Cloud HRM and Generation Z Employment Preferences: A Quantitative Study of Higher National Diploma in Accountancy Holders.

Abdul Hameed Mohamed Azam* and Sammunkutty Sithy Hamila

Department of Accountancy, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, Batticaloa

DOI: https://doi.org/10.68050/JAMS.2026.354

Received: 01 Sept 2026; Accepted: 02 Sept 2026; Published: 09 September 2026

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between Cloud Human Resource Management and Generation Z employment preferences among Higher National Diploma in Accountancy (HNDA) holders, with particular reference to the Advanced Technological Institute, Batticaloa, under the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education. It also examines the mediating role of the perceived attractiveness of the organisation's technology. Grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model, Person-organisation Fit Theory, and Signalling Theory, this study adopted a positivist, deductive, cross-sectional quantitative design. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using simple random sampling, and 175 valid responses from final-year HNDA students and recent graduates were analysed using the IBM SPSS Statistics software. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson's correlation, regression analysis, and bootstrapped mediation analysis were employed. The findings show that Cloud HRM is a significant positive predictor of Generation Z employment preferences ($\beta = 0.694$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 48.2% of the variance in employment preferences. Cloud HRM also significantly predicted perceived organizational technological attractiveness, which was positively associated with employment preferences. Together, Cloud HRM and technological attractiveness explained 60.7% of the variance in employment preference. Bootstrapped mediation analysis further indicated a significant indirect effect through technological attractiveness (indirect effect = 0.319, 95% CI [0.224, 0.429]), while the direct effect remained significant, supporting partial mediation. This study suggests that Cloud HRM contributes to employer attractiveness by shaping perceptions of organizational technological readiness. Sri Lankan organizations seeking to attract digitally oriented Generation Z accounting graduates should therefore strengthen digital recruitment, communication, self-service, learning, and remote-access HR practices.

Keywords: Cloud Human Resource Management, Employment Preferences, Generation Z, Organizational Technological Attractiveness, Sri Lanka.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid digital transformation of organizational functions has significantly altered the way human resource management (HRM) activities are performed globally. Among these transformations, Cloud Human Resource Management (Cloud HRM) has emerged as one of the most influential technological innovations in modern organizational administration. Cloud HRM refers to the delivery of HR-related services, applications, and data management through cloud-based platforms that enable accessibility, flexibility, automation, and real-time decision making (Bondarouk & Ruel, 2009). Unlike traditional HR systems, cloud-based HR platforms allow organisations to integrate recruitment, payroll, training, performance evaluation, communication, and employee engagement into centralised digital ecosystems that are accessible from any location through Internet-enabled devices (Marler & Fisher, 2013).

The growing adoption of cloud technologies has transformed organizational recruitment and employment practices, particularly among younger generations entering the labor market. The contemporary workforce is increasingly dominated by Generation Z (Gen Z), commonly defined as individuals born between 1997 and

2012 (Priporas et al., 2020). This generation has grown up in a digitally connected environment characterised by smartphones, social media, cloud computing and artificial intelligence. Consequently, Gen Z employees demonstrate different employment expectations compared to previous generations, especially regarding technological sophistication, flexibility, digital communication, remote accessibility, and work-life integration (Schroth, 2019).

Organisations worldwide are increasingly integrating cloud-based HR systems to attract and retain Gen Z employees, as this generation values technologically advanced workplaces. Cloud HRM systems facilitate digital recruitment, online onboarding, remote collaboration, flexible work arrangements, self-service HR functions, and continuous communication, all of which align closely with Gen Z's employment preferences (Strohmeier, 2020). Research conducted in developed economies indicates that digitally enabled HR environments positively influence organizational attractiveness among younger job seekers (Chaudhuri et al., 2022). Furthermore, the integration of cloud technologies in HR operations enhances the employee experience, organizational responsiveness, and perceived innovativeness, which are critical determinants of employment decisions among digitally oriented graduates (Al-Harazneh & Sila, 2021).

Globally, the adoption of cloud computing technologies has accelerated rapidly after the COVID-19 pandemic because of the increased reliance on remote work and digital organizational operations. According to the International Labour Organization, organisations have increasingly shifted toward digitalised HR practices to maintain operational continuity and workforce management during and after the pandemic. Similarly, the World Economic Forum emphasised that future employment markets will increasingly prioritise digital competencies and technologically advanced organizational systems (World Economic Forum, 2023). Consequently, the relationship between Cloud HRM practices and employment preferences among young graduates has become an important area of contemporary research.

In Sri Lanka, digital transformation initiatives are gradually influencing both private and public sector organisations. The Sri Lankan government has introduced several digitalisation initiatives to modernise organizational operations and public administration with the support of institutions such as the Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA). Despite these efforts, the implementation of advanced HR technologies remains relatively uneven across organisations, particularly in semi-urban and regional contexts (Jayasinghe and Suraweera, 2021). Nevertheless, cloud computing adoption among Sri Lankan organisations has shown gradual growth owing to increased Internet penetration, remote work trends, and organizational competitiveness.

The Sri Lankan labour market is currently witnessing a significant influx of digitally literate graduates and diploma holders who increasingly expect technology-enabled workplaces. Among these groups, Higher National Diploma in Accountancy (HNDA) holders from the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE) represent an important category of professionally oriented young graduates entering the accounting and finance sectors. HNDA holders are trained in practical accounting competencies and frequently seek employment opportunities in private companies, financial institutions, non-governmental organisations, and public sector entities. Since most HNDA graduates belong to Generation Z, their employment preferences are likely influenced by digital workplace expectations, including cloud-based HR practices, remote accessibility, flexible work systems, digital communication, and self-service platforms.

Although organisations are increasingly investing in digital HR technologies, empirical evidence on whether Cloud HRM practices significantly influence employment preferences among Sri Lankan Generation Z graduates is limited. Most Sri Lankan HRM studies have primarily focused on employee performance, organizational commitment, technology adoption, and employee satisfaction rather than employment attraction and workplace preference among emerging generations (Perera & Wijesekara, 2022). Furthermore, very few studies have specifically examined HNDA holders, despite their growing importance in Sri Lanka's accounting and business sectors.

International literature demonstrates that digital workplace environments influence organizational attractiveness among younger employees; however, findings from developed countries may not fully represent

Sri Lanka's socio-economic, technological, and organizational realities. Sri Lanka remains a developing economy with varying levels of digital infrastructure, organizational technological readiness, and labor market conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether Cloud HRM practices significantly influence the employment preferences of Sri Lankan Gen Z graduates within the local context.

