The Effect of Work Values and Job Satisfaction on the Resignation Intention of Generation Z Employees in Sichuan, China

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Abstract

Objective: This study focuses on Generation Z employees in Sichuan, China, aiming to systematically explore the impact mechanism of their work values (covering seven dimensions: personality preferences, economic returns, career development, colleague recognition, work atmosphere, innovation challenges, and self achievement) on resignation intention, and examine the mediating role of job satisfaction between work values and resignation intention. **Design/methodology/approach:** A cross-sectional questionnaire survey was conducted to sample Generation Z employees from multiple enterprises in Sichuan Province, and a total of 382 valid questionnaires were collected. Use structural equation modeling (SEM) and Bootstrap method for data analysis to examine the direct effects of various dimensions of work values on resignation intention, as well as the mediating effect of job satisfaction. **Findings:** This study confirms that the resignation intention of Generation Z employees is driven by the differentiation of their work values. Research has found that career development, work atmosphere, colleague recognition, and satisfaction of personality preferences can significantly reduce resignation intention, while the pursuit of economic returns, innovation challenges, and self achievement can significantly enhance resignation intention. Among them, the inhibitory effect of career development and the protective effect of work atmosphere are the most prominent. This indicates that Generation Z employees will both passively leave due to a lack of supportive environments and growth opportunities, as well as actively move in pursuit of higher returns and challenges. Job satisfaction plays a partial mediating role in this influencing mechanism, revealing the bridging function of emotional experience between value balancing and behavioral decision-making. **Originality/Value:** This study, for the first time in the Sichuan region with distinct regional cultural characteristics, constructs a multidimensional model of the relationship between work values and resignation tendencies for the Z generation group, and clarifies the mediating path of job satisfaction, expanding the research on employee behavior from the perspective of intergenerational and regional intersection. The conclusion has theoretical innovation significance for understanding the occupational psychological mechanism of

young labor force in emerging western development areas. **Practical implications:** The study provides regional and intergenerational management insights for enterprise management practices. It is suggested that when formulating talent retention strategies, enterprises in Sichuan should focus on building clear career development channels, optimizing salary incentive systems, and enhancing employee satisfaction by creating a supportive work atmosphere, thereby effectively reducing the risk of turnover for Generation Z employees.
Keywords: Generation Z Employees, Work Values, Job Satisfaction, Resignation Intention, Sichuan Region

Introduction

As Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2009) becomes a new force in the workplace, their unique work values are reshaping organizational management paradigms. Unlike their predecessors who emphasized collectivism, Generation Z grew up in a digital environment and placed greater emphasis on work life balance, individual expression, and immediate feedback (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). This value shift has led to a significant increase in workplace mobility, highlighting the phenomenon of "flash comments" (Shorey, Chan, Rajendran & Ang, 2021), and how to effectively manage this group has become an important issue.

The rise of Generation Z is not only a management practice issue, but also involves the core social science issue of reconstructing the relationship between individuals and organizations in the process of modernization. The traditional "organizational person" model characterized by long-term employment, organizational loyalty, and collectivism is being challenged by the global trend of "individualization" that emphasizes individual value, work mobility, and life autonomy (Dreyer & Stojanová, 2023). In the context of China, this transformation is particularly noteworthy: Generation Z employees are closely connected to global culture through digital technology, exhibiting values similar to their Western peers; At the same time, they are deeply rooted in the soil with a profound tradition of collectivism and distinct regional culture. The interweaving of globalization forces and local characteristics has made China's Generation Z an ideal sample for testing the "convergence theory" (which believes that globalization leads to value convergence) and the "differentiation theory" (which emphasizes the sustained influence of local culture) (Fu & Hou, 2025). Therefore, this study aims to take Sichuan as an example to deeply analyze the specific forms and impact mechanisms of this global intergenerational change in China.

There are significant regional development differences in China, and research needs to be conducted in conjunction with specific regional backgrounds. As an important province in western China, Sichuan's unique "leisure capital" culture and rapidly developing new economic industries have shaped the unique work values of local Generation Z employees. They pursue career development while also emphasizing work atmosphere and quality of life, a dual characteristic that echoes the theory of "locality" in career choices (Deng & Chen, 2023).

