

# ATTRITION AMONG Y-GENERATION EMPLOYEES IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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## ABSTRACT

*Hotels are facing challenges in regulating the attrition of the Y-generation employees, who are considered to be different than their previous generations. This research paper investigates the attrition intention of the concern generation hotel employees. The cost incurred to replace the gap caused by attrition is high and goes much beyond the parameters of financial losses. The population for the study are the young employees less than 35 years, who are hotel management graduates and working in 4, 5 & 5-D star hotels in Jaipur. Convenience sampling method was adopted to collect a data of 108 respondents through a structured questionnaire based on 5 point Likert scale. Descriptive and inferential statistic was used for data analysis. The study finds that the demographic variables like age, gender, job position and star category of the hotel effects the attrition intention of the Y-generation employees. It was suggested that in order to reduce the attrition intention, the hotel's working condition needs to be developed, to the extent that it suits the characteristic and meets the expectations of the Y-generation employees.*

**Key Words: Attrition, Y-generation, Hotel, Inferential Statistic, Retaining**

## INTRODUCTION

Hotel is a service oriented industry which requires talented employees to ensure customers satisfaction & its sustainability. 4, 5 & 5-Deluxe star hotels are considered to be the premiere segment that caters to the upscale market. Due to excessive attrition the continuous supply of skillful employees is always being a challenge for the HR department (Andrews, 2009; Datta, Biswakarma, & Nayak, 2013; Datta & Jha, 2015). The enduring issue has evolved as a tremendous concern ever since the inclusion of Y-generation, who are considered to be different than their seniors (Solnet & Hood, 2008).

The youngest generation who have been entering the industry for last one decade, belongs to the Y-generation cohort. With the retirement of the Baby boomers and the X-generation employees the Y-generation is replacing them (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Solnet & Hood, (2008) have indicated that employees of this generation are totally different than the other generation in relation to their attitudes and expectation. Studies of Gangai (2013) identified that the turnover rate of the young employees are higher than the older, experienced and higher position employees. Since males have more dominating roles in most of the operational departments of the hotel than females, which may influence turnover imbalance among them. Hotel industry is highly diversified in terms of the operational department and star category of the hotels and attrition behavior within this may vary. A study of the different demographic variable related to the Y generation hotel employees and its relation to the turnover tendency is necessary to address the attrition issue (Davidson M. C., 2000; Taylor, 2002; Yang, 2008; Zhang & Liu, 2010; Kuria, Peter, & Alice, 2011; Sandilyan, Dey, Datta, et.al., 2011; Torres, 2013; Gangai, 2013; Strydom, 2014; Datta, 2017).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Generation is a group of individuals born in between specific year gap and generally shares significant life events and regarded as having similar socio-cultural characteristics and attitudes. Pendergast (2010) mentions that Y Generation are born in between 1982 - 2002. According to Shaw & Fairhurst (2008), the years of birth vary from starting years of 1977-1982 to ending years of 1994-2003. Since most of the available literature are of the developed countries, so for the study of Y-generation in Indian context it is safe to include all birth years starting from 1982.

The upbringing of Generation Y is much different than their previous generation. They have born and brought up in families where they got proper care, nurture and support of their parents. They where never affected by financial crisis due to unemployment, mortgage and family responsibilities. They have achieved the lower level needs and seek for self actualization. These have engulfed them of having distinctive characteristics and behaviour than the other generations (Solnet & Hood, 2008). The authors have suggested that it is of outmost necessary for the industry's stake holders to understand the characteristic of this generation in particular because this young generation are out there in the hospitality industry or are getting prepared (hospitality undergraduates) to serve the hospitality's customers.

Eisner (2005) points out some of the distinct characteristic of this generation being valuing morality, patriotic, willing to struggle for things they believe is truth, sociable, value and respect family and friend. The author further describe that this generation is polite, energetic, have positive attitude but inquisitive. Generation Y likes intellectual challenge and strive for success and recognition.

Report of NAS Recruitment Communications, (2006) expresses about the positive and negative characteristic of Y-generation members. Positive traits are adaptability, technology savvy, ability to grasp new concept, efficient multi taskers and tolerant and the negative traits are impatient, skeptical, blunt, expressive, they are image driven and are still young.

