

A Systematic Literature Review of Talent Management, Knowledge Management and Performance Among Millennial and Generation Z Employees

Oktafiane Ruthice Runtukahu^{1*}, Olivia S. Nelwan², Victor P.K Lengkong³, Rita N. Taroreh⁴, Genita G. Lumintang⁵

¹Sekolah Tinggi Bisnis dan Manajemen Dua Saudara

^{2,3,4,5} Universitas Sam Ratulangi

Corresponding Author: Oktafiane Ruthice Runtukahu fiane@duasudara.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Talent Management, Knowledge Management, Employee Performance, Millennials, Generation Z

Received : 19, November

Revised : 09, December

Accepted: 15, December

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examines how talent management (TM) and knowledge management (KM) influence the performance of Millennial and Generation Z employees in contemporary organizations. A total of 34 empirical articles published between 2023 and 2024 were analyzed using a structured screening process. The findings reveal that both TM and KM significantly enhance performance, yet through generation-specific mechanisms. The review also highlights that integrating TM and KM creates synergistic effects, strengthening capability development, innovation, and engagement across both cohorts. Despite these benefits, current research remains fragmented, lacking unified frameworks that explain how TM-KM interactions shape performance among digital-native employees. The study offers an integrated perspective and outlines implications for future research and organizational practice.

INTRODUCTION

Global labor markets are experiencing a profound demographic transition marked by the accelerated entry of Millennial and Generation Z employees – two cohorts characterized by digital nativity, rapid learning orientation, and heightened expectations for meaningful, technology-supported work environments (Deloitte, 2023; Putra et al., 2023). As these generations assume a dominant share of organizational talent pools, their workplace behavior, value systems, and knowledge consumption patterns are reshaping the foundations of human resource systems worldwide. This generational shift coincides with escalating pressures for innovation and knowledge-driven performance, positioning human capital as a key determinant of organizational competitiveness in the digital economy.

In this context, Talent Management (TM) and Knowledge Management (KM) have become central strategic capabilities. TM guides organizations in identifying, developing, and retaining high-value employees (Collings, Mellahi & Cascio, 2019), whereas KM enhances organizational learning, knowledge creation, and innovation capacity through systematic knowledge processes (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021). Theoretically, these two systems should complement each other: TM enhances individual capability and motivation, while KM provides the cognitive and informational infrastructure necessary for performance. For digital-native cohorts who thrive on rapid information flows and technology-enabled learning, the synergy between TM and KM is expected to be particularly consequential.

However, contemporary organizations struggle to align TM and KM practices with the distinct characteristics of Millennials and Gen Z. Evidence shows rising turnover, declining engagement, and skill instability among younger employees when development systems fail to meet their expectations for rapid growth, autonomy, and continuous feedback (Nguyen et al., 2022; Al-Kumaim et al., 2021). Gen Z's reliance on mobile learning and microcontent, and Millennials' preference for structured mentorship, highlight structurally different learning pathways that conventional HR systems rarely accommodate (Vieira, 2024; Santi, 2024). Failure to redesign TM–KM systems not only weakens performance but also threatens organizational sustainability in a digital, knowledge-intensive economy.

Despite the strategic importance of TM and KM, the academic literature remains conceptually fragmented. Most empirical investigations analyze TM or KM independently (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020), overlooking the theoretical interdependence between talent capability development and organizational knowledge processes. This siloed approach results in partial explanations that fail to capture how TM and KM jointly shape employee performance—particularly within generational cohorts whose digital behaviors and learning processes differ substantially from the workforce of prior decades

A second critical gap concerns the limited generational differentiation in existing models. Although Millennials and Gen Z have been shown to differ in motivation, learning orientation, digital fluency, and expectations for work structures, most studies treat employees as a homogeneous group (Kaifi et al.,

2021). As a result, research provides little insight into how generational characteristics moderate the effects of TM and KM on performance. This omission restricts the development of precise, evidence-based frameworks that reflect the realities of an increasingly young, digitally connected workforce.

Methodologically, the literature suffers from heterogeneity in the operationalization of “talent,” KM processes, and performance metrics, producing inconsistent or contradictory findings across contexts (Le & Lei, 2023). Cross-sectional designs dominate the field, limiting the ability to capture dynamic processes such as digital learning assimilation, tacit knowledge formation, and rapid skill acquisition—phenomena particularly salient for younger generations. Most importantly, no integrated theoretical framework currently explains how TM and KM interact to shape performance among Millennials and Gen Z, leaving a substantive scientific void in human capital literature.