However, in recent years, despite the sustained increase in economic vitality in Sichuan region, the turnover rate of young and middle-aged employees in some industries and enterprises remains high. This contradictory phenomenon highlights the urgency and necessity of exploring the underlying influencing mechanisms in depth. This contradictory

phenomenon - the coexistence of economic opportunities and high resignation intention - challenges traditional turnover models that are solely based on economic rationality (such as the Price Mueller model), and raises a key social science debate: in the contemporary workplace, is it the universal "global generation" that drives employee behavior, or is it the "local" preference shaped by specific regional cultures? Existing research mostly approaches from the macro national level or developed eastern coastal regions, implicitly leaning towards a "convergence theory" perspective, assuming that first tier cities represent China's future. There is still a lack of focused research on western regions such as Sichuan with distinct cultural and economic characteristics, which makes it difficult for us to answer whether and how regional culture regulates the impact of global intergenerational values on employee behavior? This study aims to respond to this debate and reveal how Generation Z employees balance career development and quality of life, personal achievement and interpersonal harmony in the context of the "leisure capital" culture, thereby deepening our understanding of regional cultural resilience in the era of globalization (Fu&Hou, 2025).

On a theoretical level, the mainstream resignation model is constructed based on Western culture (Price, 2000), which is difficult to fully explain the behavioral characteristics of Generation Z in China. Although work values are considered a key factor in predicting resignation intention, existing research often oversimplifies values and lacks in-depth analysis of the diverse value dimensions of Generation Z. The mediating mechanism of job satisfaction has its particularity in Chinese organizations (He et al., 2024), but its role in the Z generation is not yet clear.

Therefore, this study focuses on Generation Z employees in Sichuan and constructs a value model that includes seven dimensions, with a particular emphasis on examining the mediating role of job satisfaction. The research results will provide new insights into the occupational psychological mechanisms of this specific group and provide a basis for local enterprises to formulate talent strategies (Jiang & Gu, 2025). By constructing and testing this regionalized impact model, this study not only aims to provide insights for regional human resource management, but also hopes to provide empirical evidence from emerging development regions in western China for the social science debate on the universality of intergenerational values and the specificity of regional culture.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Recent empirical research on Generation Z employees has begun to depict their unique work values map. For example, Benitez Marquez et al. (2022) found in a global study that Generation Z significantly values job flexibility and a sense of purpose more than their predecessors. However, these studies are mostly based on Western contexts or global samples, and the applicability of their conclusions in non Western cultural contexts is questioned. In contrast, Shorey et al. (2021) found in their study of Asian financial centers that Generation Z employees in high-intensity work cultures prioritize economic returns and career development. This reveals that the values of Generation Z may not be rigid, but deeply influenced by regional economic and cultural characteristics. On this basis, this study aims to examine the performance of these identified values dimensions in the unique regional cultural background of Sichuan, China, and further explore how they affect resignation intention through job satisfaction, challenging the notion that the values of Generation Z are universal and establishing a more culturally sensitive regional explanatory model.

Theoretical Foundations and Integration
This study is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (HNT) (Maslow, 1943) and Hawthorne's experimental theory (HET) (Mayo, 1933), and constructs a theoretical framework for how work values affect resignation intention through job satisfaction. The hierarchy of needs theory explains the internal structure of work values from the perspective of individual motivation. This theory divides human needs into five levels: physiological, safety, belonging, respect, and self actualization, which is highly consistent with the seven value dimensions of this study: Economic returnss correspond to basic survival needs, work atmosphere and colleague recognition meet social and respect needs, while career development, innovation challenges, and self achievement point to the highest level of self actualization needs. This theoretical perspective suggests that the resignation intention of Generation Z employees stems from their multi-level needs not being fully met, and job satisfaction is a direct reflection of the degree to which these needs are met (Rachmad, 2025). Hawthorne's experimental theory supplements the influence of social psychological factors from the perspective of organizational environment. This theory emphasizes the crucial role of non economic factors such as interpersonal relationships, group belonging, and organizational care in employee behavior, which precisely explains why Generation Z employees highly value soft values such as work atmosphere and colleague recognition. The "social person" hypothesis revealed by Hawthorne's experiment suggests that a good organizational atmosphere and interpersonal interaction can significantly improve employee satisfaction, thereby reducing resignation intention (Djafarova & Foots, 2022).