One characteristic aspect of generation Y shows that they are confident, independent, individualistic, entrepreneurial, socially active, team player and collaborative, another characteristic aspect is that they are emotional and requires appreciation, approval and feedback (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008)

Y-generation has strong feeling towards personal and family life than other generation. They are very affluent with technological gadgets (Solnet & Hood, 2008). Pendergast (2010) describes Y-generation as a Hero generation, characterized as conventional and committed, with respect for authority and civic pride. The researcher also state that the Y-generation believe in team work and are technically savvy and they focus on their perception about their feels and experience about events and workplace. They are brand and technology focussed. They are confident and relaxed . They are the most educated than all previous generations.

Bolch, (2001) explains attrition as number of employees left the organisation and even the profession (Walmsley, 2004). Most of the preexisting turnover researches is based on attrition, very few are based on attrition behavior or turnover tendency i.e. tendency of an employee to quit (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008). Researchers have established strong relation between attrition and turnover tendency. Further they have suggested that since it is difficult to carry out attrition survey on the employees who have left the organization it is easier to conduct survey of turnover tendency on the existing employees. It is important since, to control the attrition the organization must be aware of the turnover tendency of its employees and must take appropriate measure in controlling it (Taylor, 2002). Turnover tendency predicts the individual's perception and are the forerunner of the actual attrition (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000).

Demographic variables of the hotel employees like Age, Gender, Tenure of Work Experience, Job Position, Operation department & Star category of the hotel has strong relationship with attrition of the hotel employees (Davidson M. C., 2000; Taylor, 2002; Yang, 2008; Zhang & Liu, 2010; Kuria, Peter, & Alice, 2011; Sandilyan, Dey, Datta, et.al., 2011; Torres, 2013; Gangai, 2013; Strydom, 2014).

The study of Kuria, Peter, & Alice (2011) shows that maximum percentage of attrition was among the employees who were less than 25 years old whereas older staff would have less turnover tendency (Davidson M. C., 2000). For which some hotels prefers to recruit aged people, as they intend to stay longer than young employees (Gangai, 2013; Strydom, 2014).

Indian Labour Journal published by Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India (2014, Pg 13), claims that the female labor ratio is only 23%. The scenario in hotels are also similar. Females are mostly restricted in departments which are either at visual area like Front Office or areas where there is less hard work involved like HR, training, marketing etc. Kitchen and F&B Service are in general male dominated areas (Torres, 2013).

Attrition of the less experienced employees of the hotel industry is more than their senior (Gangai, 2013). Study of Yang (2008) reveals that the numbers of attrition of hotel employees can be curtailed if the attrition of the newly appointees are controlled. The findings establishes the fact that the new employees leaves the organization within few months of joining due to the fact that their expectation from the organization was not being met (Kuria, Peter, & Alice, 2011). The staffing structure of the hospitality is generally segregated into three (frontline, supervisory and managerial) levels. The relation between the senior and the junior employees are always not symphonic, which is contradictory to the ideologies of the Y generation which might influence attrition (Chikwe, 2009; Sandilyan, Dey, Datta, et.al., 2011). In general attrition is more in lower levels and it decreases as it goes up the order (Gangai, 2013). The survey findings of Davidson, Timo, & Wang (2010) revealed that the cost involvement to substitute a senior level employee is tremendously high in comparison to that of a low rank employee. But, it was also pointed out that attrition cost of front line employees is much higher as their numbers are more than the managerial employees.

In hotel industry there are four major operational department which are Kitchen, Food & Beverage Service, Housekeeping and Front Office (Andrews, 2009; Datta & Jain, 2017). These four departments contribute towards the major chunk of the employees' population in any hotel. Survey findings of Gangai (2013) establish the fact that the operational departments of the hotel suffers highest attrition rate. Almost 50% of turnover happens in the F&B department i.e. amongst Chefs and F&B service personals followed by Housekeeping & Front Office.

The comparative study by Kuria, Peter, & Alice (2011) on labor turnover issue of different star category of hotels in Kenya, pointed out that star ratings were the key factors in determining employee attrition. The study reveals that attrition is more in lower category of hotels.