This systematic literature review addresses these gaps by offering the first generationally differentiated synthesis of TM, KM, and performance research. The study contributes novelty by (1) integrating recent empirical evidence from 2023–2024 to provide an up-to-date understanding of TM–KM dynamics in digital settings, (2) articulating generational mechanisms through which Millennials and Gen Z respond differently to TM and KM practices, and (3) proposing a conceptual integration that resolves long-standing fragmentation in talent and knowledge management scholarship. By offering a coherent theoretical lens and empirically grounded insights, this study advances human capital research and provides organizations with evidence-based guidance for designing TM–KM systems aligned with the expectations of the modern digital workforce.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Talent Management (TM) and Theoretical Foundations

Talent Management (TM) is grounded in human capital theory, which posits that organizations gain competitive advantage by investing in the skills, capabilities, and potential of their workforce (Becker, 1993). TM encompasses systematic practices of talent attraction, development, succession planning, and retention designed to enhance employee capability and strengthen organizational performance (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Recent literature emphasizes TM as a strategic system that aligns employee potential with organizational goals through structured learning pathways, career development, mentoring, and performance feedback (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Social Exchange Theory (SET) further explains how TM enhances performance: when employees perceive fair development opportunities and support, they reciprocate with higher engagement, loyalty, and effort (Blau, 1964). However, empirical evidence shows that Millennials and Gen Z value different TM features—Millennials prefer structured development and stability, whereas Gen Z demands rapid, flexible, digital, and personalized learning mechanisms (Vieira, 2024; Santi, 2024). These generational differences suggest that TM

effectiveness is contingent upon the alignment between talent strategies and generational expectations.

Knowledge Management (KM) and Theoretical Foundations

Knowledge Management (KM) is rooted in the knowledge-based view (KBV), which argues that knowledge is the most strategically significant resource for organizational performance and long-term advantage (Grant, 1996). KM involves processes of knowledge creation, acquisition, storage, sharing, and utilization that enable employees to innovate, solve problems, and improve performance (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021). KM systems—including digital repositories, communities of practice, microlearning platforms, and AI-based knowledge tools—serve as cognitive infrastructures that facilitate continuous learning. Research shows that Millennials benefit from blended knowledge-sharing mechanisms combining formal and collaborative structures, whereas Gen Z is highly responsive to digital-first, microcontent-based, real-time knowledge environments (Jasmine, 2024; Noor & Durocher, 2024). These distinctions indicate that KM is not uniformly effective across generations and that knowledge behaviors differ based on digital fluency, autonomy preferences, and learning speed.

Integration of TM and KM: Emerging Strategic Nexus

A growing body of literature argues that TM and KM are interdependent systems rather than independent HR functions (Wikaningrum & Kartikasari, 2023). TM provides the human capability pipeline—skills, motivation, and leadership—while KM provides the informational and cognitive infrastructure through which talent can perform optimally. Studies show that talent development accelerates knowledge creation, and strong knowledge-sharing cultures strengthen talent retention and innovation (Sinulingga et al., 2025; Napitupulu et al., 2024). However, existing research lacks integrated theoretical frameworks explaining how TM and KM jointly enhance performance. This fragmentation limits scholarly understanding, especially in generationally diverse, digitally intensive workplaces where TM and KM must operate simultaneously to support rapid capability development.

Generational Theory and Digital-Native Behavior

Generational theory explains that social, technological, and cultural contexts shape each cohort's values, learning preferences, and workplace behaviors (Twenge, 2010). Millennials tend to prefer structured development, mentoring, stability, and collaborative learning environments. Generation Z, by contrast, is characterized by high digital fluency, rapid information processing, microlearning adoption, and stronger preference for autonomy and technology-enabled feedback (Deloitte, 2023; Santi, 2024). These generational distinctions have profound implications for both TM and KM. TM systems rooted in traditional structures may engage Millennials but fail to attract Gen Z. Conversely, KM systems designed for rapid, digital, and self-paced learning may suit Gen Z but may not meet Millennials' expectations for relational, guided

development. This gap demonstrates the necessity for generationally differentiated TM-KM design.

TM, KM, and Employee Performance

Employee performance is influenced by both skill-based and knowledge-based factors. TM enhances performance by improving employee capability, motivation, and commitment, whereas KM enhances performance by increasing knowledge availability, problem-solving ability, innovation, and decision quality (Al-Jubari et al., 2023; Wang & Wang, 2023). When TM and KM operate together, employees receive both the developmental support (TM) and the knowledge resources (KM) necessary to excel. Studies indicate that integrating TM and KM results in higher adaptability, faster skill acquisition, greater innovation, and stronger engagement (Adijaya et al., 2024). However, generational differences moderate these effects: Millennials' performance improves through structured development and collaborative knowledge environments, while Gen Z's performance improves through digital learning tools, rapid knowledge flows, and real-time feedback.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize and evaluate empirical research on the relationships among talent management (TM), knowledge management (KM), and employee performance in the context of Millennial and Generation Z employees. The SLR method is selected because it provides a transparent, rigorous, and replicable process for identifying, selecting, and synthesizing scholarly evidence (Page et al., 2021).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is done by studying the literature, where data or sources related to the research topic are collected and filtered, and then documented (Hasby, 2017). In this study, the data collected comes from journals or articles that examine talent management (TM), knowledge management (KM), and employee performance in the context of Millennial and Generation Z employees. The inclusion criteria of this study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Article Inclusion Criteria