The two theories complement each other effectively: the hierarchy of needs theory explains the multi-level value pursuits of Generation Z employees as "individuals", while the Hawthorne experimental theory emphasizes the key role of organizational environment in meeting these value pursuits from the perspective of "social beings". Job satisfaction becomes the core mediating variable connecting individual needs and organizational environment in this framework, and its level directly reflects the degree to which the organizational environment meets individual needs, ultimately affecting turnover decisions (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024).

China Contextual Considerations and Cultural Relevance
When applying Western theories of work values and resignation to China, cultural adaptability must be considered. Chinese society emphasizes collectivism, relationships, and interpersonal harmony (Yan, Mo & Zhou, 2024), which differs fundamentally from Western individualism. These cultural traits likely alter how work values influence employee attitudes and behaviors. Dimensions like colleague recognition and work atmosphere may have a more pronounced effect in China's relationship-oriented context, making direct application of Western models inadequate and necessitating localized adjustments.

This study focuses specifically on Generation Z employees in Sichuan, a group shaped by both global digital upbringing and local culture. Sichuan's distinctive "leisure culture" and growing digital economy have fostered unique expectations for work-life balance and career growth. Moreover, this generation navigates between traditional relational logic and modern individualistic values (Gan & Zeng, 2025), creating complex motivations that Western models must adapt to by incorporating regional and generational perspectives.

Sichuan's diverse industrial structure—such as Chengdu's mix of digital and traditional sectors—adds further nuance. Gen Z employees in different industries face varying organizational environments and opportunities, which may influence how they weigh work values and make resignation decisions. This study will therefore analyze the interplay of Chinese relational emphasis, regional quality-of-life values, and generational pursuit of self-realization, aiming to build a theoretical explanation that better aligns with China's reality (Wang, 2023).
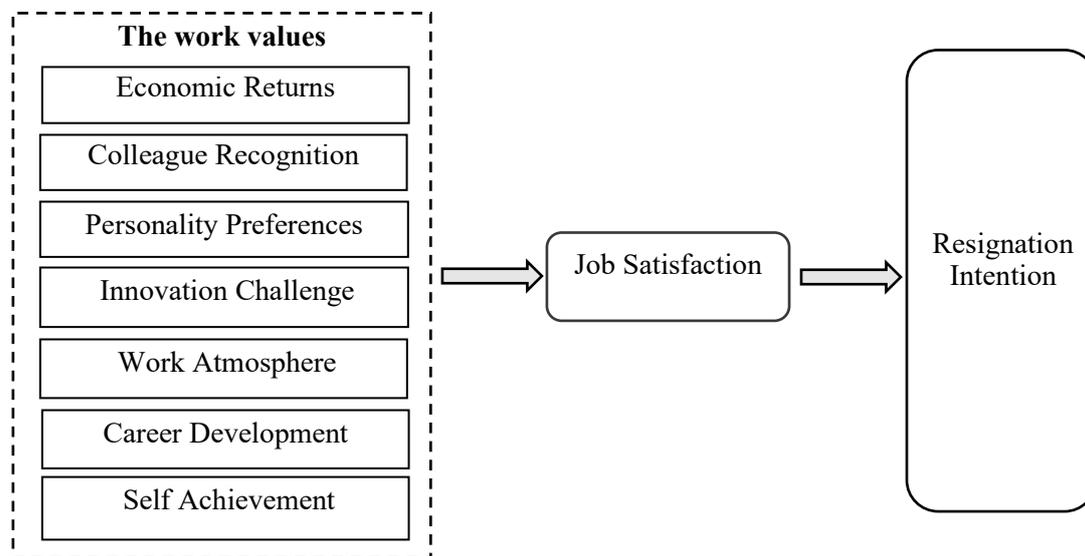

Figure 1. Integrated Theoretical Model of resignation intention Incorporating HNT Theory and HET

Hypothesis Development
Direct Effects on Resignation Intention
Work values, as the goals and standards pursued by individuals in the work context, have a guiding effect on employees' attitudes and behaviors. Resignation intention, as the most direct precursor variable of actual turnover behavior, is significantly influenced by the degree of value matching. Traditional research has shown that when the organizational environment is inconsistent with individual values, employees are more likely to have a desire to resign (Garegnani, 2024).