The objective of the study is to establish differences between the demographic variables of Y-generation hotel employees and their attrition intention.

## **HYPOTHESES**

H<sub>a1</sub>: There is a difference between the age and attrition intention of Y-generation employees of premium category hotels.

H<sub>a2</sub>: There is a difference between the gender and attrition intention of Y-generation employees of premium category hotels.

H<sub>a3</sub>: There is a difference between the work tenure and attrition intention of Y-generation employees of premium category hotels.

H<sub>a4</sub>: There is a difference between the job position and attrition intention of Y-generation employees of premium hotels.

H<sub>a5</sub>: There is a difference between the working department and attrition intention of Y-generation employees of premium category hotels.

H<sub>a6</sub>: There is a difference between the hotel's star category and attrition intention behavior of Y-generation employees.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was primarily focused to establish the attrition behavior of the Y-generation employees of 4/5/5-D star hotels. Secondary research was initially undertaken and vast literature was reviewed. Based on which the research objective was identified and research design was framed. The empirical research was based on primary data.

The respondents considered as sample has the following characteristic:

- Employees working in 4 star and 5 star category of hotels located in Jaipur
- Were born not before 1982, i.e. Y-generation.
- All were hotel management graduates and working in any one of the 4 major operational department of the hotel, i.e. Kitchen, F&B Service, Housekeeping and Front Office.
- Employees working in the Entry level, Supervisory level and Managerial level were included as samples
- Both Male and Female employees meeting the above mentioned characteristic was considered.

Convenience sampling method was adopted to collect the data from 108 hotel employees of age less than 35 years. The data collected was loaded in SPSS 21 version of software for analysis.

### **Validity & Reliability**

The 3 item attrition intention scale developed by (Camman, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979) was used to measure attrition behavior amongst the Y generation hotel employees. The questionnaire was previously used in various researches and is considered to be highly valid (Liu, 2005). Cronbach's Alpha score of the 03 attrition variables was found to be 0.855, which is considered acceptable and of good internal consistency (George & Mallery, 2003).

**Table 1: Reliability Statistic**

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Acceptance Level
3	0.855	Cronbach's Alpha Score $\geq$ 0.7

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The mean of the three attrition questionnaire was computed to be analyzed as the dependent variable. The descriptive statistic of the variable shows that majority of the respondents (44.4%) belong to the youngest age group, having least work experience (37%) and working as a frontline employee (42.6%). Majority of the respondents are Male (76.9%) and 66.7% of the employees are working in Food & Beverage department (Culinary and F&B Service).

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistic**

Variables	Characteristic	f 108	%	Attrition Mean	Attrition Standard Deviation
Age Group (in Years)	$\leq$ 25 Years	48	44.4	3.19	1.22
	26 to 30 Years	34	31.5	2.48	0.83
	31 to 34 Years	26	24.1	2.47	1.05
Gender	Male	83	76.9	2.91	1.11
	Female	25	23.1	2.40	1.09
Work Experienc e Tenure	< 3 Years	40	37.0	3.09	1.21
	3 to 5 Years	34	31.5	2.77	1.08
	> 5 Years	34	31.5	2.47	0.97
Job Position	Entry Level	46	42.6	3.28	1.22
	Supervisory Level	35	32.4	2.56	0.92
	Managerial Level	27	25.0	2.25	0.82

Department	Culinary	39	36.1	2.75	1.12
	F&B Service	33	30.6	2.82	1.14
	Housekeeping	16	14.8	3.20	1.14
	Front Office	20	18.5	2.50	1.10
Hotel Star Category	4 Star	48	44.4	3.52	0.95
	5 Star	60	55.6	2.21	0.88
Attrition Behaviour	I often think of leaving this hotel.	108	100	2.79	1.12
	It is very possible that I will look for a job next year				
	If I could I would continue to work for this hotel *				

\* reverse coding

For testing the hypotheses it is required to compare the means of the samples or groups in order to make inferences about the population means. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is the suitable procedure for comparing the means and to understand whether population means are equal. Before applying ANOVA the assumptions of it needs to be met (George & Mallery, 2003).