Criteria	Description
Time Frame	Two Years (2023 - 2024)
Type of Article	Research-Based Article
Language	English and Bahasa Indonesia
Keywords	Talent Management, Knowledge Management, Job Performance, Generation Z, Generation Y, Millennial

After systematically searching for relevant published articles from the databases (i.e., Scopus, Web of Science, Emerald, Google Scholar), 34 relevant articles that met the inclusion criteria were carefully selected for further analysis.

Data Analysis

The articles that have been obtained are then analyzed using a descriptive analysis method by describing the facts first, after which an analysis of the understanding description is carried out (Hasby, 2017). The flow of research stages is carried out as shown in Figure 1.

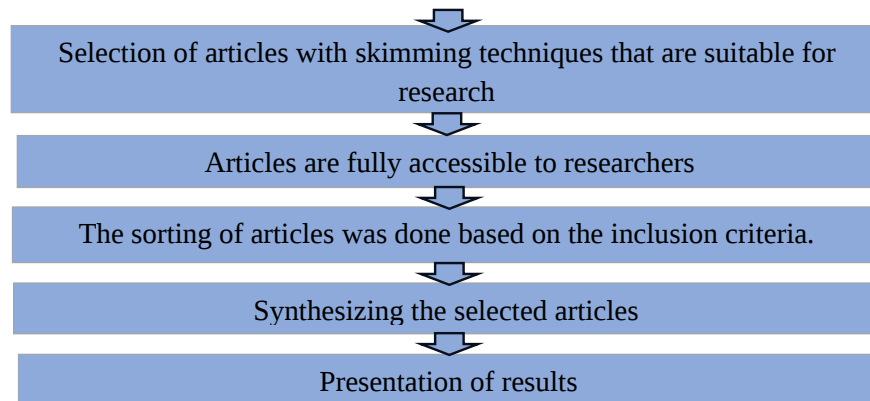


Figure 1. The Flow of The Research Stage

RESULTS

Talent Management

Talent management refers to a coordinated set of human resource practices aimed at attracting, selecting, developing, and retaining employees with high potential, aligning individual career paths with organizational needs in a strategic way. Recent reviews highlight that organizations increasingly differentiate their workforce, use data or technology for talent identification and development, and integrate talent management with overall business strategy to strengthen organizational capacity (Amalia & Rofaida, 2023). The orientation of talent management is not a standalone HR function, but part of a broader effort to ensure long-term competitiveness through human capital (Mujibi & Azmi, 2024).

Table 2 compares empirical evidence on talent management between millennials and Generation Z employees. This evidence shows that both Millennials and Gen Z value development, flexibility, and meaningful work, but differ significantly in their preferences for TM delivery. Millennials respond more strongly to structured pathways, mentoring, recognition, and stable advancement, whereas Gen Z demands digital learning, rapid feedback cycles, transparency, purpose, and wellbeing. Studies also reveal that Gen Z relies heavily on digital tools and AI for career development when managerial support is weak, which can increase turnover intentions. Effective Talent Management, therefore, requires a dual-strategy approach: structured long-term career systems for Millennials combined with agile, digital, and purpose-driven Talent Management features for Gen Z.

Table 2. Talent Management Comparison Between Millennials and Gen Z

Millennial	Gen Z
Show stronger work identity, value structured career growth, and hybrid work tied to advancement opportunities (Deloitte, 2023)	Prioritize wellbeing, meaningful work, rapid learning, and visible employer values (Deloitte, 2023)
Fit traditional TM models emphasizing career ladders, mentoring, and formal development (Vieira, 2024)	Prefer digital learning, micro-learning, fast feedback, and transparent employer branding (Vieira, 2024)
Respond strongly to recognition, structured progression, and standardized TM programs (Pratama, 2024)	Seek creative autonomy, rapid upskilling, and technologically sophisticated workplaces (Pratama, 2024)
Retention improves with mentoring, recognition, and clear career maps (Qasabandiyah & Farida, 2024)	Retention depends more on fairness, frequent feedback, and value-driven work (Qasabandiyah & Farida, 2024)

Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management refers to the systematic processes by which organizations create, capture, store, share, and apply both explicit and tacit knowledge to achieve organizational goals. A recent review of Knowledge Management models identifies generic process components typically involved in Knowledge Management: knowledge creation, acquisition, storage, validation, sharing, application, learning, and innovation (Yusril et al., 2021; Raysona et al., 2025).