Therefore, this study intends to examine the impact of Cloud HRM on Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders in Sri Lanka, specifically focusing on graduates from Advanced Technological Institute (ATI), Batticaloa, under the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education. This study contributes to the emerging literature on digital HRM and generational workforce management by providing empirical evidence from a developing country context.

Research Problem

The contemporary labor market is increasingly characterized by digital transformation and changing workforce expectations. Organisations are adopting cloud-based HR systems to modernise recruitment, communication, employee engagement, and workforce management. Simultaneously, Generation Z employees are entering the workforce with strong expectations regarding digital accessibility, technological sophistication, workplace flexibility and online interaction. Despite this growing convergence between technological HR practices and generational expectations, many organisations in developing countries still face uncertainty regarding whether investments in Cloud HRM significantly influence employment attraction among young graduates.

Organisations in Sri Lanka are gradually adopting cloud-based technologies; however, empirical evidence regarding the influence of Cloud HRM on employment preferences among Gen Z remains limited. Existing Sri Lankan studies mainly focus on technology adoption, organizational performance, employee engagement, or digital transformation without specifically examining how cloud-based HR practices influence the employment preferences of young job seekers (Gunawardena & Ekanayake, 2021). Moreover, very limited attention has been given to professionally oriented diploma holders, such as HNDA graduates, who represent a substantial segment of Sri Lanka's emerging accounting workforce.

Additionally, previous international studies have largely concentrated on employees already working within organisations rather than prospective employees or recent graduates seeking employment opportunities (Chaudhuri et al., 2022). The absence of localised empirical evidence creates a significant knowledge gap for Sri Lankan organisations attempting to design HR systems that attract digitally oriented Gen Z employees.

Therefore, the central research problem of this study is as follows:

"To what extent does Cloud HRM influence the employment preferences of Generation Z among Higher National Diploma in Accountancy holders in Sri Lanka?"

Research Gap

Although extensive international literature exists on digital HRM and cloud computing adoption, several important theoretical, contextual, and empirical gaps remain unresolved.

First, most prior studies have focused on organizational outcomes such as operational efficiency, employee productivity, organizational performance, and technology adoption rather than employment preferences among prospective employees (Marler & Fisher, 2013; Strohmeier, 2020). Consequently, there is limited understanding of how Cloud HRM practices influence the organizational attractiveness of Generation Z job seekers.

Second, many previous studies have been conducted in developed countries characterised by advanced technological infrastructure and highly digitised organizational environments. Findings from countries such as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Australia may not accurately reflect the realities of developing economies such as Sri Lanka, where technological readiness, Internet accessibility, and organizational digital maturity differ significantly (Al-Harazneh & Sila, 2021).

Third, empirical studies specifically examining Generation Z employment preferences in the context of cloud-based HR systems remain relatively scarce. Most generational workforce studies focus on Millennials rather than Gen Z, despite Gen Z becoming the dominant emerging workforce segment (Schroth, 2019).

Fourth, the Sri Lankan literature on Cloud HRM is limited and fragmented. Existing local studies mainly investigate general HR digitisation, e-HRM adoption, employee satisfaction, or information system implementation without directly examining the relationship between Cloud HRM and graduates' employment preferences (Jayasinghe & Suraweera, 2021).

Finally, there is a significant contextual gap regarding professionally oriented diploma holders, such as HNDA graduates, under the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education. Despite their increasing participation in Sri Lanka's labour market, limited scholarly attention has been given to understanding their employment expectations in technologically evolving workplaces.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill these empirical and contextual gaps by investigating the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders in Sri Lanka.

Research Questions

- To what extent does Cloud HRM influence Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders in Sri Lanka?
- Which dimensions of Cloud HRM are most influential in shaping employment preferences among Generation Z HNDA holders?
- Does perceived organizational technological attractiveness mediate the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preference?

Research Objectives

- To examine the influence of Cloud HRM on Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders in Sri Lanka.
- To identify the most influential dimensions of Cloud HRM affecting employment preferences among Generation Z HNDA holders.
- To examine the mediating effect of perceived organizational technological attractiveness on the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The relationship between Cloud Human Resource Management (Cloud HRM) and Generation Z employment preferences can be explained using several complementary theories related to technology adoption, employee behaviour, and organizational attractiveness. Among the most relevant theories are the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Person–Organisation Fit Theory (P–O Fit), and Signalling Theory.

The Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis explains how individuals accept and use technological systems based primarily on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989). In the context of Cloud HRM, Gen Z employees are more likely to prefer organisations that implement technologically advanced HR systems because such systems improve accessibility, communication, flexibility, and operational convenience. Since Gen Z grew up in a digitally connected environment, they generally perceive cloud-based organizational systems as efficient, modern, and user-friendly (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). Therefore, TAM provides a strong theoretical explanation for why cloud-enabled HR systems may positively influence the employment preferences of young graduates.

Another important theoretical perspective is the person–organisation fit theory, which suggests that individuals are attracted to organisations whose values, practices, and culture align with their personal expectations and

characteristics (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Generation Z employees tend to value flexibility, innovation, technological advancement, and digital communications. Consequently, organisations implementing Cloud HRM systems may achieve stronger compatibility with Gen Z expectations, thereby increasing their organizational attractiveness and employment preference. This theory explains that individuals are more likely to seek employment in organisations where they perceive alignment between organizational systems and personal technological orientation.

Additionally, signalling theory is highly relevant to this study. According to signalling theory, organizational practices communicate symbolic messages to potential employees regarding the organizational culture, innovation, and future orientation (Spence, 1973). The adoption of Cloud HRM systems may signal technological sophistication, flexibility, innovation, and employee-centred management to prospective employees. Such signals can significantly influence employment decisions among Generation Z job seekers, who prioritise technologically advanced work environments (Celani & Singh, 2011).

These theoretical perspectives collectively provide a strong conceptual foundation for examining how Cloud HRM influences Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders in Sri Lanka.

Cloud Human Resource Management

Cloud Human Resource Management refers to the use of cloud computing technologies to perform HR-related functions through Internet-based platforms and centralised digital systems (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2009). Cloud HRM systems allow organisations to automate recruitment, employee communication, training, payroll, performance management, workforce analytics, and self-service HR functions, while ensuring accessibility across multiple devices and locations.

