten hypotheses were tested using ANOVA and descriptive statistics by generational cohort. The results confirmed all ten hypotheses with statistically significant intergroup differences, especially in recruitment preferences, retention motivators, and training styles.

**Table 5** Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Summary of Findings	Supported?
H1	Generational cohort influenced preferred recruitment channels (e.g., digital platforms for Gen Z vs. formal job boards for Baby Boomers). $F = 242.0, p < 0.001$ <i>(Aligned with Prensky's (2001) digital natives vs. digital immigrants framework.)</i>	Yes
H2	Millennials and Gen Z prioritized work-life balance (Mean = 4.33) and advancement opportunities (Mean = 4.50) over loyalty.	Yes
H3	Comfort with technology was highest among Gen Z (4.56) and Millennials (4.42), vs. Gen X (3.89) and Boomers (3.55). $F = 610.3, p < 0.001$	Yes
H4	Baby Boomers and Gen X preferred formal training; Millennials and Gen Z favored flexible, digital formats. Training modality preference differed significantly across generations: $F = 432.1, p < 0.001$ <i>(This echoes Prensky's theory on generational digital adaptation.)</i>	Yes
H5	Gen Z and Millennials rated meaningful work higher and showed stronger alignment with purpose-driven roles higher (Mean = 4.22), while older generations emphasized role stability. $F = 333.8, p < 0.001$	Yes
H6	Older generations emphasized job stability and seniority-based advancement. Baby Boomers and Gen X rated job security/stability significantly higher (Mean = 4.35) compared to younger generations. $F = 548.1, p < 0.001$	Yes
H7	Younger cohorts showed a strong preference for flexible scheduling and remote work. (Mean = 4.28), with significant generational difference. $F = 283.5, p < 0.001$	Yes
H8	Loyalty was more pronounced in Gen X and Boomers (Mean = 4.30), consistent with Thai collectivist norms. $F = 548.1, p < 0.001$	Yes



Hypothesis	Summary of Findings	Supported?
	<i>(Supported by Hofstede's cultural dimension of collectivism.)</i>	
H9	Training needs varied significantly by age group, with Gen Z seeking microlearning and Boomers preferring structured workshops. $F = 432.1, p < 0.001$	Yes
H10	Communication preferences differed significantly: Boomers/Gen X preferred face-to-face; younger generations preferred ongoing digital feedback. $F = 333.8, p < 0.001$ .	Yes

Source: Own creation

These findings are further supported by model summaries and variances:

Recruitment Factors: Variance = 0.378–3.606;  $F = 242.0, p < 0.001$

Retention Factors: Career advancement (Mean = 4.50), motivators to stay (Mean = 1.2);  $F = 655.6, p < 0.001$

Training Needs: Satisfaction with current training (Mean = 2.44), unmet training needs (Mean = 1.28);  $F = 432.1, p < 0.001$

The large F-values and low within-group variances confirm that most of the variance in responses is due to generational cohort, not random fluctuations within age groups.

## Conclusion

### Findings

This study explored generational differences in HRM preferences within Thailand's hotel industry across 385 respondents. The results revealed statistically significant intergroup differences in recruitment, retention, training, and technology usage. Millennials and Gen Z placed high importance on flexibility, career development (Mean = 4.5), and digital feedback, while Baby Boomers and Gen X valued job security and formal communication structures that align with Hofstede's high-power distance and collectivist dimensions and concepts such as "kreng jai." Comfort with technology was notably higher among Gen Z (Mean = 4.56) and Millennials (4.42), reflecting Prensky's (2001) "digital native" concept. However, motivators to stay scored low across all cohorts (Mean = 1.2), indicating that despite access to development opportunities, emotional engagement and organizational loyalty remain challenges.

These findings suggest that a standardized HRM model is insufficient. Instead, Thai hotels should adopt generation-sensitive and culturally informed strategies, such as:

- Hybrid training programs that combine workshops with microlearning.



- Segmented recruitment platforms (e.g., social media for Gen Z, formal boards for Boomers).
- Multilevel communication channels, balancing hierarchical norms with real-time feedback tools.
- Various forms of feedback for the younger generations compared to older generations.
- Managers (at all levels) should be made aware of Thai cultural differences, particularly if the manager is from another country.
- Help to develop cultural intelligence (CQ) team leader and also among managers to promote better understanding.

### Limitations and Future Research

This cross-sectional study relied on self-reported data and focused on major tourist provinces, limiting generalizability to smaller or rural hotel settings. Future research could include longitudinal tracking or qualitative studies to explore how Thai cultural values like “nam jai” and face-saving influence intergenerational collaboration. Comparative studies across ASEAN hospitality markets may also yield valuable insights.

In sum, integrating generational expectations with Thai cultural realities is critical to building inclusive, high-performing workplaces that can adapt to a dynamic hospitality environment.