Through these processes, organizations treat knowledge as a vital asset, not just information that supports decision-making, innovation, efficiency, and long-term competitiveness. In digitally enabled environments, Knowledge Management (KM) often leverages information systems (e.g., Knowledge Management Systems, cloud storage, document management, portals) to facilitate storage, retrieval, sharing, and institutional learning (Mostofa, 2024; Gusmawati et al., 2025).

Table 3 shows that Millennials and Generation Z differ significantly in how they learn, share, and use organizational knowledge, shaping the design of modern Knowledge Management (KM) systems. Millennials prefer structured, formalized KM practices—such as mentoring, documented repositories, scheduled knowledge transfers, and recognition tied to career progression—because these approaches align with their need for clarity, stability, and guided development. In contrast, Gen Z favors digital-first, fast, and socially driven knowledge flows, relying heavily on microlearning, mobile platforms, AI-assisted tools, and peer-to-peer sharing through social or collaborative applications. These generational differences imply that organizations must adopt a dual-layer KM strategy, integrating curated, formal knowledge structures for Millennials while simultaneously offering agile, microcontent-based, AI-

enabled, and socially interactive KM channels for Gen Z. When designed together, such hybrid KM systems not only enhance engagement and knowledge retention across generations but also strengthen organizational performance, innovation, and long-term talent sustainability.

Table 3. Knowledge Management Between Millennials and Gen Z

Millennial	Gen Z
Millennials' satisfaction is driven by autonomy, relatedness, and competence (psychological needs); they prefer structured KS settings, formal communities, and scheduled transfers. (Curardo, 2023)	Generation Z favors fast, digital-first, social, and AI-enabled knowledge sharing – requiring organizations to design KM that combines organized repositories with agile, mobile, and microlearning formats. (Curardo, 2023)
Millennials use social media moderately for KS but still rely on formal organizational repositories (Jasmine, 2024)	strongly leverages social platforms for knowledge – short video, microcontent, peer posts – boosting informal KS and rapid peer-to-peer learning (Jasmine, 2024)
Structured incentives and formal recognition tied to knowledge contributions; they value mentorship and curated knowledge resources that support creative tasks (Krishna et al., 2024)	Higher responsiveness to intrinsic cues (peer recognition on social channels), immediate micro-feedback, and autonomy in how knowledge is used creatively (Krishna et al., 2024)
Accept microlearning as a supplement to longer, structured courses; they prefer blended pathways (mentor + microcontent) (Santi, 2024)	Benefits most from microlearning – short, modular knowledge units increase engagement, retention, and on-the-job application (Santi, 2024)

Talent Management and Knowledge Management

Recent studies also documented evidence of the link between Talent Management and Knowledge Management (Mohammed, 2018; Wikaningrum et al., 2021; Ramaditya, 2022). It shows that talent management and knowledge management are increasingly treated as interdependent systems that jointly build a skilled, knowledge-rich workforce. Empirical work in universities, banks, hospitals, and technology-intensive firms (Angelica et al., 2023; Napitupulu et al., 2024) finds that talent practices such as attraction, development, and retention significantly strengthen knowledge processes like knowledge creation, sharing, and integration, which then improve innovation and performance outcomes. Several structural equation modeling studies report that talent management boosts knowledge creation capacity, and this new knowledge partially mediates the effect of talent practices on innovation performance and employee outcomes, meaning that well-managed talent drives better results largely because it generates and spreads valuable knowledge inside the organization (Wikaningrum & Kartikasari, 2023; Sinulingga et al., 2025).

At the same time, recent literature reviews and conceptual papers highlight a “nexus” or integration between talent management and knowledge management as a strategic requirement for the future workplace (Othman et al., 2017; Vandy, 2023; Stefan et al., 2024). Reviews emphasize that knowledge is a key enabler of talent development (Fazai, 2023; Oktataruna, 2023), while talent management provides the human capabilities needed to capture, share, and apply knowledge, so they argue for a unified strategy where HR, KM, and technology are aligned to support continuous learning and innovation (Nurung et al., 2023; Isdiani & Tania, 2024). The overall conclusion is that organizations that deliberately integrate talent and knowledge practices – through supportive culture, digital tools for sharing, and development programs – tend to achieve higher innovation, agility, and sustainable performance than those managing them separately (Adijaya et al, 2024).