However, research on Generation Z employees presents characteristics different from traditional cognition. As a generation growing up in a digital and diversified environment, they have a distinct value orientation: they not only focus on external values such as Economic returnss and career development, but also attach great importance to the realization of intrinsic values such as personal preferences and innovative challenges. Compared to their predecessors, Generation Z is more willing to pursue value alignment through career mobility (Jaga & Guetterman, 2023).

Based on existing research, the unique growth background of Generation Z employees has shaped their composite work values, which results in significant differences in their reasons for leaving compared to traditional generations. Scholars have pointed out that Generation Z exhibits a "dual drive" characteristic in career choices, as observed by Liu and Ye (2022), with high expectations for rapid economic returns and clear career development, which are seen

as the fundamental measure of job value; At the same time, it also attaches great importance to the realization of intrinsic value and strongly desires that the work content is in line with personal interests and personality. When this' fit 'cannot be achieved, such as when the job lacks innovation and challenge, or when a platform that provides a sense of achievement cannot be provided, they may be more proactive in seeking a match through career mobility, as Xie (2019) suggests. On the contrary, research has also shown that an organizational environment that meets their individual preferences, provides a positive collaborative atmosphere, and is recognized by colleagues can effectively enhance the organizational embeddedness of Generation Z, thereby suppressing their intention to resign. This seemingly contradictory value structure - where inadequate satisfaction of certain factors (such as economic returns and innovation challenges) can "drive" resignation, while the full realization of other factors (such as team identification and development prospects) can "pull" retention - collectively constitutes a complex dynamic mechanism that affects Generation Z's tendency to resign. Recent literature further echoes this viewpoint, pointing out that the key to understanding the turnover behavior of Generation Z lies in examining the dynamic and holistic matching process between their diverse values and organizational supply (Liu & Ye, 2022; Xie, 2019). Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed::

H1: Economic returns of Generation Z employees have a significant positive impact on resignation intention;
H2: Colleague recognition of Generation Z employees have a significant negative impact on resignation intention;
H3: Personality Preferences of Generation Z employees have a significant negative impact on resignation intention;
H4: Innovation challenges of Generation Z employees have a significant positive impact on resignation intention;
H5: Work atmosphere of Generation Z employees have a significant negative impact on resignation intention;
H6: Career development of Generation Z employees have a significant negative impact on resignation intention;
H7: Self achievement of Generation Z employees have a significant positive impact on resignation intention.

Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction
Job satisfaction, as a subjective emotional response of employees to the work environment, is often regarded as a key mediating variable connecting job characteristics and behavioral outcomes in organizational behavior research (Lavoie-Tremblay et al., 2022). According to Singh and Tarkar (2022) definition, job satisfaction arises from an individual's perception of the degree to which their job achieves or promotes the realization of their value. When the work values of Generation Z employees, such as career development, innovation challenges, etc., are met, their job satisfaction may increase, which may in turn reduce their tendency to resign. However, if an organization fails to meet its diverse value needs, it may lead to a decrease in satisfaction, thereby strengthening the intention to resign (Jafari & Van Looy, 2022). Therefore, this article proposes:
H8: The job satisfaction of Generation Z employees has a significant mediating effect between work values and resignation intention.

Methodology

Research Design and Sampling Procedure

This study adopts a cross-sectional quantitative research design, with Generation Z as the research object, conducted in Sichuan, China from August to October 2025, aiming to investigate the relationship between work values, job satisfaction, and resignation intention. Adopting stratified and random sampling methods: After stratifying 9 cities in Sichuan according to GDP, 3 cities were randomly selected, and 3 different representative industries were determined from the 3 cities using stratified methods. One enterprise was simply randomly sampled from each industry, for a total of 9 enterprises. This method aims to ensure the representativeness of the sample in terms of region and industry.