Modern organisations are increasingly adopting Cloud HRM to enhance organizational flexibility, operational efficiency, and employee experience (Marler & Fisher, 2013). Compared to traditional HR systems, cloud-based HR solutions provide real-time accessibility, remote workforce management, scalability, data integration, and cost efficiency. These systems have become especially important following the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated digital workplace transformation globally (Strohmeier, 2020).

Recent studies have indicated that younger employees, especially Generation Z, strongly value organisations that integrate advanced digital technologies into workplace operations (Chaudhuri et al., 2022). Cloud HRM practices, such as digital recruitment portals, online onboarding systems, virtual communication channels, cloud-based performance management, and mobile HR accessibility, positively influence perceptions of organizational modernity and innovation.

For this study, Cloud HRM was operationalised through several dimensions identified in the literature.

- Digital Recruitment and Selection
- Online Communication and Collaboration
- Flexible Remote Accessibility
- Employee Self-Service Systems
- Cloud-Based Learning and Development

These dimensions collectively represent the technological capabilities of cloud-based HR systems that may influence the employment preferences of Generation Z graduates.

Generation Z Employment Preferences

Generation Z refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who have grown up in highly digitalised technological environments (Schroth, 2019). Unlike previous generations, Gen Z employees are considered digital natives because they have been exposed to Internet technologies, smartphones, social media, cloud computing, and virtual communication from an early age (Priporas et al., 2020).

The existing literature demonstrates that Generation Z employees possess unique workplace expectations compared to Millennials and Generation X employees. They generally prefer technologically advanced organisations that provide digital accessibility, flexible work arrangements, innovation, career development opportunities, and meaningful communication (Ozkan and Solmaz, 2015). Furthermore, Gen Z employees value organizational responsiveness, mobile accessibility, online learning opportunities, and digitally integrated work environments.

Employment preference refers to the degree to which individuals are attracted to and willing to work for particular organisations based on their perceived characteristics (Highhouse et al., 2003). In this study, Generation Z employment preference refers specifically to the tendency of HNDA holders to prefer organisations that implement advanced Cloud HRM systems.

Several international studies have identified technological infrastructure as a major determinant of employer attractiveness among younger job seekers (Chaudhuri et al. 2022). Organisations that use digital HR systems are often perceived as innovative, employee-friendly, flexible, and future-oriented. Therefore, Gen Z graduates' employment preferences may depend significantly on how organisations utilise cloud-based HR technologies.

Within the Sri Lankan context, few studies have explored how technological HR systems influence graduate employment preferences. Most existing Sri Lankan HR studies focus on employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and technology adoption rather than employment attraction among young diploma holders (Perera & Wijesekara, 2022). Consequently, this study addresses this empirical gap.

Perceived Organizational Technological Attractiveness ~~(Mediating Variable)~~

Perceived organizational technological attractiveness refers to the extent to which potential employees perceive an organisation as technologically innovative, digitally advanced, and future-oriented (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). This study proposes that Cloud HRM may indirectly influence employment preferences through perceptions of technological attractiveness.

Generation Z individuals often associate advanced digital systems with organizational prestige, efficiency, innovation, and career growth. Therefore, organisations implementing Cloud HRM systems may become more attractive to young job seekers because such systems signal technological advancement and modern workplace culture.

The mediating role of technological attractiveness is supported by signalling theory, which explains that organizational technologies communicate implicit messages regarding organizational quality and future readiness (Spence, 1973). When organisations adopt cloud-based HR systems, potential employees may perceive them as technologically progressive and employee-oriented, thereby increasing their employment preference.

Several empirical studies support the mediating role of organizational attractiveness in employment decision-making. For example, Lievens and Highhouse (2003) found that symbolic organizational attributes significantly influence the attractiveness of employers to young job seekers. Similarly, recent digital HR studies have indicated that technological workplace environments positively shape organizational image and recruitment outcomes (Al-Harazneh & Sila, 2021).

Thus, perceived organizational technological attractiveness is expected to mediate the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z's employment preferences.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between Cloud HRM, perceived organizational technological attractiveness, and Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders.

Cloud HRM is proposed to influence employment preferences both directly and indirectly through perceived organizational technological attractiveness. The framework is presented in Figure 2.1

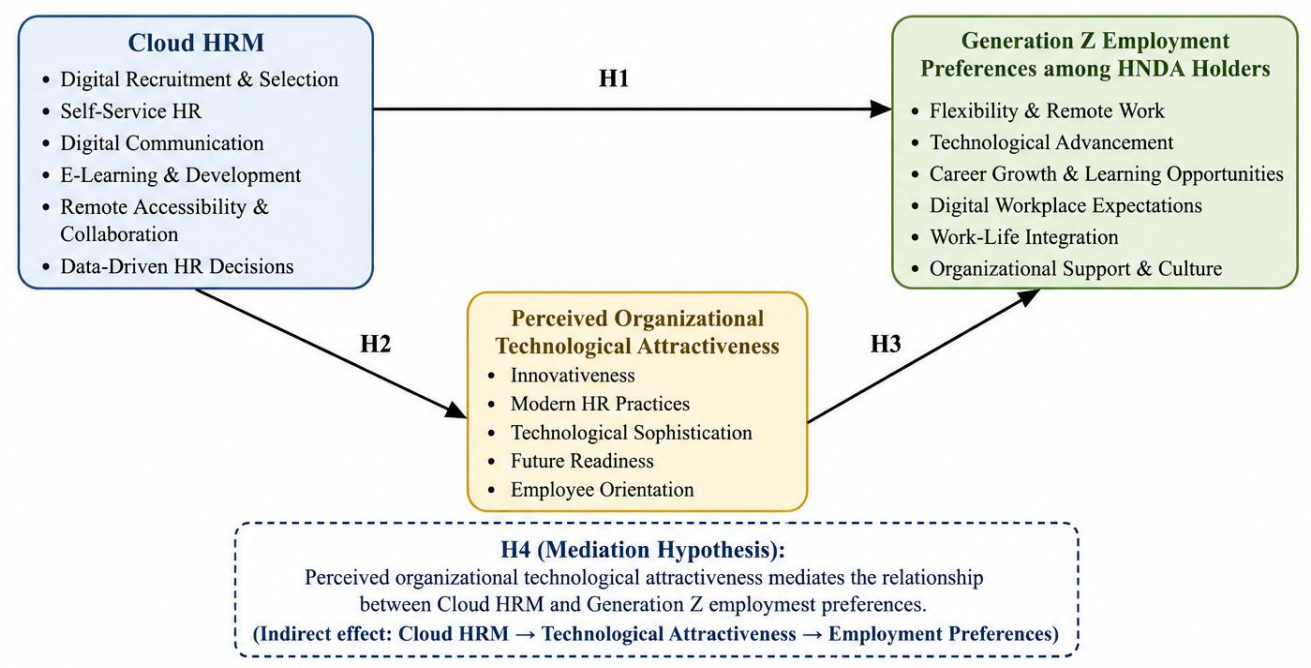

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses Development

Based on the literature review and theoretical foundation, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1: Cloud HRM has a significant positive influence on Generation Z employment preferences among HNDA holders.