Table 4 indicates that both Millennials and Gen Z benefit from integrated Talent Management (TM) and Knowledge Management (KM), but the mechanisms and emphases differ: Millennials respond more strongly to TM-KM practices that emphasize mentoring, supportive leadership, work-life balance, and collaborative knowledge sharing, whereas Gen Z is more influenced by digitally driven TM-KM systems that provide rapid skill development, continuous feedback, and on-demand access to knowledge resources (Qasabandiyah & Farida, 2024). This pattern is broadly consistent with prior research that portrays Millennials as valuing stability, relational support, and structured career paths, while Gen Z expects technology-rich learning, immediacy, and personalization in HR and KM practices; however, earlier studies often focused on general HR preferences rather than explicitly testing the combined effect of TM and KM, so the table extends previous findings by showing that both generations improve in engagement and performance under integrated TM-KM, but with generation-specific design levers (e.g., mentoring vs. digital micro-learning) (Guslina et al., 2025).

Table 4. Talent Management and Knowledge Management Between Millennials and Gen Z

Millennial	Gen Z
Talent Management and Knowledge Management focus practices on mentoring, supportive leadership, work-life balance, and collaborative knowledge sharing, most strongly enhance engagement and retention (Qasabandiyah et al., 202; Parihar & Singh, 2025; Guslina et al., 2025). Support continuous development and meaningful work (Anggellika Cindy et al., 2024)	More powerfully, to talent and knowledge systems that are highly digital, provide rapid skill development and continuous feedback, and offer seamless technology-enabled access to knowledge and learning resources (Qasabandiyah et al., 202; Parihar & Singh, 2025; Guslina et al., 2025). Support continuous development and meaningful work (Anggellika Cindy et al., 2024)

Talent Management, Knowledge Management, Job Performance

Talent management (TM) is a strategic approach to identifying, developing and retaining high-potential employees, thereby enhancing an organisation's competitive advantage. Research shows that strong TM practices, including selective recruitment, ongoing training and succession planning, significantly contribute to increased productivity and employee commitment. Recent studies have demonstrated that organisations which effectively manage talent tend to exhibit superior individual and organisational performance compared to those which do not manage talent systematically (Al-Jubari et al., 2023; Collings et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, knowledge management (KM) focuses on creating, storing, sharing and utilising knowledge within an organisation. KM has been shown to strengthen an organisation's capacity for innovation, accelerate problem-solving processes and improve service quality. Empirical research in technology companies and the public sector has found that KM practices, including knowledge sharing, acquisition and utilisation, directly influence employees' skill development and effectiveness at work (Donate & de Pablo, 2015; Wang & Wang, 2023).

Integrating TM and KM has a stronger impact on job performance because talent development requires a knowledge-based environment to produce optimal results. Several studies have shown that, with solid KM practices in place to support it, TM enables employees to generate new ideas, work more efficiently, and demonstrate a higher level of adaptability. However, some studies report that the influence of TM and KM is not always significant in the absence of supporting factors such as engagement, organisational culture, and reward systems (Rahman et al., 2024; Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023).

Although TM and KM have been proven to improve job performance in general, the literature also highlights challenges in implementation, such as resistance to knowledge sharing, lack of supporting technology, and inconsistent talent development. Therefore, researchers recommend strengthening organizational culture, digitizing KM processes, and adjusting TM designs according to sector context and employee characteristics to ensure maximum impact on performance (Inkinen, 2016; Noor & Durocher, 2024).

Table 5 . Talent Management and Job Performances Between Millennials and Gen Z

Millennial	Generation Z
Millennials show high commitment and performance improvement when provided with structured development programs and career advancement pathways. They value long-term growth and stability (Al-Jubari et al., 2023; Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023).	Gen Z responds well to rapid-skill development, micro-learning, and hands-on digital learning. They prefer flexible and fast-paced development cycles (Al-Jubari et al., 2023; Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023).
TM practices such as mentoring and recognition significantly increase	Gen Z performance increases when TM practices include

Millennial	Generation Z
Millennials' job performance through increased loyalty and engagement (Collings et al., 2021; Rahman et al., 2024).	autonomy, creativity, and psychological safety, as they are less affected by traditional retention approaches (Collings et al., 2021; Rahman et al., 2024).
Millennials prefer collaborative learning and perform better when engaged in team-based TM initiatives (Wang & Wang, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).	Gen Z performs better when TM involves digital tools, gamification, and personalized learning platforms (Wang & Wang, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).
TM enhances Millennials' performance mainly through motivation, commitment, and structured skill-buildin (Donate & de Pablo, 2015; Inkinen, 2016).	TM enhances Gen Z performance mainly through innovation, adaptability, and confidence in technology-enabled tasks (Donate & de Pablo, 2015; Inkinen, 2016).
Millennials tend to show sustained performance increase when TM emphasizes stability, career pathways, and continuous development (Al-Jubari et al.,2023; Wang & Wang, 2023).	Gen Z shows rapid performance gains when TM integrates digital learning, flexible work design, and real-time feedback mechanisms (Al-Jubari et al.,2023; Wang & Wang, 2023).