The assumption of ANOVA testing are:

- Assumption of Independence: In this study there is only one dependent variable (attrition) and six independent variables which can be tested one by one the assumption for independence is met to perform ANOVA (George & Mallery, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).
- Assumption of Normality: To check the assumption of normality, Skewness and Kurtosis statistic value should be between  $\pm 3.29$  ( $p < .001$ , two-tailed).  

$$z = \frac{\text{Statistic Value}}{\text{Standard Error}}$$

**Table 3: Skewness & Kurtosis of Attrition Mean**

Variable	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic Value	Std. Error	z Value	Statistic Value	Std. Error	z Value
N= 108						
Attrition Mean	0.424	0.233	1.81	-1.010	0.461	-2.190

tailed test) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Since the z value of Skewness ( $z = 1.81$ ) & Kurtosis ( $z = -2.19$ ) of the attrition mean is between the specified range, assumption for normality is met to perform ANOVA test.

- Assumption of Homogeneity: It requires that the variances of the distributions in the populations are to be equal. Assumption of homogeneity of variance of attrition intention of the independent variable is tested through Levenes Test (George & Mallery, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Table 4 reveals that the significance value of Gender ( $p = 0.385$ ), Tenure ( $p = 0.056$ ), Department ( $p = 0.093$ ) and Hotel Star Category ( $p = 0.0146$ ) was greater than p value 0.05 this suggest that for these homogeneity of variance is met. But for Age Group ( $p = 0.002$ ) and Job position ( $p = 0.001$ ) significance value is lesser than  $\alpha$  value of 0.05, so for these homogeneity of variance is not met.

**Table 4: Levenes Test of Homogeneity of Variance**

Independent Variable	Levenes Statistic	df 1	df 2	Significance (p)	Assumption for Homogeneity of Variance	Test to be used
Age Group	6.533	2	105	0.002	Not Met	Welch Test
Gender	0.761	1	106	0.385	Met	ANOVA
Work Tenure	2.962	2	105	0.056	Met	ANOVA
Job Position	8.088	2	105	0.001	Not Met	Welch Test
Department	0.076	3	104	0.973	Met	ANOVA
Hotel Star Category	2.141	1	106	0.146	Met	ANOVA

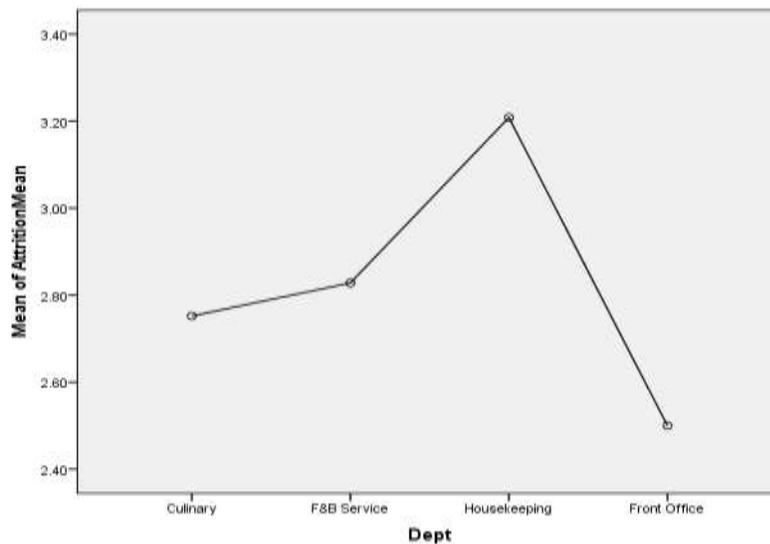
So for age group and job position ANOVA test could not be performed, instead robust test of equality of means; Welch test is implemented to give inputs.

The one way ANOVA was conducted to understand the calculated significance level of the F value at 95% confidence level. It was found that Between Groups significance value ( $\alpha$ ) for Work Tenure is 0.059 and for Working Department is 0.308 (Table 5).

The  $\alpha$  value was found higher than 0.05 so the null hypothesis is accepted. This concludes that there is no statistical difference between the Work tenure & Attrition behavior and Working Department & Attrition behavior.

The descriptive statistic (Table 2) of the mean of the attrition level shows that attrition is more for employees having experience of less than 03 years (M=3.09) and it gradually decrease with increase of work experience.