Sample Characteristics and Data Collection

The final sample includes 382 full-time employees who were born between 1995 and 2009 and are over 18 years old. According to Solimant et al (2021) recommendation, EPOWER was used to determine the sample size for all variables in this study, with a response rate of 85.6%, which is excellent for organizational research (Azizi et al., 2021). The data collection used the method of electronic questionnaire star. Prior to the main survey, a pilot study was conducted on 40 respondents to evaluate instrument clarity and identify potential issues. Based on feedback from the pilot, minor modifications have been made to improve clarity and cultural adaptability.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N = 382)

Demographic Variable	Category	Number of People	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	202	52.88
	Female	180	47.12
Marital Status	Unmarried	355	92.93
	Married	27	7.07
Education Level	High School or Below	50	13.09
	Bachelor's Degree	222	58.12
	Master's Degree	95	24.87
	Doctoral Degree	15	3.92
Tenure	Within 1 Year	73	19.11
	1 to 3 Years	149	39.01
	3 to 5 Years	84	21.98
	5 to 8 Years	65	17.02
	More than 8 Years	11	2.88

Measurement Instruments

This study used a questionnaire survey method, and all core constructs were measured using mature scales that have been validated to have good reliability and validity in existing research. To ensure conceptual equivalence in the Chinese context, all English scales were translated using standard back translation procedures (Sharma, 2022). The questionnaire is scored using a 5-point Likert scale (1="strongly disagree", 5="strongly agree").

The measurement of work values mainly draws on the research scales of Liu and Ye (2022) and Xie (2019), and has been moderately adapted according to the purpose of this study,

ultimately forming a measurement tool consisting of seven dimensions (Economic returns, colleague recognition, Personality Preferences, innovation challenges, work atmosphere, career development, and self achievement) with a total of 28 items, achieving good internal consistency (α=0.83) in this study.

The measurement of job satisfaction adopts the scale used in Katebi et al (2022) study, with slight modifications, and includes a total of 5 positive items (α=0.87).
The measurement of resignation intention draws on the scale used by Ike (2023), which was revised based on Mobley's classic scale and includes four items. It has been proven to have high reliability and effectiveness in multiple studies (α=0.91).

Data Analysis Techniques
This study used a structural equation model based on partial least squares (PLS-SEM) and SmartPLS 4.0 software for data analysis. The analysis process follows a two-stage approach: first, the reliability and validity of the measurement model are tested, and then the path relationship of the structural model is evaluated (Guenther et al., 2023).

Prior to data analysis, preliminary processing was performed on the samples. Descriptive statistics show that the variables generally follow a normal distribution. There are a small number of random missing values in the sample, with a missing proportion of less than 1.5%. The Little's MCAR test results are not significant (χ^2=28.43, df=25, p=0.29), indicating that the missing mechanism is completely random, and the expected maximization algorithm is used for interpolation (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

In the evaluation stage of the measurement model, the convergent validity and discriminant validity are examined through confirmatory factor analysis. Using indicators such as chi square/df, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR to evaluate the goodness of fit of the model, the judgment criteria are: χ^2/df＜3, CFI＞0.90, TLI＞0.90, RMSEA＜0.08, SRMR＜0.08（Sabol et al., 2023）。
In the structural model analysis, Bootstrap sampling was used 5000 times to test the direct effect of work values on resignation intention and the mediating effect of job satisfaction. If the 95% deviation corrected confidence interval for indirect effects does not include 0, the mediating effect is considered significant (Usakli & Rasoolimanesh, 2023).

Results
Preliminary Analyses and Common Method Bias
Before conducting hypothesis testing, a preliminary analysis of data quality was conducted. The skewness of each variable ranges from -0.83 to 0.91, and the kurtosis ranges from -1.05 to 1.06, meeting the requirements of a normal distribution. To test for common method bias, the Harman single factor test was used for analysis (Podsakoff et al., 2023). The results showed that the cumulative explanatory variation of the first factor extracted without rotation was 30.2%, which was below the critical threshold of 40%.

Measurement Model Results
The fitting indicators of the measurement model show that the model can accept: χ^2/df = 2.18, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.056 (90% CI: 0.049–0.063), SRMR = 0.048。 The factor loadings of each item on their corresponding latent variables reached a statistically significant

level (p<0.001), and the values were all greater than 0.68, indicating that the scale has good convergent validity. The average variance extraction (AVE) of all latent variables is above 0.55, and the combined reliability (CR) is above 0.85, further confirming the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement model (Lea et al., 2022).