Overall, table 5 shows that talent management significantly improves employee performance in both Millennials and Gen Z, but through different mechanisms. Millennials benefit most from structured development, stability, and collaborative learning, while Gen Z gains more from digital learning, flexibility, innovation-oriented tasks, and real-time feedback. This indicates that organizations must customize TM strategies to each generation's characteristics to maximize performance outcomes (Al-Jubari et al.,2023; Wang & Wang, 2023).

Table 6 summarizes the effect of Knowledge Management on employee performance. The conclusion that can be drawn is that for general, millennial, and gen Z employees, Knowledge Management has a strong and significant relationship influence on employee performance.

Table 6 . Knowledge Management and Job Performances Between Millennials and Gen Z

Millennial	Generation Z
Millennials actively participate in team-based knowledge sharing and improve performance through collaboration and interpersonal	Gen Z prefers digital knowledge-sharing platforms, quick information exchange, and uses technology to enhance performance (Inkinen, 2016; Wang & Wang, 2023).

Millennial	Generation Z
communication (Inkinen, 2016; Wang & Wang, 2023).	
Millennials rely on formal training, workshops, and mentoring to acquire new knowledge which directly increases their work quality and productivity Noor & (Donate & de Pablo, 2015; Durocher, 2024).	Gen Z acquires knowledge faster through self-learning, online resources, and micro-learning modules, leading to rapid performance improvement (Donate & de Pablo, 2015; Durocher, 2024).
Millennials apply knowledge through established procedures and structured work processes, resulting in consistent performance outcomes (Wang & Wang, 2023; Rahman et al., 2024).	Gen Z uses knowledge more flexibly, integrating digital tools and innovative approaches that enhance creativity and efficiency outcomes (Wang & Wang, 2023; Rahman et al., 2024).
Millennials adapt well to knowledge systems but still prefer blended learning that combines digital and face-to-face interaction (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).	Gen Z performs better when KM systems are fully digital, interactive, gamified, and mobile-friendly (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).
KM increases Millennials' performance by enhancing cooperation, productivity, and mastery of job tasks (Wang & Wang, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).	KM enhances Gen Z performance more rapidly due to strong digital literacy, innovation mindset, and high adaptability to technological knowledge tools (Wang & Wang, 2023; Noor & Durocher, 2024).

Knowledge management (KM) has become one of the most critical strategic practices influencing organizational performance in the digital era. KM encompasses processes of *knowledge creation, acquisition, sharing, and utilization* that enable organizations to leverage intellectual capital as a source of competitive advantage. Empirical studies consistently show that effective KM enhances employee performance by improving problem-solving ability, decision-making quality, and innovation capability (Inkinen, 2016). As the workforce becomes generationally diverse – particularly with the dominance of Millennials and the rapid emergence of Generation Z – scholars have increasingly examined how each generation interacts with KM systems and how this interaction influences job performance. Existing research highlights that while both generations benefit from KM initiatives, their approaches to learning, technology use, and knowledge application differ significantly, thus shaping how KM affects their performance outcomes (Wang & Wang, 2023).

Millennials, generally described as collaborative, team-oriented, and development-focused, exhibit strong engagement in interpersonal knowledge-sharing activities. They value mentoring, group discussions, and structured organizational learning practices that allow collective problem-solving (Donate

& de Pablo, 2015). Several studies report that their job performance improves significantly when KM practices emphasize formal learning, workshops, supervisory coaching, and cross-functional collaboration (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023). Millennials tend to integrate knowledge through established procedures and systematic work processes, which enhances consistency and reliability in their performance. Their preference for blended KM systems—combining digital platforms with face-to-face interaction—supports both social learning and skill mastery, contributing to stable and sustained performance outcomes (Inkinen, 2016).

In contrast, Generation Z employees show distinct characteristics in the context of KM and performance. Born into a fully digital environment, Gen Z is highly adaptive to technology-based KM systems, interactive platforms, and knowledge-sharing applications. Research shows that this generation acquires new knowledge rapidly through self-directed learning, online modules, micro-learning content, and mobile-based tools (Noor & Durocher, 2024). Unlike Millennials, Gen Z demonstrates greater comfort with real-time knowledge access and tends to value autonomy in how they utilize knowledge to perform tasks. As a result, KM has a more immediate impact on their performance, particularly in areas involving digital innovation, creativity, and efficiency (Rahman et al., 2024). Studies also indicate that Gen Z's strong digital literacy amplifies the effectiveness of KM systems, enabling faster integration of new knowledge into workplace practices and ultimately producing higher levels of adaptability and performance (Wang & Wang, 2023).