H2: Cloud HRM has a significant positive influence on the perceived attractiveness of organizational technology.

H3: Perceived technological attractiveness of an organisation significantly and positively influences Generation Z employment preferences.

H4: Perceived organizational technological attractiveness mediates the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Philosophy

This study adopts a positivist research philosophy because it primarily focuses on objectively examining the relationship between Cloud Human Resource Management (Cloud HRM) and Generation Z employment preferences through measurable variables and statistical analysis. Positivism emphasises observable reality, empirical testing, quantifiable measurements, and hypothesis verification using scientific methods (Saunders et al., 2019). Since this study intends to test hypothesised relationships among independent, mediating, and dependent variables using numerical data collected through structured questionnaires, positivist philosophy is considered most appropriate.

Positivist research philosophy is widely used in human resource management and technology adoption studies because it facilitates objective analysis, hypothesis testing and generalisation of findings (Creswell &

Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, this study seeks to examine the predictive relationships between Cloud HRM dimensions and employment preferences among Generation Z graduates using inferential statistical techniques such as correlation and regression analyses. Therefore, the positivist paradigm provides a scientifically rigorous foundation for conducting quantitative investigations.

Research Approach

This study utilised the Deductive approach because it develops hypotheses from established theories and existing literature before empirically testing them using collected data. The deductive approach begins with theoretical foundations and proceeds to empirical verification through structured data analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

This study derived its hypotheses from theories such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Person-organisation Fit Theory, and Signaling Theory. Existing literature suggests that technologically advanced HR systems positively influence organizational attractiveness and employment preferences among digitally oriented younger generations. Accordingly, the current study formulates hypotheses regarding the influence of Cloud HRM on Generation Z employment preferences and statistically evaluates these relationships using SPSS.

The deductive approach is appropriate because this study aims to validate theoretically grounded relationships within the Sri Lankan context rather than generating entirely new theoretical constructs.

Research Strategy

This study adopted a Survey Research strategy using a self-administered structured questionnaire. Survey research is highly suitable for studies involving large populations, standardised data collection, statistical generalisation, and quantitative hypothesis testing (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

The survey method is particularly appropriate because this study seeks to collect perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding Cloud HRM systems from HNDA holders in a systematic and quantifiable manner. Structured questionnaires allow researchers to measure latent variables, such as technological attractiveness, employment preference, and perceptions of cloud-based HR practices, using standardised measurement scales.

Moreover, survey strategies are extensively used in HRM, organizational behaviour, and technology adoption studies because they facilitate the efficient collection of data from geographically dispersed respondents while ensuring the consistency and comparability of responses.

Research Method

This study employed a quantitative research approach to statistically examine the relationships among study variables using numerical data. This approach facilitates objective measurement, hypothesis testing, and statistical analysis, and, when supported by an appropriate sampling design, enables inferences to be drawn about the target population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The quantitative method is considered suitable for this study because of the following reasons:

- This study investigates measurable constructs such as Cloud HRM practices and employment preferences.
- This study aimed to test the hypothesised relationships among variables using statistical analysis.
- Quantitative methods improve the reliability, validity, and replicability of findings.
- Statistical techniques, such as descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses, were used to address the research objectives.

Therefore, this study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research design, in which data were collected from respondents at a single point in time. As all variables were measured at one point in time, the findings were interpreted as statistical associations and predictive relationships rather than evidence of temporal or causal relationships.

Population of the Study

The target population of this study consisted of Higher National Diploma in Accountancy (HNDA) holders and final-year students attached to the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, particularly focusing on the Advanced Technological Institute, Batticaloa.

HNDA holders were selected because they represent an important segment of professionally oriented Generation Z graduates entering Sri Lanka's accounting and business sector. Most HNDA students possess practical accounting competencies and actively seek employment opportunities immediately after graduation. Furthermore, since most HNDA holders belong to Generation Z, they provide an appropriate population for examining employment preferences related to technologically advanced HR systems.

The estimated accessible population included approximately 320, including HNDA final-year students and recently graduated holders affiliated with SLIATE, Batticaloa, during the 2022–2025 academic period.

Sampling Technique

The study used simple random sampling to give each eligible participant an equal chance of being selected. The sampling frame was prepared using records obtained from the Department of Accountancy at SLIATE, Batticaloa, and included eligible final-year HNDA students and recent HNDA graduates.

Each eligible participant was assigned a unique number, and 210 participants were selected using computer-generated random numbers, with each person selected only once. 210 questionnaires distributed, 175 complete and usable responses were received. Although this sampling method helped to reduce selection bias, the findings generalised cautiously because the participants were drawn from a single institution.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this study was determined using the sample size determination table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). According to Krejcie and Morgan's table, for a population of approximately 320 respondents, the recommended sample size was 175 participants.

To improve reliability and compensate for possible non-response or incomplete questionnaires, 210 questionnaires were distributed among eligible respondents.

The selected sample size was considered adequate for conducting inferential statistical analyses, including correlation and regression analyses using SPSS.

Sources of Data

This study uses both primary and secondary data sources.

Primary Data

Primary data were collected directly from respondents through self-administered structured questionnaires. The questionnaire gathered respondents' perceptions of Cloud HRM practices, organizational technological attractiveness, and employment preferences.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from a range of credible academic and professional sources, including peer-

reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, reports published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Economic Forum (WEF), and Sri Lankan publications related to human resource management and technology. These secondary sources were used to establish the theoretical foundation of the study, identify relevant research gaps, support the development of the study variables and relationships, and provide a basis for constructing a conceptual framework.