In terms of discriminant validity, the Fornell Larcker criterion test shows that the square root of AVE for each latent variable is greater than its correlation coefficient with other latent variables. In addition, the heterogeneity to elemental ratio (HTMT) of all latent variable pairs is below the threshold of 0.82, providing further support for discriminant validity (Cheung et al., 2024). The descriptive analysis and correlation analysis are shown in Table 2:

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (N = 382)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Economic Returns	3.91	0.76	(.87)								
2.Colleague Recognition	4.06	0.69	.47**	(.89)							
3.Personality Preferences	3.83	0.80	.40**	.44**	(.90)						
4.Innovation Challenges	3.78	0.83	.43**	.41**	.60**	(.91)					
5.Work Atmosphere	3.96	0.72	.45**	.52**	.56**	.55**	(.87)				
6.Career Development	3.71	0.85	.48**	.45**	.54**	.58**	.57**	(.88)			
7.Self Achievement	3.80	0.81	.43**	.41**	.59**	.62**	.55**	.60**	(.89)		
8.Job Satisfaction	3.67	0.74	.30	.45	.50	.25	.55	.50	.35	(.92)	
9.Resignation Intention	2.52	0.88	.42	-.25	-.30	.20	-.40	-.35	.15	-.60	(.85)

*Note: **p < .01; Cronbach's alpha values are shown in parentheses on the diagonal

Hypothesis Testing: Direct Effects
This study examined the direct effects of Generation Z employees' work values on resignation intention through structural equation modeling. The results indicate that all seven hypotheses were supported by the data. Specifically, economic returns (β=0.18, p<0.01), innovation challenges (β=0.22, p<0.01), and self achievement (β=0.20, p<0.01) showed significantly positive effects on resignation intention, suggesting that higher emphasis on these values among Generation Z employees corresponds to stronger resignation intention. Conversely, colleague recognition (β=-0.16, p<0.05), personality preferences (β=-0.15, p<0.05), work atmosphere (β=-0.25, p<0.001), and career development (β=-0.28, p<0.001) demonstrated significantly negative effects, indicating that satisfaction of these value needs effectively reduces resignation intention. This research reveals the dual nature of turnover drivers among Generation Z employees: the pursuit of growth and autonomy propels their

active mobility, while reliance on supportive and developmental environments constitutes a significant retention mechanism. This finding provides important insights for organizations managing Generation Z employees, highlighting the need to simultaneously address both the "push" and "pull" factors.

Table 3
Direct Effects of Work Values on Resignation intention

Hypothesis	Path	β coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
H1	Economic Returns → Resignation Intention	0.18	0.05	3.621	0.003
H2	Colleague Recognition → Resignation Intention	-0.16	0.06	-2.815	0.025
H3	Personality Preferences → Resignation Intention	-0.15	0.06	-2.702	0.037
H4	Innovation Challenges → Resignation Intention	0.22	0.05	4.321	0.001
H5	Work Atmosphere → Resignation Intention	-0.25	0.05	-4.893	<0.001
H6	Career Development → Resignation Intention	-0.28	0.06	-5.214	<0.001
H7	Self Achievement → Resignation Intention	0.20	0.05	4.102	0.001

Hypothesis Testing: Mediation Effects
Use Bootstrap method (5000 samples) to test the mediating effect of job satisfaction. As shown in Table 4, the indirect effect of work values on resignation intention through job satisfaction is significant (confidence intervals do not include 0), but the direct effect also remains significant, indicating that job satisfaction plays a partial mediating role. Hypothesis H8 is partially supported.