Comparative research underscores that the overall effect of KM on job performance is strong for Millennials but even stronger for Gen Z, largely due to differences in technology adoption, learning preferences, and knowledge utilization patterns. However, Millennials' performance gains are more stable over time, driven by their preference for structured knowledge processes, while Gen Z tends to show rapid but dynamic performance improvements fueled by technological agility. These distinctions suggest the need for organizations to tailor KM strategies according to generational strengths—fostering team-based and formal learning environments for Millennials while providing technology-rich, interactive, and flexible KM systems for Gen Z. A generationally sensitive KM approach ensures that both groups achieve optimal performance outcomes while contributing to knowledge continuity within the organization.

Talent Management, Knowledge Management and Millennial Performance

Talent management (TM) has emerged as a strategic priority for organizations seeking to maximize the capabilities of millennial employees—now the dominant workforce demographic in many sectors. Millennials place high value on career development, recognition, and meaningful work, making TM practices such as selective recruitment, structured training programs, succession planning, and performance-based rewards particularly influential. Recent research demonstrates that TM significantly enhances millennial job performance by improving motivation, organizational commitment, and skill mastery (Al-Jubari et al., 2023). These practices help align millennial

competencies with organizational goals, fostering higher productivity, engagement, and innovation. Moreover, organizations that implement TM systematically tend to have stronger employee retention, reducing turnover among millennial talent who often seek careers with continuous learning and growth opportunities (Collings et al., 2021; Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2023).

Knowledge management (KM) complements TM by ensuring that knowledge—both tacit and explicit—is effectively created, shared, and utilized across organizational levels. Millennials tend to thrive in environments that support collaboration, open communication, and digital knowledge-sharing systems. Empirical evidence shows that KM practices such as knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and knowledge utilization positively influence millennial job performance by enabling faster problem-solving, enhanced decision-making, and greater innovation capability (Wang & Wang, 2023). Millennials' strong adaptability to digital tools also makes them effective users of KM platforms, such as learning management systems, internal knowledge repositories, and collaborative technologies. Research further highlights that KM not only improves individual performance but strengthens organizational learning culture, which millennials identify as essential to career advancement (Noor & Durocher, 2024).

The integration of TM and KM yields even stronger effects on millennial performance. Several studies indicate that TM provides the structural foundation—talent identification, development pathways, mentoring—while KM strengthens the cognitive and informational capabilities needed for millennials to perform at their best (Rahman et al., 2024; Donate & de Pablo, 2015). When organizations simultaneously manage talent and knowledge systems, millennials gain not only skills but also access to the collective expertise of the organization, enabling them to innovate more effectively. This combined approach enhances job performance through improved creativity, stronger collaboration, and greater confidence in executing complex tasks. The complementary nature of TM and KM also fosters psychological empowerment, which has been shown to mediate the relationship between HR practices and millennial performance outcomes.

Overall, the literature consistently demonstrates that talent management and knowledge management both have significant and positive effects on millennial job performance, either independently or synergistically. Millennials perform best in environments where organizations provide structured development opportunities (TM) and robust, technology-enabled knowledge ecosystems (KM). The research highlights that organizations must strategically integrate both practices to maximize performance, drive innovation, and ensure long-term employee retention among millennial workers. As the largest generational workforce cohort, millennials' preferences for growth, collaboration, and digital knowledge exchange make them uniquely responsive to TM and KM practices—reinforcing the importance of these strategies in contemporary human resource management.

Talent Management, Knowledge Management and Generation Z Employee Performance

Generation Z (born roughly 1997–2012) enters the workforce as digital natives with distinctive expectations: rapid learning, transparent employer values, frequent feedback, and high use of digital/AI tools for career learning. Consequently, classical TM models—built around long career ladders and slow promotion cycles—require adaptation to influence Gen Z performance effectively. Systematic reviews show that TM practices tailored to Gen Z (e.g., faster development paths, visible employer purpose, flexible work design, and technology-enabled mentoring) are more likely to boost engagement and reduce turnover intentions than one-size-fits-all TM programs (Vieira, 2024). Surveys also indicate that many Gen Z employees turn to AI and digital platforms for career guidance when managerial coaching is lacking, which can undermine performance and retention if organizational TM does not provide timely development support.

Knowledge Management (KM) influences Gen Z performance primarily through the speed and format of knowledge delivery. Empirical studies and applied research from 2023–2024 indicate Gen Z benefits substantially from microlearning, mobile-friendly knowledge repositories, and social or collaborative KM channels that enable just-in-time application of knowledge to daily tasks (Santi, 2024). Compared with older cohorts, Gen Z shows higher uptake and performance gains when KM systems are interactive, bite-sized, and integrated with digital workflows; in contrast, heavy, text-based repositories produce limited immediate performance effects for this group. KM research further emphasizes that purely technological KM without social validation or integration into work processes risks under-utilization — even among digitally fluent Gen Z employees — unless KM is tied directly to work tasks and career development.