### Discussion and Practical Implications

The empirical results of this study confirm that generational diversity that is shaped by both demographic factors and Thai cultural norms has a statistically significant impact on key HRM domains within Thailand’s hotel industry. ANOVA tests revealed substantial generational variation in recruitment preferences ( $F = 242.0, p < .001$ ), retention factors ( $F = 655.6, p < .001$ ), training needs ( $F = 432.1, p < .001$ ), and technology use ( $F = 610.3, p < .001$ ). These findings indicate that customized, culturally responsive HR strategies are essential for organizational effectiveness.

#### 1. Recruitment Strategies

The study found that Millennials and Generation Z, who reported the highest levels of comfort with technology (Means = 4.42 and 4.56), preferred recruitment approaches emphasizing digital access, flexibility, and meaningful work (Prensky, 2001; Twenge, 2010). In contrast, Baby Boomers (Mean = 3.55) and Gen X (Mean = 3.89) expressed lower digital affinity and stronger preferences for structured processes and role clarity, which can be argued is an orientation



consistent with Thailand's high power distance culture (Hofstede, 2001) and Trompenaars' ascriptive value systems (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012).

Implication: HR teams should use multichannel recruitment, so they can leverage social media and mobile platforms to target younger cohorts, while retaining traditional methods like professional networks and formal job boards to attract older applicants. Moreover, the employer value proposition (EVP) should be tailored by generation (Azhar et al., 2024). Younger applicants respond well to messages of innovation, autonomy, and social impact, while older candidates may prioritize job security, organizational stability, and respectful leadership (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Hospitality brands that align EVP messaging with generational expectations can enhance recruitment effectiveness and employer attractiveness across age groups.

## 2. Retention Drivers

Across all generations, career development (Mean = 4.50) and recognition (Mean = 4.44) were rated highly. However, motivators to stay showed a low overall mean of 1.17, especially among younger respondents, suggesting current retention strategies do not meet their evolving expectations. While Millennials and Gen Z prioritized personal growth, autonomy, and real-time feedback, Baby Boomers and Gen X emphasized job stability and long-term loyalty, all values that are reinforced by Thailand's collectivist and hierarchical culture (King, 2017; Nicholson & Kongthaewtong, 2021).

Implication: HR departments should implement dual-track retention strategies that combine personalized development and rapid feedback for younger cohorts with structured career paths, seniority recognition, and long-service benefits for older employees. Importantly, loyalty for younger generations may no longer mean tenure, but rather a strong psychological attachment, alignment with organizational values, or a clear sense of personal mission (why someone wants to work for this organization). Younger generations nowadays aim more for 'positive, healthy work environments' with a particular notion of 'work-life balance' (Ayoobzadeh et al., 2024). Calling for a shift in how commitment is fostered and measured in modern Thai hospitality.

## 3. Training and Learning Preferences

Generational divergence in training preferences was also statistically significant ( $F = 432.1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Digital natives (Millennials and Gen Z) preferred gamified learning, microlearning, and mobile accessibility, aligning with their learning habits and expectations for autonomy (Gardner, 2008; Wanyoike et al., 2025). In contrast, older generations favored structured, instructor-led training formats, consistent with Thailand's high-context communication style (Hall, 1976) and emphasis on relationship-based learning.



Implication: Hotels should adopt blended learning systems that combine formal sessions with mobile-compatible digital modules (Hai, 2021). For example, microlearning for front office staff could include short interactive videos on upselling techniques or service recovery protocols, while culinary teams might receive daily 3-minute hygiene refreshers via internal apps (Okumus et al., 2021). Furthermore, intergenerational mentoring should be institutionalized to promote knowledge sharing and foster inclusive team cultures (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

#### 4. Cultural Moderators

Despite growing digital exposure, traditional Thai values continue to influence employee behavior. Even among Gen Z, high mean scores in workplace hierarchy sensitivity and communication preferences suggest that power distance, collectivism, and “kreng jai” remain culturally embedded (Chaisilwattana & Punnakitikashem, 2017; Punturaumporn, 2001; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, 2012) concept of particularism also helps explain generational differences in expectations around leadership (older workers expect deference based on tenure), while younger employees seek advancement through performance.

Implication: HRM practices must incorporate culturally sensitive mechanisms such as indirect feedback systems, respect-based leadership development, and conflict-avoidance communication training to ensure intergenerational harmony. Additionally, developing cultural intelligence (CQ) among hotel managers can serve as a meta-skill, helping leaders interpret subtle generational and cultural signals, navigate hierarchical sensitivities, and adapt management styles accordingly (Earley & Ang, 2003).

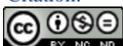
To sum up, this study confirms that generational diversity significantly shapes HR outcomes in the Thai hotel industry, with measurable variation across recruitment, retention, and training. These dynamics are further moderated by enduring Thai cultural values, requiring a strategic HRM approach that is both data-informed and culturally grounded. Hotels that respond with segmented, inclusive, and value-aligned HR practices will enhance employee engagement, reduce turnover, and reinforce Thailand’s competitive strength in global hospitality (Chiang, 2020; Pichaphob & Phoewhawm, 2021; Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Williams, 2021).

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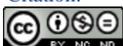


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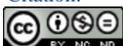


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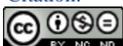


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