Table 4
Mediation Effects of Job Satisfaction

Mediation Path	Indirect Effect (β)	95% CI	Direct Effect (β)	Result
Work Values → Job Satisfaction → Resignation intention	-0.21	[-0.28, -0.15]	-0.34	Partial Mediation

Discussion
Interpretation of Key Findings
This study empirically examined the impact mechanism of work values on resignation intention among Generation Z employees in Sichuan region, revealing that their turnover motives have distinct dual driving characteristics. The results showed that career development (β=-0.28) and work atmosphere (β=-0.25) had the most significant negative predictive effect on resignation intention, which strongly confirms that supportive environment and developmental opportunities are the "pulling force" core for Generation Z employees to decide to stay (Li, 2022). When an organization can provide a clear career growth path and a harmonious internal atmosphere, it can most effectively reduce their willingness to resign. This finding is consistent with Shorey et al.'s (2021) conclusion on the

importance of career development, and further emphasizes that in the collectivist cultural context of western China, the "soft" environmental factor of work atmosphere is equally crucial as the "hard" path of career development, echoing Gan and Zeng's (2025) observation that Generation Z values team harmony.

Meanwhile, the study also identified significant "thrust" factors. Economic returns (β=0.18), innovation challenge (β=0.22), and self achievement (β=0.20) all show significant positive effects on resignation intention. This indicates that the strong pursuit of these internal and external incentives by Generation Z employees themselves constitutes an important driving force for their proactive pursuit of career mobility. However, the impact of innovation challenges and self achievement is relatively weaker than expected, which differs from the "purpose driven" model emphasized by Benitez Marquez et al. (2022). This may reveal the unique trade-off of Generation Z employees in the context of "leisure culture" in Sichuan region: while pursuing challenges and meaning, they may also hold a certain degree of reservation towards the high-intensity and high-pressure "sense of mission" work mode, and are more inclined to seek gradual achievements in a stable and controllable environment (Guo et al., 2023).

In addition, the significant negative impact of colleague recognition (β=-0.16) and personality preference (β=-0.15) indicates that Generation Z also values social identity and self-expression in the workplace, and the satisfaction of these needs is an important factor for retention. The mediating effect of job satisfaction (hypothesis H8) further elucidates that the above values, whether acting as "pulling force" (negative impact) or "pushing force" (positive impact), partially achieve their mechanism of action by influencing employees' emotional experience (job satisfaction), which supports the classic path of value matching influencing behavioral intention through emotional evaluation (Hudays et al., 2024).

In summary, the resignation decision of Generation Z employees in Sichuan is a complex "push-pull" balancing process. They are both "pushed out" due to career development obstacles and uncomfortable environments, and "pulled" towards new opportunities due to their pursuit of higher economic returns and more innovative challenges. Organizations need to manage both the "pulling force" factors that inhibit turnover and the "pushing force" factors that drive turnover in order to achieve effective talent retention.

Theoretical Implications
This study has multiple theoretical values. Firstly, by integrating the hierarchy of needs theory and Hawthorne's experimental theory, a comprehensive analysis framework was constructed that covers both individual internal needs and external organizational environment, deepening the theoretical explanation of the mechanism by which the work values of Generation Z employees affect employee behavior.

Secondly, empirical evidence has found that the work values of Generation Z employees positively predict resignation intention, which is an important supplement to traditional cognition and provides a new perspective for understanding the professional behavior characteristics of the new generation of employees.

Thirdly, the study validated the partial mediating role of job satisfaction, revealing the psychological pathway through which values influence behavioral intentions through emotional experiences, and improving the theoretical model of attitude behavior relationship. Finally, the seven dimensional work values scale developed by the research institute provides a reliable measurement tool for subsequent related research and promotes empirical research progress in this field.

Practical Implications for China Management
This study provides specific insights for the management practices of Generation Z employees in China. Enterprises need to recognize that simple economic incentives are no longer sufficient to effectively retain the new generation of talents (Quesada-Puga et al., 2024). The focus of management should shift from macro level institutional construction to micro level individual value matching, especially emphasizing the construction of clear career development channels and a harmonious and inclusive working atmosphere. Managers should regularly conduct research and communication to accurately grasp the personalized needs of employees in terms of career growth, work autonomy, team relationships, etc., and use them as the core basis for formulating retention strategies, achieving the transformation from "managing employees" to "empowering individuals" (Gazi et al., 2024).