When TM and KM are combined, their joint effects on Gen Z performance are stronger than either alone. Reviews and multi-study analyses show that TM supplies the motivational and developmental scaffolding (identifying high-potential Gen Z, providing rapid learning pathways, and recognition), while KM supplies the cognitive resources (accessible know-how, microcontent, and collaborative tools) needed to translate learning into day-to-day performance and innovation (Rahman et al., 2024; Vieira, 2024). Practically, organizations that align TM, fast career experiences, coaching, and purpose communication with KM; microlearning libraries, AI-assisted search, social sharing report faster competency acquisition, improved task performance, and higher perceived employability among Gen Z staff; conversely, gaps between TM promises and KM delivery create disengagement and higher quitting intent.

Implications for practice and research are clear. HR and L&D should redesign TM for Gen Z by embedding digitally delivered, short-cycle development (microcredentials, project rotations) and pairing these with KM systems that make knowledge immediately usable at the point of work. Organizations must also govern AI and external information use so Gen Z employees rely on validated, internal knowledge flows rather than fragmented

external advice. For researchers, future work should use longitudinal and mixed-method designs to quantify how specific TM-KM bundles e.g., microlearning and rapid mentoring causally affect Gen Z performance metrics ; productivity, innovation output, retention across sectors.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This systematic literature review provides a comprehensive synthesis of contemporary research examining Talent Management (TM), Knowledge Management (KM), and their combined influence on employee performance, particularly among Millennials and Generation Z. The theoretical review affirms that TM and KM function as strategic, mutually reinforcing capabilities that enable organizations to build, develop, and sustain a high-performing workforce in an increasingly digital and knowledge-driven economy.

TM enhances employee capability through processes such as selective recruitment, structured and personalized development, mentoring, performance recognition, and flexible work design. KM, in turn, strengthens organizational knowledge flows through mechanisms of knowledge creation, storage, sharing, and utilization. When aligned, TM and KM create a complementary system in which talent development is supported by accessible and meaningful knowledge resources, resulting in improved innovation, adaptability, and performance outcomes. The integration of TM and KM therefore represents a critical foundation for workforce competitiveness in the modern era.

The review also highlights clear differences and similarities between Millennials and Generation Z employees. Both generations value continuous learning, meaningful work, collaboration, and opportunities for growth. However, Millennials tend to prefer structured development pathways, mentorship-based learning, and formalized knowledge systems, whereas Generation Z is more responsive to rapid skill development, technology-based learning, microcontent, and real-time feedback. Despite these distinctions, evidence consistently indicates that both generations benefit from integrated TM-KM systems, although the mechanisms by which these systems enhance performance differ across generational lines.

Across the reviewed studies, the implementation of TM and KM is most effective when supported by leadership commitment, a strong learning culture, and robust digital infrastructure. TM implementation is optimized when organizations provide personalized, continuous development, while KM implementation benefits from mobile-enabled platforms, social collaboration tools, and microlearning approaches. Organizations that implement TM and KM holistically achieve higher levels of innovation, engagement, retention, and overall performance than those that manage these systems independently.

The findings reveal that TM and KM each exert a significant positive effect on employee performance among Millennials and Generation Z. TM improves performance through motivation, commitment, structured learning, and autonomy, while KM enhances problem-solving, decision-making, and innovation capabilities. Integrated TM-KM systems generate the strongest outcomes,

enabling faster competency development for Gen Z and more sustainable long-term performance gains for Millennials.

Based on these insights, several recommendations emerge. Organizations should design generationally adaptive TM strategies that offer structured career pathways for Millennials and rapid, technology-enabled development for Gen Z. KM systems should be modernized through mobile platforms, AI support, microlearning, and collaborative tools, while still maintaining formalized knowledge structures to support diverse learning preferences. TM and KM should be integrated into a unified framework aligned with organizational culture, digital strategy, and leadership practices to maximize performance impact. Future research is encouraged to employ longitudinal and mixed-method approaches to deepen understanding of how integrated TM-KM practices influence performance across generational cohorts and organizational contexts.

Overall, this review concludes that organizations seeking to optimize the performance of Millennial and Generation Z employees must adopt a dual approach: leveraging the strategic power of both Talent Management and Knowledge Management while tailoring their implementation to generational characteristics. A unified, digitally enabled TM-KM strategy provides a sustainable pathway to enhanced performance, innovation, and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving workforce landscape.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research should investigate how digital work environments and AI-driven HR systems influence the link between talent management, knowledge management, and performance among Millennial and Gen Z employees. Another important direction is exploring cross-cultural contexts to see whether generational responses to talent and knowledge practices vary across different organizations and countries.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank those willing to cooperate profusely during this research.

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