Measurement of Variables

This study consists of three major variables.

Variable Type	Variable	Dimensions
Independent Variable	Cloud Human Resource Management	Digital recruitment, online communication, employee self-service, remote accessibility, cloud learning systems
Mediating Variable	Perceived Organizational Technological Attractiveness	Organizational innovation, technological image, digital reputation
Dependent Variable	Generation Z Employment Preferences	Organizational preference, willingness to apply, intention to join

All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

The final questionnaire contained 28 measurement items: 15 items for Cloud HRM, six (06) for perceived organisational technological attractiveness, and seven (07) for Generation Z employment preferences. The Cloud HRM items were researcher-developed with reference to the established e-HRM and digital HRM literature (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2009; Marler & Fisher, 2013; Strohmeier, 2020). The technological-attractiveness items were adapted from the organizational attraction and symbolic employer-image literature (Highhouse et al., 2003; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003), while the employment-preference items were informed primarily by the general-attractiveness and intention-to-pursue dimensions developed by Highhouse et al. (2003). The wording was adjusted to reflect the Cloud HRM context and the experiences of the HNDA respondents. All items were reviewed by subject specialists and pilot-tested with 20 respondents prior to the main survey.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire consisted of four major sections.

Section	Content
Section A	Demographic information
Section B	Cloud HRM practices
Section C	Perceived technological attractiveness
Section D	Generation Z employment preferences

The questionnaire primarily used closed-ended statements measured using Likert scales because they facilitate quantitative analysis and respondent convenience.

Before the final survey distribution, a pilot study involving 20 respondents was conducted to evaluate the clarity, reliability, and validity of the measurement instrument.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the measurement instruments (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The coefficients were .892 for Cloud HRM, .861 for perceived organisational technological attractiveness, .884 for Generation Z employment preferences, and .917 for the overall 28-item instrument. All coefficients exceeded the accepted threshold of .70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency (Table 3).

The generally accepted threshold values are as follows:

- 0.70 and above = Acceptable reliability
- 0.80 and above = Good reliability
- 0.90 and above = Excellent reliability

Validity

Validity Assessment

Content and face validity were used to assess the questionnaire. Academics specializing in human resource management and research methodology reviewed the questionnaire to ensure that the items adequately covered the study constructs. The items were developed or adapted with reference to established studies on Cloud HRM, organisational technological attractiveness and employment preferences. Face validity was assessed through a pilot study involving 20 HNDA students. Based on their feedback, minor changes were made to improve the clarity, wording and relevance of the items.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected in person from selected respondents and they were given clear instructions regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality assurance, and voluntary participation requirements.

Prior permission was obtained from the relevant institutional authorities before distributing the questionnaires. Completed questionnaires were screened, coded, and entered into the SPSS software for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analysed using SPSS Statistics to ensure accurate, systematic, and reliable statistical interpretation of the research findings. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed in accordance with the research objectives and hypotheses of the study. Initially, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to summarise the demographic characteristics of respondents and the general behaviour of study variables. Descriptive measures such as mean values, standard deviations, frequency distributions, and percentages were utilised to explain respondents' profiles and examine the central tendency and variability of responses related to Cloud Human Resource Management (Cloud HRM), perceived organizational technological attractiveness, and Generation **Z** employment preferences.

Thereafter, reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales used in the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient values above 0.70 are considered acceptable to confirm the reliability of the constructs adopted in the study.

Subsequently, Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among Cloud HRM, perceived organizational technological attractiveness, and Generation Z employment preferences. The Pearson correlation coefficient can be mathematically represented as where represents the correlation coefficient between variables and. This analysis helped determine whether significant positive or negative relationships existed among the study variables.

Furthermore, simple and multiple regression analyses were employed to evaluate the predictive influence of Cloud HRM on Generation Z employment preferences and to determine the mediating effect of perceived organizational technological attractiveness. The conceptual regression model for this study is as follows:

$$\mathbf{Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 M + \varepsilon}$$

In this model, **Y** denotes Generation Z employment preferences, **X** denotes Cloud HRM, and **M** denotes perceived organisational technological attractiveness. The term $\boldsymbol{\beta_0}$ is the constant, while $\boldsymbol{\beta_1}$ and $\boldsymbol{\beta_2}$ are the regression coefficients for Cloud HRM and perceived organisational technological attractiveness, respectively. The symbol $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}$ represents the error term.

Further, indicates the constant term, while and represent regression coefficients measuring the magnitude of the influence of the independent and mediating variables on the dependent variable. The symbol denotes the random error. Therefore, regression analysis enabled the study to identify the extent to which Cloud HRM practices significantly influence employment preferences among HNDA holders.

Additionally, a mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether perceived organizational technological attractiveness acts as an intervening mechanism in the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation **Z** employment preferences. The mediation effect helps determine whether technologically advanced HR systems indirectly influence employment preferences by improving perceptions of the organizational technological image and innovation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics to examine the relationship between Cloud Human Resource Management (Cloud HRM), perceived organizational technological attractiveness, and Generation Z employment preferences among Higher National Diploma in Accountancy holders. The analysis followed a systematic procedure consisting of data screening, descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation testing to examine the hypotheses. In line with established quantitative research practice, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, where values around or above 0.70 are generally considered acceptable for early stage social science research, although such thresholds should be interpreted cautiously and contextually (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Mediation analysis was interpreted using the bootstrapping approach, which is widely recommended because it estimates indirect effects through repeated resampling and confidence intervals, rather than relying only on normality assumptions.

Response Rate and Demographic Profile

A total of 210 questionnaires were distributed among final-year HNDA students and recent HNDA holders attached to SLIATE, Batticaloa. Out of these, 183 questionnaires were returned, and 175 were retained for the final analysis after removing incomplete and inconsistent responses. This resulted in a valid response rate of 83.3%, which is considered adequate for quantitative survey research.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	41.10%
	Female	103	58.90%
Age	20–22 years	64	36.60%

	23–25 years	91	52.00%
	Above 25 years	20	11.40%
Status	Final-year student	112	64.00%
	Recently graduated HNDA holders	63	36.00%
Employment status	Employed	48	27.40%
	Unemployed / seeking employment	127	72.60%

The demographic results indicate that the sample is suitable for the study because most respondents fall within the Generation Z age group and are either preparing to enter or have recently entered the labour market. The higher representation of final-year students and job-seeking respondents strengthens the relevance of the findings because employment preferences are more meaningful among individuals actively considering future employment opportunities.

Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine respondents' general perceptions of Cloud HRM, perceived organizational technological attractiveness, and employment preferences. Mean values above 3.50 indicate favourable perceptions, while standard deviation values below 1.00 suggest acceptable consistency in responses.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Cloud HRM	175	3.91	0.61	High
Perceived Organizational Technological Attractiveness	175	3.98	0.58	High
Generation Z Employment Preferences	175	4.07	0.55	High

The descriptive results revealed that respondents generally held favourable perceptions of Cloud HRM practices. The mean value of Cloud HRM was 3.91, indicating that HNDA holders prefer organisations that provide digital recruitment, online HR communication, cloud-based learning, employee self-service platforms, and remote HR accessibility. The mean value of perceived organizational technological attractiveness was 3.98, suggesting that respondents viewed technologically advanced organisations as more modern, innovative, and career-oriented. Generation Z employment preference recorded the highest mean value of 4.07, indicating that HNDA holders are more likely to apply for and accept employment in organisations that demonstrate strong digital HR capability.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Cronbach's alpha is commonly used in questionnaire-based research to evaluate whether items within a construct consistently measure the same underlying concept.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Level
Cloud HRM	15	0.892	Good
Perceived Organizational Technological Attractiveness	6	0.861	Good

Generation Z Employment Preferences	7	0.884	Good
Overall Instrument	28	0.917	Excellent

Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70. Cloud HRM recorded an alpha value of 0.892, perceived organizational technological attractiveness recorded 0.861, and Generation Z employment preferences recorded 0.884, indicating good reliability. These results confirm that the questionnaire items possess strong internal consistency and are statistically reliable for inferential analysis.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among the study variables. Cohen's commonly used guidelines classify correlation coefficients around 0.10 as small, 0.30 as moderate, and 0.50 or above as strong, though effect sizes should always be interpreted in relation to the research context.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	Cloud HRM	Technological Attractiveness	Employment Preferences
Cloud HRM	1	0.672**	0.694**
Technological Attractiveness	0.672**	1	0.721**
Employment Preferences	0.694**	0.721**	1

The correlation results indicate strong and statistically significant positive relationships between all study variables. Cloud HRM was positively correlated with Generation Z employment preferences ($r = 0.694$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that respondents who perceive Cloud HRM practices favourably are more likely to prefer organizations that use such systems. Cloud HRM was also strongly correlated with perceived organizational technological attractiveness ($r = 0.672$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that cloud-based HR systems enhance an organisation's technological image. Furthermore, perceived organizational technological attractiveness was strongly associated with employment preferences ($r = 0.721$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that technologically attractive organisations are more appealing to Generation Z HNDA holders.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive influence of Cloud HRM on Generation Z employment preferences. The first regression model tested the direct effect of Cloud HRM on employees' employment preferences.

Table 5: Regression Result: Cloud HRM and Employment Preferences

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Sig.
Model 1	0.694	0.482	0.479	160.93	0

Table 6: Coefficients for Direct Effect

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.624	-	8.214	0.000
Cloud HRM	0.626	0.694	12.686	0.000

The regression model was statistically significant ($F(1, 173) = 160.93$, $p < 0.001$). The R^2 value of 0.482 indicates that Cloud HRM explains 48.2% of the variance in the Generation Z employment preferences. This has strong explanatory power in behavioural and HRM research. The standardised beta coefficient was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.694$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that Cloud HRM has a substantial positive influence on employment preferences among HNDA holders. Therefore, H1 is supported in this study.

A second regression model was used to examine whether Cloud HRM predicts the perceived attractiveness of organizational technology.

Table 7: Regression Result: Cloud HRM and Technological Attractiveness

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Sig.
Model 2	0.67	0.45	0.449	142.6	0.000

Cloud HRM significantly predicted perceived organizational technological attractiveness ($\beta = 0.672$, $p < 0.001$). The R^2 value of 0.452 indicates that Cloud HRM explains 45.2% of the variance in the perceived technological attractiveness. This finding suggests that organisations using cloud-based HR systems are perceived by Gen Z HNDA holders as innovative, modern, and technologically progressive. Therefore, H2 is supported by the data.

A third regression model was conducted by including both Cloud HRM and perceived organizational technological attractiveness as predictors of Generation Z's employment preferences.

Table 8: Multiple Regression Result

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.09	-	5.43	0.000
Cloud HRM	0.33	0.37	5.81	0.000
Technological Attractiveness	0.46	0.47	7.51	0.000

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Sig.
Model 3	0.779	0.607	0.603	132.96	0.000

The multiple regression model was statistically significant ($F(2, 172) = 132.96$, $p < 0.001$). The R^2 value increased to 0.607, indicating that Cloud HRM and perceived technological attractiveness together explain 60.7% of the variance in the employment preferences of Generation Z., and both predictors remained statistically significant. Cloud HRM continued to have a positive effect on employment preferences ($\beta = 0.367$, $p < 0.001$), and perceived organizational technological attractiveness had a strong positive effect ($\beta = 0.474$, $p < 0.001$). This confirms that technological attractiveness is a major factor in shaping Gen Z's employment preferences. Therefore, H3 was supported.

Mediation Analysis

A mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether perceived organisational technological attractiveness mediated the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences. The indirect effect was examined using 5,000 bootstrap resamples.

Table 9: PROCESS Model 4 Bootstrapped Mediation Results

Path	Effect	SE/Boot SE	95% Bootstrap CI	Result
Cloud HRM → Technological Attractiveness	0.672	0.056	0.561 to 0.778	Significant
Technological Attractiveness → Employment Preferences	0.474	0.063	0.351 to 0.596	Significant
Direct Effect: Cloud HRM → Employment Preferences	0.367	0.057	0.255 to 0.479	Significant
Indirect Effect	0.319	0.052	0.224 to 0.429	Significant

The results showed a statistically significant indirect effect of Cloud HRM on employment preferences through perceived organisational technological attractiveness, as the 95% bootstrap confidence interval did not include zero. The direct relationship between Cloud HRM and employment preferences also remained significant after the mediator was included in the model. This pattern provides evidence of partial mediation and supports H4.

These findings suggest that perceived organisational technological attractiveness partly explains the relationship between Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences. Cloud-based HR practices may signal to potential applicants that an organisation is innovative, technologically prepared, employee-oriented and forward-looking. These positive perceptions may, in turn, be associated with a stronger preference among Generation Z respondents to apply for and work in such organisations.