**Figure 1: Mean Plot of Attrition Behaviour of Working Department**



The attrition mean plot (Figure 1) of the operational department shows that attrition is maximum in the Housekeeping department (M=3.20) and least in the Front Office department (M=2.50). Culinary (M=2.75) and F&B Service department (M=2.80) faces moderate attrition behavior of their Y-generation employees.

**Table 5: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results of the Variables on Attrition Behavior of Y generation hotel employees.**

Between Groups of	Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	Significance $\alpha$
Gender	5.109	1	5.109	4.160	0.044
Work Tenure	7.113	2	3.556	2.913	0.059

Department	4.582	3	1.527	1.215	0.308
Hotel Star Category	46.230	1	46.230	55.019	0.000

**Table 6: Robust Tests of Equality of Means (Welch Test) of the variables on Attrition Behaviour of Y generation hotel employees.**

Variables	Degree of Freedom 1	Degree of Freedom 2	Asymptotically F - Value	Significance $\alpha$
Age Group	2	62.33	5.599	0.006
Job Position	2	67.731	9.329	0.000

The calculated significant value of the variable on attrition behavior at 95% confidence level was found from:

One way ANOVA (Table 5) - Gender ( $\alpha=0.044$ ) & Star Category of Hotel ( $\alpha=0.00$ )  
 Welch Test (Table 6) - Age Group ( $\alpha=0.006$ ) & Job Position ( $\alpha=0.000$ ).

Since the  $\alpha$ - value was lesser than 0.05, it indicate that the null hypotheses are not accepted in the given condition and it is accepted that there are differences of attrition behavior between the Gender, Star Category of the hotel, Age Group and Job Position.

Descriptive statistic of Gender (Table 2) reveals that Attrition Mean of the male is 2.91 and female is 2.40, which explains that male has higher attrition intension than the female hotel employees. For Hotel star category, the attrition mean for 5 star hotel is 2.21 and that of 4 star hotel is 3.52, which explains that attrition behavior of 4 star hotel employees of Y generation are more than that of the 5 star group.

Since the significance value from the Welch test, does not explain exactly in which condition the attrition behaviour means are different for Age Group and Job position, Games-Howell Test (which is a Post Hoc robust test when equality of variance is not met) was carried out.

**Table 7: Games-Howell's test of Attrition Behaviour on Age Group at 95% confidence level**

Age Group (I)	Age Group (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significant ( $\alpha$ )

≤ 25 Years	26 to 30 Years	.71405	.22791	.007
	31 to 34 Years	.72009	.27195	.028
26 to 30 Years	≤ 25 Years	-.71405	.22791	.007
	31 to 34 Years	.00603	.25078	1.000
31 to 34 Years	≤ 25 Years	-.72009	.27195	.028
	26 to 30 Years	-.00603	.25078	1.000

The result shows (Table 7) that there are significant differences of attrition mean with the ≤ 25 Year's age and 26-30 years group ( $\alpha = 0.007$ ) and the ≤ 25 Year's age and 31-34 years group ( $\alpha = 0.028$ ) but within other two group there are no differences. The attrition mean of age group (Table 2) identifies that attrition behaviour is highest in ≤ 25 Year's age group ( $M = 3.19$ ) and it decreases at 26-30 years group ( $M = 2.48$ ) and for 31-34 years ( $M = 2.47$ ).

**Table 8: Games-Howell's test of Attrition Behaviour on Job Position at 95% confidence level**

Job Position (I)	Job Position (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significant ( $\alpha$ )
Entry Level	Supervisory Level	.72795	.23861	.009
	Managerial Level	1.03060	.24110	.000
Supervisory Level	Entry Level	-.72795	.23861	.009
	Managerial Level	.30265	.22285	.369
Managerial Level	Entry Level	-1.03060	.24110	.000
	Supervisory Level	-.30265	.22285	.369

Games-Howell test result of attrition behaviour on job position (Table 8) explains that there are significant differences of attrition mean of Entry Level and Supervisory

Level group ( $\alpha = 0.009$ ) and Entry Level and Managerial Level group ( $\alpha = 0.000$ ) but within other two group there are no differences. The attrition mean of job position (Table 2) identifies that attrition behaviour is highest in entry level ( $M = 3.28$ ) and it decreases at supervisory level ( $M = 2.56$ ) and for managerial level ( $M = 2.25$ ).