Specifically, enterprises should establish a diversified incentive system. At the material level, it is necessary to ensure the internal fairness and external competitiveness of the salary system; At the spiritual level, it is necessary to improve the immediate recognition and feedback mechanism to meet the needs of Generation Z for respect and a sense of belonging. At the same time, enterprises should design personalized career development paths, provide opportunities for cross departmental rotation, innovative projects, and skill training, and combine organizational goals with employees' personal sense of achievement and growth needs (Taamneh et al., 2024). This concept of "overall compensation" helps to significantly improve the effectiveness of talent retention while controlling costs.

Limitations and Future Research Directions
This study has several limitations. Firstly, adopting a cross-sectional study design can reveal the correlation between variables, but it is difficult to strictly establish causal relationships. Future research can adopt longitudinal tracking or empirical sampling methods to more accurately capture the dynamic evolution process of work values and resignation intention. Secondly, the data were collected through self-report method, and there may be common methodological biases (Obeng et al., 2024). Although statistical tests indicate that the problem is not serious, data can be obtained from multiple sources (such as supervisor evaluations) or multiple methods (such as objective resignation data) in the future to improve robustness. In addition, the sample only focuses on the Sichuan region, and the generalizability of its conclusions across the country needs further verification.

Based on this, future research can delve into the following aspects: firstly, operationalizing regional cultural characteristics (such as "leisure culture") into specific moderating variables and empirically testing their differential effects between different regions (Ho & Cho, 2023); The second is to expand the research object and compare and analyze the differences in the role mechanisms of employees from different generations (such as Generation Y employees) or different industries (such as new economy and traditional industries) (Dreyer & Stojanová,

2023); The third is to explore other potential mediating variables, such as psychological contract breach, job burnout, etc., in order to construct a more comprehensive theoretical model and provide richer theoretical explanations and practical guidance for understanding talent mobility in the Chinese context (Tomprou & Lee, 2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Research Conclusion

This study reveals the dual impact mechanism of work values on resignation intention among Generation Z employees in Sichuan region through empirical analysis. Research has found that the seven dimensions of work values can be divided into two driving modes: career development, work atmosphere, colleague recognition, and personality preferences significantly reduce resignation intention, constituting an important "retention pull"; And economic returns, innovation challenges, and self achievement significantly enhance the tendency to resign, constituting a key "flow driving force". Among them, the satisfaction of career development needs is the strongest protective factor in reducing the willingness to resign, while the pursuit of innovation challenges and self achievement is an important internal factor driving proactive mobility. This indicates that the turnover decision of Generation Z employees is a complex value balancing process, which involves both choosing to leave due to developmental obstacles and environmental discomfort, as well as actively moving in pursuit of higher returns and more challenges. This decision-making model that emphasizes both push and pull reflects the dynamic balance between stability and growth breakthroughs for the new generation of employees in the digital age.

Job satisfaction plays a partial mediating role between job values and resignation intention, indicating that values not only directly affect resignation intention, but also indirectly affect employees' emotional experiences.

Practical Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following management suggestions are proposed:

1. **Enterprises should establish a diversified career development system**, providing clear promotion paths and skill training opportunities for employees;
2. **Focus on creating a supportive work environment**, strengthening team building and communication mechanisms;
3. **pay attention to the flexibility and personalization of job design,** On the basis of ensuring competitive salary and benefits, and meet employees' needs for work life balance;
4. **It is recommended that managers regularly conduct employee value surveys,** timely understand the value orientation changes of Generation Z employees and develop targeted talent retention strategies.

Future Research Directions

Based on the research findings and limitations of this paper, future research can be conducted in the following three directions:

1. Exploring the moderating effect of cultural factors: Future research can operationalize regional cultural characteristics such as "leisure culture" as specific moderating variables, and empirically test the boundary role of regional culture in the relationship between work values and resignation intention through cross regional comparisons (such as comparing Sichuan and the Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou regions).

2. Deepen causal mechanism and dynamic research: Adopt longitudinal tracking or empirical sampling methods to explore the dynamic interaction relationship between work values, satisfaction, and resignation intention, in order to more rigorously establish causal relationships and reveal the trajectory of these variables over time.

3. Expand research models and comparative studies: Introduce new mediating or outcome variables such as psychological contract and job embeddedness to construct a more comprehensive theoretical model. At the same time, the research subjects can be expanded to different generations (such as Generation Y) or different industry groups for comparative analysis, in order to test the universality and specificity of the research conclusions.

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