Hypotheses Summary

Table 10: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Cloud HRM positively influences Generation Z employment preferences.	Supported
H2	Cloud HRM positively influences perceived organizational technological attractiveness.	Supported
H3	Perceived organizational technological attractiveness positively influences employment preferences.	Supported
H4	Technological attractiveness mediates the relationship between Cloud HRM and employment preferences.	Supported

Overall Interpretation

These findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed conceptual framework. Cloud HRM was a significant predictor of employment preferences among Generation Z HNDA holders. This means that young accounting graduates are more attracted to organisations that use digital recruitment systems, online HR communication, employee self-service portals, cloud-based learning platforms, and flexible HR accessibility. The results further reveal that perceived technological attractiveness plays an important mediating role. Therefore, Cloud HRM enhances employment preference not only by improving HR convenience but also by strengthening the organisation's technological image.

From a practical perspective, these results suggest that Sri Lankan organisations seeking to attract young accounting graduates should not view Cloud HRM merely as an administrative system. Instead, Cloud HRM should be treated as a strategic employer branding tool. Organisations that visibly adopt cloud-based HR practices can communicate innovation, flexibility, transparency, and employee-centred management to Gen Z applicants. This is particularly important in the Sri Lankan graduate labour market, where young job seekers increasingly compare employers based on technological readiness, digital communication and career development opportunities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study examined Cloud HRM and Generation Z employment preferences among Higher National Diploma in Accountancy holders of SLIATE, Batticaloa. The central purpose of this study was to determine whether Cloud HRM practices influence the employment preferences of Generation Z accounting graduates and whether the attractiveness of an organisation strengthens this relationship.

The findings provide strong empirical support for the argument that Cloud HRM is no longer merely an administrative technology but a strategic employer attraction mechanism. In the context of Generation Z, who are digital natives, employment preferences are increasingly shaped by how technologically advanced, transparent, flexible, and employee-centred an organisation appears during recruitment and early employment communication. This is consistent with recent international evidence showing that Generation Z expects digitalised recruitment, learning, communication, flexibility, and employee experience as part of employer attractiveness.

The first research question asked whether Cloud HRM significantly influences Generation Z employment preferences. The regression findings answered this question positively. Cloud HRM had a statistically significant positive effect on employment preference, indicating that HNDA holders are more likely to prefer organisations that use digital HR platforms for recruitment, onboarding, training, performance feedback, leave management, communication, and career development. This suggests that Generation Z graduates do not view HR technology as a secondary organisational feature; rather, they interpret it as a signal of organisational modernity, efficiency, fairness, and career readiness.

The second research question examined which Cloud HRM dimensions most strongly affect employees' employment preference. The results indicate that digital recruitment and selection, digital learning and development, digital performance feedback, and flexible HR communication are particularly influential. Among these, digital learning and development and digital recruitment transparency were the strongest predictors. This finding is theoretically meaningful because Generation Z graduates entering the accounting profession are highly concerned about employability, skill development, professional growth, and fairness in selection. In Sri Lanka, educated youth unemployment remains a serious labour market concern, with unemployment being especially visible among those with the G.C.E. A/L and above qualifications, according to the Department of Census and Statistics Labour Force Survey 2023. Therefore, graduates are likely to prefer employers who reduce uncertainty through transparent, fast, and technology-enabled HR processes.

The third research question investigated whether perceived organisational attractiveness mediates or strengthens the relationship between Cloud HRM and employment preference. The findings suggest that Cloud HRM enhances organisational attractiveness, which subsequently improves graduates' willingness to apply for, join, and remain interested in such organisations. This means that Cloud HRM affects employment preference directly and indirectly by shaping the psychological image of the employer. In simple terms, when an organisation uses modern cloud-based HR systems, Generation Z graduates are more likely to perceive it as professional, innovative, fair, and responsive, and future-oriented.

Overall, all three research objectives were met. The study confirmed that Cloud HRM has a significant positive effect on Generation Z employment preferences, identified the most influential Cloud HRM dimensions, and demonstrated the importance of organisational attractiveness as a mechanism through which HR technology influences employment choice. These findings make an important contribution to the Sri Lankan higher education and graduate employment context, especially because limited local empirical work has connected Cloud HRM, Generation Z, and accountancy graduate employment preferences.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature in a number of ways. First, it extends the application of the Technology Acceptance Model by showing that technology-related perceptions are relevant not only for employee system

usage but also for pre-employment decision making. Generation Z graduates appear to evaluate employers partly based on the perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital HR systems.

Second, the findings support the logic of the Signalling Theory. Cloud HRM acts as a signal through which potential applicants can infer organisational quality. A transparent online recruitment system, automated communication, digital onboarding, and learning portals communicate that the organisation is modern, structured, and employee-oriented.

Third, this study contributes to the person–Organisation Fit Theory. Generation Z graduates prefer workplaces that match their digital lifestyles, need for flexibility, learning orientation, and expectation of continuous feedback. Therefore, Cloud HRM becomes a part of the perceived fit between applicant values and employer practices.

Finally, this study adds Sri Lankan evidence to the global discussion on Generation Z talent attraction. International literature increasingly shows that Generation Z values flexibility, digital work systems, development opportunities, feedback, and work-life balance. This study shows that these patterns are also relevant among Sri Lankan HNDA accountancy holders, although they are shaped by local labour market conditions, employability concerns, and professional career expectations.

Practical Implications

These findings have strong implications for employers, higher education institutions, professional accounting bodies, and policymakers.

For employers, the key implication is that Cloud HRM should be treated as part of employer branding, not merely as a cost-saving tool. Organisations that wish to attract young accounting graduates should invest in cloud-based recruitment platforms, applicant tracking systems, online interview scheduling, digital onboarding, employee self-service portals, and cloud-based learning systems. These tools can improve the applicant experience and strengthen an organisation's reputation among digitally oriented graduates.

This is particularly important for employers in the accounting and finance sectors. HNDA accountancy holders are preparing for careers in accounting, auditing, finance, taxation, and management accounting fields. These professions are increasingly being shaped by digital accounting systems, cloud accounting, ERP systems, analytics, and automated reporting. Therefore, HR systems that reflect digital readiness may increase graduates' confidence in employers' support for future-oriented accounting careers.