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

Y-generation hotel employee's of age below 25 years has high attrition behaviour ( $\alpha = 0.007$  &  $0.028$ ) which agrees with the findings of Kuria, Peter, & Alice (2011); Datta, A. (2017) & Davidson M. C., (2000) that more young is the employee, attrition level is higher and it gradually decreases with the increase of age. It may be because with the increase of age the employees attains good position ( $\alpha = 0.36$  for managerial & supervisory level). As identified by Solnet & Hood, (2008) that Y generation employees give preference to social life more than career alone, so they would like to settle down with the increase of age.

Gender shows differences with attrition tendency ( $\alpha = 0.044$ ). But in comparison female shows lesser tendency ( $M=2.40$ ) towards attrition than the males ( $M=2.91$ ). The study results is contradictory to the findings of Datta, A. (2017). Though the number of women is less in hospitality industry, off late women are doing well in their career. Most of the women work in areas where less physical labor is involved like Front Office department (Torres, 2013). This study also reveals that the Front Office department has lowest attrition behaviour ( $M= 2.50$ ) among the other operational departments which may be the reason for female employees having low attrition behaviour.

Tenure of work experience did not influence the attrition behaviour of the Y-generation hotel employees ( $\alpha = 0.059$  at 95% confidence level) which was contradictory to the findings of Gangai, (2013). Though the mean results indicates that it reduces with the increase of work experience. It is assumed that, with increase of age, experience of an employee increases but increase of experience changes the expectancy of the employees. Since Y-generation are impatient and continuously like to upgrade themselves (NAS Recruitment Communications, 2006), they prefer that working for a new organization would give them a better career platform.

Job position of the hotel employees influence the Y-generation's attrition behaviour ( $\alpha = 0.00$ ). The findings of this study agrees with the past studies of Yang, (2008), Gangai, (2013) & Datta, A. (2017) that attrition behaviour of the entry level or the frontline employees are more and it decreases as they become senior employees. Y-generation managerial level employees attrition level is least, which may be because when one reaches senior level they get empowerment, responsibility and a secure position which is in accordance to the desirability of this generation (Eisner, 2005). Also a senior person has more family responsibilities so they intends to settle down.

Working department showed no differences with the attrition behaviour of the Y-generation employees ( $\alpha = 0.308$ ) which is contrary to the findings of Gangai, (2013) & Datta, & Jain, (2017). This indicates that Y generation employees always look for better career opportunity irrespective of their working department. The attrition mean suggested that Housekeeping department suffers maximum attrition (M= 3.20) followed by F& B Service (M=2.82), Culinary (M= 2.75) and Front Office (M= 2.50), which is contrary to the findings of Gangai, (2013) which suggested F&B (Service & Culinary) to have highest attrition than the Rooms Division (Housekeeping & Front Office). Monotonous and not interesting work may be one of the factor of the housekeeping department which results in highest attrition behaviour among Y-generation employees'.

Hotel's star category highly influences attrition behaviour of its employees ( $\alpha = 0.00$ ). Attrition level of 5 star hotel (M= 2.21) is lower than that of 4 star hotel (M= 3.52) which is in accordance with the findings of Kuria, Peter, & Alice (2011) that organization policy of the 5 star is better than that of the 4 star hotels. The employees working in 4 star property would always prefer to join a 5 star property. The Y-generation employees prefer brand association and status (NAS Recruitment Communications, 2006; Pendergast, 2010) for which they would like to be associated with luxurious 5 star hotel brands.

## **LIMITATION**

The literature review pertaining to the understandability of character and work attitude of Y generation hotel employees was solely limited to that of developed or western countries where the scenario is far more advanced and different than in Indian context. The present study is based on sample of hotel employees below 35 years age, located in Jaipur, Rajasthan so the findings presented here may not be generalizable to other settings. In this study only the demographic variable of the Y-generation hotel employees was considered to draw interpretation of their attrition intention. Further studies related to the other variable like organizational climate and work attitude are needed to understand the attrition intention of this generation employees of Indian hotel industry.

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