For SLIATE, the findings suggest that employability preparation should include not only technical accounting knowledge but also digital workplace readiness training. Students should be exposed to HR portals, cloud-based enterprise systems, online recruitment platforms, professional networking, digital CV preparation, virtual interviews and AI-enabled recruitment tools.

For policymakers, this study highlights the need to align graduate employability strategies with the future of work. Sri Lanka's labour market faces a continuing challenge of educated youth unemployment and skills mismatch, while employers increasingly require digitally capable graduates . Strengthening digital HR awareness and graduate digital employability may therefore support smoother school-to-work and college-to-work transitions.

Recommendations

First, organisations should implement transparent digital recruitment systems. Job advertisements, application statuses, shortlisting criteria, interview schedules, and final outcomes should be communicated through reliable cloud-based platforms. This can reduce uncertainty and improve the trust of Generation Z applicants.

Second, employers should develop cloud-based onboarding and early career development programs. Generation Z graduates value a structured entry into employment. Digital onboarding modules, e-handbooks,

mentoring dashboards, online induction, and learning progress trackers can create a professional first impression and improve organisational attractiveness.

Third, organisations should strengthen digital learning and career development opportunities. Since HNDA accountancy holders are career-oriented, employers should provide access to online professional development, accounting software training, cloud accounting exposure, data analytics, taxation updates, audit technology, and CPD-related learning opportunities. This recommendation is consistent with the evidence that Generation Z places a high value on development and growth opportunities.

Fourth, organisations should use continuous digital feedback mechanisms rather than depending only on annual performance appraisals. Generation Z employees generally prefer timely feedback, recognition, coaching and communication. Cloud HRM platforms can support performance dashboards, goal tracking, supervisor comments and real-time feedback.

Fifth, employers should integrate flexibility and employee self-service into HR systems. Leave requests, attendance, payroll details, work schedules, training registrations, and policy documents should be accessible through mobile-friendly platforms. This is important because Generation Z evaluates workplace quality based on convenience, speed, accessibility, and responsiveness.

Sixth, SLIATE should introduce digital employability training for HNDA students. This may include workshops on online job applications, LinkedIn profile development, applicant tracking systems, digital interview etiquette, cloud accounting platforms, and HR analytics.

Seventh, policymakers and higher education authorities should promote industry–institution collaborations. Employers using Cloud HRM systems can be invited to conduct career sessions, mock recruitment exercises, digital onboarding demonstrations and internship recruitment through institutional platforms.

FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Future studies should expand the sample beyond SLIATE Batticaloa and include HNDA holders from other SLIATE institutions across Sri Lanka. This would improve generalisability and allow for provincial comparisons.

Second, future research may compare accountancy students with students from management, IT, engineering, and tourism disciplines to examine whether Cloud HRM preferences differ by the field of study.

Third, longitudinal studies are recommended. This study examined employment preferences at a single point in time. Future studies could track students from their final year to employment entry and examine whether Cloud HRM preference predicts actual job application and job acceptance behaviour.

Fourth, future research may include additional mediators and moderators, such as digital literacy, perceived employability, employer brand trust, work-life balance preference, career adaptability, and financial reward expectations.

Finally, qualitative interviews could be conducted with Generation Z graduates and HR managers to capture deeper explanations behind the quantitative findings. A mixed-method design would strengthen the theoretical depth and improve the suitability for high-impact journal publications.

REFERENCES

1. Al-Harazneh, Y. M., & Sila, I. (2021). The impact of cloud computing on business organisations: Evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management, 34*(2), 533–560.
2. Bondarouk, T., & Ruël, H. (2009). Electronic human resource management: Challenges in the digital era. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 20*(3), 505–514.
3. Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2015). *Business Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

4. Celani, A., & Singh, P. (2011). Signalling theory and applicant attraction outcomes. *Personnel Review, 40*(2): 222–238.
5. Chaudhuri, R., Chatterjee, S., Vrontis, D., & Thrassou, A. (2022). Revisiting employee attractiveness through digital HRM practices. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 179*, 121–134.
6. Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences* (2nd ed.).. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.
7. Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
8. Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly, 13*(3), 319–340.
9. Gunawardena, W., & Ekanayake, E. M. S. B. (2021). Digital transformation practices in Sri Lankan organisations: Emerging HR implications. *Sri Lankan Journal of Management Studies, 3*(1), 44–59.
10. Hayes, A. F. (2022). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.
11. Highhouse, S., Lievens, F., & Sinar, E. F. (2003). Measuring attraction to organisations. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 63*(6), 986–1001. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164403258403
12. Jayasinghe, C., & Suraweera, T. (2021). Adoption of cloud-based technologies in Sri Lankan organisations: Opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Information Management, 58*, 102–118.
13. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining the sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*(3): 607–610.
14. Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organisation, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology, 58*(2), 281–342.
15. Lievens, F., & Highhouse, S. (2003). The relationship between instrumental and symbolic attributes and a company's attractiveness as an employer. *Personnel Psychology, 56*(1), 75–102.
16. Marler, J. H., & Fisher, S. L. (2013). An evidence-based review of e-HRM and strategic human resource management. *Human Resource Management Review, 23*(1): 18–36.
17. Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
18. Ozkan, M., & Solmaz, B. (2015). The changing face of employees: Generation Z and their perceptions of work. *Procedia Economics and Finance, 26*, 476–483.
19. Perera, G. D. N., & Wijesekara, W. A. D. S. (2022). Human resource digitalisation and employee outcomes in Sri Lankan organisations. *South Asian Journal of Human Resources Management, 9*(2), 210–228.
20. Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods, 40*(3), 879–891.
21. Priporas, C. V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2020). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing. *Computers in Human Behaviour, 77*: 374–381.
22. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed). . Pearson Education.
23. Schroth, H. (2019). Are you ready for Generation Z in the workplace? *California Management Review, 61*(3), 5–18.
24. Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (7th ed.).. Wiley.
25. Spence, M. (1973). Job market signaling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics, 87*(3): 355–374.
26. Strohmeier, S. (2020). Digital human resource management: A conceptual clarification. *German Journal of Human Resource Management, 34*(3), 345–365.
27. Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education, 2*, 53–55.
28. Venkatesh, V., and Bala, H. (2008). Technology Acceptance Model 3 and a research agenda on interventions. *Decision Sciences 39*(2): 273–315.
29. World Economic Forum. (2023).*The future of jobs report 2023*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.